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**Music in Anthony Burgess' Fiction**

Hudba v díle Anthonyho Burgesse

**BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE**

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## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

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## **KEY WORDS**

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

Literature has been considered an ideal model for literature since Romanticism, however, some of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century authors have employed the analogy more precisely than the Romantics. Being a classical composer as well as an author of fiction, Anthony Burgess represents the perfect example of how the two arts influence each other. Music pervades a large portion of the author's prolific literary work, occurring in various forms.

This thesis examines allusions to music, which offer insight into the psychology of characters in some texts and elucidates the context in others, as well as on the structural features of Burgess' works. Well acquainted with the technique of composing music, Burgess models some of his works on musical forms, or specific compositions and thus adds another layer to the connection between music and literature. Both of the aforementioned methods will be discussed first separately and then combined in a single novel. Burgess' short story "1889 and the Devil's Mode" (1989) will illustrate the use of music on a thematic level, the structural analogies to music will be examined in Burgess' experimental novel *Napoleon Symphony: A Novel in Four Movements* (1974) and finally, the interplay of both methods will be discussed in Burgess' most-recognized novel *A Clockwork Orange* (1962).

The first section of the thesis focuses on the theoretical aspects of the musico-literary relations, its occurrences in earlier literary works, and on music's relations to Burgess' life and other themes recurring throughout his oeuvre. The selected works are then analysed in separate chapters divided further into subsections, according to the discussed forms of "music in fiction".

## ABSTRAKT PRÁCE

Již od období romantismu byla hudba považována za vzor pro literární díla. Někteří autoři dvacátého století ovšem pracují s pojmem „hudba v literatuře“ přesněji než romantici. Tvorba britského poválečného autora Anthonyho Burgesse, který se po velkou část života věnoval mimo literaturu také skládání klasické hudby, představuje ideální příklad toho, jak mohou oba druhy umění těžit ze vzájemného vlivu. Hudba totiž proniká do četného Burgessova díla v různých rovinách a formách.

Práce se zabývá hudebními referencemi v Burgessových prózách, osvětlujícími jejich kontext a umožňujícími hlouběji porozumět jejich postavám. Zkoumá také způsoby, jakými hudba proniká do formální stránky Burgessových literárních děl. Využívaje svého vzdělání v oblasti teorie Burgess strukturuje některé prózy na principu hudebních forem či dokonce po vzoru konkrétních skladeb, čímž prohlubuje propojení hudby a literatury. Práce bude zkoumat hudbu v Burgessových dílech, kde se objevuje samostatně jen v rámci roviny tématicky, roviny strukturní a také v díle, kde se oba způsoby kombinují.

K tématické analýze byla vybrána povídka „Rok 1889 a tónorod ďábla“ (1989), jako příklad prózy těžící z hudebních struktur byl vybrán Burgessův experimentální román *Napoleonská symfonie* (1974) a na Burgessově nejslavnějším románu *Mechanický pomeranč* (1962) práce sleduje propojení obou metod.

V první části práce jsou zkoumány teoretické aspekty vzájemných vztahů literatury a hudby, výskyty hudebních struktur v dílech jiných autorů a vliv hudby na autorův život a na další témata vyskytující se v jeho literárním díle. Vybrané prózy jsou pak podrobeny analýze v samostatných kapitolách s podkapitolami zabývajících se různými analyzovanými podobami hudby v literatuře.



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## 1. Introduction

For centuries, music has belonged to one of the most powerful means of conveying emotion. Artists, regardless of generation, genre orientation or influence, have always looked to music for inspiration. It is no wonder then that for many, music has exceeded the role of a mere stimulus and become an essential part of their work. The literary field is no doubt influenced by music: phrases from musical terminology often enter the discourse of literary criticism as metaphors for those aspects of the writers' craft that go beyond the denotation level; music also speaks in the *belles-lettres* themselves, through poets' renderings, sound patterning of a poem, the remarks of fictional characters and in many other ways. Poetry is conceived of as the dominant landscape of literary affinities with music, thanks to the emphasis put on its sound, technique of structuring, etc. However, the intriguingly crafted presence of music can be found in works of fiction as well, especially from the modernist period onwards. The life-long fascination with music and the ways it can enter, inspire and shape the fictional discourse became one of the key vehicles of the writings of British post-war writer, Anthony Burgess. This thesis explores Burgess' relationship with music and the wide spectrum of ways in which he connects it with literature.

Although considered one of the most original writers of his era, Burgess is not the only author concerned with the possibilities of the music-literary interaction. In fact, his works account for a not insignificantly large canon. The critical attention given to these works formed the basis for what is now a fully-fledged literary discipline. It is also important to point out that regardless of the ingenuity and technical mastery of Burgess and other authors, the interaction of the two arts is not without limits emerging from their nature. The following section will therefore focus briefly on the possibilities and limitations of music in

literature and then give a concise introduction to the theoretical work of the field, mentioning the key terminology that will be used in connection with Burgess' fiction.

## 1. 1. Music and Literature: Theoretical background

Music and literature share traits that facilitate mutual influence. It was noted that both are temporal media: as opposed to for example architecture and painting they both “dynamically unfold their structure and meaning on the axis of time,”<sup>1</sup> as Wolf puts it. Furthermore, literature relies, to some degree, on sound and form – aspects that are essential for music. There are, however, barriers that make certain elements of music impossible to be conveyed in a text. First and foremost, sound, which is self-sufficient in music, is arbitrarily connected to meaning in language: contrary to this, texts are usually not meant to refer to themselves only. Walter Pater’s well-recognized quote “All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music”<sup>2</sup> understands the self-referentiality of music as the “condition” that should inspire all other arts, poetry especially – “while in all other works of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, [...] it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it.”<sup>3</sup>

For 20<sup>th</sup> century criticism, however, this represents an obstacle rather than potential, because as Wolf argues: “Music can be ‘pure form’, verbal language never.”<sup>4</sup> The problem is often discussed in connection with Joyce’s eleventh chapter of *Ulysses*, the structure of which serves as an emblematic example of a text modelled on the principle of musical compositions, but, precisely because of this, stands on the verge of comprehensibility: here, as Wolf correctly argues, “the higher the degree of musicalness the less a text is recognisable as narrative fiction.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Werner Wolf, *Selected essays on intermediality by Werner Wolf (1992-2014): theory and typology, literature-music relations, transmedial narratology, miscellaneous transmedial phenomena* ed. Walter Bernhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 216.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies of Art and Poetry* (London: Fontana Books, 1961), 129.

<sup>3</sup> Pater, *The Renaissance*, 129.

<sup>4</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 216.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Gerry Smyth, *Music in Contemporary British Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008): 53.

It is also important to note that literature does not, with the exception of drama and read-aloud text, have the means for simultaneous sound: something that is central for both polyphony and harmony in music. Although these two terms are frequently used in literary criticism, polyphony, as well as harmony in the strictly musical sense, can perhaps only be hinted at, for example as Burgess attempts it in some of his works. Finally, difficulties arise in deciding whether a given literary work can actually be classified as shaped by music. After all, techniques like repetitions of motives or their variations, which often form the core of the musico-literary interpretation, are, as Wolf notes, phenomena rather common in writing.<sup>6</sup> The debates over the possible musical influence on the structure of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* serve as an example of how far-fetched a musical interpretation can get. The question remains, what criteria can reliably mark a text as intermedial.

Somehow contrary to the modernist rejections of the concept of authorial intention, Werner Wolf states that for the musico-literary interpretation to be relevant, the presence of musical structures in a work of literature must be first and foremost intended by the author.<sup>7</sup> This may seem a bit problematical at first, however, Wolf correctly argues that this condition eliminates imposing a musical structure on any text that employs the literary techniques mentioned above. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine a sonata-form-shaped novel written by someone unaware of doing so, or someone lacking knowledge of music theory. Hence, the musicality of a novel is, as Wolf states, never unintended: the structural influence of music on the text should be pointed to in the mode of 'telling' either by the author's commentary outside the work or by the thematic use of music within the narrative.<sup>8</sup> Intermedial works are further marked by conspicuous opacity of the text, or an unusual use of language. Despite the challenges arising from differences in the nature of literature and music discussed above, the

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<sup>6</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 218.

<sup>7</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 220.

<sup>8</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 223.

two media undoubtedly can influence one another, or, in Pater's words, "are able, not indeed to supply the place of each other, but reciprocally to lend each other new forces."<sup>9</sup>

Throughout its history, literature has found various ways of incorporating music into its plotlines as well as its structures, which have been later examined in detail. The following section looks into the typology of musico-literary relations and provides a theoretical framework for further analyses.

Although the mutual influence of music and literature has a long tradition in literary history and criticism, it was predominantly poetry that was subject to comparative essays, for instance by Pater, or later Calvin S. Brown. The first serious theoretical inquiries into the problematics occur in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The groundwork for a complex typology of musico-literary relations was laid by Steven Paul Scher. Introduced in 1968, Scher's typology provides three different concepts of the possible relationships between the two arts: 'literature in music,' 'music and literature' and 'music in literature'.<sup>10</sup> In this conception, an opera is classified as an instance of 'literature and music', since the two media provide a "balanced combination of the two arts within a single work;"<sup>11</sup> 'literature in music' includes pieces of programme music or compositions inspired by identifiable literary works; finally, verbal music is understood as "words which relate to music only inasmuch as they strive to suggest the experience or effects of music, while necessarily remaining within the boundaries of the medium of literature."<sup>12</sup> This can be achieved by imitating the sound of music with words (word music in Scher's typology), mimicking the structure of music, or "poetic rendering of the [...] content of the music."<sup>13</sup> Apart from that, Scher comes with the category of "verbal music" defined as "any literary presentation [...] of existing or fictitious

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<sup>9</sup> Pater, *Renaissance*, 128.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Scher: "Notes Toward a Theory of Verbal Music," in *Essays on Literature and Music (1967-2004)* by Steven Paul Scher ed. Walter Bernhart, Werner Wolf (Amsterdam: Brill, 2004) pp. 23; 25.

<sup>11</sup> Scher, "Notes," 28.

<sup>12</sup> Scher, "Notes," 26.

