INTERTEXTUAL POETICS:

THE MODERNIST POETRY OF

ANTHONY BURGESS

_____

by

Jonathan David Mann

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Manchester
Metropolitan University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English
Manchester Metropolitan University

September 2013

ABSTRACT

Intertextual Poetics: The Modernist Poetry of Anthony Burgess

This dissertation offers a series of exegetical readings of short and long poems by Anthony Burgess, with the aim of establishing the extent to which this poetry participates in Modernist and Postmodernist traditions. Beginning with Burgess's poems of the 1930s, the thesis discusses all of his major poetic works until 1993.

Making extensive use of unpublished manuscript material, this is the first thesis to treat poetry and verse drama (including translations) as a discrete area of Burgess's literary production. As such, the thesis significantly extends the critical enquiries of previous scholars.

Having identified specific poetic influences, the thesis addresses the poetic effects of the intertextual techniques used by Burgess. His poetry and writing about poetry are accounted for chronologically, and a selection of longer texts are discussed in detail. Influential Modernist poets are found to practice a range of techniques which Burgess parodies and pastiches with serious intent. Burgess is found to use Modernist techniques throughout his literary career, and to apprehend tradition through a conservative version of Modernism.

Burgess's later poetry is shown to be self-reflexive and formalist in ways which are identifiably Postmodern. In texts such as *Byrne, St. Winefred's Well* and *The End of Things*, Burgess reassesses his relationship with Modernism, and intertextuality itself becomes a key preoccupation.

Arguing the case for Burgess as a transitional late Modernist poet, the thesis charts the development of Burgess's engagement with Modernism and Postmodernism, and proposes that the two are interdependent rather than antithetical.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'[. . .] the drunkenness of things being various [. . .]'
– 'Snow' by Louis McNeice

'Modern, not just contemporary.'

– *They Wrote in English* by Anthony Burgess

INTRODUCTION

Summary

This thesis finds that Burgess's poetry uses intertextual techniques which he himself associated with Modernist poets of the 1930s. It also finds that, from the 1980s onwards, Burgess uses increasingly self-reflexive intertextual techniques that can be considered Postmodernist. Burgess is thus presented as a transitional postwar poet continuing to use intertextual Modernist techniques in an age increasingly associated with Postmodernism. *Intertextual* is seen as a wide term, encompassing debates about the structure of language, literary influence, the definition of a *text*, and the relationship between reading and writing. The way Burgess generates poetic meaning through the combination of texts (his intertextual poetics) is found to evolve over time, and to encompass Modernism, late Modernism, and Postmodernism.

Burgess is presented as both a *reader* and a writer of Modernist poetry. The poets and critics he read not only influenced his poetic style, but influenced his decision to use intertextual techniques. Extending beyond explorations of poetic influence, this thesis addresses the poetic effects of the intertextual techniques Burgess uses. Burgess, I argue, acknowledges the influence of Modernist poets including T. S. Eliot, G. M. Hopkins, Ezra Pound, William Empson, and W. H. Auden. His poetry and writing about poetry often deliberately echoes these poets via parody and pastiche, which – I argue – are the primary means by which Burgess reads literary tradition (and masters poetic form). Eliot, Pound, Empson, and Auden are found to practice Modernist intertextual poetic techniques which Burgess emulates and/or expands upon. Hopkins, whilst not a de-facto *intertextual* poet, is an important poet whose use of language influenced

Burgess greatly. Burgess is established as reading Hopkins under the critical influences of F. R. Leavis, Eliot, and Empson. Burgess's poetic technique is compared with these and other mainly British Modernist poets who, like him, are associated with the 1930s. Burgess's aesthetic is found to evolve by the 1980s and 1990s into a much more self-reflexive formalist poetry which explores and often stages the limits of its own conventions, in keeping with literary techniques practised at the time by poets such as Kenneth Koch, who has been described as Postmodern.

Anthony Mellors, in his recent study *Late Modernist Poetics* (2005)[1] argues that late Modernism 'can be said to refer to the continuation of modernist writing into the war years and until at least the end of the 1970s'[2]. Randall Stevenson, in *The Last of England?* (2000)[3] likewise finds a number of poets who use Modernist techniques in the 1960s and 1970s, arguing that there is no clean distinction between Modernism and Postmodernism. This thesis extends this argument by presenting Burgess as a poet whose *belated* or *late* Modernism evolves beyond the 1970s into more identifiably Postmodern modes in the 1980s and 1990s. Accordingly, I have found that certain of Burgess's poems are Modernist, whereas others can be seen as Postmodernist, with a link between technique and dates of composition. Like Mellors, I provide evidence for the persistence of Modernist modes in postwar British poetry, since Burgess's poetry continually articulates an identifiably Modernist aesthetic. His poetry is presented as influenced by a relatively narrow Modernist approach to intertextuality and tradition, whilst also responding to the anti-Modernism of postwar Movement poetry. Moreover, I show how Burgess's later poetry, in exploring the limitations of form via an increasingly self-conscious, and increasingly ironic dialogue with past, uses techniques which are

---

[1]
    Anthony Mellors, *Late Modernist Poetics* (Manchester University Press, 2005).
[2]   Mellors, p. 19.
[3]   Randall Stevenson, *The Oxford English Literary History: Volume 12: The Last of England? (*Oxford University Press, 2004).

associated with Postmodernism. As such, I contribute a new proposition concerning the relationship between Modernism and Postmodernism in Burgess, who is not listed in Mellors's list of 'poets whose modernist aesthetic was formed earlier in the century [and who] developed it beyond the 1930s'[4]. Whereas Mellors believes '[l]ate modernism is [. . .] antithetical to postmodernism'[5], my thesis suggests the two co-exist in the case study of Burgess, who learns his forms from the Modernists, and then interrogates the limitations of those forms via a cautious engagement with contemporary debates surrounding Postmodernism. This could be extended to other transitional writers of his generation. It could be of particular use to scholars researching Richard Wilbur, who – as I argue in Chapter Four – Burgess admired and partially emulated, and whose formalism and Modernist influences mirror Burgess's own. Wilbur's poetry has been associated with both late Modernism[6] and Postmodernism[7], but no study has argued for a transitional co-existence of the two.

In addition, the thesis also gives an insight into the processes of Burgess's literary production by accessing early-stage and abandoned drafts and discussing what impact these made on the meaning of *final* texts. This provides a model that can be used with regard to Burgess's other modes of writing in future studies. Furthermore, by treating the poems as discrete texts, my analyses allow for a fuller understanding by comparison of the relationship between Burgess's poetry, novels, criticism, and drama. Poems are taken from within novels, original publications (amateur and professional) or unpublished manuscripts. Material is collected from the University of Texas, the International Anthony Burgess Foundation (Manchester), the Anthony Burgess Center

---

4   Mellors, p. 19. On his list are: Marianne Moore, Lorine Niedecker, Nellys Sachs, Basil Bunting, Charles Olson, Jack Spicer, Edmond Jabes, Robert Duncan, Anne-Marie Albiach, Paul Celan, Andrea Zanzotto, Charles Tomlinson, Rosemary Tonks, and J. H. Prynne.

5   Mellors, p. 23.

6   See: Jonathan Holden, *The Fate of American Poetry* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008), p. 37. Holden finds Wilbur is a late Modernist.

7   Mellors, p. 23.

(University of Angers), the Royal Shakespeare Company (Stratford), and McMaster University (Hamilton). Burgess's poetry, and his critical writing on poetry, is accounted for in a mainly chronological fashion. Unpublished texts provide insight into Burgess's poetic style. Entirely new critical commentaries are provided for the following neglected or previously unstudied works: *The Eve of St. Venus* (1951); *Miser! Miser!* (before June 1983); *An Essay on Censorship* (1989); *St Winefred's Well* (1989); and, *The End of Things* (1991). Alongside a number of smaller published poems, new critical ground is established for hitherto neglected works, including: *Moses* (1976); *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1985); *Chatsky* (1993) and *Byrne* (1995). A stanza for Burgess's poem 'Adderbury' – missing from Kevin Jackson's small collection of Burgess's poems, *Revolutionary Sonnets* (2002) and first published in *The Worm and the Ring* (1961) – is restored and studied for the first time. Various long poems embedded in *One Hand Clapping* (1961), *The Clockwork Testament* (1974), and *Napoleon Symphony* (1974) are given their first critical readings as poems detached from the context of the novels.

A number of Burgess's unpublished critical writings are also examined in detail for the first time in this thesis, providing valuable insights into his ongoing approach to Modernist intertextual poetry. They are: 'The Waste Land' (1971)[8]; 'A Babble of Voices' (1980)[9]; 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (1985)[10]; 'English in the World of Literature' (c.1988)[11]; 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins' (1989)[12]; 'Can Art be Immoral?' (1991)[13], and 'Modernism and Modern Man' (1992)[14].

8   Anthony Burgess, 'The Waste Land', *Horizon Magazine* 16th August 1971, galley proof (7 pp.) (The archive of the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Manchester). Subsequent references to material from this archive collection are marked as 'IABF'.

9   Anthony Burgess, Babble of Voices' in *Index on Censorship,* 9.2 (1980), 38-41.

10 Anthony Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (Anthony Burgess Papers, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, box 45, fol. 2, 1985). Subsequent references to Harry Ransom Center are hereafter given as HRC.

11 Anthony Burgess, 'English in the World of Literature' (Texas: HRC, box 121, fol. 2.), n.d. Computer-printed fragment.

12 Anthony Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins'. *New York Times*. August 27, 1989.

13 Anthony Burgess, 'Can Art Be Immoral?' Unpublished lecture, given at Tate Gallery, 17th October 1991, (IABF).

14   'Modernism and Modern Man' , book proposal, 24 January 1992, (Texas: HRC, box 50, fol. 4).

Chapter One discusses the full scope of Burgess's career as a poet, and traces the evolution of his critical opinions concerning Modernism, Postmodernism, and intertextuality, so as to add context and outline the general logic for development of these topics in subsequent chapters. Specifically, Burgess is seen as understanding Postmodernism cautiously through its relationship to Modernism. Emphasis is placed on critics who write about Burgess and address aspects of Modernity, Postmodernity, and intertextuality; I accordingly identify critical space which my thesis aims to fill. The chapter introduces the debates surrounding intertextuality with reference to Marko Juvan's *History and Poetics of Intertextuality* (2008), which supplies a twenty-first-century perspective on established intertextual theories, which are used in subsequent chapters. These linguistically-oriented approaches are found to be coterminous with Burgess's own theories about how language's structures can be exploited for poetic effect. Accordingly, all through the thesis, I demonstrate how Burgess's critical opinions and poetic techniques developed, by referring to a range of critics who Burgess either cited directly, or who represent critical debates that were prevalent at the time. In so doing, I highlight how Burgess's poetic imagination is anchored in his contemporary critical context. This helps in understanding Burgess's choice of reading and decisions in writing. Harold Bloom's similarly contemporaneous theories of literary influence from *A Map of Misreading* (1975) are introduced; in subsequent chapters, I use these to present Burgess as a belated poet attempting to find his own poetic voice in response to strong Modernist precursors, including the Modernist poets T. S. Eliot, William Empson, and G. M. Hopkins. Hence, the belated Modernism I outline here is subtly different, and yet related to, Mellors's *late Modernism*, since it assumes the later poet's attempt to use Modernist techniques in face of the stultifying strength of recent precursors, who first used those innovative techniques. This is related especially to the

quest to negotiate one's poetic voice. *Belatedness* thus indicates anxiety to deviate from predecessors' influence as much as its more conventional chronological meaning. This is for the large part considered in conjunction with T. S. Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'[15], whose Modernist intertextual techniques influenced Burgess's own decisions to assimilate texts from across literary tradition. A neglected 1985 essay by Burgess concerning Shakespeare is presented as an example of how Burgess's own incorporations of, and responses to, tradition and intertextuality, are deeply influenced by Eliot. The chapter concludes by briefly comparing Burgess's own understanding of intertextuality at word-level (semiotics) with William Empson, Umberto Eco, and Roland Barthes, most especially in exploring how poetic meaning can be generated through the conflict of disparate texts.

Chapter Two positions Burgess as a poet of the 1930s, showing how he met, reviewed and – in keeping with literary *zeitgeist* – emulated Modernist poets. Imitation is discussed in relation to parody and pastiche as a type of intertextuality which simultaneously underscores its relatedness to previous texts whilst also establishing its critical distance through the use of revisionary techniques. The word 'parody' is used as a wide term to signal this process, so the parody becomes related to both the mastery and transposition[16] of poetic form. Burgess's critical readings of poetry, influenced by F. R. Leavis and T. S. Eliot, are shown as both *intertextual* and concerned with intertextuality. Burgess's early poetry is discussed in relation to poets including T.S. Eliot, G.M. Hopkins, W.H. Auden, Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender and William Empson. I argue that Burgess's early poetry uses intertextual, *revisionist* techniques which Bloom observes in all post-Romantic poets, and which Valentine Cunningham[17]

---

15 T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot,* ed., by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 37-44.

16 Juvan, Marko, *History and Poetics of Intertextuality*, trans. by Timothy Pogačar (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008), p. 128.

17 Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

and Samuel Hynes[18] find typical of 1930s Modernist poets. Extrapolating observations concerning non-poetic texts made by Burgess's critics, I provide close readings of Burgess's early poetry. I conclude by finding Burgess is to be seen as a Modernist poet in the 1930s, and that his earlier poetry draws on texts read by other 1930s poets, and shares their intertextual techniques.

I argue in Chapter Three that the 1930s intertextual Modernist poetic style is a consistent and unfashionable feature of Burgess's poetry between 1950 and 1979. Following Bloom, I trace how Burgess positions himself as a *belated* Modernist poet writing about belatedness itself, a fashionable preoccupation associated with a group of poets known as the Movement, even if the Modernist techniques are not. My close reading of the unpublished and unstudied verse drama *The Eve of St. Venus* explores Burgess's failure to establish a distinct poetic voice. New ground is also established in identifying poetic techniques influenced by Eliot and Empson in *The Worm and the Ring* (1961). I expand Akos Farkas's approach to parody, exploring Burgess's intertextual relationship with T.S. Eliot and Christopher Fry as a means of creative emulation in the search for poetic voice after these strong Modernist precursors. I offer an interpretation of a pivotal long poem in the novel *One Hand Clapping* (1961) as a hyperbolic intertextual rejection of the Movement styles of the previous decade, identifying it as using early Postmodern meta-poetic techniques, but one alluding to Modernist texts. Poetry from the first two *Enderby* novels (1963 and 1968) is compared with the return of neo-Modernist forms seen in Alvarez's anthology *The New Poetry* (1962). *Revolutionary Sonnets* – a sequence of poems first published in a journal in 1966 – is shown to contain elements of late Modernism in the style of Empson. I explore how Burgess uses intertextual material from Hopkins in *The Clockwork*

---

18 Samuel Hynes, *The Auden Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972:1976).

Testament (1972) to ironic effect, and, through the presence of 'metrical irregularity'[19] and the 'free handling of rhythm and rime'[20] identify the influence of Milton in the epic poem *Moses* (1976). I explore how Burgess inserts his own *belated* language into 1930s-inspired revisionist translations of Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli's poems (1977), expanding Aude Haffen's previous findings. Burgess is seen as using intertextual translation techniques associated with Modernist poets Auden and Pound. Using Bloom's critical approach, this is interpreted as the ultimate attempt of a belated poet to impose his own tropes and defences onto "strong" precursors.

In Chapter Four, I demonstrate how Burgess's intertextual poetry and verse drama in his late career is notable for its length, its formal strictness, and subtle shifts in its approach to intertextuality and Modernism. The chapter traces how Burgess's intertextual poetry evolves from the belated Modernist modes seen in Chapter Three, to more dialogic and ironic forms of intertextuality translation, adaptation, or parodic forms, which self-reflexively describe the limitations, or de-centring, of meanings arising from those forms. Burgess's intertextual poetry becomes increasingly self-conscious, increasingly ironic, and increasingly in alignment with Postmodernist technique. This section lists and addresses four inter-related contentions concerning the increasingly Postmodern forms that appear in Burgess's later-career poetry. The chapter shows a gradual development in these forms, which seem to increase significantly around 1989, culminating in the long Postmodern poem, *Byrne* (1995). Accordingly, I demonstrate how intertextuality itself becomes more of a self-conscious concern for Burgess. The chapter shows how Burgess's late poetry is written with an awareness of and in consistent association with Modernism, but evolves into forms which are more associated with Postmodernism, suggesting that the two are interrelated rather than

19 William Riley Parker, *Milton. Vol. 1: The Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968:1996), p. 316.
20 Parker, p. 316.

mutually exclusive, in keeping with Burgess's arguments which I outline in Chapter One.

Structure and Approach

Aside from the present study, there are currently no detailed explorations of Burgess's poetry. As I explain at length in Chapter One, there have been only three articles and one introductory essay covering poetry written by Burgess. These are: 'Enderby le minable magnifique' (1980)[21] and 'Poets and Poetry in the Enderby Cycle' (2003) by Sylvère Monod; 'Anthony Burgess: de la poésie la parodie' (1980)[22] by Laurette Véza; and, 'Introduction' to *Revolutionary Sonnets* by Kevin Jackson (2002)[23]. Despite this critical reticence, Burgess was a prolific writer of verse; I have so far collected 294 poems, verses, and fragments in researching the full range of his achievement. The only widely available edition[24] of his poetry does not adequately reflect this. Hence, in selecting poems for inclusion in this study, I have preferred to dwell at length on representative texts rather than engage with the overwhelming wealth of material. I have focused on poems that seem to have been written for public, rather than private consumption. Burgess wrote conversational or personal verse, often in correspondence with his readers, or as part of discussions with agents or prospective paying clients. This material, which tends to possess only surface meaning, although sometimes elegantly phrased, is not covered in this study. Many of these poems do not possess a complex literary style, and can alternate between highly comic, or sometimes emotive personal lines in direct address to a specific reader. For example, a poem recently attributed to

---

21 Monod, Sylvère, 'Enderby le minable magnifique' in *TREMA* 5 (1980), pp. 19-29.
22 Véza, Laurette, 'Anthony Burgess: de la poésie la parodie' in *TREMA* 5 (1980), pp. 31-8.
23 Kevin Jackson, 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess. *Revolutionary Sonnets,* ed. by Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002), pp. vii-xviii.
24 Anthony Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets,* ed. by Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002).

Burgess, said to have been written for a fellow cancer patient ends with the touching

personal lines:

> Moreover, there's no tinge of godly justice:
>
> You, sir, and I have kept it fairly clean,
>
> Whereas the lout whose life is loot and lust is
>
> Looked after like an opulent machine.
>
> We'll beat the bastards yet – by God, we must. Is
>
> Life, is love, meant only for the mean?[25]

Some are seemingly written more as a means of self-amusement than literary

endeavours, such as the limerick which is wittily dismissive of the poetry of Group[26]

member Edward Lucie-Smith:

> The verses of E. Lucie-Smith
>
> Must not be dealt sneeringly with.
>
> They're not just belle-lettric
>
> Or stuffed up with rhetoric;
>
> They're full not of wind but of pith.[27]

Poems like this, though often rewarding to read, are not within the scope of this thesis.

The personal, comic, and occasional poems would be most suitable for a collected

edition of Burgess's poetry, which represents a useful follow-on project. Other poems

---

25 Anthony Burgess, 'To Chas'. Private correspondence (IABF). The anonymous correspondent
     provided this background information for the poem: 'I was just rereading a poem that Anthony
     Burgess wrote for a member of my family, and it occurred to me that it should be "out there" and
     would be of interest to your foundation. Chas was just 38 and suffering from terminal lymphoma
     when he shared a room with Mr. Burgess in Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York in 1991 or
     1992. He was a wonderful young father and husband - intelligent, funny, kind and fighting so hard to
     live. Before they parted, Mr. Burgess gave this poem to Chas. It has always moved me to tears.'
26 See Peter Porter, 'Introduction, Memoir and Critical Note' in Martin Bell. *Complete Poems*
     (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1988), pp. 11-31, (p. 20).
27 Anthony Burgess, Untitled Limerick on Edward Lucie-Smith, written c.1967 (IABF).

not included are those which are simply exercises in form with little linguistic experimentation, such as the acrostic poem about L'hôtel Le Clos Voltaire, which begins:

> Leman's for lovers, still, where Thomas Stearns
>
> Eliot wept a Waste Land out, alone.
>
> Calvin burns stones, Servetus merely burns
>
> Lapping its banks the incremental Rhône
>
> Outtricks all purely temporal returns.
>
> Swiss skills face Alpine skulls; Alps calve dead bone.[28]

Even given the allusions to T.S. Eliot's intertextual poem *The Waste Land*, and the Calvinist martyr Michael Servetus, who – as I point out in Chapter Four – features in *Byrne* (1995), this acrostic exercise, like a number of other form-led poetic fragments, provides insight into Burgess's formalist poetic style but is not as developed as other, more public-facing poems. Generally speaking, the primary focus has been on poems which can be reliably dated, so as to ably support my chronological approach. In addition to this, I have selected texts which best represent the development in style and technique that this thesis aims to explore. The unpublished texts like *The Eve of St. Venus* (c.1953) or *Miser Miser* (before June 1983) cannot be dated precisely, but the evidence surrounding their production strongly assists my general argument. Like Monod and Véza, I am keen to not confuse the poetry of Enderby and Burgess, or any other of the fictional poets Burgess writes about. Burgess's poet characters may be assigned his poetry. I am particularly interested in the poetry which is re-used; if there are notable variants in a poem, I account for these where appropriate. If a poem under

---

28 Anthony Burgess, Untitled acrostic about L'hôtel Le Clos Voltaire (Texas: HRC, box 121, fol. 2), p. 1.

study is part of a text's general narrative structure, I briefly outline this, but present the contents of the poem as a literary artefact in its own right.

My thesis does not take into account Burgess's numerous songs or libretti, preferring to focus instead on long and short verses which are not written to accompany music, and which may more often than not use rhyme to heighten the poetic effect. Burgess, who 'remained preoccupied with the relations between text and music', differentiated between poetry, which 'demands the concentration of the reader' because of its 'originality of imagery or verbal trope' and the 'true lyric' – or, libretti – which 'deliberately damps the striking image, graciously obscuring the light of the words so as to affirm a true marriage of equal partners', meaning words and music[29]. Burgess describes lyricists as people who have taken 'an existing melody and attached words to it', as opposed to writing poetry[30]. Hence, libretti are not included, although sometimes referred to. The most notable omissions are *Blooms of Dublin* (1982), *Carmen* (1986), and *Oberon Old and New* (1985), which demonstrate varying levels of intertextual technique. Burgess's recently rediscovered libretto about the French Revolution, *1789*[31] (c.1989) is, accordingly, not within the scope of this thesis. Although influenced by Auden's poetry, an article Burgess published three weeks before his death[32] on Auden's libretti shows a marked differentiation between poetry and libretti. In this review, Burgess casts doubt on the 'high style'[33] of Auden's libretti, which 'insisted on the open, unevasive plain statement, which the contemporary discourse of the stage will not permit'[34]. He concludes that: 'I'm not altogether convinced'.[35] Burgess is mainly dismissive of Auden's libretti (including his collaborations). For example, he describes

---

29 Burgess,'Under the Bam', p. 105.
30 Ibid.
31 Anthony Burgess, *1789*, c.1989 (IABF).
32 Burgess died on 22 November 1993. See Biswell, p. 390.
33 Anthony Burgess, 'Making them Sing', Review of *W. H. Auden and Chester Kallmann: Libretti and other Dramatic Writing by W. H. Auden. 1939-73*, *The Observer*, 29 October 1993, p. 18.
34 Burgess, 'Making them Sing', p. 18.
35 Ibid.

Kallmann and Auden's *The Rake's Progress* as 'eighteenth-century pastiche and it contains plot elements that [. . .] do not really work'[36]. Over a decade later, Michael Tanner shares Burgess's opinion; he describes the same work as containing 'many a memorable phrase'[37], but finds it 'arch, badly constructed dramatically, and gives us a set of characters in whom there is no reason to feel any interest.'[38] Other libretti are described variously by Burgess as 'something of a bore', 'atrocious', with 'no wit', 'no urbanity' and 'no ingenuity'.[39] By comparison, Burgess finds Auden and Isherwood 'produced something close to true libretti' in verse drama *The Ascent of F6* (1937), because of the strength of the 'operatic hero' Michael Ransom[40]. Burgess read this work closely, having produced it for the stage in the late 1940s[41]. Burgess's late career conclusions contrast with the 1979 opinion that Auden wrote 'admirable opera libretti'[42]. Burgess eventually praises Auden's 'extended poetic arguments' (as opposed to the libretti) as 'profound, witty, linguistically surprising'[43]. Burgess, as I argue in Chapter Four, responded to Auden's longer poetry via parody; Auden also wrote his 'Letter to Lord Byron' in *ottava rima*, a form Burgess used in *Byrne.* Critical examination of Burgess's libretti, most especially a technical comparison with Auden, would be a suitable follow-on project, and a collected edition of the libretti would be useful for future scholars.

James Joyce's poetry[44] very rarely features in Burgess's critical or poetic texts,

---

36 Ibid.
37 Michael Tanner, 'Torment of languor.' Review of *The Rake's Progress. The Spectator,* 19 July 2008, p.42 .
38 Tanner, p.42 .
39 Burgess, 'Making them Sing', p. 18.
40 Ibid.
41 See Chapter Two.
42 Anthony Burgess, *They Wrote in English: A Survey of British and American Literature. Volume 1. La Storia* (Milan: Tramontana editore, 1979:1980), p. 81.
43 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 81.
44 See James Joyce, *Chamber Music.*(London : Elkin Mathews, 1907) and James Joyce. *Pomes Penyeach (*London : Faber & Faber, 1933). Burgess's copy of *Chamber Music* is inscribed 'JOHN BURGESS WILSON. Manchester, 1934', and also 'To Lynne from John 1939. xxxxx' This edition is: James Joyce. *Chamber Music (*London: Egoist Press, 1923).

and so is not considered in this thesis for sustained enquiry. Burgess's bawdy libretto

and radio play *Blooms of Dublin* (1982) adapts Joyce's Modernist novel, *Ulysses.*

Whilst Joyce is an important influence for Burgess's prose technique[45], I have found no

evidence to suggest any alignment with Joyce's poetry. Whereas Burgess is especially

clear and consistent about the influence of Modernist poets such as Eliot, Pound,

Empson, Hopkins, and Auden, he is dismissive of what he calls 'the slenderness of

[Joyce's] poetic talent'[46]. In the chapter about Joyce's poetry in *Here Comes Everybody*

(1965) Burgess finds Joyce's poetry 'had to be enclosed in the irony of the great prose

books for it to be effective'[47]. Burgess enclosed his own poetry in the *Enderby* novels,

and *One Hand Clapping*, also to ironic effect, as I demonstrate in Chapter Three.

Burgess labels Joyce's poem 'Goldenhair' 'one of the most atrocious lyrics ever penned

by a great writer'[48] and finds that Joyce's collection of poems '*Chamber Music* withers

under criticism'[49]. He detects a 'deliberate limitation'[50] in the quality of Joyce's poetry,

and signals brief interest in the prose's intertextual qualities, deciding Joyce's novel

Ulysses and Eliot's poem *The Waste Land* show 'how far the poetic and the non-poetic

can interpenetrate'[51]. He is also dismissive of Joyce as a playwright, finding that 'Joyce

the poet and Joyce the dramatist [are] at their most impressive and original in the two

great novels'[52].

The verse translation *Oedipus the King* (1972) is not included for study as I wish

to focus in detail on a selection of more representative texts. Burgess, in his

introduction to the play, decides he owes much to 'Lévi-Strauss, the high priest of

---

45 See Farkas and Aggeler.
46 Anthony Burgess. *Here Comes Everybody (*London: Hamlyn: 1965:1982), p. 70.
47 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 70.
48 Ibid., p. 71.
49 Ibid., p. 72.
50 Ibid., p. 72.
51 Ibid., p. 74.
52 Ibid., p. 80.

structuralism'[53]. The work, in its return to a classical literature and one which is written in 'no spirit of precise scholasticism'[54] and which commits 'at least one unforgivable sin'[55] with the narrative structure is certainly comparable with the points I raise in Chapter Four concerning the influence of Ezra Pound and W. H. Auden writing deliberately approximate translations. Studying this work separately could be another follow-on activity; arguably, combining my findings concerning verse translations with a *Collected Verse Drama* could be helpful for future scholars.

Range of Available Poetry

Having outlined my selection criteria, it is helpful to address the full scope of Burgess's prolific output as poet, librettist, translator, and verse dramatist. Biswell describes Burgess's first published poem (1935) – which appeared in a school magazine – as a 'competent parody of Gerard Manley Hopkins'[56]. Burgess also translated a French poem, showing the influence of W.H. Auden and Ezra Pound[57]. Between 1937-9[58], whilst studying at Manchester University, Burgess wrote critical reviews of Modernist poets for student magazine *The Serpent*, including Laura Riding and Robert Graves, whom he argued with. He used the student magazine to publish various Modernist poems influenced by Eliot, Auden[59], and Empson. His University thesis uses a critical approach derived from Modernist poet and formalist critic William Empson. During World War II[60], Burgess won the Gibraltar Governor's Prize for poetry, publishing

---

53 Anthony Burgess, 'To The Reader' in Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, trans. by Anthony Burgess (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), p. 5.
54 Burgess in Sophocles, p. 3.
55 Ibid.
56 Andrew Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess (*London: Picador, 2005), p. 28.
57 See Chapter Three for my detailed account of this.
58 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp.40-78.
59 See Chapter Two for more details.
60 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 79-116.

poetry in an army magazine. Between 1948 and 1949[61], Burgess directed works of Modernist verse drama for performance at Bamber Bridge emergency teaching centre, including *The Ascent of F6* by W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood and *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot. Living in Adderbury between 1950 and 1954[62], increasingly influenced by Eliot, Burgess wrote his only original verse drama, *The Eve of St. Venus*. During this period, Burgess also embedded poetry into his novel *The Worm and the Ring*, whilst also writing occasional poetry in his unpublished diary *The Journal of the Plague Year*. Between 1954 and 1959[63], Burgess wrote *The Malayan Trilogy* -- a fictional account of his colonial experience – which contains embedded verse, and allusions to Eliot and other Modernist poetry[64]. During colonial service in Malaya, Burgess also wrote an anthem for the new federation which was intended for public performance, following the example of the more famous poets of the 1930s. In the 1960s[65], Burgess published *Inside Mr Enderby*, then *Enderby Outside*, including a great deal of his own poetry which was reascribed to the character F. X. Enderby. Burgess befriended Group poet Martin Bell, and wrote a long hyperbolic poem which appeared in the novel *One Hand Clapping* (1961). He published his *Revolutionary Sonnets* in *Transatlantic Review* (1968) and entered into a public debate with his continuing critical influence William Empson.

In the 1970s[66] Burgess wrote the words for an off-Broadway musical called *Cyrano* (performed 1973), which was based on a play by the sixteenth-century French writer Edmond Rostand. *Cyrano de Bergerac,* his verse-drama in translation, adapted

---

61 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 117-22.
62 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 123-48.
63 Ibid., pp. 149-204.
64 William H. Pritchard, 'The Novels of Anthony Burgess' in Harold Bloom, ed., *Anthony Burgess.* Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 13-28, (p. 17).
65 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 205-341.
66 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 341-70.

from the same work, was published in 1971[67]. His structuralist novel *MF* (1971)

featured extended surreal verse and densely rhyming riddles. He wrote a long essay

concerning the intertextual style of *The Waste Land* (1971). Burgess's 1972 translation

of *Oedipus Rex* (partially in verse[68]) was produced for the stage. Starting around 1973,

Burgess began his experiments with long poetic forms. His third Enderby novel, *The*

Clockwork Testament (1974) was published, featuring consistently ironic allusion to

Hopkins and a long poem in blank verse about Augustine and Pelagius. The novel

Napoleon Symphony (1974), an attempt to match the life of Napoleon with the structure

of Beethoven's *Eroica* afforded Burgess the chance to write whole chapters in verse,

and to use verse to render the narrative more musical in nature. He also published a

parody of Auden's 'New Year Letter' in heroic couplets (1975). Burgess published

Moses (1976), an epic novel in blank verse, in which Burgess explored the Miltonic

style, as part of his work for a television series. He also translated and published a

number of sonnets by the obscene Roman poet, Belli. The Belli translations were put to

new purpose and published in *ABBA ABBA* (1977), a novel about the fictional meeting

of poets John Keats and Belli. In *They Wrote in English* (1979), Burgess mentions a

large number of Modernist poets (including his fictional creation, F. X. Enderby), and

assesses their influence on subsequent writers.

By the 1980s[69], Burgess was a writer of international repute, and published

poetry within his long novel, *Earthly Powers* (1981)*, including parodic poems. A

limited edition of his poetry was published in the Parisian academic journal, *TREMA*[70]

---

67 Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, trans. by Anthony Burgess (New York: Knopf, 1971:1978).
68   This adaptation and translation has not been selected for study in this thesis, simply to save space. It
     is representative, however, of the conclusions I draw concerning Burgess's revisionary translations
     elsewhere. He admits that he 'committed at least one unforgivable sin' of revising the original
     narrative structure by having Oedipus blind himself in full view of the audience, more in keeping
     with later dramatic tradition than the 'Attic aesthetic' which 'forbade the presentation of violent
     action'. See: Sophocles. *Oedipus the King,* trans. by Anthony Burgess (Minneapolis: University of
     Minnesota: 1972), p. 3.
69 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 370-88.
70 Anthony Burgess, 'Poèmes Inédits', ed. by Sylvère Monod, Appendix, *TREMA* 5 (1980), 5-17

(1980). He wrote at length about Eliot, Hopkins, and literary tradition in *This Man and Music* (1982)*.* He wrote and intended for performance a translation (mainly in heroic couplets) of Molière's *L'Avare* (written before June 1983), under the influence of contemporary formalist poet Richard Wilbur. Burgess wrote about the influence of Eliot in *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1985), and – in 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (1985) – he described his approach to literary tradition and influence, which owed much to Eliot. In response to the Salman Rushdie fatwa affair, Burgess penned *An Essay on Censorship* (1989)*,* an unpublished long poem in heroic couplets. Burgess's collaboration with Modernist poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, *St. Winefred's Well* (1989)*,* was broadcast on BBC radio, and afforded Burgess the opportunity to respond poetically to this strong influence.

The years 1990 to 1993[71] were extremely productive poetically despite his terminal cancer. He wrote an unpublished dialogue on meaning and art called *The End of Things* (1991), which features a parody of William Empson. A lecture given at the Tate gallery (1992) re-used parts of *An Essay on Censorship.* He wrote an article on translation, showing the influence of Auden. He proposed to write 'Modernism and Modern Man' (1992) a book about Modernism in poetry and other forms, which showed a cautious engagement with contemporary debates concerning Postmodernism. His translation of Griboyedov's *Woe from Wit*, *Chatsky* (performed 1993) presented as a verse drama in heroic couplets after Wilbur, was staged in London. Burgess's book-length poem, *Byrne* (started 1989, completed 1993, published 1995), written mainly in Byronic ottava rima, re-used verses he had written earlier in his career to self-reflexively explore the relationships between intertextuality, meaning, and poetic form itself.

My thesis title includes the word *poetics*, and the study in general attempts to

---

71 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 388-93.

arrive at a theory as to how Burgess creates poetic meaning through the combination of texts. *Poetics* is associated with the process of creating meaning (in this case, through intertextuality). I.A. Richards, having noted the specialist type of allusion associated with Modernist poetry, believes the process of 'recognizing recondite references [. . .] is a perversion to which scholarly persons are too much addicted.'[72] In keeping with this, the present study is not so much about *who* Burgess alludes to or cites in his poetry as understanding *what* poetic effects Burgess achieves through it. Both of these factors combine for me in the phrase *intertextual poetics*. I take *poetics* to mean the choices – or a history of the choices – Burgess makes in selecting linguistic forms for poetic effect, so as 'to *see* again, so as to *esteem* and *estimate* differently'[73] from other poets, including those whose texts he refers to intertextually.

Burgess owned a copy of Geoffrey Strickland's book *Structuralism or Criticism? Thoughts on how we read.* In formulating his theory of how people read, Strickland avoids the term *poetics*, noting simply that

> The writing of authentic poetry, it is now assumed, entails the discovery simultaneously of *what one has to say and the way in which one has to say it* and a poet is no longer praised for his accomplished conformity but for finding his own 'voice'.[74]

Strickland identifies the *what* as well as the *way* of writing; combining this with the *history* of these poetic choices, which is close to a definition of *poetics*. However, Strickland refers to 'the writer's skill in the finding a deployment of the word'[75] as part of his search for poetic voice. His concept recalls the history of linguistic decisions,

---

72 Richards, I.A., *Principles of Literary Criticism* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 1924:1926: 2001), p. 203.
73 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 4.
74 Geoffrey Strickland. *Structuralism or Criticism? Thoughts on how we read* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 47. My emphasis. Burgess's copy available at IABF, Manchester.
75 Strickland, p. 72.

specific to the poet, who – as Eliot points out – is self-consciously aware of literary tradition.

In his recent *History and Poetics of Intertextuality*, Marko Juvan – like Strickland – does not explain the meaning of *poetics,* but acknowledges that 'through the history of its writing, [his book] also changed its "poetics"'[76]. To Juvan, by inference, *poetics* fundamentally means tracing the process by which words are combined to assist the effect of comprehension, in keeping with Strickland's approach. Burgess himself believes '[p]oetry is literature in excelsis, the exploitation to the limit of the possibilities of language'[77]. By this token, poetry is language choice, and *poetics*, then, can be seen as the sum of the writer's linguistic choices over time and at the point of writing.

Martin Grey, in his useful *Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1991), defines *poetics* as a term for 'defining the chief features of the form, and elaborating the critical criteria and appropriate critical approaches by which that form might be understood and analysed.'[78] *Poetics* therefore means examining not only the poet's abilities to communicate creatively, but also the success of the reader's decoding of the text, and the assumptions s/he arrives with when reading the work. Burgess – in alignment with this – finds that 'Meaning may depend less on what the author intends than on the reader's own autobiography'[79]. Here, Burgess echoes Barthes, who argues that '[t]he text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture'[80], organised by the reader. Writing three years later, Umberto Eco makes the same point in his

---

76 Marko Juvan, *History and Poetics of Intertextuality*, trans. by Timothy Pogačar (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2008), p. vii.
77 Anthony Burgess, 'Afterword' in Elizabeth Bowen, Anthony Burgess, Lord David Cecil, Graham Greene, Kate O'Brien. *The Heritage of British Literature (*London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), pp. 219-36, (p. 231).
78 Martin Grey, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms (*Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, 1992), p. 225.
79 Anthony Burgess, 'Signals' in *Homage to QWERT YUIOP.* (London, Melbourne, Auckland, Johannesburg: Hutchinson, 1986), pp. 199-201, (p. 201).
80 Barthes, 'The Death of The Author', p. 146.

exploration of the intertextual structure of a text, *Opera Aperta*, when he states:

> *Every* work of art, even though it is produced by following an explicit or implicit poetics of
> necessity, is effectively open to a virtually unlimited range of possible readings, each of which
> causes the work to acquire new vitality in terms of one particular taste, or perspective, or
> personal *performance.*[81]

Eco's emphasis on personal perspective, and a poetics that is related to performance also echoes Julia Kristeva, who coined the term *intertextuality*, extending Barthes' model. To Kristeva, 'the text is therefore a *productivity*'[82], constantly in negotiation, with the reader interpreting the text with their *storehouse* of previous texts. Eco sees 'poetics as programmatic projects for creation', pointing out how 'contemporary poetics merely reflects our culture's attraction for the "indeterminate"'[83]. As I explain in Chapter Four, Eco's theories of intertextuality and poetics are alluded to in *Byrne,* which Burgess started around the time Eco published *Opera Aperta.*

In his complex analytical work *Introduction to Poetics* (1981), Tzvetan Todorov argues that *poetics* is about 'the general conditions of the genesis of meaning'[84]; like Barthes and Eco, he focuses on the role of the reader, in his exploration of the 'principal aspects of texts that any competent reader must, consciously or unconsciously, activate as templates of organization and meaning.'[85] Burgess, I contend in subsequent chapters, uses a combination of texts as an organizing template to create poetic meaning. (As I explain in Chapter Two, those templates, specifically, are the poetic forms used by precursors which Burgess re-uses in his later parodies and pastiches.) The word *poetics* has been used in Burgess studies before. Haffen describes Burgess's poetics of

---

81 Umberto Eco. *Opera Aperta (*Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 21.
82 Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text', p. 36
83 Eco, *Opera Aperta*, p. 15.
84 Tzvetan Todorov. *Introduction to Poetics.*(University of Minnesota Press, 1981), p. xiv.
85 Todorov, *Introduction to Poetics*, p. xiv.

'demythification'[86], where Farkas observes a 'Modernist poetics'[87]. There is, clearly, no single *poetics* associated with Burgess*, just as there is no one overriding general *poetics*. My thesis studies the *intertextual* poetics, specifically meaning the complex process by which disparate texts are combined for poetic effect.

---

86 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 136.
87 Farkas, p. 39.

CHAPTER ONE: *FROM STOREHOUSE TO MARKETPLACE*

In this chapter, I position Burgess as a formalist and transitional poet who understands literary tradition via an intertextual Modernist lens. I trace how, in later life, he becomes increasingly open to the idea of using Postmodern techniques to question the limitations of intertextual forms. Aiming to identify my critical space for the rest of the thesis, I demonstrate how other critics have not previously explored the Modernist techniques of Burgess's intertextual poetry. I provide in-depth commentaries on three short studies of Burgess's poetry, offering a descriptive assessment of absent or only partially-developed arguments that I critically engage with in other chapters. I argue that, concerning his prose works, certain critics detect an ambivalence regarding Burgess, Modernity and Postmodernity, whilst also showing how none of these critics provide a nuanced commentary on where the subtle evolution in style and technique develops from. To achieve this, I compare Burgess's opinions and tastes with those of his contemporary critics and poets to discover how this transition in intertextual technique arises. The chapter also investigates how Burgess's *poetics* is formed in relation to his literary precursors, and the conflicts arising from this, following Harold Bloom's model. The chapter accordingly provides the critical foundation for subsequent chapters by exploring how Burgess gathered his *storehouse* of reading primarily through formalist criticism, resulting in intertextual works that he writes for the *marketplace,* the reader. I argue that Burgess, as a late Modernist in transition, writes *after* Modernist precursors. I accordingly provide insights into Burgess's opinions of poetry as *serious* and respectful pastiche or imitation (another form of intertextuality), related to the mastery of strict (Modernist intertextual) forms. Burgess's ideas of parody and pastiche are discussed in relation to his essentially conservative poetry, which is

strongly influenced by the intertextualities of Eliot's Modernist poem, *The Waste Land*. Burgess's transitional qualities are ultimately located in his Modernist re-interpreting of literary tradition (seeing the past in the present) and his increasing but cautious interrogation of the limitations of those intertextual structures which is influenced by contemporary Postmodern theories.

Scope of Current Critical Oeuvre

Anthony Burgess died in 1993, leaving behind a substantial collection of journalism, music, literary criticism, linguistic studies, novels, scripts, translated plays, and – the focus of this thesis - large amounts of verse and poetry. The verses appeared within novels, plays, or TV/film scripts; a small number were published discretely in print. Others remained uncollected and unpublished in his lifetime. Burgess also left behind a reputation as an exceptionally well-read writer and critic. In his 1993 obituary for Burgess, Malcolm Bradbury concludes:

> Burgess is the great postmodern storehouse of British writing, maker not just of contemporary stories, but of innumerable new narrative codes. He is a popular writer, but also an important experimentalist; an encyclopedic amasser, but also a maker of form; a playful comic, with a dark gloom.[1]

I intend to take Bradbury's assessment seriously: Burgess, according to my interpretation, is a *storehouse*: a reader and amasser, whose poetry and opinions of poetry are in large part the result of the combination of this material. This complicated relationship between the encyclopaedic material and the writing of poetry is one half of

---

1 Malcolm Bradbury, 'Anthony Burgess: A Passion for Words', *Independent on Sunday*, 28 November, 1993, p. 3.

my investigation; the other half is exploring *why*, with reference to the poets and critics who influenced him, Burgess's poetic technique is consistently intertextual, and something he prefers to describe with reference to Modernism. Since for Burgess, 'words can never be freed of their marketplace denotations (the marketplace being also the brothel and the political forum)'[2], the 'subject matter'[3] of poetry, prose, and literary tradition itself, 'is the marketplace.'[4] That is to say, poetry is, for Burgess, about itself, and the conditions in which it is read, usually meaning in comparison with other poetic texts. Burgess constantly shifts perspective between his s*torehouse* of reading and the *marketplace* of writing. These are not poles of his poetic imagination, but variables which are mutually dependent.

There has been a growing number of critical studies of Burgess since the 1970s, but no detailed engagements with the poetry. Critical discussion of Burgess started with small works which aim to introduce Burgess to wider readerships, sometimes deploying an overriding unified theory to organise the work (Dix (1971), Morris (1971), Mathews (1975), DeVitis (1972)). This then leads to more ambitious survey works that rely heavily on plot summaries to explain basic themes (Aggeler (1979), Coale (1981)), but written still as summary introductions more than extended inquiries. Supplementing these are bibliographical guides that attempt to chart the prodigious output of a then mid-career writer (Boytinck (1974), Brewer (1980)). Later, more structured theoretical frameworks (Ghosh-Schellhorn (1986), Stinson (1991)) and volumes of critical essays (Aggeler (1986), Bloom (1987)) provide groundwork for the publications in the twenty-first century which have tended to present dedicated theories with sustained close readings of key texts (Shockley (2009), Philips (2010), Farkas (2002)) rather than

---

2   Anthony Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs' in *This Man and Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982:1983:2001), pp. 150-161 (p. 159).
3   Anthony Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 159.
4   Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 159.

feeling the urge to tackle all at once. I refer to these later, more sustained studies more regularly than the earlier introductory works. Other editions of essays or conference proceedings on Burgess are geared towards dedicated aspects of the work, including autobiography (Woodroffe (2003)), Burgess and Shakespeare (Woodroffe (2006)), Modernism (Roughley (2008)), and music and literature (Jeanin (2009)). Again, these works are used with some regularity in subsequent chapters. They deal mainly with Burgess's novels, but their arguments provide me with more occasion to intervene and extend more contemporaneous debates than the "introductory" overview works of the 1970s and 1980s. Recent biographical work (Biswell (2005), Phillips (2010)) has provided critics with useful directions for new research, enabling a more organised approach to the texts and their contexts. Biswell's autobiography provides convenient underpinnings for my chronological account of Burgess as a poet.

Burgess's poetry has not hitherto benefited from extended critical study. Jackson's edition, *Revolutionary Sonnets* (2002)[5], seeks to introduce Burgess as poet to the general public by presenting less than 20% of the available material and nothing unpublished in Burgess's lifetime, following an essay. He includes poems and poem-fragments by Burgess as well as extracts from *Moses* (1976), alongside translated verse and libretti, including *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1971 and 1985), *Oberon* (1985), *Carmen* (1986), and *Oedipus the King* (1972). However, Burgess wrote much more poetry than this. Jackson overlooks many poems embedded within novels, whilst at the same time deciding 'a man who set scant if any store by verses he had composed more than thirty years earlier would hardly have troubled to embed them so prominently'[6]. Jackson does not pass comment as to why Burgess himself did not collect the works during his lifetime, which might suggest the contrary. Additionally, Jackson does not include a

---

5   Anthony Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, ed., Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002).
6   Kevin Jackson 'Introduction' in Burgess. *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. xv.

number of unpublished works which were available in the archives then, including *The End of Things* or *An Essay on Censorship*; nor does he make reference to *St. Winefred's Well*. There is no obvious editorial logic to Jackson's edition, except to 'hand the daunting task of editing The Complete Poems of Anthony Burgess on, with all good wishes to someone who finally has the nerve to tackle it'[7]. My thesis can be regarded as a general response to this. Jackson names some poets who he believes are influential to Burgess, but does not provide any insight as to why. He finds that T. S. Eliot[8], William Empson[9] and Ezra Pound[10] are likely influences, along with 'perhaps a jigger or two of Robert Graves'[11]. Burgess's intertextual relations with Modernists Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender, W. H. Auden, as well as Ariosto, Edmund Spenser, George Gordon Lord Byron, Alexander Pope, and Richard Wilbur are not considered in Jackson's introduction. In subsequent chapters, I explore these affinities at greater length.

Sylvère Monod responded to Jackson's work in his 2003 article[12] concerning Burgess's Enderby poems for the Anthony Burgess Newsletter[13]. The article – like the work of Dix or Mathews – relies more on plot summary than any particular engagement with the style, tone, and technique of the poetry itself; Monod aims to position the poems within the context of the novels. However, Monod signals both the limitation of Jackson's 2002 edition and Burgess's prolific output, reminding readers that he edited a small number of Burgess's poems in the 1980 French journal, *TREMA* 5. He finds

---

7   Ibid., p. ix.
8   Ibid., p. xi.
9   Ibid., p. xii.
10 Ibid., p. x.
11 Ibid., p. xii.
12 Sylvère Monod. 'Poets and Poetry in the Enderby Cycle'. *Anthony Burgess Newsletter* 6 (December 2003). <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:w9yRFOoNtNwJ:www.masterbibangers.net/ABC/index.php%3Foption%3Dcom_content%26view%3Darticle%26id%3D90%26Itemid%3D105&hl=en&gl=uk&strip=1> [Accessed 4 May 2013]
13 The Anthony Burgess Newsletter was published intermittently by the Anthony Burgess Center, Université d'Angers between c.1999 – 2004.

Jackson's

> ignorance of the so-called "unpublished poems" [*TREMA 5*] contained makes him miss one link
>
> in what becomes a longish chain: poems which had seen the light of print as the work of
>
> Burgess, then been ascribed to Enderby, were in 1980, for their third appearance, recovering
>
> their virginity as "poèmes inédits" before coming to their final niche in Jackson's edition of
>
> the *Revolutionary Sonnets*.[14]

Although Monod's article is given over to the poetry of Enderby, he usefully points out that Burgess was a poet in his own right, and one with an already long poetic career by 1980. Moreover, he notes how the journal edition also features an appendix of thirteen poems by Burgess, listed as 'Poèmes inédits' ['unpublished poems'], which – writing in retrospect - Monod says he 'failed to recognize' as poems which, by then, had already been published in the Enderby novels[15]. However, he does not discuss the full range of Burgess's poetry, and nor does he explain the Enderby poems beyond their roles as plot devices in the novel. Nor does he address any potential critical influences.

 TREMA 5 (1980), which Monod refers to, features two articles concerning Burgess's poetry: by Monod, and by Laurette Véza. Monod's article introduces the poems which appear in the *Enderby* novels, explaining how they contribute to the stories concerning Enderby, a character who writes poetry on the toilet. As such, he doesn't provide a thorough theoretical perspective of the poetry itself, more of an overview of its contribution to the novels. He does, though, praise Burgess's 'virtuosité dans la manipulation des signs du langage'[16] ['Virtuosity in the manipulation of language's signs'] which he associates with the 'divers infralangages'[17] ['diversity of non-verbal language'] of the Enderby poems, briefly arguing that because of the

---

14 Monod, 'Poets and Poetry in the Enderby Cycle', p. 2.
15 Monod, 'Poets and Poetry in the Enderby Cycle', p. 2.
16 Monod, Sylvere, 'Enderby le minable magnifique' in *TREMA* 5 (1980)*,* 19-29, (p. 21).
17 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 21.

'technique, d'invention, de pouvoir sur les mots, les rythmes et les sonoritiés'[18] ['technique, invention, the power of words, rhythms and sounds'] there is the 'vibration malaisément définissable que diffusent'[19] ['hard-to-define but definite echo'] of Shakespeare, 'Hopkins souvent et au plus haut degré'[20] ['Hopkins especially to a high degree'] as well as Dylan Thomas. Of these, the present study extends these brief comments concerning Shakespeare (below), Hopkins (all chapters), and Thomas (Chapter Four). Monod also describes a proto-intertextuality (without naming it as such) through 'l'association entre création poétique et excrétion'[21] ['the association between poetic creation and going to the toilet'] which the texts combine, in this case to comic effect. To prove his point, Monod cites lines from a long blank verse poem about Augustine and Pelagius which combines scatological sounds with poetically-charged language:

> [. . .] while brown feet
> Danced in the grapepress and the
> Baark ballifoil gorstafick
> [. . .]
> Monstrous aphrodisiac danced in the heavens
> Prrrrrrp faaaatk
> Wheep[22]

Monod is keen to separate Burgess from Enderby, finding the 'poétique d'Enderby, qu'il faut sans doute se garder de considérer comme identique à la poétique de Burgess, est

---

18 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 26.
19 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 26.
20 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 26.
21 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 21.
22 Anthony Burgess, *Enderby Outside* in *The Complete Enderby* (London: Vintage,
    1963:1968:1974:1984:2002), p. 396. Quoted in Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 21.

exprimée de diverses manières.'[23] ['it is without doubt in many ways best to refrain from considering the poetics of Enderby the same as Burgess's']. Considering a scene in which Enderby ponders the meaning of a poem, Monod emphasises the Modernist techniques used in the Enderby poems, finding this is one of 'des questions les plus brûlantes'[24] ['the most burning questions'] which are associated with 'la poésie modern'[25] ['modern poetry']. Whilst he is clear that he separates his opinions of Enderby's poetry and Burgess's, Monod doesn't take into account the history of the texts that he himself later points out was – by 1980 – already well established. Nor does he explain why he is cautious in this regard. In Chapters Two and Three I also differentiate between Enderby as a fictional poet, and Burgess as the original poet, and account for some of the differences. Moreover, in Chapter Four, I show how Burgess edited his earlier poems to create variants that make hermeneutic sense in the context of the long poem, *Byrne* (1995).

If Monod finds the Enderby poems raise questions associated with Modernism, Laurette Véza takes this further, by presenting Burgess as a formalist poet who has 'L'amour du mot, non pas l'émotion'[26] ['a love of words, but not of emotion']. Véza wishes to explore what she calls Burgess's 'jeu verbal concis de allusif, discours articulé, lucide'[27] ['playful concise and allusive wording, articulate and lucid speech']. In exploring the relationship between allusion and lucid articulation, she describes intertextuality, but calls it parody. Véza usefully connects parody to tradition, finding 'La parodie est cette parole qui se dit dans le sillage de l'héritage culturel'[28] ['Parody is the word that is used in relation to cultural heritage']. However, aside from fleeting references to Shakespeare, Véza doesn't explain exactly which poets Burgess parodies

---

23 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 23.
24 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 25.
25 Monod, 'Enderby le minable magnifique', p. 21.
26 Laurette Véza, 'Anthony Burgess: de la poésie à la parodie' in *TREMA* 5 (1980), 31-8, (p. 31).
27 Véza, p. 31.
28 Véza, p. 31.

in the Enderby novels. In Chapters Two, Three, and Four, I address this directly by showing how Burgess parodies and pastiches his key influences Auden, Hopkins and Eliot and Empson. Véza writes just a few years after Barthes had established parody as one of the 'multiple writings'[29] that constitute an intertext in the models I address at length below. Véza doesn't explore this debate, although her comments seem to point towards it. For example, she finds, for Burgess 'Les mots le fascinent par leur plasticité, leur capacité songieuse d'absorption par le biais de réminiscences.'[30] ['Words are fascinating for their plasticity, their capacity to be absorbed by memory'.] Here Véza comes close to what – according to Juvan – '[Umberto] Eco calls *intentio intertextualitatis*', meaning 'a text's affinity [sic] to absorb, interpret, and reshape such memorized systems of representation.'[31] Parody, for Véza, is the site of this absorption, but she doesn't specifically relate it to the poststructuralist debates that were ongoing at the time (see below). Despite this, she both anticipates conclusions Burgess draws regarding texts in *This Man and Music* (1982), and comes close to Barthes's concept of a stereophonic[32] text when she finds 'Burgess pratique l'art due contrepoints'[33] ['Burgess practises the art of counterpoint'] in his poetry. In Chapter Four especially, I extend this in detail, when I examine how Burgess structures *Byrne* to exploit the layering of meaning that arises from disparate texts.

To be clear, my comments on parody so far, and subsequent arguments, depend on a definition of parody used by other critics that goes beyond the idea of a satirical or comical rendering of familiar language or themes, and where the term *pastiche* would generally be more applicable. The word *parody* relates to a non-respectful imitation,

---

29 Roland Barthes, 'The Death of The Author' in Roland Barthes. *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath. (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 142-8, (p. 148).
30 Véza, p. 33.
31 Juvan, p. 61.
32 Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text' in *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 155–64, (p. 160).
33 Véza, p. 34.

whereas *pastiche* is related to the mastery of literary forms. Juvan provides a brief history of the word finding that, in the nineteenth century, it was established as a 'substitution of words or phrases, turning a serious model into a comic one; as preservation of words, forms, or style of an elevated text while profanizing its plot or theme'[34]. In this form, parody is related to 'a caricature of the expressive qualities ("manners") of a particular writer.'[35] This kind of parody is still dominant in popular culture, from the satirical parodies in the columns of *Private Eye*, to websites mimicking celebrities. Extending this still valid definition, Juvan also positions parody as a sub-category of the general term *citationality*, but connects it to a definition first given by Gérard Genette, who – he says – explored parody as a means by which 'transformative or imitative'[36] effects can be achieved. Juvan connects this definition of parody to 'travesty, satiric pastiche or caricature (*charge*), common or playful pastiche, serious transposition and forgery'[37]. Juvan finds parody and pastiche are related, then. In Chapter Three, I show how Bloom – just like Burgess in the example above – argues pastiche is an emulative strategy for mastering the forms of the strong precursors. Hence, among Juvan's various keywords above, *serious transposition* and *transformative* have particular resonance for both parody and pastiche; they are related to using older forms in a process of extension and revision, as I point out in Chapter Two especially. Burgess's use of parody and pastiche transforms over time from emulation to more ambivalent forms. Burgess's parody of Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Censorship* (1989), as I point out in Chapter Four, at once highlights its own literary heritage whilst also pushing its form to the limit, thereby using parody to pass ironic comment on its own failures. Writing just a year before this, Linda Hutcheon finds this

---

34 Juvan, p.40.
35 Juvan, p.40.
36 Juvan, p. 128.
37 Juvan, p. 128.

kind of meta-poetic parody is associated with Postmodernist parody, and argues that 'a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance allows ironic signalling of difference at the very heart of similarity'[38]. She defines this as 'the intertextual mode that is paradoxically an authorized transgression'[39]. Again, the word *transgression* signals the form's consistent relationship with development and revision. In its Postmodern setting, though, the poetry becomes self-reflexive. As Hutcheon also puts it, 'metafiction's parody and self-reflexivity function both as markers of the literary and as challenges to its limitation.'[40] Parody is both a Modern and Postmodern phenomenon, and debates from each side show the two are linked. In a Modernist context, parody suggests the formalist idea 'that literature is an autopoetic system'[41], wherein poetic forms from the past are reinterpreted in the present. Postmodernist debate highlights how parody demonstrates that one text can only be interpreted with another, leading only to the deferral of meaning, as I explore in Chapter Four regarding Burgess's parody of Byron, *Byrne.* In Chapters Two and Three, Burgess is contrastingly shown as imitating Hopkins, Eliot, Empson and Auden, and showing Modernist faith in these precursors' innovative forms as he emulates them with the intention of developing as a poet.

The recent essay collection *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (2008) is of use to this thesis. Two particular essays, by Aude Haffen and by Nuria Belastegui, are used often, most especially in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, as they address Modernity, intertextuality, and Postmodernity to varying degrees. Carson Bergstrom[42], in his introduction to the book, summarises how Belastegui argues that 'Burgess as modernist [. . .] sees the need for "meaningful structure", but as a postmodernist he embarks on

---

38 Hutcheon, p. 26.
39 Hutcheon, p. 66.
40 Hutcheon, p. 224.
41 Juvan, p. 128.
42 Summarising Belastegui's argument.

the "interrogation of those very same structures"[43] In Chapter Four especially, I respond to this by showing how, in his later poetry, Burgess's interrogation of intertextual poetic form through the use of metapoetic commentary is, by his own judgement, increasingly Postmodernist in technique; Belastegui does not comment on Burgess's later judgement, which shows cautious openness towards Postmodern technique. Although Belastegui's focus is on the prose fiction, she clearly covers similar critical ground to that I have encountered in this thesis.

Bergstrom also decides 'Burgess was opposed to critical formalities such as the New Criticism, structuralism and Russian Formalism'[44]. Whilst there is very little evidence for the direct critical influence of Russian Formalists, I demonstrate at length in Chapter Two especially how many of Burgess's critical opinions of poetry echo F. R. Leavis[45] and I.A. Richards, who are associated with New Criticism. William Empson, another critic associated with New Criticism[46], is demonstrated as a consistent *presence* in both Burgess's poetry *and* writing about poetry, most especially – as I point out in Chapter Three – when responding to the poetry of Hopkins.

In their recent introductory essay to their reader on Modernism, Mia Carter and Alan Warren Friedman argue that the New Criticism of Empson, Leavis and Richards is related to Modernism. In their logic, this mode of critical thinking came from 'the self-conscious Poundian behest to "Make it new"', so that eventually 'the term morphed into, among others, the New Architecture, the New Dwelling, the New Photography, the New Typography, and soon the New Criticism.'[47] Burgess reads poetry through a critical

---

43 Carson Bergstrom, 'Introduction' in Alan Roughley, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2008), pp. 1-19.

44 Bergstrom, p. 7.

45 Mark Jancovich, *The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press:1993), p. ix. Jancovich finds F. R. Leavis's critical approach is equivalent to those of the American New Critics, who include John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren.

46 Garrick Davis, *Praising it New: The Best of the New Criticism* (Ohio University Press, 2008),   p. xxiii. Davis associates Empson, Leavis, and Richards with New Criticism.

47 Mia Carter and Alan Warren Friedman, 'Introduction: Literary Modernisms' in Mia Carter and Alan Warren Friedman, eds., *Modernism and Literature: An Introduction and Reader (*London and New

lens that is related to Modernism. This, as I argue in Chapter Two, is in itself a form of intertextuality. As I then demonstrate in Chapter Four, this form of critical intertextuality can be still be identified in later texts such as *The End of Things* (1991), his dramatic dialogue which features debates and a poem influenced by Empson.

In his foreword to *Anthony Burgess and Modernity*, David Lodge finds that Burgess 'did not cultivate the impersonality and almost religious sense of artistic vocation characteristic of high modernism'[48]. Similarly, Haffen finds Burgess's prose work offers 'a rejection of the high modernist belief in the necessary self-sacrifice of the artist's personality for the sake of pure, self-contained art'[49]. In Chapter Four, I argue that, in *Byrne* (1995), Burgess uses conventions associated with a traditional poetic form to remove his own personality from the poem. Moreover, I also discuss how his treatment of the theme of artistic self-sacrifice is linked to the Modernist texts he alludes to, even if the de-centring techniques employed are associated with Postmodernism.

For Lodge, Burgess's poet-character 'Enderby could be described as a late or belated modernist'[50]. He argues Enderby's 'verse occasionally reminds one of William Empson or Dylan Thomas'[51]; like Jackson, he doesn't qualify this with examples. There is a challenge for other scholars, since Lodge provides no statement concerning whether Empson or Thomas are to be regarded as late or belated Modernists. Equally, the term *belated Modernism* is unexplained. In Chapter Three especially, I use the word *belatedness* in keeping with Bloom's notion of a literary son writing against his literary father, a point I develop. I also use *late Modernism* in the specific sense given by

York: Routledge, 2013).pp. 1 – 14, (p. 3).

48 David Lodge, 'Foreword' in Alan Roughley, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity (*University of Manchester Press, 2008), pp. i-xix, p. xviii.

49 Aude Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies: romantic sympathy, tradition-oriented modernism, postmodern vampirism?' in Alan Roughley, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2008), pp. 131-46, (p. 139).

50 Lodge in Roughley, p. xviii.

51 Lodge in Roughley, p. xviii.

Mellors[52], and suggested by Stevenson[53], by observing a continuation of Modernist technique into postwar years, and exploring the inter-relatedness of Modernism and Postmodernism. The *Enderby* poems make up a relatively small amount of Burgess's total poetic output, and – like Monod – Lodge does not consider the many other poems by Burgess. His conclusions concerning Enderby, if unexplained, come close to my own concerning Burgess. Lodge also finds that Burgess

> shared the modernist commitment to artistic innovation and experiment, to self-conscious intertextuality, and to exploring the materiality and polysemy of language as an artistic medium[54].

This is a useful summary of the debates the present study explores, a point which I extrapolate to cover *poetry*. Moreover, my study finds Burgess's intertextuality becomes more distinctly self-conscious in the last decade of his career.

Another work I engage with at length is A. Í. Farkas's *Will's Son and Jake's Peer* (2002). Farkas explores the literary influence of Joyce and Shakespeare upon Burgess, using an 'omnivorous'[55] critical approach, which covers Burgess's assessment of Joyce's Modernist prose output so as to 'see the interrelationship of texts and their authors in a broader context of challenging socio-cultural assumptions and practises'[56]. In accordance with Haffen and Belastegui, he claims 'Anthony Burgess was as much a pre- and a postmodernist as he was a Modernist writer'[57]. In the present study, I consistently address this by finding that in his poetry, Burgess's approach to literary history (and influence) is through Modernism, whereas self-reflexive and ironic

---

52 Mellors, p. 19.
53 Stevenson, p. 208.
54 Lodge in Roughley, p. xviii.
55 A. Í. Farkas, *Will's Son and Jake's Peer* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2002), p. 13.
56 Farkas, p. 13.
57 Farkas, p. 12.

techniques which develop later are equatable with Postmodernism.

Farkas, contrary to Bergstrom, and expanding his otherwise Joyce-oriented discussion, finds 'Burgess's [. . .] formalist poetics [. . .] is very likely to have more to do with the New Criticism than anything he could have culled from Joyce.'[58] Farkas goes on to argue that 'Burgess deferred to such British exponents of formalist criticism as I.A. Richards and William Empson'[59]. He also points out Burgess studied 'the technique of exploiting polysemy [. . .] for which he gives credit to William Empson'[60], as well as finding that Burgess 'frequently expressed admiration for William Empson'[61].

Burgess, Modernism, and Postmodernism

Having introduced my critical landscape for Burgess and Modernism, it is a natural development to explore Burgess's own thoughts on these debates, and to show how these opinions evolved; it is also useful to address his understanding of (Post)Modernity *per se*, in comparison with other critics. In Burgess's late-career book proposal, 'Modernism and Modern Man' (1992)*,* he suggests a 'book that enquires rather than dogmatises'[62] as he 'seeks to answer the question "What is modernism?"'[63] The present study echoes this by highlighting literary techniques used by Burgess, which other critics associate with Modernism. Whereas in Chapters Two and Three I demonstrate Burgess positions himself as a (belated) Modernist, in Chapter Four, I explore how he continues to be cautious concerning debates about Postmodernism, despite increasingly using techniques associated with that cultural phenomenon. A

---

58 Farkas, p. 21
59 Farkas, p. 16, fn.
60 Farkas, p.44.
61 Farkas, p. 113.
62 Anthony Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man'. Book proposal (Anthony Burgess Papers, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, box 50, fol. 4, 1992), p. 1. Subsequent references to this archive collection are marked as 'HRC'.
63 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 1

contemporary of Burgess, Linda Hutcheon, in *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), finds

'Postmodernism has a direct link with what most people call modernism'[64], but

acknowledges it as a problematic term, since both 'the enemies of the postmodern [. . .]

and its supporters [. . .] have refused to define precisely what they mean by their usage

of the term.'[65] Raymond Williams, in an essay published around the same time, points

out that the term *Modernism* can be problematised, too, since its

> actual positions and practices are very much more diverse than their subsequent ideological
>
> presentations [. . .] and [we] betray a century of remarkable experiments if we go on trying to
>
> flatten them to contemporary and quasi-theoretical positions.[66]

This is a point that has also been debated recently. Mia Carter and A.W. Friedman

begin the introduction to their Modernist reader*, Modernism and Literature* (2013) by

pointing out how '"modernism" is a controversial term and concept, richly ambiguous

and reductive, and highly contested. At issue are its practitioners, techniques, locations,

politics, intentions, and consequences.'[67] Michael H. Whitworth, introducing another

critical reader, *Modernism* (2007), pragmatically attaches the word to the process of

literary production, which is helpful for the present study's exploration of how poetic

meaning is created in Burgess's poetry by exploration of the drafting process itself

(most especially in Chapter Four). Whitworth notes how a 'theory of modernism that

could not make reference to the formal features of the work would be an impoverished

one.'[68] However Whitworth also stresses that this needs to be related to the sense of 'the

---

64 Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 37.
65 Hutcheon, p. 37.
66 Raymond Williams, *Politics of Modernism.*(London: Verso, 1989: 2007), p. 66.
67 Carter, Mia, and Friedman, A.W., eds., *Modernism and Literature: An Introduction and Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), , pp.1 – 14, (p. 1).
68 Michael H. Whitworth, 'Introduction' in Michael H. Whitworth, *Modernism.* Blackwell Guides to Criticism (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 3-60, p. 6.

deeper cultural upheaval'[69] associated with Modernist techniques, which mirrors the approach I take especially in Chapters Two and Three, when I explore the rapid transitions in literary fashion between the 1930s and 1970s, and compare Burgess's poetic techniques to these upheavals.

Following Whitworth especially, but taking heed of Carter and Friedmann, in this thesis, Modernism – like Postmodernism – is therefore regarded as a label attached by other critics (including Burgess), which refers to a series of literary techniques. It remains contested as to when Modernism starts and ends as a cultural movement. Raymond Williams, in his Marxist account of Modernism, finds it convenient to accept 'the conventional delineation of the avant-garde as a complex of movements from around 1910 to the late 1930s'[70]. Valentine Cunningham[71] and Samuel Hynes[72], in their respective studies of 1930s writers, also associate literary Modernism with this period. Burgess himself believes 1912[73] – 1939[74] were the main years. Contrastingly, Carter and Friedman explore the dates 1870 – 1941, admittedly 'somewhat arbitrarily'[75]. Whitworth presents 1910 to 1939 as his focus[76]. Writing from a more international perspective, Astradur Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska, in the introduction to their edition of essays, argue that critics who are 'primarily speaking from within a British horizon'[77] tend to find Modernism ends 'around 1930'[78], implying it is later in other traditions. Carter and Friedman, in accordance with this, also suggest that in non-Western cultures, varieties

---

69 Whitworth, p. 6.
70 Williams, p. 67.
71 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*.
72 Hynes, *The Auden Generation*.
73 Burgess in Coale, 'Interview with Samuel Coale', p.445. Quoted in Belastegui, p. 22.
74 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.
75 Carter and Friedman, p. 1.
76 Whitworth, p.4.
77 Astradur Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska, 'Introduction: Approaching Modernism' in Astradur Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska, eds., *Modernism: Volume 1*, A Comparative History of Literature in European Languages, Vol. XXI (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007), pp. 1-7, (p. 1).
78 Eysteinsson and Liska, p. 1.

of Modernism began after this[79]. In Chapter Two I present Burgess's range of poetic reading as a result of his exposure to 1930s literary fashion, which coincides with most of these date ranges. Haffen finds Burgess's prose work 'defies attempts to fit him into any clockwork literary label'[80]. Taking a similarly pragmatic approach and following Farkas's caution against reductive readings[81], this thesis explores how Burgess positions *himself* within the (intertextual) Modernist poetic tradition, rather than "forcing" a set of Modernist theoretical criteria *upon him*. My approach provides much-needed detail to the assertions of Farkas, Belastegui and Haffen, by examining representative texts chronologically, and accounting for Burgess as a transitional writer, by checking his poetic technique against the cultural contexts at the time of production, and passing comment on the poetic effects of any lingering Modernist techniques.

