

## PARODY AND SATIRE IN BURGESS' *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* AND IN KUBRICK'S CINEMATIC ADAPTATION.

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*A Clockwork Orange* (1962) Anthony Burgess' probably best known novel, constitutes a marked departure both from Burgess' previous works and from traditional fictional narrative techniques. The central character of the book, Alex, emerges as a clear anti-heroic figure commanding a rapacious urban gang of London youngsters in a dystopic vision of a fictionalised post-industrial, post-modern English society. Its crude and straight treatment of barbaric young criminality received an outrageous response from literary critics, but the book's success and polemics were not definitely consecrated until the appearance of Stanley Kubrick's formalist adaptation, visually explicit in its depiction of violence (1971). Despite its nominations for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Film Editing and Best Screenplay, it was defeated in all of these categories by William Friedkin's *The French Connection* (1971)<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, both novel and film have gained ample recognition by their own merits and for that reason, a deeper analysis of the verbal and audiovisual intricate network of aspects present in both masterpieces is worthy taking into consideration.

Thus, I shall focus my examination on the significant role of the representation of culture and its satiric and parodic implications. This is particularly relevant since *A Clockwork Orange* has frequently been restrictively labelled as a political satire, my contention being that the role of *parody* in this work can be equally paramount to that of *satire*. In any case, it should be specified that both modes, although operating on different levels, can be detected as in a symbiotic relation, supplementing and strengthening each other. Thus, while *A Clockwork Orange* weighty satire, political as well as social, cannot be denied, both the literary and the cinematic narratives unveil the close relation between high and popular culture, showing in a parodic mood how their borderlines are frequently trespassed and their values subverted in modern society. Hence, this essay is aimed, among other aspects, to draw attention to the way, both book and film, have delineated a complex rhetoric of story-telling in relation with these two genres (satire and parody) and according to their different media of expression and representation (literary and cinematic).

Most frequently, critics have focused on the analysis of the Manichean dialectic that orchestrates the book's narrative and the relevance of the theme of freedom of choice as 'a theological necessity'<sup>2</sup>. In fact, the Christian cyclical structure of the original narrative (sin, punishment and redemption) highlights the necessity of human beings to have real and free choice, whether good or evil, in their lives<sup>3</sup>. On the contrary, society would risk the submission to despotic conditioning programs mas-

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<sup>1</sup> [www.filmsite.org/cloc](http://www.filmsite.org/cloc)

<sup>2</sup> From Burgess' Preface to *A Clockwork Orange* [www.cs.waikato.ac.nz/~butting/kubrick/aco.play.preface.html](http://www.cs.waikato.ac.nz/~butting/kubrick/aco.play.preface.html)

<sup>3</sup> The American edition has deleted the last chapter of the third part mostly due to an editorial evaluation that considered this chapter as a mere reduction of the tone of the novella to a rather sentimental one. This is the version from which Kubrick's film has been adapted, and what is more, even him disclaimed Burgess' original structure as *unconvincing and inconsistent with the style and intent of the book*.

tered by governmental institutions, as it occurs in *A Clockwork Orange* with the application of the anti-criminal treatment, Ludovico Technique, on the protagonist. Here, the prime divergence between book and film resides in the filmic omission of the original ending. Depriving the protagonist of the possibility of a natural and a conscious regeneration, without the external pressure of any social or political institution, transforms the original anti-behaviourist denounce into a satiric black comedy or dystopic fable of a futuristic hypothetical society where humanity would have sealed their future by proving to be tyrannised by its own perverse instincts being incapable of any moral progress. Thus, the omission of chapter 21st produces an ambiguous message. The film, as the American edition, focuses on the political satire and social criticism, rather than on the individual human aspect, and the film spectator could feel tempted of considering the aversion therapy as desirable in dealing with flagrant criminals as Alex himself, instead of the acerbic diatribe the original version exposes against this kind of drastic manipulation. Moreover, it could be claimed that Alex', as first-person narrator, (cinematically reproduced by a voice-over, point-of-view perspective shots and by being constantly framed by an aura of white light), can be better credited by his autobiographical, reformed self-disclosure at the last chapter of the original version. As a first person narrator we are straightforwardly addressed by him, and are permitted to gain a profound insight both into his malevolent desires as into his caustic reflexions on the political or social conditions of his society. In its filmic adaptation Alex speaks from an indeterminate position, flashbacking on his past life, and currently reasserting his vicious personality establishing, by so doing, a forcible contrast with the image of a defenceless, almost caricaturesque conditioned Alex, the protagonist's last and ironic statement after being restored to his previous violence is highly indicative of the prevalent satiric mood, 'I was cured all right'. However, in the novella, despite of his initial atrocities, he is endowed with human traits, by which the narrative acquires existential and ethical overtones, hence, his eventual reform makes evident to readers when realising he is in the process of narrating his own life from the mature distance of an adult writer.