<sup>13</sup> Scher, "Notes," 30.

musical compositions.”<sup>14</sup> This category is further divided into “re-presentation” or “presentation” of music – depending on whether the presented music is existing or imaginary; its relevance in the typology of musico-literary relations is, however, sometimes viewed as problematical.<sup>15</sup>

The theoretical aspects of the relations between music and fiction are further explained by Werner Wolf. Wolf broadens the field of study and provides a more structured typology, which, nevertheless, draws heavily on Scher’s triadic distinction. Wolf puts the music-literary relations into a larger framework of “intermediality”, i.e. the mutual influence of any two different media; his basic dichotomy is set as follows: each medium can either occur “with its typical or conventional signifiers [and] remains distinct and in principle separately quotable:”<sup>16</sup> this is the case of overt or direct intermediality that roughly corresponds to Scher’s “music and literature” category. As a contrasting concept, Wolf introduces covert or indirect intermediality which he defines as

the involvement of (at least) two conventionally distinct media [...] in which, however, only one (dominant) medium appears directly with its typical or conventional signifiers, the other one (the non-dominant medium) being only indirectly present 'within' the first medium as a signified (in some cases also as a referent).<sup>17</sup>

This distinction enables the application of the intermedial interpretation to media other than music and fiction, and, at the same time, refines Scher’s slightly imbalanced trichotomy<sup>18</sup> by merging “music in literature” and “literature in music” into one umbrella

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<sup>14</sup> Scher, “Notes,” 25.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 249.

<sup>16</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 243.

<sup>17</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 244.

<sup>18</sup> The problem of Scher’s typology lies in the fact that the “music and literature” concept contrast the other two on a different level than “music in literature” and “literature in music” oppose one another, as the latter two concepts both function on the principle of one dominant medium.

term. Wolf furthermore distinguishes two types of covert intermediality (demonstrated in literature as the dominant and music as the non-dominant medium): thematization and musicalisation of fiction. Intermedial “thematization,” or, presence in the mode of “telling” involves allusions to music in both the main and para-texts of a literary work<sup>19</sup>; according to Wolf, it is the “the most obvious” as well as the “most common” form of music in fiction.<sup>20</sup>

Forming its opposing pole is the “imitation [...] of the non-dominant medium on in the implicit mode of *showing*,”<sup>21</sup> which is, in the context of musico-literary relations, labelled as “musicalized fiction.” The notion was first explained in Huxley’s 1928 novel *Point Counter Point*, as incorporating music “not in the symbolist way, by subordinating sense to sound [...] But on a large scale, in the construction.”<sup>22</sup> The musicalisation, as is articulated in the novel is achieved through the repetitions and variations of themes, “the changes of moods, the abrupt transitions.”<sup>23</sup> In theory, music, as the non-dominant medium, shapes the structure, arrangement, or content of a literary work, resulting in the reader’s impression “that music is involved in the signification of the narrative.”<sup>24</sup> Drawing on and relocating Scher’s concepts, Wolf introduces three technical forms of musicalized fiction: word music, as defined by Scher, structural analogies to musical micro- and macro-forms, and imaginary content analogies – “attributing imaginary literary images to [musical compositions].”<sup>25</sup>

It is the unique characteristic of Burgess’ oeuvre that it encompasses all types of music in literature one can imagine. The typological distinction of different relationships that music and literature can enter will thus provide a helpful framework for a precise and detailed analysis of different techniques used in Burgess’ fiction. Of all the theoretical concepts

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<sup>19</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 246-247.

<sup>20</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 247.

<sup>21</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 248.

<sup>22</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Point Counter Point* (London: Routledge, 2008) 202.

<sup>23</sup> Huxley, *Point Counter Point*, 202.

<sup>24</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 248.

<sup>25</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 252.



introduced, Wolf's typology offers, in my opinion, the most elaborate and precise distinction between the possible forms, in which music can enter a literary discourse. Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, Wolf's terminology will be used.

## 1. 2. Music, Literature and the Life of Anthony Burgess

In his study on Burgess's poetics Stinson argues that "Even more than is the case with the average novelist, Burgess's fiction often proceeds in large measure from his own life experiences."<sup>26</sup> Burgess's biographical outline as well as the literary and historical context thus provides a helpful background for a comprehensive understanding of the author's work.

Anthony John Burgess Wilson was born on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1917. During his English studies at the University of Manchester, he developed a lifelong passion for phonetics and literature that experiments with form, he became particularly fascinated by Joyce and Gerard Manley Hopkins – notably authors who both work, to some degree, with music in their works. After World War II, Burgess spent several years as an English teacher in Malaya and Brunei, which were at the time still under British dominance. The provincial experience is thematized in several of his novels. After his return to England, Burgess was by mistake diagnosed with a brain tumour and given a year to live. In order to provide financially for his wife, he "[had] to turn into a professional writer"<sup>27</sup> – hence comes his extremely prolific writing career.

Music and literature come together in Burgess's life as well as in his fiction. With the musical background in the family, Burgess became a skilled piano player and an aspiring composer, with a certain proneness, as his autobiographical notes suggest, to experimentation in musical composition: "devour[ing] Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Hindemith and Honegger,"<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> John J. Stinson, *Anthony Burgess Revisited* (Boston: Twayne, 1991) vii. Gale E-books: <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=GVRL&sw=w&u=karlova&v=2.1&it=etoc&id=GALE%7C9780805738384&sid=bookmark-GVRL>

<sup>27</sup> Anthony Burgess, *Little Wilson and the Big God: being the first part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1988), 447-48.

<sup>28</sup> Burgess, *Little Wilson*, 114.

Burgess tries to “compose modernistically” at the age of fourteen. As a composer, Burgess is an author of over 250 works, including, among others, musical settings of *The Wasteland*, or Pound’s poems. Being an author passionate about intertextual and intermedial references, he even composed a song cycle called *The Brides of Enderby* – the title pointing to the protagonist of four of his novels.

However, as his musical endeavours proved to be unsuccessful, Burgess turned to fiction writing, which he “[has] always seen as an analogue to symphonic writing”<sup>29</sup> – Burgess, if we are to believe his *Confessions*, perceived the two media as related since his schoolyears, “[referring] to the Mozartian limpidity of Addison’s prose or the Wagnerian richness of Thomas de Quincy’s” in his essays.<sup>30</sup>

With a literary debut in 1956 and the last novel written in 1995, Burgess’s literary career spans over forty years, during which society, well as literature, underwent a notable transformation. Responding to the geopolitical changes in the former British colonial states, or, for example to the 60s’ youth culture phenomena in England, Burgess, however, remains a literary voice rather difficult to place, because of his extreme prolificacy in writing and, more importantly, his remarkable genre elasticity.

Burgess’s first published fiction, a triptych of novels known as *The Malayan Trilogy* – *Time for a Tiger* (1956), *The Enemy in the Blanket* (1958) and *Beds in the East* (1959) represents a comic strand of his writing. The three novels portray the years right before Malayan independence from the perspective of colonial officer Victor Crabbe. ~~(the double nature of the name being one of many illustrations of Burgess’s partiality to word puns in his texts).~~ The postcolonial themes occur also in *The Right to an Answer* (1960), another of Burgess’s comical novels.

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<sup>29</sup>Burgess, *Little Wilson*, 159.

<sup>30</sup> Burgess, *Little Wilson*, 115.

Burgess's "Enderby novels" – *Inside Mr Enderby* (1963), *Enderby Outside* (1968) and *Enderby's Dark Lady* (1984) – are also written predominantly in the humorous mode, being, as Stinson puts it, "a comic treatment of the familiar theme of 'the problems of the artist'."<sup>31</sup> The narrative, however, raises issues similar to those examined by *A Clockwork Orange*: the discrepancy between one's social adaptability and his artistic, intrinsic self.<sup>32</sup>

In some of his novels, Burgess works within a dystopian mode of writing. *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) which will be discussed in detail in this thesis, falls partially into this category, as well *The Wanting Seed* (1962) a novel examining the perils of population control. The dystopian fictional world also forms a framework for Burgess's 1978 novel *1985*. The text forms a peculiar literary response to Orwell, being both a novel with intertextual references and a metatextual commentary on *1984*. In this sense, *1985* is somehow the epitome of Burgess's aesthetics – the use of intertextuality and metatextuality belongs to the tropes central to the author's writing.

Burgess frequently (with a varying degree of elaborateness) introduces historical figures in his fiction. He fictionalises the lives of his literary and musical favourites, such as Marlowe in *The Dead Man in Deptford*, Shakespeare in *Nothing like the Sun*, plays with their imaginary meetings, ~~portraying, for instance an —John Keats and Belli in ABBA ABBA, or Hopkins and Debussy in "The Devil's Mode" or an~~ assembly of deceased composers in *Mozart and the Wolf Gang*. Stinson points out that Burgess, often focusing his attention on artistic figures, reduces the fictionalized characters to "very human dimensions," stripping them "of the false embellishment of myth."<sup>33</sup> ~~Moreover, Burgess often combines allusions and creates rich intertextual networks in his texts: for example, Shakespeare's biography is, as Stinson argues, viewed through the prism of Stephen Dedalus's theorizing on nature and~~

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<sup>31</sup> Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 94.

<sup>32</sup> Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 94.

<sup>33</sup> Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 82.

~~art in *Ulysses*~~.<sup>34</sup> Another, somewhat postmodern, element that appears in Burgess's fiction is the model author's intrusion into the fictional world – *Mozart and the Wolf Gang* includes a brief disputation between characters “Anthony” and “Burgess”, overtly authorial characters appear also in *Nothing Like the Sun*, *ABBA ABBA*, or *The End of the World News*, a 1982 experimental text combining three simultaneous plotlines. According to Clarke, these intrusions serve to destabilise the ontology of the text, foreground its fictional quality,<sup>35</sup> and becomes, thanks to the Burgess-influenced authors, a “persistent trope in anglophone fiction.”<sup>36</sup> Postmodern experimentation with the formal aspects of the novel defines Burgess's later novels *M/F* (1971) and *Napoleon Symphony* (1974), the latter being discussed in detail in this thesis.