Burgess refers to a relatively narrow conception of Modernism; my thesis, bound up in Burgess's positioning of himself within a Modernist literary tradition he defines, necessarily follows this, whilst acknowledging what Eysteinsson and Liska call the 'broadening of modernism as concept, canon and characterization and the recent recontextualizations in its philosophical, historical and cultural environments'[82]. That is to say, the Modernism that Burgess associates himself with is to be recognised as just one part of 'the plural'[83] *Modernisms* that has 'become a popular practice'[84] in recent discussions. For example, Carter and Friedman express this plurality of Modernisms when they observe how Modernism's 'restless experimentation spawned an age of proliferating "isms" that were often proclaimed in manifestos [sic]'[85]. They list eighteen in total, which encompass architecture, the visual arts, music and literature. Burgess,

---

79 Carter and Friedmann, p. 2.
80 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139.
81 Farkas, p. 12.
82 Eysteinsson and Liska, p. 1.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Carter and Friedman, p. 3.

much more narrowly, follows what Blake Morrison in his study *The Movement* (1980)

describes as a brand of European Modernism associated with the poetry of Eliot and

Pound, which focuses on literary allusion, and so is deeply intertextual[86]. Juvan's recent

study describes this type of Modernism as 'the idea that all of tradition is present in each

new creative act synchronically'[87]; so that the Modernist poet 'consciously compares

himself with previous poetry'[88] but modifies tradition by 'reshaping and rethinking the

inherited poetic subject-matter and patterns'[89].

Burgess's 1992 book proposal remains narrow and consistent with his

descriptions of Modernism in *They Wrote in English* (1979). Like Cary Di Pietro's more

recent study, *Shakespeare and Modernism* (2006)[90], Burgess in his 1992 proposal

recognises a pragmatic plasticity in relation to the 'problem of definition'[91] of

Modernism, which 'remains'[92] a problematic factor 'to the end'[93] of the planned book. In

1979, Burgess argues that Modernism is related to artistic technique rather than

historical circumstance, since a writer 'born thirty years ago is undoubtedly

contemporary, but that does not necessarily make him modern'[94]. Continuing this line in

1992 he proposes to begin his book with 'Clough, Browning, nineteenth-century poets

who seem to have a foot in our own age.'[95] Auden is not mentioned in the 1992

proposal, but Burgess suggests there is '[p]robably a theology in modernism – an

acceptance of good and evil as basic data'[96], a point close to Auden's idea that poetry

---

86   Blake Morrison, *The Movement* (Oxford University Press: 1980), p. 236.
87   Juvan, p. 59.
88   Ibid.
89   Ibid.
90   Cary Di Pietro, *Shakespeare and Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 5.
91   Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 3.
92   Ibid.
93   Ibid.
94   Burgess, *They Wrote in English*, Vol 1, p. 62
95   Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 1. Burgess, prior to this, had not provided any detailed
       account of the Modernist techniques of Clough and Browning. See Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the
       Modern Writer', pp. 6-7.
96   Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 3.

extends knowledge of good and evil.[97] Notably absent in the 1992 proposal are Hopkins and Shakespeare; writers who – as I point out below – Burgess had previously situated in the Modernist literary tradition. Intertextual poets such as Eliot and Pound are identified out as possessing a 'genuine modernism'[98] which 'is based on an embrace of the past – the Jacobeans in Eliot and the troubadours in Pound'[99]. Whilst Burgess previously explored Eliot's Jacobean intertextualities, this investigation into Pound would have been a useful addendum to his 1979 critical opinion that Pound's poetry 'exploits a large range of literatures and languages to make its (often confused) point.'[100] Writing in 1979, Burgess regarded Pound's 'long unfinished *Cantos* [. . .] as a noble failure'[101]; no indication is provided in 1992 as to whether this opinion still stands.

Whereas Burgess's definition of Modernism remained relatively consistent, his literary criticism shows that his opinions concerning Postmodernism evolved, but this can only be glimpsed through fragments of passing opinion. He never wrote an essay specifically tackling Postmodernism. Belastegui, quoting a 1981 interview between Burgess and Samuel Coale, finds he trusts the word *Modernism* more than *Postmodernism*: 'I think postmodernism, as it's called,which is a ridiculous phrase, is contained in modernism. I think that the process that began, say, take 1912-13 as the key years [. . .] I think this process is still going on.'[102] Burgess's conception of Postmodernism, then, is related to Modernism. Here, Burgess anticipates Mellors, who – eleven years later – questions the 'distinction between "modernism" and "postmodernism"', and whose concept of 'late modernism helps to identify a poetics

---

97 W. H. Auden and John Garrett. *The Poet's Tongue* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1935) p. ix. Burgess published a newspaper article on Auden in 1993 (see below)
98 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 1.
99 Ibid.
100 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 67.
101 Ibid.
102 Anthony Burgess in Samual Coale, 'Interview with Samuel Coale', *Modern Fiction Studies,* 27:3 (1981), 2# 429-52, p.445. Quoted in Nuria Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in *Nothing Like the Sun*' in Alan Roughly, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (Manchester University Press, 2008), pp. 21-37, (p. 22).

which is neither a simple continuation of modernist practice nor a decisive break with modernism's various idealisations of the aesthetic'.[103]

In *They Wrote in English* (1979), Burgess also separates the concepts of contemporary and Modern, finding the critical term Modernism is not necessarily a temporal one[104]. Postmodernism for Burgess is a term to be applied when 'doubt is cast on the viability of form and form becomes self-conscious'[105], but 'in its modernist guise, may indicate a loss of faith in art'[106]; his reading of Postmodernism is approached through Modernism, and he only dedicates a few sentences in his entire oeuvre to the debate. The unpublished and undated fragment 'English in the World of Literature'[107] is a useful if brief complement to the 1992 proposal. Indicating that this two-paragraph fragment with notes was written in or after 1988, Burgess notes how Hugh Kenner 'recently in his book *A Sinking Island*'[108], finds 'Britain rejects modernism'[109]. That Burgess used increasingly Postmodern techniques, and that his opinion shifts subtly from dismissal to a cautious engagement is notable: 'Modernism and Modern Man' (1992) does not give equal weight to these two descriptive terms, intending to dwell more upon *Modernism*. Moreover, Burgess infers doubt surrounding '*what is termed post-modernism*'[110]; he entertains the possibility that 'modernism comes to an end'[111] with Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* (1939). Burgess's brief definitions become especially important in Chapter Four, when I assess Burgess's increasingly self-reflexive intertextual techniques in the later works *An Essay on Censorship* (1989)*, St. Winefred's Well* (1989)*, The End of Things* (1991) and *Byrne* (1995).

---

103 Mellors, p. 3.
104 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 62.
105 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.
106 Ibid.
107 Anthony Burgess, 'English in the World of Literature' (Texas: HRC, box 121, fol. 2., n.d.) Computer-printed fragment.
108 Hugh Kenner, *A Sinking Island* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988:1989).
109 Burgess, 'English in the World of Literature', p. 1.
110 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2. My emphasis.
111 Ibid.

Burgess and Modernist Literary Tradition

The word "Modernism", with its connotations of innovation and immanency, has a complex relationship with tradition, extending beyond notions of rupture with the past. In 'Modernism and Tradition' (2007)[112], Anne E. Fernald explores how the Modernists, rather than shunning tradition, embraced it in the innovative re-imagining of discourse with history. She finds:

> The first modernists asked us to believe in a break with the past, to believe that they were writing in a way that was wholly new. Yet early admirers of modernism celebrated these writers for their engagement with literary precursors.[113]

Fernald doesn't mention who these early admirers were. However, she recognises a link between intertextual relationships and Modernism. Her phrase 'first Modernists' contrasts with 'early admirers', and suggests – like Mellors and Stevenson – that Modernism progresses in a series of waves rather than a single, unified cultural phenomena. She emphasises this later in the essay, explaining how 'in *later modernism*, writers [. . .] began to develop a politics of citation that was about canonizing modernism and its antecedents.'[114] The result of this process, says Fernald, is that '[e]ach of the modernists labored to make tradition their own.'[115] She describes 'the problem of tradition' as 'central' to Modernists, but asserts: 'responses to the tension between tradition and innovation were diverse. Among the strategies adopted, the best known are

---

112 Fernald, Anne E., 'Modernism and Tradition' in Eysteinsson, Astradur, and Liska, V., eds., *Modernism: Volume 1*. A Comparative History of Literature in European Languages, Vol. XXI (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007), pp. 157-71.
113 Fernald, p. 157.
114 Fernald, p. 160. My emphasis.
115 Ibid.

the twin projects of erasure and recovery'[116]. Fernald cites the poets Charles Baudelaire and Gertrude Stein as examples of the erasers, who wished to 'conceal their debt to precursors'[117] By contrast, Eliot and Joyce are seen by Fernald as poets who 'presented themselves as cultural heroes, saving bits of the past from destruction.'[118] Eliot is seen as a particularly strong influence on the Modernist debates about tradition, since 'the terms used to discuss the role of tradition in modernism have often assumed an almost exclusively Eliotic cast'[119]. Fernald notes how the relation of modernist writers to their past is 'far richer, more complex, and more contentious'[120] than later commentaries may make it seem, most especially those relating to Eliot. That said, Eliot is a particularly strong influence on Burgess's own approach to tradition.

Burgess approaches literary tradition on assuredly Modernist lines, and derives this largely from Eliot. His understanding of the relationship between Modernism and tradition is accordingly narrow. Samuel Hynes finds Eliot's *The Waste Land* - 'that powerfully influential poem'[121] - was popularly seen by 'the 'thirties generation'[122] including Burgess, as a model for the poetic combination of intertextual material, and so has a large part to play in influencing how subsequent poets approached literary tradition. Haffen – in considering Burgess's novel *Nothing Like the Sun* – finds there is a distinctly Modernist approach to relationships between one text and another, finding Burgess follows the 'high modernist theory of the ineluctably intertextual dimension of literature'[123]. Burgess, states Haffen, 'asserts the immortality of the dead poets, his ancestors, most vigorously; that he perceives not only the pastness, but also the

---

116 Fernald, p. 160.
117 Ibid., p. 160.
118 Ibid.
119 Ibid., p. 157.
120 Ibid.
121 Hynes, p. 25
122 Ibid.. See Chapter Two for more detail.
123 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139.

presence of the past.'[124] Here, Haffen alludes to Eliot's essay about literary tradition, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. Eliot believes any poet must write with a historical sense, with the perception

> not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.[125]

Elsewhere, Burgess likewise praises Eliot's ability 'to conjoin mock-pomposity with deliberate vulgarity, to throw in recondite literary allusions for ironic effects'[126] in his Modernist intertextual poem, *The Waste Land.* Raymond Williams accordingly claims Eliot is generally regarded 'as the exemplary Modernist poet'[127] who 'can be more precisely defined, in an idealist as well as a historical sense, as quintessentially Ancient and Modern'[128]. Hynes concludes this is consistent with Modernist poets of the 1930s, such as Auden, who 'is concerned to assert the continuity of literature and the links between the modern writer and his past'[129], whereas Stephen Spender defended 'the artist's right to use tradition for his own artistic and moral ends'[130]. Jackson similarly acknowledges that 'Burgess the arch-modernist was also a traditionalist'[131]. Eliot's Modernist regard for tradition is, for Juvan, an 'elitist kind of citationality'[132] which 'takes aim at refined, world-wise and sophisticated addressees, such as academics.'[133] He

---

124 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139.
125 T. S. Eliot. 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot,* ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 38.
126 Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 6.
127 Williams, p. 71.
128 Williams, p. 71.
129 Hynes, p. 167.
130 Hynes, p. 167.
131 Jackson, p. xviii.
132 Juvan, p. 146.
133 Juvan, p. 146.

finds that Eliot (as well as other Modernists Ezra Pound and James Joyce) is associated

with this technique, where

> the intertextual references are normally veiled, signalled through unconventional indicators,
>
> and pre-texts accessible only to the initiated or artistic allies are engaged; therefore, dialogue
>
> that includes speech of the other is ambivalent and difficult to pin down semantically.[134]

I. A. Richards came to the same conclusion in 1924, deciding that allusion 'is the most

striking of the ways in which poetry takes into its service elements and forms of

experience which are not inevitable to life but need to be specially acquired.'[135] In

'Tradition and the Individual Talent', Eliot accordingly states that tradition 'cannot be

inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour.'[136] This is comparable

with Burgess's recommendation that '[i]f you want to be considered a poet, you will

have to show mastery of the Petrarchan sonnet form or the sestina. [. . .] There is no

substitute for craft.'[137] These arguments are closely related to the definition of parody I

gave earlier, and which I expand through case studies in Chapter Two. In keeping with

this, Juvan also uses Petrarch as an example of this kind of learning-via-parody, when

he decides 'parody in a culture preserves its genre identity and stability, though it

incorporates texts that in parodying take on the various genre profiles of their pre-texts

– be it epic, historical tale, Petrarchan sonnet, or ode'[138]. Burgess, in short, suggests that

imitation (of, for example, Petrarch) is a means by which the later poet can master, and

then extend, the forms used by precursor poets. One such craftsman, said Burgess much

---

134 Juvan, p. 146.
135 I.A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 1924:1926: 2001), p. 204.
136 Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', p. 38.
137 Anthony Burgess. 'Deadly Sin – Creativity for All' in *Homage to QWERT YUIOP* (London, Melbourne, Auckland, Johannesburg: Hutchinson, 1986), pp. 100-1, p. 101.
138 Juvan, p. 168.

later, was Modernist poet Auden[139], who likewise 'concentrated on the perfection of his

craft, seeing a poet's task not dissimilar to that of a master carpenter.'[140] I argue in

Chapter Two that Auden – like Burgess – imitated Hopkins in order to master the forms

this important shared influence used.

Whereas Burgess does not treat Joyce's poetry seriously, his commentaries on

Joyce's novel *Ulysses* in *Here Comes Everybody* (1965) reveal much about his critical

approach to Modernist intertextuality. Recalling Bradbury's description of himself,

Burgess describes *Ulysses* as 'an encyclopaedic guide to real history'[141], finding it has

'submerged mountains of references'[142]. Tellingly, Burgess describes how a *Ulysses*

chapter comprised of a 'series of literary pastiches'[143] as 'the one I should most like to

have written'[144]. He describes this chapter as 'a fulfilment of every author's egotistical

desire not merely to add to English literature, but to *enclose* what is already there.'[145]

Here, Burgess's logic anticipates Bloom, whose *Map of Misreading* (1975), makes the

same case ten years later. Burgess found both *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* are 'intensely

conservative works'[146], whose intertextual Modernist style is a means 'of conserving the

past'[147] whilst being 'presented in a totally revolutionary technique, which, on closer

examination, seems to have its roots in conservatism.'[148] Haffen conversely equates this

with Postmodernism:

the comparison of Burgess's relation to the literary past [. . .] allows us to further qualify

---

139 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 21.
140 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 81.
141 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 103.
142 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 103.
143 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 153. He refers to the chapter known as 'Oxen of the Sun'.
144 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 156.
145 Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 156. Farkas uses Burgess's statement concerning the egotism of
    writing to demonstrate the use of Harold Bloom's work in his own biographical study of Burgess and
    literary influence. See Farkas, p. 21.
146 Jacques Cabau, 'Anthony Burgess par lui-même, un entretien inédit avec l'auteur' (pp. 93-110)
    Interview with Anthony Burgess. in *TREMA 5 (*Université de Paris III, 1980), pp. 93-110, (p. 103).
147 Cabau, 'Anthony Burgess par lui-même, un entretien inédit avec l'auteur', p. 103.
148 Cabau, 'Anthony Burgess par lui-même, un entretien inédit avec l'auteur', p. 103.

Burgess's association with some skeptical, a-historical kind of postmodernism, which

considers the past as some sort of unknowable fiction[. . .]'[149]

And, yet, Burgess operates a *knowable* relationship with the past, based on Modernist

poetry and criticism: Burgess praises Joyce and Eliot for emphasising this in their

intertextual patchworks of literary and general history, and especially praises Eliot for

introducing him to other texts through his intertextual poem, *The Waste Land*.

Burgess's book *This Man and Music* (1982) is ostensibly about music, but

features long formalist discussions of the polyphonic structures of intertextual works,

focusing on Modernist techniques that combine the present with the past. For example,

Burgess explains how – like Eliot – he combined texts from the past and present into

scenes of his novel *Napoleon Symphony* (1974): 'Tennyson, in In Memoriam style and

stanza with INRI acrostics, records N's death and mourns it [. . .] The manner is that of

Henry James, counterpointed with tropes of Gerard Manley Hopkins.'[150] In his study of

the relationship between music and the novel, Alan Shockley's very brief assessment of

Burgess's poetic pastiches in *Napoleon Symphony* does not identify these intertexts[151],

although he does acknowledge what Burgess himself describes as the '*presence*'[152] (a

vague term associated with allusion) of 'William Wordsworth, in blank verse out of *The*

Prelude'[153] in *Napoleon Symphony*; no commentary is made on the literary effects of the

intertextual technique. Andrew Biswell, writing about Stanley Kubrick's abortive film

version of the book, also emphasises how Burgess's intertextualities in *Napoleon*

---

149 Aude Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess, Shakespeare and Cultural Materialism: Contextualizing,
    Politicizing, Sexualizing the Bard.' in Graham Woodroffe, ed., *Marlowe, Shakespeare, Burgess:*
    Anthony Burgess and His Elizabethan Affiliations (Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2012), pp. 27-39,
    (p. 36).
150 Anthony Burgess, 'Bonaparte in E Flat' in *This Man and Music* (New York: McGraw-hill,
    1982:1983:2001), pp. 180-92, (p. 190).
151 Alan Shockley, *Music in the Words: Musical Form and Counterpoint in the Twentieth-Century Novel*
    (Farnham UK and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2009), p. 97.
152 Burgess, 'Bonaparte in E Flat', p. 189. My emphasis.
153 Burgess, 'Bonaparte in E Flat', p. 189.

Symphony are overtly Modernist devices, since he 'develop[s] his plot in a highly

modernist way, making extensive use of literary parodies in the concluding chapters'[154] .

Here, Biswell's conclusion is in keeping with Haffen, who observes Burgess's 'professed

endorsement of the modernist aesthetics'[155] in the 'revival of tradition'[156]. This, however,

is contrasted with Haffen's opinion that 'there is something definitely anti-modern about

resurrecting a cultural canon'[157].

Burgess's Eliot-influenced intertextual reading of tradition continues at length in

'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (1985), where he explores Eliot's intertextual

relation to Shakespeare, as well as Shakespeare's influence on Modernists. Burgess

writes about Joyce's prose, and discusses Eliot and Pound's poetry, placing substantial

emphasis on Eliot. He concludes that Shakespeare's relevance to these Modernists rests

in the complicated vitality of language. The 'modernity of Shakespeare'[158] is found

largely in the adaptation of the iambic pentameter for dramatic effect. Burgess sees

Shakespeare's poetry and drama as 'a standard for judgement of morality as well as of

art'[159], echoing Auden's rationale that, through the 'parabolic approach'[160] of poetry, 'it is

possible for us to make a rational and moral choice'[161], with the best poems avoiding a

directly pedagogical approach. As I argue in Chapter Four, Burgess fails in this regard

in *An Essay on Censorship* (1989).

Investigating how poetic meaning is created through intertextual technique,

Burgess observes how in *Murder in the Cathedral* Eliot 'refused to be influenced

---

154 Andrew Biswell, 'Anthony Burgess and Stanley Kubrick's film of Napoleon', *The Telegraph* (19
    November 2012) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/9680168/Anthony-
    Burgess-and-Stanley-Kubricks-film-of-Napoleon.html> [accessed 20 January 2013] (para. 12 of 16)
155 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 132.
156 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 132.
157 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 132.
158 Anthony Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', (Texas: HRC, box 45, fol. 2, 1985), p. 17.
    This short work was drafted by Burgess in 1984 or 1985, long after the appearance of his other books
    on Shakespeare, *Shakespeare* (1970), and *Nothing Like the Sun* (1964: 1975).
159 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 29.
160 Hynes, p. 14.
161 Hynes, p. 14.

directly by Shakespeare but accepted his influence at a remove'[162], finding his 'most sustained effort in free verse is of a highly intelligent playwright who, having learned from Shakespeare in the year 1615 or thereabouts, has gone to sleep and awakened in the twentieth century'.[163] Burgess thus finds that Eliot acts directly upon Shakespeare's poetic language, rather than intervening with the distortions and assumptions of Shakespeare's later cult-creators: it is a critical framework that recognises how 'poetry speaks of origins, of the archaic, of the primal, and above all of self-preservation'[164]. Eliot's poetic response to Shakespeare, according to Burgess, ignores seemingly untrustworthy traditions surrounding Shakespeare's *influence* (in its wider sense) and focuses on linguistic tropes only; he emphasises Shakespeare as a poet, and not an icon. Writing twenty years after Burgess, Di Pietro makes the same point: 'Incising and extracting the better part of three centuries of literary history, Eliot rewrites literary tradition to connect the poetry of the early twentieth century directly to that of the early seventeenth century.'[165]

Di Pietro likewise observes how Harold Bloom 'places Shakespeare firmly at the centre of [. . .] modernity'[166]; she notes how in the critical approaches of Bloom, Nietzsche or Freud, Shakespeare becomes 'the archetypal representative of a modern English canon'[167]. Burgess stays close to Bloom's logic, and his assertion '[t]o submit to Shakespeare directly, as to Joyce, is to risk becoming an imitator of what cannot easily be imitated'[168] echoes Eliot's *own* observation that '[a]nyone who tries to write poetic drama [. . .] should know that half his energy must be exhausted in the effort to escape

---

162 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 16.
163 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 16.
164 Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1975:2003), p. 67.
165 Cary Di Pietro, *Shakespeare and Modernism* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 31
166 Di Pietro, p. 19
167 Di Pietro, p. 19
168 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 16.

from the constricting toils of Shakespeare.'[169] Burgess recommends what Bloom calls 'a

process of malformation and misinterpretation'[170] to 'produce deviations in style'[171]; a

poetic response to Shakespeare which avoids imitation and permits revision. Di Pietro

calls this malformation of Shakespearean literary tradition 'a kind of presentist

historicism, a readjustment of the past through the lens of contemporary literary

sensibility'[172].

Burgess continues a line of enquiry from at least 1964; in a Book Society

recording from that year, he finds '[f]our hundred years have served to turn Shakespeare

into a monster, an icon, a monument.'[173] Shakespeare thus has an aura, which Walter

Benjamin describes as an 'essence'[174], assumptions attached to cultural constructs such

as the Bard, which is 'transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive

duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced'[175]. The aura itself is a

cultural text, a *marketplace* meaning by which Shakespeare is read. According to Di

Pietro, this aura is 'what Shaw disparagingly labelled bardolatry'[176]. Similarly, Burgess

finds 'each age gets the Shakespeare it requires, whether personality or art, but a comic

or even farcical Shakespeare is safer than a romantic one,'[177] recalling Walter Raleigh's

assertion that '[e]very age has its own difficulties in the appreciation of Shakespeare.'[178]

Burgess's reading identifies how Eliot's intertextual Modernist techniques – in Bloom's

terms – 'assert for literary tradition its currently pragmatic as opposed to idealized

---

169 T.S. Eliot, 'Milton II', < http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~rlstrick/401/elio.html> [accessed 26 September
    2010] (para. 6 of 40). The paragraph quoted here was cut from the Kermode edition.
170 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 20.
171 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 20.
172 Di Pietro, p. 29.
173 Anthony Burgess, Untitled recorded speech for the Book Society, (April 1964)
    <http://www.anthonyburgess.org/mediablog/anthony-burgess-on-shakespeare> [accessed 26 January
    2013]
174 Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' in *Illuminations*, ed. by
    Hannah Arendt) (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 217-252, (p. 220).
175 Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', p. 220.
176 Di Pietro, p. 24.
177 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 6.
178 Walter Raleigh. *Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 1. Quoted in Di Pietro, p. 24

function'[179]. 'Burgess's poetics of demythification'[180], concurs Haffen, is a 'shedding [of]

the Victorian remains of hero-worship'[181] in order to 'defamiliarise readers from the aura

of legends'[182]. Burgess accordingly concludes that 'the continuity of literature in

English, which must always mean learning something from Shakespeare'[183] is what

Modernist poets struggle with. In deciding this, Burgess ironically submits to the

critical influence of Eliot. Central to Burgess's literary relation to Shakespeare, writes

Farkas, is the notion that 'poems should be seen as artifacts divorced from the

personality of the creator'[184]. As Farkas admits, Burgess's 'Modernist poetics'[185] is 'less

Joycean perhaps than it is Eliotian or pre-Eliotian'[186]. Farkas therefore overlooks an

important critical connection by overlooking Burgess's 1985 study of Shakespeare and

Eliot.

Burgess finds Eliot 'accepted [Shakespeare's] influence at a remove'[187] as a tactic

for establishing one's own poetic voice relative to Shakespeare's strong presence in

literary tradition. In *Nothing Like the Sun* (1964), Burgess's novel about Shakespeare's

personal life, he applies this technique not 'merely to *add* to [. . .] but to *enclose* what is

already there'[188] by bringing lines from Shakespeare's poem *Venus and Adonis* into

'contestation'[189]. This is achieved in a comically sexual scene, where Shakespeare's wife

accuses him of 'effeminate unmanliness'[190], a symptom of his life as a poet. Under

---

179 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 29
180 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 136.
181 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 136.
182 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 136.
183 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 3.Cunningham similarly points out that literary
    Modernists Eliot, Woolf and Lawrence were also 'non-combatants' (Cunningham, p. 44).
184 Farkas, p. 16.
185 Farkas, p. 39.
186 Farkas, p. 39.
187 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 6.
188 Farkas, p. 21. Here, Farkas quotes Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody*, p. 156.
189 Julia Kristeva, 'How does one speak to literature?' in Julia Kristeva. *Desire in Language: A Semiotic
    Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine
    (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 93 – 123, p. 107.
190 Anthony Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun* (New York: Norton, 1964: 1975: 1996), p. 41.

attack, Shakespeare finds these lines coming to him 'unbidden'[191]:

> Backwards she push'd him, as she would be thrust,
>
> And govern'd him in strength, though not in lust.[192]

Shakespeare's poetic language is misappropriated and effectively brought into disrepute. Burgess creates *fictional* circumstances to take creative control of another poet's text to add his own meanings into it. Like Eliot, he responds directly to the original text; Bloom calls this '*a willing error,* a turn from literal meaning in which a word or phrase is used in an improper sense, wandering from its rightful place'[193]. Burgess's farce tames the otherwise stultifying influence of Shakespeare's poetic language.

Burgess also counters Shakespeare's *myths* by anachronistically alluding to Modernist poetry in the Shakespearean narrative. For example, in a bedroom scene, Shakespeare responds violently after being attacked by his wife. 'In her surprise'[194] writes Burgess, 'she staggered, hobbled by her down-drawn gown.'[195]. Burgess uses a Hopkinsian compact adjective ("down-drawn") in his prose, which alludes to the phrase 'daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon'[196] from Hopkins's poem 'The Windhover'. Countering Shakespeare's' *aura* with other poetic tropes is part of Burgess's overtly Eliot-styled strategy; what Bloom describes 'as the subsuming of tradition by belatedness.'[197]

Burgess also alludes to his own poetry as part of the same technique for countering tradition. For example, via a recurring motif about the name Anne:

---

191 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 41.
192 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 41.
193 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 93.
194 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 42.
195 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 42.
196 G. M Hopkins. 'The Windhover' in *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by W. H. Gardner (London, New York: Penguin, 1953:1963:1985), p. 30.
197 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 36.

'Anne Anne Anne Anne,' the starlings scolded. He shivered on that summer's day [. . .] and then

he found that the bird-cry of 'Anne' followed him to Temple Grafton [. . .][198]

In a Burgess poem Jackson believes to have been written in the 'early 1950s'[199], birds

are described in the same onomatopoeic way in phrases such as '"Prudence prudence,"

the pigeons call' or, '"Caution caution," the rooks proclaim', and '"Act! Act!" the ducks

give voice"'[200]. The repetition of the word *patience* is, in turn, a notable feature in

Hopkins's poem 'Carrion Comfort':

PATIENCE, hard thing! The hard thing but to pray,

But bid for, Patience is! Patience who asks

Wants war, wants wounds; wary his times, his tasks;[201]

Burgess takes his allusions to Hopkins (or his own poem's allusions to Hopkins) further

when, later on in the book, players in a tavern production act out 'some morality [. . .]

of Prudence and Patience'[202], thereby reinforcing the strength of this reference, which is

further adhered to through the repetition thereafter of the phrase 'Anne Anne Anne

Anne'[203] by a raven. For further emphasis, Burgess adds, later on: '"Anne Anne Anne,"

the rooks scrawked.'[204]

As Haffen puts it – paraphrasing Eliot's 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' – in

intertextual techniques such as these, Burgess 'perceives not only the pastness, but also

the presence of the past.'[205] That is to say, Burgess combines texts from across literary

---

198 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 32.
199 Jackson, p. 7.
200 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 7.
201 Hopkins, p. 62. Burgess also refers to this in *Dialogues for Old Men*, as I point out in Chapter Four.
202 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 66.
203 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 67.
204 Burgess, *Nothing Like the Sun*, p. 34.
205 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139.

tradition in order to explore his own "voice" in relation to them, just as Eliot does with Shakespeare. Burgess, according to Haffen, imagines a Shakespeare at 'the crossroads of several external, public discourses or social "texts" - a dialogical space'[206] not just in relation to Shakespeare, but in relation to other poets engaging in the act of self-definition through the combination of past and present after Eliot.

Burgess's novel, *Enderby's Dark Lady* (1984) is partially based on his own experiences of producing a 1968 film script about the life of Shakespeare[207]. Enderby is commissioned to write a libretto for a musical about Shakespeare, and enters into conflict with the production's rich backers when he contributes to the overt commercialisation of Shakespeare's life story and works. The novel dramatises the Eliot-inspired critical position Burgess makes in 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer'*,* concerning the 'corruption'[208] that creeps in when you 'cease to celebrate the greatest poet in the world's history and ennoble nothing but lust of one kind or another'[209], rather than focusing on the poetry itself. For Haffen, this 'farcical travesty can be read as a defence of tradition corrupted by the entertainment industry'[210]. Its fictionalised argument relates to a text which does not respond to Shakespeare in a purely literary-linguistic fashion. The resulting 'shameless bias towards nonsensical anachronism and mock-Tudor camp'[211] which misappropriates Shakespearean subjects using deliberate anachronisms ('I'll screw some sex into Essex|I'll scour Walter Raleigh's raw hide'[212]) is viewed by the fictional commentator as a poetic disaster. Burgess's presentation of the tortuous "dangers" of ignoring Eliot's critical advice is provided via unsubtle phrases such as 'Shakespeare looks down from the heavens in disgust.'[213] Regardless of the

---

206 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 31.
207 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 293.
208 Burgess, *Enderby's Dark Lady*, p. 557.
209 Burgess, *Enderby's Dark Lady*, p. 557.
210 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139.
211 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 139
212 Burgess, *Enderby's Dark Lady*, p. 557.
213 Burgess, *Enderby's Dark Lady*, p. 611.

57

success or otherwise of the novel-as-parable, Burgess's intentions are clear: it is a

travesty. For Juvan, such travesty of literary tradition is associated with Modernists,

since

> Modernists prefer to cite – paraphrase, travesty, parody – key texts of culture, [. . .]
>
> postmodernists, on the other hand, were inclined to make more opaque and ambiguous
>
> references and tended to pseudocitations and mystifications [. . .][214]

Burgess's *unambiguous* parable of the compromising of Shakespearean poetic tropes is

compatible with Juvan's conception of Modernist travesty.

In 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', Burgess is especially clear on the ways

in which Eliot's imagery was informed by Shakespeare in *The Waste Land*. Eliot, he

says 'drew on Shakespeare to create a kind of synthetic mythology'[215]. Burgess finds that

- especially in *The Waste Land* - through images such as 'death by water'[216],

'Shakespeare has become a great giver of symbols, and it is the culture that is done

through an ironic reminiscence of Cleopatra [. . .]'.[217] Di Pietri, writing after Burgess,

finds Shakespearean allusion in *The Waste Land* is one of the 'numerous particles of

literary texts [. . .] scattered through'[218] the poem. Burgess's Shakespeare, an intertextual

Shakespeare-via-Eliot, is not discussed in DiPietri's book.

In Chapter Three, I note how, in *The Eve of St. Venus*, Eliot's influence can also

be shown in the regulation of dramatic speech rhythm, which Burgess used to counter

the influential anti-natural language of nineteenth-century dramatists. In 'Shakespeare

and the Modern Writer', Burgess finds that:

---

214 Juvan, p. 85
215 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 6.
216 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 14.
217 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 14.
218 Di Pietro, p. 28.

> [m]ore cunning than Yeats, Eliot saw that the modernity of Shakespeare lay in a desire to
>
> obscure the five regular beats of the blank verse line and even, in the interests of
>
> approximating to speech, to truncate it on occasion.[219]

Eliot makes a similar observation in 'Poetry and Drama', when he decides Shakespeare and the Elizabethans wanted 'to find a rhythm close to contemporary speech, in which the stresses could be made to come wherever we should naturally put them, in [. . .] a line of varying length and varying number of syllables.'[220] Burgess sees Eliot's 'liberation'[221] and naturalisation of speech in blank verse for dramatic purposes a technique associated with Modernity. It is this radical approach which, for Burgess, is Shakespeare's biggest gift to the Moderns 'first as last'[222], and to which Eliot responds.

Burgess found this elsewhere with Hopkins, who – like Shakespeare – upset 'ordinary experience'[223]. Just as Shakespeare adapts language to make the form more modern, Hopkins's language 'had the capacity to startle, in sudden unsought explosions, with a vision of the truth. The expression of truth couldn't be entrusted to the weary clichés of conventional verse of prose: language itself had to startle'[224]. Shakespeare – like Hopkins and Eliot – is seen as a Modernist, albeit anachronistically. Like Eliot, the past and the present become meaningfully interwoven in the act of reading Shakespeare and understanding his anachronistic Modernism. 'What Shakespeare can give to the modern writer,'[225] finds Burgess

---

219 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 17.
220 T. S. Eliot, 'Poetry and Drama' in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 132-148, p. 141.
221 Burgess,'Under the Bam', p. 114.
222 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 27.
223 Anthony Burgess. 'Gerard Manley Hopkins' in *One Man's Chorus*, ed by Ben Forkner, (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), pp. 333-36, (p334).
224 Burgess, 'Gerard Manley Hopkins', p334.
225 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 27.

is a sense of the importance of his craft and of the resources of the English language. Add to

this an endless pragmatic wisdom and a humanistic tolerance and we have what British citizens

like to think is their main contribution to civilisation.[226]

Burgess, like Eliot, detects a *pragmatism* in Shakespeare. Moreover, Eliot's pragmatic

intertextual response to Shakespeare also becomes a model for Burgess's own pragmatic

response to Eliot, and – through Eliot – to Shakespeare himself. As Juvan puts it, the

later text (e.g., *The Waste Land*), thus is the 'derivative consequence of preceding

texts'[227], which 'by dint of logical and literary-pragmatic presuppositions [. . .] elicits

and creates its own pretexts'[228]. That is to say, literary tradition for Burgess, because of

Eliot's Modernist model, is demonstrated as pragmatic and negotiable rather than

chronological. Eliot and Burgess, though, recommend the use of strict poetic forms,

which act as containment and control mechanisms for structuring intertexts.

Semiotics, Poststructuralism, and Intertextuality

Burgess, then, approaches literary tradition through an intertextual Modernism.

However, my discussions of intertextuality also rely on a different critical base, related

to semiology. Specifically, I explore how poetic meaning is generated by the

combination or conflict of texts, be they literary or non-literary texts. Accordingly, I

consistently refer to the Marko Juvan's *History and Poetics of Intertextuality* (2008)

which traces the development of this complex and well-populated area of study. Juvan's

detailed work separates intertextuality (a linguistic process) from influence (a

cultural/ideological process); my thesis does likewise. Juvan begins his study of

---

226 Burgess, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', p. 27.
227 Juvan, p. 117.
228 Juvan, p. 117.

intertextuality by referring to Ferdinand de Saussure's influential structuralist theory: namely, that the word (or "sign") is effectively divorced from its meaning (its *signified*), and that only quirks of history have resulted in the word "cat" indicating a small four-legged creature, which could just as easily have been called a "dog". Juvan records that, in 1960s France especially, theorists from a collective known as *Tel Quel* began to rethink this *structuralist* linguistic model, and forge new approaches to reading a poem, novel, or any other written artefact (a *text*), in a movement that came to be known as *poststructuralism*, with the intention of demonstrating how even the most rudimentary linguistic act consists of multiple layers of possible meaning into a single utterance (they called this *dialogic*). Juvan records how, for the poststructuralists, a definition of a text can include bus tickets as much as the sonnets of Shakespeare. More importantly, Juvan traces how poststructuralist theorists came to position a text's complicated relation to other texts as a critical focus. Texts therefore are seen as patchworks viewed only in relation to other texts. These radical propositions focused on the reader, and so resulted in what Roland Barthes called the 'Death of the Author'[229]. Burgess, as I will soon show, read Barthes and, in the 1980s, cautiously and briefly engaged with Barthes's theories. There is a logical link, then, between the intertextual techniques of Burgess and the intertextual theories of Barthes (and, by extension, Kristeva). The interconnectivity of texts in this specific context was first described as *intertextuality* by Kristeva, who 'between 1966 and 1974, invented, defined, and launched the notion of *intertextualité* in semiotic theory and literary studies'[230]. Juvan cautions against any reductive definition of the term since, 'such terms depend on their theoretical outline'[231]. *Intertextuality*, then, is used in my thesis as a word that is a convenient gloss for a complex set of theories by multiple writers, which aim to investigate how one text

---

229 Barthes, 'The Death of The Author'.
230 Juvan, p. 11.
231 Juvan, p. 11.

reacts to another on a linguistic basis, or – as Kristeva puts it – how a 'text is

constructed as a mozaic of quotations; [how] any text is the absorption and

transformation of another'[232].

Burgess's awareness of poststructuralist and Postmodernist debates is signalled

very briefly in his critical works. The unpublished manuscript fragment 'English in the

World of Literature' (c.1988) provides very brief insights into how Burgess was keeping

up with the debates of the poststucturalists, finding '[i]t is only by general consensus

that dog and cat mean what they do. Resemblance between words and things is an

illusion. Poetry helps to fortify that illusion.'[233]. On the second page of the fragment,

brief notes suggest Burgess was considering signification and Postmodernism, possibly

as part of the planned work:

Postmodernism -

Lacan, Althusser, Barthes -

semiology

semioclasm

[. . .][234]

The keyword here (alongside semiology, which he addresses in *The End of*

Things) is 'semioclasm'[235], a word coined by Roland Barthes, who recognises language's

capacity 'to fissure the very representation of meaning [. . .] to challenge the symbolic

itself'[236]. I argue below that, in *Byrne* (started 1989), Burgess uses the semioclasm as a

literary device; the text self-consciously defers meaning by referring to other texts.

---

232 Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Ed. by Leon S.
    Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p.
    66. Quoted in Juvan, p. 12.
233 Anthony Burgess, 'English in the World of Literature', p. 1.
234 Burgess, 'English in the World of Literature', p. 2.
235 Roland Barthes, 'Change the Object Itself' in *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London:
    Fontana, 1977), pp. 165-69, p. 167.
236 Barthes, 'Change the Object Itself', p. 167.

'Semioclasm'[237], then, refers to how 'the world is written through and through'[238] with 'signs, endlessly deferring their foundations'[239]. Burgess's logic essentially continues the Empsonian/formalist line: the exploitation of the fissure in representation (Empson's *ambiguity*) for poetic effect, but shows familiarity with more contemporaneous debates that relate this to Barthes and Kristeva's definitions of *intertextuality*, which foreground the indeterminacy of meaning. In Chapter Four, I argue Burgess tackles this phenomenon in a self-conscious manner in the drama about form and meaning, *The End of Things* (1991), and in the intertextual long poem *Byrne* (1995). A single sign – in Barthes and Kristeva's logic – is interpreted severally by other texts, via 'several utterances, taken from other texts, [which] intersect and neutralize each other.'[240] Linda Hutcheon, writing around the same time as Burgess, explores Barthes's notion of semiology and argues 'that this formalism is the defining expression of *modernism*, not postmodernism'[241]. Burgess, in further notes underneath his short section on Postmodernism, concurs strongly with Hutcheon in relating this back to 'Russian formalists 1920s Prague School'[242], noting that the 'aim of art is defamiliarisation'[243], a phrase which recalls his previous assertion in *An Essay On Censorship* that, in poetry, the 'familiar [can] be rendered strange'[244], but which also hints at the idea of how unexpected meaning can be produced *between texts*.

Eliot's *The Waste Land* is, for Burgess, the model for intertextual Modernist poetry. Burgess addresses how meaning is created between texts when he finds the

---

237 Barthes, 'Change the Object Itself', p. 167.
238 Barthes, 'Change the Object Itself', p. 167.
239 Barthes, 'Change the Object Itself', pp. 167-8.
240 Julia Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text' in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 36-63, (p. 36).
241 Hutcheon, p. 144.
242 Burgess, 'Modernism and the Modern Man', p. 1.
243 Burgess, 'Modernism and the Modern Man', p. 1.
244 Anthony Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship* (Texas: HRC, box 20, fol. 7, 1989), p. 2.

'mass of quotations'[245] in Eliot's *The Waste Land* create 'confrontation'[246] through the use of 'juxtapository'[247] devices arising from the disparate tones, languages, and general poetic purposes of each text referred to. This recalls Bloom's assertion that influence is defined by sometimes antagonistic 'relationships *between* texts'[248]. For Burgess, *The Waste Land* is 'a dramatic poem with many voices'[249] which 'like a play or a novel [. . .] has a structure separable from language'[250]. That is to say, the combination of intertextual material creates its own structure and its own meanings, which – in keeping with Barthes's theory – are ultimately organised by the reader. Burgess finds the layers of voices, and the layers of literary allusion make the poem the 'miraculous mediator between the hermetic and the demotic.'[251] Burgess likewise finds Eliot's highly intertextual poem made it 'unwise to fasten [. . .] moral statements on the author himself'[252], but to be inferred from the combined meanings of texts referred to. For Burgess, then, Eliot's poem is the original Modernist model for the combination of texts which conflict and combine for poetic effect, and the source of this conflict is the reader him or herself, who has to read the texts simultaneously to extract the full meaning. This, as I point out in Chapter Four, is also the case with *Byrne*.

Burgess, in a 1973 article writes on how other people view his use of literary allusion, noting how a character in Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One* 'describes quotation as the great English vice'[253]. Moreover, describing how he inserted an allusion to Milton in *Enderby Outside* (1968), Burgess explains how intertextuality and conflict are coterminous:

---

245 Anthony Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 5.
246 Ibid., p. 4.
247 Ibid., p. 6.
248 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 3.
249 Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 5.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid., p. 7.
252 Ibid., p. 7.
253 Anthony Burgess, 'Viewpoint', *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 March 1973, p. 2.

I still smile smugly when I re-read it, but now I am told – especially here in America – that it

was a dirty and snobbish trick, and that nobody coming to a new novel should be expected to

be equipped with a memory of an earlier reading at all. This worries me.[254]

In the same article, Burgess explains how intertextual technique needs to be used to artistic effect, and not simply for its own sake. He describes, with a sense of disappointment how his students in New York, who don't 'totally ignore the style'[255] of literary intertextuality, like 'to play the game – when they have nothing better to do of spotting allusions, just like their elders, but somehow missing the point of the game.'[256] He believes the point is: 'the big moral issues'[257]. That is to say, he equates allusion with a purpose aimed at the reader (recalling Barthes). Burgess opposes subtle allusion to 'degree zero writing, with a solid moral shining through'[258], alluding to Barthes's *Writing Degree Zero* (1953). He also notes how Ezra Pound 'said something about culture being the residue of one's reading. When you fuse, or confuse, then you are being cultured, and all the rest is literature.'[259] *Fuse* and *confuse* is a useful dichotomy for attempting to explain how texts are combined in intertextual writing. In *The Poetic Achievement of Ezra Pound* (1979), Michael Alexander argues that Pound's own intertextual technique is equated with conflict, deciding his 'notorious allusiveness is perhaps the chief obstacle to his being more widely read'[260], Alexander also finds Pound's long poem *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* 'is a learned, allusive and difficult poem, difficult in its compression [. . .] and in its cultural exhibitionism'[261].

254 Burgess, 'Viewpoint', p. 2.
255 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
257 Ibid.
258 Ibid.
259 Ibid.
260 Michael Alexander, *The Poetic Achievement of Ezra Pound,*(London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1979). Burgess's copy available at IABF, p. 19.
261 Ibid., p. 121.

Burgess also demonstrates awareness of Barthes's work in a 1971 article, when he sees *The Waste Land'*s 'ironic confrontation of graceless present with gracious past'[262], and a 'juxtapository device for showing fragments of a decayed culture'[263]. In *This Man and Music* (1982) he develops this, finding '*The Waste Land* is, among other things, a collage of literary citations'[264], a phrase which echoes Barthes, who in turn identifies how any text is 'woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages [. . .] which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony.'[265] Burgess, who owned a copy of Barthes's *Writing Degree Zero*, refers to 'the writings of Roland Barthes'[266] elsewhere in the 1982 book, finding Eliot and Barthes shared a fondness for detective stories. Barthes associates *stereophony* with intertexts; Burgess paraphrases this musically in discussing his intertextual techniques in *Napoleon Symphony,* which, 'it is hoped, will leave an aftertaste of *polyphony*'[267], hoping his readers 'may not ignore the demand of the structure for verbal counterpoint'[268] in his prose. Burgess, then, highlights how he self-consciously introduces disparate texts (voices), focusing on the reader's ability to hold the 'alternation of officialiese and demotic'[269] simultaneously 'after the reading'[270], recalling Barthes's assertion that a text's unity lies with its destination, the reader[271].

Bloom's Theory of Influence

---

262 Burgess, 'Viewpoint', p. 1.
263 Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 6.
264 Burgess,'Under the Bam', p. 99.
265 Barthes, 'From Work to Text', p. 160.
266 Anthony Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs' in Anthony Burgess. *This Man and Music* (New York: McGraw-hill, 1982:1983:2001), pp. 150-161, (p. 160). Burgess's copy of Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, trans. by Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967) is at IABF.
267 Burgess, 'Bonaparte in E Flat', p. 186. My emphasis.
268 Ibid.
269 Ibid.
270 Ibid.
271 Barthes, 'Death of the Author' in Barthes, 1977, p. 148.

Harold Bloom – a contemporary of Burgess and editor of the essay collection

Anthony Burgess (1987)[272] – writes about egotism, influence and poetic intertextuality

in his book *A Map of Misreading* (1975). As a contemporary theory of influence that

coincides with Burgess's own continuing struggle to establish a poetic voice, it is a

valuable insight into how late twentieth century poets (including what Mellors calls late

Modernist[273] poets) write against the force of literary tradition. Of particular interest is

his identification of Milton as a strong poetic precursor, given that Burgess's own

Miltonic poem in blank verse, *Moses*, was published just a year after Bloom's work.

Bloom's approach is different from the semiological *intertextuality* that Juvan is

concerned with, but is a useful way of considering Burgess's relationship to previous

poets, and how meaning is generated when one poem is defined by its relationship with

another one. Juvan believes Bloom has a cultural-political agenda in the way he

describes the influence of poets with large literary reputations:

> such views have been interjected into the building of the prevailing canon, which maintained
>
> colonial hegemony of great authors, languages, and literatures. The orthodox concept of
>
> influence with its binariness, causality, and value freight has thus become an easy target of
>
> critics who advocated intertextuality, from Kristeva to Barthes.[274]

Juvan, like Farkas, also equates Bloom's approach with consideration of technique*,*

highlighting how writers like Kristeva and Barthes 'pointed out influence's conservative

privileging of prominent literary achievements'[275]. Bloom positions literary influence in

a Freudian way, believing the sometimes suppressed image of struggle with the literary

father 'dominates the imagery of [. . .] many major Romantic and Post-Romantic

---

272 Bloom, Harold, ed., *Anthony Burgess*. Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea
   House Publishers, 1987)
273 Mellors, p. 19.
274 Juvan, p. 56.
275 Juvan, p. 56.

poems'.[276] The belated poet accordingly reads (or misreads) a precursor's texts in a 'psychic operation'[277] which originates from a poet's 'ego'[278] in the struggle for self-definition against strong influences. Juvan separates intertextuality from Bloom's model of influence, finding '[i]n contrast to influence, intertextuality undermined the author's role and showed his psyche and subjectivity to be structured linguistically',[279] as opposed to egotistically.

Also arguing that prevailing criticism relating to influence and literary tradition is governed by cultural politics, Fernald connects Harold Bloom's approach to influence with Eliot's assertion in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' that tradition must be learned. She points out that critics in the 1990s wrote unfavourably about Bloom, finding his emphasis on canon-formation was unsuitably political, just as Juvan does. Fernald connects Bloom's work on influence with Modernism especially, finding '[u]ntil recently, critics used his [Eliot's] work, and perhaps Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973), as models through which to explain modernism's relationship to its past.'[280] She then points out how recent debates have highlighted how the 'question of tradition intersect[s] with questions of canon'[281], so as to move 'away from judgement of individual works, focusing instead on the process and history of canonization'[282]. My thesis does not aim to enter into the debate concerning the politics of canon-formation. My purpose here is, simply, to explore how Burgess's Modernist aesthetic was developed through reading and emulating poetry through the gaze of certain contemporary critics and poets; it is not within the scope of my thesis to investigate the politics of this. Specifically, Burgess was especially influenced by Eliot's conservative

---

276 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 103
277 Ibid., p. 92.
278 Ibid., p. 92.
279 Juvan, p. 57.
280 Fernald, p. 160.
281 Ibid.
282 Ibid.

approach, and recognised it as such. Bloom's general approach to the poetic strategies for coping with strong influences, and his concept of revisionary ratios remain useful tools for showing how later poets engage directly with the language of their precursors, most especially in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. Bloom's Oedipal metaphors are therefore used as convenient shorthand descriptors more than literal descriptions.

Without passing comment on these debates, Farkas approaches Burgess's literary influences 'in a distinctly Harold Bloomian manner'[283] usefully finding that 'these devices of literary and sub-literary echoing are among the most important means used by' writers like Burgess and Joyce 'to achieve certain artistic purposes exceeding'[284] the readers' pleasure. Farkas does not comment on the intertextual techniques in Burgess's poetry, or what the artistic purposes *are*, despite usefully demonstrating that intertextuality was a literary technique Burgess learned from his influences. Bloom finds there are six *revisionary ratios* available to a poet as coping strategies for countering strong literary influences. He calls these revisionary ratios: *clinamen,* '[w]hen a latecomer [. . .] swerves from a poetic father'[285]; *tessera,* 'a completion that is an opposition, or restorer of some of the degrees-of-difference'[286]; *kenosis,* an 'undoing or discontinuity'[287]; *daemonization*, 'the breakthrough to a personalized sublime'[288]; *askesis,* 'a severer self-curtailment'[289]; and, *apophrades,* 'an answering return of lost voices and almost-abandoned meanings'.[290] I refer to these terms especially in Chapter Two, as convenient ways to explore how Burgess strives to establish a poetic voice, and how meaning is created between texts from across literary tradition.

---

283 Farkas, p. 34.
284 Ibid., p. 35.
285 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 96.
286 Ibid.
287 Ibid.
288 Ibid.
289 Ibid.
290 Ibid.

Conflict Theory and Intertextuality

Common to the critical approaches I have outlined so far is an inferred *conflict* theory, where meaning is produced *between texts*. Burgess's conflict theory concerning intertextuality in the poetry of Eliot and Pound was initially influenced by Empson who he read at university, and who continued to influence his critical thinking as late as 1991 in the Empson-influenced dramatic dialogue, *The End of Things* (see Chapter Four). Empson explored how conflicts between a word and its many possible referents (i.e., different texts), create poetic meaning. In *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), Empson finds ambiguity in language may 'show a fundamental division in the writer's mind'[291], where 'opposite meanings'[292], 'contradiction'[293], or 'simultaneously'[294] presented different meanings ensure the 'reader is forced'[295] to independently draw his or her own conclusions from a (poetic) text. Eco's much later opinions concerning poetics are compatible with Empson's, as he focuses on ambiguity. Eco finds contemporary trends in critical reading 'prefer to disclose a field of possibilities, to create "ambiguous" situations open to all sorts of operative choices and interpretations'[296]. For Eco – as for Empson – 'a work of art is never really "closed", because even the most definitive exterior always encloses an infinity of possible "readings."'[297]

For Burgess, intertextual conflict happens because '[w]e live in a binary universe, created by our own brains, which depends on codes of communication made out of opposites [. . .] In language we have a whole set of oppositions'[298] which are the

---

291 William Empson. *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Pimlico, 1930:1947:1953:2004), p. 192.
292 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 192.
293 Ibid., p. 176.
294 Ibid., p. 102.
295 Ibid.
296 Ibid., p. 43.
297 Ibid., p. 24.
298 Anthony Burgess, 'Can Art Be Immoral?' Unpublished lecture, given at Tate Gallery, 17th October 1991 (IABF), p. 5.

essentials of linguistic structure; elsewhere, he argues that '[s]igns have cultural validity only when they can be opposed to other signs.'[299] Juvan finds more recent debates concerning intertextuality continue this conflict theory, highlighting how 'the meaning of poetic signs arises from their referencing other signs.'[300] Belastegui, whilst not associating the conflict theory with Empson (or Eco), finds in 'Burgess's dialectical vision, the role of the artist is that of creating meaning or the illusion of meaning in the face of continuing struggle. Art, in Burgess's duoverse, emerges out of a continuous battle of opposites.'[301] Belastegui proposes that 'Burgess's vision of the universe, as one of his most perceptive critics, Samuel Coale, has observed, is one where "conflict and uncertainty" are "mixed and fused", but "not to the point of ultimate synthesis, but to the point of continuing, unresolved conflict"'.[302] According to Coale, 'Burgess insisted that art, myth, and language, should reconcile [. . .] Manichean opposites'[303]. Writing on Eliot, Burgess accordingly suggests there is no easy reconciliation between word and meaning, because

> Words themselves are ultimately arbitrary. There is nothing in the structure of a word that relates to the meaning of that word. Probably it is the job of poetry to turn ordinary speech into some kind of iconic representation of reality.'[304]

My account of Burgess's poetry, then, explores how poetic meaning is created between texts, be that linguistically, or across literary texts. In the next chapter, I explore the literary tradition which Burgess draws upon, finding it to be distinctly Modernist.

In this chapter, by surveying recent and earlier debates concerning Burgess as a

---

299 Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 159.
300 Juvan, p. 114.
301 Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in Nothing Like the Sun', p. 24.
302 Ibid
303 Samuel Coale, *Anthony Burgess (*New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981), p. 152.
304 Anthony Burgess, Curiously Coloured Things'. T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures 1980. Thoughts on Music and Literature. BBC Radio Three, 13 October 1980 (IABF), p. 19.

Modernist, I have identified that other critics have not previously explored the intertextual Modernist techniques that Burgess uses in his poetry. Burgess is shown as a prolific poet. Other critics, I have found, have decided that there is a certain ambivalence regarding Burgess and Modernity and Postmodernity. Haffen has been presented as providing especially important comments on Burgess as a transitional prose writer. She finds his exploration of the limitations of structure to be Postmodern, whereas his approach to literary tradition is found to come from Modernist precursors. Likewise, Belastegui – in presenting how Burgess's aesthetic is based on conflict – presents this as related to both Modernist and Postmodernist techniques. Neither of these critics provide a commentary on how these subtle differences in style and technique develop, and – with the common exception of identifying Eliot as an influence – neither provide a model of critical influence to account for how this transitional style arises. My consequent approach is to compare Burgess's opinions and tastes with those of his contemporary critics and poets to discover how this transition in intertextual technique arises. Farkas usefully demonstrates how Burgess is a formalist writer, and – like Belastegui – believes his *poetics* is formed in relation to his literary precursors, and the conflicts arising from his belated position in regard to these, following Bloom's model. Lodge simply asserts for Burgess a belated Modernity, whilst not explaining the term. Jackson and Monod likewise insist Burgess's poetry is Modernist, without fully explaining why. My intention is to address these questions more fully in later chapters.

Chapter One has also provided a critical foundation that is explored in full in subsequent chapters. Specifically, the chapter has demonstrated that Burgess gathered his *storehouse* reading primarily through the critical influences of Eliot and Empson; this then results in the intertextual works that are written for the *marketplace* of the

reader, who interprets intertexts. Poetry is seen as a self-enclosed formalist system for Burgess, reacting to *itself* and its history; hence, intertextuality is inevitable. Véza believes all of the Enderby poems are parodies (a kind of intertextuality). I wish to focus on Burgess's poetry as *serious* and respectful parody (Burgess calls it *pastiche*, a more correct word), related to the mastery of strict forms[305]. Burgess's comments on Joyce's parody and pastiche are shown to be highly pertinent to Burgess's essentially conservative poetry; *The Waste Land* is shown as the high point of Modernist intertextual poetic technique. I have proposed that Burgess, as a late Modernist in transition, writes poetry *after* his Modernist precursors, and these pastiches afforded Burgess the opportunity to practise his own formalist styles. I have presented Burgess's transitional qualities as located in the conflict of two preoccupations. Firstly, his Modernist relationship to tradition (an intertextual relationship) which is influenced by a very narrow brand of Modernism associated with Eliot especially. And, secondly, his increasing Postmodernism is seen through the interrogation of the limitations of those intertextual structures, and a cautious engagement with contemporary theories of Postmodernity.

---

305 See Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p.160.

CHAPTER TWO: *REVOLUTIONARY SONNETS* (1935 – 1949)

John Anthony Burgess Wilson is, I assert in this chapter, first and foremost a poet of the 1930s. Accordingly, this chapter presents his earlier works in the context of the Modernist critical and poetic fashions of the time. The intention is to demonstrate the early poetic influences between 1935 and 1949 so as to provide a framework for Chapters Three and Four, where I trace a transition in technique from the Modernist roots outlined in the present chapter, to a form of late Modernism through to a gradual accommodation of Postmodernist techniques. Burgess's shorter occasional poems between 1935 and 1949 (especially the earlier ones) make use of parable, allusion, and ambiguous, difficult poetic language. In exploring the features of Burgess's poetry which are related to the poetry of 1930s, I use Valentine Cunningham's *British Writers of the Thirties* (1988) and Samuel Hynes's *The Auden Generation* (1972). These features, in my reading (via Cunningham and Hynes especially) align Burgess closely with other, more recognised 1930s poets. I argue that Burgess shares with these more established peers intertextual, *revisionist* poetic practice which Bloom finds in all post-Romantic poets, and which Cunningham and Hynes more specifically find to be the hallmarks of 1930s poets. Rather than simply claiming Burgess to be influenced by the more famous 1930s poets, this chapter follows Harold Bloom's model for poetic influence closely to explore the dominant *revisionist* techniques of 1930s poets (including Burgess) in their urge to revise the work of their "strong" Modernist precursors (who themselves, I argue, are revisionist). I therefore identify the techniques Burgess and his more famous poetic peers have in common. I engage with previous studies of Burgess which at least *infer* the presence of these revisionary stylistic features, and I extrapolate their findings into the present study's specific focus of poetry.

I thus interpret *Revolutionary Sonnets,* the title of Burgess's collection of poems, literally. I read it as his intertextual poetic project: to react and respond to literary tradition. Moreover, I posit in subsequent chapters that the intertextual methods that Burgess first experimented with in the 1930s were to remain a constant presence in his poetry right up until his death in 1993 in an increasingly self-conscious and often ironic fashion.

Burgess attended both secondary school and university in the 1930s. His higher education in English literature, theoretical responses to literary texts, and subsequent development of intellectual resources both as a reader and a poet thus resulted from the predominant literary fashions of that era. Burgess's range of reading was governed by a literary *zeitgeist*, made up of intertextual allusion and the use of "revisionist" Modernist imagery (which attempts a break with tradition, but maintains a link to that tradition). These elements are to be found in Burgess's poems of the time (but also after); close readings of the chosen poems has previously never been attempted. Burgess, in autobiographical and critical works draws his readers' attention to these literary developments of the 1930s, and locates these within his own work. Identifying literary fashion (and thus tradition) through the window of intertextual reading and writing is a viable exercise, as Juvan points out, since '[a]n intertext is an unfinished and flexible multitude of texts, [. . .] phrases, images, clichés, etc. that a reader [. . .] must recall'.[1] I argue that Burgess is a reader and writer, whose Modernist tastes were established in the 1930s and are demonstrated in poetry whose style originates in the same decade. Whereas Juvan, Barthes *et al* take intertexts to mean *any* linguistic structure[2], I use only *poetic intertexts* following Bloom's model of finding 'relationships *between* texts'[3]. As a complement to Bloom's approach, I support my observations through Hynes and

---

1   Juvan, p. 114.
2   See Chapter One.
3   Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 3.

Cunningham's own commentaries about the stylistic features of poetry of this decade. To state the argument specifically, Burgess's poetry draws on texts, images, and contemporary literary theories that coincide with those accessed by other 1930s poets, including (but not limited to) Auden, Empson, and Spender among many others. Moreover, a uniting factor in these shared literary resources is allusion, citation – and ultimately – revision (in Bloom's sense) of earlier poets' texts from across the English literary tradition; newness is thus discovered in the range of revisions that later (1930s) poets apply to the material found in earlier (mainly Modernist) poets.

Before launching into comparative textual reading, it is necessary to outline the literary traditions that Burgess and his 1930s contemporaries share, so as to give some account of the perceived state of poetry in that decade, and to explain how this trend of revisionism came about, as well as how Burgess's range of poetic and critical reading anchors his predominant formal technique in this decade.

Samuel Coale's chronology of Burgess gives 1923 – 1940 as the time encompassing Burgess's tenure at primary school, Xaverian College and Manchester University[4]. Most of the present chapter is dedicated to the later part of this period. I also stray into his wartime experience (1941-46), to show how Burgess's poetic techniques and revisionism of the 1930s spilled over into this tumultuous decade.

To begin with, I wish to argue that Burgess's general poetic style and critical response to poetry was shaped by literary developments that happened in this period. Specific literary developments of this formative period include the various editions of *Georgian Poetry* and the mainstream publishing, availability and burgeoning critical responses to Gerard Manley Hopkins's works. Also important were the startling impact of the Modernist poetry of T.S. Eliot mainly, but also Ezra Pound (1917 onwards). Other important literary developments included the rising popularity of

---

4   Samuel Coale, *Anthony Burgess* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981), p. viii.

W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Louis MacNeice, and other "new" Modernist poets with the support of T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf. Burgess owned a copy of Michael Roberts's *Faber Book of Modern Poetry* (1936)[5], which afforded him the opportunity to access Modernist poetry through one convenient edition. The small-scale publishing of Burgess's juvenilia in the early 1930s[6], and Laura Riding and Robert Graves publishing their *Survey of Modernist Poetry* in 1927 were also events of literary importance. The publishing of F. R. Leavis's *New Bearings in English Poetry* (1932), and the associated influence of the New Critical school upon Burgess at Manchester University was, I demonstrate, a very important development in the shaping of Burgess's poetic and critical imagination. Additionally, the publication of I.A. Richards' *The Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929) as well as William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) were also important literary developments.

F. R. Leavis's *New Bearings in English Poetry*[7] (1932) summarises the prevailing attitude to the contemporary literary tradition from the Victorians onwards: the Modernist poetry of Eliot, Pound, and their later offshoots is viewed as a reaction to the 'dead'[8] condition of most post-Romantic poetry. 'A study of the latter end of *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*,'[9] he writes, 'leads to the conclusion that something has been wrong for forty or fifty years at the least'.[10] Leavis finds Victorian poetry has no substantial technical innovation[11], and is laced with 'the pervasive presence of Tennyson'[12] whose phrase 'The long day wanes' is quoted by Bloom as an example of

---

5   Held at IABF, Manchester.
6   The first time Burgess's verse saw commercial publication was in 1956, as short and usually light verses embedded within the text. See Anthony Burgess. *Time for a Tiger* (London: Heinemann, 1956).
7   F.R Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry (*London: Faber and Faber, 1932:1950:2008). In this chapter, Leavis's dramatic statement that late Victorian poetry was *dead* not only very adequately sums up the *zeitgeist* of Burgess's age, but also contributes directly to it.
8   Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 12.
9   Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., p. 19.
12 Ibid., p. 15.

how 'Tennyson offers up his art in sublimation'[13], a line Burgess later adopted as a book title[14], whilst also epigrammatic of the necessary break with tradition that Modernist poets such as Eliot and Hopkins represented, and which Burgess and his peers were to learn from.

There is little doubt that Burgess read Leavis: in his account of the literary life of D. H. Lawrence *Flame into Being*[15], he notes how 'the Leavis crowd'[16] was nostalgic for a time when English language was more honest, 'a period in British cultural history that had probably never existed.'[17] Burgess in his autobiography describes Manchester University as F. R. Leavis's 'embassy [. . .] [which] was run by Dr Lionel Charles Knights'[18]. Knights was co-editor of Leavis's *Scrutiny* magazine. As Biswell - in his biography of Burgess - puts it, Burgess's contact with Knights 'put him in touch with one of the significant intellectual movements of his day.'[19] Leavis's presence in Burgess's literary development is therefore inevitable. In these statements on Knights, Burgess is clearly keen to show his Modernist credentials. Yet, as Biswell points out, his final examinations at Manchester were influenced by a 'syllabus [which] placed a heavy emphasis on the history of criticism and the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.'[20] The latest poets on this syllabus were Hopkins and Browning[21]. His poetic taste, then, was for a group of poets who were generally more contemporary than those taught on his degree's syllabus.

With its emphasis on metaphysical and Modernist poetry and the formalist focus on language effects, the influence of Knights's readings is discernible in Burgess;

---

13 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 158.
14 Anthony Burgess, *Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy* (New York: Norton, 1964).
15 Anthony Burgess, *Flame into Being* (New York: Arbor House, 1985), p. 268.
16 Burgess, *Flame into Being*, p. 8.
17 Ibid.
18 Anthony Burgess, *You've Had Your Time* (London: Vintage 1990:2002), p. 168.
19 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 46.
20 Ibid., p. 75.
21 Ibid.

allusions to Tennyson, Keats, Hopkins, and Marvell can be identified in Burgess's

poetry. Leavis via L. C. Knights influenced Burgess's formalist understanding of 1930s

English Modernist poetry. Whilst studying 'not Tennyson and Browning, not Keats and

Shelley, but Blake, Hopkins, Donne, Marvell'[22] under Knights, Burgess apparently

realised that 'The Leavis crowd had learned much from T. S. Eliot'[23], an opinion shared

by Brian Barbour, who – in his assessment of the influence of Leavis - points out that

'Much of the historical and critical core of Leavis's thought clearly derived from Eliot.'[24]

Cunningham argues that, as much as Leavis learned from Eliot, the two critics became

polarised; Leavis's '*Scrutiny* soon lost faith with Eliot – one of Leavis's major critical

influences – and with Auden – one of Leavis's earliest contributors.'[25] In any event, the

influence of Eliot is reflected in Burgess's poetic style of the time. Eliot - in 'Tradition

and the Individual Talent' (1919) for example - notes that 'No poet, no artist of any kind,

has his complete meaning alone', in a logic that prefigures Bloom[26]. Eliot is concerned

with later poets' 'relation to the dead poets'[27], a phrase Bloom alludes to when he writes

that 'Poetic strength comes only from a triumphant wrestling with the greatest of dead'[28].

Leavis is also aware of this struggle with literary tradition, noting 'the difficulty of a

new start'[29]. He observes how, to partially counter this, Eliot makes use of intertextual

literary tradition in a number of his poems, which 'use as essential means quotation and

allusion'.[30] Burgess, then, was exposed to current literary debates about literary allusion

and revisionism in the 1930s, through his access to Leavis, who – like Eliot – shows

strong critical awareness of poets' belated relation to poets of the recent literary

---

22 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 173.
23 Ibid.
24 Brian Barbour. 'Lewis and Leavis'. *Modern Philology*, Vol. 96, No. 4 (May, 1999), 439-484 (p. 444).
25 Cunningham, p. 34.
26 T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*. Ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 37-44, (p. 38).
27 Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', p. 38.
28 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 9.
29 Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 52.
30 Ibid., p. 68.

tradition in a way prefigures and is compatible with Bloom's own reading of this situation[31].

For Leavis, Hopkins has a 'technical originality [which] is inseparable from the rare adequacy of mind, sensibility and spirit that it vouches for'[32], more than other Victorians, including Tennyson (see above). Hopkins held a particular influence on 1930s poets, demonstrated by the pastiches and parodies of Hopkins that Auden, Spender, and Burgess all carried out in that decade. T. S. Eliot, for Leavis, disrupted the Georgian epoch of flat, uninspired verse: 'It is mainly due to him that no serious poet or critic can fail to realise that English poetry in the future must develop (if at all) along some other line [. . .] He has made a new start, and established new bearings'[33]. Burgess, as a student understood Eliot's revisionary approach to poetry through reading Leavis as much as through reading Eliot directly. Moreover, strains were to remain with Burgess for the rest of his career. Burgess, then, absorbs the two main "strong" poets championed by Leavis (Eliot and Hopkins), and defines his poetic voice in relation to them.

On the whole, Leavis firmly believes that 'the [Victorian] age did not make full use of its talent'[34]. Michael Roberts, in his 1936 introduction to *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, picks up on Leavis's *New Bearings*, when he notes the difference in approach that Eliot deploys 'may be puzzling at first, but given a general understanding [of his poetry] it becomes clear'[35]. Roberts, clearly, detected such a shift in approach in Eliot's poetry that he decided his readers should be primed with a critical apparatus for understanding these radically different poems, prior to tackling them. Burgess's own copy of Roberts' edition is filled with his own attempt at a critical reading of Eliot, via

31 See Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 37.
32 Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 20.
33 Ibid., p. 25.
34 Ibid., p. 22.
35 Michael Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse (*London: Faber and Faber, 1936), p. 18.

annotations for his later dramatisation of *The Waste Land*[36]. In the introduction to this edition, Roberts feels the need to justify the approaches of Eliot and the other poets selected, through what he calls 'a considerable body of poetry which excites an active animosity [. . .] because the reader feels compelled to argue that it is not poetry at all'[37], demonstrating that many of the Modernist poems were controversially received upon publication. Roberts argues the Leavisite break with Georgian poetic tradition, or – in Bloom's terms – the strong revisionary nature of the poetry created this animosity. Roberts finds this initial impulse located in Pound's 1913 Imagist anthology, whose contributors were 'shocked at the vagueness and facility of the [Georgian] poetry of the day'[38], an observation echoed by both Burgess and Leavis. Indeed, if Leavis found Victorian or Georgian poetry to be dead, then it is dramatically reborn in the shocking innovations of Eliot and Hopkins.

Burgess very much mirrors the attitude of Leavis and Roberts in his own conception of the impact of Modernism in English literature, when he notes that – before the publication of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and James Joyce's *Ulysses* – poetry had 'sunk to a feeble condition of weekend nature worship'[39] whereas 'Hopkins developed a freer rhythm and a bolder language than was to the taste of the Neo-Georgian poets'[40] whilst Pound becomes 'the most potent new direction for English poetry'[41]. Meanwhile Eliot deploys 'imagery appropriate to the machine age' with *The Waste Land* becoming the 'best manifesto of modernism in poetry'.[42] Although written some time after *New Bearings* was published, these phrases are more a summary of Leavis's opinions than Burgess's own. The Modernist triumvirate of Eliot, Hopkins and

---

36 See Burgess's copy of Roberts, IABF, Manchester.
37 Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 1.
38 Ibid., p. 15.
39 Anthony Burgess, 'The Literature of the British From 1900 to 1982' in *One Man's Chorus*, ed. by Ben Forkner (New York: Carrol & Graf, 1998), pp. 190-9, (pp. 193-4).
40 Burgess, 'The Literature of the British From 1900 to 1982', pp. 193-4.
41 Ibid., pp. 193-4.
42 Ibid., pp. 193-4.

Pound, then, is sounded in Leavis, and resonates firmly in Burgess, who finds *New Bearings* there. However, Eliot and Hopkins are given far more attention by Burgess. Burgess also later included Joyce (on account of his prose work), noting that 'Joyce, along with Pound and Eliot, made shiningly clear precisely what modernism is. Modernism is, from the linguistic angle, the employment of a vocabulary which rings the bells of the colloquial as well as of the traditionally poetic and the new technological'[43]. Modernist poetry, according to Burgess, alludes to literary tradition, with technical innovations featuring as formal devices in language, including revisionary imagery in reaction to other poets' works: 'The result,'[44] says Leavis, 'is breach of continuity'[45], a radical re-viewing of (literary) tradition.