In this sense, the act of writing becomes central to the narrative, indeed, Alex, in a postmodernist fashion, occasionally reveals himself as 'Your Humble Narrator' in the book we are currently reading and the film we are watching. Significantly, two of the frightful attacks carried by his gang are directed towards a reader (just in the written version) and a writer (author of a manuscript entitled *A Clockwork Orange*), not arbitrarily, called Alexander. The latter plays a significant role in the narrative, apparently standing as Alex' Manichean opposite, and yet, he proves to personify metaphorically the narrative's cornerstone, that of individuals being naturally capable of good or evil actions, and the concealed, or overt, hypocrisy of many of those who claim to stand for the defence of an apparent righteous purpose.

But above all, the fundamental message of *A Clockwork Orange* exhorts against the risks of behaviourist and mechanistic philosophies that can culminate in the establishment of a technological totalitarian world, a dystopic outcome in a society lacking any moral sense of obligation. Conscious of social fears and oppressive political administrations, Burgess, in this novella, prophetically captured the first steps towards a future where mass media revolution and advances in cybernetics would

create a new urgency about matters concerning manipulation. Thus, in the first part, Alex and his three *droogs* are simultaneously victimizers and victims of an unsavoury society in which the state itself permits the distribution of hallucinogen beverages prompting violent reactions on its consumers, *That sort of thing could sap all the strength and the goodness out of a chelloveck*, or promotes the exhibition of films on *the usual cowboy riot, with the archangel of hell's fighting legions, the kind of hound-and-horny veshch put out by Statefilm in those days* (ACO: 7). In fact, Alex and his *droogs* can be said, then, to be conditioned by his own cultural acquired deviant desires and tastes. Additionally, the passivity of society before this state of affairs equally reveals itself through the mass media being *the usual about ultra-violence and bank robberies and strikes and footballers making everybody paralytic with fright by threatening to not play next Saturday if they did not get higher wages* (ACO: 34-35). From this perspective the use of violence elucidates Alex' rebellion, externally connoted by Alex' language and clothing, against a deeply corrupted adult world that although condemning young violence proves, at the same time, to sink to the same levels. This becomes emphatically considered in the third part of the novella, where Alex suffers the outrageous retaliations of his previous victims and gang mates.

The second type of governmental control, and the most evident of both, is the statal obliteration of Alex' humanity by a conditioning process through chemically induced sickness in order to refrain him from fulfilling his evil desires and transforming him into an automaton artificially pushed towards a socially acceptable goodness, instead of seeking to eliminate the causes of his violent behaviour or to strengthen his moral understanding. Being obliged to watch violent films produced under the auspices of the authorities he is symbolically submitted to agreeably support the State political interests (Alex himself chose to be cured with the help of Ludovico Technique). Such paradoxical concept of social repression represents one of the prime recurrent characteristics of dystopic and/or cyberpunk works, indeed, this technique symbolises the worst possibilities of state control. When the prison chaplain witnesses the transformed Alex he rises severe objections against the expedient methods of the State, *He ceases also to be a creature capable of moral choice*, but the State replies, *These are subtitles...We are not concerned with motive, with the higher ethics*<sup>4</sup>.

The film, masterfully translates and recreates, through an impressive range of visual and musical effects, the pervading terrific atmosphere depicted in the book. Technically, Kubrick has exploited to the extreme an expressionist process of adaptation of the literary source according to the high level of experimentalism found in Burgess work. Thus, *the camera is used as a method of commenting on the subject matter, a way of emphasising its essential rather than its objective nature. There is a high degree of manipulation, of re-forming of reality.* (Gianetti, 1972: 6).

Following formalist conventions, content and form appear inextricably bound, and as Andre Bazin has noted *One way of understanding better what a film is trying to say is to know how it is saying it* (1972: 8). Kubrick's film epitomises this statement, thus, the plot and the basic components of the film medium (photography, performance, sound, colour, lighting, movement, montage, etc) appear as mutually depend-

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<sup>4</sup> Quotations extracted from the film.

ent. Symbolic and psychological aspects are stressed by a deliberate manipulation of the diverse visual qualities offered to the spectator.