The aforementioned metatextual authorial intrusions as well as the enthusiasm for experiment form point to Burgess's affinities with the modernist/postmodernist poetics: Clarke, for instance, mentions the influence of Flann O'Brien<sup>37</sup> and the deep inspiration from Joyce's writing is almost self-evident. It is the musico-literary experimentation that links Burgess to yet another modernist – Huxley's novel *Point Counter Point* draws its structure from music. Acknowledged in the title, as well as in the protagonist's ponderings mentioned above, the novel's structure is subjected to the principles of counterpoint, i.e. creating multiple melodies that fit into each other in terms of consonances and dissonances. However, as Ziolkowski points out, Huxley's novel is “more concerned with the juxtapositions of figures and scenes [...] than with any precise musical analogy”<sup>38</sup> as is done later by Burgess.

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<sup>34</sup> ~~Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 91.~~

<sup>35</sup> Jim Clarke, *The Aesthetics of Anthony Burgess: A Fire of Words* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017) 262-3. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66411-8>

<sup>36</sup> Clarke, *A Fire of Words*, 262.

<sup>37</sup> Clarke, *A Fire of Words*, 263.

<sup>38</sup> Theodore Ziolkowski, *Music Into Fiction: Composers Writing, Compositions Imitated* (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), 134.

The occasional involvement with catholic and moral themes links Burgess remotely to Graham Greene, whom Burgess saw as an influential figure at the beginning of his prose-writing career.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, both Greene and Burgess often work outside the borders of “high-brow” literature or connect elements of popular and intellectual, as well as realistic and experimental. This is in a sense epitomic for the post-war novel which, as Head argues, “has done much to discredit a rigid distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture.”<sup>40</sup> Moreover, “bridging the gap elite and popular art,”<sup>41</sup> as Hutcheon puts it, is considered one of the key points of postmodern poetics. Several other concepts put Burgess’s writing in the (already pointed to) framework of postmodernism. Hutcheon for example mentions Burgess in her study of intertextual parodies and postmodern handling of history – concepts that appear for instance in *Napoleon Symphony*. Burgess furthermore consistently works with the notion of oppositions – for instance in the Malayan trilogy, as Stinson argues, “opposing forces collide everywhere.”<sup>42</sup> But most importantly, Burgess is tied to the postmodern by his use of intermediality. In her study on the poetics of postmodernism, Hutcheon speaks of “transgressing of previously accepted limits: those of particular arts, of genres, of art itself”<sup>43</sup> and marks it as a typically postmodern phenomenon. Burgess himself asserts that “the gap between the sphere-born harmonious sisters [is] wide”<sup>44</sup>; in his works, however, this gap is constantly being challenged and experimented with.

A look at the life of Anthony Burgess thus demonstrates his passion for music and literature, his interest in experimenting with the form of both media and, most importantly, the fact that he senses the intermedial parallels examined by Wolf and others and discussed in

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<sup>39</sup> Burgess, *Little Wilson*, 365.

<sup>40</sup> Dominic Head, *The Cambridge introduction to modern British fiction, 1950-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 6. EBSCO: <https://search-ebscobhost-com.ezproxy.is.cuni.cz/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,shib&db=e000xww&AN=125039&lang=cs&site=e000xww&scope=site>.

<sup>41</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988) 20.

<sup>42</sup> Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 29.

<sup>43</sup> Hutcheon, *A Poetics*, 9.

<sup>44</sup> Burgess, *Little Wilson*, 291.

this thesis. The brief overview of Burgess's literary oeuvre points to the author's immense artistic variability and shows several frequently occurring tropes in his writing, such as the use of intertextuality, fusion of historical figures and fiction, or, the frequent use of music both on thematic and structural mode. The following analysis will discuss how Burgess uses the respective modes separately and combined: short story "1889 and the Devil's Mode" and *Napoleon Symphony* were for the analyses, since they represent the condensed and concentrated example of allusions to music and its use on the structural level. *A Clockwork Orange* demonstrates, how the two modes interplay with each other as well as with other key elements of the novel. Firstly, intermedial thematization, as the most common method of adding music to the literary discourse, will be examined through its use in "1889 and the Devil's Mode" followed by the discussion of the purely experimental use of structural analogies in *Napoleon Symphony* and finally, the thesis will focus on the combination of thematic and structural in *A Clockwork Orange*.

## 2. Analysis

### 2.1. "1889 and the Devil's Mode" (1989)

"1889 and the Devil's Mode" is a text from Burgess's only short story collection *The Devil's Mode and Other Stories* written in 1989, in the last stage of the author's career. Many of the texts employ fictionalized historical figures, ranging from Shakesperians to Attila or pre-raphaelite poets, portraying them with witty humour. The title story has been considered "the most humane" and one of the "best tales"<sup>45</sup> of the collection overall not very well received.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Helen Benedict, "Shakespeare meets Cervantes," review of *The Devil's Mode and Other Stories*, *The New York Times* December 10, 1989. <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/97/11/30/home/burgess-devilmode.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Benedict "Shakespeare meets Cervantes" or Arthur Waldhorn's review in *Library Journal* 114, no.18 (November 1, 1989), 115. [https://cuni.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/420CKIS\\_INST/1pop0hq/cdi\\_proquest\\_reports\\_196731316](https://cuni.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/420CKIS_INST/1pop0hq/cdi_proquest_reports_196731316).

The story, playing with a fictional meeting of several literary and musical personages, is centred around the composition of Debussy's *Prelude a l'après-midi d'un faune*. The covert narration combines the perspective of fictionalized Robert Browning and, more importantly, 26-year-old fictional representation of Claude Debussy.

The narrative opens with Debussy's recollection of the 1889 World Exhibition featuring a performance of Javanese gamelan,<sup>47</sup> that brought tonic systems and rhythms new to Western music. Debussy, portrayed as an impoverished composer financially supported by his partner, meets a fellow composer, with whom he discusses the (im)possibilities of setting the newly built Eiffel Tower into music, then leaves for London to meet Christina and William Rossetti who ordered a musical score for the eulogy to their deceased brother. The partition is not accepted by the Rossetti siblings, but on his way back, Debussy meets a fellow compatriot, Stephané Mallarmé whose symbolist poem "L'après-midi d'un faune" Debussy once planned to set to music, and who persuades the composer to accompany him on a trip to Dublin. The narrative perspective then shifts to Robert Browning, seeking confession in one of the Irish catholic monasteries, discussing the matter of sin, abolition, Protestantism and Catholicism with one of the priests. At the same time, Debussy and Mallarmé meet Father Allen to see unpublished juvenile poems by E. A. Poe, which Mallarmé wishes to translate into French. Similarly to Debussy's, Mallarmé's journey proves futile as he finds the poems simply not good enough to be translated. Later, at the hotel they meet Browning and discuss art and morals, touching upon the issue of self-reference in music and literature. Browning then ponders Mallarmé's viewpoints in his room. In the last section of the story, Mallarmé and Debussy visit a common house in Ireland; as Debussy is playing the tune from *Samson et Dalila* on the badly tempered piano in the house, one mistuned key

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<sup>47</sup> "A type of musical ensemble traditional to parts of Indonesia, esp. Java and Bali, and usually consisting mainly of tuned percussion instruments, with some woodwind and string ones." *Oxford English Dictionary*, online, last modified March, 2022. <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/76476?redirectedFrom=gamelan#eid>.

creates a tritone in the melody and Burgess's Debussy comes upon the main theme of the *Prelude*.

### 2.1.1. Music in "1889 and the Devil's Mode"

Analysed through Wolf's theoretical concepts of intermediality, the story does not show marks of any structural analogies to music. The narrative is, to a large degree linear with no opaqueness in the language indicating the need for musico-literary interpretation of the structure. The narrative perspective of the fictional Claude Debussy is periodically changed to Robert Browning's viewpoint – every third section of the story contains Browning as the focaliser. This might be compared to the alteration of principal and secondary theme in music – however, the scheme does not point to any existing musical forms and interpreting a simple changing of perspectives itself as a structural analogy to music would almost certainly lead to an over-interpretation of the story.

To some extent, word music can be found in the opening passage of the story, where Burgess imitates the rhythm of the drums mentioned by arranging their names into rhyming or alliterative pairs and by creating regular rhythmical units that, to a certain degree, imitate the sound of drums: "Claude's ears buzzed. Buzzed with bonang and gambang, saron and gender, ketipung and kenong."<sup>48</sup> The function of word music in the story is, nevertheless, restricted only to this instant and is merely ornamental.

In "1889 and the Devil's Mode," music is present especially in the mode of telling, the story thus employs, in Wolf's terminology, intermedial thematization. The numerous allusions to music enter a complex intertextual network of the story and it is the intermedial thematization of music and its connection to other intertextual references that forms central elements for the interpretation of the story.

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<sup>48</sup> Anthony Burgess, *The Devil's Mode and Other Stories* (London: Hutchinson, 1989), 79.



#### 2.1.1.1 Allusions to music in the story”

Music, literature and the combination of the two forms the main idea of “1889 and the Devil’s Mode as the plotline climaxes with Claude Debussy creating the musical setting for Mallarmé’s poem during an unsuccessful journey to Great Britain, where he came for a similar purpose – to compose the music for an elegy by Christina Rossetti’s poem. Both the successful and the failed projects are significant, as they subtly point to the fin-de-siecle change of aesthetics in arts including music and literature.