The Leavisite concept of poetic Modernism which Burgess echoed was informed by Robert Graves and Laura Riding[46], who note in their 1927 *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* that 'The trouble [with poetry is] that ordinary modern life is full of the stock-feelings'[47] since 'the commonplaces of everyday speech are merely the relics of past poetry'[48], what Richards – writing three years earlier – calls 'the resources of all poets who belong to the literary tradition.'[49] The parodically 'artless lyrics'[50] of prototypical Georgian poet Rawcliffe in *Inside Mr Enderby* display these features*:*

'Perhaps I am not wanted then,' he said

'Perhaps I'd better go,'

He said. Motionless her eyes, her head,

---

43 Burgess, 'The Literature of the British From 1900 to 1982', p. 367.
44 Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 71.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., p. 140.
47 Ibid., p. 140.
48 Robert Graves, and Laura Riding, *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* in Charles Mundye, and Patrick McGuinness, eds., *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* and *A Pamphlet Against Anthologies* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1927:2002, 1928:2002), p. 43.
49 Richards, p. 202.
50 Anthony Burgess. *Inside Mr Enderby* in *The Complete Enderby* (London: Vintage, 1963:2002), p. 62.

Saying not yes, not no.[51]

In the rapid, song-like quality of its strict rhymes, combined with the clichéd wartime

'gun-grief' it aims to recall, this poem deliberately lacks innovativeness and punch and

so accordingly highlights the artistic impasses of Georgian poetic technique[52]. Graves

and Riding's recommendation for countering the belated condition of poetry is to use

language from 'outside of literature'[53], such as technology. This can be seen as a

Bloomian "defense" for 'clearing an imaginative space'[54] in the face of the stultifying

stasis of previous poetic tropes, just as the Georgians – according to Leavis – did with

regard to their use of deliberately loose forms. Graves and Riding, like Leavis and

Roberts, argue for a re-reading (or mis-reading) of literary tradition, emphasising what

Bloom calls the 'dialectics of literary tradition'[55]. Burgess knew their work, and praised

their technique of 'dissecting a poem before pronouncing on it',[56] noting how Empson

later perfected it to 'the benefit of the art of criticism'[57] in general. Hopkins is discussed

in far more length in the *Survey*, presented as 'a modernist in virtue of his extraordinary

strictness in the use of words and unconventional notation'[58]. Empson, in *Seven Types of

Ambiguity* similarly champions Hopkins' linguistic capabilities, most especially, in 'The

Windhover', noting how he combines seemingly incompatible psychological states

'simultaneously by words exhausting satisfaction'[59]. Burgess's own commentary some

years later – echoing Graves/Riding and Empson - is linguistically-oriented: 'For a poet

like Gerard Manley Hopkins the problem of showing the reader [. . .] the

---

51 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 62.
52 Ibid.
53 Graves and Riding, p. 43.
54 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 152.
55 Ibid., p. 40.
56 Anthony Burgess. 'The magus of Mallorca', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 May 1982, p. 547.
57 Burgess, 'The magus of Mallorca', p. 547.
58 Graves and Riding, p. 43.
59 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 225.

suprasegmental elements of his idiolect was excruciating and has still not been solved.'[60] Graves and Riding also present an analysis of the Georgian/First World War poet Isaac Rosenberg, whose epic poem *Moses* is close to Burgess own epic poem of the same title, as I explain in Chapter Three.

Graves, Riding, and Leavis all point towards a crisis in poetry that was seen as partially remedied by Hopkins and Eliot primarily, as well as other poets. Burgess, seeped in 1930s' literary debates concerning poetry, signals his agreement with this in his writing about the period, often closely echoing the opinions of major literary critics of the time; evidence from his own poetry of the time also shows this to be the case. With the possible exception of Pound (see Chapter Three), other poets are not as important in Burgess's literary consciousness as the two "strong" poets Eliot and Hopkins. This in itself is a literary development entirely in keeping with Burgess's more famous fellow 1930s' poets such as Auden, Spender, Empson and MacNeice, as shown by Cunningham and Hynes. Graves, Riding, Leavis (and Eliot to some degree) all note a crisis in poetic tradition that started in Victorian writing, which was partially addressed by the Georgian poets. Burgess, I have pointed out, considered many of the Georgian poets as "modern", and Leavis notes that the tactics these poets adopted to counter the crisis is a kind of "soft" forerunner to what Eliot and Hopkins represented, most especially to the *belated* 1930s poets, whose own poetic forms were aided by what Eliot and Hopkins had already done to revise literary tradition. These two poets became especially popular in the 1930s and were to feature intertextually in the works of the 1930s poets via allusion and parody, techniques recommended by Eliot himself.

The crisis of tradition that was discussed in the early 1930s is, in itself, compatible with Bloom's observation that *belated* poets write from a position of anxiety, wherein the force of what has been written before checks their ability to create

---

60 Anthony Burgess, 'When to lend an ear' , *Times Literary Supplement*, 28 December 1984, p. 1491.

poetic newness without the application of *misreading*, or the *revision* of works that have gone before. In Bloom's opinion, poetry of the post-Romantic (including Modern) tradition shows 'an initial vision of loss or crisis, centering on a question of renewal or imaginative survival'[61]. Burgess, as much as Graves, Riding, or Leavis observed this as a chief condition of the state of poetry in the early 1930s. These contemporary critics were putting forward a case for the active misreading of recent literary traditions, so as to forge a pragmatic view in attempting poetic innovation that was still somehow linked to the tradition thus far. As Haffen notes with regard to his novels, 'for Burgess, literature is not a disembodied interplay between textual or mythic memories, but a living relationship between different generations of writers'.[62] The same also applies to the poetry of Anthony Burgess, and the literary-critical continuum that Burgess coincided with during his literary education in the 1930s created the right intellectual conditions for achieving the full exploration of this intertextual relationship. Most especially, Eliot and Hopkins are seen by the critics of the time (Richards, Leavis, Graves, Riding, and Burgess) to actively apply *misreadings* of previous poets in order to interrupt the stasis. Moreover, these two "father" poets revised English poetic tradition from a formalist perspective, wherein language and literary tradition serve in themselves as the main focus of the work. Eliot especially is seen as the writer who shows later poets how to respond to the modern crisis through poetic form.

To return to Hopkins, Burgess claims his first encounter with this poet was during a research exercise at Xaverian College, reading 'Pied Beauty' and 'The Starlight Night' in the process[63]. This was a discovery that was to have a lasting effect on

---

61   Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 97.
62   Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', pp. 139-40.
63   Burgess, Anthony. *Little Wilson and Big God (*London: Vintage, 1987:2002), p. 122. Burgess refers to Lawrence Binyon, *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics. Book fifth, nineteenth century [supplementing the work by Francis T. Palgrave]. Selected and arranged by L. Binyon. With notes by J. H. Fowler (*London: Macmillan, 1928). James Elroy Flecker, who is mentioned by Burgess as another previous research subject (p. 122), also appears in this edition.

Burgess: he 'had conceived'[64], he tells us, a 'devotion to the poetry of Gerard Manley

Hopkins'[65] as a result of reading 'The Windhover', a poem which was subject to

Empson's own critical reading. Hopkins's position as an Anglican convert received late

into the Catholic church[66] chimed well with Burgess's own Catholic[67] schooling; his

early reaction to Hopkins is demonstrably more heartfelt than his reaction to the

Anglican Eliot[68], to the point where Burgess's poetic voice is saturated with Hopkins's

language. Burgess, whose crisis of faith meant he ended the decade 'turning his back on

the Church'[69], was doubtless affected by Hopkins's own poetic laying bare of his crises

of faith. It is this strong influence of Hopkins's crises that is foregrounded in the doubt-

laden sonnet that Burgess tell us he 'was determined to write' during a holiday in Wales:

> I wrote on the beach with a stick of salty wood
>
>   'Our deeds are but as writings on the shore',
>
>   Believing it: I never thought them more
>
> Than prey for growling time: all ill, all good
>
> Were friable as sand. [. . .][70]

Burgess points out the 'touch of Hopkins in the sprung rhythm of the first line, but the

rest a mixture of Meredith and Shelley'[71]. Sprung rhythm – as Jeffrey Wainwright writes

in his overview of poetic techniques – has the 'energy of medieval strong-stress

---

64 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 141.
65 Ibid.
66 Gardner in Hopkins, p. xxiii.
67 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 25.
68 Burgess's parody of Eliot was to become much more prominent after the Second World War.
69 Paul Phillips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint: The Music and Literature of Anthony Burgess* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 30.
70 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 135.
71 Ibid. George Meredith (1828 – 1909) was a poet and novelist of some general fame in the later nineteenth century, associated with Swinbourne and Rossetti. See *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 8 March 2013], The Shelley referred here is the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822). The description of the wind on the beach has some similarity to George Meredith's own description of the wind in 'Dirge in Woods'.

metres'[72]. Hopkinsian sprung rhythm 'disturbs the decorum of standard lines by jamming stresses together'[73]. The phrase 'disturbs the decorum'[74] would, in Leavis's logic, refer to over-polished Victorian poetic conventions, which Hopkins interrupts through a dramatic return to 'medieval' forms. This, therefore, is a *long-view* intertextuality that unites ancient and modern texts. This pastiche of Hopkins is part of his wish to learn from his precursor, recalling his own later comments that pastiche is the best way to learn poetic forms[75]. This, to be clear, is close to the kind of emulation I define in Chapter One. Summarising an argument first put forward by Laurent Jenny, Juvan finds 'observable intertextuality'[76] such as this pastiche of Hopkins is 'one of the key semantic, stylistic, structural, and evaluative strategies of artistic creation'[77]. In Burgess's poem, this formal technique expresses itself in the jarring sibilance of the 'stick of salty wood', which emulates Hopkins. Hopkins' 'The Windhover' is given as a specific example by Burgess[78] as to the power the sprung rhythm device had on him during his poetic explorations in the 1930s. The resemblances that Burgess identifies in the opening few lines of his work can be seen quite clearly when compared with Hopkins's poem, which has marked similarities, tone, jarring sound construction, and in the natural imagery:

> I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
>
>   dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn
>
>   Falcon, in his riding
>
>   Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and
>
>   striding

---

72 Jeffrey Wainwright, *Poetry The Basics* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 90.
73 Wainwright, p. 90
74 Ibid.
75 Burgess, 'Deadly Sin – Creativity for All', p. 101.
76 Juvan, p. 125.
77 Ibid.
78 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 141.

> High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling
>
> wing[79]

Biswell notes that, in addition to the Hopkinsian holiday poem, Burgess also wrote 'a competent parody of Gerard Manley Hopkins, when he was eighteen, in 1935.'[80] In this poem 'That The Earth Rose Out of a Vast Electric Basin', the repetition of 'rolled', and the sprung rhythm of 'swill, spills', 'fire flies', and 'binds, blinds' are close imitations of the Hopkins, very comparable with the opening lines of 'The Windhover' (see above). Biswell finds a third parody of Hopkins, written in 1934 shows more accomplishment:

> Whether windowed a greycold welkin or a dawn that mounts
>
>   and breaks
>
> In a roseflush wave each day arises this working man,
>
> Heavy maybe but never thwarted for a life's plan
>
> Seen shaped to the pounding day: for the day's round he
>
>   awakes.[81]

Here, Burgess does not travesty Hopkins. It is accordingly not a parody in the usual sense of the word, and therefore closer to pastiche. The difficulty of language here is a reaction to the density of Hopkins, comparable with Burgess's later attempts to incorporate Empsonian "crossword-style" language into his poetry (see below). Biswell notes that 'Hopkins' poems were not properly published in a commercial edition until 1930, so Burgess must have found and absorbed them shortly after they appeared.'[82] Cunningham explains how C. Day Lewis writes on Hopkins in *A Hope for Poetry* (1934), noting that 'the year 1918 [was] when Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetry first

---

79 Gerard Manley Hopkins, 'The Windhover' in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 55.
80 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 27.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid., p. 38.

became widely available'[83]. Here, Day Lewis demonstrates that Hopkins was part of the general critical debate by 1934. It was, however, not until the 1930s that secondary material, and major editions (such as the Oxford University Press publications) saw Hopkins established at the forefront of literary imagination, albeit belatedly. Day Lewis overstates the case about availability of Hopkins' works in 1918, since – according to Oxford University Press – 'it took a decade for [the 1918 edition] of 750 copies to sell out'[84]. Hopkins was a Victorian poet, but treated as a Modernist by critical readers in the 1930s, who – by then – were at least *increasingly familiar* with him. The 1930s saw a high concentration of publications by or about Hopkins, including a new edition by Robert Bridges[85], and in three volumes of collected letters and ephemera[86]. Certainly, the 1930s provided Burgess with a rich array of resources for indulging his formative tastes for Hopkins' poetry, including the analysis provided by William Empson in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. It was the 'second edition, which appeared in 1930, [which] was almost immediately successful with a new generation of readers and critics'[87]; given that his first recorded primary and secondary readings of Hopkins began in 1934, Burgess's early fascination with the Jesuit poet was innovative for a young reader and writer. That said, Burgess's intertextual imitation of Hopkins was assuredly part of a current literary response. Valentine Cunningham provides a commentary on Hopkinsian pastiche, which indicates that Burgess shares his intertextual poetic technique with C. Day Lewis, whose

---

83 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 16.
84 Alice Jenkins, 'Gerard Manley Hokpkins', (3 February 2011) <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199799558/obo-9780199799558-0034.xml?rskey=PQicG7&result=36&q=.> [accessed 22 October 2012] (para. 1 of 1).
85 Gerard Manley Hopkins. *Poems,* ed. by Robert Bridges (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930).
86 See: Abbott Colleer Claude, ed., *Correspondance of Gerard Manley Hopkins and R. W. Dixon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935: 1956); Humphrey House, ed., *Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937:1959), and; Abbott Colleer Claude, ed., *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938: 1956).
87 Jenkins, para. 1 of 1.

sonnet [beginning 'There fall|From him shadows of what he is building [. . .]'] is in fact a

deliberate and seriously intended pastiche of the Gerard Manley Hopkins sonnet we know as

'The Soldier' [. . .] And it draws on Hopkins's own repeatedly expressed homoerotic feelings for

large members of the lower orders – especially soldiers and sailors, with the occasional farrier

or ploughman or sturdy beggar thrown in. These feelings were shared by Auden, Plomer, Joe

Ackerley, Brian Howard [. . .] and by Isherwood[. . .][88]

In the poem (given the title 'Jack Hopkins' – itself a nod to the subject of the pastiche),

Burgess also provides a study of the physical form of a working man, although this

doesn't appear to be homoerotic. The poem, though, does make use of Hopkinsian head

rhyme to maintain a clear allusion to Hopkins in addition to the title, a linguistic feature

which Burgess has in common with C. Day Lewis. Day Lewis and Burgess weren't the

only poets at the time writing pastiches of Hopkins. Samuel Hynes points out that

Auden, too, wrote a poem which begins by imitating Hopkins'[89].

Auden – like Burgess – imitated Hopkins, but via a somewhat disrespectful

parody of 'The Windhover.' In his expansive guide to Auden's poetry, *W. H. Auden: A

Commentary* (1998)[90], John Fuller detects a Hopkinsian reference in Auden's long

poem, *The Orators* (1931). He detects allusion to Hopkins's 'The Windhover' in the

phrase 'Success my dears – Ah!'[91]. Fuller finds that – just as Burgess does some years

later in *St. Winefred's Well* (1989)[92] – Auden parodies Hopkins to meta-poetically

comment on the earlier poet's linguistic abilities, during a football match scene:

There is one moment, though, when the parody turns Hopkins into a victim. His habit of

verbal insistence, as in the opening of 'Henry Purcell' ('Have fair fallen, O fair, fair have fallen,

---

88 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 160.
89 Hynes, p. 108.
90 John Fuller, *W. H. Auden*: *A Commentary* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), p. 115.
91 Auden quoted in Fuller, p. 115.
92 See Chapter Four.

so dear|To me') is wickedly exposed in Auden's description of the beaten Sandroyd side

('Defeats on them like lavas | Have fallen, fell, kept falling, fell | On them, poor lovies'), but

even here the respect is maintained, not least through the affection for the fallen which closely

parallels Hopkins's own.[93]

Summarising the effect of this parody, Fuller concludes: 'Parody engineers a tonal stage

on which Hopkinsian effects may be enacted afresh.'[94] Accordingly, Fuller also suggests

a process of transposition, recalling Juvan's summary of Genette's argument that both

parody and pastiche are transformative forms of intertextuality which re-use elements

of the pre-text to create new linguistic effects[95].

Day Lewis, Burgess, and Auden all imitated Hopkins in their poetry of the

1930s, then, and parody and pastiche is an intertextual process which – in all three

cases, is related to the mastery and then hoped-for transposition of the original poet's

work. Juvan notes that literary parody is related to Modernism, since 'Modernists prefer

to cite – paraphrase, travesty, parody – key texts of culture, for example, Joyce the

Odyssey, Mann stories about *Faust* [. . .]'[96]. By this token, Day Lewis, Burgess, and

Auden demonstrate their awareness of Hopkins' work as *key texts of culture* in a

(revisionist) style that is common in 1930s poetry whilst at the same time using it as

part of their process of development as poets.

Overlooking the capacity for intertextual development-by-emulation, Farkas

argues that, for Burgess, parody and pastiche are modes 'of literary "enclosing"'[97]. This

can be interpreted in Bloomian terms as Burgess's tactic for accommodating the

strength of Hopkins's poetic tropes from a belated position[98], which is the same

---

93 Fuller, p. 115.
94 Ibid.
95 Juvan, p. 128.
96 Ibid., p. 85.
97 Farkas, p. 35
98 I follow Bloom's logic here.

"defence" strategy used by Auden and Day Lewis in *their* explorations of their poetic relation to Hopkins. Burgess writes *after* Auden and Day Lewis's poetic responses to Hopkins, so he has to deploy even more complex tactics. I argue in Chapter Three that his tactics as a belated Modernist are not always successful. Farkas, to be clear, presents the case only from the position of Burgess's prose relations to Joyce – he doesn't mention Burgess's poetry. Writing 54 years later, Burgess was content to describe Hopkins as a 'poet of modernist tendencies'[99], thereby reflecting Hopkins's important position as (an early) modernist, which also explains why Auden and Day Lewis and – later – Burgess[100] similarly chose to emulate him. Burgess possessed a number of works by or about Hopkins and continued to collect books about Hopkins all his life[101]. As late as 1992, Burgess prepared Italian page proofs for a presumably unfinished work called *The Life of Hopkins*, alongside audio tapes to support it[102]. See Chapter Four for a fuller analysis of Hopkins in Burgess's late career.

The other strong "revisionary" poet read extensively by Burgess in the 1930s is T.S. Eliot. In the following section, I will present Burgess's poetic style in relation to Eliot (most especially *The Waste Land*), so as to present this Eliot as a "strong" poet who was responded to by Burgess and his peers, to show this poetic as part of a general literary development of the 1930s.

In *Little Wilson and Big God*, Burgess says he first became acquainted with Eliot's poetry through his *Collected Poems 1909 – 1935*[103]. Burgess's own copy of this

---

99 Anthony Burgess, 'First Novel' (1988) in *One Man's Chorus*. Ed. by Ben Forkner (New York: Carrol & Graf, 1998), pp. 270-273, (p. 270).

100 In *St. Winefred's Well* (1989) especially.

101 Books formerly owned by Burgess and now held at the IABF include: Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Dalle foglie della sibilla* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1992); and, Norman White, *Hopkins: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). The Anthony Burgess Center at the University of Angers holds the following books that belonged to Burgess; Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943). This is an ex-libris copy, inscribed 'L. Wilson', and 'Banbury County school library'; Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. by Helen Gardner (London: Penguin Books, 1960).

102 Anthony Burgess, *The Life of Hopkins* (Texas: HRC, box 26, fols. 7-8 and box 27, fols.1 -2, 1992).

103 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God,* p. 157. Burgess describes this episode as taking place just after he finished Sixth Form, and before he undertook his studies to be a civil servant. Biswell dates this as

edition is inscribed with the date 1936 in his own handwriting[104]. Burgess, a keen reader

of Eliot throughout the 1930s, would have been aware of the influence that this poet had

on his generation, in his capacity as literary adviser and poet-in-chief at Faber and

Faber, and via Leavis's championing of Eliot's intertextual revisionist poetry in *New

Bearings*. Eliot was a well-established literary presence by the 1930s, since 'between

1919 and 1926 the shadow of Eliot and literary modernism had fallen across English

poetry'[105]. Burgess's close readings therefore coincide with those of his generation.

Collections of poetry or verse by Eliot were published three times by Faber and Faber

in 1936. In addition to *Collected Poems 1909 – 1935*, Eliot appears in Michael Roberts'

1936 edition *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*[106]. His verse drama, *Murder in the

Cathedral*[107] was first published in the same year. Burgess is continually keen to align

himself with these two key "father" poets of the 1930s generation, something he shares

with poets such as Auden, Isherwood and Empson. Just as Burgess, Auden, and Day

Lewis were to imitate Hopkins in the 1930s, so Eliot approves of closely following

Dante's style. Specifically, he finds that

> more can be learned about how to write poetry from Dante than from any English poet [. . .]
>
> Most great English poets are *inimitable* in a way in which Dante was not. I put my meaning
>
> into other words by saying that Dante can do less *harm* to anyone trying to learn to write
>
> verse, than can Shakespeare.[108]

Eliot clearly recommends what might be termed *active* poetic intertextuality by way of

imitation so as to learn the craft. In this specific case, he believes it is easier to achieve

---

1936: see Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 41. The edition in question is T. S. Eliot. *Collected Poems, 1909-1935* (London: Faber and Faber, 1936).
104 Held at IABF, Manchester.
105 Barbour, p. 444.
106 Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, pp. 98-123.
107 T. S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral (*London: Faber and Faber, 1936).
108 Eliot, 'Dante', p. 215.

with Dante than with Shakespeare[109]. The choice of poets here is not as relevant to my thesis as the *recommendation itself*: namely, that reference to the "father" poet is a good way to 'learn to write verse'[110] (Dante is Eliot's poetic father here, just as Eliot is Burgess's poetic father). The 1930s' poets' imitations of Hopkins, another poetic father, can thus be seen as following Eliot's recent precedent; the *belated poets* use a technique recommended by a "*strong*" predecessor poet, who recommends what Bloom calls the 'creative emulation of literary tradition'[111]. Burgess tells us that, in '1935 [. . .] I knew much of Gerard Manley Hopkins by heart and had copied out, in very neat hand, the whole of Eliot's *The Waste Land* from the public library collection of his verse'[112]. Eliot and Hopkins were thus according to Burgess a firm part of his revisionist/Modernist reading by the middle of the decade, in keeping with the literary fashions of his more famous peers. Burgess certainly emulates Eliot in his 'first modern poem'[113], which features the same rhyme used by Eliot in 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.' Burgess uses the phrase: 'Too old to make *decisions*|Their plotted *revisions*'[114], whereas Eliot – in a work originally published in 1917 – wrote 'And time yet for a hundred *indecisions*,| And for a hundred visions and *revisions*'[115]. Burgess doesn't say whether he read Eliot's poem before 1935, although – for a highly literate student with an advanced interest in contemporary poetry – this is highly likely, and the coincidence of the rhyme scheme certainly *suggests* this. Burgess was certainly exposed to modern poetry from a young age. As early as 1927 or 1928 his school reading featured 'a class anthology of verse which, by some mischance or bold accession of genius *was all modern*. Not Eliot, not

---

109 As Burgess wrote in his 1980 T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture, we 'certainly cannot improve on William Shakespeare'. See Anthony Burgess, 'Rhythm, Sprung and Unsprung.' T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures, 1980, BBC Radio 3, broadcast 6 October 1980 (IABF), p. 2.
110 Eliot, 'Dante', p. 215.
111 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 31.
112 Burgess, Anthony. *This Man and Music* (New York and London: Applause, 2001:1983:1982), p. 22
113 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 153.
114 Ibid. My emphasis.
115 T.S. Eliot, *Selected Poems (*London: Faber and Faber, 1961:1954), p. 13.

even Hopkins, but Harold Monroe and J. C. Squire's "Lines to a Bulldog" [. . .][116]. The

edition he refers to here is *Georgian Poetry 1916-17*[117], which – like Eliot's 'Prufrock' -

was published in 1917[118]. Burgess's taste for Eliot and Hopkins in 1935, then, were

comparatively advanced for one whose school syllabus had mainly featured the late

Georgian poets, regarded as 'modern' at the time. The same applies for his university

syllabus. In both cases, Burgess makes claims for the Modernity of his literary

education.

Burgess's general taste for Eliot was particularly fashionable; Cunningham

emphasises Eliot's *The Waste Land* especially as a particularly important poem for the

1930s generation, detecting in it allusions to 'a Dantesque Hell.'[119] This poem was

important to Burgess, Isherwood, Spender, Empson, Day Lewis, Auden *et al* – in

Cunningham's reading, because it signals how the chaos of post First World War

modernity (which is represented through Eliot's ample combination of intertextual

material) can be organised into a meaningful poetic response. Cunningham explains his

argument by invoking Richards:

> The poem, says Richards, not only expresses the post-war 'sense of desolation, of uncertainty,
>
> of futility, of the baselessness of aspirations, of the vanity of endeavour, and a thirst for a life-
>
> giving water which seems suddenly to have failed', but it also shows the way out of this chaos,
>
> 'the only solution of these difficulties', beyond the lost fixities of belief to a determined
>
> acceptance of the chaos engendered out of the modernist flux. [. . .] 'One must abandon oneself',
>
> as Richards was suggesting *The Waste Land* had done, to the horrors of modernity.[120]

Hynes concurs with this, but more overtly states the case for intertextual writing, when

---

116 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 77. My emphasis.
117 Sir Edward Howard Marsh, ed., *Georgian Poetry 1916-17 (*London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1917).
118 This edition is used by Leavis (see above) as an example of the direction being taken by modern
     poets, in their attempts to break with tradition through formal innovation and allusion.
119 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 227.
120 Ibid.

he finds that Richards's approach to *The Waste Land* 'proposed that the way out of this [modern chaotic] situation, for the writer, was a formal one'[121]: the emphasis, for Hynes, is firmly on *form*. (I have already explored Burgess's formalist approach to poetry in Chapter One). Eliot's poem is of interest to the late modern 1930s poets in this reading because he 'had found a form for unbelief, so others could, too.'[122] For the belated 1930s poets, Richards – in his contemporary formalist reading of Eliot 'extended the bounds of the problem, and provided younger writers with a link to the past: even in a world without belief, there was a tradition.'[123] Formal technique and a modern approach to the use of traditional literary material thus combine in Eliot's poem, and in Richards's reading of it. For Hynes, Eliot and Richards were inextricably linked in 1930s critical thought, since: 'I.A. Richards, [. . .] was especially influential, for he seemed, to the young men he taught, to occupy roughly the same place in post-war criticism that Eliot did in post-war poetry.'[124] Indeed, he quotes Christopher Isherwood who described him as '"the prophet we had been waiting for".'[125] For all this fervour towards Richards, his comments on Eliot-style allusion are refreshingly sober:

> Allusion is the most striking of the ways in which poetry takes into its service elements and forms of experience which are not inevitable to life but need to be specially acquired. And the difficulty which it raises is merely a special instance of a general communicative difficulty which will probably increase for the poetry of the future.[126]

Richards as a formalist dwells on intertextuality as a self-enclosed aspect of literature

---

121 Hynes, p. 163.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid., p. 28.
125 Ibid., p. 28.
126 Richards, I.A., *Principles of Literary Criticism* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 1924:1926: 2001), p. 204.

which is 'specially acquired'[127] by reading. His observation about 'communicative

difficulty' are coterminous with Leavis, since it points towards a crisis of poetic

tradition; an inability to communicate poetically, which the revisionist technique was

meant to solve, and which Burgess and his peers used in the 1930s. Richards, in his

assessment of the use of allusion in modern poetry thus recommends it as a means of

improving poetic communication, most especially in light of Leavis's comments about

the insufficiency of poetic tradition up until the Georgians, and perhaps in a way

comparable with Eliot's recommendation for emulation. Richards's word 'difficulty'[128]

can also be seen as marking a specific formal technique, as well as referring to general

literary conditions of the time. As Cunningham points out,

> T.S. Eliot had committed himself in his influential essay on 'The Metaphysical Poets' (1921) to the idea
>
> that in a civilization of 'great complexity and variety' modern poets 'must be *difficult*'. 'The poet, he'd
>
> said, 'must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to
>
> dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning.'[129]

Complex intertextual poets such as Eliot are therefore seen as deliberately adding

elements of *difficulty* in their attempts to aesthetically render the *confusion* of the

modern age. Burgess, in his dense and metaphysically-inspired "unpoetic" imagery and

complex allusion within his own poetry (see below) clearly was influenced by these

sentiments, in keeping with peers such as Empson or Auden, who are seen by

Cunningham as 'densely allusive [. . .] [whose] [. . .] practice in many ways

represented, in fact, a revival of poetic complexity'[130]. (I explain the metaphysical

connections in detail below, with regard to Empson.) Allusion and complexity, then, are

---

127 Richards, p. 204.
128 Ibid.
129 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 298.
130 Ibid., pp. 300-1.

techniques devised by 1930s' poets such as Auden or (at a much lower level of maturity and accomplishment) Burgess, to be deployed in keeping with Eliot's assertions that the only way to confront the crisis in poetic communication is to embrace denseness into poetic forms and allusion. Kevin Jackson goes some way to addressing this, when he notes that – for Burgess – 'Poetry of the more conventional kind – lyrical, autobiographical – was not for him: too naked, too personal.'[131] Whilst this is by inference in keeping with Richards or Eliot's idea of poetic difficulty, a closer comparison with Empson and Eliot, compared with explorations of his critical reading of the time, goes some way to explaining Jackson's point, in absence of any clarification from him directly.

Bloom provides a logic broadly in agreement with the crisis concept put forward by the various 1930s' critics surveyed so far. Bloom shows that this general crisis of *belated* poetic communication can be detected within a poem itself, most especially through a poem's intertextual features. In his reading, a poet's use of language shows revisionary tactics in action which he believes are found in post-Romantic crisis lyric poems, since '"revisionary ratios" are [poetic/imagistic] tropes and psychic defenses [or, ways of countering other poets' tropes] [. . .] manifested in poetic imagery.'[132] Via complex allusion, intertextual poetic forms, and layers of revisionist imagery, Burgess's poetry is revisionist in nature, and can be read as very much a product of the 1930s project to identify *New Bearings*, in keeping with his poetic contemporaries and their shared inheritances.

Farkas, in his reading of Burgess's prose relationship with Joyce, is nervous of being too reductive in applying Bloom's ratios, which he describes as 'involving literary son intent on slaying poetic father'[133]. Farkas, with regard to prose, then, cautiously

---

131 Jackson, p. viii.
132 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 89.
133 Farkas, p. 12.

recognises this revisionary propensity in Burgess, even if this is not actively identified in his extensive poetry. Farkas points out that 'Burgess's motives in exercising those Bloomian ratios appear to be far more complex than whatever is encapsulated in such concepts of *tessera*, *kenosis*, or *askesis*.'[134] He is nervous of over-reducing Burgess's work to make it fit neatly into Bloom's (or anyone else's) reading. His reading attempts to counter reduction by incorporating biographical elements in support; he explores especially Burgess and Joyce's shared Jesuitry as examples of this. I have already established at length that anxiety concerning recent literary traditions, and how this can be countered via revisionist poetry, were also *in fact part of Burgess's biography* via his Leavisite literary education. Bloom's model thus becomes a further extension of Farkas's logic, and this theory of revision is *directly* applicable to Burgess's poetry (even beyond 1940). Specifically, I have already established that Burgess began to write partially emulative poetry in the midst of the revisionist practice and advocacy of Eliot, Richards, Graves, Riding, Leavis, and as identified by Hynes and Cunningham.

Bloom's revisionary ratios, and his general structure of *poetic crisis-measured response-qualified* answer can be observed in a Burgess poem[135], which he entitled 'A Father's Death'[136], and which appears in *Enderby Outside* as 'Independence Day'[137]. The opening few lines show a clear concern with the poet's relations to the recent past, and how to overcome the influence of the overbearingly authoritative traditions represented by the figure of the father:

> Anciently the man who showed
>
> Hate to his father with the sword

---

134 Farkas, p. 12.

135 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 193. Burgess suggests that this is a poem from 1938 (since he says he wrote it after his father's death, his father having died in 1938). Paul Phillips dates the poem as 1937, a year before Burgess's father's death. See Phillips, p. 407.

136 Anthony Burgess, 'A Father's Death', (Texas: HRC, box 121, fol. 4, n.d.).

137 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 360.

Was bundled in a dark sack

With a screaming ape to claw his back

And the screaming talk of a parrot to mock

Time's terror of air's and light's lack

Black

And the slimy litheness of a snake.[138]

Burgess describes the horrific strength of tradition as 'terror' and 'light's lack|Black'. The anxious presence of the post-Edenic snake shows the long tradition of being unable to go against the father without catastrophic retribution. In the opening eight lines, there is a 'vision of loss'[139], caused by the impenetrable darkness and the violent force of tradition. The crisis is partially countered by the "universal" father figure being 'swirled into the sea'[140]. Burgess then marks his 'movement away from'[141] the father (poets) when he says 'we have changed all that'[142]; this ancient father-worshipping mythology is summarily dismissed as 'all balls and talk'[143], a perhaps ironic testicular image for a poem obsessed with the break from the father. Immediately after this, though, there is a modification of this awareness of the break; dark history has been transferred into 'a cleaner light'[144], with the ability to 'wipe that mire off on the mat'[145]. Some recognition of the presence of the past via the fecund 'mire' on the doormat remains; Burgess thus provides an image of accommodation of the recognisably unpleasant clinging *historical matter* he has picked up (in a metaphorical sense).

The initial crisis of the poem is followed by the only couplet in the poem, which accordingly draws attention to itself: 'So when I knew his end was near|My breath was

---

138 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
139 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 96
140 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
141 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 13
142 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.

freer'[146]. Burgess shows awareness that he is able to exercise at least some limited

freedom in response to the (poetic) father, albeit limited by the continuing force of

tradition. The rhyme scheme is too *neat*; such hyperbole 'strains at the limits of

expression'[147], as a self-conscious defence against the father figure. The strain of this

tactic is therefore shown in the forced rhyme. This is immediately followed by imagery

where Burgess's right to selfhood is affirmed; the poem details 'a shedding then|Of all

the accidents of birth'[148], 'Peeling the last squamour of the old skin'[149]. The old skin is

removed, whilst the unusual medical word 'squamour'[150] stands out firmly in the line.

This word is used to describe the layer of the skin's epithelium which contain flat

cells.[151] 'Squamous' is also a word used by Rupert Brooke in his poem 'Heaven'[152], itself

a poem about the difficulty of poetic expression, via metaphors relating to the sea. It is

comparable with Burgess's own use of sea-imagery; his recondite allusion therefore

strengthens the viability of the sea metaphor through the power of intertextual

comparison. The middle part of the poem finds Burgess wrestling with Eliot's great

dead, and finding at least one way of 'shedding'[153] their weight. However, he follows

this with cautious lines:

> But never underestimate
>
> The comic cunning of the dead.
>
> The snake that slithers in at night
>
> To occupy most of the bed

---

146 Ibid.
147 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 146.
148 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid.
151 Oxford Online Dictionary <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/squamous?q=squamous> [Accessed 22 August 2013]
152 Burgess, who says he read a lot of Georgian poetry in his schooldays, could conceivably have read Brooke's poem in Edward Marsh, ed., *Georgian Poetry: 1913-15* (London: *The Poetry* Bookshop, 1915).'Squamous' is also used by Wallace Stevens in his 1942 poem, 'Connoisseur of Chaos' in Wallace Stevens. *Parts of a World (*New York: A.A. Knopf, 1942), p. 50
153 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.

Has learned to wear my father's head.[154]

The 'snake that slithers' is able to 'occupy most of the bed'[155], a symbol suggesting that

the archetypal snake is now been sublimated into himself. Confusingly, that snake's

head is his father's head; the over-use of the sibilance does not add any clarity to this.

Burgess follows Hopkins' use of head rhyme here. For example, in 'That Nature Is A

Heraclitean Fire And of the Comfort of the Resurrection', Hopkins uses the comparable,

heavily sibilant phrase 'Squandered ooze to squeezed'[156], an equally *slimy* image;

Burgess constructs the poem with recourse to Hopkinsian tropes, at the detriment to his

own poetic voice. The father (also meaning Hopkins) returns in Burgess's distorted

serpent image, which is indelibly bound up with Burgess himself. The father, Burgess,

and history as the serpent are indistinguishable in this single revised biblical image.

These lines acknowledge that the dead keep returning. This is where the comedy of the

poem comes from: the father cannot ultimately be got rid of, as the son starts to look

like him. Hence, 'A load of stupid monkey tricks|Turns me to him as the months pass'[157].

The poem ends with images of self-curtailment, Bloom's revisionary ratio,

askesis:

I hear him mine the floor beneath

Muffled: You'll not be rid of me.

Each morning when you shave you'll see.[158]

The onerous morning shave is thus daily combat with the dead. The ablution-based

---

154 Ibid.. Jackson's version misses these lines, along with the rest of this stanza. See Burgess,
     Revolutionary Sonnets, p. 13.
155 Ibid.
156 Gerard Manley Hopkins. "That Nature Is A Heraclitean Fire And of the Comfort of the Resurrection'
     in Roberts , *The Faber Book of Modern Verse,* p. 60.
157 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
158 Ibid.

imagery is comparable with William Empson's own seemingly trivial 'she cleans her teeth into the lake' (from 'Camping Out'[159]). In 'A Father's Death', Burgess's personal relationship with his father thus becomes a general message about *all fathers*. The conversion is, in turn, an accommodation of the past into the present. Haffen also detects this, when she notes in passing:

> One could apply to Burgess's [writings] Harold Bloom's definition of great romantic poetry as "a successful manifestation of the dead in the garment of the living, as though the dead poets were given a suppler freedom than they had found for themselves."[160]

This is exactly what happens in 'A Father's Death', and Haffen's argument about prose is applicable to poetry (since Bloom's original theory is specifically about poetry). Metaphorically, Burgess is attempting to shave off the dead man's skin to reveal his own beneath it; it is also a poem that uses poetic tropes of Hopkins, and Brooke, and uses imagery close to Empson and his metaphysical predecessors. Burgess's subject is Eliot's dead poets as much as his dead father; the imagery works on both levels, but – unlike his more famous contemporaries – Burgess's flat language at the end curtails the success of the "high" tropes he establishes early on. As Farkas would point out, the poem is an emotional response to a biographical event first and foremost, but it is undoubtedly entirely concerned with fathers, tradition, and the anxiety of being *belated*. Farkas's discussions about biographical details affecting the work of the artist-ephebe (or, the father-killer), would have therefore benefited greatly from this particular case study.

To return to Empson in further detail, 'A Father's Death' is similar to Empson's

---

159 Empson, 'Camping Out' in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 255. Jackson similarly notices this 'Eliotic/Empsonian strain' (p. v.) in Burgess's poetry, although he doesn't provide examples.

160 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 135. Haffen refers to Burgess's *biofictions* here, and not his poetry.

'This Last Pain' in terms of rhyme strength, the father themes, and – partially - tone.

Closer comparison thereby shows Burgess's poetic style is affected by the Empsonian

strain. For example, Empson's opening two lines begins with an equally generalised

assertion about fathers:

> This last pain for the damned the Fathers found:
>
> 'They knew the bliss with which they were not crowned.'[161]

Empson sticks closely to couplets, whereas Burgess opts for ABAB form, but for the

notable exception I have recorded above. In both cases, strong rhymes provide a sense

of *authority* and intellectual development, thanks to the rapid progression that the close

rhymes afford; Burgess is less successful in maintaining this, however. It is in the

attempt at a demonstrative, confident tone that the best comparisons can be seen.

Burgess assumes everyone agrees with him when he writes 'Nowadays we have

changed all that.'[162] Empson takes the same *inclusive* school-teacher tone when he

assumes '[. . .]if we worked it long|We should forget where it was wrong.'[163] Both poets

are confidently addressing their audience, expecting to be found correct. Cunningham

finds that this assertive, "we"-inclusive, assumptive grammar is typical of the period,

since '[t]he period's widespread diecticism [meaning demonstrative statements] was

undoubtedly an effort to assert authority, knowledge, command of experience [. . .] the

period's effort to achieve an authoritative air by dint of deictics cannot be ignored

[. . .]'[164]. In both poems, there is oscillation in pronouns from 'we' to 'I' as the argument

progresses, indicating intellectual development from the *deictic* general to the *emotive*

personal. In addition, Empson describes a 'cleanser for the frying-pan'[165], a domestic

---

161 Empson, 'This Last Pain' in Roberts, p. 256.
162 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.
163 Empson, 'This Last Pain' in Roberts, p. 257.
164 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 10.
165 Empson, 'This Last Pain' in Roberts, p. 257.

image easily as wretched as Burgess's mire on the mat. Both poems, ultimately, are complex statements about the force of tradition and the powerless absence it creates in the present. Empson's poem, following a series of extremely difficult transformations from crown-to-thorn-to-ash[166] demonstrates that sons live in a permanent state of absence caused by their father's stealing of power. As Empson's biographer John Haffenden puts it, the poem shows how 'man must suffer the agonizing strain of living by conceptions of absolute order which he knows to be only conceptions.'[167] That is to say, the force of tradition is presented as hollow in the present – there is a continual case, then, for forging ahead with a revisionary *mis-reading*. Empson concludes:

> Imagine, then, by miracle, with me,
>
> (Ambiguous gifts, as what gods give must be)
>
> What could not possibly be there,
>
> And learn a style from a despair.[168]

Like Burgess, then, Empson's poem ends with recognition that his voice (his 'style'[169]) will always be weakened by the force of tradition, hence the despair.

Empson's clipped style is achieved through a logical progression of dense language and complicated imagery in combination with strict rhyme. Burgess's poem, by comparison, does not exercise such restraint: it is an undergraduate's work which is urgent but given to lapses and repetitions such as '[. . .] a screaming ape to claw his back|And the screaming talk of a parrot [. . .]'[170], and compromised by the refusal to maintain the lofty imagery by the end. Burgess may have youthful verve, but Empson

---

166 'Thorn' and 'ash' would resurface as Empsonian ambiguous words in Burgess's later poem, 'Lines'. See Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets* p. 35.

167 John Haffenden, *William Empson: Among the Mandarins (*Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 363.

168 Empson, 'This Last Pain' in Roberts, p. 257.

169 Ibid.

170 Burgess, 'A Father's Death', p. 1.

has a mature coolness that helps the argument of his poem develop subtly, as opposed to Burgess's more obvious overstatements of 'stupid monkey tricks'[171] or clumsy formations such as a 'Time's terror of air's and light's lack|Black.'[172]

Empson and Burgess share more than just deictic language and revisionary preoccupations: they also share imagery inspired by the metaphysical poets. In the following section, I explore this metaphysical imagery, and present it as a shared inheritance between Empson and Burgess, two poets of the 1930s. I also position this trait as part of 1930s poetic fashion.

Empson and Burgess read Graves and Riding's assessment of Shakespeare in their *Survey*; Graves/Riding approve of how Shakespeare uses language to 'make as it were a furiously dynamic cross-word puzzle'[173], finding this "modern" in its approach (just as Burgess was to find Shakespeare Modern in his later years – see Chapter Four). Empson and Burgess, following the Graves-Riding assessment, both went on to use highly intellectualised metaphors in much the same way. Both alluded to the seventeenth-century *metaphysical* poets, specifically Empson with Donne and Burgess with Marvell[174]. For Cunningham, this intertextual metaphysical style was a fashion in poetry of the time, if not followed by all poets. Louis MacNeice, for example 'decried Empson's poems'[175]. He saw them as "'definitely the kind of poetry I don't like'"[176], since they were 'merely a set of soluble puzzles, games for "the detection of the statistician and the crossword puzzler"'[177]. Empson, according to Cunningham, replied that

yes, his poems were like crossword puzzles; the taste of 'obscure poetry' had indeed arisen

---

171 Ibid.
172 Ibid.
173 Graves and Riding, p. 38.
174 Burgess closely read Marvell in his Leavisite university seminars.
175 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 76.
176 Ibid.
177 Ibid.

'about the same time as the fashion for crossword puzzles'; ' this revival of puzzle interest in poetry, an old and natural thing', was very good; what's more, his Notes would give the 'answers' just as the newspapers eventually published crossword solutions.[178]

MacNeice, then, found the poems foregrounded intellect more than emotion. Haffenden defends Empson against such slights, finding that critics of his 1935 *Poems* could be found 'at least 'tentatively praising their ingenious technique, their allusiveness, their intellectual precision, their wit'[179]. The *allusiveness*, the intertextual link to seventeenth-century poetry, is a way to revise a traditional literary form, which Empson and Burgess use to find *New Bearings* in poetry. For Haffenden, Empson's imagery creates a controversial 'clash between tradition and new learning'[180], which expresses itself in the domestic modernity of toothpaste and razors in poetry. It revises literary tradition by incorporating tropes from the modern day in the Bloomian sense. Empson was very clear on his practice: he 'imitated Donne'[181], who in the seventeenth century used such unromantic imagery as a pair of compasses, or a flea, and who 'had, in effect, been discovered for the twentieth century by Eliot'[182]. Metaphysical allusion thus also becomes bound up with Eliot's influence as much as Empson.

Burgess, in a poem from *Enderby Outside*, alludes to (and revises) Marvell, another metaphysical poet. This is in an episode where the poet-character F. X. Enderby recites an 'Horation ode'[183], remembering how one of his critics once observed that the 'thirties are his true home'[184]. The poem begins:

The urgent temper of the laws,

---

178 Ibid.
179 Haffenden, *William Empson: Among the Mandarins*, p. 357.
180 Ibid.
181 *Ibid.*, p. 358.
182 Barbour, p. 448.
183 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 303.
184 Ibid., p. 304.

> That clips proliferation's claws,
>
>> Shines from the eye that sees
>>
>> A growth is a disease.[185]

The same poetic form was used by the seventeenth-century poet Andrew Marvell in *An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*, a poem which Empson describes as an example of the way 'the later metaphysical poets came to take the conceit [device] for granted, came to blur its sharp edge'.[186] Empson wrote about the poem, and Burgess read Empson's reading of it. These Empsonian-Marvellian tropes are further strengthened by Enderby's assertion after reciting the poem that he regards the approach '[t]he seventeenth century modified.'[187] This poem, by inference, is positioned as a 1930s modification of the seventeenth-century style. The fact that Empson singled out Marvell's 'Horation Ode' for attention in 1930 adds weight to this logic, as does Burgess's claim that he studied Marvell under Knights at Manchester in the 1930s (see above). The poem certainly displays the Empsonian approach for *modification* of a seventeenth-century form, a style part of the 1930s literary *zeitgeist*. It is unclear whether Burgess wrote the poem in the 1930s, but the poem at least shows that Burgess's Empsonian/metaphysical preoccupations remained strong when the book was published. Hence, a close reading of the poem shows how Burgess undertakes the same revisionary practice as William Empson, even if a reliable date cannot be ascribed to it.

In the poem, Burgess subtly invokes Marvell's original poem to express the difficulty of poetic discipline. The poetic language – like Empson's 'This Last Pain' – has revisionist themes, which are expressions through modified seventeenth-century (metaphysical) poetic forms (or, tropes). For Bloom, this is natural, since '[t]o originate

---

185 Ibid.
186 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 166
187 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 304.

anything in language we must resort to a trope, and that trope must defend us against a prior trope'[188] . In the first two lines of the poem, *laws clip proliferation.* That is to say, the creation of new poetic meaning is affected by the force of the written words of the past. It's an image of the urge for freedom via growth, albeit thwarted by the governing laws of proliferation; hence, a 'growth is a disease'[189]. This scientific-sounding phrase seems to indicate mutation, or harmful over-growth. Here, the word 'temper' is also ambiguous, referring both to the *anger* or voraciousness of the laws, and - via the similarity of the word to "tempo" or "tempus" - *time*. Time and anger are combined in a single word. This is an ambiguity of Empson's third category: 'two ideas, which are connected only by being both relevant in context, can be given in one word simultaneously'[190]. The Empsonian strain continues in the poem with *deictic* language in the assertion 'Only the infant will admire|The vulgar opulence of fire'[191]. This tone expects only agreement, and the argument here is that only the young have the energy and will-power to attempt the uncontrolled 'fire' of innovation. These lines are at once a recognition that new creation can be attempted, but also an understanding that any creation is part of 'the dumb|Patient continuum'[192], and so an accommodation. The word 'Patient' thus becomes a further conceit, referring both to the patient (possibly poetry itself) whose 'disease'[193] is being treated, and to the time-related concept of *waiting*. Marvell's original *Horatian Ode*, lends strength to the theme of accommodating "natural" creation, which can be seen in the lines that Burgess alludes to here:

> Nature that hateth emptiness
>
> Allows of penetration less,

---

188 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 69.
189 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 304.
190 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* p. 102.
191 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 304.
192 Ibid.
193 Ibid.

And therefore must make room

Where greater spirits come.[194]

The theme and the rhyme scheme are the same. However, Marvell refers to Oliver

Cromwell's "natural" right to government, whereas Burgess is making a more general

point about creation; however, the intertextual parallel acts as "evidence" for Burgess's

argument. The recondite allusion also adds ironic weight to Burgess's poem,

contributing to the theme of one's accommodation within an existing scheme. Burgess,

here, is undertaking a *misreading* through allusion, actively using the kind of poetic

"difficulty" preferred by Richards, Empson, and Eliot.

The irony is sustained in the final stanza, as Burgess boldly states that the

'cancer' of creation (or poetry) can be 'controlled|And moulded'[195] in imagery

continually borrowed from recent medical science[196]. This can be regarded as a tactic to

modernise the metaphysical form. Haffenden recognises this in Empson, noting that

'The peculiar strength of Empson's poetry derives from the scope and ingenuity of his

analogizing imagination.'[197] Burgess, then, certainly shared Empson's methodology for

modifying metaphysical poetry.

The influence of Empson remained strong at the end of Burgess's university

education, as 1940 approached. As Max Saunders points out – in his exploration of

conflict and sexuality in the novels of Burgess, James Joyce, and Ford Maddox Ford –

Burgess's final BA thesis on *Dr Faustus* 'was influenced by William Empson's

---

194 Arthur Quiller-Couch, *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (Oxford University Press, 1900:1939), p.
      394. Burgess's own copies of these editions available at the IABF, Manchester.
195 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 304.
196 Thomas Hunt Morgan, winner of the 1933 Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine, had published
      research involving disease and cellular activity as early as 1922. See Thomas Hunt Morgan, Alfred
      Henry Sturtevant, Hermann Joseph Muller, Calvin Blackman Bridges. *The Mechanism of Mendelian
      Heredity (*New York: Holt, 1922). See also 'The Nobel Prize in Pysiology or Medecine 1933',
      <http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/1933/ > [accessed 26 September 2012]
197 Haffenden, *William Empson: Among the Mandarins*, p. 364.

analysis'[198]. In the thesis, Burgess explores what he calls 'the closely woven conflict in Faustus's own mind'[199], concluding that 'his mind is a welter of conflict'[200]. For him, this is evidenced via 'an ambiguous construction'[201] in Faustus's use of the word 'dispaire'[202] in the two lines: 'Away with such fancies and despaire,|Despaire in God'. Burgess notes how the 'forceful reiteration of "despaire gives the impression of Faustus hammering the injunction consciously and with some effort into his brain'[203], suggesting doubt. Because of this, Burgess finds 'an ambiguous construction for the first "dispaire"' and sees it 'as an object of [to] "go away with"' God into salvation, whilst also – at the same time – being 'a negative word, the absence of hope.'[204] Here, Burgess continues Empson's own argument about Marlowe's use of line stress to create ambiguity. Empson uses Faustus's phrase '*Let* Ugly Hell gape, *show* me Lucifer'[205] to demonstrate the character's psychological conflicts. According to Empson, 'the depths of his mind are being churned to the surface; his meanings are jarring in his mouth; one cannot recite *Ugly Hell gape not* as a direct imperative'[206]. Likewise, Burgess's point regarding reiteration also extends Empson's argument that 'ambiguity is a phenomenon of compression'[207]. In such cases, argues Empson, this 'is in itself a device of some rhymical subtlety', and 'is often a matter of separating the implications of sentences and using them at different times'[208]. This is the same argument Burgess makes with regard to the ambiguous "dispaire". He takes, in short, an Empsonian approach to ambiguity, founded on conflicting meanings within the same word and the subtle effect of a word's

---

198 Max Saunders, 'Burgess, Joyce and Ford: modernity, sexuality and confession' in Alan Roughley, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (University of Manchester Press, 2008), pp. 190-206, (p. 201).
199 Anthony Burgess, untitled BA thesis draft, 1940 (IABF), p. 10.
200 Burgess, untitled BA thesis draft, p. 12.
201 Ibid., p. 8.
202 Ibid., p. 8.
203 Christopher Marlowe, *Dr Faustus*, quoted in Burgess, untitled BA thesis draft, p. 8.
204 Ibid.
205 Christopher Marlowe, *Dr Faustus*, quoted in Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p.206.
206 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p.206.
207 Ibid., p.31
208 Ibid.

repetition. Burgess, then, shared Empson's approach to modified seventeenth-century forms and, by the end of the 1930s, Empson's critical approaches to literary tradition were embedded into his undergraduate education.

Burgess's use of complex allusion, intertextual modifications of literary forms, revisionist fervour, "unpoetic" imagery, and linguistic devices, I have shown, originate from the literary developments that Burgess and his more recognised poetic modernist peers were seeped in during this key decade. In the 1940s, Burgess's poetry continues to display these stylistic features of the 1930s. Arguably, the paraphernalia of the war (especially its technology), and of *war* as a general literary theme afforded Burgess opportunities to adapt his intertextual, revisionist poetic style in continuing depth, but not to explore it beyond the methodology he had already adopted.

The 1942 poem, 'A Typical Evening of Wartime', for example, begins with a misquotation of the seventeenth-century poet, Thomas Shadwell:

> Nymphs and satyrs, come away.
> Faunus, laughing from the hill,
> Rips the blanket of the day
> From the paunch of dirty Will.[209]

The misquotation of Shadwell sets the poem up for irony, as can be seen from these lines from Shadwell's original verse drama, *The Libertine*:

> Nymphs and Shepherds come away
> In these Groves let's sport and play;
> Where each day is a Holy-day,

---

209 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 82.

Sacred to Ease and happy Love.[210]

This verse, sung as part of a 'Symphony of Rustick Musick'[211] which was written by

Henry Purcell, follows a brief dialogue of shepherds warning against the fleshly

dangers of city life, including 'excess of Meat'[212] and 'dangerous Wine'[213] In Burgess's

poem, Shadwell's *shepherds* are substituted for sex-craved *satyrs* (presumably

servicemen), and the presence of *dirty Will* shows that this is more about the dangers of

urban excess, as opposed to the purity of life enjoyed by Shadwell's shepherds.

Shadwell's 'happy Love'[214] becomes furtive sexual contact in a flea-pit cinema in

Burgess's revision. Juxtaposing sordidness and intertextual pastoral tropes[215] is in

keeping with Samuel Coale's observations concerning Burgess's mythic prose

intertexualities, since in his novels he uses older 'literary forms [or, tropes] to make

comparisons between the lost past and the futile present.'[216] Coale points out that

Burgess follows Eliot's practice in doing this[217]. From the point of ironic allusion, then,

Burgess continues 1930s poetic styles into the 1940s.

The direct invoking of Shadwell is at once a modification and recognition of the

original; it is an accommodation and a change at the same time. The violent image of

ripping the blanket from Will, who makes a new projection, thus becomes an image for

renewal, a swerving from Shadwell. The following description of projection equipment,

which compares cinematic technology to the snout of a 'truffling'[218] pig thus becomes a

---

210 Thomas Shadwell, *The Libertine: A Tragedy* (London: Tonson, Saunders, Bennet, and Bentley, 1704), p. 40
211 Shadwell, *The Libertine*, p. 40.
212 Ibid*., p. 39.
213 Ibid*., p. 39.
214 Ibid*., p. 40
215 This is a subject Burgess returned to in the 1950s, in allusion to the poetry of George Crabbe. See Chapter Three.
216 Coale, *Anthony Burgess*, p. 102.
217 And Joyce. Farkas, Aggeler, and Coale all argue for Joycean intertextualities in Burgess's novels. Were my thesis concerned with prose forms, I would provide a full exploration of this.
218 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 82.

tactic in response to provide a personalised voice, or *daemonization.* The swine-filled

cinema is not treated sympathetically; it is more about back-row fumbling than celluloid

art. Cunningham finds that this anti-cinematic attitude is to be found in poetry of the

1930s. He quotes MacNeice's 'Ode' and a section from Auden's *The Dog Beneath the*

Skin, noting these poets' dislike of the anti-intellectualism of this particular form of

mass entertainment. MacNeice describes cinema as 'a frivolous nostalgia|Like that

which film-fans feel|For their celluloid abstractions|The nifty hero and the deathless

blonde'.[219] Burgess's scenes about cinema of the 1940s are just as frivolous.

Burgess alludes to a non-poetic text, when he writes: 'Till the *Wille*'s lights gush

out|*Vorstellungen* on the screen.[220] In *Enderby Outside*, the eponymous poet's interior

monologue on these lines draws attention to Schopenhauer: 'Love, Schopenhauer had

seemed to say, was one of the perpetual cinema performances or *Vorstellungen*'[221].

Love, here, is sex, and it is a mere projection; the word *Wille* therefore seems to be the

cinema's name and the Schopenhauerian word for the *will*, and *vorstellungen* means

representation; the source text in English is called *The World as Will and*

Representation[222]. The image is at once sordid, philosophical, and about the limits of the

(poetic) artwork to project this scene. It is thus a hyperbolic "mis-reading" of

Schopenhauerian tropes, used as a tactic to counter the presence of Shadwell, and the

literary traditions he stands for. Burgess combines disparate parts of cultural history to

force his own *projection* with an act of *will*, through the ironic use of a German

philosopher in a context of war with Germany.

The next stanza shifts perspective, as Burgess invites his reader to 'See! The

---

219 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 286.
220 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 82.
221 Ibid.
222 See Raymond B. Marcin, *In Search of Schopenhauer's Cat: Arthur Schopenhauer's quantum-mystical theory of Justice* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), pp. 6-8.

rockets shoot afar!'[223] This presumably refers to images of warfare (perhaps from

newsreel footage), but is also an image of sexual over-projection, which reaches its

climax when the screen reaches its 'tautest'[224] state. Again, Burgess exploits ambiguity

to will the images projected in the poem. This is then met with a final return of another

dead German writer. This time, it's Oswald Spengler: 'Tragic the parabola|When the

sticks reel down again.'[225] Here, Burgess refers to a concept which appears in a lecture

Theodore Adorno gave in 1938, which addresses Spengler's 'historical fatalism'[226], a

curve of history Adorno found to be a 'parabola of growth and decay'[227]. Enderby's

interior monologue about this poem also points to 'Spengler, too'[228]. The word

'parabola' refers, then, to the curve of decay in culture, noted when 'the sticks reel down

again'[229] in the poem. The reeling-down is an image of bombs descending, and the

exhaustion of the sexual will. The pun is, once again, Empson's third kind of ambiguity

– a conceit, as the whole scene described by Burgess is also a *parable* for the morality

of cinema. The poem doesn't didactically explain that cinema is artistically empty or

sordid, but it certainly shows it through these complex conceits and allusion. Samuel

Hynes notes that the *parabolic* technique is closely associated with Auden, as identified

by Empson, who in a 1931 essay finds it is

> an acknowledgement of Auden's great contribution to the imagination of his generation; his
> gift for assimilating modern movements and systems of belief and transforming them into
> parabolic forms, and for finding the necessary images of immediate reality [. . .][230]

---

223 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 82.
224 Ibid.
225 Ibid.
226 David Roberts, *Art and Enlightenment: Aesthetic Theory after Adorno* (University of Nebraska Press, 1991), p. 73.
227 Roberts, *Art and Enlightenment*, p. 73.
228 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 82.
229 Ibid.
230 Hynes, p. 55.

Burgess presents all of this in his own (1940s) poetic parable of the cinema, which self-consciously draws attention to its own preoccupations. The modern, sordid, and belief-eroding effect of cinema is presenting through an unpoetic image of "immediate reality" (technology), and once again shows Burgess revising literary tradition in an effort to literally project his will into the poem. Auden, by comparison, is similarly dubious about the cinematic experience. In 'A Bride in the '30s', for example, he finds that, in cinema:

> Summoned by such a music from our time
>
> Such images to audience come
>
> As vanity cannot dispel nor bless:
>
> Hunger and love in their variations
>
> Grouped invalids watching the flight of the birds
>
> And single assassins.[231]

Burgess was in later life to regard Auden as an inheritor of Hopkins, who 'used the alliterative technique of Hopkins and of Anglo-Saxon poetry to proclaim the coming era of change'[232]. Allusions to Auden and Eliot feature in poetry written around 1945. Burgess foregrounds this by noting that '[t]he poetry I was reading at war's end were of a pacific nature – Eliot's *Four Quartets*, at last completed, Auden's *New Year Letter* and Cyril Connolly's *The Unquiet Grave.*'[233] The poem which Burgess presents after this comment begins with saturated allusions to Auden and Eliot:

> Useless to hope to hold off
>
> The unavoidable happening

---

231 Auden in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 284.
232 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 538.
233 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 320. *The Unquiet Grave* is not a poetry book, but a collection of pensées, mostly in prose, with some quotations from Dryden's translation of Virgil.

>With that frail barricade
>
>Of week, day or hour
>
>Which melts as it is made,
>
>For time himself will bring
>
>You in his high-powered car,
>
>Rushing on to it,
>
>Whether you will or not.[234]

The images here are all based on the idea of *time.* The *urgent temper* of the earlier poem remains, then. Auden's *New Year's Letter* – which Burgess parodied in 1974[235] – begins with a long assessment of the relationship between time and literature, whereas Eliot's 'Burnt Norton' from *Four Quartets* contains complex assessments of the relationship between past and present. The sense of inevitability of time in Burgess's poem is coterminous with Auden, whereas time's sublimation into general human experience is from Eliot. For example, Burgess's phrase 'unavoidable happening' echoes Auden's 'on the verge of happening.'[236] Auden, as Burgess pointed out, uses Hopkinsian alliteration in the line preceding this, so that 'her haunted house'[237] coincides with 'happening'[238]. In much the same way, Burgess places *hope*, *hold*, and *happening* to set up a similar Hopkinsian head rhyme. Burgess makes use of *deictic* language once again, to speak of 'that frail barricade|Of week, day or hour'[239], a phrase comparable with Auden's 'Of winter, conscience, and of state.'[240] In addition to this, Burgess's 'time himself will bring'[241] echoes Auden's 'Time can moderate his tone'[242], through the similar metre, and

---

234 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time,* p. 320.
235 See Chapter Three.
236 W.H. Auden, 'New Year Letter' in *Collected poems,* ed., Edward Mendelson (London: Faber and Faber, 1976:1991:1994), p. 199.
237 Auden, 'New Year Letter', p. 199.
238 Ibid.
239 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time,* p. 320.
240 Auden, 'New Year Letter', p. 199.
241 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 320.
242 Auden, 'New Year Letter', p. 199.

through the device of presenting time as a person. Both poets rhetorically present

general and not necessarily connected points as logical, and expect agreement. As

Cunningham points out (see above), this is diectic device is associated with 1930s

poetry.

The three lines of the second stanza develop the logic of time's inescapable

presence by locating it within 'bone', in a trope also used by Eliot in 'Burnt Coker'. It is

a force within the human body (scientifically demonstrated by the act of ageing). Two

lines from Eliot's 'Burnt Coker' present a similar sublimation of time-into-body: '[. . .]

the enchainment of past and future|Woven into the weakness of the changing body.'[243]

Burgess, then, continues to allude to Eliot, much as he did in the 1930s. This, though, is

compounded by further allusion to Auden in the following line. Whereas Burgess is

resigned to the events of time, Auden's *New Year Letter* uses the phrase 'Obedient to

some hidden force'[244]. It is unusual that this poem alludes to Auden directly, since the

poetry surveyed thus far has tended to allude to shared predecessors of Burgess's

generation, rather than directly to his peers (and this includes the Empsonian tropes,

which are Empsonian by dint of their allusion to the seventeenth-century). This poem,

then, sees Burgess referring to more contemporaneous poets. And, through images such

as a substance that 'melts as it is made', and the 'shaking hands with the grim

satisfactory argument' it is possible to see Burgess as reacting to the recent '

unavoidable' force of literary "time", and attempting to work out whether he embraces

its strength, or whether to enjoy the 'margin of leaving', the 'final tight pressure of

hands' that marks a small timeless personal moment of a kiss in the 'bare acres' of time

and tradition. It is, at the same time, a poem about a soldier's feelings at the prospect of

---

243 T.S. Eliot, 'Burnt Coker' in *The Complete Poems and Plays*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1969:2004),
    p. 173.
244 Auden, 'New Year Letter', p. 199.

return back to service after his leave[245]. Burgess alludes to Auden and Eliot, and – in

keeping with 1930s practice, also incorporates technological imagery ('high-powered

car') in a poem that is as much about the poet's relationship to belated literary tradition

as it is the belated hour of the return to duty. By the mid-1940s, then, Burgess remained

closely with his 1930s strains. He alludes to Auden's *New Year Letter* in a poem

published in 1975, as I point out in Chapter Four.

As Burgess returned from war service in the late 1940s he continued to explore

these 1930s literary techniques, through explorations of "strong" poets' works. For

example, between 1948 and 1950, Burgess produced verse plays for public performance

including T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* Auden and Isherwood's *The Ascent of

F6*[246]. The latter play's characters are 'the big, the tough, the butch, the airbourne, [who

are] able to achieve heroic stature for themselves only by pretence, by proxy, in

metaphor and other literary figures'[247]. Burgess's choice of Auden and Isherwood's play,

which focuses on the 'rejection of the heroic in the recuperated tones – and amid

recollections – of First War disillusionment'[248], was apt for one returning for war

service, but also useful research for his subsequent explorations of the modernist

dramatic form. Burgess was returning to poetic works he had read during his Leavisite

education in the 1930s. That is to say, Burgess would be an increasingly belated 1930s-

informed intertextual Modernist poet from 1950 onwards. In the following chapter, I

explore this in detail.

This chapter has traced the critical and poetic influences that Burgess signals in

his biographical work and elsewhere. In so doing, the chapter has defined the relatively

narrow conception of Modernism that was first introduced in Chapter One, and is

---

245 See Anthony Burgess, 'Poèmes inédits', pp. 5-17.
246 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 120-1.
247 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 170.
248 Ibid., p. 208.

developed in Chapters Three and Four. Burgess is seen as accessing poetry and writing about poetry primarily through the formalism of Eliot, Empson, Leavis, Hopkins, and Auden. These poets are found to all refer to poets from the past in a distinct way. Burgess accesses literary tradition through this unique lens. The poetic result of this, I have argued, is what Cunningham describes a serious kind of pastiche[249], which has been identified and discussed in Chapter One. Burgess's creative emulation of Eliot, Hopkins, Empson, and Auden has been presented as an early means of mastering form. *The Waste Land* has been demonstrated as a particularly influential Modernist poem which provides a strict form for assembling a multiplicity of intertextual material in a coherent manner. Burgess's early poetry, accordingly, uses strict forms and references to other poets, whilst also writing about the revision of culture, showing the strong influence of Pound, Eliot, Leavis, and Auden. The early poem, 'A Father's Death', has been shown to be about strong precursors, and to also feature hyperbolic language which is stretched as a means of reacting to the strength of these influences. This is a prototypical investigation of the limitations of form, but not as developed as those seen in subsequent chapters. The influence of Empson's poetry has been identified, as has the importance of Empson's theories of conflict and ambiguity, which – as I showed in Chapter One – become equatable with post-structuralist theories of linguistic intertextuality and ambiguity. Poetic devices associated with Auden, Spender, Hopkins, and other poets published in the 1930s have been detected within a range of Burgess's poems, showing how these early parodies and pastiches feature the same Modernist techniques and preoccupations that became a feature in his poetry up until his death.

---

249 Ibid., p. 160.

CHAPTER THREE: *HUNGER FOR THE PICARESQUE* **(1950s to 1970s)**

In this chapter, I demonstrate how the 1930s Modernist poetic style identified in

Chapter Two frequently appears in Burgess's poetry between 1950 and 1979. Although

general literary techniques changed, Burgess's Modernism remained consistent. I thus

present Burgess as a poet wrestling not only with Eliot's *great dead*, but also his relation

to the swift changes in literary tradition. In the present chapter, I use the word

"belatedness" in relation to Burgess's position regarding literary tradition; I present

Burgess as an increasingly belated Modernist poet. For Bloom, *belatedness* means 'the

fear of time's revenges [which] is the true dungeon for the imagination'[1], a stultifying

potential block in the quest to negotiate one's poetic voice. *Belatedness* thus indicates

anxiety to deviate from predecessors' influence. It also has an obvious chronological

meaning: Burgess is presented as continually using Modernist techniques some years

after his precursors had written their innovative Modernist texts. Mellors and Stevenson

use the term *late Modernism* in recognition of the continuing existence of Modernist

techniques in poetry that continues beyond the 1930s. In this chapter, I use *belated*

Modernism to refer to this, but also to present a more immediate response to influence.

Specifically, *belated Modernism* means the continuation of established Modernist

techniques in a literary context where the general relevance or impact of those

techniques has passed, but where those Modernist poets have already established a

strong poetic voice that cannot be ignored by the later poet. Accordingly, many of the

poems I study in this chapter possess a self-conscious awareness of their belatedness,

especially in relation to Modernist literary tradition. I identify how this self-conscious

---

1   Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 68.

awareness of belatedness is in keeping with 1950s-1970s general poetic trends, even if

Burgess's "core" 1930s style is not; his belated Modernist style is therefore viewed as a

transitional postwar style which is out of literary fashion. Burgess, I establish, does not

always successfully find his poetic voice. Accordingly, my exploration of Burgess's

1950s poetry starts with a close reading of *The Eve of St. Venus,* Burgess's only original

work of verse drama, a text which has never before benefited from textual analysis.

Burgess, I assert, over-emulates T. S. Eliot (and Christopher Fry) via an already-

outmoded literary form, and so fails to counter the influence of *strong* verse dramatists.

I view the play as a noteworthy example of Burgess's failure to innovate as a poet, and

by exploring this, I clear new ground for future study.

Additionally, I identify the continuing influence of Eliot and Empson in poetry

of the 1950s from *The Worm and the Ring* (written c.1952, published 1961[2]); again,

these poems have never been studied in their own right before. Farkas's observations

concerning pastiche and parody are expanded when I consider Burgess's emulation of

early-1950s Eliot, Fry, and the fashionable poetic techniques of the group of writers

known as the Movement. I present a previously overlooked poem from *One Hand*

Clapping (1961) as a disapprovingly hyperbolic intertextual response to Movement

styles, an example of Bloom's revisionary ratio of *kenosis.* I also explain how Burgess's

poem anticipates the tone and style associated with The Group, a community of poets

active in the 1960s, under the distant influence of Leavis.

I position poetry from *Inside Mr Enderby* (1963) and *Enderby Outside* (1968) as

exhibiting 1930s poetic conventions, this time *partially* in keeping with the general

swing back to more experimental forms of that time, as identified by Alvarez in his

introduction to *The New Poetry* (1962), and as seen in retrospect by Michael Schmidt et

---

2   See Biswell, p. 132.

al (1972)[3]. My point here (and elsewhere in this chapter) is that Burgess's 1930s-style remains consistent, whilst poetic fashion changes around him. He remains more of a *belated* 1930s poet than a contemporary poet reverting to the styles of previous generations, writing in the context of a poetic culture in transition. Most especially, the *Revolutionary Sonnets* sequence (1966) is shown as high "1930s" Empsonian Modernism, of at best variable relevance to the poetic vein of the 1960s, viewing Burgess's Satan as the ultimate Bloomian image for belatedness.