In fact, in the adaptation process, form has inevitably undergone a profound remodelling. Equipped with the major technical devices, Kubrick, has managed to articulate the symbolic pillars of the story, that is, violence, dehumanisation and hopelessness, tracing, in so doing, the greatest degree of authenticity. The tools to induce such sensations on the audience are recurrently an emphasis on the grotesque aspects of clothing and acting, in effect, all the characters without exception reproduce histrionic patterns of behaviour, easily detected in their speech and gestures; a distortion of sound and music and the high occurrence of expressionist shots and angles. Thus, often, an alternation from extreme close-ups, as the first scene framing Alex blue and sinister stare, to long shots, as in the acrobatic molestation scene of Billy-boy's gang on the stage of a forlorn theatre; of fast and slow motion scenes, Alex' forty second orgy with two young girls in his bedroom staged to the frenetic tempo of *William Tell Overture* preceding a significant slow-paced scene of Alex and his droogs walking on the banks of river Thames and the subsequent turning of the protagonist on his demanding mates musically accompanied by Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie*. Extreme low-angles, cant angles, point-of-view shots and hand-held camera scenes are purposefully combined to suggest confusion, tension and nightmarish anxiety, the best instances of which are that of the ballet-like struggle between Alex and the *Cat lady* and the final brutal strike she receives on her face (with a superimposed image of a pop art woman's open mouth), and Alexander's low-angled apoplectic face, twisted in horror when recognising Alex' echoes of *Singing in the Rain* emanating from the bathroom.

A seventies garish mod clothing and decorative fashion strengthens the sense of futuristic nihilism and excess. In this respect, the reiteration of two main strategies is not accidental, either by the employ of a visually aggressive chromatic spectrum of lurid colours and grotesque, pornographic forms of art or minimalist furniture, or, conversely, by the absence of colour, shadowed, greyish environments and sober settings resorting, in this way, to a more realistic approach to visual materials and contents. The best illustrative instances of the first kind are found in the first part of the film, just before Alex' arrest. The very title of the film appears upon an orange-shaded background accompanied by an apocalyptic synthesised melody of *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary* that reappears in several, particularly, grim occasions all throughout the film. Likewise, the *Korova Milkbar* artificial design with its man-size nude sculptures of submissive women, Alexander's scifictive architectural excessive *HOME*, or the *flashy, and equally mirrored, music shop in which a highly stylishly-dressed Alex is filmed in an elaborate, 360 degree tracking shot*, musically backgrounded by the synthesised fourth movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. As far as the second type of visual strategy is concerned, it becomes prominent, firstly, when offering the image of Alex' home at a municipal flat block with a *ground-floor, trashed lobby of [a] depressing, unkempt building with a huge mural depicting the dignity of labour and noble citizens defaced with obscene sexual graffiti*, but most significantly, it is during Alex' two-year stay in prison and, then, at the Ludovico Medical Center, that the narration turns to a more dramatic standpoint matched with a series of sombre outfits and settings. Thus, for instance, Alex' usual gang costume, a white jumpsuit, bowler hat,

*false eyelash and the ornamental detail of a bloody, ripped-out eyeball adorning his cufflinks and suspenders* is substituted by a plain, dark suit that he will dress until the end of the film<sup>5</sup>.

Let us now move to the central subject of this essay, that is, the divergences between book and film in the representation of high culture, and most importantly, their parodic and satiric associations. As defined by Linda Hutcheon in *A Theory of Parody* (1985), the difference between parody and satire resides on the distinct nature of their respective targets (1985: 43). Thus, whereas the parody's target *is always another work of art or more generally, another form of coded discourse*, process in which the inclusion of the decoder is crucial for a simultaneous operation of repetition and 'transcontextualization'; satire, on the other hand, *is both moral and social in its focus and ameliorative in its intention* (1985: 62). However, both tend to appear in conjunction in many works of art, sometimes serving as vehicles of expression for each other, which has lead critics to confuse both notions and their above-referred targets (1985: 62). Nevertheless, Margaret Rose seems to agree with Hutcheon's on the primary divergence between satire intended *extramural* object and parody *intramural* one, *Despite the fact that some parody may appear to treat its target in a manner similar to satire in making it the object of laughter, one major fact that distinguishes the parody from satire is the parody's use of the preformed material of its target as a constituent part of its own structure. Satire, on the other hand, need not to be restricted to the imitation, distortion or quotation of other literary texts or preformed artistic materials,... but simply make fun of it as a target external to itself.* (1993: 81-82)