As is characteristic of many of his other texts, Burgess creates his characters from real historical figures. The relations between music and literature in the story are pointed to through the use of fictionalization. Most of the characters that either appear in the story or are referred to are artists – some being musicians or composers (for instance Debussy or Satie) and a number of them literary personages (Mallarmé, Browning, Christina Rossetti) some characters skilled in both arts. Interestingly, a dialogue between fictionalized Mallarmé and Browning from the latter half of the story touches upon the problematics of self-referentiality of music and literature:

“Literature must have a subject.”  
“Its subject must be itself. As with music.”  
“Even music teaches its great moral lessons.”<sup>49</sup>

Notably, the ideas are put into the conversation between those two characters as they represent two different coexisting literary generations and, in the dialogues cited above hint at the radical changes that affected all arts with the rise of modernism. The generational contrast is pointed to furthermore in the story – several pioneering figures of modernism in both music and literature, such as Erik Satie or Gerard Manley Hopkins are mentioned by the

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<sup>49</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 101.

characters, and the exotic music of Javanese gamelan is contrasted with the “grinning Haydn or simpering Mozart.”<sup>50</sup>

Gamelan music is another key allusion in the text, subtly pointing to the change. It is the reminiscence of a gamelan orchestra experience that opens up the story, the motif recurring multiple times. As Pasler argues, “the dancers, actors, and musicians from Java and Vietnam were among the most popular attraction”<sup>51</sup> at the 1889 world exhibition in Paris. Many visitors would see the performances as a mere spectacle, asserting the dominance of Western culture, as one of the journal reports shows: “[they] spent many hours in these savage enclosures and houses studying the people and their arts and listening to their rude music.”<sup>52</sup> For others, however, the new sounds presented the idea of music as a “cultural universal” as Pasler puts it, and would broaden their perception of the possibilities of music. According to Pasler, “exotic music, together with what was written about it, led some composers to reconsider traditional Western notions of melody, harmony, and especially rhythm”<sup>53</sup> and it was Debussy, relatively unknown at the time, who benefited from the experience greatly. The exotic music of the gamelan orchestra forms one of the sources of inspiration for the *Prelude* in the story. Moreover, Javanese music is put, in Debussy’s perspective, into connection with change. In the opening paragraph, he meditates upon the long tradition of consonances-defined Western music: “and yet that had to be all over. The voices of the Javanese [...] said so.”<sup>54</sup> Later, during Debussy’s meeting with Father Allan, the reminiscence comes up again: “The exotic, Claude thought vaguely, hearing in his head the

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<sup>50</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 80.

<sup>51</sup> Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009): 550.

<sup>52</sup> Otis T. Mason, “Anthropology in Paris During the Exposition of 1889,” *American Anthropologist* 3, No.1 (January 1890): 35.

<sup>53</sup> Pasler, *Composing the Citizen*, 580.

<sup>54</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 79.

bonang [...]. It was always the exotic that primed the new.”<sup>55</sup> The gamelan allusions in the story thus point to the changes emerging at the turn of the century.

In the opening parts of the text, Debussy and Godet discuss the possibilities of setting the newly built Eiffel Tower into music, using merely sequences of fourths and fifths in order to reflect its skeletal nature – Godet immediately points to the problem of the augmented fourth inevitable in such that process. When, later, Debussy suggests keeping the interval, Godet replies: “But it stands for something faulty. [...] All our music’s been based on avoiding the augmented fourth.”<sup>56</sup> The augmented fourth, or tritone and the change of its reception by musicians form an allusion central to the meaning of the short story.

The interval was forbidden in Western medieval music<sup>57</sup>, having been marked as *diabolus in musica*, or the devil’s interval.<sup>58</sup> This of course makes for an interesting paradox if we consider the “pure form” of music, as the interval has been ascribed meaning, which has been, moreover, persistent through the history of music up to the present-day textbooks on classical harmony. It was 20<sup>th</sup>-century music and some of its predecessors that began to use the interval freely, not restricting it to one of the components of the dominant seventh chord and considering it neutral<sup>59</sup>.

The interval, together with its connotations is mentioned multiple times in the story. The Javanese music’s employment of the interval is discussed by during the discussion between Debussy and Godet, with Debussy pointing out that “there [is] no sense of breakdown in that gamelan music.”<sup>60</sup> As the dogmatic view in the interval disappears, the image of a devil transforms into a more neutral idea of a faun. The change is reflected in the

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<sup>55</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 98.

<sup>56</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 84.

<sup>57</sup> Michael Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 741.

<sup>58</sup> Hence comes its use in musical compositions to suggest evil. Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary*, 741.

<sup>59</sup> Vincent Perischetti, *Twentieth-century Harmony: Creative Aspects and Practice* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1961): 14.

<sup>60</sup> Burgess, *The Devils’ Mode*, 84.

fictionalized moment of creation of the prelude: “A tritone, the *modus diabolici*. But the creature was not the devil. [...] The faun played it on his flute.”<sup>61</sup> The shift from Christian to ancient imagery is then somewhat epitomic for the radical shifts from tradition that were characteristic of all arts during the fin de siècle époque. It points to the modernist fondness of ancient myth and its transposition into modern contexts. It removes the arbitrary meaning attached to the musical interval and with it the idea that “discords are evil, but can be resolved into concords, which are good,”<sup>62</sup> expressed by a one of the characters in the story.

In “1889 and the Devil’s Mode,” Burgess employs fictionalized historical characters and situations to convey an idea of music as one of the key vehicles of the emerging modern era. Debates on its central ideas, as is the self-referentiality of art, are demonstrated through the viewpoints of Burgess’s artist-creator characters and their discussions in the story. Two different voices of poetry are represented for instance by Mallarmé and the Rosetti and the (un)successful setting of their works to music. Burgess touches upon other events important to the era – most of them are, nevertheless, put into the connection with music. The Eiffel Tower is likened to a musical succession of fourths and fifths, as both represent a revolutionary aesthetics. The overall importance of the 1889 exhibition is, again, seen from a musical point of view. The exotic music of the gamelan orchestra is viewed as a fresh air for the obsolete practices of Western music, and as a source of inspiration for the modernists. The most important metaphor for the transformation is then formed by the references to the augmented fourth interval. At first perceived as an interval that cannot be employed fully, it later serves an incentive for Debussy’s probably most famous composition. At first a “devil in music”, then the perfect representation of Mallarmé’s faun, the interval serves as the epitome of the transformation of aesthetics and repudiation of some traditional dogmas of

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<sup>61</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 108.

<sup>62</sup> Burgess, *The Devil’s Mode*, 102.

Western cultures. The story thus forms an interesting textual response to the era presented through the lenses of music and in that merges the two arts, using a network of interconnected allusions, attention to detail and context, and wit. However, it was already mentioned that Burgess does not restrict the use of music in his texts to a thematic level, but, drawing on his experience with music as well as the Joycean experiments with literary form, Burgess turns music into a device shaping the structure of a novel. His most remarkable achievement in this type of literary experiment is his novel *Napoleon Symphony*, first published in 1975.

## 2.2. Napoleon Symphony (1974)

With the idea of a novel strictly following a particular symphonic structure being on Burgess's mind on some time, *Napoleon Symphony* originated as a screenplay for a Stanley Kubrick movie. Kubrick and Burgess discussed using a symphony "which had already narrative associations [...],"<sup>63</sup> Beethoven's *Eroica*. During the process of writing, however, the project proved unsuitable for cinematic adaptation, and Burgess thus continued writing with even more space for the experiment. The chosen musical material is in itself considered a ground-breaking work in the history of Western music. Hamilton-Paterson speaks of a "gulf [that] instantly opened up between the work and every other symphony that gone before it."<sup>64</sup> Importantly, this was "not just a gulf of musical form [...] The music seemed to suggest to its listeners a narrative."<sup>65</sup> The well-known legend about the inspiration behind the Third Symphony – at first composed with the figure of Napoleon in mind, to whom it was originally dedicated – then provided a theme for the narrative, encouraging the novelist to engage with what Benedict labelled "a familiar Burgess device"<sup>1</sup>: a fictional play with a historical character.

In an analogy to the respective movements of Beethoven's symphony, the novel is divided into four parts with a brief introductory passage. The "prelude" presents an assembly waiting for Napoleon's arrival; the "camera eye" of the narration anticipates the swift

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<sup>63</sup> Anthony Burgess, *You've Had Your Time: the Second Part of the Confessions* (New York: G. Weidenfeld, 1991), 247.

<sup>64</sup> James Hamilton-Paterson, *Beethoven's Eroica: the First Great Romantic Symphony* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 144.

<sup>65</sup> Hamilton-Paterson, *Beethoven's Eroica*, 144.

changes of focalisation in the text that follows. Set in Paris after the French Revolution, the first section of the novel introduces Burgess's rather comically infatuated Bonaparte, the leader of the Italian army, some of his closest associates, and his spouse Josephine. Bonaparte celebrates victory after victory on Italian battlefields as he enthuses his troupes with the same passion that inspires his fervent love letters to Josephine. After forcing the Austrian emperor to a truce and attending his sister's wedding, Napoleon sets off to Egypt – the campaign, despite its successful outset, turns into a failure, as the French troupes are slayed by plague and British armies, and news of Josephine's affairs reach her husband. Napoleon secretly returns to France. After a coup d'état, France is ruled by a triumvirate with Bonaparte serving as the First Consul, gradually seizing power and, in the finale of the section, having himself crowned as the French Emperor. The second part covers Bonaparte's negotiations with the Russian and Prussian governors, followed by his unsuccessful war in Russia and the tragic retrieve across the Berezina river, with Bonaparte leaving his troupes once again to stop the spreading rumours of his death in Paris. The rapid alternation of scenes and focalisers of the first section is replaced by frequent occurrences of dreams and reminiscences in the perspective of Bonaparte and Josephine, already divorced, as the monarch seeks a politically advantageous marriage, and an unnamed commander, depicting the building of the bridges in Russia and the failed escape across them. In the opening paragraphs of the section, Bonaparte remembers an encounter with his failed assassin, a strong-headed German student Stapp – their conversation conveys the ideas of growing German nationalism, contrasted by the views of Stapp's cousin, whom Bonaparte accidentally meets on his incognito journey through Parisian cafés, which closes the section.

Evoking the playful and joyful mode of the symphonic *Scherzo*, the third section of the novel opens with the celebration of Bonaparte's coronation. As a part of the celebrations, Bonaparte and some of his guests attend a tragic opera in Paris – a retelling of the

Promethean myth. Bonaparte, initially bored by the performance, grows suspicious about its parodic potential, interpreting it as a satire aimed at his wife and himself: this makes him, in a grotesquely authoritative manner, order the play to be altered to his liking. The script is, however, replaced with an explicitly parodical monologue of the Prometheus-Bonaparte figure. The monologue gradually begins to be interspersed with Wellington and Talleyrand's discussions leading to the return of the Bourbons and Bonaparte's exile.