I argue that Burgess's 1930s poetic preoccupations continue in major works in the 1970s, just as Mellors has recently observed the persistence of late Modern techniques in postwar poets[4]. I argue that Burgess weaves ironic allusion to and citation of Hopkins's strong 1930s poetry into the prose of *The Clockwork Testament* (1972) in an Auden-style parable concerning the morality of poetry and art, whilst still maintaining a highly comic effect. Similarly, Burgess is found reverting at length to 1930s formalist writing in *Moses* (1976), which at once revises Rosenberg's 1918 epic poem whilst being informed by Graves and Riding's analysis of Rosenberg's original blank-verse text. I address the poem's relation to this precursor text, a problematic matter not previously tackled by other scholars. I also show that Burgess's 1930s-inspired revisionist preoccupations continued into the *late 1970s*, in his translation of sonnets by Roman poet Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli, and in the "forced" attribution of John Keats as the writer of Burgess's poems in *ABBA ABBA* (1977). My reading of these sonnets expands Haffen's previous findings as I identify how Burgess employs tactics for interrupting the *biographical mythologies* of predecessors in poetry, disturbing the authority of precursor poems by inserting his own *belated* tropes into them. In this sequence of poems, I argue, Burgess uses intertextual techniques similar to those which

---

3   Michael Schmidt and Grevel Lindop, eds., *British Poetry Since 1960: A Critical Survey* (Oxford: Carcanet, 1972).

4   Mellors, p. 19.

both Auden and Pound employed in their own (mis-)translation work. This is interpreted as the ultimate attempt of a belated poet to impose his own tropes and defences (Bloom) onto "strong" precursors. Ultimately, then, Burgess continues as a 1930s-informed revisionist poet using intertextual techniques generally out of step with the poetic conventions of 1950-1979.

Britain and Belatedness

Before close examination of specimen poetry (starting with the 1950s), I will address the concept of "late" or "belated" British culture. Between 1950 and 1979, as Burgess recognised, '[t]he world was certainly changing'[5], and fast. The postwar world's economy, politics, technology, and subsequent artistic responses were all being rethought along new lines. Burgess and his wife recorded this rapid cultural transition of the early 1950s in a diary which demonstrates the pessimism and austerity of early Cold War Britain, including 'weekly cardboard ewe-meat'[6] and the threatening 'smell of war'[7]. The diary contains lines of unpublished verse, which were later recycled in verse drama *The Eve of St. Venus* (see below). In this diary, the church and the pub are presented as features of a suddenly *belated* world, out of keeping with rapid global changes. Burgess paints a picture of anti-intellectualism potently represented by the pub's television set. For Robert Conquest, the *poetic* symptoms of this creeping anti-intellectualism (which started in the late 'forties) was a 'collapse of public taste'[8], with 'diffuse and sentimental verbiage'[9], and the 'metaphorical lavishness'[10] of, for example,

---

5   Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 367.
6   John Burgess Wilson and Lynne Wilson, *Journal of the Plague Year*, personal journal, 1952 (IABF), p. 2.
7   J. B. Wilson and L. Wilson, *Journal of the Plague Year,* p. 2.
8   Robert Conquest, 'Introduction' in *New Lines:An Anthology,* ed., Robert Conquest (London, Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956), p. xi – xviii, (p. xi).
9   Conquest, p. xii.
10 Blake Morrison, *The Movement* (Oxford University Press: 1980), p. 35.

Dylan Thomas replacing the "difficult" formalism of Empson, Eliot, and their 1930s peers. (Burgess's 1940s poetry *maintained* its Empsonian strains in contrast to this neo-Romantic fashion). Conquest and the poets in the 1956 anthology wished to counter this retraction with a rational poetry that was properly reflective of the world of the H-bomb and the television set. This group of poets (known as 'the Movement') were seen by critics as united in their mission to introduce austere form and content into poetry. As Randall Stevenson puts it in his account of the period,

> The Movement's restrain and directness also answered more general needs in a post-war age, anxious about A- bombs and Auschwitz [. . .] Neutral tones and cleared spaces were consolidated by Movement poetry's careful structure, and by its language – colloquial in style, but usually regular in rhyme and metre [. . .][11]

Burgess, though set apart from this community, shared at least some of its formalist fervour. John Lehmann, in a 1952 broadcast, discussed the poets eventually represented in Conquest's anthology, and

> observed that the Romanticism of recent poetry was being offset by 'a very different mood and impulse, not precisely satirical but of a dry anti-romantic flavour, and using the contract or conflict of a conversational tone and an exacting pattern.'[12]

The younger, revisionist Movement poets of the 1950s were 'abandoning lyricism and feeling for a poetry of reason and statement'[13]. Dense allusion and difficult metaphor were being replaced by a plainness of diction: it was a new revisionist project, arising from the poets' own self-conscious sense of belatedness. Morrison finds a particularly

---

11   Stevenson, p. 167.
12   John Lehmann, *New Soundings*, BBC Radio Broadcast 24th September 1952). Quoted in Morrison, p. 43.
13   Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 33.

concentrated sense of Movement *belatedness* in a poem by Philip Larkin about the time

immediately before World War I, called 'MCMXIV', which ends with the line 'Never

such innocence again.'[14] For Morrison, this 'is a termination myth, a myth about the end

of something [. . .] a decisive break in the English consciousness and experience.'[15] The

unobtainable return to innocence marks the poem's belatedness, its obsession with its

own modern setting. The poem is also written in strikingly stark diction, with no

metaphysical metaphor or explosive Hopkinsian diction. It is, for Morrison, typical of

Movement poetry. Burgess shares this awareness of belatedness, and also makes use of

the exacting forms that Lehmann observed in 1952. For example, in Burgess's novel

Beds in the East (1959), Fenella Crabbe writes a poem in strict quatrains about the

movement of time:

> Youth was a knife and lakes and air,
>
> Metal and glass; you could bestow
>
> Your body as a gift of swords to spare.
>
> It was different then. It was not you [. . .][16]

Her husband Victor Crabbe describes this as 'a proleptic Eliotian image of an aged eagle

with tired wings demanding to be released from the dressing-mirror'[17]. Burgess's

continuing use of 1930s-style complex metaphor and "difficult" Empsonian language

sets him apart from the poets who were gaining fame in the early 1950s.

Burgess, like Movement poets, detected a creeping anti-intellectualism and

sense of *belatedness* in the early 1950s: 'the backbone of bourgeois culture [was]

---

14 Philip Larkin, 'MCMXIV'. Quoted in Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 194.
15 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 195.
16 Anthony Burgess, *Beds in the East* (1959) in *The Long Day Wanes* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972:1978:1979:1981), p. 522.
17 Ibid.

disregarded and even reviled'[18] in Banbury as much as Britain generally. A review of the

local arts in the *Banbury Guardian* similarly decided that the 'growing indifference to

artistic events [. . .] must give rise to serious alarm.'[19] This could well have been written

by Burgess, who says he would often 'write the notices of performances'[20] for the

newspaper. Burgess's artistic response[21], though, was radically different from Movement

poetry: he used Modernist verse drama after Eliot. He knew this 1930s-style Modernist

form well, and was prodigious in his own interpretations of writers who used it:

'[b]etween 1948 and 1950 he directed six stage plays'[22] including Auden and

Isherwood's *The Ascent of F6* and Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral.* Burgess showed

continuing interest in producing 1930s-style drama in 1950-1951, producing Sean

O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* for 'the Adderbury Drama Group'[23]. He largely chose to

produce verse drama published between 1925 and 1936[24], giving him opportunity to

immerse himself in these works' conventions, following Eliot's advice that tradition

'cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour',[25] just as he,

Auden, and Spender did with the 1930s pastiches of Hopkins.

The Eve of St. Venus

The Eve of St. Venus, described as Burgess's 'first original play, a three-act

theological comedy'[26] is his only work of verse drama, written in 1951, and uses a

---

18 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 355.
19 'Musical Society Opens'. *Banbury Guardian.* Thursday, 18 October 1951, p. 5.
20 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 356.
21 This also included music. See 'Local Man's Music Played'. *Banbury Guardian.* Thursday 22 March 1951, n.p.
22   Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 120.
23 'Spring Breaks New Plays'. *Banbury Guardian.* Thursday February 14th, 1952. n.p..
24 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* pp. 120-1. The exceptions are: an adaptation of the 1947 Nigel Balchin novel *Lord, I Was Afraid*, and Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* and Marlowe's *Dr Faustus.*
25   T.S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, ed. by Frank Kermode. (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 38.
26 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 129.

poetic form originating from the 1930s to dramatise the conflict of tradition versus modernity. Kayla McKinney Wiggins – in her introduction to English modern verse drama – supports this when she observes that

> in the 1930s a new kind of verse drama appeared with the dramas of playwrights and poets who sought to establish it as a modern theatrical convention by uniting the heightened expression of poetry with issues relevant to the modern world, and by making verse an integrated part of a coherent drama based in action and conflict.[27]

Cunningham points out that public performances of plays of this kind took place from at least 1932[28]. By 1939, Burgess was confident enough with the conventions of this mode to write a negative review of Eliot's verse drama *The Family Reunion*; he 'found that the poet's imagination was not a dramatic one'[29]. This early opinion did not prevent him from writing verse drama in thrall of Eliot twelve years later. Auden, Isherwood, Fry, and – most especially – Eliot were the key verse dramatists that Burgess drew upon. They had created the recent tradition, and Burgess, though approximately contemporary as a writer, produced his own work long after these writers had established the modern form; Burgess is thus positioned as a *belated* verse dramatist and out of keeping with the predominant trends of 1950s poetic modes.

Having immersed himself in the texts of the most dominant verse dramatists of the 1930s modernist mode, Burgess wrote *The Eve of St Venus* in blank verse, like many of the plays he *produced* in the years previous to this. The play presents belated British culture in conflict with its own traditions. The characters, who are mainly landed gentry, debate film, television, popular entertainment, and coffee bars. Foppish Ambrose

---

27 Kayla McKinney Wiggins, *Modern Verse Drama in English,* Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature, Number 39 (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 1993), p. x.
28 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 322.
29 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 69.

Rutterkin, on the night before his wedding to Diana Drayton accidentally marries Venus, the goddess of love from classical tradition, by placing his engagement ring upon her statue's finger. Befuddled by drink, he encounters Venus in his bed, and retreats to the Draytons' house. A Vicar arrives to exorcise Venus, to the disgust of Diana's Falstaffian father, Sir Ben, who believes in the power of classical deities. The "new" Anglican religion is shown as weak in comparison with the ancient deity and the Vicar loses his faith. Meanwhile, Diana attempts to elope with her friend Julia. When Venus's magic immobilises Julia's car, Diana returns and the family is reconciled. The curtain closes with the certainty that the marriage will happen, and Sir Ben will enjoy his Falstaffian feast-day.

Burgess notes that he 'wrote the [play originally as a] libretto with no further motive than the providing of words for music'[30]. The work was later to resurface in Burgess's career as a novella (1964). Phillips's assessment of the text does not mention its intermediary phase as a *verse* play[31]. Burgess initially called it *Gods Have Hot Backs*[32], an allusion to Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (specifically, a scene where Falstaff asks '[. . .] When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do?')'[33] Juvan calls this kind of allusion '"Intertitleness" [or a] literal or adapted citation of another text's title, [which] is a special example of citational allusion and paraphrase'[34]. Burgess's original title, then, revises a Shakespearean *trope* (if not the title directly) which conveniently summarises the themes of the play. *The Eve of St. Venus*, the later title, as Aggeler[35] notes, also revises the title of an earlier Keats poem, *The Eve of St.*

---

30 Anthony Burgess, *The Eve of St Venus (*London: Hesperus Press, 1964:2004), p. vii.
31   Paul Phillips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint (*Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 54.
32   On the MacMaster MS, this title is struck through, and the Wilson name corrected to Burgess. The date of 1951 was also added at the time of these amendments.
33   William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by W. J. Craig (London: Magpie Books, 1993), pp. 68-9. Burgess also used this quote as a later-abandoned epigraph.
34   Juvan, p. 19.
35   Geoffrey Aggeler, *Anthony Burgess: The Artist as Novelist (*University of Alabama Press, 1979), p. 150.

Agnes, a Romantic poem which itself attempts to revise Shakespeare, by 'competing with those classical narrative forms [of] which the "Venus and Adonis" of Shakespeare was the most popular'.[36] Burgess – via his title – intertextually revises Keats who – in turn - revises Shakespeare. Burgess also revises Shakespeare directly using techniques associated with Eliot, and in keeping with the 1930s mode. Bloom notes that the belated poet who revises an earlier revisionary poet will be 'cognizant not only of his own struggle against [. . .] the precursor, but is compelled also to a sense of the Precursor's place in regard to what came before *him*.'[37] Bloom, therefore, signals what – in Burgess – can be termed a self-conscious *belatedness* in his poetic style. Burgess's allusion to Keats' Romantic poetry is in itself comparable with the conventions of 1930s poetry; for example Cecil Day Lewis. Day Lewis's 'Transitional Poem', according to Hynes, is remarkable in '[. . .] how well it attaches itself to the English tradition: the verse forms are regular, the allusions are classical, the natural details are Romantic.'[38] These features are all found in *The Eve of St. Venus*, which alludes to Keats, incorporates classical imagery and a narrative structure from the classics, as well as using regulated rhyme quatrains. It is, in short, laced with 1930s poetic conventions, and not in keeping with the nascent 1950s modes.

The incorporation of intertextual tropes associated with Romanticism is especially divergent from the anti-Romantic sensibilities of the predominant 1950s form, as Morrison points out with reference to Lehmann (see above). Moreover, Burgess's reliance on his audience's recognition of the complex layers of allusion is at odds with the Movement's general project to introduce simple statements into poetic forms. Morrison notes that Larkin and 'other Movement poets object to [. . .] poems

---

36 Edward Gossse, 'Preface' in John Keats, *The Eve of St. Agnes* (Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour), pp. 1-29, (p. 25). Gosse's essay notes the poem is written in a Spenserian stanza form, which Burgess revises in *Byrne* (1995).
37 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 32.
38 Hynes, p. 45.

which, if they are to be intelligible, *require* the reader to recognize an allusion'[39]. This allusive *learning of tradition* is more associated with Eliot of the 1930s, than the poets of the 1950s. Additionally, the poetic form Burgess uses is notably not in keeping with contemporary poets, no doubt because of its Modernist associations, since 'to follow the Modernist tradition was, they contended, a retrogressive act.'[40] As Stevenson puts it, the Movement poets rejected what they 'saw as the elitism, complexity, and foreign origins of the modernist writing'[41] of their precursors. To be clear, verse drama of the older style was still being written and performed for the stage in the early 1950s, as Wiggins notes at length in her survey. However, the form was quickly losing its audience, since by the early fifties,

> the impression of staid conformity was hard to shake, and for all the undoubted skill of dramatists like [Eliot, Fry,] Rattigan or J. B. Priestley, *they hardly represented a break from the styles of the thirties*, and neither did they really reflect the concerns of the post-war age.[42]

The conservative, Eliot-influenced imagery of the play is nostalgic for the certainties of another time, and takes place mainly in a drawing room, at a time when *other* stage writers, such as John Osborne 'broke radically with conventions of drawing-room drama'[43]. The character Sir Benjamin, whose name echoes John Betjeman (a poet first published in the 1930s), is the main supplier of what Stevenson calls 'nostalgia for life earlier in the century'[44]. Betjeman's poetry, according to Movement critic and poet Donald Davie, simply displays 'nostalgia' in contrast to Larkin's 'admirable clear-sightedness' in his 'refusal to measure a depleted present against a richer past'.[45] In direct

---

39 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 193.
40 Ibid., p. 21.
41 Stevenson, p. 171.
42 Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had it So Good* (London: Abacus, 2005), p. 188. My emphasis.
43 Sandbrook, p. 188.
44 Stevenson, p. 171.
45 Morrison, p. 257.

contrast with Davie's observations on the subtleties of Movement poetry's approach to *belatedness*, Burgess's Sir Benjamin actively measures an *anaemic* present against the richness of the past:

<div style="text-align:center">

[. . .] Anaemic,

</div>

That's what we are.   Heroes are dead to us:

We worship filmstars.

Deep drinking, deep thinking

Make way for milkbars.[46]

The milkbar is a potent symbol of the shallowness of the "modern youth" of the 1950s[47], who as Richard Hoggart – in his contemporary account of Britain in transition – says gathered there to listen to pop music on the newly-invented jukebox, with 'no aim, no ambition, no protection, no belief'[48]. Unlike the Movement's 'epiphanic'[49] poetic conclusions that are 'expansive emotionally'[50], Burgess's short verse simply wishes for the 'heroes'[51] of another time. The same short verse appears in the Burgesses' diary *Journal of the Plague Year,* as Alan Roughley points out[52]; although he doesn't note its dual usage. The modernity and *anaemia* of milk bars, what Roughley calls 'the very symbol of decadence and social decay'[53], is contrasted with the *blood* of *history,* and found to be the source of the 'flatnosed, odourless, colourless heaven,| [. . .] of which

---

46   Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis* (Hamilton, ON: McMaster University, 1951), p. 18.
47   Sandbrook, p. 184.
48   Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy (*Harmondsworth: Penguin,1957:1967), pp. 248-9. Quoted in Sandbrook. Burgess's copies of this book available at IABF and at the Université d'Angers.
49   Nicholas Jenkins, 'The "Truth of Skies": Auden, Larkin and the English Question' in Zachary Leader, ed., *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 34-61, (p. 39).
50   Jenkins in Leader, p. 39.
51   Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 18.
52   Alan Roughley, 'Converting Life to Literature: From Wilson to Burgess and Auto-biographer to Narrator.' in Graham Woodroffe, ed, *Anthony Burgess, Biographer (*Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2006), pp. 67-80, (p. 73).
53   Roughley in Woodroffe, p. 73.

this coloured, stinking,|Various, delightful, painful world is a copy.'[54]. With its nostalgic

overtones, and its rhyming of *bars* and *stars*, Sir Benjamin's short verse is reminiscent

of Betjeman's 1937 poem, 'Slough':

     And talk of sports and makes of cars

     In various bogus Tudor bars

     And daren't look and see the stars

       But belch instead.[55]

Sir Benjamin's short verse, then, has more in common with the clipped rhymes of

Betjeman's nostalgic 1937 poem than early Movement poetry of 1951, as attested to by

both Davie and Morrison who find nostalgia *absent* from Movement poetry, but

connected with Betjeman, a 1930s precursor of the Movement poetic style[56]. Burgess

accordingly uses a poetic tone more associated with 1930s poetry. When Sir Benjamin

calls it an 'anaemic age|Which explains away the miraculous with algebra'[57], he uses a

phrase that echoes Buck Mulligan's mockery of Stephen Dedalus in James Joyce's

novel, *Ulysses* (1922): 'He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's

grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father'[58]. Farkas misses this

poeticised allusion to Joyce in his study of Joyce's influence upon Burgess. This phrase

is of interest since it shows Burgess alluding to a text from 1922, and expecting his

audience to recognise the allusion, again much out of keeping with the burgeoning

poetic fashions of the early 1950s.

     Burgess calls it 'a derivative play, full of echoes of *The Cocktail Party* ("the

waterless trek in the desert" and so on) and parodic [of] Christopher Fry, who was just

---

54 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 18.
55 John Betjeman, *The Best of Betjeman,* ed. by John Guest (London: John Murray, 1978:2006), p. 25.
56 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 257.
57 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 21.
58 James Joyce, *Ulysses* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1922:1993:1998), p. 18.

going out of fashion'[59], signalling his own awareness of the increasing *irrelevance* of the 1930s style in light of early 1950s British poetic and dramatic trends. Elsewhere, he describes the play as 'a comedy whose language seemed to parody the pseudo-poetics of Christopher Fry'.[60] It's not clear exactly what Burgess means by *pseudo-poetics*, but he is certainly keen to position himself as writing *after* Fry and Eliot. Were Burgess's parody strictly comedic, then his audience would expect absurd language and action. However, his drawing-room dialogue and dramatic unities follow a conventional line comparable with Eliot's verse drama from 1935 onwards. Accordingly, here, I interpret Burgess's use of the word *parody* as being closer to *pastiche.* The only seemingly unusual feature in the play is the supernatural Venus narrative, itself an intertextual allusion to Robert Burton's Elizabethan *Anatomy of Melancholy*, from which the main story of the play derives. Burgess owned the 1949[61] Everyman edition of Burton's text; the classical story about a goddess may have been fresh in his mind when he wove this intertextual allusion into the poetic play. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*, similarly, features classical deities appearing in the lives of conventional characters, so even this feature is not stretching the 1930s modern verse drama form too much. However, in the early 1950s, this use of classical allusion was contrary to the growing conventions of the newer poetic style, a development which eventually culminated in 'Larkin's dismissal of the "myth-kitty" and dislike of allusions to other poets'[62]. Burgess's very choice of intertextual form, then, demonstrated the continuation of a (1930s) poetic style considered outmoded by the younger poets of the mid 1950s.

---

59 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 360.
60 Anthony Burgess, *The Eve of St Venus (*London: Hesperus Press, 1964:2004), p. vii. For Burgess's review of Fry's translation of *Cyrano De Bergerac,* see Anthony Burgess. 'A mingled chime', *Times Literary Supplement*, 16 January 1975, p. 50.
61 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy (*London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd [Everyman], 1932: 1949). Burgess's own copy, held at the IABF, Manchester. The page is folded over on p. 47, marking where Burton's description of the tale appears.
62 Eric Homberger, 'New Lines in 1956' in Zachary Leader. *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 255-269, (p. 267).

I see *The Eve of St. Venus* as Burgess's workman-like attempt to master the 1930s-style form, like his Hopkinsian effort twenty years before. However, verse drama form was out of fashion in the 1950s, whereas Hopkinsian parody and pastiche in the 1930s was contrastingly forward-thinking. Burgess's word choices in *The Eve of Saint Venus* occasionally seem to emulate Fry. For example, in Fry's *Venus Observed* – whose *Venusian* title is echoed in Burgess's later play – Reedbeck, the agent of the Duke of Altair, bursts into colourful rage at his son, Dominic:

> You're a vain, incomprehensible,
>
> Crimping, constipated duffer. [. . .]
>
>
> [. . .]   God give me a few
>
> Lithontriptical words! You grovelling little
>
> Gobemouche![63]

This spectacular stretching of language is comparable with the alliterative spleen of Burgess's Sir Benjamin:

> Come here, you clusterfist, you chichy caffard,
>
> You slipshop demisemiwit. What the hell do you mean
>
> By meddling, muddling in forbidden territory,
>
> You fubsy chuffcat? [. . .][64]

Both verse dramatists use self-consciously poetic language. Whereas Fry delights in obscure words Latinate words ('lithontriptical'[65], 'gobemouche'[66]), Burgess's clustered

---

63 Christopher Fry, *Venus Observed* in *Christopher Fry: Plays Two* (London: Oberon Books, 2007), p. 46.
64 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 143.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.

alliteration of 'c' sounds, word-invention, and the quick rhythm of 'demisemiwit'[67] and

the proximity of sounds in 'meddling'[68] and 'muddling'[69] is reminiscent of his 1930s

Hopkinsian poetry (see Chapter Two), and also anticipates the Nadsat of *A Clockwork*

Orange (1962). In the extract above, Burgess also incorporates another intertextual

style, associated with 1930s Modernist poetry. This alliterative verse form was – later

in his career – described by Burgess as:

> a Celtic invention, but the English eventually received it from the Continent. W. H. Auden,
>
> and Ezra Pound in a remarkable translation of the Old English *Seafarer*, used the three-headed-
>
> rhyming words-to-a-line technique with great success [. . .][70]

Pound's *The Seafarer* (1935), for example, uses distinctly Anglo-Saxon language at a

rapid and repetitive rate, like *The Eve of St. Venus*:

> Bitter breast-cares have I abided,
>
> Known on my keel many a care's hold
>
> And dire sea-surge, and there I oft spent
>
> Narrow nightwatch night the ship's head[71]

Burgess's earliest extant experiment with this form was in 1936, in a poem published in

school magazine *The Manchester Xaverian*, which similarly repeats the forcefully

alliterative three-word patterns on single lines:

---

67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Anthony Burgess, *A Mouthful of Air* (London, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Vintage, 1992:1993), p.193. He describes this as a 'double archaism', referring to the "old" modernist forms of Auden and Pound which he flippantly considers to be as out of date in the 1990s as ancient Anglo-Saxon.
71 Ezra Pound, 'The Seafarer' in *Selected Poems 1908-1969* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 35.

No bird or beast but does begin

In its own speech to swell the strain:

The earth has cast her winter skin

Of warping wind and driving rain.[72]

Burgess was familiar with Pound's poetry as early as 1934[73]. His lingering interest in Pound is clear in a 1973 recording, where Burgess recites the poem 'Homage to Sextus Propertius', which was published a year before Burgess's own head-rhyming poem[74] and uses similar alliterative patterns:

Annalists will continue to record Roman reputations,

Celebrities from the Trans-Caucasus will belaud Roman celebrities

And expound the distentions of Empire,[75]

Burgess also notes[76] that the form was used by Auden in his verse play *Paid on Both Sides* (1938). Auden uses a phrase similar to Burgess's own example, in the short extract:

Though heart fears all heart cries for, rebuffs with mortal beat

Skyfall, the legs sucked under, adder's bite

The prize held out of reach[77]

Auden, like Burgess and Pound, clashes consonants to create poetic effects. Burgess

---

72 John Burgess Wilson (JBW), 'A Rondel for Spring'. The Manchester Xaverian. Easter Term 1936, n.p..

73 Burgess's copy of Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933:1934) held at IABF. Pound also appears in Roberts, *Faber Book of Modern Verse* (1936).

74 See John Spiers, 'Mr Pound's Propertius' (1935) in F. R. Leavis. *A Selection from Scrutiny.* Volume 1 (Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 101-4.

75 Ezra Pound, 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' in *Selected Poems 1908-1969* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 79

76 Burgess, *A Mouthful of Air*, p. 193.

77 Auden, *Collected Poems,* p. 5.

therefore reintroduces 1930s-inflected language into a 1950s "late" form best represented by Fry or Eliot. Burgess's language here, then, owes more to Pound and Auden than it does to Fry; the 1930s influence is still very much present. That is to say in Bloomian terms he uses tropes from an earlier period as a defence against Fry's more recent poetic tropes. The return to 1930s styles is what Bloom calls a 'process of malformation and misinterpretation'[78] which *should* 'produce deviations in style between strong poets.'[79] However, despite this, the result is still closely emulative of both Fry and Eliot; the 1930s-style Audenesque or Poundian language simply provides one strong trope against another, and does nothing to help Burgess establish his own imaginative space. The presence of these recent predecessors is too strong. Farkas sees such emulative endeavours in Burgess as an enclosing device, and equates them with pastiche and parody[80]. Farkas quotes Burgess himself, who – in *Joysprick* -- made the following distinction:

> [P]astiche is an imitation of an existing artistic style, so close and skilful as to be indistinguishable from the original. A parody is also an imitation, but one that so exaggerates the characteristics of the original as to provoke various kinds of laughter, from the affectionate to the scornful.[81]

By Burgess's own terminology, then, *The Eve of St. Venus* is a pastiche. The intertextual relationship is thus one of master and student, with Eliot (and Fry) providing the raw materials. Bloom, in accordance with this logic, connects this intertextual practice with 'creative emulation of literary tradition'[82]. However, Burgess does not infuse his own innovations into Fry's language; the creativity here is in the surveying of the mainly-

---

78 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 20.
79 Ibid.
80 Farkas, p. 35.
81 Burgess in Farkas, p. 35.
82 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 31.

1930s material for pastiche as a literary response more than creating new imaginative space. Juvan points towards the ability of pastiche to develop literary responses, when he finds '[. . .] literary works reply to other texts and discourses, but also reprocess them by commenting on, developing, criticizing, making pastiche, parodying, and so forth'[83]. In keeping with my discussions of parody in Chapter Two, the key word here is *developing*, which is coterminous with Bloom's assertion that pastiche can be seen as 'an independent intertextual genre significant for its learned artistry, competitive imitativeness'[84]. Whilst Burgess's practice is certainly learned, very little creative ground seems to be established. I interpret Burgess's original use of the word *parody* to actually mean pastiche as a method for poetic development, but the textual evidence demonstrates that – in this case – he enriches the imitation with another imitation. The imitative intertextuality, in my reading, then, includes Auden, Pound and Eliot as much as Fry.

Before explaining at length how Burgess imitates Eliot's dramatic technique, I'll first show why Eliot featured so strongly on Burgess's mind – and in the public conscience – in early 1951. Burgess records finishing Helen Gardner's book *The Art of T.S. Eliot* on Monday 22 January 1951[85]. He also notes how on 1 February 1951 'at 10.45,[he] heard Eliot read some of his own verse'[86], on the Third Programme[87]. He does not indicate which poems he heard on BBC radio, but makes a note on the word 'damyata'[88], a word from 'The Waste Land' (1922). Burgess had fairly recently produced Eliot's verse drama *Murder in the Cathedral* and read much of Eliot's critical and poetic work first hand from the 1930s onwards. The result of this combination of factors is a

---

83 Juvan, p. 67.
84 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 50.
85 John Burgess Wilson and Lynne Wilson, *Journal of the Plague Year*, p. 20.
86 J.B. Wilson and L.Wilson, *Journal of the Plague Year*, p. 24.
87 The edition of the *Radio Times* which relates to that week does not list the poems selected, but confirms that, in the following week, Eliot is to read some of his poems. See 'Third Programme', *Radio Times,* 19 January 1951, p. 43.
88 J.B. Wilson and L.Wilson, *Journal of the Plague Year,* p. 24.

play rich in Eliot-style poetic tropes, contained in a classical intertextual structure influenced by Eliot.

In 1951 – the same year as Burgess read the Gardner book and produced his own work of verse drama – Eliot delivered the first Theodore Spencer Memorial lecture at Harvard[89]. This lecture and subsequent essay was called 'Poetry and Drama', and afforded Eliot the opportunity to fully explain what he meant to achieve through works such as *The Family Reunion.* Eliot's essay lays bare the logic of his dramatic technique. He demonstrates a pragmatic approach to using poetry in drama, noting that since verse drama 'must justify itself dramatically [. . .] it follows that no play should be written in verse for which prose is *dramatically* adequate.'[90] Since Eliot doesn't explain this term, I take it to mean that *poetry should heighten the dramatic effect of the play.* Certainly, pencil lines struck through Burgess's manuscript demonstrate that he took Eliot's advice seriously:

<u>Nurse</u>

Well, sir. ~~What a good thing this has happened.~~

~~It's Providence, that's what it is I'd never have thought it.~~

~~You're such a quiet boy.~~ Come on, ~~sir~~, you're joking, aren't

you?

The excesses of language are stripped back in order to maintain dramatic urgency. In 'Poetry and Drama', Eliot also explains how – in *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) – he opted for 'An avoidance of too much iambic, some use of alliteration, and occasional unexpected rhyme, [which] helped to distinguish the versification from that of the

---

89 T. S. Eliot, 'Poetry and Drama' in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot,* ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 132-148.
90 Eliot, 'Poetry and Drama', p. 132.

nineteenth century.'[91] *The Eve of St. Venus*, similarly, has hardly any rhymes and uses alliteration extensively. In this opting for speech-like patterns (albeit laced with poetic devices at the same time), Burgess follows a revisionist preoccupation which Eliot develops in opposition to 'the primary failure of nineteenth-century poets'[92] who 'had lost the flexibility'[93] needed 'to give the effect of conversation.'[94] He believed the 'rhythm of regular blank verse had become too remote from the movement of modern speech.[95] As Wiggins puts it, '[f]or poetry to be effective as drama [. . .] it had to be an integrated part of a functioning play'.[96]

A striking incidental example of the pervasive influence of Eliot in the play can be found in the deliberate insertion of lines from *The Waste Land* into the typescript. Explaining how he understood Venus's classically seductive language during a scene in the village pub, Ambrose's reply is interrupted by two lines of Eliot's poem, arbitrarily inserted into the manuscript:

> It's incredible, I know, but she seemed to say

> April is the cruellest month
> Breeding lilacs out of the dead land[97]

The Eliot quotation is simply a random page collected in the manuscript. The two lines appear on an insert page, which is clearly an exercise in typing favourite lines, rather than an attempt to insert them in the play itself. However, their presence is a clear reminder of Burgess's close reading (and, indeed, reciting) of Eliot in and around the

---

91 Ibid., pp. 139-40.
92 Ibid., p. 139.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
96 Wiggins, p. xi.
97 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, pp. 37-8.

time of the writing of the play: his influence was so pervading that even a recalled couple of lines can be inserted into the proceedings and seem to make poetic sense. Ambrose's speech is continued on a different page, and it's therefore clear that Burgess never intended to include the quote in the final version of the play.

In deploying verse drama after Eliot, Burgess also partakes in this willing return to old forms linguistically, not just thematically. In Gardner's reading, through the use of verse in drama, Eliot (and therefore Burgess) use the form intertextually – they have 'in fact gone back in order to go forward. [They have] returned to the most primitive form of tragedy'[98]. The character of Sir Benjamin affords an epigram for this, when he notes that 'The past is never discarded; it's made richer|By the present'[99]. As I pointed out in Chapter One, Burgess was to note this himself later in his career, in 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (1985)[100].

A Poem in Heroic Couplets

A useful companion piece to *The Eve of St. Venus* is an untitled poem of some 'sourness'[101], which Burgess says was written in 1953[102], and appears at first reading to possess a more contemporary style. First published in *The Worm and the Ring* (written c.1952[103], published 1961), the poem is an exercise in scathing close observation of the local community, who – like the characters in Burgess's earlier verse drama – are out of step with the changes around them. Jackson calls this poem 'Adderbury'[104], but his edition misses the poem's opening eight lines:

---

98 Helen Gardner, *The Art of T.S. Eliot (*London: Faber and Faber, 1949), p. 138.
99 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 73.
100 See Chapter One.
101 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 361.
102 Ibid.
103 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 132.
104 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 30.

The Dragon's mouth will consummate our search

For pillars of the borough and the Church,

Whose bar-side stance bespeaks their propping function.

There stands the Vicar who, with extreme unction,

To flesh and blood will transubstantiate

The cups that Sunday abstinents donate.

This generation, wiser than the luminous,

Thus gains vicarious contact with the numinous.[105]

Burgess opts here for heroic couplets, a verse form rich in intertextual associations, one which he returned to at length in the expansive poem, *An Essay on Censorship* (1989). Like the Eliot pastiche, this parody of Pope allows Burgess to access a convenient combination of poetic conventions which can be used to describe the conflicts of contemporary life. As J.S. Cunningham points out in his introductory essay, Alexander Pope used heroic couplets in *The Rape of the Lock* to create a poem 'wickedly agile in allusion'[106]. Pope's poem extends the conventions of epic poetry ('the Fable, the Machines [mythological devices to drive the plot along], the Descriptions, the Hero, the Moral'[107]), 'playing on the heroic conventions'[108] so that 'he parodies'[109] the language of precursor texts, and 'these debts by no means amount to inert imitation'[110], just as Burgess does with Eliot as much as Pope. As the brief extract above shows, Burgess incorporates glimpses of mock-epic into his poem: the 'Dragon's mouth', for example, is an Empson-style conceit, punning on the name of a local pub[111] and also a reference to

---

105 Anthony Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring (*London: Heinemann, 1961), p. 99.
106 J.S. Cunningham, 'Preface' in Alexander Pope. *The Rape of the Lock,* ed. by J.S. Cunningham (Oxford University Press: 1736:1966), pp. vii-viii, (p. vii).
107 J.S. Cunningham, 'Introduction' in Alexander Pope. *The Rape of the Lock,* ed. by J.S. Cunningham (Oxford University Press: 1736:1966), pp. 1-23, (p. 13).
108 Cunningham, 'Introduction', p. 2.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
111 Possibly The George and Dragon pub, Shutford, which is around eight miles away from Adderbury,

the mythical dragon Fafner (a conceit which is part of the Wagnerian intertext that structures the novel *The Worm and the Ring*). Burgess reuses Pope's mock-epic style: the conventions of heroic myth-narrative are transposed into careful social observations for ironic effect. By Pope's logic, then, he presents the Hero (the Vicar), as well as close Descriptions of his ironic efforts to assist his flock in the Moral, in this case – the search for the 'numinous'[112]. The effect – like that of Pope's original poem – is a barbing observation on the fickleness of society. The substitution of the Vicar's sober religiosity for his pun-laden *vicarious* bar-propping is thus a Pope-like 'sea-change caused by the difference in context'[113]. Burgess, then, uses a poetic form that is associated with a "strong" revisionist intertextual poet, and which has a similarly intertextual purpose. This early exercise in the heroic couplet form was complemented by Burgess's more substantial original poems and translations of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, as I demonstrate at length below and in Chapter Four.

Aside from Pope, another possible intertext is George Crabbe's 1807 poem, 'The Parish Register' which similarly presents a selection of parochial characters in scathing rhyming couplets. For example,

> Such are our Peasants, those to whom we yield
>
> Praise with relief, the fathers of the field;
>
> And these who take from our reluctant hands,
>
> What Burn advises or the Bench commands.
>
> Our Farmers round, well pleased with constant gain,
>
> Like other farmers, flourish and complain.—[114]

---

where Burgess lived (See 'The George and Dragon', <http://www.thegeorgeanddragon.com/> [accessed 21 November 2012].

112 Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring*, p. 99.

113 Cunningham, 'Introduction', p. 5.

114 George Crabbe. 'The Parish Register' in Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, Jon Stallworthy, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry (*New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1970:1975:1983:1996:2005), p. 279.

These lines, also in strong iambic metre, are similar to Burgess's own lines about gluttonous complaining farmers:

> Here ruined farmers, in new hacking-coats,
>
> Pour Scotch and ram fat bacon down their throats;
>
> And children, obdurately red and flaxon,
>
> Proclaim the crass inbreeding of the Saxon.[115]

Burgess knew Crabbe's poetry, and – five years after writing this poem – described Crabbe's poetry as 'important'[116]. Furthermore, he notes how

> Crabbe showed country life was not idyllic, not a romantic dream, and he bitterly attacked the complacency with which town-dwellers viewed the lot of humble farmers, fishermen, agricultural labourers, painting vividly the squalor and poverty of their lives.[117]

Burgess takes this parochial theme and applies it directly to the modern context of 1950s provincial Oxfordshire. The surprising ending to Burgess's poem, in light of the allusion to Crabbe, gathers a significantly ironic note, as it is not the *town* that begins to clash with the pastoral setting that Burgess paints in the poem, but the militaristic forces of *another* country, which signals the breaking of tradition and the belatedness of Burgess's poetic scene:

> [. . .] The manor gates are down, the past is dead.
>
> American police patrol instead,[118]

---

115 Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring*, p. 150.
116 Anthony Burgess, *English Literature* (London: Longman, 1958:1974), p. 146.
117 Burgess, *English Literature*, p. 146.
118 Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring*, p. 150.

Whereas Crabbe presents the cultural clash of town and city in the 1800s, Burgess shows its modern *global* equivalent: the American police[119] interrupt the pastoral imagery as reminders of Cold War politics. Burgess, then, combines intertextual tropes of Pope and Crabbe in an ironic rendering of older literary traditions, via what Juvan calls a break 'with the grand past, using the strategies of familiarization and domestication'[120] to show the effect of the passage of time; namely, to show how epic heroes have turned into 'petty and frivolous modern characters.'[121] Burgess therefore revises an already intertextual form by the further imposition of contemporary imagery.

The rhyming couplet form was used in a self-consciously ironic way in the 1930s, before its 1950s revival by Burgess (and Thom Gunn, see below). Sylvia Townsend Warner's poem *Opus 7* (1931) – according to Janet Montefiore, in her survey of men and women writers of the 1930s – was intertextually 'modelled on Crabbe's narratives in "The Parish Register"'[122], and 'accomplished with a certain Modernist irony'[123], just like Burgess's later revision of Crabbe. Her poem presents *another* postwar Britain (after World War I), and provides domestic description in strong iambic pentameter, which is reminiscent of the character details and poetic structure Burgess would produce in his later poem:

> Then to the butler's or the cook's discreet
>
> beck comes the charwoman on stealthy feet,
>
> and in a bag receives, and bears away

---

119 See 'Chance to tour Cold War airbase', *Banbury Guardian* (7 July, 2005) <http://www.raf-upper-heyford.org/tour_info.jpg> [Accessed 21 November 2012]. Upper Heyford, a former US Airforce base, is around 9 miles away from Adderbury, where Burgess lived in the early 1950s.
120 Juvan, p. 38.
121 Ibid.
122 Janet Montefiore, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s: The Dangerous Flood of History.* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 125.
123 Montefiore, p. 125.

the spoiling relics of a splendid day . . . [124]

Although Burgess doesn't attest to it (and he has opportunity to do so in his discussion

of Crabbe in *English Literature*), it is *possible* that his allusion to Crabbe's poem was

informed by Warner's own 1930s revision. Burgess was certainly familiar with Crabbe,

if not Warner directly. However, the precedent of the ironic rendering of Crabbe's work

in the 1930s at least shows that the intertextual revision of heroic couplets took place in

the 1930s. Burgess's use of the form, then, was not out of keeping with 1930s

intertextual poetic experimentation.

A more notable 1930s practitioner of couplet forms is William Empson, such as

in his poem 'This Last Pain'. Although there are radical differences in subject between

the poems of Empson and Burgess, the rhythms are comparable. For example, Burgess's

iambic lines

> (Though not for soup) tune their patrician reeds
> In shops which specialise in tasteless tweeds[125]

share a similar metre with Empson's

> These the inventive can hand-paint at leisure,
> Or most emporia would stock our measure.[126]

Empson's rhyme scheme, by comparison, is neater, showing a greater clarity of voice.

However, Empson organises his couplets into AABB quatrains, whereas Burgess opts

for two stanzas of eight lines, and two of ten lines. Empson's 1936 poem, then, provides

---

124 Ibid.
125 Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring*, p. 150.
126 Empson, 'This Last Pain' in Roberts, p. 257.

a rational clipped rhythm to contain his difficult message. Burgess has an equally rapid couplet form, to contain ironic messages based on social observation. The incorporation of mock epic elements after Pope and Crabbe (and possibly Warner) helps enrich Burgess's otherwise plain messages of *sourness* by adding irony; recognising the conventions of the literary tradition enables the reader to appreciate the effect of the shift in historical context.

Although Burgess's use of heroic couplets is in keeping with poetic conventions of the 1930s, there are some surface similarities with the features of 1950s "Movement" poetry. For example, his choice of a parochial setting coincides with 'the seeming "little Englandism" of the Movement'[127], whereas his deployment of a strict form comes close to what Conquest describes as Movement poets' 'refusal to abandon a rational structure and comprehensible language, even when the verse is most highly charged with sensuous or emotional intent.'[128] However, Burgess's overtly intertextual style, which insists on its own ironic connections to poetic pretexts in the Eliot-style tradition, is at odds with what Morrison believes Larkin for example – 'means to reject'[129]: namely, 'Eliot's idea of a European tradition laboriously acquired and openly declared through textual notes and allusions.'[130] Much of Burgess's poetry originating from the early 1950s resurfaced in the 1960s *Enderby* novels, and demonstrates a continual emphasis on 1930s poetic conventions, as I show later.

Allusions to Eliot Continue

In the late 1950s, Burgess became a professional novelist. His *Malayan Trilogy*,

---

127 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 59.
128 Conquest, p. xv.
129 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 236.
130 Ibid.

Time for a Tiger (1956), *The Enemy in the Blanket* (1958), and *Beds in the East* (1959)

feature embedded verse, and are rich in 1930s-inspired intertextual tropes. Whilst the

present study is about Burgess's poetry, it is useful to note how Richard Mathews,

exploring how Burgess's novels are structured, reminds his readers that poetic allusion

takes place in the *Malayan Trilogy;* he quotes DeVitis, who

> points out that [Burgess's] jungle setting employs symbols and allusions similar to those in
>
> T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and the *Four Quartets* to comment on the contemporary reality
>
> beyond the setting of [these] novel[s]. He notes especially that: "The death-by-water theme,
>
> most dominant, brings into focus the trilogy's religious importunities, which are perhaps
>
> Burgess's chief concern.[131]

Eliot-influenced poetic tropes, in short, were present in Burgess's late 1950s prose

works. William H. Pritchard, in his general overview of Burgess's novels, also observes

the prose allusions to Eliot when he notes that, in *Time for a Tiger,* the scene where

'Crabbe's wife reads *The Waste Land* to Nabby Adams and his Malayan sidekick [. . .]

"contributes" nothing to the novel except as one more of the witty satisfactions which

occur throughout the trilogy'[132].

The 1960s saw Burgess building on this trend, and heavily embedding poetry

into his novels, most especially in *Inside Mr Enderby* (1963) and *Enderby Outside*

(1968). However, the first notably long poem appears in the novel *One Hand Clapping*

(1961).[133] In the novel, this poem is written by fictional poet Redvers Glass, to assist

Howard Shirley in expressing his disappointment with postwar Britain, and uses

forceful plain diction, observations on loneliness, and depiction of the specific to

131 Richard Mathews, *Clockwork Universe of Anthony Burgess* (San Bernadino: Borgo, 1978), p. 33.

132 William H. Pritchard, 'The Novels of Anthony Burgess' in Harold Bloom, ed., *Anthony Burgess.*
    Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 13-28, (p.
    17).

133 Anthony Burgess, *One Hand Clapping (*New York: Ballantine Books, 1961: 1973), pp. 172-3.

dramatic effect. For example:

> We've all betrayed our past, we've killed the
>
>> dream
>
> Our fathers held. Look at us now, look at us:
>
> Shuddering waiting for the bomb to burst,
>
> The ultimate, but not with dignity, oh no.[134]

Burgess presents the poem in loose blank verse of variable syllable length per line. The clipped rhyme scheme of the previous decade seen in 'Adderbury' or the predictable metrical feet found in *The Eve of St. Venus* are entirely absent. A first reading of the poem, then, suggests abandonment of the 1930s Modernist mode. Certainly, this style of matching specific detail with general conclusion accords with Michael Schmidt's observations on general styles in 1960s poetry. To Schmidt, this decade saw a trend for poets to regard themselves as 'seer rather than abstract visionary, as focal rather than focus'[135]. The emphasis on *focus* points towards a sense of restraint that is clearly missing in Burgess's Redvers Glass poem; there is no unifying point, just a series of bitter reflections intended to make a bigger case that the reader never sees because the poem is unfinished. There is evidence that the poem should be viewed as a hyperbolic intertextual response to a poetic fashion that Burgess observed to be in progress, more than a committed switch to a "radically" contemporary style.

Certainly, Burgess's framing of this poem in its "home" novel provides room for hyperbole: it is commissioned by a suicidal man, written by an oversexed drunk – 'a young man with a bitter sort of face [. . .] with dark rings under his eyes and a droopy

---

134 Burgess, *One Hand Clapping,* pp. 172-3.
135 Schmidt, 'Introduction', p. 9.

sort of mouth'[136] and read to a woman who falls asleep because it is 'a very boring poem'[137]. The poem itself, then, is *allowed* to be excessive, as this reflects the action and bawdy characterisation of the novel. The intrusion of Janet's dream-language concerning the evening meal's ingredients contributes to this:

> Better out of it steak and kidney
>
> Steak meets kidney and asks to dance
>
> KNOCK KNOCK
>
> The band strikes up with one-er two-er three
>
> It might as well be steak and kidney pie I can
>
> > always
>
> Boil some potatoes no need for a second
>
> Vegetable
>
> KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK[138]

This parody of contemporary poetic styles appears to call attention to its own limitations. As such, the poem's combination of what Hutcheon calls 'parody and self-reflexivity function both as markers of the literary [technique] and as challenges to its limitations'[139], and so – by her logic – could be described as Postmodern in technique, making the poem an exception at a time when Burgess was otherwise determinedly using late Modernist poetic techniques. It is convenient, then, that the poem's context in the novel permits this metapoetic exploration of the limits of poetic form. Samuel Coale, in his introduction to the works of Burgess, detects the presence of what he calls 'antipoets'[140] in many of Burgess's novels, finding 'this is particularly true of Janet

---

136 Burgess, *One Hand Clapping,* p. 104.
137 Ibid.
138 Ibid., p. 174.
139 Hutcheon, p. 224.
140 Coale, *Anthony Burgess*, p. 138.

Shirley'.[141] Whilst he doesn't go on to explain *why* Janet is anti-poetical, his passing

comment concurs with the essentially anti-poetical context that Burgess provides here;

it appears from her perspective, and her domestic dream-language wins over the doom-

laden imagery at the poem at the end. The word KNOCK is the sound of the police at

the door (returning a drunk Redvers Glass to wake her). It is also an intertextual

allusion to Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes*[142] (1932), which – according to Burgess – 'used

colloquial speech and Jazz rhythms to present another picture of modern sterility'[143] and

ends in a similarly fragmented fashion, with conspicuous use of the capitalised

KNOCK:

 And perhaps you're alive

 And perhaps you're dead

 Hoo ha ha

 Hoo ha ha

 HOO

 HOO

 KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

 KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

 KNOCK

 KNOCK

 KNOCK[144]

Burgess alludes to Eliot through the insertion of this word, and renders the poem all the

more ironic for it, since he replaces Eliot's tropical sing-song with Janet's musings on

141 Ibid.

142 T.S. Eliot, *Sweeney Agonistes: Fragments of an Aristophanic Melodrama (*London: Faber and Faber, 1932).

143 Eliot, 'Fragment of an Agon' in Anthony Burgess, *They Wrote in English: A Survey of British and American Literature. Volume 2. L'antologia: i campioni* (Milan: Tramontana editore, 1979:1980b), p. 509.

144 Ibid., p. 514.

steak and kidney pie. To a certain degree, then, he echoes Eliot's blend of colloquial and rhythmic language, but in a hyperbolic manner. The allusion is once again to 1930s poetry, and even this seemingly stretched language demonstrates the lingering influence of Eliot in Burgess's poetry in the early 1960s. As Juvan puts it, pastiche of this kind 'stretches between the melancholy idea that all has been said and ludistic availability of textual inheritance'[145]. Even such a seemingly nonsensical repetition of a word, then, can show Burgess's poetic style as that of a *belated* 1930s-style Modernist with a detailed understanding of literary tradition.

That said, the directness of diction, and the pessimistic imagery is *in keeping* with the conventions of early 1960s poetry, even if on a parodic level. The poem was published in 1961, a year before Burgess's friend[146] Martin Bell (a member of the community of poets known as The Group[147]) had his poetry published for the first time. Bell dedicated a poem to Burgess and his wife ('Pets')[148], as well as sending a poem ('A Vocation Possibly')[149] directly to the Burgesses. Burgess owned a copy of the 1962 Penguin anthology that Bell appeared in[150]. Bell, aside from being relatively close to Burgess in the early-to-mid-sixties, is a useful point of reference, since his work can be taken as representative of contemporary poetic convention, in opposition to Burgess's continuing 1930s-inflected styles. Peter Porter decides Bell is

> essentially a realistic and vernacular writer [. . .] His style is a yoking of salient detail to rhetorical projection. To achieve this, the poet needs to be a master of phrasing, syntax and drama [. . .] his verse is never afraid to be flamboyant, but always stays close to the spoken

---

145 Juvan, p. 53
146 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 97.
147 For a brief account of The Group, see Stevenson, pp. 174-5.
148 Martin Bell, *Complete Poems,* ed. by Peter Porter (Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe Books, 1988), p. 129.
149 Bell, p. 231.
150 George Barker, Martin Bell, Charles Causley, *Penguin Modern Poets 3* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962). Burgess's copy held at the Anthony Burgess Center, at the Université d'Angers.

word[151]

The poem in *One Hand Clapping* displays all of these features, but Burgess lacks restraint in comparison with Bell. For example, in the following lines, Bell uses grotesque details as his focus *salient detail,* but presents this in subtly compacted phrases, as opposed to the polemic-sounding outbursts in Burgess's hyperbolic effort:

> Our coming-in was brisk to music
>
> Strident through raucous light along the slanting floor,
>
> Underfoot rubbish and everywhere sweet disinfectant[152]

Bell's unusual imagery ('raucous light' or 'sweet disinfectant') allows his reader to re-appraise the qualities of even the most unpoetic features of modern life, whilst still presenting the material in a style Roger Garfitt believes is typical of Group poets, and is 'as meticulous, pedantic, and undramatic as a policeman giving evidence'[153].

Burgess's intentions and effect are clearly very different; he is rhetorical, but – unlike Bell – does not allow the pedantic detail to carry the force of the rhetoric, preferring instead to spell it out for his readers. For example, Burgess pushes his reader towards crude conclusions in the lines

> [. . .] We saw nastiness
>
> Proclaimed as though it were rich natural
>
> Cream and the fourth-rater exalted
>
> So long as her tits were big enough[154]

---

151 Porter in Bell, p. 18.

152 Martin Bell, 'To Celebrate Eddie Cantor' in George Barker, Martin Bell, Charles Causley. *Penguin Modern Poets 3.* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), p. 52.

153 Roger Garfitt, 'The Group' in Michael Schmidt and Grevel Lindop, eds., *British Poetry Since 1960: A Critical Survey* (Oxford: Carcanet, 1972), pp. 14-69, (p. 16).

154 Burgess, *One Hand Clapping,* pp. 172-3.

That said, Burgess's presentation of domestic and unpoetic detail anticipates Bell's method, albeit in a hyperbolic fashion. Burgess, then, was aware of the current poetic vein, and took care to carefully present it via his parody, which is unfavourable and not necessarily serious.

In his contemporary account, *British Poetry Since 1960: A Critical Survey* (1972), Michael Schmidt argues there was a split in 1960s poetic styles, between poets who are 'geographic, or descriptive'[155] and those who are 'historic'[156] in their outlook. Roughly speaking, Schmidt differentiates between the followers of the Movement style 'Graves school'[157] (of which Bell can be seen as an "improver") and a reversion towards poetry which is more self-consciously aware of literary tradition, the 'Pound school'[158], which Burgess is allied to by dint of the intertextual regard for literary tradition that I have demonstrated at length in the study so far. Following this line of argument, it can be conveyed that literary tastes had fundamentally changed by the 1960s, but Burgess's poetic style had not. The poet and critic A. Alvarez[159], in his introduction to the anthology *The New Poetry* (1963), records this cycle of poetic tastes as three 'negative'[160] feedbacks which occurred in poetry between the 1930s and 1963: firstly, at the end of the 1930s, when 'experimental verse was out'[161] and 'traditional forms, in a chic contemporary form'[162] (such as Empson's) were in; secondly, in the 1940s, a time of 'anti-intellectualism'[163] when 'All that mattered was that the verse should sound

---

155 Schmidt, 'Introduction', p. 2.
156 Ibid.
157 Ibid.
158 Ibid.
159 For Burgess mentions Alvarez in Anthony Burgess, 'The Jew as American' in *Urgent Copy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973), pp. 145-50.
160 A. Alvarez, ed., *The New Poetry* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 18. Burgess's own copy of this book is held at the Anthony Burgess Center, Université D'Angers.
161 Alvarez, p. 18.
162 Ibid.
163 Ibid., p. 19.

impressive'[164], then the changes associated with the Movement, which was 'yet another reaction: against wild, loose emotion.'[165] Burgess's long poem can thus be seen as his *own* negative feedback to burgeoning 1960s "freer" styles. Unlike Conquest's 1956 anthology, Roberts' in 1936, or as I show in Chapter Four, Morrison and Motion in 1982, Alvarez does not attempt to position his early-1960s anthology editorially. He is, though, clear in 'suggesting that [poetry] drop the pretence that life, give or take a few social distinctions, is the same as ever, that gentility, decency, and all the other social totems [of previous epochs] will eventually muddle through'[166]. Alvarez argues, from a position of belatedness, against *gentility* resulting from the previous 'insularity'[167] of British poetry, which he views as 'a stance which is becoming increasingly precarious to maintain'[168]. Alvarez, in short, wishes to determine the precise relationship between poetry and the world around it. He doesn't necessarily argue for a *functional* representation of the world, but nor does he argue against it. These debates about poetry are also to be found in Burgess's 1960s novels about a poet, *Inside Mr Enderby* (also published in 1963), and *Enderby Outside* (1968), in what Farkas calls their 'treatment of the art-versus-life quandary'[169] (Farkas gives no account of Alvarez's contemporary thoughts on this). For the purposes of the current study, I intend to address representative poetry within these novels more in the context of the general debate and trends in poetry at the time than within the frameworks of these highly entertaining books about a poet's struggles with the world around him.

Inside Mr Enderby

---

164 Ibid., p. 19.
165 Ibid., p. 19.
166 Ibid., p. 23.
167 Ibid., p. 21.
168 Ibid., p. 21.
169 Farkas, p. 72.

In *Inside Mr Enderby*, Burgess continued to publish poetry in a 1930s-inspired style throughout the 1960s. Many of the poems that appear in the book were written in previous years, and put to new purpose in the novels; authorship of them is passed to the fictional poet F. X. Enderby. Burgess mixed his existing poems with new commissions, having 'to write Enderby's poems for him, or resurrect old poems of my own to swell his *oeuvre*'[170], noting 'I have sometimes been identified with the poet himself' as a result, which he finds 'not really just'[171]. The re-use of this poetic material in the novel demonstrates how Burgess saw these poems as at least worthy of inclusion in the novel; whereas others are regarded as meeting his own Eliot-influenced criteria for "good" poetry. For example, in his autobiography, he claims that, in the early 1950s, 'with great daring [he] sent a volume of poems to Faber and Faber [which] Mr Eliot himself returned'[172]. This presumably momentous event is not recorded in the otherwise fairly detailed diary *Journal of the Plague Year*; he was careful enough to record listening to Eliot on the radio, but omits to mention direct contact with him, if it ever existed. Writing in his autobiography about *Inside Mr Enderby* (published 1963), Burgess singles out 'one of three poems [written circa 1952], not previously attributed to Enderby, mildly approved by T. S. Eliot'[173] (but nevertheless returned):

> In this spinning room, reduced to a common noun,
>
>   Swallowed by the giant stomach of Eve,
>
> The pentecostal sperm came hissing down.
>
> I was no one, for I was anyone,
>
>   The grace and music easy to receive,

---

170 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 14.
171 Ibid.
172 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 355. The specific year in which he sent the poems to Eliot is not given.
173 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time,* p. 14.

The patient engine of a stranger son.[174]

This poem was later attributed to F. X. Enderby, and published in *Inside Mr Enderby*.[175]
The *terza rima* rhyme scheme here echoes Eliot's own poetic forms of previous
decades. *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1916), for example, ends in two three-
line verses as follows:

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves

Combing the white hair of the waves blown back

When the wind blows the water white and black

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea

By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown

Till human voices wake us and we drown.[176]

However, whereas Eliot's tercet deploys an ABB, CDD rhyme scheme, Burgess's tercet
is closer to a form associated more with Dante than any other poet, since – in Burgess's
version – as Wainwright observes:

the lines connecting the rhymes criss-cross and the rhyme becomes *inter-laced. Terza rima* [. . .]

works in three line units, aba, bcb, cdc [. . .] *Terza rima* was devised by Italian poet Dante

[whose] choice of *tercets* within his three-part scheme was meant to allude to the Holy

Trinity'[177].

Recognising the force of the Dantean allusion thus enables Burgess's reader to fully

---

174 Ibid. There is currently no supporting material available from the Faber and Faber archive to
    substantiate Burgess's claim.
175 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, pp. 45-6.
176 T. S. Eliot, 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' in *The Complete Poems & Plays*.(London: Faber
    and Faber, 1969:2004), p. 17.
177 Wainwright, pp. 112-3.

appreciate the Christian content of the poem. This is out of keeping with the growing

conventions associated with the poets of the early 1950s (when the poem was written),

since they were suspicious of allusion; the style is therefore more like Eliot than, say, a

1950s poet such as Larkin. Although Burgess appears to be responding more to Dante

than Eliot in this instance, Eliot can be viewed as an intertextual "introducer" of Dante

for Burgess. Burgess acknowledges this in retrospect when he notes (in a previously

unstudied article) that, because he read *The Waste Land* in the 1930s,

> The result was that, at fifteen, I could quote Dante and Baudelaire in the original, as well as a
>
> few objurations from the Upanishads. *The Waste Land* was, and still is, quite apart from its
>
> poetic merits, a kind of big railway terminus, from which you can take a train to various
>
> literatures and theologies.[178]

If Eliot really did respond to Burgess's poetry, then it follows that Eliot may have

approved of the 'spinning room' poem on the basis of its emulation of Eliot's *own* use of

Dantean forms in *The Waste Land* (and Eliot had previously explained his appreciation

of Dante's poetic technique in a 1929 essay, 'Dante'[179]). Either way, Burgess's self-

consciously Eliot-influenced "difficulty", its abstraction, and its detachment from any

emotional content are all out of keeping with the style of poetry that began to arise in

the early 1950s, and are suggestive of the *gentility* that Alvarez believes has no place in

1960s poetry. Morrison notes, for example, that '[b]y the early 1950s [. . .] Davie [was]

abandoning lyricism and feeling for a poetry of reason and statement.'[180] The shift in

persona in Burgess's poem from the 'I' to 'His', in comparison with such dense images as

chuckling fish and worms ensures this poem cannot proceed to any strictly *reason-*

---

178 Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 1.

179 T.S. Eliot, ' Dante' in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975).

180 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 33.

driven conclusion. It is a formalist exercise, written in an Empsonian or Eliot-informed

manner, with a hint of lyricism; everything, in short, that the burgeoning Movement

poets were trying to avoid, and which Alvarez argued against in the year it was

published.

That said, the use of the tercet form in the 1950s, arguably has closer

associations with Empson than Eliot. As Bowman points out, this is because

> Empson's influence has been repeatedly cast as a matter of merely formal features, a
>
> 'framework', in Conquest's phrase, to be 'filled out'. [G.S.] Fraser declared [in *Poetry Now*]
>
> that among the new poets of the decade 'certain metrical forms had an unusual prestige [. . .]
>
> notably two, borrowed from Mr. Empson: the villanelle and *terza rima*'.[181]

In its fictional setting, Enderby comments that the poem somehow refers to 'the genesis

of the poet'[182], since, 'the struggle to create his own myths had made him a poet'[183].

Following the fictional logic, then, the poem is about the poet's struggle to forge his

own voice, which is an essentially Bloomian reading. However, I wish to divorce the

poem from the fiction: suffice to say, the Empsonian form, combined with gnomic

imagery – in Burgess's case – produces the same 'notable aridity'[184] that Conquest

observed in a number of post-Empson poets. However, Burgess's poem, because of its

abstraction, owes much more to Empson directly than any Movement poetry, since it is

not a poem of 'reason and statement'[185], of the type associated with the Movement.

Another poem, called 'The Music of the Spheres,' is reproduced in full in the

novel. A version of this poem first appeared in *The Worm and the Ring*[186], and a variant

---

181 Deborah Bowman, '"An Instrument of Articulation": Empson and the Movement' in Zachary Leader.
   The Movement Reconsidered (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 155-76, (p. 162).
182 *The Complete Enderby*, p. 47.
183 Ibid., p. 46.
184 Conquest, p. xvi.
185 Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 33.
186 Burgess, *The Worm and the Ring*, p. 209.

is also included in *Byrne[187]*. The University of Texas has a single manuscript of the poem[188] which appears in exactly the same format as Jackson's 2002 edition, but is dated 1934; Jackson does not cite this date, but refers to the version from *Inside Mr Enderby* (1963). However, the condition of the Texas manuscript suggests it was typed long after 1934. A handwritten note by Liana Burgess in the IABF collection indicates that Burgess typed this poem in 1993[189]. The poem features in *The Worm and the Ring* (written c.1952, published 1961)[190], but with the first and last stanza combined together as a single, truncated verse, described as a popular song, and is sung by the lead character Christopher Howarth. In *Inside Mr Enderby*, it is presented as a poem written by Enderby 'at the age of seventeen.'[191] In *Byrne* (1995), Burgess does not indent every other line (as he does in the 1963 edition), and very minor variants in ('in' instead of 'on', and 'see' instead of 'look') suggest Burgess wrote the poem from memory in the later edition. For more information on Burgess's re-purposing of other poems in *Byrne*, see Chapter Four.

The poem is intertextual as it refers to non-literary texts; namely, those of music and astronomy. Leon S. Roudiez, in explaining Julia Kristeva's notion of intertexuality, finds that this crossing-over of the literary and the non-literary is part of the linguistic framework of *all* (and not just *poetic*) intertextuality. For him, it is 'the transposition of one or more *systems* of signs into another, accompanied by a new articulation of the enunciative and denotative position.'[192] The poem pivots on a pun that combines

---

187 Anthony Burgess, *Byrne (*London: Hutchinson, 1995), pp. 149-50.
188 Anthony Burgess, 'The Music of the Spheres', (Texas: HRC, box 121, fol.4, 1934), p. 1.
189 Liana Burgess, 'Last 1993', typewritten list of works by Burgess from 1993(IABF). Covering the period from November 1992 to November 1993, and between entries from 9 December 1992 and 13 January 1993. Liana Burgess lists the following poems as being typed out by Burgess in 1993: 'A Father's Death', 'You Were There, After Charles d'Orleans', 'Jack Hopkins', and 'Music of the Spheres'. The 1934 date, then, appears to be approximate and unreliable.
190 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 132.
191 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby,* p. 75. If Burgess (b.1917) wrote the poem in 1934, he, too, would have been aged seventeen.
192 Leon S. Roudiez, 'Introduction', in Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* ed. by Leon S. Rouidez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 1-22, (p. 15).

sixteenth-century astronomical language and the language of sexual desire, set to music:

> I have raised and poised a fiddle
>
>   Which, will you lend it ears,
>
> Will utter music's model:
>
>   The music of the spheres.[193]

Later on in *Inside Mr Enderby*, Burgess partially assists the reader by referring to the astronomer who first coined the term *the music of the spheres*, Johannes Kepler[194]. Burgess's choice for scientific intertextual subject was notable, in that Kepler was *also* concerned with mastering form and structure. Kepler believed that, by transcribing the orbit of the planets on a musical stave, he could get closer to God, since 'God's image is revealed in the Sphere by God the Father at the centre, God the Son on the surface, God the Holy Ghost mid-way between the central point and the circumference.'[195] The spheres in Burgess's poem represent both celestial bodies and – presumably – the genitalia of the wooing speaker. The image is also therefore an Empsonian ambiguity of the third kind (see Chapter Two), a conceit. In both 1961 and 1963, then, Burgess published poetry that answered Eliot's call for difficult poetry, which is dislocated from its original meaning[196]. There is no reliable date for the poem's composition, but, it is rich in 1930s-style poetic tropes.

Revolutionary Sonnets

    In 1966, *Transatlantic Review* published a sequence of Burgess's poems, called

---

193 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 74.
194 Ibid., p. 244.
195 Alexander Koyré, *The Astronomical Revolution* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973), p. 344.
196 See Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 298, and Chapter Two of the present study.

'Five Revolutionary Sonnets'[197]. This was the first time Burgess's poetry had appeared discretely in print in a professional publication. Compared with the other poems they appear alongside, the high formalism of Burgess's offerings draws attention to itself. For example and by contrast, Roberts Dawson's poem 'Rafters', which appears immediately after Burgess's sonnets, begins:

> Haling rafter out of Mason City
>
> across the Dakota when no roads
>
> paved north and south, my father
>
> hid me in the sleeper. One haul
>
> a detour bent us eighty miles
>
> over chicken driveways.[198]

The first of Burgess's sonnets is much less personalised and more abstract than Dawson's *verse libre* effort. The sonnet, a compact example of how Burgess's 1930s-informed intertextual style continued into the mid-to-late 1960s, uses Hopkinsian headrhyme, and Empsonian neo-metaphysical language to revise Miltonic imagery. The sonnet also uses public school imagery to detail the revolt of Lucifer. Opening lines demonstrate a close attention to sound-sense, and a continual use of conceit to exploit ambiguity to poetic ends:

> Sick of the sycophantic singing, sick
>
> Of every afternoon's compulsory games,
>
> Sick of the little cliques of county names,
>
> He let the inner timebomb start to tick –

---

197 Anthony Burgess. 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', *The Transatlantic Review*, 21 (1966), 30-32.
198 Robert Dawson, 'Rafters' in *The Transatlantic Review*, 21 (1966), 32-33, p. 32.

> Beating out number. As arithmetic
>
> The plot took shape – not from divided aims,
>
> But short division only. [. . .][199]

Cunningham believes 'school images'[200] such as those deployed here are closely associated with the poetic conventions adopted by 1930s poets such as Auden or Day Lewis; this imagery 'came naturally'[201] to them not only because they were still very young writers, but because they also went 'back into the system as schoolmasters'[202]. Burgess, twelve years before this poem was published, had also served time as a schoolmaster at the 'Eton of the East'[203] in Malaya, and so had opportunity to use his own imagery in the same vein as his 1930s counterparts. Burgess like Day Lewis before him[204], combined his lyrical and pedagogical interests when he wrote an anthem for the school.[205].

The first line of Burgess's sonnet on Satan is notable for the headrhyming of the 's' consonant, and its repetition of the word 'sick' and its homophone 'syc[. . .] ', which is echoed at the start of the third line, and is subtly woven in to mimic the sound of the ticking timebomb. This is a sound device that echoes lines by G. M. Hopkins in the poem 'Felix Randall' which describes the illness of a child through assonance and headrhyme:

> This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears
>
> My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears[206]

---

199 Burgess, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', p. 30.
200 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 123.
201 Ibid.
202 Ibid.
203 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 160.
204 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 126.
205 John Burgess Wilson, 'Jubilee Anthem For Malay Boys' Voices' (IABF).
206 Hopkins, p. 48.

Burgess revises Hopkins's language to revise Milton's more famous story of Lucifer's

revolt, *Paradise Lost.* This is especially clear in Burgess's later phrase 'Poised on the

brink'[207], which closely echoes Milton's original, 'Stood on the brink of Hell'[208]. Bloom

finds Milton's Satan to be a conveniently concentrated image of both *belatedness* and

revisionism, since it is

> an imposition of the psychology of belatedness, and Satan, like any strong poet, declines to be
>
> merely a latecomer. His way of returning to origins, of making the Oedipal trespass, is to
>
> become a rival creator to God-as-creator.[209]

That is to say, Satan – for Bloom – rivals the father-creator, and jostles for his own

"creative space" just as a later poet (Burgess) does in revising the tropes of earlier poets

(Milton and Hopkins). Burgess's poem, then, is a re-vision of Milton's story, and uses

Hopkinsian language to try to counter the force of Milton's original image, in much the

same way as Auden or Pound were used unsuccessfully to counter the force of Eliot in

The Eve of St. Venus. The sonnet is rich in 1930s tropes, and presents an argument about

the clearing of imaginative space, ironically in language that shows this process is

strained; Burgess's voice in the poem is once again not entirely his own.

　　The free-will theme of the poem coincides with William Empson's own

conclusions on *Paradise Lost*, what Haffenden describes as 'the fundamental opposition

between the demands of the Christian God and the birthright of humanity, the

responsibility to exercise individual judgement'[210]. Empson's own study of Milton was

published in its second edition a year before Burgess's poem[211]. Empson – like Bloom –

---

207 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', p. 30.
208 John Milton, *Paradise Lost* in *The Works of John Milton* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994), p. 157.
209 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 37.
210 John Haffenden, *William Empson: Against the Christians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006:2009), p. 435.
211 Ibid., p. 435.

makes judgement on the father/son, creator/ephebe debate, by noting that 'The Son who

suffers on the cross is not the victim of a Father who can only be satisfied by blood; he

is identical with the Father'[212].

In the same year as the poem was published, Empson and Burgess corresponded

in *The Spectator* regarding theology, literature, and Milton. Empson was keen to

emphasise how 'the human should be kept rigidly distinct from the divine'[213]. Burgess

had concluded that, in his preface to John Harrison's *Reactionaries*

> Empson, after another slam at Milton's 'sacrificial theology', finds comfort in the neo-
>
> Wellsianism of the Cambridge School of Divinity. I don't think any such ethos is likely to
>
> produce a new Hopkins or Eliot, but one never knows. Literature is disconcertingly
>
> autonomous.[214]

Burgess's comment shows his familiarity with Empson's Miltonic theories, which in

turn goes to explain the distinctly Empsonian/Miltonic tropes in the first of the

Revolutionary Sonnets. Empson had long since established his position on this, and

Burgess was engaged in both critical and poetic dialogue with Empson on the subject.