Furthermore, insofar as irony constitutes a common and powerful rhetorical trope used by both genres, the frequent interaction of satire and parody contributes, once more, to the blurring of any precise demarcation between their diverse ethos and range of interests (1985: 49)<sup>6</sup>. In this sense, it is also worthy mentioning Hutcheon's attempts at elaborating a minute classification of the various degrees and levels of cooperation between parodic and satiric manifestations, thus, she postulates the existence of two sub-genres, so-called 'parodic satire' and 'satiric parody'. In the former the object of criticism is satiric but achieved through the parody of a particular work of art or artistic trend, whereas in the latter, its prime parodic target will resort to satire as its main channel (1985: 62). In short, whatever the possible taxonomies attributed to the overlapping of these two genres, Hutcheon seems to conclude this entangling issue by establishing the definite grounds for the categorization of parody, satire and irony on their distinctive pragmatic dimension (an *implied* level of signification), rather than on their semantic or structural one (a *surface or foreground* level) (1985: 64)

As far as *A Clockwork Orange* (book and film) is referred, apart from examples of plain parody and satire, it exhibits a prominent number of instances of the 'parodic satire' type by choosing the parody of several literary texts, musical compositions and historical symbols as the vehicle for its social and political satire. As readers

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<sup>5</sup> Some of the technical terminology and particular information, such as the titles of the melodies employed in the film have been extracted from [www.filmsite.org/cloc.html](http://www.filmsite.org/cloc.html).

<sup>6</sup> ...the ethos is the overlap between the encoded effect (as desired and intended by the producer of the text) and the decoded effect (as achieved by the decoder) (1985: 55). According to this definition, satire would present a "marked negative ethos, that is, scornful in its encoding and corrective in its intent; parody, by contrast, would remain neutral *unmarked*, but ready to assume an ample variety of possible markings (1985: 60), from *scornful ridicule to reverential homage* (1985: 37).

and/or spectators of *A Clockwork Orange*, it is difficult not to be aware of the centrality of music, dance, plastic arts, literature and writing in both artistic productions. A brief analysis of these works would be sufficient for realising that images, metaphors and descriptions concerning art possess their own economy, their own distinctive attributes, in other words, they serve to represent something else, displacing it, while yet referring to it. This can be considered as the redundant dual nature of representation, whereby the representation is both itself and *something else* allowing for a satiric and parodic expression, modes certainly engaged in a necessary process of double-coding. As Linda Hutcheon reminds us, *With parody as with any form of reproduction the notion of the original as rare, single, and valuable (in aesthetic or commercial terms) is called into question. In other words, parody works to foreground the politics of representation* (1989: 94).

In *A Clockwork Orange*, the relation with this so-called *something else* is mediated and clearly shaped by a concentric circular structure of parodic satire that brings into the foreground a re-evaluation of aesthetic forms and contents. The satiric component is mainly focused on the bitter critique of the duplicitous conception of reality prevailing in modern society, and, above all, of State-individual relationships. In the first part we are confronted with a gang of uncontrollable youngsters exercising violence just because of a devious notion of aesthetic pleasure, *And there were devotchkas ripped and creeching against walls and I plunging like a shloga into them, and indeed when the music, which was one movement only, rose to the top of its big highest tower, then, lying there on my bed with glazzies tight shut and rookers behind my gulliver* (Burgess, 1962: 29). The third part of the book, second half of Kubrick's film, offers us the clue to fully comprehend the reason why this futuristic British state could have arrived at such situation of social disorder. Evilness, corruption, amorality lie deep-rooted at the basis of the political and social apparatus, and individuals seem to be no more than personified embodiments of this situation. In this sense, both book and film do not differ in the essential direction and objectives of the satirizing process. However, as it is obvious, a cinematic production can fall back on additional audiovisual resources to stress the satiric effect. In this respect, two particular episodes are remarkable. One corresponds to the visit of the Minister of Interior to Alex' prison, visit coupled with the British symphony *par excellence*, its national anthem. Again, in the last scenes of the film, the Minister insincere apologising in representation of the estatal forces feeds Alex in a symbolic epilogue of submissive acceptance of a corrupt democratic government. Conversely, Burgess' novella alternates the satiric mood with straight condemnations and ontological considerations on the political and social state of affairs, often, even provided by Alex himself as in the following statement, *But, brothers, this biting of their toe-nails over what is the cause of badness is what turns me into a fine laughing malchick. They don't go into the cause of goodness, so why the other shop?* (ACO: 34).