The finale of the novel presents Bonaparte on his way to the island of St. Helena, convinced of analogies between his fate and that of Christ, Bonaparte as a nostalgic prisoner, spending time in conversation with young Betsy Balcombe, Bonaparte arguing about his living conditions with Sir Hudson Lowe, or cultivating his little garden, which he sees as the metaphor for his earlier political endeavours in Europe. The linearity of the narrative is disrupted with the authorial voice entering the narration for the first time with a Shandyesque digression on the nature and symbolism of the letter "W", skilfully handled prolepses, or Napoleon's reminiscences and dreams about the previous events in his life, which increase in number and extent, grow surreal, as his body slowly gives in to starvation and sickness. Alternating with the hallucinations are the disputations of his physicians, with the majority of them instructing, led by Hudson's instructions, improper care. Bonaparte's death then, the novel suggests, is the result of the treatment. The text closes with Bonaparte's Joyce-resembling internal monologue and his meeting with the troops.

### 2.2.1 Musico-literary elements in *Napoleon Symphony*

#### 2.2.1.1 *Intermedial thematization in the novel*

Given the source material, the role of music on the thematic level is of peripheral importance with only a few occurrences of musical allusions in the narrative. Nevertheless, these instances provide some fruitful metaphors. Frequently recurring, especially in the first section of the novel, is the motif of minuet and waltz. Burgess's Napoleon employs the



motifs multiple times as a metaphor for the severity of the war: “The days of the minuet are over,”<sup>66</sup> or for the specific French military procedures: “No more minuets. Augereau knows all about the waltz. We’ll waltz them back to Vienna.”<sup>67</sup> The frequent occurrence of the waltz motif also serves as a, in a sense metatextual, reference to the tempo of the movement, which is, in Berlioz’s words, “nearly equal to that of waltz.”<sup>68</sup> Burgess often uses the “mode of telling” metatextually, commenting on the analogies between his novel and its symphonic counterpart. The *marcia funebre* – the subtitle of the second movement – is evoked by the army’s *march* back from Russia as well as by multiple *funerals* dreamt or witnessed by Bonaparte. The opening of Josephine’s perspective in the same section – “nonsense, but rather charming played on flutes and oboes”<sup>69</sup> – even points to a specific moment in the symphony: the restating of the main theme by the wind instruments. Furthermore, the Promethean theme of the opera visited by Bonaparte in the *Scherzo* not only suggests merging of the two figures, but also points to the famous motivic relations between *Eroica* and Beethoven’s earlier composition *The Creatures of Prometheus*.<sup>70</sup> The thematic references also enter a dialogue with *Eroica*, creating moments of subtle irony, as in the textual counterpart to the fourth movement subtitled of *Finale*, which is opened with Bonaparte’s cries “Not all over, [...] not in the least all over.”<sup>71</sup> Although present only sporadically, thematic references to music add to the overall effect of the novel. As was mentioned by Wolf, “explicit ‘telling’ of musical affinities” belongs to key traits of a musicalized text<sup>72</sup>; the musical allusions in *Napoleon Symphony* enhance the link between the composition and the novel, help to navigate the reader in the symphonic material and serve to ironic and comical

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<sup>66</sup> Anthony Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony* (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), 6.

<sup>67</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 7.

<sup>68</sup> Hector Berlioz, *A Critical Study of Beethoven’s Nine Symphonies*, trans. Edwin Evans (London: William Reeves, 1958) 41.

<sup>69</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 140.

<sup>70</sup> Mentioned for example by Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven’s Symphonies: an artistic vision* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015), 42.

<sup>71</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 285.

<sup>72</sup> Wolf, *Selected Essays*, 223.

purposes. Nevertheless, it is the elaborateness of structural analogies to music that forms the backbone of the novel and its importance.

### 2.2.1.2. *Musicalisation of Napoleon Symphony*

As was already mentioned, the four parts form analogies to the four movements of Beethoven's *Eroica*: the general mood of the novel's sections corresponds to the mood of the respective symphonic movements and, as Ziolkowski argues, "the relative length of each of the four parts of the novel is calculated to correspond with great precision to the listening time of the corresponding movement of the symphony."<sup>73</sup> Burgess, however, surpasses these surface correspondences and explores the musicalisation of fiction and its possibilities to the utmost detail.

The first movement is, as is the custom for symphonic works, composed in the fashion of sonata form (exposition – development – recapitulation – coda), which is reflected by the four-part structure of the text. The first section, introducing the characters and covering Bonaparte's victorious years in France and Italy, thus forms a textual exposition; the journey for Egypt and the events of the African campaign correspond to the development of the sonata form; and finally, in the recapitulation part where the main themes of the exposition are usually restated, the novel's setting "returns" back to France, letting him crowned Emperor in the coda. Within this general structure, Burgess meticulously captures the alternations and repetitions of themes within each section.

The main theme of the Allegro movement is introduced by a single instrument group – accordingly, the reader is introduced to the first section by a resembling a stream of thoughts love letter by Napoleon, holding Josephine's picture. The theme is then passed on to other instruments, as is the portrait in the text: "Massena took it from Augerau who had taken

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<sup>73</sup> Ziolkowski, *Music into Fiction*, 120.

it from La Harpe [...].”<sup>74</sup> Bonaparte’s name appears in the text for the first time a few pages later, similarly to the theme stated by the whole orchestra after a few bars.

The exposition then proceeds with numerous transitions, minor themes, or a second lyrical subject in the dominant key. Burgess answers by rapid changes of perspectives, including Napoleon, Josephine, or a troop of citizens, listed each time with an almost incomprehensible variation, which can be interpreted as a textual response to repetition. The development is marked with a similar density of themes, embellished by two fugal passages: Burgess retains the tempo of changes in narration and, as Shockley observes, adds the increased use of poetry, interspersing it with the prose sections, by which he creates a “second level of polyphony.”<sup>75</sup> In Shockley’s opinion, the alteration of prose and poetry, especially the villanelle appearing towards the development / Egyptian section “implies simultaneity” – moreover, the line “*Bonaparte will kiss the soil of France*”<sup>76</sup> that forms the villanelle’s refrain, forms an ingenious analogy to the main theme that sounds in brass and woodwinds under the development themes and anticipates, as well as the verse does, the recapitulation.

It is with the recurrence of lexical units, motives and the order of focalisers that the recapitulation of the main themes of the exposition is handled. The introductory letter returns, as mentioned by Shockley, with lexical variations.<sup>77</sup> As all instruments present the main theme, Bonaparte is “presented” to the reader as the First Consul, examining, instead of Josephine’s picture, his own reflection in the mirror. The Citizens’ troops face the same conditions in the exposition: “Drizzle fell coldly on Montenotte, then thickened to proper rain,”<sup>78</sup> and in the recapitulation: “Drizzle fell coldly on Genoa, then thickened to proper

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<sup>74</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 3.

<sup>75</sup> Alan Shockley, *Music in the Words: musical form and Counterpoint in the twentieth-century Novel* (London: Routledge, 2016), 86. <doi:10.4324/9781315090832>.

<sup>76</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 56.

<sup>77</sup> Shockley, *Music in the Words*, 82.

<sup>78</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 8.

rain.”<sup>79</sup> The section is also far shorter than the movement’s opening, giving way to the coda – Bonaparte’s coronation. The coda includes, unusually, a theme from the development section, posing yet another challenge to the narrative, which is set back in Italy. Burgess uses this recurrence to enhance the comic effect of the novel, as he lets his Bonaparte give a speech in front of the Italian clergy: ““We all are [...] respecting the holy prophet, worshipping Allah –’ He caught puzzled looks. Wrong country, wrong religion.”<sup>80</sup> The following movements of the text are handled with the same precision and inventiveness.

For the second movement, Burgess draws from the methods familiar from the *Allegro* – shifts in settings and perspectives – and adds more layers of musico-literary experiment. The funeral march of *Eroica* is built around the powerful first melody, which enters without any introduction and recurs regularly as the main theme of the rondo<sup>81</sup> form of the movement. Burgess develops a new strategy to underline the theme’s prominence – the section opens with a short mockingly mourning poem rhythmically corresponding, as Burgess explains, to Beethoven’s theme<sup>82</sup>:

There he lies en-san - guina - ted ty - rant O blood-y blood-y ty - rant

See how the sin with - in Doth in - car - na - dine his skin from the shin to the chin.

The poem or its fragments then interrupt the text with the same intensity as the march theme; it is subject to variations in vowels, as well as in the semantic object to “*Reincarnate*

<sup>79</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 76.

<sup>80</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 86.

<sup>81</sup> “Form of composition [...] in which one section intermittently recurs. [...] Frequent pattern is ABACADA.” Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 581.

<sup>82</sup> Anthony Burgess, *This Man and his Music*, as cited in Shockley: *Music in the Words*, 75.

*Cleopatra*”<sup>83</sup> Josephine, pointing thus to the change in instrumentation. Right before the B section, the two poems intertwine and, towards the end of the movement, the lyrics return as a part of Bonaparte’s interior monologue, swallowed by other motifs.

The Scherzo of Beethoven’s *Eroica* is in its general structure – ABA’ – similar to the sonata form that shapes the first movement. The representation of the recapitulation through the setting of the text is not repeated, however, Burgess once again uses the lexical variations and changes in narrative perspective to reflect the relations between the musical themes. The opening of the section: “From bivouac to bivouac to bivouac to bivouac to bivouac”<sup>84</sup> is thus echoed in “From Cannes (has kissed the soil of France) to Grasse to Séranon to Digne”<sup>85</sup> referring to Bonaparte’s journey and upon close inspection, those lexical variations can be found throughout both passages. A paragraph-long shift to Madame Mère’s thoughts serves as an example of contrasting themes by narrative perspective, although the device is used to a much lesser extent than in the first section of the novel. But the A part of the Scherzo is, in comparison to the exposition/recapitulation themes in a sonata form, largely monothematic and, in the case of *Eroica*, relies on the changes in instrumentation, key and dynamics, posing even more of a challenge on the narrative requiring linearity. Burgess mimics this monotonousness with an almost pedantic use of listing: as the main theme is stated by different groups of instruments, the paragraphs give a detailed account of, for instance, the guests present at the celebrations (p. 251), Bonaparte’s titles (p. 252), or the citizens he’s passing on the way to the opera (pp. 259, 260) adding comical effect to the text. The A/A’ section of the Scherzo being this repetitive and much shorter than other movements gives Burgess, on the other hand, more space to develop the analogy in different ways, mirroring for example the swift rhythm of the music by stress-patterning and rhyming of the prose:

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<sup>83</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 140.