Burgess's critical response invokes Hopkins, which is fitting given his lacing of the

poem with Hopkinsian language. Burgess may have encountered the critical precedent

for this conflation of Milton and Hopkins in *New Bearings*, when Leavis quotes Charles

Williams, who finds that a 'poet to whom we should most relate Gerard Manley

Hopkins' is Milton, also deciding 'the way Hopkins uses the English language [. . .]

contrasts him with Milton.'[215]. Burgess's 1966 revisionist sonnet, then, is a highly

---

212 Ibid., p. 445.
213 John Haffenden, *The Selected Letters of William Empson* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 413.
214 Anthony Burgess, 'Fleurs du Mal' in *Urgent Copy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973), pp. 217-220, p. 220.
215 Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 125.

intertextual poem, drawn from Hopkins, Milton, and framed in a contemporary

theological debate and neo-metaphysical language that is closely informed by Empson.

In *Urgent Copy* (1968), Burgess continues this debate, when he observes

> Hopkins, who wanted to 'purify' his style towards the Miltonic, wholly rejected what Milton
>
> the man stood for. Anglicans, royalists and Tories like Johnson and Eliot have been equally
>
> revolted. Empson thinks that Milton's God is the Devil. The man's beliefs are all wrong; the
>
> man himself is bad.[216]

Burgess, in this complex phrase, links Hopkins, Milton, Eliot, and Empson once again.

The debate is about the various conflicts in English literary tradition: the Jesuit Hopkins

and the Puritan Milton; the Latin of Milton and the Anglo-Saxon of Hopkins. Burgess

emphasises the linguistic constraints most effectively when he argues that 'the Miltonic

miracle seems to lie in the attainment of a compressed Virgilian effect without undue

syntactical ambiguity'[217]. Burgess returned to this argument in *This Man and Music*

(1982). At the same time, he is scathing of Leavis et al when he notes 'The Scrutineers

never complained that Gerard Manley Hopkins, quite as deliberately and far more

bizarrely on occasion, exaggerated [his] Teutonic elements.'[218]

Milton and Hopkins are presented as two opposing, or complimentary, poles of

the literary tradition, then, and Burgess once again sFhows his familiarity with

Empson's own contribution to this ongoing critical debate, which was especially

initiated by Leavis in the 1930s, carried by Eliot and Empson up until the late 1950s,

and continued by Burgess's poetry in the 1960s, and at least until 1970, when Burgess

'quoted from *Areopagitica*, John Milton's polemic'[219] against government intrusion into

---

216 Anthony Burgess, 'The Milton Revolution' in *Urgent Copy (*Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973),
    pp. 185-9, (p. 188).
217 Burgess, 'The Milton Revolution', p. 187.
218 Ibid., p. 187.
219 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 341.

literature in a work eventually published as *Obscenity and the Arts*[220].

Earlier in the essay, Burgess finds that Milton's position in literary tradition was threatened by Leavis:

> When the shattering of Milton's reputation was completed, it only remained for Leavis to announce, in 1933, that his dislodgement had been effected 'with remarkably little fuss'. [. . .] [I]t was Eliot himself who, changing his critical tune and also his poetic practice, initiated the re-revaluation.[221]

The subtly anti-Leavis argument is developed further, then, when he lines up Leavis and *Scrutiny* on one side of the critical debate concerning Milton, and Eliot and Empson on the other. In his 1966 sonnet, Burgess aligns himself with the Eliot and Empson side of the debate, whilst yet acknowledging his familiarity with Leavis's line of inquiry, which resulted from his university education (see Chapter Two).

Earlier, I noted how Burgess – in 1971 – used the metaphor of a railway terminus to explain Eliot's poetic relation to literary tradition. In *Urgent Copy*, Burgess summarises Eliot's influence on literary tradition more dramatically: 'As for literature, the tastes of *all of us* have been Eliotian for the past forty-five years.'[222] In another essay in the book, ostensibly about W. B. Yeats, Burgess notes how Eliot's strong position in literary tradition is achieved through the intertextual merger of critical opinion and poetic style:

> Eliot is a great critic, but his achievement in criticism is not merely parallel to his achievement in verse – one is an aspect of the other. Eliot thus belongs to a literary tradition,

---

220 Anthony Burgess, *Obscenity and the Arts* (Valetta: Library Association of Malta, 1973a).
221 Burgess, 'The Milton Revolution', p. 186.My emphasis.
222 Anthony Burgess, 'Lament for a Maker' in *Urgent Copy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973), pp. 110-2, (p. 111).

while Yeats is just himself. [. . .] Yeats does not really encourage the world to read any work but his own.[223]

Burgess, then, admires Eliot's capacity to introduce readers to literary tradition through his poetic work. Eliot makes active use of literary tradition through his intertextual poetry, rather than attempting to define a new area, and somehow combines this into his own voice. Burgess identifies this and praises Eliot's ability to use other poets' tropes to introduce a sense of chronological mutability into his own (i.e., Eliot's) work, which 'was accepted even by the avant-garde.'[224] Burgess decides that

> with Eliot, the past was not a dull and venerable ancestor but a living force which modified the present and was in turn modified by it. Time was not an army of unalterable law; time was a kind of ectoplasm. One of the shocks of *The Waste Land* was to find past and present co-existing, even fusing.[225]

Once again, Eliot is positioned by Burgess as the ultimate Modernist intertextual poet, one who shocks his readers with his on-page negotiations with the dead poets; Burgess views this as a poetical extension of his critical prose. This model of Modernity-through-intertexuality, which Burgess observes in Eliot, concords with Hynes's assertion that *The Waste Land* was a 'powerfully influential poem'[226] for the 1930s Modernist poets because Eliot had an acute sense of what he called "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy that is contemporary history", and he put that sense of history into his poem.'[227] Cunningham continues this argument, finding that Eliot's use of intertexts in *The Waste Land* (among others) is an aspect of Modernity that proves

223 Anthony Burgess, 'Cast a Cold Eye: The Yeats Centenary' in *Urgent Copy (*Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973), pp. 70-4, (p. 73).
224 Burgess, 'Lament for a Maker', p. 112.
225 Ibid., p. 112.
226 Hynes, p. 25.
227 Ibid., p. 25.

'the inevitability of literary modernism's retreat from the common reader'[228]. The forward-looking attitude that Burgess, Hynes, and Cunningham all identify in Eliot's poetry is based on his high regard for the cultural canon, and in his ability to use it to new effect.

Modernism in the 1970s

Burgess's poetic output in the early 1970s continued along determinedly intertextual lines, and the 1930s-style modernist poetic style, informed by Hopkins, Empson, and Eliot, remained prominent. Burgess's structuralist novel, *M/F* (1971) features a series of poems written in a supposed foreign language, as well as alearic verse written by a fictional poet call Sib Legeru. It is also notable for its short verses written in riddles, included because 'Miles [Faber, the main character in *M/F*] clearly has a mad Oedipal talent. He can answer riddles and solve crosswords with no trouble.'[229] I pointed out in Chapter Two how MacNeice complained that poets in the wake of Empson had, in the 1930s, reduced poetry to *crossword puzzles*. Burgess's riddles in *M/F* are a literal example of this crossword style verse. For example, Miles Faber prepares this short riddle in advance of meeting a character called Loewe, whose name is the German word for 'lion', which is the answer to this riddle:

> Behold the sheep form side by side
>
> A Teuton roarer of the pride.[230]

The dense imagery, and the stretched grammar in compact lines, if not the rhyme scheme, are comparable with Empson's more challenging passages, such as this from

---

228 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 298.
229 Burgess, *This Man and Music*, p. 166.
230 Anthony Burgess, *M/F* (London: Penguin, 1971: 2004), p. 9.

'Courage means running':

> Fearful 'had the root of the matter', bringing
>
> Him things to fear, and he read well that ran;
>
> Muchafraid went over the river singing[231]

As Bowman points out, the puzzle poem was a convention that derived from Empson, and continued to be popular until at least the 1950s. For Empson, dense poetry was best accompanied by extensive notes, which he thought 'are meant to be like answers to a crossword puzzle; a sort of puzzle interest is part of the pleasure that you are meant to get from the verse'[232]. Burgess continues this tradition, not least by the short explanations provided in the novel, but also by the long accompanying essay on the novel (including its poems) that appears in *This Man and Music*. This is a phenomenon that had experienced a partial revival in the 1950s. Thom Gunn and John Wain, Bowman points out, also published poems which 'recall what Empson called the element of "puzzle interest"' in his own poems, [whereas] Larkin's riddles sound out the emotional depths of their form.'[233] Burgess's riddle poems are much closer to Empson's original forms, since 'they are intellectual puzzles rather than emotional mysteries'[234].

Burgess intended *M/F* as a structuralist novel, and wrote under the influence of Lévi-Strauss. He records how **'**Man, according to Claude Lévi-Strauss, is a structure-making animal: his brain is so composed that he has to select from the continuum of external nature a series of opposed signs.'[235] In keeping with this, Burgess's poetry of the 1970s self-consciously makes use of poetic structures that are closely associated with

---

231 William Empson, 'Courage means Running' in *The Complete Poems* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 76.
232 William Empson, 'Notes' in *The Gathering Storm* (London: *Faber and* Faber, 1940), pp.55-71, (p. 55).
233 Bowman, p. 169.
234 Ibid.
235 Burgess, 'Signals', p. 199.

other poets. Renate Lachmann, according to Juvan, finds that there is an association

between 'intertextual writing and the structure of a literary work with a wider historical

or cultural network in which intertextuality showed itself to be a form of cultural

memory [. . .]'[236]. Burgess uses structure to tap into cultural memory most notably via

poetic forms closely associated with William Empson in *Napoleon Symphony* (1974).

For example, Shockley points out how, in the novel, Burgess uses a form that possesses

'strangeness'[237], when a 'verse is immediately succeeded by footnotes'[238]. Shockley only

mentions one poem, but there are in fact two that have this structure. Here is an

example of one of the footnoted verses:

> In blissful nescience of the[1] drift of man,
>
> Fulfilling only its[2] Creator's plan,[11]
>
> The wide[3] plateau[9] extends its windy plain
>
> A rarity in that engorg'd terrain,[4]   [239]

Shockley finds that the very presence of footnotes, let alone their presentation out of

order, contribute to this verse's strangeness. The order of the footnotes is indeed

confusing, but the general structure owes much to Empson, whose poem 'Two Centos'

also makes use of an ABAB rhyme scheme with footnotes embedded within the verse:

> At Algezir,[1] and will in overplus,[2]
>
> Their herdsmen,[3] well content to think thee page,[4] divided[3]
>
> Tell Isabel the queen, I looked not[5] thus
>
> Leander, Mr Ekenhead and I did.[6]   [240]

---

236 Juvan, p. 132.
237 Alan Shockley, *Music in the Words: Musical Form and Counterpoint in the Twentieth-Century Novel* (Farnham UK and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2009), p. 84.
238 Shockley, p. 84.
239 Anthony Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), pp. 26-7.
240 Empson, *The Collected Poems*, p. 8.

Where Empson's footnotes appear slightly out of order, it is for a logical reason: the accompanying notes at the bottom of Empson's verse, like a crossword solution, explain how each footnoted line is a citation of another poem. In an interview with Charles T. Bunting, Burgess does not mention Empson, but instead explains that this is a 'poem of notes' which 'represents the terrain, and the position of the figures'; hence, 'referring to footnotes is not numerical' because 'it varies according to position', enabling the reader to 'tell by reading the poem, by moving around, exactly where' the Napoleonic troops 'are and when they're conducting the battle.'[241]

Burgess's intertextual use of the structure is rendered ironic by comparison, since – as Shockley points out – Burgess's Empson-inspired footnotes do little to explain the poem. Empson's poem is a collage work, comprised entirely of intertextual material, but explained with notes and a literal demonstration of Barthes's observation that any text is '[. . .] woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages [. . .] which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony.'[242] Shockley's general argument concerning the novel is that Burgess builds up a multitude of voices via linguistic structures which creates the musical effect of *polyphony.* Shockley's argument, even though he doesn't state it, is in accordance with Barthes's *stereophony* concept of intertextuality, since he finds 'there's a second level of polyphony at work here: between poetry and prose.'[243] Burgess's structural references to Empson build this layering of voices up even further, by alluding to another poetic voice from an intertext. Shockley also notes how Burgess, elsewhere in the novel, uses the villanelle[244], as is the case with the footnote structure. Shockley does not relate this

---

241 Charles T. Bunting, 'Dressing for Dinner in the Jungle' in Earl G. Ingersoll and Mary C. Ingersoll, *Conversations with Anthony Burgess* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), pp. 74-100, p. 76.
242 Barthes, 'From Work to Text', p. 160.
243 Shockley, p. 86.
244 Ibid.

to Empson. As Bowman[245] points out, and as Empson's poem 'Villanelle' demonstrates, the villanelle form is closely associated with Empson, and practised by Burgess in *Napoleon Symphony.* It is another example of Burgess using a 1930s-style Empsonian form in the early 1970s.

Shockley points out that Burgess uses the heroic couplet form in *Napoleon Symphony,* noting how one poem in particular is 'in heroic couplets and its style is certainly borrowed (perhaps it's a mockery of a translation of Tasso by Pope?)'[246]. Burgess used this form in the early 1950s, and then revised it in *Essay on Censorship* (1989). Burgess's deployment of the form in *Napoleon Symphony* is close to its original "epic" purpose, in that Burgess sets it to work in describing larger-scale troop manoeuvres:

> Mark how the Alexander of our age
>
> Bids soldier's skill fulfill a lover's rage.
>
> His numbers far inferior are found:
>
> Too many ring resistant Mantua round,[247]

Shockley identifies how this uses a poetic form closely associated with a previous text; specifically, he uses the word 'borrowed'[248] to demonstrate his awareness of Burgess's intertextual method. Shockley further develops his understanding of Burgess's intertextual method, noting how in passages of closely interwoven poetry and prose, 'Burgess delves into a virtuosic display of pastiche, romping through the history of English literature'[249], ultimately finding poetry in the Wordsworthian style, consisting of

---

245 Bowman, p. 157.
246 Shockley, p. 84.
247 Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony,* p. 21.
248 Shockley, p. 97.
249 Ibid.

'blank verse that could very well have come from *The Prelude'.*[250] For example, in the detail concerning the battle, Burgess deploys blank verse to purvey epic action, much in the same way as he did with *Moses*, two years later (see below):

> A cannon shoots its flower and frozen smoke
>
> Opens a horse's mouth in shock forever.
>
>   [. . .] There,
>
> The Consul, in left foreground, shows his staff
>
> The things it can already see: a forest
>
> Of flustered enemy, of tangled horses,
>
> Of shouts and totterings and crazed dismay.[251]

The horses and the cannon, and the larger-scale scenery of horses and forests are certainly reminiscent of Wordsworth's own epic blank verse, which witnesses armies on the move:

> And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on
>
> A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world,
>
> Neglected and ungratefully thrown by
>
> Even for the very service they had wrought,
>
> But husbanded through many a long campaign.[252]

Readers familiar with the Wordsworthian epic vision can appreciate a sense of continuity in its use to describe post-revolutionary French troop movements. Far from rendering his later novel ironic, Burgess simply uses the form to continue, rather than

---

250 Ibid.
251 Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, p. 95.
252 William Wordsworth, *The Prelude* in *The Collected Poems of William Wordsworth* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994), book one, lines 516-520, pp. 639-40.

revise, the tropes of a strong precursor. Wordsworth's *The Prelude,* just like Coleridge's *Religious Musings*, deploys blank verse very much in the tradition of Milton, since – in the Romantic tradition – 'to become a great poet like Milton, one had to produce an epic magnum opus, in a similar vein to *Paradise Lost*'[253]. Whilst Burgess had, a few years before, attempted to revise Milton via Empson, in the *Revolutionary Sonnets*, in *Napoleon Symphony,* he pastiches Wordsworth's own revision of the Miltonic form, but – as Shockley suggests – produces verse that is almost indistinguishable in style from the original. In much the same way as *The Eve of St Venus*, Burgess does not clear enough imaginative space to establish his own poetic voice in this learned but derivative intertextual model.

Hopkins and Intertextual Irony

Burgess wrote large quantities of poetry in 1974. The blank verses, heroic couplets, villanelles, and acrostic verses of *Napoleon Symphony* were matched by a long theological poem in blank verse that appears in *The Clockwork Testament*. Dealing with the difficult Catholic debate about free will and determinism, the poem was published two years before Burgess's other biblical epic in blank verse, *Moses,* and is written in a pedagogical style using Hopkinsian sprung rhythm in lines such as

> Smelling of stolen apples but otherwise
>
> Ready to scorch, a punishing sun, saying:
>
> Where is this man of the northern sea, let me
>
> Chide him, let me do more if

---

253 K. E. Beavers, '"The Balance of Reconciliation of Opposite or Discordant Qualities": Political Tensions and Religious Transitions in the Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge' (unpublished doctoral thesis. University of Greenwich: 2011), p. 66.

His heresy merits it, what is his heresy?[254]

This poem is one of many Hopkinsian tropes in the novel, and Enderby eventually abandons it, deciding '[y]ou could not make poetry out of raw doctrine.'[255] This is a neat conclusion for a novel which is threaded together with citation and allusion to poetry by Hopkins in order to construct an argument about the necessary freedoms an artist (literary or otherwise) should have to practice their art. The novel is an example of what Juvan describes as '[r]eworking or adaptation as an intertextual genre that adjusted a source's shape and content to a new function and another target audience'[256]. That is to say, intertextual material from Hopkins is intricately woven together and re-contextualised as prose narrative, as well as references to *A Clockwork Orange* in both its film and novel form, itself a novel which Blake Morrison – in his introduction – finds has 'many literary jokes and allusions'[257]. With the exception of Burgess's completion of Hopkin's 'St Winifred's Well' for BBC broadcast in 1989[258], the novel is one of Burgess's most extended poetic dialogues with Hopkins.

As Geoffrey Aggeler points out, Burgess also uses ironic allusion to Hopkins in *Napoleon Symphony*. Writing about a character in the novel, he detects '[. . .] allusion to Gerard Manley Hopkins's sonnet "The Windhover," [when] she greets Napoleon with "O my chevalier."'[259]. Having identified the allusion, Aggeler then passes comment on why Burgess has used this device: '[t]he significance of these allusions is not readily apparent. Certainly, to some extent, they are ironic.'[260] In *The Clockwork Testament*,

---

254 Burgess, Anthony. *The Clockwork Testament*. in *The Complete Enderby* (London, Sydney, Auckland, Parktown: Vintage, 1974:2002), p. 410.
255 Burgess, *The Clockwork Testament*, p. 434.
256 Juvan, p. 32.
257 Blake Morrison, 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess. *A Clockwork Orange (*London: Penguin, 1962:1972:1996)*, p. vii - ix, (p. xiv).
258 'Burgess … on film, television and radio', <http://www.anthonyburgess.org/about-anthony-burgess/burgess-on-film-television-and-radio> [accessed 27 December 2012]
259 Aggeler, pp. 228-9.
260 Ibid.

ironic allusion is built up regarding Enderby's screenplay, based on Hopkins's poem

The Wreck of the Deutschland (on the 1875 death of Franciscan nuns shipwrecked in

storms). Early on in the novel, Burgess provides sample scenes from the film. For

example:

> There was also an ambiguous moment when, storms bugling, though somewhat subdued,
>
> Death's fame in the background, she cried orgasmatically: 'Oh Christ, Christ, come quickly' –
>
> Hopkins's own words, so one could hardly complain.[261]

Here, Burgess's comical re-rendering of Hopkins's phrase as sexual innuendo shows the

ease with which a quotation can be distanced from its original meaning. Enderby sets

himself up for irony, as Hopkins's language is inevitably misinterpreted. Intertextual

irony, according to Kristeva, is usually built up when the pre-text and its new context

'intersect and neutralize each other'[262]. The meaning of Hopkins's phrase is thus

neutralized (or, rather, sexualised) by the film's requirements.

In a nod to Burgess's own experiences in defending Kubrick's version of *A

Clockwork Orange*, Enderby is asked on a TV talk show to explain why his film

treatment of Hopkins's *The Wreck of the Deutschland* has apparently resulted in

violence against nuns in real life. Enderby points out that the TV presenter's unlikely

name, Sperr Lansing, is derived from Hopkins' poem 'To R.B'. He quotes directly from

Hopkins: '"The strong spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame. I suppose that's

where he got it from.'[263] Enderby is on the show to explain his creative choices (and

their possible violent impact on the world outside); it is fitting, then, that Sperr's name

comes from a Hopkins poem which deals with 'the rapture of inspiration'[264]. The details

---

261 Burgess, *The Clockwork Testament*, p. 369.
262 Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text', p. 36.
263 Burgess, *The Clockwork Testament*, p. 397.
264 Hopkins, p. 68.

from an external text are embedded directly into Burgess's narrative. When readers

recognise the reference, the result is a sort of literary joke; the material is also used

directly to tell the story of the novel. Burgess structures his novel using the poetic

artefacts of Hopkins.

Eventually, the debate collapses into shouting and abuse. Above the noise,

Enderby begins reciting the original lines from *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, whilst at

the same time Lansing is doing his TV duties by promoting their sponsors' product –

called Mansex – for gents who 'feel, you know, not up to it'[265]. This sordid-sounding

product is yet another Hopkins reference: it is a word used in the poem 'The Bugler's

First Communion'. It is a gross distortion of Hopkins's original intention. Just as his

long poem has become a violent blockbuster, his compound word to describe the

religious dignity of a boy's physical development has been transformed into a

pharmaceutical sex aid. This could be described as *poetic intertextual comedy*. It is as at

the same time a focused metaphor for the commercial misappropriation of art. Once the

work is placed into the public sphere, the poet has lost control because of readers'

(mis)interpretations, which in themselves are other texts-based-on-texts. That is to say,

Burgess comically makes use of the reader's ability to recognise the intertext in

presenting material from literary tradition whose original meaning is disrupted by other

(in this case, fictional) *belated* readers. Roland Barthes helps summarise this problem,

when he finds 'there is one place where [linguistic meaning's] multiplicity is focused

and that place is the reader'[266]. Kristeva's summary of Barthes's conception of

intertextuality thus presents the text as an essentially disruptive place, since 'writing is

contestation, rupture, flight, and irony.'[267] Here, Burgess exploits this propensity for the

purposes of bawdy intertextual comedy, a purpose Kristeva chooses to mainly overlook

---

265 Burgess, *The Clockwork Testament*, p. 450.
266 Barthes, 'The Death of The Author', p. 148.
267 Kristeva, 'How does one speak to literature?', p. 107.

in her study.

On his way to the TV studio, Enderby encounters the actor who plays Hopkins in the controversial film version of *The Wreck of the Deutschland*. The actor reveals that his mother was Irish and his father British. In response to this, Enderby recites lines from another Hopkins poem, 'The Bugler's First Communion': "'"Born, he tells me, of Irish|Mother to an English sire (he|Shares their best gifts surely, fall how things will).""[268] This quotation has no purpose at all in terms of the structure of the novel, except to draw attention to itself, or perhaps to enrich the level of ironic references to Hopkins. Burgess does this more thoroughly later on in the scene, when he quotes Hopkins in the middle of the dialogue, but – this time – no character speaks it. It is inserted directly into fabric of the prose: 'Though this child's drift|Seems by a divine doom channelled, nor do I cry|Disaster there [. . .]'[269]. The effect is a distortion of the narrative voice, as the reader is unclear as to whether Hopkins or Burgess is the main contributor. This, writes Juvan, is 'a practice that also quite obviously referred to the text that gave birth to it' with the effect that the 'boundaries between paraphrase, imitation and translation were blurred [. . .]'[270]. Burgess uses Hopkinsian poetic tropes so densely that the precursor poet becomes the dominant voice. Burgess thus renders the structural fabric of his own narrative problematic, such is the depth of poetic intertextuality he has woven into the novel.

Readers unfamiliar with Burgess's works could well expect *The Clockwork Testament* to be some sort of critical guide to *A Clockwork Orange;* the book's title suggests this, in keeping with Juvan's observations on *intertitleness*. It's a complex interaction of texts which – when combined – allows dialogue to be created concerning the ethics of literary production, and allows Burgess to present the evidence in a non-

---

268 Burgess, *The Clockwork Testament*, p. 437.
269 Ibid., p. 438.
270 Juvan, p. 32.

didactic fashion, since there is a web of Hopkinsian poetic language between the moral argument and Burgess's intentions in presenting them. Kristeva describes this call-and-response of ideas presented through language as 'dialogical'[271]. To present the *dialogic* in poetic clothing lets Burgess use the novel as an *entertainment* primarily whilst still charging it with important messages about culture and society in general, which have *their* clear references to the original controversy sparked by *A Clockwork Orange.* For Hynes, this technique of avoiding didacticism in art (most especially in poetry) is closely associated with Auden of the 1930s. In *The Poet's Tongue* (1935), Auden describes the form as *parable*, and – through works such as *The Ascent of F6* – constructs poetic narratives about moral choice, since he believed that 'poetry is not concerned with telling people what to do, but with extending our knowledge of good and evil'[272]. Auden believed that the role of poetry was in 'leading us to the point where it is possible for us to make a rational and moral choice.'[273] Empson, in reviewing *Paid on Both Sides*, praised Auden's 'gift for assimilating modern movements and systems of belief and transforming them into parabolic forms, and for finding the necessary images of immediate reality'[274]. The word 'assimilating' here is especially pertinent, with its overtones of intertextual combination. In *The Clockwork Testament*, Burgess achieves such an assimilation via a fictional character and intertextual allusion to and citation of the poetry of Hopkins to present a parabolic debate which has its roots in real life experience, thereby making Enderby's defence of the role of art autonomous from his creator**.** He thereby escapes the temptations of a mechanically didactic presentation of arguments by the complex enclosure of these debates in intertextual material in a form closely associated with 1930s poets. Burgess was to return to poetic parabola via *Byrne*

---

271 Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and* Art, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 64-91, (p. 79).
272 Auden in Hynes, p. 14.
273 Ibid.
274 Hynes, p. 55.

(1995) which also draws on intertextual material for a fictionalised debate about the role of poetry.

Moses, Milton and Revisionism

The parable form that was established in the 1930s and revived by Burgess in the 1970s (and the 1990s) was, according to Jean Moorcroft Wilson, introduced into the Modernist tradition by Isaac Rosenberg in his blank verse play *Moses*. In her biography of the Modernist war poet, she argues that Rosenberg's editor, Martin Taylor, found that the poet 'was ahead of his time, and much nearer to the verse dramatists of the 1930s who were, in Auden's words, "not concerned with telling people what to do, but with extending our knowledge of good and evil [. . .]"'[275]. Rosenberg, as a writer of a blank verse drama called *Moses*, and as a key innovator of the parable form, is of relevance to Burgess, who, in 1976, wrote his own epic poem along the same lines, also called *Moses*.

Graves and Riding describe Rosenberg as 'one of the few poets who might have served as a fair challenge to sham modernism,'[276] quoting a long extract from the epic poem *Moses*, originally published in 1916[277], which is the same extract used in Roberts's 1936 anthology of Modernist poetry. Burgess's own *Moses* deals with the same subject and is presented in blank verse form[278], whereas Rosenberg's *Moses*, although written in blank verse, uses character names and stage directions, in keeping with the conventions of verse drama, much as Eliot or Fry do in their verse drama (see above). Fry, notably, also writes about the Moses myth in the Modernist mode: his play

275 Jean Moorcroft Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg:The Making of a Great War Poet: A New Life* (London: Westfield & Nicolson, 2008), p. 302.
276 Graves and Riding, p. 108.
277 Isaac Rosenberg, *Moses. A Play (*London: Paragon Printing Works, 1916).
278 IABF, Anthony Burgess Center, and HRC have no record of Burgess having held a copy of an edition of Rosenberg's poems.

The Firstborn[279] uses blank verse with character and stage directions, and was published

initially in 1946, and then in a new edition in 1970. Whereas Burgess's *Moses* (1976) is

presented in Miltonic epic blank verse, Fry's *Moses* has more in common with

Rosenberg. Burgess acknowledges intertextual tropes from Fry's work in *The Eve of St.*

Venus, but does not mention Fry (or, for that matter, Rosenberg) with regard to *Moses*.

Burgess was well aware of Fry's diminishing influence upon literary tradition, and there

is nothing to connect Burgess's *Moses* with Fry's *Moses*, whereas there is an implied

connection between Burgess and Rosenberg. Rosenberg's *Moses* is reviewed by Graves

and Riding in their *Survey*, which Burgess read. However, as Daiches points out in a

review which parodies Burgess's blank verse, Burgess eschewed Rosenberg-style verse

drama for "'a sort of epic poem" (his own description)|As a necessary preliminary [. . .]|

To a shooting script'[280]. The keyword here is "epic", which evokes Milton more than

Rosenberg (see above). Whilst Burgess makes no mention of Rosenberg's blank verse

drama *Moses* in the introduction to his long poem,[281] he had already written a

substantial amount of epic blank verse in *Napoleon Symphony* and *The Clockwork*

Testament, informed by his mid-1960s dialogue with Empson concerning Milton's own

epic poetry. By 1976, then, writing a TV treatment in Miltonic blank verse was a natural

decision for Burgess. Daiches views Burgess's poem as only 'Perfunctory in

scholarship, but showing signs of reasonable background reading'[282], but doesn't

mention Fry or Rosenberg. Three biographies of Isaac Rosenberg were published in

1975[283], and Fry's version was recently published, so – if anything – interest continued

to *grow* in this section of literary tradition prior to Burgess's own *Moses.* There are

---

279 Christopher Fry, *The Firstborn* in *Plays: The Boy with a Cart: The Firstborn: Venus Observed.*
    (Oxford University Press, 1946:1949:1952:1958:1970).
280 David Daiches, 'Ambulant prophet', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 January, 1977, p. 50.
281 Anthony Burgess, *Moses* (New York: Stonehill,1976), p. 5.
282 Daiches, p. 50
283 Jean Moorcroft Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg, Poet & Painter: a Biography* (London, Cecil Woolf,
    1975); Jean Liddiard. Isaac Rosenberg: *The Half Used Life (*London : Gollancz, 1975); Joseph Cohen.
    *Journey to the Trenches: the Life of Isaac Rosenberg, 1890-1918 (*London: Robson Books, 1975).

surface similarities between Rosenberg and Burgess's *Moses.* For example, here is an

excerpt from Rosenberg:

> O, what a furnace roaring in his blood
>
> Thawed my congealed sinews and tingled my own
>
> Raging through me like a strong cordial.
>
> He spoke! Since yesterday
>
> Am I not larger grown?
>
> I've seen men hugely shapen in soul,
>
> Of such unhuman shaggy male turbulence
>
> The tower in foam miles from our neck-strained sight . . .[284]

A random selection from Burgess's *Moses* demonstrates similar alternation between

high and low language, presented in blank verse of varying rhythm:

> Fill him with bread, or water, and his spirit
>
> Comes alive, ready to brood on heaven, on you, on
>
> Human freedom. But let the meanest of your gifts
>
> Elude him, and he croaks like a fractious frog.[285]

Descriptions of Moses in *The Firstborn* are certainly as striking as those of Burgess or

Rosenberg:

> [. . .] I saw him walking like a lion
>
> Behind bars, up and down in your battered garden,
>
> Rameses. The sentries had tried to hold him

---

284 Rosenberg in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 164.
285 Burgess, *Moses*, p. 87.

> But he broke through their spears as though he didn't see them.[286]

Burgess, though, maintains the Miltonic epic blank verse form of uninterrupted lines, in keeping with the post-Miltonic epic style that he had experimented with two years previously, informed by the critical dialogue with Empson. Rosenberg and Fry, however, break the lines up with stage directions and character names. For Wilson, Rosenberg – like Burgess – was still deliberately writing *after* Milton, since 'a more recent appreciation of Milton's great blank verse epic *Paradise Lost* had almost certainly encouraged Rosenberg's decision to attempt his own epic.'[287] In short, both poets responded to Milton by applying epic forms to the Moses story; Burgess did so because of the commission from a TV production company.

Rosenberg is by comparison, the more innovative re-writer of the myth, anticipating forms that would be especially popular in the 1930s, whereas Burgess returns to a more conservative form, closely associated with Milton. In complement to Burgess's Miltonic connections in *Moses*, Bloom finds that 'Milton's prophetic, oral original [in *Paradise Lost*] was Moses'[288]. Milton, once again, becomes Burgess's most likely intertextual model for poetic revision (this time, rather than Rosenberg or Fry), resulting from his familiarity with William Empson's *Milton's God*, and from the decision to return to Milton's influential poetic structure. Bloom passingly refers to Empson's work when he positions Milton as the ultimate figure of literary revisionism, since the 'imitation of the precursor takes as its paradigm the burden of imitating a double-god, for these two gods-in-one are still present in Milton's God.'[289] For Bloom, and for Burgess (in *Moses*), Milton is a key site of revisionist enterprise; Burgess's intertextual structure alludes to a primary scene of literary revisionism. Burgess thus

---

286 Christopher Fry, *The Firstborn*, p. 117.
287 Jean Moorcroft Wilson, *Isaac Rosenberg:The Making of a Great War Poet: A New Life*, p. 298.
288 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 50.
289 Ibid., p. 87.

effectively uses Milton to revise the Bible.

Burgess and Belli

The use of structural intertexts to negotiate creative space with strong precursors remained, for Burgess, predominant in the late 1970s. *ABBA ABBA* (1977) presents a theoretical meeting in nineteenth century Rome between English poet Johns Keats and Giacchino Belli, who become friends due to their shared preference for the Petrarchan sonnet form. Within the novel are seventy-one sonnets by Belli, which Burgess translated, including the five he initially published in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 1976[290]. For Haffen, Burgess uses the novel to debunk the literary myth of 'the sad but glorious destiny of the official romantic poet'[291]; Haffen detects how Burgess decided that, instead, Keats' 'frustrated creativity is a terrible waste and loss.'[292] Burgess, argues Haffen, takes control of the Keats myth, so as to re-negotiate Keats's position in literary tradition as 'not fossilised into an essence, a clockwork ready-lived existence, but re-created as a potential, a becoming'[293]. It is a form of Bloomian *transumption*, therefore. However, this is only at prose level: Haffen does not go on to comment about the creative transumption that also takes place on a *poetic* level via creative mis-translation of Belli.

Burgess's translations of Belli's sonnets foist a *belated* poetic voice upon Belli. Edwin Morgan, in his review of the novel, identifies Burgess's own anachronistic tropes in the translations, which are 'fairly free as regards added detail, or local or modern analogy, but very properly sticking to the Petrarchan rhyme scheme which permits

---

290 Anthony Burgess, 'Five Sonnets by G. G. Belli translated by Anthony Burgess', 23 January 1976, p. 76.
291 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 134.
292 Ibid.
293 Ibid., p. 135.

some finely strained and inventive collocations.'[294] Whilst Belli's structure is "cited" directly by Burgess, new details are added in translation, as is evidenced from Burgess's own translation notes, which helpfully show how the sonnets evolved from a basic transliteration to the more familiar Petrarchan form. There is insufficient space here to account for seventy-one sonnets in translation. However, a usefully focused example is to be found in the first verse of 'The Creation of the World', which went through at least four prose translations from Roman dialect in sonnet form to basic English prose; one of which begins:

> The year that Jesus Christ kneaded the world, for he already had the dough to knead it, he chose to make it green, flat and round, like a street-vendor's sample melon. He made only one sun, one moon and one globe, but by god he made a whole heap of stars; he put the birds on high, beasts in the middle and fish below, he planted the plants and then said: "Enough".[295]

After a number of transliteration attempts, and at least three worked-out sonnets, Burgess arrives at this verse draft:

> One day the Master Baker buckled to
> And baked, so say the very best religions,
> This loaf the world – though atheist collegians
> Say it's a melon, and the thing just grew.
> He made one sun, moon, map of green and blue,
> But chucked stars wild, like breadcrumbs for the pigeons,
> Set birds up, beasts down, fish in nether regions,
> Planted his plants, and then yawned: Aye, that'll do.[296]

---

294 Edwin Morgan, 'The thing's the thing', *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 March 1977, p. 669.
295 Anthony Burgess, 'The Creation of the World' translation notes (Texas: HRC, box 1, fol. 1, n.d.), p. 1.
296 Ibid.

Notable differences include: the use of the technical phrase 'atheist collegians'; 'dough' replaced by 'bread'; 'Jesus' becoming the 'Master Baker'; 'plants' replaced by a 'map of green and blue'; and 'birds' are changed to 'pigeons'. In addition to this, as Morgan points out, Burgess incorporates a 'Manchester dialect'[297] Conspicuously, Burgess introduces Hopkinsian head rhyme through the use of the words 'baker', 'baked' and 'buckled'. As John Haffenden points out[298], 'buckled' is singled out by Empson in *Seven Types of Ambiguities* as a particular example of how Hopkins (in 'The Windhover') uses ambiguous words for poetic effect, and as an example of the seventh type of ambiguity. Burgess, here, once again uses intertextual material from Hopkins to create a sense of intertextual irony. Burgess uses *belated* texts as a tactic to counter the strong creative voice of Belli; he is, as Bloom puts it, 'troping on a trope'[299] (i.e., using intertexts of Hopkins and Empson to counter the strength of Belli's original text) so as to 'enforce a state of rhetoricity or word-consciousness'[300] as Burgess vies with Belli to "own" the translated poem. It is notable that, in the published version in *ABBA ABBA*, the line featuring 'buckled' is missing. Burgess made further changes for the final version, which avoid the theological language of the initial translation, and introduce a greater sense of Burgess's Lancashire vernacular:

> One day the bakers God & Son set to
>
> And baked, to show their pasta-master's skill,
>
> This load the world, though the old imbecile
>
> Swears it's a melon, and the thing just grew.
>
> [. . .][301]

---

297 Morgan, 'The thing's the thing', p. 669.
298 Haffenden, *William Empson: Volume II: Against the Christians*, p. 436.
299 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 139.
300 Ibid.
301 Anthony Burgess. *ABBA ABBA* (London: Vintage, 1977:2000), p. 67.

A useful indicator of Burgess's approach to translation can be found in his own copy of Humphrey Carpenter's biography of W. H. Auden. On the last endpaper of this edition, in Burgess's handwriting, is the number 406. The corresponding page has clearly been opened many times. This page deals with translation, most especially the newness that a liberal translation can bring to a text, specific to Auden's translation of poems by Andrei Voznesensky. On this page, Carpenter notes:

> Auden's translations often departed quite radically from the originals, but he was prepared to justify this: 'It does not particularly matter if the translators have understood their originals correctly; often, indeed, misunderstanding is, from the point of view of the native writer, more profitable.[302]

In his translation of the Belli sonnets, Burgess follows Auden's line of profitable misunderstanding via a complex intertextuality more than a creative mistranslation. The intertextual material is used to negotiate creative space with the precursor poet. As Haffen points out Burgess shows that literary tradition is a process of dialogic, and a similar linear progression.

I have demonstrated at length in this chapter that Burgess's determinedly pragmatic use of intertextual poetic material between 1950 and 1979 continued to refer back to 1930s-inspired Modernist practice, most especially via Eliot and Empson's own negotiations with literary tradition; at the same time he became increasingly belated in his Modernist techniques. As Burgess progressed into the final years of his career, Eliot, Auden, Hopkins, and Empson remained strong in his poetic imagination, up until his death. In the next chapter, I address this in detail. The chapter has also explored how Burgess's poetry reacts to the dramatic transitions in postwar English literature via

---

302 Humphrey Carpenter, *W.H. Auden: A Biography* (London: Unwin, 1981:1983), p. 406.

continued exploratory parody and pastiche. Burgess has been presented as a belated Modernist, meaning his poetry continues to incorporate the Modernist techniques of precursors who critical and poetic influences are on the wane. Burgess, like the poets of the burgeoning Movement, writes about this belatedness in strict forms but – unlike them – does not abandon his Modernist intertextual poetic techniques. His response to the Movement is a hyperbolic travesty, taken from the novel *One Hand Clapping*. Burgess structures the novel so as to indicate this text is not to be taken seriously. It is thus a parody that calls into attention its own formal limitations, and – as such – it can be regarded as an early Postmodern poem. *The Eve of St.Venus*, his most substantial Modernist poetic text of the 1950s, has been presented as yet another pastiche of Eliot (and Fry); his pastiche is so complete that he fails to establish his own poetic voice. Pastiche (which he relates to parody) is once again shown as related to poetic development, most especially with regard to form. Burgess continues to write under the influence of Empson, this time responding to Milton via Empson's own readings, in producing the *Revolutionary Sonnets* (which are out of keeping with contemporary literary fashions) and the hyperbolic verses which appear in of *The Clockwork Testament* and *Napoleon Symphony,* as much as the "serious" Miltonic verse of *Moses*, which is informed by the early Modernist, Isaac Rosenberg. The majority of Burgess's poems in this chapter have been seen as staunchly Modernist and out of keeping with the development of poetry at the time. The influence of Pope has been detected in poems in couplets from *The Worm and the Ring* and *Napoleon Symphony*. Again, these are presented as explorations of form, bound up with 1930s-style Modernist preoccupations concerning chaos, order, and the re-imagining of (literary) tradition. Burgess's loose translations of the poetry of Belli, I have argued, can be taken as an intertextual enterprise influenced by the Modernist approaches taken by Auden and

Pound; the looseness of the translations have been established as a re-imagining of the

literary past in alignment with Eliot's Modernist concept of tradition.

CHAPTER FOUR: ***MOVING FROM ONE WORLD INTO ANOTHER*** **(1980-1993)**

In Chapter Two, I established that Burgess's intertextual poetic style originates from the 1930s Modernist tradition. In Chapter Three, I presented evidence that Burgess, in his mid-period career, continues to use intertextual techniques to assert himself as a belated Modernist. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Burgess's intertextual poetry and verse drama in his *late career* is notable for its length, its formal strictness, its subtle shifts and in its approach to intertextuality and Modernism. Burgess's poetry during this period is characterised by an increasing awareness of more contemporaneous techniques and debates, most especially in growing engagements with formalist styles of poetry. Burgess's intertextual poetry transitions to become increasingly self-conscious, increasingly ironic, and increasingly in alignment with Postmodernist technique.

This chapter, accordingly, interrogates key texts to address four inter-related contentions. The first contention is that Burgess's texts in this period *stage the production of poetic meaning through intertextuality*. The second is that *Burgess is wary of Postmodernism as a critical term, but is aware that his later poetry uses techniques associated with it*. The third is that Burgess *develops a self-conscious and sometimes ironic intertextuality*, which – as I argue below – other critics have associated with Postmodernity. The fourth is that Burgess *continues to use intertextual techniques to investigate his own relation to Modernist literary tradition*. The present chapter shows these are gradual developments, which seem to increase significantly around 1989, culminating in the long Postmodern poem, *Byrne* (1995).

I do not wish to claim that Burgess suddenly *becomes Postmodern* from 1980 onwards, but do claim that intertextuality itself becomes more of a self-conscious

concern for Burgess, with Burgess himself identifying this self-conscious exploration of form as a possible indicator of Postmodern technique[1]. Specifically, techniques that Juvan describes as 'self-referentiality, a play of differences, intertextuality, metafiction, meta-parody, and transgressiveness'[2] ('traits of [. . .] postmodernism'[3]) are increasingly to be found in Burgess's late period poetry, in amongst the explorations of (and alignment with) literary Modernism. For convenience, this chapter refers to Linda Hutcheon's *Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), published around the same time as Burgess's later works, and which usefully describes the 'current cultural phenomenon that exists'[4] by the late 1980s. Reading Burgess's poetry of this period through this contemporary critical work is useful in demonstrating how Burgess's increasingly Postmodern style is related to debates that were present at the time. Like Juvan – Hutcheon describes a *poetics*, 'a flexible conceptual structure which could at once constitute and contain'[5] the term Postmodernism. Specifically, this chapter shows how Burgess's intertextual poetry moves from the belated Modernist modes seen in Chapter Three, to more of 'an ironic dialogue with the past'[6] through intertextual translation, adaptation, or parodic forms associated with Postmodernism. My intention is to show how Burgess's late poetry straddles the two critical debates of Modernism and Postmodernism, and not to reductively force the later work into one category or another.

A useful word for these discussions is *dialogism*, which Juvan describes as the way a 'word is not a plain direct and objective representation of extralinguistic things, but a [. . .] link between self and other'[7]. He also finds that in 'a word/utterance's semantic construction, its presuppositions, intonation, or stylistic register one can also

---

1   Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.
2   Juvan, p. 9.
3   Ibid.
4   Hutcheon, p. ix.
5   Ibid.
6   Hutcheon, p. 4.
7   Juvan, p. 89.

discern its directedness [. . .] to "another's discourse", "someone else's speech" [. . .][8] ; this is equivalent to Barthes's assertion that texts are read through other texts. Juvan points out how dialogism has been discussed with regard to both Modernism and Postmodernism[9]. The texts addressed in this chapter are linked by their *shared concern with* dialogism, with how poetic meaning is generated and multiplied through the agency of interacting texts. Burgess's verse drama translations *Miser! Miser!* (written before June 1983), *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and *Chatsky (The Importance of Being Stupid)* (1993) are shown as generating new poetic meaning by combining translated texts from one literary tradition with texts from another. Burgess, I argue, translates plays which each feature intransitive characters who help dramatise the conflicts, tensions, and syntheses of disparate texts. Burgess, in completing Hopkins's unfinished verse drama *St. Winefred's Well* (1989), is found to structure the adapted text so that his characters enter into intertextual dialogue with those of Hopkins. The long poems *Essay on Censorship* (1989) and *Byrne* (1995) are examined as works which are structured to explore how meaning is generated through the interaction of disparate texts. *Byrne* is found to incorporate techniques of ironic intertextuality that have also been identified in Eco's Postmodern novels, and to explain these self-consciously within the narrative itself. Burgess's unpublished drama *The End of Things* (1991) is considered as a work which dramatises how meaning is rendered ambivalent by the interaction of texts. Nigel, a character in this play, presents a suitable focus for the present chapter's arguments by using intertextuality to highlight the effect of dialogism:

> "The drunkenness of things being various," said Louis MacNeice. And where does it all lead?
> There's no final number, but there is certainly an absolute zero. That, perhaps, is the God we all

---

8   Ibid.
9   Ibid., p. 93.

yearn for. We're so split, so divided.[10]

Here, Nigel cites MacNeice's poem 'Snow', which ironically describes the dizzying effect of how multiple meanings are generated *between texts*:

> World is crazier and more of it than we think,
>
> Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion
>
> A tangerine and spit the pips and feel
>
> The drunkenness of things being various.[11]

The effect, as Nigel suggests, is a sense of deferred meaning; Burgess's drama refers to a poem which is about the potential of multiple meanings. Certainly, Nigel's phrase 'absolute zero'[12] hints at a more contemporary debate concerning dialogism which was well established by 1991. Roland Barthes's text *Writing Degree Zero* (1953) – as Patrizia Lombardo has recently pointed out in her study of the paradoxes of Barthes work – is about the relationship between one text and another, and how an author's style and language 'is the code of prescriptions and habits that all writers of a given period have in common.'[13] Indeed, the focus of the book 'for Barthes was the relationship between literary form and history'[14]. Nigel, in finding there is 'no final number'[15] to intertextual writing recalls what Umberto Eco calls the 'intertextual second sense'[16]; the possibility that an intertextual work can be 'infinite, running from text to text – with no

---

10 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 22.

11 Louis MacNeice, 'Snow' in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 296. The IABF holds Burgess's own copy of F. R. Dodds, ed., *The Collected Poems of Louis Macneice (*London: Faber and Faber, 1966:1979). Burgess owned the following: Louis MacNiece, *Eighty-Five Poems by Louis MacNeice (Faber, 1959)*, inscribed 'L & JBW Etchingham' (at IABF, Manchester).

12 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 22.

13 Patrizia Lombardo, *The Three Paradoxes of Roland Barthes* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010), p. 4.

14 Ibid., p. 7.

15 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 22.

16 Umberto Eco, *On Literature (*Orlando: Harcourt, 2002), p. 235.

other promise than the continual murmuring of intertextuality'[17]. Burgess cites Eco, and refers to his understanding of intertextuality in *Byrne* (1995)[18], as I explain in detail below.

Critical debates concerning the state of British poetry of the 1970s and 1980s, both recently and at the time, demonstrate an equally 'incorrigibly plural'[19] range of styles and techniques. Blake Morrison and Andrew Motion (1982)[20] attempted a 'contentious'[21] anthology that knowingly followed those of Marsh[22] (1912), Roberts[23] (1932), Conquest[24] (1956), and Alvarez[25] (1962). Resistance to the anthology initially came from Northern Irish poet Seamus Heaney, who in a poem called *Open Letter* – at the time rejected the 'benign cultural imperialism' of being included in an anthology about *British* poetry[26]. Randall Stevenson, tracing the development of postwar English literature, makes an even profounder point in retrospect: he asks '[w]hether or not'[27] the anthology confirms 'the poetic scene was [. . .] conspiratorially manipulated'[28] by critics like Motion and Morrison, as 'Donald Davie feared'[29] at the time. Davie made this point some years earlier, deciding that

> for the last fifty years each new generation of English poets [. . .] was formed or fomented
> or dreamed up by lively undergraduates at Oxford, who subsequently carried the group-

---

17 Eco, *On Literature,* p. 235.
18 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 61.
19 Louis MacNeice, 'Snow' in Roberts, *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, p. 296.
20 Blake Morrison and Andrew Motion, *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry* (Harmondworth: Penguin, 1982).
21 John Goodby, 'Hermeneutic Hermeticism' in C. C. Barfoot, ed., *In Black and Gold: Contiguous Traditions in Post-war British and Irish Poetry* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994). pp. 137-16, p. 137.
22 See Chapter Two for a discussion of the Edwardian poetry Burgess read during his 1930s education.
23 Morrison and Motion refer to: Michael Roberts, *New Signatures* (London: L. & V. Woolf, 1932). In Chapter Two and Chapter Three, I identify Roberts's 1936 *Faber Book of Modern Verse* as a key text for Burgess.
24 See Chapter Three.
25 See Chapter Three.
26 Goodby, p. 137.
27 Stevenson, p. 207.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., p. 207. See Donald Davie. 'The Varsity Match', *Poetry Nation*, No 2 1974 (pp. 420-1) ,p. 74. Also quoted in Morrison, *The Movement*, p. 49.

image to London and from there imposed it on the public consciousness so as to earn at least a footnote in the literary histories.[30]

Morrison and Motion, emphasising their own editorial imperatives, play down the case for belated Modernism, finding their anthologised poets 'exhibit something of the spirit of post-modernism'[31], and – though 'distinct and distinguished individual talents'[32] – have a 'sense of common purpose: to extend the imaginative franchise.'[33] They don't fully explain what this *Postmodern spirit* is, but certainly equate it with plurality. Arguing that English poetry in the 1960s and 1970s needed external influence to stimulate its development, Stevenson concludes that any Postmodern technique in poetry of the time 'was adapted from work in the United States'[34]. I argue below that Burgess's translation work between the 1970s and 1990s was likewise influenced by American poet Richard Wilbur who – avoiding the term *Postmodernist* – simply describes himself as a 'formalist poet'[35], pragmatically adapting a range of styles and texts from across a number of literary traditions in disciplined forms. Stevenson, concentrating on English verse, does not mention Wilbur. Mellors briefly mentions him as an example of a poet who has – in turn - been described by the critic Charles Altieri as Postmodern, meaning 'a fundamental rejection of modernism's humanist drive to order through the aesthetic appropriation of myth.'[36] Mellors' does not pass comment on Altieri's seemingly paradoxical position of how Wilbur's self-confessed formalism shows a rejection of order.

Randall Stevenson and Anthony Mellors[37] have identified postwar poets who

---

30 Donald Davie. 'The Varsity Match', *Poetry Nation*, No 2 1974 (pp. 420-1), p. 74.
31 Morrison and Motion, p. 20.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Stevenson, p. 207.
35 Richard Wilbur, *Responses: prose pieces, 1953-1976* (Brownsville, OR: Story Line, 1999), p. 302.
36 Mellors, p. 23.
37 See Introduction and Chapter One.

used Modernist techniques up until the 1970s, which is helpful in comparison with the present study's identification of Burgess's lingering Modernist influences. However, I argue below that Burgess, in fact, continues this until the 1990s, but – at the same time – also comes to use increasingly Postmodern techniques. Burgess is thus presented as a transitional poet. Stevenson, in his account of postwar poetry, finds self-conscious alignment with Modernist tradition (such as Burgess's) was an identifiable aspect of British poetic styles at the time, but he does not identify any poets who can be seen as late Modernist and Postmodernist at once. Most especially, he finds the poets Basil Bunting and Geoffrey Hill continued 'writing in an established modernist idiom'[38]. Hill's long narrative poem, 'The Mystery of the Charity of Charles Péguy' was published just one year after Morrison and Motion's anthology, and features the Modernist mix of Eliot-style difficulty and fragments of other languages:

> Happy are they who, under the gaze of God,
>
> die for the 'terre charnelle', marry her blood
>
> to theirs, and, in strange Christian hope, go down
>
> into the darkness of resurrection.[39]

Stevenson detects in Hill the same Eliot-influenced approach to history which, as I first established in Chapter One, continued to be an influence on Burgess. He describes the 'complex anachronisms' of Hill's long cycle of poems, *Mercian Hymns* (1971) as following 'T. S. Eliot's conclusions in *Little Gidding* (1942) about the past's continuity with the present'[40]. David Perkins's account of postwar poetry is ambivalent about the Modernity of Hill, acknowledging that his long poetry, along with Bunting's *Briggflatts*

---

38 Stevenson, p. 208.
39 Geoffrey Hill, *Collected Poems* (London: Penguin, 1985), p. 188.
40 Stevenson, p. 199.

'extended the genre' of 'the long Modernist poem'[41]. He finds Hill's poetry – in keeping

with the Eliot-styled tradition which Burgess follows – combines 'intellectual difficulty

and compression'[42]; intertextual techniques achieve this compression. In his exploration

of late Modernist poetics, Mellors similarly views Bunting's *Briggflatts* (first published

1966, broadcast on Channel 4 in 1982)[43] as an example of the continuing Modernist

techniques which lingered in some poets until the end of the 1970s[44]. Mellors sees

Bunting as one of many poets whose 'modernist aesthetic was formed earlier in the

century'[45], and who then 'developed it beyond the 1930s'[46], echoing Burgess's own

development as a poet self-consciously in alignment with Modernist styles associated

with the 1930s. Example lines from Bunting show a denseness of language and a

description of male physique that is comparable with Hopkins, and a description of the

pastness of the present comparable with Eliot:

> Today's posts are piles to drive into the quaggy past
>
> on which impermanent palaces balance.
>
> I see Aneurin's pectoral muscle swell under his shirt,
>
> pacing between the game Ida left to rat and raven,
>
> young, tell yesterday, with cabled thighs.[47]

Stevenson, in exploring Bunting's persistent Modernist aesthetic, locates it in the same

intertextual formalism learned from Eliot which also informs Burgess's poetry. He

observes how it 'resembled *The Waste Land* (1922)'[48] in 'its complex structure of

---

41 David Perkins, *A History of Modern Poetry: Modernism and After* (Harvard University Press: 1987),
    p. 212.
42 Perkins, p. 212.
43 Neil Astley, 'Readings and texts of *Briggflatts*' in Basil Bunting. *Briggflatts (*Highgreen: Bloodaxe,
    1966:2009), pp. 7-9, (p. 8).
44 Mellors, p. 19.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Basil Bunting, *Briggflatts (*Highgreen: Bloodaxe, 1966:2009), p. 27.
48 Stevenson, p. 196.

juxtaposed vignettes[49]' and its 'uncompromising incorporation of material from other cultures'[50]. He describes it as an example of 'formal invention and modernist imagination [. . .] in the later twentieth century.'[51] Bunting, like Burgess, is influenced by Eliot, and incorporates Modernist technique in his poetry of the late twentieth century. Moreover, in her critical survey of Bunting's poetry, Victoria Forde highlights how Gerard Manley Hopkins was 'a poet Bunting admired'[52]. Ian Gregson, in examining Bunting's treatment of masculinity, also briefly compares Bunting's 'evocation of sexual potency'[53] (such as the 'cabled thighs'), whose 'non-transparency'[54] of style he equates with the 'modernism'[55] of Hopkins. Again, this is comparable with Burgess, who – in 1989 – completed Hopkins's Modernist verse drama, *St. Winefred's Well.* Burgess and Bunting share this combination of Modernist influences, and their subsequent development of the Modernist aesthetic in the postwar period. Morrison and Motion likewise find 'in some poets [. . .] a preference for metaphor and poetic bizarrerie to metonymy and plain speech'[56] , whereas others showed 'a renewed interest in narrative [. . .] in describing the details and complexities of (often dramatic) incidents.'[57] I argue all through this chapter that Burgess in the 1980s and 1990s increasingly preferred complex metaphor to the plain statement[58], most especially through intertextual modes, and often registered 'the difficulties and strategies'[59] involved . These are not only techniques Morrison and Motion identify in *contemporary* (Postmodern) poets, but also

---

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., p. 197.
52 Victoria Forde, '"Lines Drawn" Across a Century: Basil Bunting's Poetry as an Overview' in James McGonigal, Richard Price (eds). *The Star You Steer by: Basil Bunting and British Modernism* (Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 2000), pp. 235-51, p. 244.
53 Ian Gregson. '"Adult Male of Merciless Species": Basil Bunting's Rueful Masculinity (pp. 109-22) in James McGonigal, Richard Price (eds). *The Star You Steer by: Basil Bunting and British Modernism (*Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 2000), p. 188
54 Gregson, p. 188
55 Ibid.
56 Morrison and Motion, p. 12.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.

in alignment with Stevenson, Perkins, Forde, Gregson, and Mellors – consistent with belated Modernist intertextual poetic styles. Specifically, Mellors posits that poets such as Bunting and Burgess use intertextual formalist techniques that can be categorised as *late Modernist*[60]. A Modernist aesthetic lingered in their poetry at a time when contemporary commentators (including Morrison and Motion) were increasingly defining a *Postmodernist* aesthetic, following the anti-Modernism of the Movement. Stevenson casts doubt on these contemporary commentaries which ignored the persistence of Modernist technique, arguing that the Postmodernists' description of their immanent cultural and historical condition created a problem of definition which 'inevitably arose from the simultaneity of post-modern analyses, and their defining vocabularies, with the age they sought to categorize.'[61] As I pointed out in Chapter One, Burgess was certainly familiar with critical debates concerning Postmodernism but was similarly cautious of the term, which he understood through its relationship to Modernism.

Translation is an important site of late Modernist intertextual poetic technique for Burgess in the 1980s and 1990s. '[M]any literary theorists place translation among intertextual phenomena'[62], writes Juvan, finding 'a translation starts to become obviously intertextual'[63] when 'the literary system into which it is transplanted it is not simply a substitute for the source but takes on a life as a version.'[64] In the essay 'A Babble of Voices' (1980) Burgess explores how poetic meaning is generated by combining a multiplicity of texts during translation. He identifies how some writers are *untranslatable* because of the uniqueness of poetic language:

---

60 Mellors, p. 19.
61 Stevenson, p. 71.
62 Juvan, p. 33.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.

[. . .] when a work of literature is being most literary it is exploiting the resources of the author's

vernacular to the very limit. This exploitation may be so thorough – so eccentric, indeed – that it

will totally forbid translation.'[65]

Accordingly, he decides 'that the greatest poet of the nineteenth century was Giuseppe

Gioacchino Belli [. . .]'[66] because his poetic voice is effectively untranslatable on its

own terms. Writing much later, he finds 'Belli has never been translated into English,

for the simple reason that he wrote not in Italian but in a dialect that nobody not Roman

can possibly know.'[67] Burgess's translation of Belli's poems – like his later translations –

divert dramatically from the original, simply because the innovations use language that

has no suitable analogue in translation. Burgess's insertion of new[68] poetic tropes is

therefore a process of *textual dialogism*, a Bloomian 'encounter *between poems*'[69] and

literary traditions. That is to say, for Burgess as much for Bloom and Juvan, the

translated text becomes essentially a *new* poem arising from the conflict between the

untranslatable poetic tropes of the original and the approximations of the new linguistic

setting, between one text and another. As a result, two sets of 'rich literary and cultural

associations intertwine'[70]. Burgess later noted that a model text for creating newness

from combinations of trans-linguistic intertexts was Eliot's *The Waste Land*, which

---

65   Burgess, 'A Babble of Voices', p .39.
66   Ibid.
67   Anthony Burgess, 'Bless thee Burgess, thou art translated: Anthony Burgess died this week. In a recent lecture he reflected on the uneasy world of the translator'. *The Independent.* Saturday 27 November 1993, p. 2. Burgess overlooks a translation that had been published by the time he wrote this. See Guiseppe Gioacchino Belli, *The Roman Sonnets of Guiseppe Gioacchino Belli.* Jargon 38, trans. by Harold Norse (London: Villiers, 1960:1974). See also Guiseppe Gioacchino Belli, *Sonnets of Guiseppe Belli*, trans. by Miller Williams (Baton Rouge and London: Louisana State University Press, 1981). Burgess's own copy held at IABF, Manchester. Inscribed on cover page: 'For Anthony Burgess – Gladly, with deep admiration, Miller Williams.' See also the translations into Scots English in Robert Garioch, *Complete Poetical Works.* Ed. by Robin Fulton (Edinburgh: Macdonald, 1983). For more recent translations, see Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli, *Sonnets*, trans. by Mike Stocks (Richmond: Oneworld Classics, 2007).
68   And those of Hopkins – see Chapter Three.
69   Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 70.
70   Juvan, p. 71.

showed a way in which our poetry could neglect translation altogether, by assuming that the

literature of Europe in the original was already our property. Thus the Waste Land [. . .] is full of

foreign languages, and these cannot be translated because the associations are with the original

sound.'[71]

The admission of untranslatable tropes, the focus on sound, and the combination of

texts from different literary traditions are all factors especially evident in Burgess's

translation and adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and is also comparable with the

Modernist approaches practised by Ezra Pound and W. H. Auden. In Chapter Three, I

noted how Burgess's early poem-in-translation, 'A Rondel for Spring', is influenced by

Pound's translation of *The Seafarer.* I also noted how Burgess read Carpenter's

biography[72] of Auden, and indicated strong interest in the poet's approach to *creative*

mistranslation; in his later-period intertextual translations, he merges this with his Eliot-

influenced understanding of the poetic interaction of past and present. Burgess owned a

1968 edition of the journal *Delos*[73], whose editorial board included Auden. In *Delos*

article 'The State of Translation'[74] Auden finds '[t]ranslation is, in theory, impossible'[75],

just as Burgess later concluded how 'literature cannot be translated'[76]. Burgess's

summary limits translation to literature, whereas Auden's meaning is more general. In a

1992 lecture, Burgess discusses *general* texts, when he finds revisionary 'translation can

revivify a language, and revivify a culture'[77]. Auden, recognising how a text is

transformed by translation, argues for the separation of 'perfect transliteration, an

---

71 Anthony Burgess 'European Lecture', *Guardian*, Saturday 27 November 1993. Originally given at
    Cheltenham Festival of Literature, 9th October 1992, p. 2.
72 Carpenter, p. 406.
73 D. S. Carne-Ross (ed), *Delos : A Journal On & Of Translation:* The National Translation Center, 1,
    (1968)*.* Burgess's own copy of this is available at the Anthony Burgess Center, *Unversité d'Angers.*
74 W. H. Auden, 'The State of Translation' in D. S. Carne-Ross, ed., *Delos : A Journal On & Of
    Translation:* The National Translation Center, 2 (1968), 29-30, p. 29.
75 Auden in Carne-Ross, p. 29.
76 Burgess, 'European Lecture', p. 1.
77 Ibid., p. 2.

unrealizable ideal'[78] and what he describes as a 'new work suggested by an old and

foreign one'[79]. Auden believes any new translation is a 'result of a collaboration'[80]

between the original 'master of the mother tongue'[81] and the 'philological expert in the

original language'[82]. Auden recognises how the translator necessarily alters the original

work, since s/he cannot faithfully transliterate it. Burgess, in 1991, similarly

summarised translation as 'a possible transmigration or elevation'[83] of the original,

'moving from one world into another.'[84] Like Auden, Burgess recognises how translation

intertextually combines the original language with the language of the translator.

Writing in 1974, he admits 'I am aware that I have traduced French and Italian writers I

have translated – partly through haste, partly through ignorance – but I have also, I

know, sometimes *improved on the original*.'[85] Burgess follows Auden's observation that

when a translator inevitably 'does depart from the literal meaning of the original'[86] s/he

needs to be convinced that 'the departure was necessary'[87] to purvey the sense of the

original, if not literally. As Burgess puts it elsewhere '[t]ranslation is not a matter of

words only: it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.'[88] Hence, *literal*

translation is impossible. Auden and Burgess, then, emphasise what Juvan calls the 'idea

that intertextuality articulates a text's historicity and sets it in a literary tradition'[89], since

the translated work is essentially an intertextual hybrid, formed from two literary

---

78 Auden in Carne-Ross, p. 29.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
83 Burgess, 'European Lecture', p. 1.
84 Ibid.
85 Anthony Burgess, 'Authors on Translators' in *Translation,* II.74 (Winter 1974), 5-8, p. 6.
86 Auden in Carne-Ross, p. 29.
87 Ibid.
88 Anthony Burgess, 'Is translation possible?' *Translation: The Journal of Literary Translation* 12
    (1974), 3-7, (p. 4). Quoted in Albrecht Neubert. 'Words and Texts - Which Are Translated? A Study in
    Dialectics.' in Gunilla Anderman and Marge Rogers (eds). *Word, Text, Translation: Liber Amicorum
    for Peter Newmark* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1999), pp. 119-128, (p. 124).
89 Juvan, p. 123.

traditions. As Kristeva puts it, 'the *text* is defined as a trans-linguistic apparatus'[90], ripe

for intertextual revision, where meaning is generated *between* texts.

Burgess, then, shares with Auden a pragmatic acceptance that literal translation

is not possible. The admission that he deliberately *elevates* the original text recalls Ezra

Pound's approach. Pound approximates the *spirit* of the foreign language text, more

than translating it; he therefore creates new meaning by putting the original text in

conflict with his *new* text-in-translation. Pound is particularly self-conscious when

discussing his translation of Guido's canzone 'Donna mi prega':

> As to the atrocities of my translation, all that can be said in excuse is that they are, I hope, for the
>
> most part intentional, and committed with the aim of driving the reader's perception further into
>
> the original than it would without them have penetrated.[91]

Burgess recognises how Pound's 'free translations'[92] of classical, French, and Italian

poets deviate from the original to create 'a new kind of English – colloquial ,learned,

witty, passionate – which broke away from the stiff, stale, "poetic" jargon of the late

romantics.'[93] Hugh Kenner, in his exploration of Pound's translations, describes them as

'interchanges of voice and personality with the dead'[94], which rely on the 'rendering of a

modus of thought or feeling'[95]. For Kenner, only Pound had had both the boldness and

resource to make a new form'[96], and by doing so – 'permanently extends the bounds of

---

90 Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text'. Quoted in Juvan, p. 12.

91 Ezra Pound, 'Notes on Elizabethan Classicists'. Quoted in Ronnie Apter, 'Ezra Pound ' in Daniel
    Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson (eds). *Translation - Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*
    (Oxford University Press: 2006), pp. 274 - 289, (p. 276). Apter's source text is Ezra Pound. 'Notes on
    Elizabethan Classicists,' in *Literary Essay*, ed. and introd. by *T. S. Eliot* (New York: New Directions,
    1968), 227-48 (First published as 'Elizabethan Classicists', *The Egoist*, 4 (1917), 8-10).

92 Burgess, *They Wrote in* English, Vol 1, p. 62.

93 Ibid.

94 Hugh Kenner, *The Translations of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1953), p. 14. Burgess's
    copy of this book available at IABF.

95 Ibid., p. 11.

96 Jill Scott, 'Translating Myth: The Task of Speaking Time and Space.' in Katherine M. Faull, ed.,
    Translation and Culture. Bucknell Review, XLVII.1 (Cranbury, NJ: Associated Bucknell University
    Presses, 2004)*,* 58-72, (p. 67).

English verse'[97]. Elsewhere, Jill Scott likewise argues 'Pound's notion of translation puts the foreign text in the service of a modernist poetics'[98], since he 'appropriates the foreignness of the source and then simulates this in the English language.'[99]

Burgess's translation and adaptation of Edmond Rostand's nineteenth century French play *Cyrano de Bergerac* is a self-consciously intertextual verse drama, which Burgess – like Auden and Pound – (self-consciously) adapts by assimilating Rostand's original texts with his own. The eponymous hero is a swashbuckling but essentially lonely soldier-poet in love with his cousin. Cyrano is equally skilled with a sword and a poem. His poetry is a *text* which he, in combative mode, opposes to the other *texts* around him to dramatic effect. For example, the foppish bad actor Montfleury is subject to Cyrano's gall, in colourful heroic couplets:

> If the Tragic Muse had the dubious honour, fat sir,
>
> Of your acquaintance, she would not abuse
>
> Her pious duty. See the blubber ooze
>
> Into your collar and your belly round as a clock
>
> She'd kick your buttocks with her tragic sock.[100]

Cyrano's love is thwarted by his large nose, and by the competing attentions of Christian, a handsome but unintelligent fellow soldier, who makes Cyrano write love poetry to Roxanne on his behalf. After a successful period of wooing, the two soldiers have to go to war, where Christian is killed. Years later, it is revealed that Cyrano wrote the love poems, and he and Roxanne are briefly reconciled before his death through intrigue with his enemies.

---

97 Scott in Faull, p. 67.
98 Scott in Faull, p. 68.
99 Ibid., p. 67.
100 Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, trans. Anthony Burgess (London: Nick Herne Books, 1985: 1991), p. 23.

Although I wish to focus on the 1985 text, it is useful to quickly record the complex evolution[101] of this text between 1970[102] and 1985. Burgess's initial translation was in 1970, which was then transformed into an off-Broadway musical, returning to the stage in 1983, and finally published in 1985. Burgess's introductory essay (dated 1984, published 1985), has the same Eliot-influenced preoccupations as 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer' (1985), and includes information not present in the earlier version. Burgess notes how he intertextually imports Eliot-style dramatic techniques to the poetic translation. Burgess clarified Eliot's technique in 1992, finding '[t]he best example of'[103] the combination of multilingual intertexts 'can be found in our own age [. . .]. T.S. Eliot made his own contribution to the feeling and the thought of our time through studying Elizabethan verse, and then French verse'[104]. In *Cyrano*, Burgess follows Eliot's Modernist technique: he combines French and Elizabethan-styled intertexts, and recognises poetry must come second to drama[105]. This, he argues, makes his translation more dramatically and poetically charged than the translations of competitors Fry, and Hooker. Specifically, Burgess finds Hooker's 1923 *Cyrano* translation largely follows the nineteenth-century style of blank verse which 'became, in the nineteenth-century revivalist tradition that Hooker followed, an over-limpid or limping medium full of self-conscious Shakespearean echoes'[106]; he decides 'Hooker makes Cyrano sound like a man speaking blank verse [. . .]'[107] If, in 'Shakespeare and the Modern Writer', Burgess finds Eliot liberated the blank verse form, Hooker is seen here as trapped within its constricting nineteenth-century conventions. Eliot's first

---

101 See Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* for more a full assessment of Burgess's various *Cyrano* texts, including an off-Broadway musical and a film adaptation.
102 The preface of the 1971 edition is dated December 1970.
103 Burgess, 'European Lecture', p. 2.
104 Ibid.
105 Anthony Burgess, 'Introduction' in Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, trans. by Anthony Burgess (London: Nick Herne Books, 1985: 1991), pp. i-xii, (p. x).
106 Burgess in Rostand, p. vii.
107 Ibid.

experiment with Modernist blank verse, 'Sweeney Agonistes'[108] – came three years after

Hooker's translation of *Cyrano.* Burgess, in opposing Hooker's conservatism with the

intertextual Modernism of Eliot, positions the act of translation as a pragmatical

process.

Burgess says *Cyrano* existed in a previous draft, which used the same 'rhymed

decasyllabic couplets'[109] as the American poet Richard Wilbur used in his translation of

Molière's *Tartuffe,* but this form was scrapped[110]. I have found no copies of this draft.