Linda Hutcheon's reflexions on the functions of parody within Postmodernism become particularly pertinent to introduce theoretically this examination of the parodic tensions in the representation of culture that prominently persist throughout both the novella and its filmic adaptation. By highlighting the relational intrinsic nature of parody in its interaction either with past or art, Hutcheon synthesises what seems to be the two primordial parodic drives in Burgess' work and Kubrick's adaptation, *Instead, through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how pre-*

sent representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference (1988: 93).

In elaborating this parodic component Burgess and Kubrick's stress powerfully falls on reflexivity, spectacle, and theatricality, both in a literal and symbolic senses. With reference to reflexivity, this is inextricably linked to both spectacle and theatricality. Thus, a reflexive attitude is inseparable from reconstructing the self, and the social world, and, in the case of *A Clockwork Orange* this is definitely achieved thanks to the already mentioned use of political and social satire and of parody of high and low culture in modern society. Furthermore, bringing into explicit focus what is otherwise only implicit or presupposed becomes central to a reflexive attitude something that, obviously, lies at the very core of parody and satire.

In their turn, both spectacle and theatricality dramatise the excesses of representation not by showing their dependence on certain canons and the passivity of art spectators, but, quite on the contrary, subverting and transcending high culture frontiers. Hence, the individual is not depicted as a mere immobile subject before artistic manifestations: he/she is incorporated in this artistic panorama and is never excluded from real participation into it. In this sense, social interaction with art, and most precisely, with high culture, becomes a crucial component of self-identity and an exploration of artifice at the core of modern culture. In this respect, the satiric episode of Alex being tied down and strait-jacketed to be forced to watch violent films environmentally paired to his favourite melody, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, is highly illustrative. By a double exposure to cultural products, Nazi footages and Beethoven's masterpiece, Alex is captive in the previously mentioned concentric relation of parodic and satiric modes in this work. Thus, *parodically*, he starts falling prey to his own violence by being caused revulsion against his beloved symphony, (Alex) *It is a sin, using Ludwig van like that. He did no harm to anyone. Beethoven just wrote music* (from the film). It is also worth remembering Alex' reaction when reading an article about violence and how *Modern Youth would be better off if a Lively Appreciation Of the Arts could be like encouraged*, in fact, he harshly rejects this putting himself as a clear example, *Music always sort of sharpened me up [...], ready to make with the old donner and blitzen and have vecks and ptitsas creeching away in my ha ha power* (1962: 35). Here lies one of the most suggestive clues about this parodic reversal, it is through a distortion of the apparently noble aspirations and effects of high culture over humanity, the book being itself a metaphorical instance of this process, that Alex seems to manifest his human superiority. Equally, the governmental aims *satirically* springs up when Dr. Brodsky, witness to Alex' agonizing pleads, happens to comment, *It can't be helped. Here's the punishment element perhaps. The Governor ought to be pleased...I'm sorry Alex, this is for your own good*. In other words, the effects of a high culture paragon as Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* deformed by the aid of drugs (an example of popular culture in modern society frequently exploited in dystopic and Cyberpunk narratives), becomes the artefact to cure Alex' anti-social tendencies.

Although literature and writing become the primary target of the novel, the film is saturated with images of fetishised painting, sculpture, classical music and sexuality, with Alex being constantly enthralled into orgiastic envisions of blood, rape and beating and always accompanied by powerful classical symphonies as background

music, however, literature and writing become the primary fetishised target of the novel. In fact, the cinematic adaptation has eliminated one of the most significant parodic metaphors of Burgess' original, Alexander's philosophical reflection on ontological issues in his *A Clockwork Orange* manuscript where he advocates the defence of human integrity and the threat represented by mechanist political and social conceptions. At this particular point, Burgess manages a complex relation by which the drive of the subject to know itself results in positing itself as its own object. The whole narrative is an extensive instance of the extract from Alexander's manuscript, - *The attempt to impose upon a man, a creature of growth and capable of sweetness, to ooze juicily at the last round the bearded lips of God, to attempt to impose, I say, laws and conditions appropriate to a mechanical creation, against this I raise my sword-pen-* (ACO: 21).