<sup>84</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 251.

<sup>85</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 272.

“United Kingdom of Benelux Benelux, Britain gets Malta and Cape of Good Hope. Plenty for Austria, plenty for Prussia but nothing at all in the Paws of the Pope.”<sup>86</sup>

The trio (B section) of the third movement corresponds to the Promethean play in verse. According to Shockley, this stands for an ingenuous solution, as “it is the nature of musical trio sections to sound old-fashioned [...] and an ancient myth sets the play far removed from the real world and the present day.”<sup>87</sup> It also represents a certain deviation from *Eroica* – while Beethoven, through the use of the same themes, directly connects the symphony with *The Creatures of Prometheus* in the fourth movement, Burgess forms the direct analogy<sup>88</sup> as early as the *Scherzo*.

Like the symphony, the novel returns to some of the motives from the previous movements in its *Finale*: dying Bonaparte’s dreams, which in themselves formed one of the main motifs of *Marcia funebre*, include the motifs of sultan, Islam, snow and Russia, referring thus to the first two movements, and one of the passages forms a word-for-word citation of the third movement’s opening. This recapitulation is important for one more reason. As both Mowat and Shockley observe, the fourth section of the novel is marked with increased use of literary pastiche<sup>89</sup>: apart from the Joycean finale, Shockley notices pieces of prose evoking for instance Dickens, Scott, Henry James, or a poem written in the fashion of Burgess’ favoured poet Gerard Manley Hopkins.<sup>90</sup> Bonaparte’s dream of torches lighting “From bivouac to bivouac to bivouac” thus points to the *Scherzo* and at the same time works as a self-referential piece of pastiche. The use of literary parody forms a brilliant representation of the “theme and variations” structure of Beethoven’s final movement;

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<sup>86</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 277.

<sup>87</sup> Shockley, *Music in the Words*, 92.

<sup>88</sup> Although, as Shockley points out, the novel hints at the connection earlier through motives of fire, liver and men of clay – Shockley, *Music in the Words*, 102–103.

<sup>89</sup> John Mowat, “Joyce’s Contemporary: A Study of Anthony Burgess’ *Napoleon Symphony*,” *Contemporary Literature* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1978), 191. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1207954>.

<sup>90</sup> Shockley, *Music in the Words*, 87–100.

adapting well-known literary poetics is more than fitting for the representation of the final movement that famously borrows from Beethoven's earlier works<sup>91</sup>; and finally, thanks to the pastiche, Burgess' literary self dissolves in the abundance of other voices,<sup>92</sup> just as the main theme becomes hardly recognizable in some of the variations.

As Shockley correctly argues, Burgess' text ceases to be a historical novel, or a biography.<sup>93</sup> It can be argued, however, that the analysed handling of the material puts Bonaparte "off the historical pedestal" – the general's life is reduced to a mere motif, a tool for Burgess' experiment; and, experimenting with the potential of musico-literary devices is after all the goal of Burgess' novel.

In an interview with John Cullinan, Burgess states that "in the widest possible formal sense [...] we've hardly begun to explore the possibilities"<sup>94</sup> of combining music and literature. *Napoleon Symphony*, disapproved of and largely overlooked by the literary public, marks a notable achievement in exploring this wide range of possibilities – for each movement, Burgess comes with a new way of giving "*Symphonic shape to verbal narrative*."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Lockwood, *Beethoven's Symphonies*, 60–61.

<sup>92</sup> Excluding, naturally, the abovementioned citation of the novel itself.

<sup>93</sup> Shockley, *Music in the Words*, 114.

<sup>94</sup> John Cullinan, "Anthony Burgess" in *Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews*, ed. George Plimton (New York: Penguin books, 1977), 334.

<sup>95</sup> Burgess, *Napoleon Symphony*, 364.

### 2. 3. *A Clockwork Orange* (1962)

Even though the detailed handling of musical analogies in *Napoleon Symphony* exceeds most literary attempts of musicalisation, be it texts by Burgess or other authors, it is Burgess' most famous novel *A Clockwork Orange* that benefits the most from the combination of music and literature. Published in 1962, the novel skilfully combines the two types of 'music in fiction' discussed to a large degree separately in the previous chapters and interweaves them with its other central ideas.

Right in its opening, the text throws its reader into a peculiar skazzed narration of 15-year-old Alex on his regular evening – neither the setting nor political system of the fictional world is specified throughout the whole text. A “Humble narrator” of the story Alex introduces his three companions, Dim, Georgie and Pete, and their usual way of spending the night – refreshed by drug-infused milk, they, as well as other teenage gangs, take to the streets and indulge in the so-called “ultra-violence”. Alex's group thus first beats up two elder men, plunders a shop and then breaks into a country house with a stolen car and assaults its inhabitants. Aside from violence, Alex takes pleasure in listening to classical music, Beethoven especially – Having purchased a new record from the music shop, Alex takes two little “devotchkas” to his room and brutally rapes them to the sounds of Beethoven's choral symphony. That same evening, the group plans another break-in – this time, however, the police are called and Alex, having beaten the old owner of the house, gets arrested. Alex does not expect serious trouble; the next morning, however, he discovers that the old lady succumbed to her injuries, and he is to be charged with murder.

Alex returns to his readers two years after his imprisonment, while he assists the prison's chaplain and plays music to the sermons. Alex revels in reading the violent parts of



the Bible, quite unaffected by the chaplain's endeavours to teach him its ethical and religious lessons. The chaplain's moral principles come to a sharp contrast with Alex's, as they two discuss the possibility of "Ludovico treatment" – a newly developed form of aversion therapy which can allegedly turn anyone into a good man. According to the chaplain, imposing goodness on a human being and depriving him of choice is worse than a man choosing to be evil; Alex, however, sees the treatment as an effortless, quick way to get released from prison. When he causes the death of a newcomer to the cell, Alex is recognized as incorrigible by common methods and chosen for the treatment. Still quite naïve about the process, Alex is shown the first series of music-accompanied movies, all of them presenting similar acts of violence he has committed outside prison; due to the conditioning, Alex experiences fits of pain and nausea while he watches the on-screen violence. It is after he recognises Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> symphony in one of the films that he understands the process of treatment and tries to escape unsuccessfully, unable to fight his way out. After the fourteen-day treatment is finished, Alex is presented to the research team as a harmless citizen – however, to the indignation of the prison chaplain, he is completely deprived of choice and thus remains a mere human prop. In the third section of the novel, Alex is once again (in the legal sense) a free man, expecting his life to return to normal, but experiencing quite the opposite. His room in Flatblock 18A is rented to a working lodger and all his possessions are sold. With no place to go, Alex seeks consolation in music, only to painfully realize the full effects of the Ludovico treatment: his nausea is stimulated, aside from violence, by music. This brings him to consideration of suicide, but again, the mere thought of blood triggers his nausea. Alex thus finds himself utterly defenceless and becomes the victim of the same crimes he committed in the first section of the novel. Beaten up by the police, Alex stumbles upon the house of *A Clockwork Orange* writer, who, at first recognising Alex from the newspapers and not as the aggressor he encountered earlier, finally shows him kindness.

However, it soon becomes clear that Alex is once again being used as a political tool, this time by the opposition with his benefactor, writer F. Alexander as their leader. To demonstrate the notion of Alex as the victim of the current government's politics, the opposition orchestrates his suicide, using music as the trigger that leads him to the open window. Alex jumps but does not die. On the contrary, the effects of Ludovico treatment are reversed in the hospital and Alex is, although serving as a political prop one more time, completely cured. While he finds new "droogs" and resumes his usual night activities, the narrator of the story slowly realises that he cannot fully return to his previous life. Alex matures.

The 'nadsat' narration, violence and the ethical issues raised the novel poses are widely discussed in its criticism. The jargon, drawing mostly from Russian vocabulary, is both admired and condemned for providing "a curious flavour,"<sup>96</sup> distance from the violence,<sup>97</sup> or "minor philological enjoyment"<sup>98</sup> for readers with basics of Russian. The novel shocked many with the provocative degree of violence portrayed: the book, as well as its movie adaptation have been banned after provoking violent incidents. This is quite paradoxical, given that Burgess was inspired by the phenomenon of violent teenage gangs in Britain<sup>99</sup> – the novel is, after all sometimes likened to Greene's *Brighton Rock*.<sup>100</sup> The violent urges of the protagonist are then provocatively posed against psychological intervention that deprives him of the choice between good and evil, raising the issue whether such intervention is acceptable.

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<sup>96</sup> Kingsley Amis, 'A Clockwork Orange' in Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, ed. Andrew Biswell (London: Penguin, 2013), 275.

<sup>97</sup> Robert Gorha Davis, "The Perilous Balance," review of *A Clockwork Orange*, by Anthony Burgess, *The Hudson Review* 16, no. 2 (Summer, 1963), 283. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3848649>.

<sup>98</sup> Diana Josselson, review of *A Clockwork Orange*, by Anthony Burgess, *The Kenyon Review* 25, No. 3 (Summer 1963), 559. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4334366>.

<sup>99</sup> Burgess, *You've Had Your Time*, 26.

<sup>100</sup> As in S. E. Hynam, *Afterword*, in Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 299.

### 2.3.1 Music and *A Clockwork Orange*

Music represents a prominent element on both the thematic level of the novel, and the structure of the text. Word music, as defined by Wolf, does not occur.

#### 2.3.1.1 *Musical allusions and their relevance to the novel.*

When reviewers comment on the role of music in *A Clockwork Orange*, they hardly ever mean more than the paradox of “a junior Caligula, listening to the scherzo of Beethoven’s Ninth”<sup>101</sup>, i.e. the combination of what is considered “cultivated art” and the low viciousness of the main character – Martin Amis, for instance, finds Alex’s love for music “highly implausible” passion,<sup>102</sup> while Kingsley Amis comments with “What price the notion that buying classical LP’s is our youth’s route to salvation, eh?”<sup>103</sup> However, Burgess’ use of music exceeds this notion greatly: in *A Clockwork Orange*, music helps to articulate some of the main arguments that the novel is trying to make and poses further questions to be addressed.