Burgess was supportive of Wilbur's Molière translation in 1976, noting how 'in his

translations of Moliere, [Wilbur] is *as formally strict* as his original, and this pays large

dividends of wit and dramatic point'[111]; and yet, *Hooker*'s formal strictness is

inconsistently dismissed by Burgess. John Simon, a contemporary reviewer, compares

Burgess with Wilbur, finding his translation does not entertain 'as thrillingly as Richard

Wilbur's Moliere'[112], whose translation – by comparison – seems 'as if the author had

written in English'[113].

Burgess's assessments of competing translations, as well as Simon's review,

recall Lawrence Venuti's ideas concerning Pound's revisionary approaches to

translation. In an essay exploring how meaning and value are created through

retranslations (i.e., competing translations), Venuti argues:

> Because retranslations are designed to challenge a previous version of the foreign text, they are
>
> likely to construct a more dense and complex intertextuality so as to signify and call attention to
>
> their competing interpretation.[114]

---

108 T. S. Eliot, 'Sweeney Agonistes' in *The Complete Poems & Plays* (London: Faber and Faber,
     1969:2004), p. 115.
109 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
110 The mention of Wilbur and Tartuffe are notable, as I demonstrate later with regard to Burgess's
     Miser! Miser!
111 Anthony Burgess, 'A mingled chime', p. 50.
112 John Simon, 'Visiting Royalty' in *New York Magazine*, 29 Oct 1984, 61-2, p. 61.
113 Ibid.
114 Lawrence Venuti, 'Retranslations:The Creation of Value' in Katherine M. Faull, ed., *Translation and*

Like Eliot before him, Burgess – in his own competing translation – prefers rhyme only when it successfully contributes to action. He therefore dislikes the way Christopher Fry[115] translated *Cyrano de Bergerac* entirely in 'strict couplets'[116], deciding 'I do not think it works'[117], since it 'is difficult to sustain in a play which contains a lot of action and sudden surprises'[118]. And yet, as I point out below, Burgess returned to couplets under the influence of Richard Wilbur in the translation of Moliére's verse drama *Miser! Miser!*, which was written after the *Cyrano de Bergerac.* The form's heavy 'intellectual associations'[119] with wits such as Pope could make the text more like an essay than a drama. Burgess used this form more self-consciously in the *Essay on Censorship* (1989), which, as a polemical essay, makes *full use* of the form's intellectual and intertextual associations[120]. On the subject of rhyme, Burgess echoes Eliot's 'Poetry and Drama'[121] when he finds:

> the auditor will register rhyme irregularly placed, and for that matter verse rhythm itself, only subliminally. Rhyme is deliberately muffled at times, but there are occasions when it has to assert itself and snap out wittily.[122]

While rapid couplets are used to demonstrate the intellectual skill of Cyrano, Valvert's rhyme-response uses a quatrain verse whose slower rhythm and halting comma-separated caesuras demonstrate lesser mental agility:

Culture. Bucknell Review, XLVII.1 (Cranbury, NJ: Associated Bucknell University Presses, 2004), 25-38, (p. 32).

115 Burgess partially emulated Fry in *The Eve of St. Venus* some years before. See Chapter Three.
116 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
119 Ibid.
120 See below for more detail.
121 Eliot, 'Poetry and Drama', p. 132. See Chapter Three.
122 Burgess in Rostand, p. ix.

> [. . .] Arrogant, base
>
> Nonentity, without even a pair of gloves
>
> To his name, let alone the ribbons and lace
>
> And velvet that a man of breeding loves.[123]

Burgess calls his version '[s]prung or counterpoint rhythm'[124], 'five-beat lines with a varying number of syllables'[125], and acknowledges the intertextual use of techniques associated with Hopkins. This rhyme scheme is different from Rostand who lines up three near-rhyming sounds:

> Ces grands airs arrogants!
>
> Un hobereau qui. . .qui. . .n'a même pas de gants!
>
> Et qui sort sans rubans, sans bouffettes, sans ganses! [126]

Valvert's rhymes are smoother in the French, but Rostand makes sure 'qui' appears twice between ellipses in order to reinforce the character's halting delivery. In literal translation, the meaning is very different: ' These strongly arrogant airs!|A squire who [. . .] who [. . .] has not even gloves!|And leaves without ribbons without bunches, lace!'[127] 'Base nonentity'[128] is Burgess's own phrase, as is 'man of breeding'[129]; Burgess ignores the word *squire*. Moreover, Rostand has Cyrano finishing off Valvert's rhyme allowing Cyrano to demonstrate his prowess with a quick companion rhyme: 'Moi, c'est moralement que j'ai mes élégances.'[130] Because of the divergent rhyme scheme, this

---

123 Rostand, p. 31.
124 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
125 Ibid.
126 Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, ed. by Geoff Wollen, French Texts (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1998), p. 35
127 My translation.
128 Rostand, p. 31.
129 Ibid.
130 Rostand (ed. by Wollen), p. 35.

cannot happen in Burgess's translation. These rhyme-scheme changes are in addition to structural changes, including making 'Cyrano improvise a kind of acrostic on his name in Act II'[131]; 'adding to'[132] Roxanne's lines; subtracting her 'presence from Act IV'[133]; as well as the merging of characters[134]. Meaning from one poetic text (Rostand's) 'is transformed into a mode of transumption'[135] by the other text (Burgess's) 'and poetic tradition'[136] – on both sides – 'is radically altered in consquence'[137]; Burgess and Rostand's intertexts merge and create a new text, which is Burgess's adaptation. John Simon highlights the scale of these changes, finding 'it was presumptuous of Anthony Burgess to rewrite the play'[138]. Recalling Auden's idea of translations as an intertextual 'collaboration'[139], Simon finds Burgess's imposition of intertextual material 'suggests, at any rate, collaboration between Rostand and Burgess.'[140]

Burgess's essay on *Cyrano* expresses his preference for Wilbur's translation of 'Molière's Tartuffe'[141] whose example in his 'first draft'[142] he 'tried to follow'.[143] This passing comment is notable, in that Burgess also translated another play by Molière around the same time, using decasyllabic couplets, called *Miser! Miser!*[144] He does not mention this text, though, but its translation is much closer to translations by Wilbur than *Cyrano*, which bears a self-consciously Eliot-influenced approach that Burgess adopted in the 1970s. A translation of Molière's 1668 play *L'Avare* from the early 1980s, *Miser! Miser!* is closely related to the RSC production of *Cyrano* that Burgess was

---

131 Burgess in Rostand, p. iv.
132 Ibid., p. ii.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
135 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 129.
136 Ibid.
137 Ibid.
138 Simon, p. 61.
139 Auden in Carne-Ross, p. 29.
140 Simon, p. 61.
141 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
144 Anthony Burgess, *Miser! Miser!*, c.1983(IABF).

involved with between 1983 and 1985. The RSC were producing a translation of

Tartuffe[145] around the same time; this translation, in blank verse, was by Christopher

Hampton[146]. Burgess was responding, then, to what Wiggins calls a 'marked increase in

contemporary verse plays'[147] up until the 1980s. Leslie Gardner, Burgess's former

literary agent, confirms that Burgess wrote the script for RSC producer Terry Hands,

who was 'nearing the end of his tenure'[148], and which 'had a lot to do with'[149] why the

production 'did not happen'[150]. *Miser! Miser!* is a comic tale of Harpagon, a usurer who

values his money more than his children. Harpagon finds himself tricked into lending

money to his son in a complicated plot where Harpagon's son attempts to lend the

money in order to marry the woman who his father has also selected as his stepmother.

At the end of the play, various people are to become married, Harpagon keeps his

money, and a long-lost family becomes reunited. As with *Cyrano*, Burgess's central

character is a man who is constantly in dramatic conflict with the *texts* around him,

most especially when there are reasons for him possibly parting with money. Unlike the

character of Cyrano, Harpagon is not a poetic character, and his lines hardly rhyme.

Other characters, instead, describe his frenzied conflicts concerning money in

occasional couplets, such as these from La Fleche:

You'll never see a sou from Harpagon.

The man's a Turk, a really Turkish one.

---

145 'Cyrano de Bergerac Availability against other shows'. 16 June 1983. (Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive, fol. RSC/SM/2/1983/95), p. 1. Subsequent references to this archive collection are marked as 'RSC'.
146 <http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=moreTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=BLLSA2119140&indx=1&recIds=BLLSA2119140&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=12&dscnt=1&vl(174399379UI0)=any&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BLCONTENT%29&frbg=&tab=local_tab&dstmp=1369075376536&srt=rank&mode=Basic&dum=true&tb=t&vl(freeText0)=moliere+hampton+tartuffe&vid=BLVU1> [accessed 20th May 2013]
147 Wiggins, p. xviii.
148 Leslie Gardner to author, 21 February 2013. Private communication, [para. 1 of 1].
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid.

You'll die ten deaths before he'll ever reach

Into his long pocket. He's a leech,

Leeching in cash, loving his money more

Than decent reputation. Ask him for

A farthing and he'll fall into a fit,

A frenzy- there's no other word for it.[151]

This manuscript has hitherto not received critical analysis. It is useful here in considering the dramatic possibilities of rhyme for dramatic effect, and the influence of Wilbur in its formal strictness. In his 1989 revision of George Graveley's translation of *L'Avare*, Ian MacLean notes how the Molière's original was 'written in prose'[152], but 'if he had had time'[153] would have produced *L'Avare* 'in verse'[154]. *Miser! Miser!* is, then, yet another intertextual 'collaboration'[155] between the original text and Burgess own, which – in turn – is informed by Wilbur. Burgess's translation partially fulfils Molière's original poetic plan, by combining prose with interludes of couplets in decasyllables, after Wilbur[156]. In explaining to Harpagon's daughter why he discussed her as a commodity for trading, Valere answers in couplets:

I did it so as not to anger him.

I know the situation's pretty grim,

But contradiction would erode my plan.

Your father is a tough and stubborn man.

Some natures need a lateral approach.

If you confront them head on, try to broach

---

151 Burgess, *Miser! Miser!*, p. 14.
152 Ian Maclean, 'Note on the Selection and the Translation' in Molière. *Don Juan and Other Plays*, trans. by George Graveley and Ian Maclean (Oxford University Press: 1989), p. i-xxiv, (p. xxi).
153 Ibid., p. xxi.
154 Ibid.
155 Auden in Carne-Ross, p. 29.
156 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.

Your argument direct, they start to race

Along the road of rank unreason. Face

The fools and you're unfaced. Seem to consent

Even to a diabolic argument

And you can work angelic reason in.

To seem to lose – that is one way to win.[157]

Burgess, who previously cautioned against 'conventional, unpoetic, arhetorical'[158] interludes in translation, produces a dramatically unsuccessful verse, since, as he himself points out elsewhere, the 'double clop of rhyme, always expected [. . .] is difficult to sustain in a play which contains a lot of action and sudden surprises'[159]. That said, the verse form also works to organise the arguments concerning Harpagon's unwillingness to enter into dialogue with the social and cultural texts around him, and Valere's complicated double-logic in describing his lover in financial terms. Grey points out that this is a technique used by Richard Wilbur, who discovered

> the appropriate way of acknowledging discordancy in verse is to accommodate it within an elaborate formal structure. [. . .] [T]he poet's forms supply a context, while his ironic, quizzical yet steady voice draws disparate elements together, relates them and holds them in equilibrium.[160]

Maclean's revised translation of the same scene, by comparison, uses Molière's original prose form for dramatic effect, and avoids unnatural poetic language like *unfaced* or *unreason*:

---

157 Burgess, *Miser! Miser!*, p. 14.
158 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
159 Ibid.
160 Richard Gray, *A History of American Literature (*Chichester: Wiley, 2011:2012), p. 534.

I did it so as not to provoke him. We shall gain our end the better. To oppose him outright would

be fatal. There are some minds which can only be led, not driven; some temperaments so

stubborn and irrational that they shy away from the straight road of reason, and the only way to

manage them is to guide them subtly in the desired direction.[161]

Wilbur signals both his self-doubt and dramatic successes as a revisionary poetic

translator of Molière, in finding that in his own versions of *The Misanthrope* and

Tartuffe, 'people just sat there and put up with rhymed couplets [. . .] I think it's *quite a*

test'[162]. Wilbur suggests here that it was his poetic skill that made the couplets work in

his version. Whilst there is no evidence of decisions concerning the dramatic viability

of Burgess's play, a brief note in the RSC archives indicates that versions of Burgess's

Cyrano, and Wilbur's *Tartuffe* were considered compatible from a production

perspective, since 'Cyrano & Tartuffe are exactly contemporary as regard to

design/period'[163]. A note in the RSC archive dated 16 June 1983 uses short names for

productions, including *Cyrano*, *Tartuffe* and 'Moliere'[164] [sic], suggesting that another

Molière play was on the roster. Aside from this passing comment, there are no other

possible references to *Miser! Miser!* in the archive.

The influence of Wilbur is not necessarily a break with Modernist technique.

James Longenbach presents Wilbur as a pragmatically intertextual poet, able to

accommodate a multiplicity of traditions which are contained in his disciplined poetic

forms: 'Wilbur is not battling modernism by suggesting that it has passed; casting his

historical net a little wider, Wilbur sees that the first wave of postmodern reaction has

also passed.'[165] James Longenbach – in his exploration of postwar poets' relationships

---

161 Molière, p. 201.
162 Willard Pate and Panel, 'An Interview with Richard Wilbur' in William Butts, ed., *Conversations
    with Richard Wilbur (*University of Mississippi Press: 1990), pp. 66-86, (p. 81). My emphasis.
163 'Cyrano: Provisional Rehearsal Props List.' (5pp.). 1 June 1983', (Stratford: RSC, fol.
    RSC/SM/2/1983/95), p. 1.
164 'Cyrano de Bergerac Availability against other shows', p. 1.
165 James Longenbach, *Modern Poetry after Modernism (*Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 83.

with Modernism – quotes Wilbur, who acknowledges Modernist poets as the initial facilitators of this intertextual practice: 'Pound and Eliot sophisticated American verse by introducing techniques from other literatures, and by reviving and revising our sense of literary tradition.'[166] Burgess, then, has the same Modernist influences for translation, and also approved of Wilbur's strict forms.[167] It is logical, then, that Wilbur's distinctive techniques should then influence Burgess's verse translations of the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1993, Burgess 'translated and adapted'[168] Alexander Griboyedov's *Woe Out of Wit* (1823) for the British stage, renaming it *Chatsky (The Importance of Being Stupid)[169]*, an intertextual title intended, according to Burgess, to 'deliberately evoke the title of Wilde's great comedy', *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)[170]. Chatsky is about the eponymous hero's return to Moscow after three years' absence abroad. He becomes particularly angry at finding out that Sophie, his love interest, has had an affair with Mochalin, her father's secretary. The majority of the play is given over to Chatsky's combative condemnation of Moscow society, finding it stupid, hypocritical, and too much in thrall of French fashions; as with Harpagon in *Miser! Miser!* and Cyrano in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Burgess translates a play whose central character conflicts with the various *texts* around him to dramatic effect. In a short article in the play's programme, Burgess highlights Chatsky's propensity for conflict, when he decides the play as 'about the failed attempt of an intellectual rebel to indent the smug and philistine society in which he finds himself'[171]. The play ends unhappily for Chatsky, who

---

166 Richard Wilbur, *Responses: prose pieces, 1953-1976* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 122-3. Quoted in Longenbach, p. 83.
167 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
168 Biswell, p. 387.
169 Anthony Burgess, *Chatsky (The Importance of Being Stupid). A Verse Comedy in Four Acts by Alexander Sergeyevich Gribodeyov. A Verse Translation by Anthony Burgess* (London: Almeida Theatre, 1993).
170 Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest and Four Other Plays. Ed. by Kenneth Krauss* (New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2003), p. xviii.
171 Anthony Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid' in *Chatsky.* Almeida Theatre production programme (London: The Almeida Theatre, 1993), pp. 6-7, (p. 7).

becomes disenfranchised because of his refutation of the all-pervading shallowness of society around him, since – according to his would-be suitor – his 'only happiness is in derision'[172].

Burgess, in this verse drama, once again opts for the decasyllabic couplets he observed in Wilbur's translations and occasionally used in *Miser! Miser!* Wilbur, in turn, equates this form with Molière translations, finding it 'very hard at present to think in anything but couplets. You get obsessed by the couplet when you're translating Moliere.'[173] The strict rhyme scheme is on occasion notably strained:

> French underwear and overwear – coiffures.
>
> "I'll have a vodka"- "Really?"- "And what's yours
>
> Oh, water if it comes from the Paris sewers."[174]

Whereas one critic found the play's performance flawed and was often irritated by the 'intrusive cleverness of Burgess's translation'[175], another detected Burgess's previous exposure to the dramatic style of Molière, deciding 'it also reminds me strongly of Moliere's The Misanthrope'[176] [sic] because of 'its use of the kind of virtuosic rhyming couplets Tony Harrison famously employed in the Moliere'[177] [sic], in reference to Harrison's 1973 translation of *The Misanthrope*[178] (also in couplets[179]). Burgess does not mention Harrison's translation, but his text was written long after Harrison and Wilbur had produced their contemporary translations to critical acclaim. In an article written

---

172 Burgess, *Chatsky*, p. 8.
173 William Butts (ed). *Conversations with Richard Wilbur* (University of Mississippi Press: 1990), p. 74.
174 Ibid., p. 5.
175 'Arts: Flawed "Chatsky" - Theatre'. *Financial Times.* 18 March 1993, p. 29.
176 Michael Billington, 'Theatre: Chatsky, Almeida Theatre'. *Guardian*, 18 March 1993, p. 11.
177 Ibid., p. 21. The comparison with Harrison is notable, when considered in light of my later comparison with *Essay on Censorship*, below.
178 Molière, *The Misanthrope*, trans. by Tony Harrison (London: Rex Collins, 1973).
179 Burgess does not mention this translation. Insofar as my research has proven, Burgess never provided any critical commentary on Tony Harrison's poetry.

for the play's accompanying programme Burgess confirms he was specifically thinking

of Wilbur's successes with Molière when he translated the play:

> The rough rhyming couplets I have used belong to a fairly recent theatrical tradition [. . .] and
> the renderings have achieved a certain commercial success. I am thinking of Richard Wilbur's
> versions of Moliere and my own adaptation of Rostand's 'Cyrano de Bergerac'.[180]

Burgess also admits he knows of no other translation other than Joshua Cooper's *Woe*

from Wit (1972)[181], which was published around the time of his first *Cyrano* edition[182].

He explains how Cooper 'had his own prosodic reasons for a kind of free verse without

rhyme'[183], as opposed to Burgess's Wilbur-influenced couplets. In his introduction to the

translation (also called *Chatsky*, with the subtitle *The Misery of Having a Mind*), Cooper

points out that the 'metre used in the present translation is broadly similar to that of the

original, a mixture of iambic lines of any length [. . .] but is unrhymed'[184]. He describes

the original Russian form as consisting of an 'unvarying alternation of monosyllabic and

disyllabic endings.'[185] Recalling Wilbur's comments on the possible dramatic

expectations of the couplet form, Cooper believes 'the English theatre does not take

kindly to rhymed verse, except for the pantomime, and it would be difficult to preserve

the rhyme [. . .] to reproduce the alternation of single and double rhymes in English

would probably be impossible.'[186] Burgess believes Cooper's 'translation perhaps

suffers by being too close to the original', labelling it 'unactable'[187] whilst admitting 'he

---

180 Anthony Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid' in *Chatsky.* Almeida Theatre production
    programme (London: The Almeida Theatre, 1993), pp. 6-7, (p. 7).
181 Joshua Cooper, *Four Russian Plays (*London: Penguin, 1972:1990).
182 Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid', p. 7.
183 Ibid.
184 Joshua Cooper, 'Introduction' in *Four Russian Plays (*London: Penguin, 1972:1990). pp. 11-40, (p.
    27).
185 Ibid., p. 27.
186 Ibid.
187 Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid', p. 7.

has some pentametric lines, one or two of which I have appropriated here'.[188] Cooper's

use of the original variable line lengths add some weight to Burgess's judgement:

> [. . .] it's hard enough
>
> For other folk as well; your Father's been along –
>
> I nearly died!
>
> I played him up – I don't know what I told him [. . .]
>
> What are you waiting for, Sir? Make your bow
>
> And go, with your heart in your mouth [. . .]
>
> Do you see the clock? Well, now look out of the window![189]

Undramatic constructions such as 'go, with your heart in your mouth' not only slow the

drama down, but also do little to adequately represent the language of a lower-class

servant.

Burgess, just as he does in his 1985 introductory essay for *Cyrano de Bergerac*,

explains his own translation technique by comparing himself with Eliot. He explains

how Griboyedov's original Russian ' verse form is strange – rhyme, lines of variable

length though always iambic – and the flavour far from poetic'[190]. Hence, he imposes his

own verse forms after Eliot, admitting: '[v]erse, on the stage, as T S Eliot has shown,

can lift from banality the colloquial and naturalistic: it is a medium for the exploitation

of rhythm rather than a vessel for the profound or colourful.'[191]

Once again following Auden and Pound, Burgess ensures his translation

incorporates his own tropes. This can be seen especially in comparison with Cooper.

For example, in his own translation of Liza's same lines, Burgess regulates the length of

---

188 Ibid., p. 7.
189 Alexander Sergeyevich Giboyédov, *Chatsky, or The Misery of Having a Mind*, trans. by Joshua
  Cooper, in Joshua Cooper, ed., *Four Russian Plays* (London: Penguin, 1972:1990), pp. 125-214, (p.
  130).
190 Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid', p. 7.
191 Ibid.

the sentences, adds extra phrases for dramatic effect, and uses dialect approximating his

own native Lancastrian:

> Some has to watch all night and work all day.
>
> I've done a day's work with your dad already.
>
> You, sir, stiffen the rest of you. Come, steady-
>
> Swallow the heart that's in your gob and bow
>
> and go. You see that clock? You see it? Now
>
> [. . .][192]

Juvan finds revisionary translation such as this is closely related to '[r]eworking or

adaptation'[193], 'an intertextual genre'[194] which adjusts 'a source's shape and content to a

new function and another target audience'[195]. Wilbur, like Burgess, finds that literal

translation is not strictly possible, and he also relates this to Modernist poet Ezra Pound,

describing his method as 'an adaptation, an homage, an imitation'[196]. He finds that

Pound – like himself and Burgess – often changes the form of the source text, and

creates new poetic meanings in the process:

> Pound will be so free as to take a poem of Voltaire's and reduce it to prose and throw away any
>
> material he doesn't want to use. [. . .] Obviously you can't translate anybody word for word, even
>
> in prose. I try to translate thought by thought, and not to leave out any thoughts.[197]

Burgess adapts the content and poetic form to the needs of the late twentieth-century

English stage, and is seen by contemporary critics as importing linguistic techniques

---

192 Burgess, *Chatsky*, p. 4.
193 Juvan, p. 32.
194 Ibid.
195 Ibid.
196 Butts, p. 83.
197 Ibid.

that are associated with British Modernism. Contemporary critic Benedict Nightingale, detecting an overtone of severity and puritanism in the translation, highlights Chatsky's 'Leavis-like scrutiny and his Lawrence-like ire.'[198] Adaptation – not strictly translation – of a text which 'quite obviously'[199] refers 'to the text that gave birth to it'[200] is a discrete category of intertextuality, since in this form, the 'boundaries between paraphrase, imitation and translation'[201] become 'blurred'[202]. Hence, Nightingale speculates that '[p]erhaps remembering that Giboyedov was suspected of consorting'[203] with Russian radicals at the time of writing 'Burgess emphasises Chatsky's radical, anti-Tsarist sympathies probably more than he should'[204]. Robert Hewison, finding Burgess's intertextual adaptations far-reaching, suggests that Burgess, in changing the play's title, moves his translation more from 'genial comedy'[205] to a 'darker and more significant'[206] form.

Burgess's translation, then, creates intertextual meaning by combining aspects of (twentieth-century) English literary and dramatic tradition with the original nineteenth-century Russian. In keeping with this, the rebellious[207] central character, Chatsky, is a suitable focus for the conflict of texts from different cultures. Many of his speeches are given over to resisting and decrying fashionable European influences in an autocratic Russian state that, as Burgess puts it, had 'a powerful desire to maintain a torpid stasis'[208]. For example, soon after he returns unexpectedly after three years away, he regales Sophie, his former love interest, with wittily confrontational lines:

---

198 Benedict Nightingale, 'Pique fails to hit the heights'. *The Times,* 18 March 1993, p. 34.
199 Juvan, p. 32.
200 Ibid.
201 Ibid.
202 Ibid.
203 Nightingale, p. 34.
204 Ibid.
205 Robert Hewison*,* 'Intelligensia test; Performance' *Sunday Times,* 21 March 1993, p. 21.
206 Hewison, p. 21.
207 Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid', p. 7.
208 Ibid., p. 6.

The best place is where none of us cretins are,

But never mind. How is your dear papa?

Still a staunch pillar of the English club,

Giving the waitresses a friendly rub?

Your uncle – is he still rabbiting around?

Your foxy cousin – has he gone to ground?

How are our princes and our dear princesses –

Indulging still in philistine excesses,

Spending taxpayers' cash on caviare

And dancing where the latest half-wits are?

[. . .][209]

Sophie attempts to dismiss Chatsky's derisory language, which ridicules her family, as the result of seeing 'too much of the world'.[210] That is to say, Chatsky has been influenced by other cultures, and is now comparing these with his own native Russia. He imports new *texts* (i.e., his opinion of society under foreign influence) with his native culture which creates conflict. Sophie accordingly responds with the angry outburst:

You're not a human being. You're a snake.

Have you, in irony or sheer mistake,

Ever said something kind about a person?

Perhaps you did when coddled by our nurse, an

Infant who knew only how to coo.[211]

Chatsky is also in conflict with himself as a character. His barbing language and

209 Burgess, *Chatsky*, p. 10.
210 Ibid., p. 10.
211 Ibid., p. 11.

aloofness get in the way of his lingering love for Sophie. Accordingly, after her

outburst, he defends his affections for her, from a peculiar position of conflict whose

imagery appropriately alternates between the contrasts of black and white:

> This is pure vinegar, and new for you.
>
> Don't go back to my days of immature
>
> Niggling. You can be absolutely sure
>
> Of what I feel for you. Black night, white day,
>
> The bells a-tinkle on the homeward sleigh,
>
> Blinded by a desert of dead white,
>
> Urging it on, urging it day and night
>
> To get to you [. . .][212]

Chatsky's position of internal conflict as rendered through black and white recalls

Burgess's suggestion that Empson's theories of ambiguity rely on internal conflicts[213]

played out in a 'world where black was white and things stood on their heads.'[214]

Chatsky also signals internal conflict later on, when he shows some doubt as to why –

unlike the torpid characters he mixes with – he cannot appreciate surface beauty.

Speaking about Sophie's handsome love interest Molchalin, he signals doubt at his own

inability to assess mortal beauty:

> [. . .] God, that face
>
> Matches the inner vacuousness. Invoking
>
> The god of love for <u>that</u>? She must be joking!
>
> But that can't be; she has no humour.

---

212 Ibid.
213 William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Pimlico, 1930:1947:1953:2004), p. 192.
214 Anthony Burgess, 'Unclean' in *Homage to QWERT YUIOP* (London: Hutchinson, 1986), pp. 98-99,
  (p. 99).

> There seems to be a mystery here – a rumour!
>
> A hint, a hiss, a whisper of a miracle.
>
> Perhaps I'm wrong – deaf to the sweetly lyrical,
>
> Blind to all beauty [. . .][215]

Chatsky's internal and external conflicts prove unresolvable at the end, resulting in him leaving Moscow, under the threat of death from Sophie's father, Famusov. In his long final speech, Chatsky uses dense imagery to describe the various conflicts he is in the middle of:

> I came in innocence? Ignorance. Poured away
>
> My heart's blood down the drain. In a passionate tumble
>
> The words went clattering – holy, heartfelt, humble –
>
> On you – you – you! [. . .]
>
> [. . .]
>
> Our past together was a joke. The dead
>
> Memories a stale jar of pot-pourri.
>
> But the past doesn't die. Alive in me,
>
> I thought it was alive in you.[216]

Here, Chatsky opposes his heartfelt combative loquaciousness with the notion of cultural memory. He opposes the past and present, and reveals them both to synthesised within himself. In Burgess's Modernist-style translation, whose verse techniques he associates with Eliot[217], this speech takes on new weight, through recondite allusion to Eliot's notion of the past in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'[218]. Not only is Chatsky a metaphor for conflicting texts, then, but Burgess casts him as an image of the pastness

---

215 Burgess, *Chatsky,* p. 35.
216 Ibid., p. 61.
217 Burgess, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid', p. 7.
218 See Chapter One.

of the present after Eliot. The conflict between cultures remains unresolved at the end;

Chatsky's disputes only lead to his exit, and Famusov's final line ('What will they

say?'[219]) suggests he has learned nothing from the main character's attempts to introduce

home truths into polite society. This is also the case for the text itself, which remains a

complex intertextual dialogue between the texts of Eliot, Burgess, Griboyedov, and

Wilbur's Móliere translations.

Burgess's approach to collaborative translation, following Auden and Pound,

self-consciously contrasts disparate literary texts (and literary traditions) for poetic

effect. In his unpublished and hitherto neglected long poem, *An Essay on Censorship*

(1989), Burgess uses heroic couplets, a poetic form traditionally associated with

intellectual inquiry[220] to investigate a series of events in recent history where *literary*

texts have clashed with *political* or *religious* texts. Burgess comments on the

implications of these textual flashpoints for society in general. The poem's opening

lines pun on the religious and political meanings of the words 'Censor' and 'censer', as

well as the word 'text' to economically introduce the general scope of his inquiry:

A book is perilous, a book can slay:

This is the text we ponder on today,

Hence sing the Censor, though our preference is

To swing the censer at his obsequies,

The Censor, whose twin tasks, when Rome held sway,

Were to count citizens, then make them pay,

But now whose proper function is defined

As preying not on money but on mind.[221]

---

219 Burgess, *Chatsky,* p. 62.
220 Burgess in Rostand, p. viii.
221 Anthony Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship* (Texas: HRC, box 20, fol. 7, 1989), p. 1.

Biswell describes *Essay on Censorship* as 'a long poem in heroic couplets, composed as an immediate response to Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* against the novelist Salman Rushdie on 14 February 1989'[222], and completed in a 'verse-form and stately tone [. . .] borrowed from Alexander Pope's "Essay on Man"'[223]; I also compare it below to Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. Burgess, in 1979, describes Pope's poetic style as 'philosophical, critical, and satirical, all sharp intellect, perfect form, admirable balance.'[224] He finds that, in *Essay on Criticism*, Pope's 'aim was perfection in the expression of the obvious'[225]. In *Essay on Censorship*, Burgess's philosophical enquiry is rendered satirical and uses a strict form, but – as I point out below – there are instances where the argument is unbalanced.

The *single moralising* voice which Burgess adopts for the poem recalls Auden, who – as Cunningham points out – in an 'effort to assert authority, knowledge, command of experience'[226] adopts a 'position of vision and authority'[227] in poems such as 'Consider' (1930), which

> subverts what he and Day Lewis [. . .] had defined in *Oxford Poetry 1927* as 'the chaos of values which is the substance of our environment', a blurry scene in which 'no universalized system – political, religious or metaphysical – has been bequeathed to us.'[228]

This can be seen in Auden's poem in lines such as:

> Long ago, some supreme Antagonist,
>
> More powerful than the great northern whale,

---

222 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 388.
223 Ibid., p. 388.
224 Burgess, *They Wrote in English*, Vol 1, p. 219.
225 Ibid., p. 220.
226 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 10.
227 Ibid.
228 Ibid.

Ancient and sorry at life's limiting defect

In Cornwall, Mendip, or the Pennine moor

Your comments on the highborn mining-captains,

Found they no answer, made them wish to die

– Lie since in barrows out of harm.[229]

Whereas Burgess adopts a voice suitable for a lecture hall or a newspaper editorial, Auden's tone is lyrical, but equally commanding. Auden's material is more abstract, but the authoritative voice is, by comparison, stronger than Burgess's, as it addresses the reader directly through the second-person possessive pronoun 'your'. Burgess's use of the inclusive 'we' also involves the reader directly, assuming unchallenged opinion. If Auden's nuanced lyrical voice commands experience (as Cunningham says[230]), Burgess's voice attempts to command reason. Burgess investigates the relationship between literature and the chaos of the world outside, and does so through what on the surface is an authoritative voice. Auden, by contrast, renders the chaos of the world outside in lyrical language. Both writers, then, explore the interface between literature and the *antagonists* outside it.

In a BBC television interview with Jeremy Isaacs (also in 1989), Burgess touches on the objectives of the *Essay*, although he doesn't mention the work directly. He says '[o]ne possibly has a duty to explain to [. . .] one's contemporaries what the world is they're living in'.[231] This is comparable with Auden, who found 'poetry is not concerned with telling people what to do, but with extending our knowledge of good and evil'[232]. In 'Psychology and Art To-day', Auden put forward a 'defence of art against

---

229 W. H. Auden, 'Consider' (March 1930) in *Collected Poems*, p. 61.
230 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 10.
231 *Late Show: Face to Face.* BBC2, (21 March 1989),
    <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/writers/12216.shtml> [accessed 8 January 2011].
232 W. H. Auden and John Garrett, *The Poet's Tongue* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1935), p. ix.

the reductions of any system'[233], signalling a preference for dialogic in poetic readings in 'defending the artist's right to use the tradition for *his own* artistic and moral ends'[234]. Burgess felt – like his 1930s counterparts – that he had to 'defend art from the demands of propagandists'[235], finding the world outside the '[p]tolomaic preserves of the reviewers [. . .] contains relatively few readers of books [. . .].'[236] According to Hynes, this dichotomy is associated with 1930s Modernist poetry, best seen in the introductory essay to *The Faber Book of Modern Verse*, where 'one aspect of the new poetic situation was a changed relation between private and public experience'.[237] Juvan summarises how Marxist critic John Frow believed literary texts engage with *public* non-literary texts such as religion or law:

> [i]ntertextuality seemed to him [. . .] a manifestation of the literary text's historicity, but also a way of situating itself in the literary system. It was the formalist concept of literary system that Frow cast in the role of interface modifying a literary work's intertextual references to the general discursive field by which society articulates itself.[238]

Intertextual literature, then, is *discursive*, generating dialogue rather than presenting a single meaning. Juvan points out that literature is read and decoded by the general public, regardless of the writer's purely literary intentions; the 'interface'[239] with the 'general discursive field'[240] – the general intertextual *marketplace*[241] of society – is inevitable when the work is published. Because (as Barthes's puts it), the text is 'a

---

233 Hynes, p. 167.
234 Ibid. My emphasis.
235 Hynes, p. 164.
236 Anthony Burgess. 'Craft and Crucifixion – The Writing of Fiction' in *One Man's Chorus,* ed. by Ben Forkner (New York: Carrol & Graf, 1998), pp. 257-65, (p. 265).
237 Hynes, p. 44.
238 Juvan, p. 150.
239 Ibid.
240 Ibid.
241 Burgess, as I point out in Chapter One, uses this term to refer to literature's public readership, and the ensuing dialogue it creates.

variety of writings, none of them original'[242] which 'blend and clash'[243], readers of literature arrive at a multiplicity of interpretations. Readers are accordingly forced to read one text in relation to another. This multiplicity of readings is in response to the dialogic structures the writer has opted for.

The heroic couplet form of *An Essay on Censorship* was also used by Auden. Burgess, before *An Essay on Censorship*, had – like Auden – previously written 'a long verse letter in couplets'[244] to address a public audience to explore the moral meaning of a recent political event: US President Nixon's removal from office in 1974. Burgess's 'New Year's Message for 1975'[245], *O Lord, O Ford, God Help Us, Also You* is a long poem which deals with diverse subjects from *Playboy* to Plato. The poem was published in *New York Times Magazine*, alongside an illustration by Ralph Steadman, suggesting the poem is in a satirical or parodic mode. The poem accordingly parodies Auden's *New Year Letter* (1940), a poem he said he read in the 1940s and alluded to in a poem from around the same period[246]. In the posthumously published collection of his lectures about Auden, Randall Jarrell finds

> it's always hard to say what long didactic expository poems are about, but one feels quite
>
> safe in saying the New Year Letter is about the Modern World and how it got to be Modern,
>
> about Auden the poet – and his relations to Things in General.'[247]

This is as pertinent to Burgess's long poem in couplets as to Auden's, which is also

---

242 Barthes, 'Death of the Author' in Barthes', p. 146.
243 Ibid.
244 Ian Sansom, 'Saviour and Scapegoat', *The Guardian,* (12 May 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/may/12/poetry.whauden> [accessed 23 May 2013] (para. 6 of 9).
245 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, pp. 36-41.
246 Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, p. 320.
247 Randall Jarrell, *Randall Jarrell on W. H. Auden* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 126.

about belated Modernity. Burgess's title[248] alludes to Auden's 1940 poem, and partially counters its own similarity to Auden's original by citing Hopkins:

> Unhouse that calendar: her dates are done,
>
> Her whorings over. Get another one,
>
> Try to pretend a new year has begun.[249]

The conspicuous first word adds immediate irony to this poem about a president's removal (or, *unhousing*) from office and therefore possesses an immediately ironic and satirical tone. Hopkins's early religious devotional poem 'The Habit of Perfection' features the phrase 'And you unhouse and house the Lord'[250]. The allusion thus becomes, as Richards puts it, 'a technical device for compression.'[251] In Bloom's logic, Burgess uses Hopkins to counter the poetic strength of Auden whilst also creating a compact intertextual pun.

Burgess, in his 1974 Auden parody, signals an ironic awareness of previous writers. In lines compatible with Bloom and Eliot's notion of contemporary poets' relationship with dead poets, Burgess uses a second-person pronoun in deictic language recalling Auden's own tone of voice, and alludes to political texts by Macchiavelli, as well as texts by classical writers:

> Your Ford, unflawed by an ironic smile,
>
> Announced to the whole world: *Truth is a glue*.
>
> O Lord, O Ford, God help us, also you.
>
> Half a millenium has gone by since
>
> Great Niccolò penned precepts for a Prince,

---

248 Juvan, p. 19. 'Intertitleness'.
249 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 36.
250 Hopkins, p. 6.
251 Richards, p. 274.

> But in those unregenerative days at least
>
> A prince, however hard he played the beast,
>
> Saw statues hovering over him and read
>
> Plato and Aristotle: the huge dead
>
> Were still alive. [. . .][252]

The combined mention of the 'huge dead'[253] alludes to Eliot's essay, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'[254], and the undeclared and yet clear similarities with Auden's own New Year poem adds even more weight to the word 'ironic'[255]. Burgess's poem, citing other poets, shows a clear awareness of the scope of its own reference to the 'huge dead'[256], including Auden, who had died the year before. Burgess continues in the same satirical mode that Auden used until the early 1970s 'to criticize public affairs'[257], as Stevenson points out.

Jarrell also compares Auden's *New Year Letter* to Pope, finding that – like the *Essay on Censorship*, it 'lacks the necessary immediacy and finality of presentation, is at a remove; the urgency and reality have been diluted.'[258] Burgess's 1974 poem in couplets is equally diluted through its expansiveness, which covers calendars, nature, utopia, evil, politics, philosophy, democracy, comparisons of America and Italy, the British mining industry, Plato, and *Playboy* magazine. Moreover, Jarrell notes how – like both of Burgess's long couplet poems – Auden's 'New Year Letter' is intertextual, using 'unexpected images (drawn from the sciences, often); surprising quotations, allusions'[259], such as this encyclopaedic-toned passage:

---

252 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 37.
253 Ibid.
254 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', p. 38.
255 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 37.
256 Ibid.
257 Stevenson, p. 211.
258 Jarrell, p. 128.
259 Ibid.

> There DRYDEN sites with modest smile,
>
> The master of the middle style,
>
> Conscious CATULLUS who made all
>
> His gutter-language musical,
>
> Black TENNYSON whose talents were
>
> For an articulate despair.[260]

Burgess similarly invokes other poetic texts, including this rhetorical misquotation of Whitman's 'To the States':

> Your fathers spoke thus, and did not the grey
>
> Poet on Paumonak cry out: *Obey*
>
> *Little: resist much – let those four words be*
>
> *A lasting slogan for the polity?*[261]

This Audenesque technique of matching expansive subject matter in a long poetic form resurfaced in *Byrne* (1995), as I note below, which was started in the same year as *An Essay on Censorship*[262].

　　An Essay on Censorship, written fifteen years after the published parody of Auden, is a literary failure by its own standards. In urgently recommending dialogue, Burgess ironically strays from 'static'[263] poetry to become didactic, much against his own advice to 'avoid invading either of these two areas'[264] of writing types at once. The

---

260 Auden, *Collected Poems*, p. 204.

261 Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets*, p. 36. Here, Burgess quotes Whitman's 'To the States'. Whitman's original phrase is 'Resist much, obey little.' See Walt Whitman. *The Complete Poems* (ed. Francis Murray) (London: Penguin, 1975:1977:1986:1996: 2004), p. 44. The placing of the other text in Italics suggests an error in Jackson's edition; in absence of a copy of the original poem, this cannot be verified here.

262 Biswell, p. 388.

263 Anthony Burgess, 'Can Art be Immoral?', lecture given at Tate Gallery, 17th October 1991 (IABF), p. 6.

264 Burgess, 'Can Art be Immoral?', p. 6. Here, Burgess speaks about art and pornography, but he makes the case equal case for combining either of these categories if poetry/literature is to remain a self-contained structure.

Essay is what Burgess later judged as 'improper art'[265], since its meaning 'is fulfilled outside itself'[266]; that is to say, it is not a balanced lyrical rendering of chaotic scenes, such as Auden may have written. Burgess contradicts himself in saying 'Art may imply but not directly speak'[267] whilst also advising that

> [. . .] literary art
> Must be attacked and torn apart
> When it essays a propagandist aim
> (Teaching again); the artist may not claim
> The right to wield the pedagogic chalk[268]

This passage is undeniably pedagogical in style, and written in a *single* voice. This self-referential statement is no case of irony, either: whereas later on in the poem, a passage of blasphemy is deliberately rendered ironic by the instruction to 'add inverted commas and "he said"'[269], no such instruction follows these *pedagogic* lines. Parts of the text were made public for the first time in Burgess's 1991 lecture 'Can Art Be Immoral'. This still presents unopposed opinion, but this is suitable for its newer context as a lecture. Burgess, in this lecture, admits the poem's shortcomings, describing it as 'heavily *didactic* in the style of a debased Alexander Pope'[270].

Burgess's return to the heroic couplet form closely associated with Alexander Pope is what Gérard Genette (according to Juvan) in his formalist project to record the structures of intertextuality – categorises as a 'noticeable, even declarative'[271] intertext.

---

265 Ibid., p. 8.
266 Ibid.
267 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship*, p. 8.
268 Ibid., p. 6.
269 Ibid., p. 9.
270 Anthony Burgess, 'Can Art Be Immoral?', p. 8. My emphasis.
271 Juvan, p. 125.

It is also an example of intertitleness[272], alluding to Pope's *Essay on Criticism*[273] (1711), itself a work which – like Burgess's *Essay on Censorship* – 'called for informed responsiveness in place of myopic fault-finding'[274]. Whereas Pope's focus for his essay is the role of the critic, Burgess has a much wider and therefore less focused subject. He self-consciously invokes Pope, who – like Burgess – wrote in Twickenham[275]:

I write in Twickenham, with little hope

Of inspiration from the ghost of Pope.

His willows yet survive, but not his art.

Our literature is barbarous at heart.[276]

Pope, like Burgess, was weary of incomplete or inaccurate readings of texts, finding 'A little Learning is a dang'rous Thing'[277] and warning against the misreadings that the multiplicity of interpretative texts create amongst readers:

The Critick else proceeds without Remorse

Seizes your Fame and puts his Laws in force.[278]

Burgess discusses a dramatic example of this: 'Kirkup's poem on a soldier's dream'[279] which was 'denied the right of print'[280]. Kirkup, whose 'unusually clumsy poem'[281] about 'an openly gay Christ, penetrated in all orifices'[282] was 'sent to trial and

---

272 Ibid., p. 19
273 Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (W. Taylor : London, 1711).
274 John Barnard. 'Introduction' in *Alexander Pope: The Critical Heritage,* ed. by John Barnard (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 1973). pp. 1-36, (p. 5).
275 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 388.
276 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship*, pp. 14-5.
277 Pope, p. 14.
278 Ibid., p. 12.
279 Ibid., p. 3.
280 Ibid.
281 Gregory Woods. *Articulate Flesh: Male Homo-Eroticism and Modern Poetry* (Yale University Press, 1987), p. 47.
282 Ibid.

found guilty'[283] of blasphemy, the 'first case of its kind for more than 50 years.'[284]

Burgess fictionalised this blasphemy case in the novel *Earthly Powers* (1980)[285].

Burgess had first-hand experience of this conflict between literary and non-literary texts before the *Essay* was written. These conflicts – unlike the Rushdie affair (and Burgess's responses to it) - were more about libel than blasphemy. His novel *The Enemy in the Blanket* (1958) features an unpleasant character called Hardman, modelled loosely on a lawyer acquaintance of Burgess who, recognising himself in the character, responded by 'asking for a lot of money'[286], demanding the novel be 'withdrawn from sale'[287]. This was later overturned in the High Court.[288] Another involved *The Worm and The Ring* (1960): Gwen Bustin – recognising herself as a model for a scandalous character in the novel – began legal proceedings, and forced Heinemann to pay 'a generous out-of-court settlement of £100, and to withdraw and destroy the entire first edition'[289]. Burgess had also experienced the Maltese state's 'dangerously bizarre'[290] postal censorship, which he recorded in the 1973 pamphlet *Obscenity and the Arts*[291]. He also experienced a conflict of cinematic and literary texts, arising from Stanley Kubrick's violent film version of *A Clockwork Orange*[292]. Although the original 'book sold badly'[293], Kubrick's notorious film adaptation turned attention back to Burgess, who claims he became 'the target of vile accusation'[294] when the violence of the film

---

283 Ibid.
284 '1977: Gay paper guilty of blasphemy', (n.d.),
     <http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/11/newsid_2499000/2499721.stm> [accessed 5 March 2013] (para. 1 of 12)
285 Anthony Burgess, *Earthly Powers (*Harmondsworth, New York, Ringwood, Ontario, Auckland: Penguin, 1980:1983). pp. 522-526.
286 Anthony Burgess. *Little Wilson and Big God* (London, Sydney, Auckland, Houghton: Vintage, 1990:2002), p. 432.
287 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, p. 432.
288 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, pp. 192-3.
289 Ibid., p. 269.
290 Anthony Burgess, *Obscenity and the Arts* (Valetta: Maltese Library Association, 1973), p. 2.
291 Ibid*.,* p. 1.
292 Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (London: Penguin, 1962: 1999).
293 Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, pp. 59-60.
294 Ibid., p. 257.

was wrongly associated with him. He fictionalised this experience in the intertextual

parable-novel, *The Clockwork Testament*[295,], heavily alluding to Hopkins in the process.

Burgess makes a distinction between literary texts and *purely descriptive* texts

including the pornographic and the scientific. He uses literary intertextual devices to

make this point, which makes the general purpose of the essay seem confused. For

example he alludes to Milton to illustrate his point:

> [. . .] literature is different. It arouses,
>
> Enflames the Thames, engulfs both men and houses,
>
> Drags at the heart, excites to cathartise,
>
> Purges within its rhythm, satisfies.[296]

In his later lecture, recycling this emphatically formalist description of literature,

Burgess discusses 'Milton's phrase "calm of mind, all passion spent" [which] is the

proper state of mind of one who has suffered the vicarious agonies of [Shakespeare's

character] King Lear.'[297] These lines from Milton's *Samson Agonistes* are a reference to

the 'cathartic cure'[298] Milton hoped for in his attempt to temper emotions through the

structure of the play itself; he hoped to show 'the mysterious workings of God'[299]

through form itself, showing faith in literature's capacity to be self-enclosed.

Burgess's *Essay*, ironically, encompasses a series of non-literary subjects in a

conversely literary form, and – as such – does not achieve any particular unity as a

poem. Specifically, the focus of Burgess's text is affected by its ambiguous hybridity, by

its provisional state as either a poem or an essay, and in its inability to distance itself

---

295 See Chapter Three.
296 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship,* p. 5.
297 Burgess, 'Can Art be Immoral?', p. 6.
298 Emily. R. Wilson, *Mocked with Death: Tragic Overliving from Sophocles to Milton* (Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 163.
299 Ibid*.,* p. 163.

from the debate it is commenting on. Hutcheon (writing one year before Burgess's

Essay) equates this hybridity with the paradoxes of Postmodern art, what she calls the

'consideration of the different and the heterogeneous, the hybrid and the provisional.'[300]

She believes this is 'not a rejection of the former values in favor of the latter; it is a

rethinking of each in the light of the others.'[301] Her thoughts on how 'the contradictions

that characterize postmodernism reject any binary opposition that might conceal a

secret hierarchy of values'[302] are particularly applicable to the ambiguous status of the

Essay, and its recommendation for a dialogism between texts, rather than reductive

readings:

> It is more a questioning of commonly accepted values of our culture (closure, teleology, and
>
> subjectivity), a questioning that is totally dependent upon that which it interrogates. This is
>
> perhaps the most basic formulation possible of the paradox of the postmodern.

Burgess, a prolific journalist, could feasibly have intended to published the text

as an opinion piece. In his *TLS* review of Clive James's long poem *Charles Charming's*

Challenges on the Pathway to the Throne[303], Burgess uses comical rhyming couplets to

venture his opinion of James's satirical literary style. For example, he finds of James:

> Though Cambridge-sleeked and London-tamed at times
>
> He plonks an Aussie phoneme in his rhymes
>
> Like martyred/started on Page 96
>
> Of this new Hudibrastic instant mix
>
> That mocks and makes the royal congeries

---

300 Hutcheon, p. 41.
301 Ibid.
302 Ibid., pp. 42-3.
303 Clive James, *Charles Charming's Challenges on the Pathway to the Throne (*London: Jonathan Cape,
    1981) Burgess's copy held at IABF.

No more fantastic than it really is.[304]

The use of the word *hudibrastic* is conspicuous here. Writing about about Dryden's satirical poetic style, Dustin Griffin associates this form with Samuel Butler, whose long poem *Hudibras* (1709) used the 'form – the short tetrameter couplet, with comic double rhymes – [which] no doubt helped to make his lines memorable'[305]. While Burgess's rhyming review certainly uses playful rhymes such as 'page 96'/'instant mix'[306], he stays with 'the five-foot couplet'[307] which Griffin associates with Dryden. Griffin points out the form is usually associated with 'acerbic and leveling wit'[308] , of the type present – after Pope – in *An Essay on Censorship.* Had the *Essay* been published as an opinion piece, then it could read in the same ironic mode as the review of Clive James. This would certainly be a supportable position given its ironic allusion to Pope's essays, which are pre-texts like the James poem Burgess refers to in his *TLS* review. It is also possible that Burgess chose to write the poem in a knowingly ironic form, in much the same way as the long hyperbolic poem contained within *One Hand Clapping* (1961). Either way, in recording the complexities of reading and writing texts in contemporary society, Burgess's 1989 text necessarily is infused with the same *historical values* it paradoxically attempts to write against, in keeping with Hutcheon's observations. If there is a Postmodern technique present, it is more part of observing contemporary movements in culture than any particular break with his own previous styles. To be sure, Burgess's alignment with Modernism certainly continues in *An Essay on Censorship.* For example, he cites Modernist poetry to explain the formalist structures of literary texts, finding it is important that

---

304 Anthony Burgess, 'The Princely Progress', *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 June 1981, p. 656.
305 Dustin Griffin. 'Dryden and the Restoration Satire' in Ruben Quintero, ed., A Companion to Satire: Ancient and Modern (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 176-195, (p. 180).
306 Anthony Burgess, 'The Princely Progress', *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 June 1981, p. 656.
307 Griffin, p. 180.
308 Ibid.

The foul familiar [can] be rendered strange

– The lignam and the yoni, the whole range

Of Sigmund's symbols before we can start

Accepting sex as a matter for high art.[309]

Burgess alludes to D. H. Lawrence's poem 'Medlars and sorb-apples'[310] through the conspicuous use of the word *yoni*. He agrees with I.A. Richards, in identifying how a true literary text uses symbolism that is contained within its own concrete structure, and is therefore 'strange'[311] to the world outside:

[t]he myth of a "transmutation" or "poetization" of experience and that other myth of the "contemplative" or "aesthetic" attitude, are in part due to talking about Poetry and the "poetic" instead of thinking about the concrete experiences which are poems.[312]

Richards, instead, argues for a subtler semiological approach to the process of poetic treatments of 'impressions'[313] , where '*signs* [. . .] depend not on themselves alone but upon the other impressions [i.e., other signs] which have co-operated with them in the past.'[314]. Richards here anticipates Barthes who finds the process of signification 'is only a tissue of signs, an imitation that is lost, infinitely deferred.'[315]

Whereas Burgess did not publish *Essay on Censorship*, Tony Harrison capitalised on 'the Rushdie affair'[316] in his long poem in correspondingly strict rhyme

---

309 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship,* p. 2.
310 D.H. Lawrence. *Selected Poems,* ed. by W.E. William (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950:1954:1960:1963:1965), p. 45.
311 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship,* p. 2.
312 Richards, p. 71.
313 Ibid., p. 81.
314 Ibid.
315 Barthes, 'Death of the Author', p. 146.
316 Anthony Burgess. 'The art of frivolity', *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 December 1992, p. 22.

scheme, *The Blasphemer's Banquet* (broadcast 31 July 1989[317]). Harrison's poem

responds directly to the dramatic conflict between texts that Salman Rushdie

experienced in 1989 when 'the Iranian leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, [called]

for his execution for the crime of writing *The Satanic Verses*'[318], viewed, like Kirkup's

poem, as blasphemous. Burgess, in contrast, uses this as a general focus, but expands

the debate into other areas; Harrison maintains focus by honing in on this one event and

expressing his opinion forcefully. Rushdie's perceived blasphemy resulted in global

protests, including book-burnings in Britain, an image that was later to resurface in

Byrne (1995). These outrages were sparked by the popular misreading of blasphemy

that only took place in 'the dreams or nightmares of a character who is in the grip of

psychosis'[319]. The Rushdie affair, then, is a specific example of the risks of exposing a

literary text to other texts in society.

Harrison's poem was so controversial that 'it nearly did not receive a first

broadcast'[320]. Burgess's *Essay on Censorship,* dated 10 April 1989[321], was written two

months before Harrison's unambiguously polemical film/poem was aired. Harrison is

especially clear in this verse, which 'the BBC removed'[322] from the film because of 'legal

pressure'[323]:

> The Ayatollah in his rich brocades
>
> such sherbets by shimming cascades
>
> nods approval to the theologian

317 Peter Symes. 'Introduction' in Tony Harrison. *The Shadow of Hiroshima and other film/poems (*London: Faber and Faber, 1995), p. vii-xxiv, (p. xiv).
318 Andrew Anthony, 'How one book ignited a war', *Observer,* (11 January 2009), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/jan/11/salman-rushdie-satanic-verses> [accessed 3 April 2011] (para. 3 of 40).
319 Anthony, para 3 of 40.
320 Symes in Harrison, p. xiv.
321 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship*, p. 15.
322 Harrison, p. 64. fn.
323 Ibid.

who wants to kill all those with Aids.[324]

The two poems have different 'poetic imperative[s]'[325]. Whereas Harrison writes a focused 'polemical essay that passionately attacked fundamentalists and their fellow travellers'[326], Burgess's gives lengthy and disparate examples of textual proscription including: Catholicism; Malta; Communism; James Joyce; D. H. Lawrence; Kirkup; pornography; de Sade; Oscar Wilde; blasphemy; Islam; the state *per se;* Judaism; and, ends with a discussion of Original Sin. Burgess's final lines suggest the decision to not publish may have come from his ultimate censor, himself:

> "Whom did I kill? Whom did I hurt?" I ask,
>
> Reflecting that the writer's only task
>
> Is not to preach or prophecy but please.
>
> But pleasure's fraught with ambiguities,
>
> And who am I to plead pure innocence?
>
> Still, I can mildly murmur in defence,
>
> Surveying gloomily my loaded shelf,
>
> At least I played the censor in myself.[327]

A poetic work of more significant length in 1989 was Burgess's completion of Hopkins's unfinished Modernist verse drama, *St. Winefred's Well,* described by the BBC as 'A verse drama left in a fragmentary state by the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) and completed and shaped by Anthony Burgess with music by the same'.[328] This verse drama is about the beheading of St. Winefred by a jealous would-be suitor Caradoc and the creation of a miraculous well that sprung from the scene of her murder.

---

324 Harrison, p. 64.
325 Symes in Harrison, p. xiv.
326 Symes in Harrison, p. xiv.
327 Burgess, *An Essay on Censorship,* p. 15.
328 BBC Written Archives Centre Reference Number SBS950/89DA6366. Transcript is unavailable.

It was recorded on 11 December 1989, and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 23 December 1989[329]. In also providing music for the production, Burgess – who as far back as 1968 had found Hopkins used the '*sforzandi* of music – heavy head-rimes'[330] – also provided flute music to explore the musical aspects of Hopkins's sprung rhythm in a way which 'is rhythmically as elastic as the words'[331]. A script of the play is not in the BBC Written Archive or elsewhere, but a recording of the broadcast is available at the IABF, Manchester.

In his unpublished doctoral thesis about Burgess's music, Michael Holloway argues that the work 'was a major undertaking: little more than seven sides of Hopkins's text are inflated into a forty-minute verse drama'[332]. The *inflation* is not as dramatic as Holloway suggests. Rather than writing entirely new material for the radio play, Burgess pieces together other poems and fragments by Hopkins which become dramatically suitable in their new contexts. The resultant assembly of disparate poetic texts, leading to new poetic meanings, can be regarded as a completion of not only Hopkins's verse drama, but also of Burgess's various *literary responses* to Hopkins, which began with juvenile pastiche in 1934[333] and was partly completed in 1989 with Burgess acting as a literary editor for, and partial parodist of, his precursor. A unity of theme and language is established between the collage of texts, demonstrating both Hopkins's own consistent poetic style and Burgess's earlier point that 'syntax makes its own ghostly sense, and that if a statement has a coherent structure, its semantic burden

---

329 See Holloway, p328. Holloway does not identify when it was recorded. This was confirmed in: Email from Jessica Hogg to author, 15 April 2013. Private correspondence. Listed contributors on the BBC database include: ARMSTRONG, Roger (fl); BURGESS, Anthony (adap);BURGESS, Anthony (comp) DAVIES, Meg (act) [Gwenlo]; DICKSON, Hugh (act) [Teryth]; GOOD, Christopher (act) [Cadwaldr]; HOPKINS, Gerard Manley (auth); MACLOUGHLIN, Shaun (prod); MANSFIELD, Elizabeth (act) [St Winefred]; MEREDITH, Ioan (act) [Caradoc]; PETHERBRIDGE, Edward (act) [St Beuno]; RIVERS, Andrew (act) [Llewelyn]; SAGAR, Sydney (arr); SLAVIN, Jane (act); WIMBUSH, Mary (act).
330 Anthony Burgess, 'Gash Gold-Vermillion' (pp. 59-64) in *Urgent Copy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973), p. 62.
331 Holloway, p. 338.
332 Ibid., p. 333.
333 See Chapter Two.

is of no importance.'[334]

In combining short blended passages of emulated Hopkins with re-contextualised poems and fragments of Hopkins's original verse drama, Burgess – in Bloom's logic – takes control of the precursor's *new* text 'so as then to aim "correctively"'[335] and alters the original meanings of Hopkins's poems from what Hutcheon calls the 'basic postmodernist stance – of a questioning of authority'[336] through deletions, omissions, and additions which subtly recontextualise the source material in order to serve the narrative purpose. Burgess, specifically, upsets textual authority through his revisions. As a result, the 'later text'[337] – as Juvan puts it – 'reinterprets, reevaluates, transforms, and exploits its sources for introducing new messages, aesthetic effects, and for its own identity politics.'[338] The identity politics in *St. Winefred's Well* are purely literary, and characterised by a blurring of authorship between Hopkins (original poet) and Burgess (editor, parodist, and partial repudiator). Burgess was aware of the risks involved in this editorial technique. In his accompanying article concerning the work, he notes how Hopkins's literary executor and editor Robert Bridges not only delayed 'the publication of Hopkins's small poetic oeuvre'[339] but also 'introduced hyphens that are not in Hopkins's manuscript'[340] to make 'some English compound words' in his edition 'look like items in a child's primer'[341].

Burgess's changes are much more far-reaching that those of Bridges. Burgess inserts entirely new material in between poems by Hopkins, which in turn appear in an order chosen by Burgess. The resultant structure of the verse drama allows for internalised dialogue between Burgess's texts and those of Hopkins. Accordingly, one

---

334 Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 151.
335 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 4.
336 Hutcheon, p. 202.
337 Juvan, p. 68.
338 Ibid., p. 68.
339 Anthony Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins'. August 27, 1989, p. 15.
340 Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins', p. 15.
341 Ibid.

of Burgess's most notable *corrective* activities early on in the play is to write new material for Hopkins's characters which brings attention to their own belatedness. Gwenlo decides 'We belong to past times'[342], at once describing her and Teryth's old age (in comparison with their daughter Winefred, who 'is the future.'[343]) and their own position within an older text. Burgess introduces a sense of doubt into Hopkins's unflinchingly religious themes, when he has Teryth say: 'God sits, as always, silent'.[344] Burgess at once acknowledges and calls into question the religious content present in Hopkins's original text. Hutcheon finds techniques such as this are associated with Postmodernity:' [b]y calling attention to the authority structure of'[345] Hopkins's Catholicism 'within the text itself, a postmodern text might be able to subvert (even as it installs) the ideology of originality which subtends them.'[346] That is to say, Burgess creates new meanings by self-consciously opposing the authority of Hopkins's original text with his own.

As a further example, Burgess introduces dialogue either literally by splitting a monologue up between new or existing characters or by writing new lines that take aim at the original, such as Gwenlo's sour rebuke to Winefred after she recites stanzas from Hopkins 'The May Magnificat[347]: 'You hail a thing that dies. Look at me!'[348]. Gwenlo's response is Burgess's own; he also chooses to omit stanzas 1-3, 7-9 and 11 from Hopkins's poem. These are stanzas that refer to the Virgin Mary. Burgess therefore revises the original religiosity of this poem, focusing instead of the stanzas that talk about the beauty of nature. Burgess's heavy alterations to the poem, as a result, turns from Catholicism to a nature-worship. Whereas Bridges introduces hyphens, Burgess

---

342 Gerard Manley Hopkins and Anthony Burgess, *St. Winefred's Well*, BBC Radio 3, 23 December 1989, (IABF), 02:25:00.
343 Ibid., 02:25:00.
344 Ibid., 02:32:00.
345 Hutcheon, p. 81.
346 Ibid.
347 Hopkins, pp. 37-39.
348 Burgess and Hopkins, 05:28:00.

audaciously omits entire lines to suit his later structural purpose.

Burgess also reassigns poetry originally intended for single voices to multiple characters, changing the meaning of those lines. He turns 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo'[349] (verses intended for *St. Winefred's Well* in the first place) into a dialogue between the happy young women, and the aged Gwenlo. This dialogue between characters is of Burgess's devising. These lines, for one single voice in Hopkins's original poem, are recited by many women in Burgess's revision:

> O is there not frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
>
> Down? no waving off of these most mournful messengers, still
>
>   messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?[350]

These lines, conversely, are given to a new speaker, Gwenlo:

> No, there's none, there's none. O no there's none,
>
> nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair,
>
> [. . .][351]

Burgess's dialogic imposition performs a deliberate 'misprision'[352] of Hopkins's original text. The extra voice, attached to a character who Burgess has previously established as possibly close to death creates bitterness not present in Hopkins's original. Joseph J. Feeney, in his book about Hopkins's linguistic playfulness, argues that since '[i]ts theme is beauty, inevitably lost by aging [sic] and death'[353], '"The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo" is likely the play's final chorus, subtitled "Maiden's song from St. Winefred's

---

349 Hopkins, p. 52.
350 Ibid.
351 Ibid.
352 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 3.
353 Joseph J. Feeney, SJ., *The Playfulness of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Ashgate, 2008), p. 115.

Well.'"[354]. The mention of death is out of keeping with the otherwise life-affirming

Mayday scene which Burgess adds in the *middle* of the intertextual collaboration. The

dialogue between the characters accordingly becomes a creative dialogue between

Hopkins and Burgess.

The next section of Hopkins's verse notably contains the words 'fagged'[355] and

'fashed'[356], which are also used by Alex in *A Clockwork Orange*[357]:

> The next morning I woke up at oh eight oh eight hours, my brothers, and as I still felt shagged
> and *fagged* and *fashed* and bashed and my glazzies were stuck together real horrorshow with
> sleepglue, I thought I would not go to school.[358]

The allusion to Hopkins's poem 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo' – one of the

'embedded quotations from the poems and plays of Gerard Manley Hopkins'[359] within *A*

Clockwork Orange – adds weight to Alex's claim of tiredness, since the poem describes

the state of being 'heavyheaded hundredfold'[360] upon wakening from slumber. The result

is, accordingly, an intertextual pun, which – as Biswell puts it in his introduction to

2012 edition of the novel – also gives 'a sense of the importance of Hopkins to

Burgess's formation as a writer'[361]. Hopkins, like Burgess's teenage delinquent character,

Alex, uses these terms to describe tiredness:

> O then, weary, then why should we tread? O why are we so
>
> > haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged,

---

354 Feeney, p. 115.
355 Hopkins, p. 54.
356 Ibid.
357 See Andrew Biswell, 'Conflict and Confluence Anthony Burgess as Novelist and Journalist'
    (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 2002), p. 210.
358 Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, p. 27.
359 Andrew Biswell, 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange. The Restored Edition,* ed.
    by Andrew Biswell (London: Heinemann, 2012), pp. xv-xxxi, (p. xxxi).
360 Hopkins, p. 54.
361 Andrew Biswell, 'Introduction', p.xxxi.

> so fashed, so cogged, so cumbered [. . .][362]

The word 'cogged' seems also to be cognate with the title of Burgess's novel. Moreover, having a murderous juvenile quote the religious lines of Hopkins introduces intertextual irony to Burgess's novel. As I pointed out in Chapter Three, Burgess also laces *The Clockwork Testament* with ironic allusion to Hopkins. Stevenson's brief summary of *A Clockwork Orange* hints at these Modernist intertextualities when he surmises the '[l]inguistic inventiveness was partly owed to admiration for modernist innovation'[363], although he overlooks the Hopkinsian references[364]. Christopher Ricks, likewise, finds ironic intertextuality in Burgess's novel *The Doctor is Sick*. In a scene in this novel, the lead character and professional linguist Edwin Spindrift muses on the titles of pornographic magazines, all of which derive from Hopkins's 'The Windhover':

> There was the one Charlie had brought him: *Brute Beauty*. And there were others he had never seen before: *Valour, Act*; *Oh!* He rubbed his eyes, which were troubling him with an odd impairment of vision. Were those really *Air, Pride, Plume, Here?*[365]

Christopher Ricks, writing about Burgess and sexual imagery, emphasises both the intertextuality and its comical effect, finding:

> Anyone who has had enough of "The Windhover" will think that Hopkins has had that coming to him for a long time. But that doesn't alter the fact that it would take stupendous powers to be able to yoke such heterogenous material together, such pain and such humour.[366]

---

362 Hopkins, p. 54.
363 Stevenson, p. 426.
364 Stevenson, instead, decides Burgess is influenced by Joyce in this novel, although no supportive evidence is provided to substantiate this.
365 Anthony Burgess, *The Doctor Is Sick* (New York: Norton, 1960:1977:1997), p. 84.
366 Christopher Ricks, 'The Epicene' in Harold Bloom, ed., *Anthony Burgess.* Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 9-12, (p. 12).

Biswell also highlights the comical effect of the 'indecent allusions to Gerard Manley Hopkins'[367]. Spindrift's name, in turn, is a word conspicuously used in 'In my craft or sullen art', a poem by Dylan Thomas, who Biswell decides 'made a large and lasting impression on Burgess'[368]:

> Not for the proud man apart
>
> From the raging moon I write
>
> On these *spindrift* pages
>
> Nor for the towering dead[369]

In *St. Winefred's Well*, Burgess inserts original poetry that parodies Hopkins and is used to extend the themes Hopkins has selected, sometimes to ironic effect. For example, around eleven minutes into the verse drama, Winefred recites these lines by Burgess:

> And if there be no beauty, if God has passed some by
>
> In beauty giving, what then? Heir lip, wall eye,
>
> Limbs shrunken? Beauty's giver will be blind to them,
>
> Will cast them to the pit. What then?
>
> Beauty is in the doing, beauty is not being
>
> As for what you speak of – shining hair, feel of primrose skin,
>
> For what they are, for what I have of them,
>
> Were they but in my gift, you should have them freely.[370]

Another character, who doesn't appear in Hopkins's original work, responds also in verse by Burgess, and repudiates the sentiment which was started in Hopkins's own

---

367 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 217.
368 Ibid., p. 91.
369 Dylan Thomas. 'In my craft or sullen art' in *Selected Poems* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 87.
370 Burgess and Hopkins, 10:54:00.

lines for Winefred and carried on in Burgess's lines. This other woman replies: 'You speak of beauty in the ghost! I would have beauty in the flesh. I am not yet a ghost.'[371] Winefred then speaks Hopkins's poem 'To What Serves Mortal Beauty'[372] , which is used as part of the dialogue about youth and beauty, to which the other woman responds: 'Keep your grace! As for dancing, dance off your queen!'[373] Burgess's insertion of a new character, and new poetic lines to oppose those of Hopkins turns this section of the verse drama into an 'act of textual self-questioning and self-exposing'[374], 'revealing the contradictions'[375] between Hopkins's assuredly Catholic understanding of beauty, and Burgess's more earthly, postlapsarian understanding of it. Burgess's interpolations thus render Hopkins's work ironic, as he calls into question Hopkins's religious intent, his 'prevailing ideology'[376]. Hutcheon finds these techniques are associated with 'postmodern art'[377]. Hutcheon cites Catherine Belsey's opinions of playwright Bertholt Brecht, who creates an 'interrogative text'[378] which 'disrupts the unity of the reader'[379] as much as the text by inviting 'the reader to produce answers to the questions it implicitly or explicitly raises'[380]. In this case, the question is with regard to the structure and scope of Hopkins's original text, which Burgess alters in a process of 'transmigration or elevation'[381] just as he does with his translations after Auden and Pound. If the self-conscious textual awareness is associated with Postmodernism, Burgess's source material is assuredly Modernist.

For Belastegui, this kind of carefully-structured dialogue (which anticipates the

---

371 Ibid., 11:43:00.
372 Hopkins, p. 58.
373 Burgess and Hopkins, 11:50:00.
374 Hutcheon, p. 221.
375 Ibid.
376 Ibid.
377 Ibid.
378 Catherine Belsey, *Critical* Practice (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 91. Cited in Hutcheon, p. 221.
379 Ibid.
380 Ibid.
381 Burgess, 'European Lecture', p. 1

dialogic structure of *The End of Things* (1991)) is a device for keeping the narrative in check, and is part of

> the disruptive power of negativity at work in what [Julia Kristeva] calls the ambivalent text, the text which, through a "staging of its dialectical structure", becomes a "questioning" of its own status as writing.[382]

Burgess doesn't insert the dialogue to question the *general* act of writing, but does so to oppose Hopkins's otherwise unchallenged Christian themes. This is accordingly divergent from Hopkins's intention, which was to provide what Dennis Sobolev in his essay on Hopkins and semiotics calls 'understanding [. . .] the world as a system of spiritual signs, as a book written by God – or, in more technical terms, the problematics of nature as a semiotic system'[383]. Sobolev does not mention Empson's commentary on how these spiritual signs are interpreted, and how this gives rise to ambiguity, which assists Burgess's own understanding of Hopkins and the effect of signs and the ambiguities arising from their referents. Either way, Burgess's dialogue allows what Belastegui calls 'a postmodernist interrogation'[384] of this sign-system's 'very structures'[385]. Burgess, elsewhere, differentiates between Sobolev's term 'semiotic'[386] and *semantics*, noting: 'Language is a complex structure of signs, and the study of signs is called semiology. This is not to be confused with semantics, which is the study of meaning'[387] (and so cognate with Empson's observations of the disparate referents that are in conflict when decoding signs). The focus of Burgess drama, then, is not so much the story of St. Winefred, but the story of how Burgess responds to his strong precursor.