This exercise of authorial self-parody on the part of Burgess extends further in the third part of the novella with Alexander Machiavellian use and abuse of Alex' suppressed identity, in the same way writers frequently do with their own characters. Autobiographical hints are similarly detected in the portray of a crippled Alexander, taking into account that, at the time, Anthony Burgess had been diagnosed a terminal illness<sup>7</sup>. Kubrick has omitted this particular allusion to Alexander's manuscript and, Alex in the corresponding cinematic scene just throws the table with the typewriter on it dismissing, in this way, any possible involvement with the production of art. Nevertheless, all throughout the film, it is possible to detect some intertextual self-reflexive glimpses extracted from one of Kubrick's major cinematic success *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). Thus, the image of Alex leaping with his cane (symbol of his tyrannical power) and hurling Georgie and Dim into the river waters resembles the man-ape in the opening scenes of this film. This exercise of authorial self-parody overlaps with a simultaneous satiric criticism of human despotism and violent behaviours, by linking the primeval stages of primates' evolution with a twentieth century brawl. Although showing the greater sophistication of modern human beings by substituting the primitive bone by a cane, Kubrick seems to point out ironically to the circular, perennial brutality ingrained in human nature.

Kubrick switches Burgess' aesthetics and cultural representations by placing a major focus on music, and plastic arts. For instance, Alex' bedroom combines sexually explicit paintings, posters of Beethoven and a plastic, bleeding, figure of Jesus Christ. This clearly creates an analogous sense of 'parodic satire' subversion and a cumulative merging of high, low and popular culture elevating sexual obscenities and perversions to the category of prime works of art and, in this sense, parodically banalising traditional concepts of high art. Additionally, a number of the orchestral melodies are synthetically distorted, equating them, in so doing, to popular teenaged pop tunes. The musical film genre also become object of *interfilmic* parody. In many scenes of Kubrick's film, for instance, the playful acrobatic struggle between a girl assaulted by another urban gang, takes place on the stage of a derelict theatre or opera house, symbol of the collapse of society, image that foregrounds a particularly bitter satiric evaluation. Equally, Gene Kelly's *Singing in the Rain* reappears in several occa-

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<sup>7</sup> Burgess himself has pointed out at Nadsat as charged with lofty political implications evoking Communist propaganda by his wide use of Slavic linguistic roots in the elaboration of this argotic language. It must be taken into account that Russia at the date of the publication of *A Clockwork Orange*, the early sixties, focalised many Western anxieties about foreign invasions, totalitarian regimes and brainwashing.



sions during the film and, particularly, during one of the most disturbing scenes, that of Alex' brutal assault on Alexander *with its juxtaposition of the familiar lyrics of playful music from a classic film with images of brutality* also satirically employed as the background melody during the closing credits.

This musical atmosphere becomes particularly emphatic in many occasions setting an eerie mood for the scenes of death and violence. In this sense, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* coincides symbolically with the plot since the structural arrangement of this melody represents a transformation identical to that experienced by Alex' himself. The first movement of this symphony evokes a tragic environment of existential anguish for all mankind just like Alex' first violent activities and evil desires. The following is a good instance of Alex' parodic re-reading of a fragment from the lyrics of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*: [...] *I heard the Ninth, last movement, with the slovos all a bit mixed up like they knew themselves they had to be mixed-up, this being a dream:*

*Boy, thou uproarious shark of heaven,  
Slaughter of Elysium,  
Hearts on fire, aroused, enraptured,  
We will tolchock you on therot and kick  
your grahzny vonny bum (1962: 59).*

In the second movement, Beethoven's music expresses the longing for the liberation of humanity from its forlorn state of existence and a determined search for hope. This can be compared with Alex' resolution to accept the Ludovico Treatment, and the fact that even though the transformation was forced, Alex underwent a veritable conversion after the conditioning process. The final part of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* comes to a close with great delight in its last movement, better known as 'Ode to Joy' coinciding with the triumphant reversion of Alex' process. No doubt, this extended literary-musical matching perfectly fits into Hutcheon's definition of a 'parodic satire' mode.

Alex' last raptured vision, a theatrical rape heightened by the *Ninth Symphony*, in which he takes direct participation while surrounded by a Victorian public that applauds in a slow-motioned scene, epitomises the prime concern of Kubrick's adaptation: a crude satiric illustration of human hypocrisy, and the narrow gap between art and excess, democracy and totalitarianism. Obviously the book lacks this image, and instead, presents Alex exalted thoughts about his mature future, even contemplating the idea of bringing up a son.

Ideological tensions in modern society tend to spring from or be accentuated by the complex growth and development of mass media presiding effortlessly over all levels of society, indeed triumphantly active in every aspect of our present world as in that portrayed in *A Clockwork Orange*. Consequently, mass media do not escape mordant criticism either, most particularly revealed during Alex' interview in Alexander's home, where the former is subjected to the unscrupulous journalistic methods of the sensationalist press.