The text swarms with references to music, overt as well as subtle. The list of existing classical composers spans from Bach to twentieth-century Britten and also includes a few of fictional authors like Geoffrey Plautus or Adrian Schweigselber. On the other hand, the equally numerous scale of popular music that envelops Burgess’ fictional world consists entirely of fictional names such as Berti Laski, Goggly Gogol or Luke Sterne. It might be suggested here is that while popular music is subject to changeable trends, classical music has a somewhat stable value and even with new names appearing in Alex’s world, the authors of the baroque era onwards will never cease to be appreciated. This can be, without hesitation, said about the protagonist of the story; his attitude is reflected by the radical difference in vocabulary he uses when referring to music of the respective genres.

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<sup>101</sup> Robert Gorha Davis, “The Perilous Balance,” 284.

<sup>102</sup> Martin Amis, *Foreword* in Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, viii.

<sup>103</sup> Kingsley Amis, ‘*A Clockwork Orange*,’ 276.

Popular music is described with heavy use of nadsat: “a song” is paraphrased as “real starry oldie,”<sup>104</sup> a “very sick electronic guitar veshch,”<sup>105</sup> and repeatedly “cal.”<sup>106</sup> On the other hand, the parts in which Alex talks about classical music form the rare moments of nadsat-free prose, such as “I wanted music very bad this evening,”<sup>107</sup> or “it’s not fair on the music.”<sup>108</sup> Music gets, in Alex’s narration, the attribute “lovely” in most of the references, whereas other nouns are usually modified by its nadsat synonym “horrorshow.”

The contrast between the two musical genres present differentiates Alex from the rest of the society portrayed in *A Clockwork Orange*. In his study on music in dystopian fiction, Weiss argues that the compositions are usually created by people in power to stimulate “obedience, the redirection of emotion away from dissent, or the deadening of feeling altogether.”<sup>109</sup> The popular music in the novel seems to do just that. The two girls that Alex meets in the music shop, browsing through the popular record are “very much alike though not sisters,” and have “the same ideas or lack of.”<sup>110</sup> It is Dim’s mocking response to classical music that prompts Alex to attack the member of his gang. This incident is important for two reasons: it shows Alex as different even from his equally violent peers, while pointing to Dim’s mindless conformity which crystallises later as he works for the state as a policeman. The society’s disdain for classical music and their fondness of the banal popular songs thus enable the reading of Alex as a rebelling individual.

The view of music in general forms another contrasting point between Alex and the world around him. In one of the early chapters of the novel, Alex remembers, with a grin, an article asserting that “Great Music [...] would like quieten the Modern Youth down and make

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<sup>104</sup> Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 10.

<sup>105</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 34.

<sup>106</sup> For instance, Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 49, 51.

<sup>107</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 37.

<sup>108</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 126.

<sup>109</sup> Allan Weiss, “Disharmony and Dystopia: Music in Classic Dystopian Fiction,” in *Collision of Realities: Establishing Research on the Fantastic in Europe*, ed. Astrid Böger and Lars Schmeink (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 286.

<sup>110</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 50.

Modern Youth more Civilised.”<sup>111</sup> For Alex, music cannot be used politically, ethically, nor in any other way. The novel thus articulates Burgess’ conviction that “the great work of art is neutral. It’s fairly harmless. It’s not committed to the world of action.”<sup>112</sup> Even when music does heighten Alex’s “martial spirit,”<sup>113</sup> as Weiss would put it, he strongly opposes against its utilization. This is clearly voiced in one of the crucial moments of the text. When Alex recognises Beethoven’s Symphony no.5 in the violent Nazi film shown to him, he for the first time opposes the morality of the method: “It’s a sin, [...] using Ludvig van like that. He did no harm to anyone. Beethoven just wrote music!”<sup>114</sup> The argument about music’s neutrality, enhanced, again, by Alex’s use of neutral English is however not understood by doctor Brodsky and his team – Brodsky seems to be impartial to music and views it merely as “a useful emotional heightener.”<sup>115</sup> Interestingly, the attitude towards music is shared by the opposing political forces in the novel. F. Alexander, who initially criticises the utilization of music and other arts, later uses music to prompt Alex to suicide. As to his view on music, Alex remains a solitary figure in the story.

Yet it is music that, in the end, defines the protagonist the best, or certainly better than the inclination towards violence, as it might seem from the majority of the novel’s criticism. As he confesses early in the novel, music sharpens Alex up – this, however, does not apply merely to the increased mood for violence, but to thinking in general: listening to Bach after the break-in to F. Alexander’s house, he begins to understand the title *A Clockwork Orange*; hearing Beethoven’s fifth, he realises how exactly the treatment works. Alex’s identity seems to be formed by music, as he integrates it into his language: as a way of showing disrespect, he often gives his opponents “lip-music”, he also addresses both his readers and other

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<sup>111</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 48.

<sup>112</sup> Coale, interview, 440.

<sup>113</sup> Weiss, *Disharmony and Dystopia*, 286.

<sup>114</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 124.

<sup>115</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 124.

characters of the narrative as “My Brothers.” This might be a narrative trick to make the readers sympathize with Alex, an attempt to “establish family structures,”<sup>116</sup> as Davis and Womack argue, or it might be another way by which the character connects with his most beloved Symphony no.9 by Beethoven. This work is by far the most referenced composition in the novel, the twisted version of both Beethoven and the work appear in Alex’s dreams right before the turning points of the story. The choral part of the symphony famously adapts Schiller’s poem “An der Freude” with the line “All Men will become Brothers” repeated throughout the whole movement. Shrock recognises this line as “the central idea of the whole symphony.”<sup>117</sup> “O My Brothers” can thus be interpreted a subtle allusion to Beethoven’s work, emphasising the importance of music for the main character.

Moreover, Alex’s aforementioned indignant reaction to the abuse of Beethoven is followed by a discussion with Brodsky with Alex saying: “I don’t mind about the ultra-violence [...] but it’s not fair to the music.”<sup>118</sup> He is willing to be “cured” from his violent behaviour but not from his love to music. Even when the effects of the treatment are reversed, Alex finds himself “not in the mood”<sup>119</sup> for violence, but the joy he finds in music remains. Burgess asserts that in his novels he has the characters “stripped of the illusions and see what’s left. [...], and what’s left is the essential human.”<sup>120</sup> It is thus music, not the violence, that forms the inseparable part of the protagonist, “the essential Alex.” As the essential part of his identity, music also guides the reader through the development of the character.

In the first section of the novel, Alex clearly associates music with violence. During his night listening session, each of the compositions evokes different images of rape and

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<sup>116</sup> Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack, ““O My Brothers: Reading the Anti-Ethics of the Pseudo-Family in Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*,” *College Literature* 29 no. 2 (Spring, 2002), 28.

<sup>117</sup> Dennis Shrock, *Choral Monuments: Studies of Eleven Choral Masterworks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017) 207.

<sup>118</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 126.

<sup>119</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 198.

<sup>120</sup> Coale, interview, 447.

violent assaults on “vecks and ptitas, both young and starry.”<sup>121</sup> Later on, it is the Ninth Symphony that prompts the actual violence: “then the male human goloss coming in and telling them all to be joyful [...] and then I felt the old tigers leap in me and then I leapt on those young ptitas.”<sup>122</sup> Alex does not hear this particular work until the effects of Ludovico treatment are negated, but even then, there is a remarkable difference in what the symphony evokes: “When it came to the Scherzo, I could viddy myself very clear running and running on like very light and mysterious nogas, carving the whole litso of the creeching world.”<sup>123</sup> The image is far less specific than the vivid visions in the novel’s opening, which already hints at Alex’s maturation. The protagonist’s coming of age is then underlined by his choice of music: while young, he revels in large-scale orchestral works, throughout the last chapter, however, it is “malenky romantic songs that they call *Lieder*, just a goloss and a piano”<sup>124</sup> that speak to him. At this point, Alex realises the lack of purpose in his life, again through music “At eighteen old Wolfgang Amadeus had written concertos and symphonies [...] But what was I going to do?”<sup>125</sup> The ongoing paradox of the novel – that works of creation create the protagonist’s urge to destruct – is thus resolved in the last chapter as the protagonist, in Burgess’ words “recognizes that human energy is better expended on creation than destruction.”<sup>126</sup> Thematic references to music form are crucial for the overall understanding of *A Clockwork Orange* – they shed light on the fictional world and Alex’s position in it; they raise the question of the political utilization of music and art in general and they, forming the most important part of his character, trace the protagonist’s development. This development is indicated also by the structural analogies to music present in the novel.

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<sup>121</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 39.

<sup>122</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 52.

<sup>123</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 192.

<sup>124</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 199

<sup>125</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 202

<sup>126</sup> As cited in Davis and Womack, “O My Brothers,” 20.

### 2.3.1.2 Structural analogies to music in the novel

*A Clockwork Orange* forms another example of a sonata-form pattern in a text, Ziolkowski even recognises it as “the best-known example of musical structure”<sup>127</sup> in fiction. The three-part structure of the text is easily recognizable by the recurring question “What’s it going to be then, eh?” that opens each section and is repeated multiple times until the key themes are firmly established – according to Philips, the motif can even be likened to the four-note motif of Beethoven’s symphony no.5.<sup>128</sup> As was the case with *Napoleon Symphony*, the analogies are handled with extreme attention to detail.