---

382 Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in Nothing Like the Sun', p. 26.
383 Dennis Sobolev, *The Split World of Gerard Manley Hopkins: An Essay in Semiotic Phenomenology.* (Catholic University Press, 2011), p. 95.
384 Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in Nothing Like the Sun', p. 26.
385 Ibid.
386 Sobolev, p. 95.
387 Burgess, 'Signals', p. 199.

Feeney finds Hopkins 'doubted his ability as a dramatist'[388]. *St. Winefred's Well* has very little dramatic action, but has a lot of lines describing what Hopkins called the *inscape* of objects and sensations, described by W. H. Gardner – in the introduction to her edition of Hopkins's poetry and prose – as 'that "individually-distinctive" form (made up of various sense-data), which constitutes the rich and revealing "one-ness" of the natural object.'[389] Burgess finds Hopkins's poetic explorations of instress 'meant that ordinary experience had the capacity to startle, in sudden unsought explosions, with a vision of truth.'[390] That is to say, Hopkins's original texts are also about description itself, or – specifically – the drama of describing *inscapes*. Hence the play has lines whose awkward phrasing highlights the process of selecting language itself, for example in this description of old age:

> Ó, is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
>
> Dówn? No waving off of these most mournful messengers, still
>
>   messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?
>
> No there's none, there's no, O no there's none,
>
> Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair,
>
> Do what you may do, what, do what you may,
>
> And wisdom is early to despair:[391]

For Sobolev, Hopkins emphasises the dialogic nature of objects in these sorts of poetic descriptions: '[. . .] material objects, like St. Winefred's Well [. . .] voice diverse spiritual and ecclesiastical messages.'[392] The inscape of an object, then, can be a diversity of texts, equatable with *dialogism*. Burgess's structuring of *St. Winefred's Well* is therefore

---

388 Feeney, p. 115.
389 Gardner in Hopkins, p. xx.
390 Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins', p. 15.
391 Hopkins, p. 53.
392 Sobolev, p. 95.

in keeping with this; it sets up a literal dialogue that creates meanings by opposing

Burgess's texts with Hopkins's. As Hutcheon puts it, 'it inscribes and then undercuts'[393]

the 'autonomy of art'[394] and the 'referentiality of history'[395] (or, here, religion) 'in such a

way that a new mode of questioning|compromise comes into being'[396]. Burgess's

editorial collaboration with Hopkins, then, can be seen as both a 'theory and practice'[397]

which Hutcheon calls 'Postmodernist'[398].

In *St. Winefred's Well,* Burgess uses Auden's technique for collaborating with the

original author, this time not in translation, but in *re-ordering* or editing disparate texts,

and making them serve the narrative purposes of the unfinished fragment. Nevertheless,

the original text – like an Auden or Pound-styled translation – is extrapolated to the

later poet's own structural model and editorial purpose. As a result, the authorship of the

poems is subtly renegotiated. Burgess's imposition of his own poetic language, and the

revisionist construction of a new Hopkins text using other Hopkins texts, is compatible

with what Haffen calls a 'modernist order-imposing, mytho-poetic aesthetics'[399]. Whilst

Haffen doesn't fully explain what mytho-poetic means, the imposition of order is

certainly pertinent to Burgess's project. Here, I thus interpret Haffen's statement as

relating to the urge to check the influence of a precursor's previous texts (i.e., the myth

of the precursor's strength) through the medium of poetry itself; this is certainly what

Burgess attempts in his re-ordering of Hopkins. Coale finds that Burgess's 'own use of

the mythic method'[400] is part of 'his debt to [. . .] literary modernism'[401]; in re-ordering

Hopkins's fragment, Burgess – a lapsed Catholic – conveniently adds order to Hopkins's

---

393 Hutcheon, p. 56.
394 Ibid.
395 Ibid.
396 Ibid.
397 Ibid.
398 Ibid.
399 Haffen, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies', p. 132.
400 Coale, *Anthony Burgess*, p. 102.
401 Ibid.

various texts by following the received story of St. Winefred.

St. Winefred's Well is at once a literary and critical text. This metapoetic quality is, for Burgess, associated with the Modernist poetry of Eliot, whose 'achievement in criticism is not merely parallel to his achievement in verse – one is an aspect of the other.'[402] Hutcheon, conversely, finds 'Postmodernism marks a challenge to received ideas, but it also acknowledges the power of those ideas and is willing to exploit that power in order to effect its own critique.'[403] She points out how Postmodern texts are a 'site of internalized challenge.'[404] This subtle difference between Burgess's understanding of Eliot's metapoetic practice, and Hutcheon's understanding of Postmodern texts is in repudiation. Whilst there is certainly evidence of the Burgess, an 'apostate'[405], repudiating certain parts of Hopkins's Catholicism in St. Winefred's Well the text itself – though subject to far-reaching changes – is not travestied, unlike the deliberate travesties of Hopkins found in The Doctor Is Sick or The Clockwork Testament. Burgess, in keeping with his later definition of Modernism[406], maintains faith in Hopkins's poetic forms; he doesn't question the poetry, as much as the religiosity. However, in keeping with his later definition of Postmodernism, he opts for a self-conscious dialogic structure in his literary-critical response to Hopkins's material[407].

Burgess wrote an article for the New York Times to accompany St. Winefred's Well. In this previously unstudied essay, he emphasises how Hopkins's language made him decide in the 1930s that 'Modernism was dangerous, and one of the marks of modernism was strangeness of language'[408]; that is to say, he does not signal any loss of faith in how Hopkins's Modernist forms have an ongoing capacity to startle. He equates

402 Anthony Burgess, 'Cast a Cold Eye: The Yeats Centenary', p. 73.
403 Hutcheon, p. 209.
404 Ibid.
405 Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess, p. 319.
406 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.
407 Ibid.
408 Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins', p. 15.

Hopkins with the 'tide of literary innovation'[409] that also included Eliot, Pound, and Joyce. This strangeness of language, writes Burgess, is Hopkins's technique for representing how 'God's glory showed itself in the intense variety of the physical world, especially when such variety was present in a single member of it.'[410] That single *member* can be, among other things, a word: what Burgess calls a 'kind of counterpoint - one word doing the work of two, even more'[411], the equivalent of Empson's second type of ambiguity, 'when two or more meanings [or, texts] are resolved into one'[412]. According to Sobolev, the best metaphor for this in *St. Winefred's Well* is the severing of Winefred's head, a 'dismantling of the unity of the body'[413]. Burgess's critical exploration of multiple meanings in Hopkins's language anticipates his late career drama about dialogism, *The End of Things*, which celebrates verbal counterpoint, and is appropriately subtitled *Dialogues for Old Men*.

Burgess doesn't mention *St. Winefred's Well* directly. Instead he uses the opportunity to explain how Hopkins influenced him, and how he first read him in 1930. He decides Hopkins sits alongside Pound, Eliot, and Joyce as an exemplar of Modernist practice[414]. He comments on how Hopkins uses linguistic devices to reflect the glory of variety in the physical world, and how (like Shakespeare) he reinvigorates language using strong poetic rhythm and startling imagistic language. Burgess finds Hopkins's form was connected to literary tradition, but he was unusual in his propensity 'to exaggerate the Teutonic element in English'[415], its Anglo-Saxonisms. He finds Hopkins's method 'looked more eccentric than the Miltonic'[416] approach, which over-emphasised the Latin. In these respects, his 1989 opinion is little changed since the essay 'The

---

409 Ibid.
410 Ibid.
411 Ibid.
412 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 48.
413 Sobolev, p. 162.
414 Despite this, in his 1992 book proposal, on the same subject, Hopkins is missing.
415 Burgess, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins', p. 15.
416 Ibid.

Milton Revolution' (1968)[417]. By comparison, Burgess's opinion of another Modernist

had definitely altered by 1989. In private correspondence with Peter du Sautoy of Faber

and Faber, written some months before the *New York Times* article, Burgess says 'I think

I've come to the end of my lifetime's promotion of Joyce [. . .] Joyce has ruined the lives

of a lot of novelists, myself included.'[418]

Burgess's 1989 radio play, then, is a hybrid form which responds to the

Modernist poetry of Hopkins in a subtly dialogic form. Although ostensibly a

hagiographic drama, it is also a poetic-historic drama, with the *ephebe*[419] poet creating

new poetic meaning from the 'relationships *between* texts'[420]. Burgess's dialogic reading,

re-ordering, and adaptation of Hopkins's poetry in *St. Winefred's Well* is complemented

by *The End of Things: Three Dialogues for Old Men*[421], an intertextual work which cites

Modernist poetry by Hopkins, Ezra Pound, and Louis MacNeice, and features a sonnet

which parodies Empson.

This previously unstudied text marks an important part in the development of

Burgess's intertextual poetics. It's worth briefly recapping to explain how. In his

translations, Burgess makes use of the difference between foreign and English texts to

create new poetic meaning, using mainly Modernist techniques. In *Essay on

Censorship*, Burgess examines how literary texts enter into conflict with society.

Burgess, in *St. Winefred's Well*, stages intertextual dialogue within a Modernist-style

literary form, to subtly Postmodern effect. *The End of Things* is an overtly ambivalent

dialogic text, which examines the limitations of (Modernist poetic) form. It also

discusses the meanings of art, beauty, form itself, religion, and meaning, with

Modernist poetry being cited or parodied to support the unresolved dialogic process.

417 Anthony Burgess, 'The Milton Revolution', pp. 185-9.
418 Anthony Burgess, unpublished Letter to Peter du Sautoy, 31 May 1989, (IABF).
419 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 17.
420 Ibid., p. 3.
421 Anthony Burgess, *The End of Things: Three Dialogues for Old Men* (Texas: HRC, box 18, fol. 6, 1991).

There is no drama as such, and Burgess's characters speak as if they're reading from a critical work:

WILLIAM:

[. . .] Beauty in art does not lie in the materials used but in the form imposed on those materials. In fact, the sensuous appeal of those material does not apply. Form is all.

NIGEL:

And how do we judge form?

AUBREY:

[. . .] I doubt if there is a single unified aesthetic which applies as much to literature as to music and to the visual arts. Form? I don't think literature can ever be pure form, as painting presumably can. Content matters too much. Novels and poems are always <u>about</u> something.[422]

This argument recalls Richards's belief that poets have a 'superior power of ordering experience'[423,] which Burgess echoed in 1981, finding '[t]he fundamental purpose of any work of art is to impose order on the chaos of life as it comes to us'[424]. Burgess's 1991 text tests this, allowing contrary opinions to be presented. William – like Burgess in 1981 – believes in form; however, Nigel is ambivalent, whilst Aubrey seems to believes in content over form. These unresolved conflicts are then combined with ontological propositions, with Nigel and Aubrey increasingly extending the argument to

---

422 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 13.
423 Richards, p. 228.
424 Coale, 'Interview with Samuel Coale', p. 102.

abstract notions of beauty and God. One year later, Burgess makes this literary and ontological strategy more overt when, in a proposal for a book called 'Modernism and Modern Man' (1992) he equates the self-conscious casting of doubt upon form with Postmodernism[425]. For Belastegui, this process can be seen in Burgess's 1964 novel, *Nothing Like the Sun*, which she says likewise 'dramatises the dialogic encounter'[426] between language's 'power to express the reality that lies beyond signification'[427] and what she calls 'the moment when epistemological uncertainly becomes intractible in modernist texts and questions of meaning give way to "ontological plurality or instability", which are the marks of the postmodernist aesthetic.'[428]

The subtitle of *The End of Things* is *Three Dialogues for Old Men*[429]. Juvan notes how, for Kristeva, such dialogues are more than 'assumed relations between subjects as individual persons'[430]. Kristeva sees this kind of dialogue is a 'productivity'[431] which 'redistributes a linguistic code by intertextually connecting it to anterior and synchronic utterances'[432]. That is to say, dialogue is a place of intertextual interplay. Burgess also created dialogue – between two characters called Anthony and Burgess – in *Mozart and the Wolfgang*[433] published in the same year, to discuss music. In *The End of Things*, Burgess uses a Modernist poem which parodies Empson to contribute to his theme of unresolved meaning. It is therefore fittingly ironic that the poem resembles the work of a poet and critic who investigated how readers can hold 'a variety of things in your mind'[434] and 'apply them simultaneously'[435]. Burgess's Empsonian parody begins:

---

425 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.
426 Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in *Nothing Like the Sun*', p. 23.
427 Ibid. Here, Belastegui quotes Brian McHale. *Postmodernist Fiction* (London and New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 11.
428 Ibid., citing McHale, p. 11.
429 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 1.
430 Juvan, p. 101.
431 Ibid.
432 Ibid.
433 Anthony Burgess, *Mozart and the Wolfgang* (London: Hutchinson,1991)*, pp. 92-102.
434 Empson*, Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 238.
435 Ibid.

Crippled, the antarctic fire with chiselled skill

And fraught with allomorphs deforms the climb

To netherness and, opportune, clangs time

Out of the waldorf-coloured chlorophyll.

Undoubt, unbuild the wharf-encrusted thrill

That doubts redouts of most discordant slime

Where, weathered to a clink of the sublime,

The sheaths of allergy must work their will.[436]

The peculiar imagery, evasive crossword-style language and abstract end rhyme scheme recall, for example, Empson's poem 'Sea Voyage':

Pillowed on gulfs between exiguous bobbins

The Son of Spiders, crucified to lace,

Suspends a red rag to a thousand dobbins

And sails so powered to a better place.

All his gained ports, thought's inter-reached trapeze,

Map-sail, transport him towards Hercules.[437]

Aubrey says of the Empsonian parody: 'Pure sonnet, pure form? [. . .] That sonnet is about something, and that something is the impossibility of making sense of the world. Its meaning is the necessary cancelling out of meaning.'[438] This sentence echoes the assessment of I.A. Richards (given by Enderby's enemy, Rawcliffe) in Burgess's earlier fictionalised dialogue about poetry and meaning, *Inside Mr Enderby*: 'You are one for meaning, aren't you? The meaning of meaning. I.A. Richards and the Cambridge

---

436 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 14.
437 Empson, *The Complete Poems*, p. 21.
438 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 14.

school. A lot of twaddle if you want my opinion.'[439] As Aubrey suggests, the Empson-

styled imagery, through veiled logic, is about how true meaning is often impossible to

grasp. The sonnet uses the complex metaphor of 'antarctic fire'[440]; if the layer of snow on

the green land represents language, then – by the logic of the poem – the snow of

language has an internal fire that melts it quickly away, so is only ever an insubstantial

layer. The climber[441] cannot gain sufficient purchase on the ever-melting linguistic

slope, which – 'fraught with allomorphs'[442] is a place of multiple linguistic meanings.

The mention of allomorphs – parts of words which 'have two or more different

pronunciations'[443] – highlights the Empsonian notion that language is a place of

indeterminate meaning. Burgess uses Empson's fourth kind of ambiguity (where '[. . .]

two or more meanings [. . .] combine to make clear a complicated state of mind in the

author'[444]) in the phrase 'clink of the sublime'**[445]** to describe the material that appears

underneath the poem's metaphorical snow. The word clink can mean a 'sharp sound like

glass'[446], or a 'prison'[447]. Moreover, the word can also mean money or excrement[448]. His

suggestion for resolving this background ambiguity is to simply embrace it, to 'consider

neither jot nor tittle[449],' to 'unbreach'[450] the boundaries of language, and realise how

ambiguous signification is. Hence, he doesn't see any softening of language's inability

to define (he uses the term 'mollient'[451]), but finds 'it brittle'[452]. Even the title of the drama

---

439 Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 116.
440 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 14.
441 Cunningham points out that poets and critics (such as I.A. Richards or Michael Roberts) were
    mountaineers. This adds a further 1930s-themed trope to the poem.
442 Anthony Burgess, *The End of Things: Typescript Drafts* (Texas: HRC, Box 18, Folder 6, 1991), p. 14.
443 Andrew Carstairs-McCarthy, *An Introduction to English Morphology: Words and Their Structure*
    (Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p. 22.
444 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 133.
445 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 14.
446 Helen Liebeck and Elaine Pollard, eds., *The Oxford Paperback Dictionary* (Oxford University Press,
    1994:1995), p. 148
447 Liebeck and Pollard, p. 148.
448 Jonathon Green, *The Cassell Dictionary of Slang* (London: Cassell, 1998), p. 243.
449 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 14.
450 Ibid.
451 Ibid.
452 Ibid.

– *The End of Things* – is an Empsonian ambiguity of the second type[453], since *end* refers to the death these old characters are facing up to, as well as the purpose of art (and, by extension, human existence).

In mentioning God, multiplicity, and the split nature of human psychology, ('We're so split, so divided'[454]) Burgess inserts a recondite allusion to Empson's *Milton's God,* in which Empson uses *Paradise Lost* as example of the 'real mental conflict'[455] caused by the irreconcilable dichotomy of intellectual rationalism and religious faith. Burgess alluded to Empson's book in *This Man and Music*[456] nine years before and was informed by it when writing the epic poem *Moses* (1976)[457]. Belastegui overlooks the influence of Empson, when, commenting on the 'logic of dialogue'[458], she usefully finds in 'the dialogic text meaning gives way to ambiguity and ambivalence.'[459] And, yet, Burgess's late-career exploration of his Empsonian influence becomes a convenient focus not just for poetic parody, but also for his self-conscious presentation of dialogic questioning of the limitations of poetic form.

Hutcheon notes how, though dialogism is associated with the works of Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin, its association with Postmodern writing is due to the work of Julia Kristeva, who equated it with *intertextuality* via the 'reworking of the Bakhtinian notions of polyphony, dialogism, and heteroglossia – the multiple voicings of a text'[460]. She argues that

> Out of these ideas, [Kristeva] developed a more strictly formalist theory of the irreducible
>
> plurality of texts within and behind any given text, thereby deflecting the critical focus away

---

453 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 48.
454 Burgess, *The End of Things*, p. 22.
455 Haffenden, *William Empson: Against the Christians*, p. 307.
456 Anthony Burgess, 'Nothing is to Beautiful as Sprung' in *This Man and Music* (New York: McGraw-hill, 1982:1983:2001), pp. 117-33, (p. 121).
457 See Chapter Three.
458 Belastegui, 'Negativity and dialogical play in *Nothing Like the Sun*', p. 27.
459 Ibid.
460 Hutcheon, p. 126.

from the notion of the subject (the author) to the idea of textual productivity.[461]

In *Byrne*, Burgess explores how meaning can be generated from a seemingly *irreducible plurality* of texts which in turn refer to other texts. Like *The End of Things, Byrne* uses dialogic forms to generate poetic meaning through the clash of this plurality of texts. However, Burgess thus aligns himself with contemporary debates concerning intertextuality and dialogism, including Umberto Eco. *Byrne* is Burgess's last published novel and his second entirely in verse (the other being *Moses*). The story of a fecundly undisciplined musician, artist, and prolific fatherer of children Michael Byrne, Burgess's long poem covers subjects as diverse as the Spanish Armada, Nazi collaborators, Modernism, the European Union, and the rise of Islamic terrorism. Following a rambling history of the Byrne family, the poem describes the lives of four Byrne children, and their project to reintroduce their father's ill-wrought artworks back to an indifferent public audience. The majority of the book is dedicated to the stories of twins Tim and Tom, respectively a doubtful priest and a Latin scholar. The action takes place in Europe, Africa and East Asia, before focusing on London. The book is narrated by Tomlinson, a journalist who finds the form of the poem tiring and too decorative for the story of its fecund commissioner, Michael Byrne. By the end of the story, Tim returns to the priesthood, fearing the onset of lung cancer, Tom has to recover from the surgical removal of a testicle, and Tomlinson also has what he suspects to be lung cancer, for which he blames his subject. In the farcically intertextual and open-ended denouement, Michael Byrne reads his will and his poems to his children, "plagiarising" Burgess's fictional poet, F. X. Enderby.

In *Byrne*, a dizzying array of texts combine and conflict as part of Burgess's general plan to render the poem not unintelligible but ambivalent[462]. That is to say,

---

461 Ibid.
462 Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', p. 69.

strategies are woven into the fabric of the poem to ensure a multiplicity of competing interpretations arise out of a wide range of assembled texts, all organised in a strict poetic form. Burgess's last poem, like *St Winefred's Well* and *Essay on Censorship* metapoetically comments on its own structure. However, *Byrne* is far more overt in its exploration of itself, with characters providing their own metanarrative opinions on the form and content of the poem.

The formalism of *Byrne* continues the strict rhyme schemes seen in the *Essay on Censorship* and the Wilbur-influenced verse drama translations. I noted earlier how Grey finds Wilbur uses formal structures to accommodate discordancy.[463] The same applies to *Byrne*, which is both structured by, and about, the discordant clash of texts. Burgess stimulates this clash of texts by using characters who enter into poetic dialogue with the text, passing comment on its progress. He explores how ambivalence can be created *between texts* by leaving the ending especially open-ended and relying on the readers to organise meaning, and by rendering his poem polyphonic.

The poem is written in *ottava rima,* a traditional form suitable for assembling many layers of intertextual material into a unifying structure. As Gregory Dowling points out in his essay concerning difficult forms in narrative poetry, '[t]he capaciousness'[464] of the *ottava rima* form tends to highlight 'what Louis MacNeice described as "the drunkenness of things being various"'[465], a propensity that 'derives from its technical qualities.'[466] The form consists of 'six lines of interlocked, unified preparation followed by its couplet of climax'[467] so that the 'very rhyme scheme implies that each stanza will contain two more or less distinct kinds of materials.'[468] Hence,

---

463 Grey, p. 534.
464 Gregory Dowling, 'The Fascination of What's Difficult' in Steven P. Schneider. *The Contemporary Narrative Poem: Critical Crosscurrents* (University of Iowa Press, 2012), pp. 27-55, (p. 34).
465 Dowling, p. 34.
466 Ibid.
467 Ibid.
468 Ibid.

Burgess alludes to or cites literary and non-literary texts to give his intertextual collage

a bewildering *variousness* of subject, of character, and – finally – of interpretation.

Byrne accordingly seems to have no unifying centre other than its form. Instead of

variousness, Barthes describes this technique as *plurity*, which 'is not simply to say that

[the final text] has several meanings, but that it'[469] possess a 'very plural meaning: an

irreducible [. . .] plural'[470]. Dowling views *ottava rima* as a poetic interaction and

interlacing of texts, just as Barthes views the text *per se* as 'not a co-existence of

meanings but a passage, an overcrossing'[471].

Burgess began writing *Byrne* in 1989[472], around the time when a number of long

verse novels were published. Most notably, Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* (1986) uses

uses a form associated with 'the Onegin stanza'[473] of the nineteenth century in a novel

about modern California. Similarly, Derek Walcott's *Omeros* (1990) employs Dante-

inspired *terza rima*, using the medieval form in a long narrative about Caribbean

culture; Burgess used this form in the 1950s. In America, Kenneth Koch wrote *Ko; or,*

A Season on Earth (1960), and *Seasons on Earth* (1987), a 'postmodern long poem'[474] in

ottava rima, whose 'almost totally haphazard'[475] storyline Dowling believes owes much

to Ariosto. Although there is no evidence that Burgess read Koch, his works

demonstrate how the expansive form had long been re-established by the time Burgess

came to write *Byrne*. Dowling notes how Koch especially – as 'with Byron and

Auden'[476] – enjoys the "cocktail" aspect of the form'[477], its ability 'to mix otherwise

---

469 Barthes, 'From Work to Text', p. 159.
470 Ibid.
471 Ibid.
472 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 388.
473 Andrew Kahn, *The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin (*Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 10.
474 Joe Moffett, 'Simulation, Popular Culture, and the Postmodern Long Poem: The Case of Kenneth
     Koch's"Seasons on Earth"' T*he Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Vol. 40, No. 2,
     Special Convention Issue: High & Low / Culture (Fall, 2007), pp. 4-18, p. 5.
475 Dowling, p. 34
476 Ibid.
477 Ibid.

unconnected things'[478], or, intertexts.

Writing about the relationship between popular culture and long Postmodern poetry, Joe Moffett argues the sense of 'depthlessness'[479] arising from the 'intensely self-reflexive'[480] nature of Koch's long *ottava rima* poems is a feature associated with Postmodernism. He thus finds *Seasons on Earth* a 'traditional narrative-based text, but on reflection'[481] views it as 'only a sort of simulation of a narrative poem'[482], which constantly foregrounds the difficulties of its own production but doesn't really make any determinable narrative progress. Tomlinson, *Byrne*'s narrator – along with other characters – also self-reflexively foregrounds the poem's conventions. For example, he rhymes Nijinsky with Stravinsky, finding that 'the rhyme's unavoidable'[483]. Timothy Byrne instructs his half-sister to 'wrap up your rhymes'[484] after a long monologue, clearly understanding he exists within a poem. Tomlinson, in another example, asks 'Should I correct that stanza? As you see|It has an extra lines and rhymes too much'[485], whereas – elsewhere – he questions the truth of Byrne's stories, finding some have 'proved to be impossible'[486]. Moffett finds that Koch's narrator in *Seasons on Earth* 'often expresses the limits of his knowledge'[487] in much the same way.

Kristeva equates these dialogical intertextual devices with 'ambivalence'[488], observing that dialogue like Tomlinson's shows that 'within the space of *texts*, poetic language is a "double"'[489], a place where multiple interpretations are generated. That is to say, the poem's internal dialogues stage the process of *ambivalence* being produced.

---

478 Ibid.
479 Moffett, p. 6.
480 Ibid.
481 Ibid.
482 Ibid.
483 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 14.
484 Ibid., p. 53.
485 Ibid., p. 105.
486 Ibid., p. 14.
487 Moffett, p. 7.
488 Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', p. 69.
489 Ibid.

Hutcheon, in turn, finds this kind of technique is associated with the 'loss of faith in [the] centralizing and totalizing impulse of human thought'[490] that Postmodern texts dramatise by revealing the unavailability of a stable narration. Burgess, when drafting the poem, deliberately added characters to increase this propensity for dialogue, which – in turn – leads to a multiplicity of possible intertextual meanings. Prose versions of 'a novel by A. Burgess which was unfinished but eventually became BYRNE'[491] are available at the University of Texas. One of the two prose drafts includes a single main character, whose actions are narrated conventionally:

> Michael Hildrick's sleep cycle ended abruptly at seven forty-three. Thus he was up earlier than the birds, such of them as would twitter through the Middlesex winter. There was enough light from the street lamp beyond the bare tree to let him perform the ten-second act of dressing[492].

In the final poem, Michael Hildrick becomes twins Tim and Tom, and these have a brother (Brian) and sister (Dorothy). The mother of these siblings is uncertain, but certainly one of three sisters, contributing further to the confusing sense of multiplicity. Their four interacting voices are echoed in the conspicuous use of the words 'tetraphone'[493], 'tetraphonic'[494], and 'fourfold voice'[495] throughout the poem. This fixation with tetralogy reappears towards the end of the poem, when Byrne's voice is amplified by 'tetraphonic speakers'[496]; soon after, he speaks with a 'fourfold voice'[497] and he is

---

490 Hutcheon, p. 58.
491 Anthony Burgess, *Byrne* draft fragments, (Texas: HRC, box 5, fol. 7, n.d). Handwritten note by Liana Burgess, p. 1.
492 Burgess, *Byrne* draft fragments, p. 1. A character's full name and precise time of action is a prose technique also used in *Any Old Iron (1989)*, which features the comically understated line 'David Jones sailed from Southampton on the *SS Titanic* at noon on 10 April 1912.' Anthony Burgess. *Any Old Iron* (London: Arrow Books, 1989), p. 6.
493 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 75.
494 Ibid., p. 138.
495 Ibid., p. 140.
496 Ibid., p. 138.
497 Ibid., p. 140.

carried by 'four'[498] thuggish guards. Notably, Burgess dedicates *Byrne* to four

unexplained people: 'To you and you and you. Also you.'[499] There is a striking

ambivalence in the poem even before its main text begins, which is only heightened by

the interaction of characters and their narrator. The reader, accordingly, needs to enter

into dialogue with the text. As I point out below, the ending of the prose draft *does*

eventually break down into a process of metanarrative dialogue, but only after a

substantial attempt.

Towards the end of *Byrne*, Michael Byrne is presented as an allegory of

polyphony and dialogism, when he tells his assembled offspring 'My land|Is rich in

omnium: fresh research upon|Its fissile properties esctatic'[500]. Here, Byrne alludes to the

Irish novelist Flann O'Brien as an economical means to signal the increasing number of

meanings and texts that collide and combine towards the end of the poem. 'Omnium' is

a high-energy element that features in Flann O'Brien's 1967 novel about a murderer's

confusing experience of hell, *The Third Policeman.* O'Brien's comical description of

omnium is ironically unresolved and several: 'Omnium is the essential inherent interior

essence which is hidden inside the root of the kernel of everything and it is always the

same.'[501] Michael Byrne's intertextual use of the word therefore economically provides

a growing sense of expansiveness, allusiveness, and complexity of the poem's ending:

his mention of ecstatically splitting atoms becomes a metaphor for this, whilst the

allusion to the highly allusive novel is a way to show – via literary technique – how this

expansion of meaning happens. Like *Byrne*, O'Brien's novel shows how one ostensible

meaning can become relative, and expanded into many other competing meanings,

which recall Empson's idea that when 'you are holding a variety of things in your mind,

---

498 Ibid., p. 139.
499 Ibid., front page matter. On the manuscript draft, this dedication appears underneath the 'Prudence'
    poem, whereas in the final book, it follows it.
500 Ibid., p. 145.
501 Flann O'Brien, *The Third Policeman* (London: Flamingo, 1967: 1993), p. 113.

or using for a single matter a variety of intellectual machinery, the only way of applying

all your criteria is to apply them simultaneously.'[502] Burgess wrote about Flann O'Brien

in a 1976 article, over ten years before *Byrne*, and described his technique as 'not of a

hierarchy of narrative levels but of genuine polyphony'[503], in much the same way *Byrne*

structures its dialogism through simultaneous texts or voices. Burgess also signals

awareness of the reader's position in amongst these textual overcrossings: 'woe betide

the reader who looks for no more than one meaning.'[504] Burgess likewise opts for a

narrative which uses polyphony to consistently expand ambivalence.

Although Burgess uses a traditional poetic form whose conventions permit

metapoetic commentary, one of his characters identifies the contemporary critic

Umberto Eco[505] as an intertextual presence in the poem. In *On Literature* (2002), Eco

recognises 'metanarrative strategy'[506], though often found in classical poetry, is present

'in the modern novel'[507] but 'with greater insistence'[508]. Eco also admits that

metanarrative, dialogism, and intertextual irony (all, as I argue below, present in *Byrne*)

are features associated with Postmodernism; he uses precise terminology to explain

how the technique works:

> in order to highlight the reflection the text is carrying out on itself, I have turned to what I would
>
> call "artificial dialogism," namely, the fiction of a manuscript on which the narrating voice
>
> reflects, and tries to decipher and judge at the very moment when it is narrating [. . .][509]

At the same time, Burgess can also be seen as continuing literary tradition in including

---

502 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 238.
503 Burgess, 'The Magical Madness of Flann O'Brien', p. 25.
504 Ibid., p. 25.
505 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 61.
506 Umberto Eco, *On Literature* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2002), p. 213.
507 Ibid.
508 Ibid.
509 Ibid.

a narration which checks the poem's progress. As Bayley points out, the sixteenth-century Italian poet Ariosto also wrote in *ottava rima* with 'inspired frivolousness'[510] on the 'fun and the magic'[511] of the *ottava rima* form in *Orlando Furioso* (1516)[512]. Just like the later *ottava rima* poems which Moffett describes as Postmodern*,* this medieval poem is 'epic in scale and length'[513] and refers to its own conventions as part of the creative process. For example, Ariosto begins his poem by explaining how difficult the rhyme scheme is, and just how far-reaching his innovations are:

> And of Orlando I will also tell
>
> Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,
>
> [. . .]
>
> If she who my poor talent by her spell
>
> Has so reduced that I resemble him,
>
> Will grant me now sufficient for my task:
>
> The wit to reach the end is all I ask.[514]

Burgess's own 'foregrounded "creative act"'[515] uses a similar tone:

> Why choose this agony of versifying
>
> Instead of tapping journalistic prose?
>
> Call it a tribute to a craft that'd dying, [sic]
>
> Call it a harmless hobby. [. . .][516]

Edmund Spenser is another traditional precursor whose text Burgess self-

---

510 P.C. Bayley, 'Introduction' in Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene. Book 1*, ed by P.C. Bayley (Oxford University Press, 1966), pp1-28, (p. 14).
511 Bayley in Spenser, p. 14.
512 Ibid.
513 Ibid.
514 Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso: Part One,* trans. by Barbara Reynolds (London: Penguin, 1973:1975), p. 117.
515 Williams, p. 77.
516 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 40.

consciously alludes to. Bloom sees Spenser as a 'belated'[517] Modern writer because of his 'allusive collage'[518] technique. Spenser, like Burgess after him, combines layers of intertextual material. Bayley concurs, and his summary of Spenser's technique in *The Faerie Queene* comes close to Burgess's own intentions in *Byrne*:

> he gives us simplicity in multiplicity, straightforward guidances through an intricate succession of stories, and lucidly Christian moral suasion [. . .] inspired by an unprecedented range of literary, doctrinal, and source-material.[519]

Spenser's long allegorical poem, *The Faerie Queene* (1590), uses an adaptation of *ottava rima* which was 'apparently designed, with its final dragging alexandrine, to slow things down'[520] and so is an appropriate form for carefully holding a multiplicity of material in suspension. Bayley concurs with this, finding Spenserian 'alexandrine has no strongly marked caesura and this gives an added length and an increased sense of movement appropriate to the subject-matter.'[521] Book Three of *Byrne* is written in Spenserian form. This middle part of the novel is packed with detail: a character called Rayne Waters discusses feminism and attempts to seduce Tim; a list of 'Euroculture'[522] and 'Eurothinkers'[523] is considered[524]; a conference is held concerning Latin; and, Tom Byrne collapses due to testicular pain. Burgess alludes to Spenser through the strained narrative voice of Tomlinson, and refers to Spenser's influence on Romantic poet Byron. Unlike the sixteenth-century predecessors, Burgess writes from a position of knowing belatedness, providing a brief history of the form in the stanza:

---

517 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 129.
518 Ibid.
519 Bayley in Spenser, p. 10. My emphasis.
520 Dowling, p. 38.
521 Bayley in Spenser, p. 19.
522 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 91.
523 Ibid.
524 Ibid.

For me, I face a fresh prosodic duty.

Rhyme for a time must be quadruple-barrelled

As well as treble. The occluded beauty

Of winter Venice, bilious sea-apparelled,

Calls me to try on Byron's other suit. He

Used the nine-fingered stanza in *Childe Harold*,

Borrowing it from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

I'll rest before I ride that time machine.[525]

This, following Eco[526], has a greater insistence on the form, its history, and its conventions, than – say the opening verses of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, which is not as intrusively *insistent* as Tomlinson's ongoing comparison with his literary precursors but certainly self-reflexively foregrounds the difficulty of the form itself:

[. . .]

Mirror of grace and Majestie divine,

[. . .]

[. . .] raise my thoughts too humble and too vile,

To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,

The argument of mine afflicted stile:

The which, to heare, vouchsafe, O dearest dred a-while.[527]

Burgess via Tomlinson – like Spenser, Ariosto, or Koch – enters into dialogue with the reader directly. Tomlinson, who shares his name with the title of a poem by Rudyard Kipling[528] , directly addressing the reader, self-reflexively cites the Romantic poet Lord

---

525 Ibid.
526 Umberto Eco, *On Literature* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2002), p. 213.
527 Spenser, *The Faerie Queene. Book 1*, p. 46.
528 Burgess explains his familiarity with Kipling's poem in *Little Wilson and Big God,* when he notes

Byron[529] as yet another precursor in defending his choice of the form:

> [Byrne] thought he was a kind of living myth
>
> And hence deserving of *ottava rima*,
>
> The scheme that Ariosto juggled with,
>
> Apt for a lecherous defective dreamer.
>
> He'd have preferred a stronger-muscled smith,
>
> Anvilling rhymes amid poetic steam, a
>
> Sort of Lord Byron. Byron was long dead.
>
> This poetaster had to do instead.[530]

Byron's editor and critic, Jerome McGann, believes the Romantic poet 'finds himself, *as writer and director*, taking part in the action, and therefore falling subject to the action: as participant in the interpersonal exchange'[531]. McGann observes the same phenomena in Byron's narrator-heroes, who 'are poetical constructions, designed to summon their rhetorical doubles'[532], their 'readers.'[533] The narrator requires the reader to make decisions on the action, a point reinforced by the ambivalence of both the epigraph and ending (as I note later). On the subject of Byron's narrators, McGann finds that 'the

---

that his first wife 'would ask me to read aloud to her Kipling's "Tomlinson", and I would dread the moment when she joined in the chorus "Not in Berkeley Square".' Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God,* p. 352. *For* a discussion on Burgess's 'admiration for Kipling' see Andrew Biswell. *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess,* pp. 154-5.

529 Burgess wrote at a time of increased critical interest in Byron. Jerome McGann's edition of *The Complete Poetical Works of Byron*, as well as contributions to *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse* both appeared in 1993. See Lord George Gordon Noel Byron. *The Complete Poetical Works.* Ed Jerome McGann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) and McGann, Jerome. *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse (*Oxford University Press, 1993). Burgess owned a copy of this book. The Anthony Burgess Center in Angers, France, holds the following edition from Burgess's personal library: Lord George Gordon Noel Byron. *The Poetical Works of Lord Byron* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1878).

530 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 5.

531 McGann, *Byron and Romanticism*, p. 157.

532 Ibid., p. 157.

533 Ibid., p. 157.

role'[534] of 'a poem's interpreter'[535] is to comment on 'the work's complications'[536], as well as the 'dangers that may be imagined as part of those complications'[537]. Tomlinson experiences these dangers, finding he is 'dying'[538] because of the difficulty of narrating *Byrne.* In *Don Juan,* Byron's narrator explains the complications of matching an unheroic subject to the *ottava rima* form:

> Brave men were living before Agamemnon
>
> And since, exceeding valorous and sage,
>
> [. . .]
>
> But can't find any in the present age
>
> Fit for my poem (that is for my new one);
>
> So, as I said, I'll take my friend Don Juan.[539]

The self-reflexivity of *Byrne* is seen in a number of narrative devices, which – alongside the self-critical intrusions of Tomlinson and his characters, create an 'intertextual second-sense'[540] in amongst the poem's other intertextual techniques, be they texts from across literary tradition or via the dialogic of multiple character voices and perspectives. Eco describes this layering of intertextual dialogic as

> horizontal, labyrinthine, convoluted, and infinite, running from text to text – with no other promise than the continual murmuring of intertextuality. Intertextual irony presupposes an absolute immanentism. It provides revelations to those who have lost the sense of

---

534 Jerome McGann. *Byron and Romanticism,* Cambridge Studies in Romanticism (Cambridge University Press: 2002). p. 157.
535 Ibid.
536 Ibid.
537 Ibid.
538 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 147.
539 Lord George Gordon Noel Byron. 'Don Juan' in *The Works of Lord Byron (*Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994), p. 627.
540 Eco, *On Literature*, p. 235.

transcendence.[541]

In short, Eco points out how the combination of texts can lead to a sense that the overall work ironically defers meaning by one text referring to another text and so on, in an ongoing expansion of meaning. Dorothy Byrne's video collection a convenient metaphor for Eco's idea of an endlessly-deferred dialogue between texts, where disparate videos (*texts*) such as 'dying rain forests'[542], 'child abuse'[543] combine to become the general 'hoarding|Of pain'[544], an economic description of human history presented through a combination of intertexts. Tim Byrne, after seeing this, metapoetically considers how 'Umberto Eco|Had artefact speaking to artefact'[545]. Here, Burgess refers to a debate about ironic intertextuality: namely, the ability of 'historical metafiction'[546]such as Eco's *The Name of the Rose* to 'blur the line between fiction and history'[547] through medieval characters speaking in anachronistic language, so that one historical text enters into dialogue with another. Juvan, in summarising Eco's arguments in *Semiotics*, highlights how in some texts, '[c]itation can become the message, especially given a complex network or culturally conditioned interpretents '[548]; this citation then becomes a 'semiotic encyclopedia [. . .] that is at least partially shared by author and reader'[549]. *Byrne* is Burgess's self-conscious literary demonstration of this, one which uses Eco's logic as one of its many intertextual layers to describe how meaning becomes deferred and showing the text as a 'productivity'[550] between its constituent intertexts, including past and present.

---

541 Ibid.
542 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 61.
543 Ibid.
544 Ibid.
545 Ibid.
546 Hutcheon, p. 113.
547 Ibid.
548 Juvan, p. 146.
549 Ibid.
550 Ibid., p. 101.

Also in this scene, Burgess explores the poetic qualities of seemingly unpoetic subjects. For example, in Dorothy's video cassette manufacturers: 'here TDK|BASF, Fuji, Quasar, and there|Slept Sony, Maxell, Kodak.'[551] Burgess's poetic rendering of this unpoetic 'imagery taken from everyday life'[552] is for Roberts a 'defining feature'[553] of Modernist poetry. Juvan similarly finds 'modernists and members of the avant-garde introduced fragments and materials from urban, mass communication into their texts by using collage techniques.[554] This ability to make poetry 'hospitable to'[555] diverse and traditionally unpoetic themes, is comparable to Burgess's earlier praising of Auden's ability to incorporate 'slang, technical terms, rare archaisms, and neologisms'[556] into *his* poetry. To Eco, this use of everyday material in a highly literary setting is also 'one of the characteristics of so-called postmodernism', which is seen in 'stories that are capable of attracting a wide public even though they employ learned allusions and "arty" stylistic device[s]'[557]. Burgess used a similar technique in prose seven years before starting *Byrne*; *The End of the World News* (1982) is a book comprised of three separate texts whose 'fusion within a single novel radically alters the meaning of the individual threads'[558]. Burgess's dust jacket, as Biswell points out, explains this intertextual technique in terms suitable for the video age: 'To view one channel at a time is no longer enough: we need three distinct yet simultaneous imaginative stimuli'[559].

Another narrative device relating to intertextual dialogue is a libretto text, adapted within the *ottava rima* format, based loosely on H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1865); this is an original Burgess text re-ascribed to the character Brian

---

551 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 50.
552 Roberts, quoted in Hynes, p. 44.
553 Ibid.
554 Juvan, p. 19
555 Burgess, *They Wrote in English*, Vol 1, p. 81.
556 Ibid.
557 Eco, *On Literature*, p. 235.
558 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 384.
559 Anthony Burgess. *The End of the World News* (London: Hutchinson, 1982). Dust jacket copy.

Byrne, a writer of popular musicals, and step brother of Tim, Tom, and Dorothy. The libretto unites the past with the present; its Victorian time-travelling hero observing everything from medieval witch-hunts to twentieth century race riots. The central hero of Brian's musical is what Burgess, with reference to Auden and Isherwood's '*The Ascent of F6*[560], describes as an 'intellectual and man of action'[561]. Intellectualising the dangers of time travel, the character says 'Nietzsche said life must be dangerous.'[562] As a useful aside, Nietzsche – for Bloom – is identified with literary (and *historical*) belatedness, pointing out how Nietzsche saw language as a 'prison-house'[563], an 'antagonist'[564]. Bloom finds 'no poet can write a poem without [. . .] remembering another poem'[565] , just as Burgess finds '[i]t is not easy to write nonsense, since everything relates to everything else. '[566] For Bloom, this position of literary belatedness leads to a process of poetic misreading or deliberate forgetfulness, which is in turn linked to Nietzsche's assertion that 'forgetfulness is a property of all action'[567]. Tomlinson, like the hero in *The Time Machine*, is certainly a man of action. His commitment to the 'agony of versifying'[568] makes him ill: 'I cough blood'[569]. (Burgess's own lung disease is reascribed to the framing narrator as careful poetic parable; the *Byrne* manuscript in Texas has occasional blood spots on it.)

Burgess, in pursuing the theme of martyrdom, continues to align himself with Modernist tradition. As Cunningham points out, this kind of 'heroic myth-mongering in and around '30s writing was only natural because the "poet [. . .] is always to some

---

560 Burgess, 'Making them Sing', p. 18.
561 Ibid.
562 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 65.
563 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 68.
564 Ibid., p. 156.
565 Ibid., p. 199.
566 Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 152.
567 Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York:Cosimo, 1873: 2010), p. 6.
     Quoted in Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 199.
568 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 40.
569 Ibid., p. 147.

extent a frustrated man of action.'"[570] Cunningham finds, in Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, martyrdom itself is *action* with Eliot promoting 'the idea that suffering, martyrdom, the *patience* of Thomas a Beckett are serious versions of action, are a valid Christian heroism'[571] . Hence, Eliot turns 'suffering into action [. . .] an eternal action, an eternal patience.'[572] For Bloom, a poet risks encountering the 'self's sense of its own diminishment'[573] in the process of writing, because of the strong poetic precursors of literary tradition. Eliot, in accordance with this, also notes how '[t]he progress of the artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality'.[574] Tomlinson sacrifices himself for a text he has no faith in. By Burgess's 1992 criteria, this lack of faith in the form and its purposes is associated with Postmodernity.

Burgess uses the ongoing theme of (literary) martyrdom and self-sacrifice to subtly infer arguments concerning dialogism and textual multiplicity. Eco finds this subtlety is to be expected, since 'intertextual irony does not presuppose at every turn a carefree carnival of dialogism'[575], but 'it is certainly true that the text' as a general concept 'asks its reader to be aware of the rumble of intertextuality'[576]. For example, after a passing reference to 'St. Stephen's martyrdom'[577], there are descriptions of Tim's planned TV film about the sixteenth century Unitarian 'conspicuous martyr'[578], Michael Servetus. This is a parable concerning intertextuality/variousness as much as martyrdom. Servetus was burned at the stake in 1553[579] for 'various heresies'[580]

---

570 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 157.
571 Ibid., p. 157.
572 Ibid., p. 157.
573 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 73.
574 Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', p. 40.
575 Eco, *On Literature*, p. 235.
576 Ibid., p. 235.
577 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 60. See Acts 6:8-15 and Acts 7:59-60 for the Biblical story of Stephen's
    martyrdom.
578 Juan Naya, Marian Hillar, 'Michael Servetus Biography' in Juan Naya, Marian Hillar, eds., *Michael
    Servetus, Heartfelt: Proceedings of the International Servetus Congress, Barcelona, 20-21 October
    2006 (*Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2011), pp. xiii-xvii, (p. xiii).
579 Naya and Hillar, p. xxiii.
580 Ibid., p. xx.

concerning 'the Trinity, the person of Christ'[581] described in *Byrne* as the 'Essential three in one. God's subtle art'.[582] Tim decides Servetus '[s]howed his true oneness manifested under|Mere outward show: call that the Holy Trinity.'[583] Servetus's heretical belief thus encapsulates what Juvan calls 'the possibility of coexisting contradictions'[584], and this becomes a convenient metaphor for Burgess's project to introduce multiplicity into the poem. Writing about Servetus and sacrifice in the sixteenth century, Thanos Christacopoulos detects 'a double meaning'[585] in the word *martyr*; it can mean 'the person who speaks about what he has seen and as the person who suffers martyrdom.'[586] Servetus fits into the latter category, as does Tim, whose 'sanguine spasm'[587] of lung disease is brought on by the difficulty of writing the Servetus script. Tomlinson, as narrator, both records and suffers martyrdom in the process of writing, finding 'Byrne is the killer'[588]. Tomlinson's phrase 'plodding feet and blistered toes'[589], thus becomes both a compact literary conceit to describe both the difficult *ottava rima* form and Servetus's death by burning at the stake.

As he writes the Servetus TV script, Tim adopts the pen name Southwell. His agent, learning this, responds with the line 'As I in hoary winter|Night [. . .]'[590], recognising the pseudonym comes from Robert Southwell. The line as it appears in *Byrne* is a misquotation of sixteenth-century poet Robert Southwell's religious text, 'The Burning Babe':

---

581 Ibid.
582 Burgess, *Byrne,* p. 122.
583 Ibid., p. 122.
584 Juvan, p. 98.
585 Thanos Christacopoulos, 'From Sacrifice to Science: Servetus between Joseph De Maistre and Francis Bacon' in in Juan Naya, Marian Hillar, eds., *Michael Servetus, Heartfelt: Proceedings of the International Servetus Congress, Barcelona, 20-21 October 2006* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2011), pp. 69-86, (p. 76).
586 Christacopoulos, p. 76.
587 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 124.
588 Ibid., p. 147.
589 Ibid., p. 40.
590 Ibid., p. 77.

> As I in hoarie Winters night stoode shyvering in the snow,
>
> Surpris'd I was with sodayne heate, which made my hart to glowe;
>
> And lifting up a fearefull eye, to vewe what fire was nere,
>
> A pretty babe all burninge bright did in the ayre appeare;[591]

Here, Southwell acts a poetic martyr by recording what he has seen[592]. In his study of Catholic religious poets. For Cousins, it is a poem as much about religion as dialectic, since it

> recalls a moment of dialectic [. . .] the opposition and interplay between the profane "I" and his divine counterpart [the babe Himself] being subtly diverse. Focusing initially on the language through which those opposed identities appear, leads naturally into the complexities of their dialectical relationship.[593]

The allusion to Southwell's poem happens in a scene of dialogue: namely, the interaction of Tim, a lapsed Catholic, and the 'Calvinistic epic'[594] which the project's funder, the Reverend Eli Sewell requires of him. When Tim asks 'What do I do about'[595] Servetus's 'martrydom?'[596]. Reverend Sewell, in opposition to this, insists '*No Martyrdom!*'[597]. Burgess, in opposing the two characters, creates yet another area of dialogue, and the martyring of Servetus and Southwell become convenient ways to portray conflicting texts, whilst also explaining the difficulty of the writing process itself.

Earlier, when Michael Byrne displays a series of artworks, which 'chiefly

---

591 Robert Southwell, 'The Burning Babe' in *Collected Poems*. Ed. by Peter Davidson and Anne Sweeney (Manchester: Carcanet, 2007), p. 14.

592 Naya and Hillar, p. 76.

593 A. D. Cousins. *Catholic Religious Poets from Southwell to Crashaw. A Critical Study* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1991), p. 44.

594 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 79.

595 Ibid., p. 81.

596 Ibid.

597 Ibid.

showed the organs of coition'[598], he attracts governmental condemnation and is

compared with D. H. Lawrence as a possible artistic martyr.:

> [. . .] In Parliament some quaint
>
> Ruskinian terms expressed the State's abhorrence.
>
> The same thing happened later to the saint
>
> Of sexuality, the dying Lawrence.
>
> Byrne felt the arrow of the martyrised.
>
> He rather liked it, and he was surprised.[599]

Lawrence, in his 1931 book *Apocalypse* finds '[a]n apocalypse is a revelation of what

lies beyond this world'; Burgess's allusion thus recalls Christacopoulos's[600] notion of a

martyrdom through *recording,* as well as Cousins's[601] concept of dialectic in religious

experience. Lawrence's death, like Tim and Tomlinson's, is a martyrdom; moreover, his

conflict with the state – like Michael Byrne's – is an image of dialectic. Burgess once

again uses recondite allusion to highlight the process of dialogue between texts.

Lawrence is dying in the scene, dating it around 1930[602]. Lawrence, for Cunningham, is

one of the 'heroes'[603] of 'British Modernism'[604], whose posthumous works 'jutted

aggressively into the decade'[605] whose poets influenced Burgess's own poetic style[606].

The increasing sense of multiplicity in the poem is further heightened towards

the end of the poem, with an announcement about Christmas, replete with 'snarling'[607]

reindeer. Byrne discusses a carol for Maria, who, having 'birth-pangs'[608] wonders 'what

---

598 Ibid., p. 22.
599 Ibid., p. 23.
600 Christacopoulos, p. 76.
601 Cousins, p. 44.
602 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 15.
603 Ibid., p. 21.
604 Ibid., p. 21.
605 Ibid., p. 21.
606 See Chapter Two.
607 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 138.
608 Ibid., p. 138.

her place is within the scheme of things'[609]. The first of seven re-used Burgess poems

with variants[610] is recited in reply:

> In this spinning room,
>
> Reduced to a common noun,
>
> Swallowed by the giant belly of Eve,
>
> The pentecostal sperm came hissing down.
>
> Lallay lullay.[611]

With its refrain 'lullay', the new version becomes a 'Yuletide carol'[612]. In *A Companion to*

the Middle English Lyric, Thomas Gibson Duncan describes 'The Coventry Carol',

which is associated with a 'medieval mystery cycle', and described as a 'lullaby sung by

the women of Bethlehem when Herod's knights appear to slay the children'[613]. The carol

features the word *lullay* as a refrain:

> Lully, lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
>
>   Bye, bye, lully, lullay;
>
> Lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
>
>   Bye, bye, lully, lullay.[614]

This represents a fitting allusion for a Christmas scene in which the Byrne children are

---

609 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 138.

610 First published in *Inside Mr Enderby.* See Burgess, *Inside Mr Enderby*, p. 38.The original terza rima stanzas are changed into four main lines with a refrain in the *Byrne* version. Other variants are as follows. Stanza one: new line formed by 'Reduced to a common noun'; 'giant stomach' is changed to 'giant belly'; 'Lullay lullay' refrain is added as a fifth line. Stanza two: 'For I was anyone' is added as new line; 'Lullay lullay lullay' refrain is added as fifth line. Stanza three: 'The fish, the worm were chuckling to achieve' becomes 'The worm, the fish was chuckling to achieve.'; 'Lullay haha lullay' refrain is added as fifth line. Stanza four: 'Of the dove' is added as a new line; 'Lullay'is added as refrain on fifth line.

611 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 139.

612 Ibid., p. 140.

613 Thomas Gibson Duncan, ed., *A companion to the Middle English lyric* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2005), p. 169.

614 Torstein O. Kvamme, ed., *The Christmas Carolers' Book in Song and Story* (Miami: Belwin, 1985), p. 56.

threatened. The allusion is especially obscure, but rendered conspicuous by the word

'lullay', and the threatening Yuletide overtones. Maria's role in the scheme of things, as

Burgess's allusion demonstrates, was to produce the child Jesus Christ who, like

Servetus, would be sacrificed.

The unexplained inclusion of the five *Revolutionary Sonnets* which 'sum up all

our annals'[615], immediately before this, adds to the confusion. Like the 'Spinning Room'

poem and unlike the re-worked libretto of *The Time Machine*, these poems are not

adapted into *ottava rima*; Burgess wilfully makes the general 'structure [. . .]

collapse'[616]. These poems are different from the versions published in the 1966

Transatlantic Review[617]. The poems are changed subtly to suggest multiplicity and the

deferment of meaning. Aside from other variants in the first sonnet[618], 'But short division

only'[619] is changed to 'Meant only 2'[620], in a poetic image reminiscent of Empson's

second kind of ambiguity 'where two or more meanings are resolved into one'[621]. The

second sonnet features a modified line: 'Bodies were firm, their hair clean and their

feet'[622] which is changed to 'Their loving flesh was O so firm, their feet.'[623] Bloom

associates this kind of 'straining at the limits of expression'[624] as 'images of reduction'[625]

which 'show subjectivity yielding to a world of things'[626]. Again, the subtle change

suggests the theme of multiplicity; Burgess's expression seems to indicate that this has

---

615 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 140.
616 Anthony Burgess. *Byrne* draft fragments, p. 127.
617 Burgess, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', pp. 30-2.
618 Sonnet One, stanza one: 'let the timebomb' changed to 'bade the timebomb'; 'in his brain start to' changed to 'in his brain go'; 'But short division only. Then,' changed to 'Meant only 2. But,'; 'Black Monday' becomes 'black Monday'; ' "That act may mean an empire is at stake."' becomes '*His death may mean an empire is at stake.*'
619 Burgess, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', pp. 30-2.
620 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 140.
621 Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, p. 48.
622 Burgess, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', pp. 30-2.
623 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 141.
624 Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 146.
625 Ibid., p. 146.
626 Ibid., p. 146.

been said before, in a better way, elsewhere. Sonnets Three[627] and Four[628] have relatively

minor variants. Sonnet Five[629], though also containing variants, has a phrase, which – in

its new context in *Byrne* – creates a new meaning. The phrase '(Blood and ideas) meant

pipes'[630] becomes 'Blood and ideas meant pipes', with the brackets omitted. Earlier in the

novel, is a discussion of the martyrdom of Michael Servetus, who '[r]ejecting blood as

a red static pillar [. . .] [p]ursued its course – artery, vein capillary'[631]. Seen in light of

this, the lines seem to refer back to the earlier part of the story, once again

demonstrating Burgess's previous assertion that syntax makes its own ghostly sense[632].

Another ironic effect of repurposing these poems in *Byrne* is to undermine the status of

these texts in their previous forms; it becomes unclear which revision is meant to be the

final one. When viewed in the context of Burgess's entire career, then, each of these

poems itself is rendered ambiguous.

Burgess incorporates discussions of (literary) history that at once derive from

and allude to Eliot, itself contributing to the growing sense of multiplicity in the poem.

This can be seen in the Spenserian stanza:

Once did she hold the glorious East in. What

Had fleaed the lion's rump and pared his claws?

[. . .]

Decay had come early. What were the seven laws,

Time's ruin? Shylock loosed from his *borghetto*

---

627 Sonnet Three variants include: 'sewed' becomes 'wove'; 'anybody's pitch' becomes 'everybody's
   pitch'; 'urge to tame' becomes 'wish to tame'; 'cleft in an age of rest' becomes 'cleft rusty age in lock'.
628 Sonnet Four variants include: 'filmed by terror' becomes 'unglazed with terror'; 'Later, the 'For
   vomiting the sweet error' becomes 'Eat now, and vomit later the sweet error.'
629 Sonnet Five variants include: 'up straight' becomes 'in state'; 'but each shaft' becomes 'that each shaft';
   'column: classic craft' becomes 'column. Classic craft'; 'Jack, but Caruso' becomes 'Jack. Caruso';
   'nodding columns' becomes 'columns nodded'; 'For, after all that a rational machine' becomes 'It
   seemed then that a rational machine'; 'all men' becomes 'Jack's men'; 'Chipped logic, hence became his
   guillotine.' becomes 'Was patented by Dr Guillotine.'
630 Burgess, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets',, pp. 30-2.
631 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 121.
632 Burgess, 'Contrary Tugs', p. 151.

The plague. All else was for Canale Canaletto.[633]

In this stanza, Burgess echoes Eliot's poem 'Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar'[634] as an economical means to describe a scene set in Venice, the city described in the original poem. Moreover, Burgess also mentions Shylock, a character from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice.* Bradshaw finds Eliot's 'Burbank' poem itself is 'characterized by an extraordinary level'[635] of intertextuality, and 'is every bit as allusive'[636] as other poems by Eliot. A further phrase – 'something by Tom Eliot'[637] – during a later speech to fellow Latin-speakers, reinforces this by paraphrasing Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' in exploring the relationship of the living with the dead: 'We know [. . .] more than the dead,|But it's the dead we know [. . .]'[638]. The allusion, following Richards's logic, is a device for the compression of meaning[639]. Burgess's allusion to Eliot's intertextual collage poem, *The Waste Land* adds further intertextual irony by emphasising how Eliot's work itself is constructed of other texts. Amongst Brian's many West End productions is one described as 'a *heterogeneous* blend|Of Wagner, ragtime, raga, rage, dysphorious|Sex called *Wasteland*'[640]. Burgess's own 1978 setting of *The Waste Land*[641] shares Brian's *heterogenous* mixture of ragtime[642] and other styles; Phillips finds its 'eclectic assortment of compositional styles and techniques'[643] reflect the 'varied linguistic sources'[644] of Eliot's intertextual Modernist poem.

---

633 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 41.
634 Eliot, *The Complete Poems & Plays*, p. 40.
635 David Bradshaw, *A Concise Companion to Modernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 209.
636 Ibid., p. 209.
637 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 111.
638 Ibid., p. 111.
639 Richards, p. 274.
640 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 62. My emphasis.
641 Phillips, p. 392.
642 Ibid., p. 222.
643 Ibid.
644 Ibid.

Burgess's initial prose almost reached the *plagiarism* episode near the end of the story (127 pages in the prose draft; 145 pages in the verse novel). In a prose version, after writing the metanarrative instruction '"Give it up, Tomlinson," said I, Anthony Burgess. "You've done enough"'[645], he observes '[t]hings missing. *Absence* much more meaningful than presence. No real ending possible.'[646] Burgess switches to a loose draft of *ottava rima* to describe this ending:

> a wrinkled shrunken wreck.
>
> Ninety? A hundred? The voice was a reed
>
> Eroded, forced out of a ruined neck.
>
> "I'm he," he croaked. "You wretches have no need
>
> To prove a kinship. Here at my call or beck
>
> All that you seek to demonstrate indeed
>
> Is greed or curiosity. I see my features
>
> In just a few. The rest are nameless creatures.[647]

This stanza was retained with minor alterations in the final verse novel[648]. At the end of this section, having opted for *ottava rima*, Burgess writes '"the structure doesn't fit. Or rather there's too much. The time has come for structure to collapse."'[649]. Burgess clearly understood how his novel would end. His early draft describes 'Byrne brought in on a kind of bird scream signal by his four black thugs, on a kind of papal litter, unbelievably ancient'[650], as happens in the final version.

The meaningful *absence*, and the deliberate collapsing of structure, then, is a deliberate *ambivalence,* as ambiguous as its tetraphonic epigram. Its structure only

---

645 Burgess, *Byrne* draft fragments, p. 127.
646 Ibid., p. 127. My emphasis.
647 Ibid.
648 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 145.
649 *Byrne* draft fragments, p. 127.
650 Ibid.

collapses when Burgess inserts his earlier poems directly in the text. The ending of the *Byrne* poem is deliberately open-ended. The lyrical final stanza makes no immediate sense, and is notably separated from the other *ottava rima* stanzas, because it appears after an embedded poem which is not in that rhyme scheme:

> Spring then was needed – the green chirping token
>
> Of sacrifice. Those baby limbs would grow
>
> Into a Hillman's, scourged, finally broken.
>
> Let the logician and the Godman show
>
> The foolishness, but let the word be spoken.
>
> Tim embraced Tom, embarking for Heathrow.
>
> Smiling, Christmas-elated, somewhat sad too,
>
> Blessing the filthy world. Somebody had to.[651]

Burgess's unfinished initial hand-written draft of this stanza seems to position *himself* as the *wordman* in possession of a *foolish muse*. It also seems to emphasise Tim and Tom's status as twins (therefore with dialogic potential):

> Spring then was needed. The green chirpy token
>
> Of sacrifice. Those badly[?] twins[?] cohort[?] grow
>
> Into a Hillman's, scourged, finally broken,
>
> Let the logician of the wordman show
>
> This foolish muse --------   spoken
>
> Tim embraced Tom, embarking for Heathrow
>
> Christmas – elated[652]

---

651 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 150.

652 Anthony Burgess. *Byrne* Holograph MS (Texas: HRC, box 5, fol. 5, n.d.), diary page headed 26 - 28 December 1991, p. 181. This is written in a different ink to the stanzas on preceding pages, reinforcing its sense of isolation in comparison to other stanzas.

Burgess's own presence is excised from the final draft, and the logician is eventually separated from the wordman and becomes the 'Godman'[653]. The meaning in the final stanza is therefore less obvious, and no longer refers to Burgess's own muse. Completely in control of the poetic proceedings, Burgess encourages (but does not instruct) the reader to enter into dialogue with the text in order to try and resolve it, and makes changes to increase ambiguity. Barthes, in accordance with this, recognises the capacity of an intertextual work to be organised by its readers, finding

> there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader [. . .] The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination.[654]

This is why Burgess prefers absence: as Juvan puts it – the reader constructs 'the semantic structure from the text's semiotic dispositions by using inference'[655], and that inference process is through the agency of other texts. Here, the theoretical language of Juvan and Barthes complicatedly re-states a simple fact that writers such as Byron and Ariosto – via their metapoetic commentaries – have long since established and made poetic use of: that there is a participant reader implicit in very act of the writing of the poem.

Burgess's decision that, in the end, absence is more meaningful than presence also recalls and comes after the 'Marxist historicism'[656] of Pierre Macherey, whose theories were later developed to investigate 'a manifestation of the literary text's historicity [. . .] by situating it in the literary system.'[657] Macherey's account of the

---

653 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 150.
654 Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p. 148.
655 Juvan, p. 140.
656 Ibid., p. 120.
657 Ibid.

'complex materiality of the literary text'[658] in *A Theory of Literary Production* (1978)

draws upon a 'Freudian theory of the unconscious'[659] in order 'to identify those gaps and

silences, contradictions and absences'[660] which are related to the repressed presence of

[. . .] ideological materials'[661]. Macherey's theory of absence, though from a Marxist

perspective, is still about how meaning is created intertextually through reading and

writing. His description of the *book* (as a general concept) serves well to describe the

absences Burgess weaves into the end of *Byrne*: 'The book is furrowed by the allusive

presence of those other books against which it is elaborated; it circles about the absence

of that which it cannot say'.[662] In the case of *Byrne*, the process is more like *that which*

it wishes not to say so that the reader can supply the absent meanings. It is accordingly

difficult to summarise the meaning of the ending, but it is related to sacrifice and

creativity; there is a sense of death and infertility. Tom's possible death from lung

disease is signalled when he forces 'a gob|Of pulmonary blood'[663] onto his father's 'white

cerement'[664]. Tomlinson, likewise is 'dying'[665]. He tells his readers: 'I cough blood too,

thin, thick or lightly, darkly.|Byrne is the killer'[666]. That is to say, the strain of narrating

the poem has resulted in a terminal disease. The subject who has led to this disease,

Michael Byrne, tells his children: 'We all die, my sons, my daughters'[667], while pointing

out his family's reputation for 'fixing sudden death throes', such as the one Tomlinson is

suffering. Tom Byrne signals his eschewing of reproduction by returning to the

priesthood (and therefore celibacy) by going 'off|To do his Midnight mass'[668]. Brian

---

658 Geoffrey Wall, 'Translator's Preface' in Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. by
    Geoffrey Wall. London, Henley and Boston: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1978), pp. vii – ix, (p. viii).
659 Wall in Macherey, p. viii.
660 Ibid.
661 Ibid.
662 Macherey, p. 80.
663 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 146.
664 Ibid.
665 Ibid., p. 147.
666 Ibid.
667 Ibid.
668 Ibid., p. 148.

Byrne is unlikely to produce any Byrne issues, since he is established as homosexual with his 'catamites and triple bed'[669]. His stepsister, Dorothy Byrne, remains an unproductive spinster: her father draws attention to her ugliness in advance, earning violent reaction by asking: 'Are you a witch? Hm, a moustache, a beard.'[670] There is also a sense of rebirth in the last stanza's recondite lines: 'Spring then was needed – the green chirping token|Of sacrifice. Those baby limbs would grow.'[671] The individual stories and themes, like the poem itself, are inconclusive and unresolved by the time the poem finishes. The ending of *Byrne* is complicatedly allusive, either by hermetically referring to narrative structures elsewhere in the novel (seen in the tetraphone example I've given), or via the layering of intertextual material, such as the inclusion of earlier poems, along with the subtle changes Burgess made in order to help them suit the context of the later *master* poem. To quote Macherey, 'When we explain the work, instead of ascending to a hidden centre which is the source'[672] of its meaning, 'we perceive its actual decentred-ness.'[673]

In *Byrne*, then, Burgess creates a de-centred text which consciously defers its meaning to other texts, either from literary tradition, or from polyphonic structures that suggest the poem's meaning is provisional and organised by the reader. As Macherey says,

> Its form, then, is complex; the line of its discourse is thickened by reminiscences, alterations, revivals and absences; and likewise the object of this discourse is multiple, a thousand separate, hostile and discontinuous realities.[674]

---

669 Ibid., p. 72.
670 Ibid., p. 146.
671 Ibid., p. 146.
672 Macherey, p. 79.
673 Ibid.
674 Ibid., p. 99.

Byrne refers to the process of its own production of meaning through the use of intertextual techniques, and makes use of a traditional form that conveniently allows for this to happen in a contemporary context. The poem's action takes place cross-border, not just across Europe and Africa, but across the reader, the writer, and many texts. Hutcheon would no doubt view this as an appropriate metaphor for the Postmodern text, whose 'language of margins and borders marks a position of paradox: both inside and outside.'[675] The paradox of *Byrne* is that, to bring attention to the investigation of poetic form, Burgess chose a difficult form to create what may be his most unified poetic text; one which is paradoxically polyphonic. Burgess's late career translations, his intertextual dialogues, and his long poetic arguments are all written with a self-consciously Modernist alignment, but using techniques that might be characterised as Postmodernist. The late career is ultimately a growing dialogue between Burgess, his predecessors, their texts, and the poetic forms selected to contain these debates. Burgess extends his intertextual poetic technique in *Byrne* by acknowledging that other important text, the reader.

Chapter Four has shown how Burgess increasingly explores the limitations of intertextual form, through more substantial poetic texts in the 1980s and 1990s. These texts use strict rhyme schemes to hold a multiplicity of intertexts in suspension and synthesis. Burgess's lingering Modernism in the early 1980s and 1990s is found to extend Mellors's observations concerning the late Modernism of poets such as Bunting and Hill. Whilst later critics point out their Modernism remains consistent, Burgess is found, initially in translations, but then through longer poetic exercises, at once interrogating and meta-poetically dramatising the limitations of poetic form. His translations are shown to be greatly influenced by Richard Wilbur, another possible *late Modernist* who – like Burgess – is also influenced by Eliot, Pound, and Auden's

---

675 Hutcheon, p. 66.

Modernist re-imagining of tradition. Wilbur is seen as a contemporary influence of

Burgess, with Burgess praising his formalist translations. Burgess's contemporary critics

are found to detect this, and their comments regarding the closeness of his rendering

contribute much to the concept of parody and pastiche I have been commenting on

since Chapter One. Burgess learns from Wilbur, developing beyond the self-consciously

Eliot-inspired translation, *Cyrano de Bergerac.* In *Miser! Miser!* and *Chatsky*, there is a

case for close pastiche of Wilbur's translations that is comparable with *The Eve of St.*

Venus seen in the previous chapter. However, these texts all meta-poetically comment

on how meaning is created through the conflict of texts, and so are arguably

Postmodern in technique. Burgess's approach to profitable intertextual mistranslation is

found to continue the Auden and Pound-influenced Modernist approach method first

detected in Chapter Three. Burgess continues as a strict formalist in the Pope parody *An*

Essay on Censorship, which fails by its own standards. Here, Burgess pushes the form

to the very limit in exploring the capacity of that form. As such, the work remains

ambiguous in its status, a possible indicator of a Postmodern work. Burgess also

explores the limitation of poetic form in his collaboration and poetic dialogue with

Hopkins, *St. Winefred's Well*, which questions the validity and status of the Modernist

poetic material it completes. Burgess is found to construct an internal dialogue with

Hopkins's poems and characters, so as to bring them into question, which is a technique

which Hutcheon – a contemporaneous critic – associates with Postmodernism. Burgess

goes on to question the nature of poetic meaning in his dramatic dialogue, *The End of*

Things, eventually deciding it is relative and unfixed. This, once again, shows a

familiarity with contemporary debates concerning Postmodernity and ontology.

However, the poem central to the dialogue uses Modernist language that seems to

allude to Empson, to make its Postmodernist/post-structuralist point concerning the

indeterminacy of meaning in language, but couched in a New Critical debate associated

with Modernism. Burgess's final extended poetic text, *Byrne,* is presented as an

extended pastiche of Byron and Ariosto which makes convenient use of an ancient

poetic convention which allows for metapoetic commentary. However, aware of Eco

and other contemporary debates, Burgess pushes this strict form to straining point, by

weaving in layers of texts which – in the process of writing – are worked upon to

become deliberately indeterminate and open-ended, including the redrafting and

repurposing of his own earlier poetic material. However, Burgess is continually in

control of the ancient form, and makes full use of its long-established propensity to

assemble disparate material. Lingering late Modernism has thus been detected in the

continued faith in form even if Burgess's explorations of those form's limits can be

described as Postmodernist. This faith in form, by Burgess's standards, is associated

with Modernism, whereas the exploration of form through the form itself has been

associated with Postmodernism, as other critics have found. This demonstrates, as I

pointed out in Chapter One, that Burgess found Modernism and Postmodernism were

inter-related, and not mutually exclusive terms.