However, the clash between high and popular culture achieves its climax in one of the most brilliant scenes of the film, Alex' struggle with the 'Cat lady'. Burgess' original restricts any secondary implications to the employ of a Beethoven's bust as a

criminal weapon in Alex' hands. Further expanding the parodic and satiric potential symbolic value of this episode, Kubrick's merge a whole range of artistic elements in an elaborate visual interaction of high culture parodic decentering and satiric questioning. Music and painting, and particularly, a relatively small Beethoven's bust fighting a huge sculpture of a phallus (*a very important work of art*, according to its proprietor) get involve in a graceful balletic performance, an orgy of dismembered modern art. The archetypal phallic supremacy is not naively paired to the parallel impressive countenance of Beethoven, in some senses, a paradigmatic exponent of Hitler's disproportionate ambitions and tastes. Here, what could arise as an apparent mere distortion of art transcends visible moulds and enter into an allegoric space if establishing a comparison with the dubious democratic state in this future London community, thus, both art and political democracies parallelly prove not to be immune to corruption and deviances of any kind. Art as politics becomes liable to mockery and criticism as vivid embodiments of social degeneration as well as objects of aggression and murder. In this respect, another significant instance in Burgess' work suggestively epitomises this blurring of borders between high, low culture and mass media. Thus, the symbolic masks worn during Alex' gang attack on Alexander and his wife by him and his *droogs* representing Disraeli, Henry VIII (political power), Elvis Presley (materialism and mass culture) and Shelley (literature) imply an amalgamation of seemingly disparate cultural forces though clearly operating from an identical homogenised process of acculturation.

The reworking of ambiguous biblical images and texts and the resurrection of old myths in Burgess' work (Alexander the Great - Alexander the Large, Beethoven, Adolf Hitler) are basic in this process of rethinking art and history through parodic and satiric recreation. History as being consistently manipulated by human beings is represented by a juxtaposition of intertextual elements ironically aimed to revise and rewrite past and present, historical and social progress. Thus, sexual fantasies and brutal images come to Alex' mind when listening to the great German masters of classical music as when perusing the more intense violent parts of the Old and New Testaments. In fact, structurally, Burgess' work is articulated around a biblical conception of symbolic numerology. Firstly, dividing the book into three parts, symbol of the trinity, that is, unity, balance and perfection, and, secondly, each part, in turn, being integrated by seven chapters, standing for the seven days of Genesis. Parody is detected here, not only through Christian allusions, but also in the seemingly elaborate surface organization of the work oddly matched with a most blatant criminal chaotic atmosphere. Obviously, both the American edition as the film adaptation have interrupted this symbolism by obliterating the last chapter. But these biblical parodic resemblances expand beyond external aspects creating a fertile space for metaphoric disruption while gradually disclosing a series of daring parallels between Alex and the figure of Jesus Christ. Thus, Alex is betrayed three times by his close friends, his family and society in general echoing in this way St. Peter's denial of Jesus. Interestingly, in Kubrick's version, due to the absence of the last chapter, there is no difficulty in recognising the iconic relationship between Alex' story following Jesus' mythical life pilgrimage, although, of course, in a subverted sense. Hence, the three-years period Jesus' spent preaching to the Israelites can be matched to Alex' criminal adolescence, Jesus' condemnation and subsequent martyrdom is made par-

allel to the application of the Ludovico Technique on Alex, becoming, in so doing, a sacrificed victim for the good of humanity (the Minister of Interior words are explicit in this respect when referring to Alex after he receives the Ludovico Treatment, ([he is] *capable of being crucified before than crucify*)), and finally, Jesus' resurrection is equated to Alex' restoration to his original evilness. In short, traditional Christian values are reversed and put into question in an irreverent reappropriation of the New Testament pointing by that to a pattern of modern rhetorics based on a contrastive banalisation of present and past, history and fiction<sup>8</sup>.

Two more appealing examples of literary parody and intertextual retrieval are strategically located in Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*: on the one hand, the construction of this novel as an unconventional *Bildungsroman* -indeed *Künstlerroman*-, and, on the other, in its ironical transcoding of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

The second aspect is closely related with one of the most acclaimed elements of Burgess' novel its linguistic inventiveness and experiment in language by the creation of a teenager cryptic slang called *Nadsat*. What is more relevant about this creation is not only Burgess' ability to elaborate a linguistic system out of several real languages (English, Latin and Slavic languages) and its adequacy as a medium of expression for a highly mechanised and morally devastated youth, but also, its ingenious use in order to facilitate the inclusion of the readership into the story, indeed, being exposed to more than a hundred pages of this argot, it easily ends up making sense as a fluid form of communication<sup>7</sup>. Kubrick's adaptation attempts to maintain this teenaged language, although the number of terms belonging to the *Nadsat* linguistic system has been considerably reduced. Arguably, this reduction is motivated since the linguistic context in which the new words come up in the literary form provides sufficient clues for its perfect comprehension; the cinematic medium, however, principally focused on the audiovisual apparatus, certainly restricts its understanding and diffuses the inclusive effect achieved in the original.