The two themes of the exposition – primary in the tonic and secondary in the dominant key – are represented by two contrasting themes linked to the novel’s protagonist: music and violence, a work of creation and an act of destruction. Notably, the first section of the novel closes with violence brought to the utmost extreme, just as the exposition usually ends on the dominant, transitioning to the development section.<sup>129</sup> The development section works, once again, with the dislocation of the main character and the themes are brought back, varied and modulated in various ways: motifs occur in reminiscences: “it [a science lecture] reminded me of tolchocking [...] that ded coming from the public biblio,”<sup>130</sup> the leitmotivic question “What’s it going to be then” is, for the first time, posed by a different character and exceeds its rhetorical meaning, and both violence and music enter the context of Christianity and subsequently the context of the issues raised by the novel – the question of free will and the matter of art’s independence. Moreover, as Philips points out, the change of mode from major to minor that occurs often in the sonata-form compositions is hinted at

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<sup>127</sup> Ziolkowski, *Music Into Fiction*, 117.

<sup>128</sup> Paul Philips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint: The Music and Literature of Anthony Burgess* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 90.

<sup>129</sup> Kennedy, *Oxford Dictionary of Music* 987

<sup>130</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 86.



verbally, as Alex introduces the respective section of the book as being “the real weepy and like tragic part of the story.”<sup>131</sup>

The recapitulation, returning Alex to his original environment, introduces subtle reversals of the exposition motifs right from the beginning: Alex enters the scene first in the evening, then “very very early in the morning;”<sup>132</sup> he is first surrounded by his “droogs” and then completely alone; in the exposition, his pockets are first “full of deng”<sup>133</sup> as opposed to “malenky bit [...] of cutter”<sup>134</sup> he possesses in the recapitulation. Ziolkowski correctly points out that

All the actions of part 1 recur in odd inversions: in the public library Alex, encountering the helpless old man whom he had previously beaten up, is now in turn attacked and battered by a group of “starry dodderers”; the two policemen who come to his assistance are two of his former ruthless gang members [...]<sup>135</sup>

The inversion mentioned by Ziolkowski is crucial, as it forms yet another analogy to the sonata-form structure – just like the secondary theme in a recapitulation is inverted from the dominant key to the tonic,<sup>136</sup> Alex’s role in the violent acts shifts from agent to patient.

It is also worth noticing that both sections close with an, in a sense, anti-climactic chapter – just like the exposition gives space for transition (Alex is in fact transferred in the literal sense) after the tension-filled scene in the old lady’s house, the recapitulation ends one chapter after Alex’s attempted suicide, as he is transposed to the hospital and cured. In these two incidents, again, Alex’s role changes from the source of suffering to its victim. The most articulated restatement of the opening then occurs in the coda – the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of the novel, which presents with a paragraph structured identically to the very first words of the novel,

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<sup>131</sup> Philips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint*, 89.

<sup>132</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 143.

<sup>133</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 7.

<sup>134</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 143.

<sup>135</sup> Ziolkowski, *Music into Fiction*, 119. Ziolkowski, perhaps misled by Kubrick's adaptation, overlooks that one of the policemen belonged to, in fact, the gang of Alex's rivals, but apart from this detail, his interpretation is accurate.

<sup>136</sup> Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 650.

incorporating variation (“Your Humble Narrator” substitutes “Alex”, progressive aspect is added to “we sat”, the names of Alex’s “droogs” are different etc.) as well as exact repetitions, commented on by the narrator with “but I’ve told you all that before.”<sup>137</sup> As the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter progresses, Alex slowly lets go of destruction and only the primary theme of the novel – creation – is restated and modulated, as the protagonist starts craving a son.

Moreover, the structural analogies to music form an important argument in the textological debates that aroused around the two existing editions of the novel.

The first American edition, published in 1987, famously omits the last chapters, leaving Alex “cured alright”<sup>138</sup> presuming his return to violent delinquency. The critical opinions on which version carries more impact vary: As was noted by Philips, the British edition was found anticlimactic by many<sup>139</sup> and for instance, Stinson views the full version as sentimental and “easily exposed to ridicule,”<sup>140</sup> and for Amis, the twenty-first chapter “feels like a startling loss of nerve on Burgess’ part,”<sup>141</sup> its omission producing “the ‘dark ending,’”<sup>142</sup>. On the other hand, Gorra finds the complete text “far darker than the glibly apocalyptic American version.”<sup>143</sup> The British text reveals Alex’s ability to “grow out” of his delinquency and thus puts the state’s intervention in an even worse light. Burgess’s intention with the chapter is perfectly clear: in his memoirs, as well as in numerous interviews, Burgess states that he “had to accede to this lopping [...] but was not happy about it,”<sup>144</sup> even though the typescript of the book, as Biswell notes, is commented with ‘an optional epilogue follows.’<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*.

<sup>138</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 192.

<sup>139</sup> Philips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint*, 89.

<sup>140</sup> Stinson, *Burgess Revisited*, 59.

<sup>141</sup> Martin Amis, *Foreword*, xiii.

<sup>142</sup> Amis, *Foreword*, in Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, xii.

<sup>143</sup> Michael Gorra “The World of *A Clockwork Orange*” as cited in Davis and Womack, “O My Brothers.”, 20.

<sup>144</sup> Burgess, *You’ve had your time*, 60.

<sup>145</sup> Anthony Biswell’s editorial notes to Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 214.

Burgess' note in the typescript encourages reading the final chapter as a musical coda, which is not strictly obligatory in sonata-form compositions. It seems striking, however, that the coda has, "in the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, and especially [Alex's favourite] Beethoven internal formal significance."<sup>146</sup> The structural significance of 'Burgess's coda' is hinted at by the full restatement of the novel's opening mentioned above. Moreover, if destruction and creation form the main two themes of the musicalized novel, the text would end, in a sense, implausibly on the dominant, with Alex returning to his violent urges, imagining "carving the whole litso of the creeching world."<sup>147</sup> In the twenty-first chapter, the secondary theme fades away, giving way to the primary theme. The final chapter also includes multiple sentences that could easily form the conclusion of the whole novel – "That's what it's going to be then, brothers [...] But now, as I end this story, brothers, I am not young [...] And so farewell from your little droog. [...] Amen. And all that cal."<sup>148</sup> Similarly, the coda provides a finite ending or, as Philips puts it to reinforce "the final sense of stability."<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Kennedy, *Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 117.

<sup>147</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 192.

<sup>148</sup> Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 204.

<sup>149</sup> Philips, *A Clockwork Counterpoint*, 88.

## 4. Conclusion

Of all authors of post-war fiction, Anthony Burgess has probably contributed the most to the synergy between music and literature, as it, to varying degrees, penetrates almost his whole oeuvre, each time in a different angle, in new forms and with new aspects. Burgess's writing, be it comic novels, proses of fictionalized history, formally experimental pieces, or a novel of ideas, consistently employs music and provides it with space to shape its characters, themes, arguments and structure. As this thesis attempted to demonstrate, Burgess is capable of incorporating all kinds of musico-literary relationships that were defined by the existing theoretical concepts.

Each of the works examined in this thesis presents a different approach to the notion of music in literature. The short story "1889 and the Devil's Mode," which remains almost unrecognized in critical works on Burgess, forms a condensed example of intermedial thematization – music forms a centre around which all revolves – the characters as well as other themes, such as change, tradition and innovation, or the domestic and the exotic.

A bold literary experiment, following the footsteps of Joyce and Huxley, and at the same time an entertaining comic novel, *Napoleon Symphony* represents the opposite pole: the work imitates, almost bar by bar, the four movements of an existing symphony, serving as an epitome of musicalisation of fiction.

Finally, in Burgess's best-known novel, *A Clockwork Orange* the two phenomena integrate, contributing greatly to a more complex image of the work. Clarifying his development, music on both thematic and structural levels undermines the reduced reading of Alex as a mere vicious hoodlum; at the same time, music forms a powerful argument in the critical debate over the two existing versions of the book.

The analyses of the respective texts reveal that over his literary career, Burgess returns to several themes, structures and methods. Both *Napoleon Symphony* and “1889 and the Devil’s Mode” base the musico-literary prose on fictionalized history; the contrast in the form of the respective narratives markedly shows the difference in the overall effect of intermedial thematization and musicalization of fiction.

“1889 and the Devil’s Mode” as well as *A Clockwork Orange* touch upon the idea of music as self-referential art that cannot be subjected to moral lessons or political use. In “1889” this is achieved through the symbolic change in the connotations attributed to the augmented fourth interval, as the prevalent association of the devil transforms into a more neutral image of a faun as the story unravels. The idea is also discussed explicitly between representatives of two different generations of artists – music’s independence is thus viewed as a central phenomenon of the approach to art that forms at the turn of the twentieth century. In *A Clockwork Orange*, music is utilized by Doctor Brodsky and his research team as well as by the members of the political opposition. The protagonist, a vicious character as he may seem, recognizes the use of classical music as the soundtrack to Nazi propaganda as a “sin”.

Three different examples of structural analogies to a tripartite form have been encountered in this thesis (*Napoleon Symphony* sections I, III and *A Clockwork Orange*). Burgess mirrors the contrastive effect of the ABA pattern in the *Scherzo* section of his experiment by inserting a Promethean play into the narrative. The sonata-form, which is imitated in the opening of *Napoleon Symphony* and *A Clockwork Orange*, usually involves a shift to a different key in the development – this is, in both texts represented by the change in the protagonists’ environment. Unlike Bonaparte, however, Alex’s character undergoes significant development in the second section. The contrast in the recapitulation of the respective texts shows Burgess’s ability to adjust the musical pattern to their genre and intended overall meaning. Within variations and attempts of repetition in *Napoleon*

*Symphony*, the recurring structure of sentences slightly prevails over the recurrence of situations – both are, however, carried out with the utmost attention to detail, which often adds to the comic effect of the novel. In *A Clockwork Orange*, the inverted reiteration of incidents allows Burgess to further develop the interplay with the main themes explored by the novel. Thanks to the similarity of situations presented, the change in Alex's character is more remarkable.

The three prose texts analysed in this thesis form just a small fraction of Burgess's extensive oeuvre – however they include musical presence so concentrated that they, hopefully, demonstrate how music elevates his fiction writing. For Burgess, astonishingly erudite in both theory and practice of the two arts, clearly shows that the notion of musicality in a literary work can exceed a figure of speech of criticism and does not have to be limited to poetry either and that, even though some qualities of music, such as simultaneity of sound can hardly be achieved in written language, exploring the potential as well as obstacles and limits of merging the two arts can be strikingly fruitful for literature.

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