CONCLUSION: *THE THIRTIES ARE HIS TRUE HOME*

My thesis has shown an evolution in Burgess's intertextual poetry, which incorporates techniques that can be described as Modernist, late Modernist, and Postmodernist. I have identified a shift from narrow Eliot-influenced literary intertextualities associated with Modernist tradition, to more Postmodern modes of ironic intertextuality that determinedly defer meaning between texts and explore the multiplicity of meanings created between texts. In the first chapter I explain how Burgess differentiated between the *storehouse* of reading and the *marketplace* in which a text is to be read through the agency of other texts. I establish in detail in Chapter Two that Burgess's intertextual *storehouse* was built in the 1930s, and formed the basis for serious pastiches[1] that were part of his poetic development, in a process entirely comparable with the Modernist imitations undertaken by Auden and his contemporaries. An advanced early reader, Burgess's preference was for a revisionary and intertextual poetry through which he was able to connect to literary tradition (and the techniques for incorporating literary tradition), most especially through the Modernist models provided by Eliot. He benefited from reading the formalist criticism of Leavis, Richards, Empson, and Eliot, who helped him understand and practice intertextual Modernist readings early on in his career. Generally speaking, Burgess always wishes his readers to make their *marketplace* readings of his texts in relation to a belated Modernism. Eliot, Pound, Empson, Auden and Hopkins are the primary Modernist poets he responds to. Importantly, I have shown Burgess parodies, emulates, alludes to, or cites, these poets' texts in every decade that this study addresses. In Chapter Three, I point out how, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s this insistence on the 1930s-oriented group of poetic influences becomes increasingly outmoded, and when

---

1   Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 160.

Burgess attempts to write in a more contemporary style it is ironic. Moreover, Burgess combines his belated Modernist style with an exploration of belatedness itself, in keeping with the literary fashions of the Movement, and anticipating the self-consciously ironic modes of the 1980s and 1990s. In Chapter Four, accordingly, I point out that self-consciously ironic intertextual modes evolve in Burgess's poetic works into explorations of the limitation of intertextual poetic form. In Burgess's mind, this is associated with Postmodernism, a word he distrusts and reads mainly in relation to Modernism. These later texts are increasingly focused on the reader as a final organising text. Burgess opts for traditional poetic forms which conveniently allow metapoetic commentary; this commentary becomes increasingly foregrounded in Postmodern contexts. At the same time, Burgess's translations of verse dramas and sonnets from other traditions shift from being influenced by Auden and Pound, then his contemporary Richard Wilbur, who – in turn – was also influenced by Auden and Pound. Burgess, though, first responds to Auden (then also a contemporary poet) in the early 1940s via imitation, whereas Auden responded to Hopkins via imitation. Burgess's later long poetic texts (including translation) dramatise, and are constructed out of, the conflict between texts. His formalist poems which combine strong rhyme often in long poems are influenced by Pound, Eliot, Empson, Auden, then Wilbur. 1989 becomes something of a turning point, with the start of *Byrne*, and a creeping reappraisal of the impact and value of Modernist literary tradition. Burgess ends his career using Postmodern techniques, but still consistently responding to Modernist literary tradition, using long formalist poetry.

My thesis has consistently found that Burgess uses intertextual techniques; in anticipation of future debates, it is helpful to explore what assumptions or demands these techniques make of the reader, since the reader – as I point out in Chapter Four –

is increasingly one of the texts used in Burgess's poetry, most especially near the end of his career. I have established at length how Burgess developed his Modernist intertextualities mainly through Eliot. In Chapter One, I note how Juvan finds Eliot's brand of intertextuality 'elitist'[2], because it requires the reader to recognise the text. Likewise, the Marxist critic Raymond Williams argues that

> Eliot developed what can now be seen as an Ancient-and-Modern position, in which unceasing literary experiment moved towards a conscious elite, and in which an emphasis on tradition [. . .] was offered as in effect subversive of an intolerable because shallow and self-deceiving [. . .] social order.[3]

Fernald makes the same point, describing those who follow the Eliot-influenced approach to tradition as 'anxious curators'[4] working 'to recover and preserve traces of the past that were being lost in the rapid drive to modernization'[5]. It is a narrow and conservative form of Modernism. I pointed out in Chapter One that Burgess recognised this, finding Eliot (and Pound) produced essentially conservative works. However, as I then showed in Chapter Three, Eliot's poetry also introduced Burgess to the wide range of texts which he himself then drew upon. Burgess also highlights how Eliot's Modernist intertextual poetry showed him how texts of the literary past and present clash to create a poetic effect. Like Eliot, Burgess combines texts from his storehouse. *The Waste Land*, as I pointed out in Chapter Three, is an important focus by which Burgess came to understand this kind of Modernist tradition. Burgess views the poem (and its influential approach to tradition) as an important interface with European tradition. Eysteinsson and Liska emphasize the continuing relevance of this model of

---

2   Juvan, p. 146.
3   Williams, p. 61.
4   Fernald, p. 168.
5   Ibid., p. 161.

Modernism, arguing

> There is much in the whole enterprise of recent critical activity [concerning Modernism]
> indicating that modernism is indeed an extremely important gateway between history and the
> present. The space opened up by this inquiry encourages us to review the aesthetics and cultural
> poetics of literary modernism in similarly broad terms, observing, precisely, the large human
> connections and disruptions that characterize the modernist contribution and objection to
> modernity.[6]

The examples of literary Modernist intertextualities which I have examined through this
thesis are rooted in precisely this relationship between past and present. The
intertextualities, and the revisionist strategies for re-imagining and re-contextualising
them (which I have presented especially in Chapters Two and Three) are the
connections and disruptions that Eysteinsson and Liska mention. In this model,
literature talks to literature, a point compatible with Barthes's assertions that texts are
read through texts, and Eco's suggestion that books talk about other books (see Chapter
Four). Burgess equates faith in form with Modernism (in Chapter One); the larger form
of literary tradition is one he extensively makes use of to develop his own voice in light
of strong precursors.

Commenting on Geoffrey Hill, Burgess also sums up his own position when he
finds 'a perhaps excessive multiplicity of citation and allusion serves as a sequined
motley which, seeming to hide his nakedness, exposes it all the more.'[7] In *The End of
Things*, Burgess's dramatic dialogues about split-selves refer to other texts to highlight
just how relative the derivation of meaning is as a consequence of these assembled
intertexts; it explores the *nakedness* at the centre of those texts. As Richard Mathews

---

6   Eysteinsson and Liska, p. 1.
7   Anthony Burgess. 'The Bond of Words', *Times Literary Supplement*, 5 April 1984, p. 487.

puts it, Burgess's works exist in

> a universe lacking certainty, exactitude, precision; a universe not of machines and numbers (the
>
> clock) but of words; a literary universe, where words constantly mean more than one thing
>
> [. . .]. Transcendence is achieved through giving up the search for exact significance and finality,
>
> and aesthetically embracing the richness of meaning language can convey and communicate.[8]

The exploitation of semiotic ambiguity, and the layering of literary texts are not just convenient devices for Burgess; they are the foundations of his poetics. Empson first showed Burgess how conflicts between texts can create poetic meaning, just as Eliot showed how literary texts form new meanings through allusion and citation. The propensity for multiplicity reaches a climax in *Byrne*, which itself is a poem about multiplicity.

Intertextual poetry can have its disadvantages for Burgess, who doesn't adequately find his poetic voice in *The Eve of St. Venus* and *St. Winefred's Well* because of the force of strong influences. There is too much Eliot in the former, and too much Hopkins in the latter. Moreover, these works are essentially undramatic: his actors in the 1950s struggled with his unfashionably *difficult* vocabulary in *The Eve of St. Venus*, and in the 1980s he completed a play by Hopkins which was more about religious inscape than dramatic outcomes; in both cases, the real drama was between Burgess and his precursors. Detractors in the 1990s complained, conversely, that Burgess's voice was too loud in his poetic translation of Griboyedov, in which another critic ironically detected too much Wilbur. There is an undeniable ambiguity about Burgess's intertextual poetic voice, which is on occasion ventriloqual. In *The Eve of St. Venus*, Burgess aptly represents this through Sir Benjamin, who revises classical Latin in an

---

8   Mathews, p. 60.

English translation:

Tomorrow

Shall be love for the loveless, and for the lover love.

The luckless punter shall have unbelievable luck,

[. . .]

[. . .]   The golf course,

The billiard table and the peevish piano

Shall play into the player's hands. And clocks

Shall, in the headlong minute before closing time,

Not swoop to the kill but hover endlessly

Like a benevolent hawk. Amen.[9]

When this same song is sung in the published prose version (1964), it is appropriately 'ventriloquised'[10] by the character who sings it. The voices and the poets are intermingled and signification occurs through the complex allusions to Robert Burton[11], Eliot[12], the *Pervigilium Veneris*[13] and Burgess himself, who combines the golf club and the country pub from the present with the classical text of the past. It is appropriate, then, that Burgess's most puzzling, complex, and distinctive poem is *Byrne,* which demonstrates what Farkas calls the 'urge to proliferate form as well as meaning'[14]. In this, Burgess's own voice is sublimated through a series of fictional characters whose dialogues expose and explore the limitations of the intertextual poetic form itself, combining a series of texts and creating a multiplicity of competing meanings in the process. Empson, established in Chapter Two as a major critical influence for Burgess,

---

9 Burgess, *The Eve of St. Venus: The Pursuit of Adonis*, p. 86.
10 Ibid*.,* pp. 76-8.
11 Burton, p. 47.
12 See Chapter Three.
13 Burgess, *The Eve of St Venus,* p. vii.
14 Farkas, p. 34.

likewise explores how poetic meaning is created from competing significations in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. Conversely, in *An Essay on Censorship*, Burgess attempts to explore combinations of texts using just one unopposed voice. The work fails as a poem by its own standards but may be successful as an essay; this poem's ambiguities will no doubt prove to be a source of future debate.

It is useful, therefore, to attempt some general conclusions concerning the relationship between intertextuality, ambiguity, and poetry which the present study has shown runs through Burgess's career. Writing about Burgess's prolific output as a novelist, musician, playwright, journalist, critic, poet and scriptwriter, Biswell rightly asks 'Where *does* the centre lie?'[15]. It is a measure of Burgess's 'prodigiously fertile mind'[16] that the same question can be asked of his poetry alone. Because his poetry so often features the voices of other poets, it is difficult to conclude with some certainty exactly what its status is other than *ambivalent*. As I note in Chapter Four, this is especially true of *An Essay on Censorship.* Critics such as David Daiches, Clive James, Laurette Véza, and Sylvère Monod all highlight how Burgess's style verges on parody. Writing about the Enderby poems, Véza takes this to the extreme, finding 'Le poeme est ainsi une énorme farce, parade de parodie.'[17] ['The poetry is a huge farce, a parade of parody'.] I would not dismiss Burgess's poetry as farcical parody. The intertextual techniques are subtler than *conventional* parody. The word 'parody', I have consistently shown, is used by Burgess himself (regarding *The Eve of St. Venus*, erroneously) as much as critics like Véza, Biswell, and Monod to describe imitation that is not ostensibly comical, when the word 'pastiche' would be more appropriate. To be clear, I have been keen all through this study to position the majority of Burgess's *pastiches* as

---

15 Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, p. 391.
16 Jackson in Burgess, p. xvii.
17 Véza, p. 33.

'seriously intended'[18], written to master form and foreground the relationship between past and present. Juvan highlights three categories of 'intertextual referencing': 'transposition, imitation, or description'[19], which he relates to pastiche and parody. Burgess's pastiches (or, his serious *parodies*) are a means of transposition, of *adding to* the forms and types of language used by his Modernist precursors. Hence, in Chapters Two and Three, I have argued that Bloom's notion of an ephebe writing in conflict with his precursor is applicable to Burgess; he imitates to find a poetic voice, and not always successfully. These imitations are as wide-ranging as Eliot, Empson, Pope, Auden, and Hopkins. However, his first published poem was a pastiche of Hopkins, and *Byrne* – the last poem he intended for publication – goes to great lengths to render his earlier poems ironic by re-using them. Whilst some poems are undisguised travesties (the Redvers Glass poem, or the Gravesian poem by Rawcliffe), others – like 'The Music of the Spheres' or the *Revolutionary Sonnets* are too subtle to be shrugged off as mere derivative work, or poems which simply serve the structures of a larger prose narrative. However, Burgess himself described *The Eve of St. Venus* as parodic, but – as I pointed out in Chapter Three – there is also the sense that this was the inevitable result of a particularly close reading of Eliot.

This study has introduced an approach to Burgess's poetry which, it is hoped, will stimulate future debates. Burgess's long poetry in particular, by dint of its denseness and range of content, should prove particularly fruitful. I believe these poetic texts are particularly important: *The Eve of St. Venus*; 'Adderbury'; the Redvers Glass poem; the 'Augustine and Pelagius' poem from *The Clockwork Testament*; poems from *Napoleon Symphony*; *Moses*; *An Essay on Censorship*; *St. Winefred's Well*; *Chatsky*; and, *Byrne*. All of these works are inextricably wrapped up in the language and forms of

---

18 Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, p. 160.
19 Juvan, p. 168.

previous poets, and sometimes – as in *St. Winefred's Well* – the relationship between poets is difficult to untangle. If they are parodies, they are intended seriously, and Burgess clearly devoted significant resources to their production.

Hutcheon, in keeping with this approach, 'suggests a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance allows ironic signalling of difference at the very heart of similarity'[20]. Véza, as I explained in Chapter One, helpfully equates parody with cultural memory; Haffen balances this by equating cultural memory with Modernism, and then Postmodernism.

However, there is also ambivalence that arises from the subtle questioning of precursors' literary conventions via meta-poetic commentaries that can be detected within the poems, especially the longer ones. These arguably begin in the 1960s with parodies of the Movement (in the central poem of *One Hand Clapping*), and in parodies of Georgian styles (in the Rawcliffe poem that appears in *Inside Mr Enderby*). Burgess's 1974 parody of Auden's *New Year Letter* is an ambiguous work seemingly serious in its intertextual intent, but presented with a comic illustration. The Augustine and Pelagius poem from *The Clockwork Testament* is likewise ambiguous; it is a long and complex work and so would have required significant creative energies. However, it is presented in a novel which casts doubt on its poetic purpose. Likewise, *An Essay on Censorship* stretches Pope-inspired couplets to the point of failure whilst also pointing out its own literary shortcomings. Burgess's 1989 collaboration with Hopkins, *St. Winefred's* Well, passes comment on the precursors' religious intent, whilst mimicking it sometimes to the point of being indistinguishable. The ironically de-centred intertextual works, *The End of Things and Byrne* are all, meanwhile, laced with Postmodern sensibility, even if the content is rooted in the narrow brand of Modernist literary tradition that is associated with Eliot. *Byrne* was drafted to deliberately confuse the reader through the

---

20 Hutcheon, p. 26.

bringing together of intertextual material in a seemingly well-ordered parody of Byron. Whereas pastiche serves a poetic-developmental purpose, then, parody seems to be related to exploring the capacity of form. The later, more sophisticated poetic texts are structured to present this meta-poetic process happening on the radio, page or stage. By Burgess's own standards, this testing of form is Postmodern.

I have established at length how in a critical essay Burgess saw *The Waste Land's* Modernist juxtaposing [21] of the past and present as a prototype for his own later intertextual poems. Burgess's own dialogues with the past and their ambivalent statuses are – for Kristeva – inevitable in the intertextual text. Kristeva aptly sums this up regarding poetry, when she finds '[d]ialogue and ambivalence lead me to conclude that, within the interior space of the text as well as within the space of *texts*, poetic language is a "double".'[22] The relationship between Modernism, Postmodernism, and intertexuality has been presented all through this thesis as depending on the nature of the later text's dialogue with the pre-text. (In Modernist terms) Burgess's narrow kind of Modernism re-imagines literary tradition, and re-engages with it to renew our understanding of the impact of the past on the present. Burgess's *storehouse* of reading relies on, and comes from, this. The subtle difference in the Postmodern approach, as Burgess's contemporary, Eco, points out, relies on an *ironic* dialogue with the past. That is to say, where the pre-text is alluded to or cited, it questions the viability of the form in its later use, and this has an impact on our understanding of how a narrative itself is structured. Hutcheon, writing around the same time as Burgess's more Postmodern texts argues that this is related to a more general, ontological enquiry. Hence, in *Byrne,* Burgess combines intertexts to ironically defer meaning contained in a strict form whilst also providing a subtle narrative concerning death and renewal. In Burgess's later

---

21 Burgess, 'The Waste Land', p. 6.
22 Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', p. 69.

poetry, formalist explorations of narrative combine with ontological inquiry. When this happens, it is Postmodern. This is especially is true in *The End of Things*, which uses a Modernist-style Empsonian sonnet to show how meaning itself is unfixed and subjective. The characters are approaching the end of their lives, and the fundamentals of language are at stake. Nothing is resolved, and language remains – after Empson – ambiguous. In 1989, Burgess signals a change of opinion regarding Joyce's Modernist language (and by extension, possibly his general assumptions regarding Modernism itself) in a letter to Peter de Sautoy. In the same year, he questions the religiosity and Modernist innovations of his hitherto unchallenged *father*, Hopkins. As Juvan puts it:

> Literary critics, translators, literary historians, and others create metatexts, when they interpret, comment on, cite, allude to, or parody other literary works. Such techniques are important because they process primary texts and manipulate their position in the cultural system, thus regulating their subsequent reception to a certain degree.[23]

Burgess's poems (especially the later ones) are metatexts, which pass comment on previous texts. Poetry is an appropriate form because Burgess, as a formalist, understands that poetry responds to other poetry. When his poems are identifiably Modernist – such as *The Eve of St. Venus* – they show absolute faith in the forms of the precursors' poems, an indicator of Modernism by his standards. However, in later texts such as *Byrne*, Burgess is influenced by Postmodernist debates – especially Eco – when he begins to highlight the limitations of form and language in producing anything other than relative meanings. Intertextuality, at this point, becomes a place of ironic deferment. Again, for Juvan:

> The chief feature of postmodernist poetics is a self-reflective bind between intertextuality

---

23 Juvan, p. 73.

(parody, pastiche, citation, imitation, etc.) and metafiction; this joining deconstructs the
ontological unity of the world and relativizes epistemological access to reality.[24]

Poetry, responding mainly to other poetry, is indeed self-reflective for Burgess.

Throughout this thesis, I have presented Burgess as led by poetic form, often
writing about poetic form and meaning in the process. Drawing conclusions concerning
formalism and intertextuality is therefore helpful. As I point out in Chapter One, Farkas
also positions Burgess as a formalist, specifically with regard to his Eliot-influenced
approach to literary tradition. In Chapter Two, I outlined how Burgess developed his
formalism after reading Leavis via Knights, as much as Eliot and Empson. In Chapter
Three, that formalism is shown as increasingly influenced by Eliot and – in keeping
with contemporary fashions – Empson. Juvan certainly equates Eliot's Modernist
intertextuality with formalism, and he claims that 'Eliot was the first to introduce the
thought that every new work enters the system of literary tradition where it fashions its
semantic and aesthetic identity.'[25] Burgess, in his poetry and writings on poetry, seeks to
be aligned with this same system of literary tradition.

In Chapter Four, I explained how Burgess praises the formalism of Wilbur, who
described himself as a formalist. Burgess's poetry's 'semantic and aesthetic identity'[26] is
bound up with those of Hopkins, Empson, and Auden. Burgess's later poetic dialogue
with Wilbur is not a break with this, but a convenient exploration of contemporary
formalism in conjunction with a strong historical awareness of Modernist tradition. So
influential is Eliot's tradition-oriented formalist view of poetry, that Juvan's description
of his purpose in writing is equally applicable for Burgess: 'during writing he
consciously compares himself with previous poetry and situates himself in a system of

---

24 Ibid., p. 84.
25 Ibid., p. 59.
26 Ibid.

tradition, and modifies its image by reshaping and rethinking the inherited poetic

subject-matter and patterns.'[27]

In Chapter Two, I explained how Eliot's Modernist poems, in combination with

Richards's commentaries on them, helped the poets of the 1930s to find what Hynes

calls a form for unbelief[28]. I identified the strict forms used by Empson as especially

influential. Richards points out that these forms, and the dense subject matter they deal

with, are Modernist techniques for coping with chaos[29], most especially that arising

from holding multiple texts and multiple meanings *between texts* in suspension. As I

have pointed out at length, Burgess equates strict form with Modernist faith. I believe,

although he stretches it and interrogates it, he never truly loses faith in form. When

drafting the prose version of *Byrne*, his decision to let structure collapse[30] is still a

controlled decision, and – more than signalling a radically loose form – leads to the

adoption of the incredibly strict Medieval form, *ottava rima*. However, the increasingly

self-reflexive nature of the post-1989 texts in their exploration of form and meaning is

certainly compatible with descriptions of Postmodernist writing.

In terms of time, and in terms of practise, Burgess writes *after* Modernism. Just

as Mellors observes with regard to Bunting, Prynne, or Hill[31], Burgess's poetry between

the 1930s and his death continues to combine *difficulty*, the layering of texts from other

traditions, recondite allusion, and – importantly – form. In this respect, in keeping with

Mellors's recent distinctions[32], Burgess is a late Modernist as much as a Modernist and a

Postmodernist. The addition of 'late Modernist' adds to Belastegui, Haffen, and Farkas's

arguments concerning Burgess's ambivalence. Furthermore, I have presented detailed

evidence to show the contemporary critical debates Burgess engages in; this further

---

27 Juvan, p. 59.
28 Hynes, p. 163.
29 Ibid.
30 Burgess, *Byrne* draft fragments, p. 127.
31 Mellors, pp. 19-24.
32 Ibid., p. 19.

extends these three critics' work. Moreover, in Chapter Three especially, I have argued that Burgess is a *belated* Modernist, specifically meaning one who writes relatively soon after Modernist innovators established their own impacts in redefining recent literary tradition, and one who is concerned with his own *belated* position. Rather than Eliot's *great dead*, Burgess's influences are the *great living*, and Burgess is seen as partially unable to find his poetic voice in face of them. In Chapter Four, I show that this difficulty continued as late as *Chatsky* (1993), which was so influenced by Wilbur as to lead other critics to surmise Burgess had turned his translation of Griboyedov into one of Wilbur's translations of Moliére. Burgess is established in Chapter One as understanding Postmodernism only in relation to Modernism. His position as a poet with transitional credentials suggests Modernism and Postmodernism are not *antithetical* (as Mellors suggests[33]) but 'a set of a mutually dependent concepts'[34], as Whitworth argues. For a determinedly prolific artist, this is appropriate: seeing him as at once a Modernist, late Modernist, belated Modernist, and Postmodernist compliments his position as a poetic, musician, novelist, linguist, and journalist. Like MacNeice, he was in thrall of *variousness*.

Burgess's poetry remains difficult to access in any unified manner. In preparation for the present study, I have brought together material from archives in the UK, Canada, and the US. By using intertextuality itself as the general approach, I have been able to create a structure that tackles not only the multiplicity of texts, but also the related complex multiplicity of texts which they in turn cite or allude to; my structure has also helped me address *why* Burgess opts for this intertextual style in the first place, as well as providing commentaries on its poetic effects. The poetry's current general unavailability remains a problem for future scholars wishing to study Burgess's poetry

---

33 Ibid., p. 23.
34 Whitworth, p. 3.

in any comprehensive fashion. An edition of *The Collected Poetry of Anthony Burgess* remains a necessary follow-on task.

Despite the range of texts surveyed in this study, further work would be enriching. For example, *Byrne* deserves what might amount to its very own literary biography. There is a substantial amount of draft material that would benefit from extended study. The poem was adapted from earlier prose material, which was then worked up into handwritten *ottava rima*. The handwritten verses were, in turn, typewritten, with additional changes made in Burgess's hand. Omissions, deletions, and changes show how poetic vocabulary builds through revision, and the decision to remove words shows – as I pointed out in Chapter Four – a preference for sophisticated inference over plain diction. It also reveals much about how Burgess carefully drafted and re-drafted his poems at syllable, word, and sentence-level. An exploration of more examples of this would be worthwhile in accounting for Burgess's poetic decisions, such as in this other example which takes place in the guest bedroom of the feminist novelist Rayne Waters:

[Version One]

Tim found his bedroom somewhat monkish-cellish,

Rug on the floor but nothing on the walls.

An   embellish

The ceiling with roses and cherubim.

The sheets were threadbare, no new thing for him.

He got in naked, put the light out, waited.

[Version Two]

The bedroom she allotted now to Tim

> Was bare, austere, its frame[?] was monkish-cellish
>
> The ceiling though had fading cherubims,
>
> A noseless goddess. This failed to embellish
>
> The chamber with sensual relish.
>
> He in threadbare sheets, waiting, ~~awake~~
>
> ~~Somehow envisaging that ---- hellish~~
>
> ~~creative force~~[35]

In the final version, the overt 'hellish|creative force' becomes the subtler 'research' in the final lines:

> The bedroom that she opened for him
>
> Was chill, austere, its odour monkish-cellish.
>
> The ceiling though had flaking cherubim,
>
> A noseless Venus. These failed to embellish
>
> The narrow bed with any sensual relish.
>
> He lay in threadbare sheets, untouched by fear
>
> Of what might come. (Tom's snore, next door, was hellish).
>
> He knew she might pursue some research in here.
>
> Tim had confessed some writers in his long career.[36]

These three examples show how Burgess began his drafts by embracing the form itself. He began this draft by lining up often comical rhymes ('monkish-cellish', 'embellish', 'hellish', relish') and then made sure the most predictable ones were removed; the effect is to maintain an element of surprise and fun through the stretching of meaning to accommodate rhyme. His writing process, then, comes from continually thinking of the effect on the reader, whilst being led by form. Moreover, Burgess abandons 'somehow

---

35 Burgess, *Byrne* holograph MS, on page 11th February – 13th February 1991, pp. 21-23.
36 Burgess, *Byrne*, p. 93.

envisaging', which suggests the beginning of an unambiguous plain statement. Instead,

he replaces it with the more open-ended, but more economical phrase, 'what might

come', which contributes ambiguity as well as a faster pace in the syllables. There are

many more examples of this that would benefit from extended study. In the same vein, I

also pointed out in Chapter Four that, in *Byrne*, Burgess makes reference to his own

libretto, based on H. G. Wells's *Time Machine.* There is another, earlier text, which

Burgess re-uses in *Byrne*. This is an unpublished and unfinished prose text about the

martyr Servetus, who features in the later sections of *Byrne.* This short story is collected

in a folder alongside draft fragments for *A Dead Man in Deptford*, and begins

> MICHAEL SERVETUS, or Michel Servet as they called him here when they did not call him
> filthy Spanish heresiarch, tried to make a universe out of his cell. On each wall he bade shine
> three signs of the Zodiac, so that on his feeble circular patrol he traversed the brilliant heavens
> exacted rather than reduced by their being called to manmade order. The cell was perfectly square
> and perfectly clean, for this was Geneva: dirt was the secular equivalent of sin. Or perhaps, in
> a state where God reigned as Caesar, the two were inseparable.[37]

This unpublished prose fragment has not been studied before, and is of use to scholars

exploring Burgess's opinions of Catholicism, Protestantism, recusancy, and martyrdom,

approaches which were first suggested by Geoffrey Aggeler, Carol Dix, and Richard

Mathews.

Similarly, there are many extant drafts for the Belli poems in translation. In

Chapter Three, I provide enough representative examples, but there are many more to

work from. The University of Texas holds the manuscripts for sonnets 18 – 70. Other

manuscripts are also available at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation in

---

37 Anthony Burgess. Untitled and unfinished story about Michael Servetus (Texas: HRC, box 10, fol. 4,
    n.d.), p. 1.

Manchester. There were seventy-one sonnets in translation that appear in *ABBA ABBA*

and five sonnets with variants were published in the *TLS* before this novel appeared. An

extended account of this material would demonstrate how Burgess carefully and

selectively structured his translations after Pound and Auden to create new meanings

between the old and the new text. This, arguably, could be an approach for creating a

new critical edition of the sonnets for future scholarly use.

In *Enderby Outside*, the eponymous hero comes into contact with a group of

artists in a bar in Tangier. One of them recites a poem which invites his followers to

> Attend to the slovos of your psychedelic guides-
>
> Swamis, yogins, and yognins,
>
> Amerindian peyote chiefs, Zen roshis.
>
> Proclaim inner space, jolting the soft machine
>
> Out of its hypnosis conditioned by
>
> The revealed intention of the Senders –[38]

Enderby responds to this *vers libre* with what he describes as a 'sonnet, yet. Horatian

ode, yet.'[39] Readers are given the further reflection, 'A critic had once written:

"Enderby's addiction to the sonnet-form proclaims the 'thirties are his true home."'[40]

Enderby also states 'I stand for form and denseness. The seventeenth-century

modified.'[41] In this regard, Enderby is like Burgess. He is a formalist poet who has his

roots in the 1930s. However, Enderby is a fictional character, and his poetry does not

possess the range of Burgess's. Like Enderby, Burgess's form and denseness come from

the 1930s, specifically from Eliot, Empson, and Hopkins, but – over the course of his

---

38 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 303.
39 Ibid.
40 Burgess, *Enderby Outside*, p. 304.
41 Ibid.

career – this develops into more contemporary forms.

Burgess is thus presented as a transitional intertextual poet, who begins in thrall of 1930s Modernism, using pastiche as a means to master strict forms and difficult intertextual techniques. He is shown as influenced by a narrow range of Modernist poets, and accesses literary tradition through their revisionary perspectives. His way of reading is influenced by formalist critics, and this formalism has its repercussions all through the rest of his career. The poets he alludes to and cites are accessed through a Modernist conception of literary tradition. It is in the exploration of the limits of poetic form learned from precursors that Burgess can be described as Postmodernist; in those cases where he casts doubt on the viability of form, he meets his own criteria as a Postmodernist. Such texts include: 'A Father's Death' (partially), the poem from *One Hand Clapping*, *O Ford, St. Winefred's Well, An Essay on Censorship, Miser! Miser!, Chatsky, The End of Things,* and *Byrne.* In cases where his language, structure, and the literary tradition to which his poetry responds, is presented without any seeming metapoetic imperative, this poetry is intended as staunchly Modernist. Because of their serious regard for form, poems in the Modernist category include: the occasional early poems which are partially well-intended pastiches, 'The Music of the Spheres', 'Adderbury', *The Eve of St. Venus*, *The Revolutionary Sonnets*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Moses,* and the Belli translations. There seems to be more poems in the "Postmodern" category than "Modern" category. Notably, the "Postmodern" texts were all mainly written between 1983 and 1989, indicating a late but prolific adoption of these poetic techniques.

It still remains open to debate as to whether Burgess is ultimately a Modernist, a late Modernist, or a Postmodernist, as Belastegui, Farkas, and Haffen all demonstrate. Although my thesis title uses the phrase 'Modernist Poetry', an unhandy but more

correct phrase might be 'Poetry which refers to Modernist texts, is influenced by the Modernist approach to literary tradition, and which aims to be seen as part of that set of poetic techniques and tradition, even if they have ceased to be an important part of current literary innovations.' Burgess's poetry was made public after the time he himself aligned with Modernism (1912[42] - 1939[43]). He also started writing poetry around the time when Modernism may have passed. He used form to hold together disparate texts from literary tradition, from a position of belatedness, often with irony, and increasingly self-reflexiveness. Other critics establish this as Postmodern. Burgess initially resisted the idea of the Postmodern, but practised techniques associated with it in later life. He interrogated form itself, and explored how meaning is relative in poetry. He may be a Proto-Postmodernist, as Paul Phillips has argued; he may be a transitional Modern/Postmodern; he may be a late Modernist. Either way, Burgess was an intertextual poet who liked to align himself with Modernism.

To paraphrase Enderby's critic, Burgess's addiction to strict intertextual forms proclaims that the 1930s are his true home. As I demonstrate at length in Chapter Two, Burgess's poetry is very much a product of the *storehouse* reading he began in that decade. The poems written in subsequent decades continue the revisionary preoccupations, and understanding of literary tradition he first encountered in the 1930s and so are very much the product of *his* time. It is notable that the only sustained engagement Burgess had with a postwar poet was with Richard Wilbur. As I showed in Chapter Four, Wilbur – like Burgess – was influenced by the narrow brand of Modernism represented by Eliot and Pound and insisting upon the relationship between the past and the present. Accordingly, the relevance of Anthony Burgess's poetry today lies not in any claim to profound lyrical gift (despite occasional successful interludes),

---

42 Burgess in Coale, 'Interview with Samuel Coale', p. 445. Quoted in Belastegui, p. 22.
43 Burgess, 'Modernism and Modern Man', p. 2.

but in its important role as a marker of the swift progression of postwar poetic fashions and styles. Burgess's mainly static and conservative 1930s-style poetry is set intransigently against a succession of cultural changes, from late Modernism, to anti-Modernism (The Movement), to Postmodernism. To use Alvarez's terminology, its consistency can be seen as a negative feedback[44] to the transitions in poetry. Whereas British poetry changed dramatically between 1935 and 1993, Burgess's poetry altered only subtly in the last four years of his life. Burgess's poetry, then, is a useful way to calibrate the swift progression of postwar poetic styles. Its intertextual reactions to other poetry are deeply related to the aesthetic traditions of late Modern poetry, and its associated critical texts.

Anthony Burgess's poetry thus emerges as an important focus for assessing a range of reading as prolific as the writing itself. The prevalence of allusion and citation are, as Richards points out, devices of economy and compression, and come from Burgess's *storehouse* of reading[45]. These devices are then decoded by readers in the *marketplace.* His poetry pivots on the economies of intertextual meaning and structure. Complex and ambiguous, Burgess's poetry is a productivity between texts from across literary tradition. His densely polyphonic poems echo with the recursive voices of precursors and are structured both in harmony and discord with them, often aiming to improve upon what is already there. Burgess's poetry is about poetry, literature, and the reader. It deserves to be read as a valuable document recording a world in rapid transition and a culture increasingly reassessing its own status in history. The poetry of Anthony Burgess simultaneously declares its origins and purposefully states its transitional intent.

---

44 Alvarez, p. 18.
45 Richards, p. 274.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Alvarez, ed., *The New Poetry* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963)

Aggeler, Geoffrey, *Anthony Burgess: The Artist as Novelist* (University of Alabama Press, 1979)

Aldington, Richard, *D. H. Lawrence* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1930)

Alexander, Michael, *The Poetic Achievement of Ezra Pound* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1979)

Anthony, Andrew, 'How one book ignited a war', *Observer* (11 January 2009), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/jan/11/salman-rushdie-satanic-verses > [accessed 3 April 2011]

Apter, Ronnie, 'Ezra Pound' in Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson, eds., *Translation - Theory and Practice: Historical Reader* (Oxford University Press: 2006), pp. 274 – 289

Ariosto, Ludovico, *Orlando Furioso: Part One,* trans. by Barbara Reynolds (London: Penguin, 1973: 1975)

Astley, Neil, 'Readings and texts of Briggflatts' in Basil Bunting, Briggflatts (Highgreen: Bloodaxe, 1966: 2009)

Auden, W. H., 'The State of Translation' in D. S. Carne-Ross, ed., *Delos : A Journal On & Of Translation:* The Translation Center, 2 (1968), 29-30

Auden, W. H., and Garrett, John, *The Poet's Tongue* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1935)

Auden, W. H., *Collected Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976: 1991: 1996)

Barker, G., Bell, M. and Causley, C., *Penguin Modern Poets 3* (London: Penguin, 1962)

Barnard, John, 'Introduction' in John Barnard, ed., *Alexander Pope: The Critical Heritage* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 1973), pp. 1-36

Barthes, Roland, 'Change the Object Itself' in *Image Music Text,* trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), 165-69

Barthes, Roland, 'From Work to Text' in *Image Music Text,* trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 155-64

Barthes, Roland, 'The Death of The Author' in Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text,* trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 142-8

Barthes, Roland, *Image Music Text,* trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977)

Bayley, P.C., 'Introduction' in Edmund Spenser. *The Faerie Queene. Book 1,* ed. by P.C.

Bayley. (Oxford University Press, 1966), pp.1-28

Beavers, K. E., '"The Balance or Reconciliation of Opposite or Discordant Qualities":
Political Tensions and Religious Transitions in the Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge'
(unpublished doctoral thesis. University of Greenwich, 2011)

Bell, Martin, *Complete Poems*, ed by Peter Porter (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1988)

Belli, Guiseppe Gioacchino, *Sonnets of Guiseppe Belli,* trans. by Miller Williams
(Baton Rouge and London: Louisana State University Press, 1981)

Belli, Guiseppe Gioacchino, *Sonnets*, trans. by Mike Stocks (Richmond: Oneworld
Classics, 2007)

Belli, Guiseppe Gioacchino, *The Roman Sonnets of Guiseppe Gioacchino Belli*, Jargon
38, trans. by Harold Norse (London: Villiers, 1960: 1974)

Belsey,Catherine, *Critical Practice* (London: Methuen, 1980)

Benjamin, Walter, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' in
Illuminations, ed. by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 217-252

Betjeman, John, *The Best of Betjeman*, ed. by John Guest (London: John Murray, 1978:
2006)

Billington, Michael, 'Theatre: Chatsky, Almeida Theatre', *Guardian*, 18 March 1993, p.11

Binyon, Lawrence, *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics. Book Fifth, Nineteenth Century [Supplementing The work Francis T. Palgrave]. Selected and arranged by L. Binyon. With notes by J. H. Fowler* (London: Macmillan, 1928)

Biswell, Andrew, 'Anthony Burgess and Stanley Kubrick's film of Napoleon', *The Telegraph* (19 November 2012)
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/9680168/Anthony-Burgess-and-Stanley-Kubricks-film-Napoleon.html> [accessed 20 January 2013]

Biswell, Andrew, 'Conflict and Confluence: Anthony Burgess as Novelist and Journalist' (unpublished doctoral University of Warwick, 2002)

Biswell, Andrew, 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange. The Restored Edition,* ed. by Andrew (London: Heinemann, 2012), pp.xv-xxxi

Biswell, Andrew, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* (London: Picador, 2005)

Bloom, Harold, *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1975: 2003)

Bloom, Harold, ed., *Anthony Burgess*, Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987)

Bowman, Deborah, '"An Instrument of Articulation": Empson and the Movement' in Zachary Leader, *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 155-76

Boyntinck, Paul, *Anthony Burgess: An Annotated Bibliography and Reference Guide* (New York and London: Garland, 1985)

Bradbury, Malcolm, 'Anthony Burgess: A Passion for Words', *Independent on Sunday*, 28 November, 1993, p. 3

Bradshaw, David, *A Concise Companion to Modernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003)

Brewer, Jeutonne, *Anthony Burgess A Bibliography,* Scarecrow Bibliographies, No. 47 (Metuchen. N.J, and London: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1980)

Brian Barbour, 'Lewis and Leavis', *Modern Philology*, 96.4 (May, 1999), 439-484

Brooker, Peter, ed., *Modernism/Postmodernism,* Longman critical readers, (London: Longman, 1992)

Bunting, Basil, *Briggflatts* (Highgreen: Bloodaxe, 1966: 2009)

Bunting, Charles T., 'Dressing for Dinner in the Jungle', in Earl G. Ingersoll and Mary C. Ingersoll, *Conversations With Anthony Burgess* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), pp. 74-100

'Burgess … on film, television and radio', <http://www.anthonyburgess.org/about-anthony-burgess/burgess-on-filmtelevision-and-radio> [accessed 27 December 2012]

Burgess, Anthony, 'A Babble of Voices' in *Index on Censorship,* 9.2, (1980), 38-41

Burgess, Anthony, 'A mingled chime', *Times Literary Supplement*, 16 January 1975, p. 50

Burgess, Anthony, 'Afterword' in Elizabeth Bowen, Anthony Burgess, Lord David Cecil, Graham Greene, Kate O'Brien, *The Heritage of British Literature.* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), pp. 219-36

Burgess, Anthony, 'All of Lawrence's sons – Book', *The Times* (29 August 1992) <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> [Accessed 28 Feb 2012]

Burgess, Anthony, 'Authors on Translators' in *Translation*, 11.74 (Winter 1974), 5-8

Burgess, Anthony, 'Bless thee Burgess, thou art translated: Anthony Burgess died this week. In a recent lecture reflected on the uneasy world of the translator', *Independent,* 27 November 1993, p. 2

Burgess, Anthony, 'Chatsky, or The Importance of Being Stupid' in *Chatsky*, Almeida Theatre production programme (London: The Almeida Theatre, 1993), pp. 6-7

Burgess, Anthony, 'European Lecture', *Guardian,* Saturday 27 November 1993 (Originally given at Cheltenham of Literature, 9 October 1992), p. 2

Burgess, Anthony, 'Five Revolutionary Sonnets', *The Transatlantic Review*, 21 (1966), 30-32

Burgess, Anthony, 'Five sonnets by G. G. Belli translated by Anthony Burgess', *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 1976, p.76

Burgess, Anthony, 'Introduction' in Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac,* trans. by Anthony Burgess (London: Herne Books, 1985: 1991), pp. i-xii

Burgess, Anthony, 'Is translation possible?' *Translation: The Journal of Literary Translation,* 12 (1974), 3-7

Burgess, Anthony, 'Making them Sing', review of *W. H. Auden and Chester Kallmann: Libretti and other Dramatic Writing* by W. H. Auden 1939-73, *Observer*, 29 October 1993, p. 18

Burgess, Anthony, 'The Bond of Words', *Times Literary Supplement*, 5 April 1984, p. 487

Burgess, Anthony, 'The Ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins', *New York Times*, August 27, 1989, p. 15

Burgess, Anthony, 'The Magical Madness of Flann O'Brien', *Saturday Review* 17 April 1976, pp. 25-7

Burgess, Anthony, 'The magus of Mallorca', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 May 1982, p. 547

Burgess, Anthony, 'The Princely Progress', *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 June 1981, p. 656

Burgess, Anthony, 'Viewpoint', *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 March 1973, p.2

Burgess, Anthony, H. Meilhac and L. Halevy. *Carmen: An Opera in Four Acts*, trans. by Anthony Burgess (London: Hutchinson, 1986)

Burgess, Anthony, 'Poèmes Inédits', ed. by Sylvère Monod, *TREMA* , appendix (1980), 5-17

Burgess, Anthony, *A Clockwork Orange* (London and New York: Penguin, 1962: 1999)

Burgess, Anthony, *A Mouthful of Air* (London: Vintage, 1992: 1993)

Burgess, Anthony, *Any Old Iron* (London: Arrow Books, 1989)

Burgess, Anthony, *Byrne* (London: Hutchinson, 1995)

Burgess, Anthony, *Earthly Powers* (Hardmondsworth: Penguin, 1980: 1983)

Burgess, Anthony, *Enderby Outside* (London: Vintage, 1968: 2002) (Cited in *The Complete Enderby*)

Burgess, Anthony, *Enderby's Dark Lady* (London: Vintage, 1984: 2002) (Cited in *The Complete Enderby*)

Burgess, Anthony, *English Literature* (London: Longman, 1958: 1974)

Burgess, Anthony, *Flame into Being* (New York: Arbor House, 1985)

Burgess, Anthony, *Here Comes Everybody* (London: Hamlyn, 1965: 1982)

Burgess, Anthony, *Homage to QWERT YUIOP* (London: Hutchinson, 1986)

Burgess, Anthony, *Inside Mr Enderby* (London, Vintage: 1963: 2002) (Cited in The Complete Enderby)

Burgess, Anthony, *Late Show: Face to Face*, BBC2 (21 March 1989)
< http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/writers/12216.shtml > [accessed 8 January 2011]

Burgess, Anthony, *Little Wilson and Big God* (London: Vintage, 1987: 2002)

Burgess, Anthony, *Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy* (New York: Norton, 1964)

Burgess, Anthony, *M/F* (London: Penguin, 1971: 2004)

Burgess, Anthony, Untitled recorded speech for the Book Society (April 1964)

Burgess, Anthony, *Man of Nazareth* (London and New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979)

Burgess, Anthony, *Moses* (New York: Stonehill, 1976)

Burgess, Anthony, *Mozart and the Wolfgang* (London: Hutchinson,1991)

Burgess, Anthony, *Napoleon Symphony* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974)

Burgess, Anthony, *Nothing Like the Sun* (New York: Norton, 1964: 1975: 1996)

Burgess, Anthony, *Oberon Old and New* (London: Hutchinson, 1985)

Burgess, Anthony, *Obscenity and the Arts* (Valetta: Maltese Library Association, 1973)

Burgess, Anthony, *One Hand Clapping* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1961: 1973)

Burgess, Anthony, *One Man's Chorus,* ed. by Ben Forkner (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998)

Burgess, Anthony, *Revolutionary Sonnets,* ed. by Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet,

2002)

Burgess, Anthony, *The Clockwork Testament* (London: Vintage, 1974: 2002) (Cited in *The Complete Enderby*)

Burgess, Anthony, *The Complete Enderby* (London: Vintage, 1963: 1968: 1974: 1984: 2002)

Burgess, Anthony, *The Doctor Is Sick* (New York: Norton, 1960: 1977: 1997)

Burgess, Anthony, *The End of the World News* (London: Hutchison, 1982)

Burgess, Anthony, The Eve of St Venus (London: Hesperus Press, 1964: 2004)

Burgess, Anthony, *The Worm and the Ring* (London: Heinemann, 1961)

Burgess, Anthony, *They Wrote in English: A Survey of British and American Literature*, Volume 1, La Storia (Milan: Tramontana editore, 1979: 1980)

Burgess, Anthony, *They Wrote in English: A Survey of British and American Literature*, Volume 2, L'antologia: campioni (Milan: Tramontana editore, 1979: 1980)

Burgess, Anthony, *This Man and Music* (New York: McGraw-hill, 1982: 1983: 2001)

Burgess, Anthony, *Time for a Tiger* (London: Heinemann, 1956)

Burgess, Anthony, *Urgent Copy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968: 1973)

Burton, Robert, *The Anatomy of Melancholy,* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd [Everyman], 1932: 1949)

Butts, William, ed., *Conversations with Richard Wilbur.* (University of Mississippi Press: 1990)

Byron, Lord George Gordon Noel, *The Complete Poetical Works,* ed. by Jerome McGann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)

Byron, Lord George Gordon Noel, *The Poetical Works of Lord Byron* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1878)

Byron, Lord George Gordon Noel, *The Works of Lord Byron* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994)

Cabau, Jacques, 'Anthony Burgess par lui-même, un entretien inédit avec l'auteur' in *TREMA 5* (1980), 93-110

Carne-Ross, D. S., ed., *Delos: A Journal On & Of Translation*, The National Translation Center, 1 (1968)

Carpenter, Humphrey, *W.H. Auden: A Biography* (London: Unwin, 1981: 1983)

Carstairs-McCarthy, Andrew, *An Introduction to English Morphology: Words and Their Structure* (Edinburgh University Press, 2002)

Carter, Mia, and Friedman, A. W., 'Introduction: Literary Modernisms' in Mia Carter and Alan Warren Friedman, eds., *Modernism and Literature: An Introduction and Reader.* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 1

Christacopoulos, Thanos, 'From Sacrifice to Science: Servetus between Joseph De Maistre and Francis Bacon' in Naya, Marian Hillar, eds., *Michael Servetus, Heartfelt: Proceedings of the International Servetus Congress, Barcelona, 20-21 October 2006* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2011), pp. 69-86

Claude, Abbott Colleer, ed., *Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and R. W. Dixon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935: 1956)

Claude, Abbott Colleer, ed., *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938: Coale, Samuel, 'Interview with Samuel Coale', *Modern Fiction Studies,* 27:3 (1981), 429-52

Coale, Samuel, *Anthony Burgess* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981)

Coale, Samuel, *The Auden Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972: 1976)

Cohen, Joseph, *Journey to the Trenches: the Life of Isaac Rosenberg, 1890-1918*

(London: Robson Books, 1975)

Conquest, Robert, 'Introduction' in Robert Conquest, ed., *New Lines:An Anthology*

(London, Macmillan; New York: Martin's Press, 1956), pp. xi – xviii

Cooper, Joshua, ed., *Four Russian Plays* (London: Penguin, 1972: 1990)

Cousins, A. D., *Catholic Religious Poets from Southwell to Crashaw. A Critical Study*

(London: Sheed & Ward, *Critical Heritage* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge,

1973), pp. 1-36

Cudden, J. A., *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Harmondsworth, Penguin: 1977)

Cunningham, J.S., 'Introduction' in Alexander Pope. *The Rape of the Lock,* ed. by J.S.

Cunningham (Oxford University Press: 1736: 1966), pp. 1-23

Cunningham, J.S., 'Introduction' in Alexander Pope. *The Rape of the Lock,* ed. by

J.S. Cunningham (Oxford University Press: 1736: 1966), pp. 1-23

Cunningham, J. S., 'Preface' in Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, ed. by

J. S. Cunningham (Oxford University Press: 1736: 1966), pp. vii-viii

Cunningham, Valentine, *British Writers of the Thirties* (Oxford and New York: Oxford

University Press, 1988)

Daiches, David, 'Ambulant prophet', *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 January 1977, p.50

Davie, Donald, 'The Varsity Match', *Poetry Nation*, 2 (1974), 420-1

Davis, Garrick, *Praising it New: The Best of the New Criticism* (Ohio University Press, 2008)

Di Pietro, Cary, *Shakespeare and Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Dix, Carol M, *Anthony Burgess,* Writers and Their Work, No.222 (Harlow: Longman for the British Council, 1971)

Dowling, Gregory, 'The Fascination of What's Difficult' in Steven P. Schneider, *The Contemporary Narrative Poem: Critical Crosscurrents* (University of Iowa Press, 2012), pp. 27-55

Downarowicz, Tomasz, *Entropy in Dynamical Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Duncan, Thomas Gibson, ed., *A Companion to the Middle English lyric* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2005)

Eco, Umberto, *On Literature* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2002)

Eco, Umberto. *Opera Aperta* (Harvard University Press, 1989)

Eliot, T. S., 'Milton II', < http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~rlstrick/401/elio.html> [accessed 26 September 2010]

Eliot, T. S., *Collected Poems, 1909-1935* (London: Faber and Faber, 1936)

Eliot, T. S., *Murder in the Cathedral* (London: Faber and Faber, 1936)

Eliot, T. S., *Selected Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954: 1961)

Eliot, T. S., *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975)

Eliot, T. S., *Sweeney Agonistes: Fragments of an Aristophanic Melodrama* (London: Faber and Faber, 1932)

Eliot, T. S., *The Complete Poems & Plays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969: 2004)

Empson, William, 'Notes' in *The Complete Poems*. (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 55-71

Empson, William, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Pimlico, 1930: 1947: 1953: 2004)

Empson, William, *The Complete Poems* (London: Penguin, 2000)

Eysteinsson, Astradur, and Liska, V., eds., *Modernism: Volume 1*, A Comparative History of Literature in European Languages, Vol. XXI (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007)

Farkas, A. Í , *Will's Son and Jake's Peer* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2002)

Feeney Joseph J., *The Playfulness of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Ashgate, 2008)

Ferguson, M., Salter, M. J., Stallworthy, J., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1970: 1975: 1983: 1996: 2005)

Fernald, Anne E., 'Modernism and Tradition' in Eysteinsson, Astradur, and Liska, V., eds., *Modernism: Volume 1* Comparative History of Literature in European Languages, Vol. XXI (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007), pp. 157-71

Forde, Victoria, '"Lines Drawn" Across a Century: Basil Bunting's Poetry as an Overview' in James McGonigal, Price, eds., *The Star You Steer by: Basil Bunting and British Modernism* (Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 2000), pp. 235-51

Fry, Christopher, *The Firstborn* in *Plays: The Boy With a Cart: The Firstborn: Venus Observed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946: 1949: 1952: 1958: 1970)

Fry, Christopher, *Venus Observed* in *Christopher Fry: Plays Two* (London: Oberon

Books, 2007)

Gardner, Helen, *The Art of T.S. Eliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 1949)

Garfitt, Roger, 'The Group' in Michael Schmidt and Grevel Lindop, eds., *British Poetry Since 1960: A Critical* (Oxford: Carcanet, 1972), pp. 14-69

Garioch, Robert, *Complete Poetical Works*, ed. by Robin Fulton (Edinburgh: Macdonald, 1983)

Ghosh-Schellhorn, Martina, *Anthony Burgess: A Study in Character. (*Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York: Peter 1986)

Giboyédov, Alexander Sergeyevich, *Chatsky, or The Misery of Having a Mind*, trans. by Joshua Cooper, in Joshua Cooper, ed., *Four Russian Plays* (London: Penguin,1972: 1990), pp. 125-214

Goodby, John, 'Hermeneutic Hermeticism' in C. C. Barfoot, ed., *In Black and Gold: Contiguous Traditions in Post-British and Irish Poetry* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994). pp. 137-16

Gosse, Edward, 'Preface' in John Keats, *The Eve of St. Agnes* (Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour), pp. 1-29

Goy-Blanquet, Dominique, '"Enter as Balthazar": Burgess in Shakespeare's Comedy' in

Graham Woodroffe. *Marlowe, Shakespeare, Burgess: Anthony Burgess and His Elizabethan Affiliations* (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, pp. 53-63

Graham-Yool, Andrew, *Point of Arrival* (London: Pluto Press, 1992)

Graves, Robert, and Riding, Laura, *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* in Graves, Robert, and Riding, Laura, *A Survey Modernist Poetry and A Pamphlet Against Anthologies*, ed. by Charles Mundye, and Patrick McGuinness (Manchester: Carcanet, 1927: 2002, 1928: 2002)

Gray, Richard, A History of American Literature (Chichester: Wiley, 2011: 2012)

Green, Jonathon, *The Cassell Dictionary of Slang* (London: Cassell, 1998)

Gregory, Tobias, 'Mad for Love' in *London Review of Books,* 32.17 (29 September 2010), 23-24

Gregson, Ian, "'Adult Male of Merciless Species": Basil Bunting's Rueful Masculinity in James McGonigal, Richard Price, eds., *The Star You Steer By: Basil Bunting and British Modernism* (Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 2000), pp. 109

Grey, Martin, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, 1992)

Haffen, Aude, 'Anthony Burgess, Shakespeare and Cultural Materialism:

Contextualizing, Politicizing, Sexualizing Bard' in Graham Woodroffe, ed., *Marlowe,*

Shakespeare, Burgess: Anthony Burgess and His Elizabethan

Affiliations (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2012), pp. 27-39

Haffen, Aude, 'Anthony Burgess's fictional biographies: romantic sympathy, tradition-

oriented modernism, postmodern vampirism?' in Alan Roughley, ed., *Anthony Burgess*

and Modernity (Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 131-46

Haffenden, John, *The Selected Letters of William Empson* (Oxford: Oxford University

Press, 2009)

Haffenden, John, *William Empson: Volume I: Among the Mandarins* (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2005)

 Haffenden, John, *William Empson: Volume II: Against the Christians* (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2006)

Harrison, Tony, *The Blasphemer's Banquet* in *The Shadow of Hiroshima and other*

film/poems (London: Faber and 1995)

Henry Ware collection, Harvard University

<http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~hou01879> [Accessed 18

September 2011]

Hewison, Robert*,* 'Intelligensia test; Performance', *The Sunday Times,* 21 March 1993,

p. 21

Hill, Geoffrey, *Collected Poems* (London: Penguin, 1985)

Hoggart, Richard, *The Uses of Literacy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin,1957: 1967)

Holden, Jonathan, *The Fate of American Poetry* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008)

Holloway, Michael, 'Music in Words: The Music of Anthony Burgess, and the Role of Music in His Literature' (unpublished doctoral thesis. University of Huddersfield, 1997)

Homberger, Eric, 'New Lines in 1956' in Zachary Leader, *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 255-269

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Dalle foglie della sibilla* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1992)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Note-books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* ed. by Humphrey House (Oxford: University Press, 1937: 1959)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins,* ed. by W. H. Gardner (London: Penguin 1960)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins,*ed. by W. H. Gardner (London: Penguin, 1963: 1985)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London : Oxford University Press, 1943)

Hopkins, Gerard Manley, *Poems,* ed. by Robert Bridges (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930)

Hutcheon, Linda, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1988)

Ian Maclean, 'Note on the Selection and the Translation' in Molière, *Don Juan and Other Plays*, trans. by George Graveley and Ian Maclean (Oxford University Press: 1989), p. i-xxiv

Jackson, Kevin, 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess, *Revolutionary Sonnets,* ed. by Kevin Jackson (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002), pp. vii-xviii

Jancovich, Mark, *The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

Jarrell, Randall, *Randall Jarrell on W. H. Auden* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005)

Jeannin, Marc, ed., *Anthony Burgess: Music in Literature, Literature in Music* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars 2009)

Jeffrey Wainwright, *Poetry The Basics* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2004)

Jenkins, Alice, 'Gerard Manley Hokpkins', 3 February 2011. <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199799558/obo-9780199799558-0034.xml?rskey=PQicG7&result=36&q =.> [accessed 22 October 2012]

Jenkins, Nicholas, 'The "Truth of Skies": Auden, Larkin and the English Question' in Zachary Leader, ed., *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 34-61

Joyce, James, *Chamber Music* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1907)

Joyce, James, *Pomes Penyeach* (London: Faber & Faber, 1933)

Joyce, James, *Ulysses* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1922: 1993: 1998)

Julia Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* Leon S. Rouidez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez. (New York: Columbia University 1980), pp. 64-91

Juvan, Marko, *History and Poetics of Intertextuality*, trans. by Timothy Pogačar (West Lafayette: Purdue University 2008)

Kahn, Andrew, *The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Kenner, Hugh, *A Sinking Island* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988: 1989)

Kenner, Hugh, *The Translations of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1953)

Kermode, Frank, 'Introduction' in Eliot, T. S. *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot,* ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber Faber, 1975)

Koyré, Alexander, *The Astronomical Revolution* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1973)

Kristeva, Julia, 'How does one speak to literature?' in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora and Alice Jardine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 92–123

Kristeva, Julia, 'The Bounded Text' in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon Rouidez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 36-63

Kristeva, Julia*, Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art,* ed. by Leon S. Rouidez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 64-91

Kvamme, Torstein O., ed., *The Christmas Carolers' Book in Song and Story* (Miami: Belwin, 1985)

Larkin, Philip, *High Windows* (London: Faber and Faber, 1974: 1979)

Lawrence, D.H., *Selected Poems,* ed. by W.E Williams (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950: 1954: 1960: 1963: 1965)

Leader, Zachary, *The Movement Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Leavis F.R., *New Bearings in English Poetry* (London: Faber and Faber, 1932: 1950: 2008)

Leavis F.R., *Thoughts, Words, and Creativity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976)

Lehmann, John, *New Soundings,* BBC Third Programme, 24 September 1952

Liddiard, Jean, *Isaac Rosenberg: The Half Used Life* (London : Gollancz, 1975)

Liebeck, Helen, and Pollard, Elaine, eds., *The Oxford Paperback Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1994: 1995)

Lombardo, Patrizia, *The Three Paradoxes of Roland Barthes* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010)

Longenbach, James, *Modern Poetry after Modernism* (Oxford University Press, 1997)

Macherey, Pierre, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. by Geoffrey Wall (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge Keagan Paul, 1978)

Macneice, Louis, *The Collected Poems of Louis Macneice*, ed. by F. R. Dodds (London: Faber and Faber, 1966)

Marcin, Raymond B., *In Search of Schopenhauer's Cat: Arthur Schopenhauer's Quantum-Mystical Theory of Justice* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006)

Marsh, Edward, ed., *Georgian Poetry: 1913-15* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1915)

Marsh, Edward, ed., *Georgian Poetry 1916-17* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1917)

Mathews, Richard, *Clockwork Universe of Anthony Burgess* (San Bernadino: Borgo, 1978)

McGann, Jerome, *Byron and Romanticism*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2002)

McGann, Jerome, *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse* (Oxford University Press, 1993)

McHale, Brian, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London and New York: Methuen, 1987)

Mellors, Anthony, *Late Modernist Poetics: From Pound to Prynne* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005)

Milton, John, *Paradise Lost* in *The Works of John Milton* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994)

Moffett, Joe, 'Simulation, Popular Culture, and the Postmodern Long Poem: The Case of Kenneth Koch's "Seasons Earth"', *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Special Convention Issue: High & Low Culture, 40.2 (2007), 4-18

Molière, *Don Juan and Other Plays*, trans. by George Graveley and Ian Maclean (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1968: 1989)

Molière, *The Misanthrope*, trans. by Tony Harrison (London: Rex Collins, 1973)

Monod, Sylvere, 'Enderby le minable magnifique' in *TREMA* 5 (1980), 19-29

Monod, Sylvère, 'Poets and Poetry in the Enderby Cycle', Anthony Burgess Newsletter (6 December 2003) <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?
q=cache:w9yRFOoNtNwJ:www.masterbibangers.net/ABC/index.%3Foption
%3Dcom_content%26view%3Darticle%26id%3D90%26Itemid
%3D105&hl=en&gl=uk&strip=1 > [Accessed

4 May 2013]

Montefiore, Janet, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s: The Dangerous Flood of History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996)

Morgan, Edwin, 'The thing's the thing', *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 March 1977, p. 669

Morgan, T.H., Sturtevant, A.H., Muller, H. J., and Bridges, C. B., *The Mechanism of Mendelian Heredity* (New Holt, 1922)

Morrison, Blake , 'Introduction' in Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (London: Penguin, 1962: 1972: 1996)

Morrison, Blake, 'Kingdom of the Wicked', *Guardian* (9 November 2002), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2002/nov/09/biography.highereducation > [accessed 28 January 2013]

Morrison, Blake, and Motion, A. *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry* (Harmondworth: Penguin, Morrison, Blake, *The Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1980)

Naya, J., Hillar, M, 'Michael Servetus Biography' in Juan Naya, Marian Hillar, eds., *Michael Servetus, Heartfelt:Proceedings of the International Servetus Congress, Barcelona, 20-21 October 2006* (Lanham, MD: University Press America, 2011), pp.

xiii-xvii

Neubert, Albrecht, 'Words and Texts - Which Are Translated? A Study in Dialectics.' in Gunilla Anderman and Rogers, eds., *Word, Text, Translation: Liber Amicorum for Peter Newmark* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1999), 119-128

Newman, Charles, *The Post-modern Aura: The Art of Fiction in an Age of Inflation* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1985)

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York: Cosimo, 1873: 2010)

Nightingale, Benedict, 'Pique fails to hit the heights', *The Times,* 18 March 1993, p. 34

O'Brien, Flann, *The Third Policeman.* (London: Flamingo, 1967: 1993)

Parker, William Riley, *Milton. Vol. 1: The Life.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968: 1996)

Partridge, Eric, *Concise Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English,* ed. by Paul Beale (New York: Macmillan, 1989)

Pate, Willard, and Panel,'An Interview with Richard Wilbur' in Butts, William, ed., *Conversations with Richard Wilbur* (University of Mississippi Press: 1990), pp. 66-86

Perkins, David, *A History of Modern Poetry: Modernism and After* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press: Phillips, Paul, *A Clockwork Counterpoint: The Music and Literature of Anthony Burgess* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010)

Pope, Alexander, *An Essay on Criticism* (London: W. Taylor , 1711)

Pope, Alexander, *Essay on Criticism* in Martin Price, ed., *The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century.* The Oxford Anthology of English Literature. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1973)

Porter, Peter, 'Introduction, Memoir and Critical Note' in Martin Bell, *Complete Poems,* ed. by Peter Porter (Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 1988), pp. 11-31

Pound, Ezra, 'Elizabethan Classicists', *The Egoist*, 4 (1917), 8-10

Pound, Ezra, 'Notes on Elizabethan Classicists,' in *Literary Essays*, ed. by T. S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, pp.227-48

Pound, Ezra, *Selected Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933: 1934)

Pound, Ezra, *Selected Poems 1908-1969* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975)

Price, Martin, *The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century. The Oxford Anthology of English Literature* (New York, London, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1973)

Pritchard, William H., 'The Novels of Anthony Burgess' in Harold Bloom, ed., *Anthony Burgess* Modern Critical (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 13-28

Pushkin, Alexander, *Eugene Onegin*, trans. by V. Nabokov (Princeton University Press, 1975)

Quiller-Couch, Arthur, *The Oxford Book of English Verse* (Oxford University Press, 1900: 1939)

Raleigh, Walter, *Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan, 1907)

Richards, I.A., *Principles of Literary Criticism* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 1924: 1926: 2001)

Ricks, Christopher, 'The Epicene' in Harold Bloom, ed., *Anthony Burgess*. Modern Critical Views (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 9-12

Ricoeur, Paul, *The Rule of Metaphor* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 2003)

Roberts, David, *Art and Enlightenment: Aesthetic Theory after Adorno* (University of Nebraska Press, 1991)

Roberts, Michael, ed., *New Signatures* (London: L. & V. Woolf, 1932)

Roberts, Michael, ed., *The Faber Book of Modern Poetry* (London: Faber and Faber, 1936)

Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero,* trans. by Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967)

Rosenberg, Isaac, *Moses. A Play* (London: Paragon Printing Works, 1916)

Rostand, Edmond, *Cyrano de Bergerac,* ed. by Geoff Wollen, French Texts (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1998)

Rostand, Edmond, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, trans. by Anthony Burgess (London: Nick Herne Books, 1985: 1991)

Roudiez, Leon S., 'Introduction', in Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and* Leon S. Rouidez, trans by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 1-22

Roughley, Alan R, ed., *Anthony Burgess and Modernity* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2008)

Roughley, Alan, 'Converting Life to Literature: From Wilson to Burgess and Auto-biographer to Narrator.' in Graham Woodroffe, ed., *Anthony Burgess, Biographer* (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2006), pp. 67-80

Sandbrook, Dominic, *Never Had it So Good* (London: Abacus, 2005)

Sansom, Ian, 'Saviour and Scapegoat', *Guardian* (12 May 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/may/12/poetry.whauden > [accessed 23 May 2013]

Schmidt, Michael and Lindop, Grevel, eds., *British Poetry Since 1960: A Critical Survey* (Oxford: Carcanet, 1972)

Schmidt, Michael, 'Introduction' in Michael Schmidt, Michael and Grevel Lindop, eds., *British Poetry Since 1960: Critical Survey*. (Oxford: Carcanet, 1972), pp. 1-9

Schoenbaum, Samuel, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970: 1991)

Scott, Jill, 'Translating Myth: The Task of Speaking Time and Space', in Faull, Katherine M., ed., *Translation and Culture. Bucknell Review,* XLVII.1(2004), 58-72
Seth, Vikram , *The Golden Gate* (London: Faber & Faber, 1986)

Shadwell, Thomas, *The Libertine: A Tragedy.* (London: Tonson, Saunders, Bennet, and Bentley, 1704)

Shakespeare, William, *Henry IV* in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works,* ed. by W. J. Craig (London: Magpie Books, 1993)

Shakespeare, William, *The Merry Wives of Windsor in* W. J. Craig, ed., *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (London: Magpie Books, 1993)

Shockley, Alan, *Music in the Words: Musical Form and Counterpoint in the Twentieth-Century Novel* (Farnham Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2009)

Simon, John, 'Visiting Royalty' in *New York Magazine*, 29 Oct 1984, pp.61-2

Sobolev, Dennis, *The Split World of Gerard Manley Hopkins: An Essay in Semiotic Phenomenology* (Washington, Catholic University Press, 2011)

Sophocles, *Oedipus the King,* trans. by Anthony Burgess (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1972)

Southwell, Robert, *Collected Poems,* ed. by Peter Davidson and Anne Sweeney (Manchester: Carcanet, 2007)

Spenser, Edmund, The Faerie Queene. Book 1, ed. by P. C. Bayley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966: 1970: 1979: 1988: 1990: 1991: 1992)

Spiers, John, 'Mr Pound's Propertius' in F. R. Leavis, *A Selection from Scrutiny*, Volume 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 101-4

Stevens, Wallace, *Parts of a World.* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1942)

Strickland, Geoffrey, *Structuralism or Criticism? Thoughts On How We Read* (Cambridge: Cambridge University 1981)

Symes, Peter, 'Introduction' in Tony Harrison, *The Shadow of Hiroshima and Other Film/Poems* (London: Faber Faber, 1995), p. vii-xxiv

Tanner, Michael, 'Torment of languor', Review of *The Rake's Progress*, *Spectator,* 19 July 2008, p. 42

Thomas Hunt Morgan, Alfred Henry Sturtevant, Hermann Joseph Muller, Calvin Blackman Bridges, *The Mechanism of Mendelian Heredity* (New York: Holt, 1922)

Thomas, Dylan, *Selected Poems*, ed. by, Walford Davies. (London: Penguin, 2000)

Thwaite, Anthony, 'Toad trip: Larkin 25 years on', New Statesman. 12 July 2010. <http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2010/07/larkin-verse-poems-poet.> [Accessed 2 May 2013]

Todorov, Tzvetan, *Introduction to Poetics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981)

Vainio, Olli-pekka, *Beyond Fideism: Negotiable Religious Identities* (London: Ashgate, 2010)

Venuti, Lawrence , 'Retranslations: The Creation of Value' in Katherine M. Faull, ed.,

Translation and Culture. Review. Volume XLVII.1 (2004), 25- 38

Véza, Laurette, 'Anthony Burgess: de la poésie à la parodie' in *TREMA 5* (1980), 31-8

Walcott, Derek, *Omeros* (London: Faber & Faber, 1990)

Ward, Bernadette Waterman, *'World as Word': Philosophical Theology in Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Washington, Catholic University of America Press, 2002)

White, Norman, *Hopkins: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992)

Whitman, Walt, *The Complete Poems*, ed. by Francis Murray (London: Penguin, 1975: 1977: 1986: 1996: 2004)

Wiggins, Kayla McKinney, *Modern Verse Drama in English,* Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature, Number (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1993)

Wilbur, Richard, *Responses: Prose Pieces, 1953-1976* (Brownsville, OR: Story Line, 1999)

Wilde, Oscar, *The Importance of Being Earnest and Four Other Plays*, ed. by Kenneth Krauss (New York: Barnes Noble Classics, 2003)

Williams, Raymond, *Politics of Modernism* (London: Verso, 1989: 2007)

Wilson, Emily. R., *Mocked with Death: Tragic Overliving from Sophocles to Milton* (Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004)

Wilson, Jean Moorcroft, *Isaac Rosenberg:The Making of a Great War Poet: A New Life* (London: Westfield & 2008)

Woodroffe, Graham, ed., *Marlowe, Shakespeare, Burgess: Anthony Burgess and his Elizabethan Affiliations* (Presses l'Université d'Angers, 2012)

Woods, Gregory, *Articulate Flesh: Male Homo-Eroticism and Modern Poetry* (Yale University Press, 1987)

Wordsworth, William, The Prelude in *The Collected Poems of William Wordsworth* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1994)

'Arts: Flawed "Chatsky" - Theatre', *Financial Times,* 18 March 1993, p.29

'Chance to tour Cold War airbase', *Banbury Guardian* (7 July 2005) <http://www.raf-upper-heyford.org/tour_info.[Accessed 21 November 2012]

'Local Man's Music Played', *Banbury Guardian,* 22 March 1951, n.p.

'Musical Society Opens', Banbury Guardian, 18 October 1951, p. 5

'Other New Novels.' Review of *A Clockwork Orange, Times Literary Supplement*, 25

March 1962

'Spring Breaks New Plays', *Banbury Guardian*, 14 February 1952, n.p.

'The George and Dragon', <http://www.thegeorgeanddragon.com/> [accessed 21

November 2012]

'Third Programme', *Radio Times,* 19 January 1951, p. 43

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/11/newsid_2499000/2499721.stm

> [accessed 5th March <http://www.anthonyburgess.org/mediablog/anthony-burgess-

on-shakespeare > [accessed 26 January 2013]

<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199799558/obo-

9780199799558-0034.xml?rskey=PQicG7&result=36&q =.> [Accessed 22 October

2012.]

'1977: Gay paper guilty of blasphemy', (n.d.),

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/11/newsid_2499000/2499721.stm

> [accessed 5th March 2013]

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1933',

<http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/[accessed 26 September

2012]

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <http://www.oxforddnb.com > [accessed 8 March 2013]

<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/9780199799558/obo-9780199799558-0034.xml?rskey=PQicG7&result=36&q =.> [accessed 22 October 2012]