*Nadsat* results particularly appealing for its novelty and witty structures seeking to foreground the violent traits of its speakers while, simultaneously, emphasising the readers' distance from them softening, somehow, the crude episodes of sado-masochist violence. The vocabulary takes on new significance as it evinces its technological and mechanical etymologies, (such as *glazzies* for *eyes*, or *sinny* for *cinema*, among others), in a parodic reworking of semantics that, simultaneously, will serve as an instrument for activating a satiric process.

Subsequently, there is little doubt that Alex' *transcontextualisation* of the term *gulliver*, meaning *head*, is not a naïve invention on the part of Burgess since it definitely leads us to trace a number of significant parallels between *A Clockwork Orange* and Swift's acerbic political satire *Gulliver's Travels*. Part One and Two become parodic distortions of Swift's eighteenth century satire, clearly recalling Gulliver's voyages to Lilliput and Brobdinag, one a small scale world, represented in this case by Alex himself and his gang, the second, a larger one embodied by the State and a pervading

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<sup>8</sup> Clothing in the film also participates as a *parodic satire* symbol of society and history, for instance, bowlers and top-hats, sign of old-fashioned aristocracy or bourgeoisie, are ironically worn by a gang of youngsters coming from, as far as we know, a working-class background and usually committed to the assault of middle and upper class individuals.

atmosphere of cultural deformation. Also of great significance is the humorous analogy of Alexander's *HOME* and Gulliver's stay at the flying island of Laputa inhabited by individuals ironically portrayed as possessors of a formidable but inane wisdom. Thus, the depiction of an intellectual élite, as that represented by Alexander and his wife, emphasises a great social disparity when juxtaposed with urban proletariat, as Alex' own family. This contrast is further stressed in Kubrick's adaptation by an ironic visual antithesis, although equally poignant in its critic, established between the sophisticated countenance of Alexander and his wife, and the snobbery of Alex' parents.<sup>9</sup> Whatever the internal implications of this satiric approach within Burgess' novella, its satiric target shows an obvious similarity between the erudite inhabitants of Laputa and the upper-class intellectual groups in this futuristic English society, both of them sharing a common moral ambiguity and a detached position towards those outside their privileged circles. Thus, Alexander, while claiming his personal involvement with social concerns and intellectual apologia for democratic ideals, he tries, at the same time, to keep himself safely apart from the corruption, moral misery and illiteracy of the urban areas moving to the isolation of the countryside, that is, parodically reworking the metaphoric satiric implications of Swift's Laputa flying island. Finally, deceived by everyone, Alex, as Gulliver, must decide whether to dismiss any relation with humanity, having been constantly betrayed, or to get reintegrate into society, not as before, but being aware of himself as an autonomous individual, avoiding pressures both from within, through his culturally shaped reactions, and from outside, from a fraudulent system. Obviously, the film by deleting the last chapter of the original version lacks, to a great extent, this interpretational dimension, dispossessing Alex of a final self-reflexive, conscious metamorphosis.

As way of conclusion, it is convenient to clarify the difficulty in exhausting the multiple instances of parodic satire found all along *A Clockwork Orange*. Whatever the aspects left uncommented, I consider that the brief analysis I have offered illustrates sufficiently how parody enters and participates in a whole range of possibilities in connection with satire, and particularly in relation with the politics of cultural representation. In terms of its capacity for changing positions and, therefore destabilising cultural, social and political relations, parody functions as a catalyst of textual reflection, a commitment to ideology on the part of the author and *as a way of textually incorporating the history of art [since] parody [acts as a] formal analogue to the dialogue of past and present...* (Hutcheon, 1988:25). As the divergences in adapting this parodic satire mode to Kubrick's cinematic version seem mainly to derive from the evident technical and expressive idiosyncrasies of each medium, any further comment is irrelevant in this respect. It can be generally concluded that, despite the omission of the book's last chapter, Kubrick's adaptation manifests, on the whole, a great degree of fidelity towards the book original constituents mainly by paralleling Burgess' emphasis on parodic *transcontextualisations* of past artistic and/or historical materials as a medium of satiric criticism.

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