BILL THE SYMBOLIC WORKER: FORCED SYNDICALISM, OPPOSITION AND THE SELF IN ANTHONY BURGESS'S *1985*

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George Orwell's masterpiece, *1984*, was written shortly after the Second World War in the wake of Churchill's defeat and the coming to power of the socialist party, a political shift which delighted the author of *1984*, a dedicated socialist. The question then comes up, early in Anthony Burgess's novel, how is it that Orwell's response to that victory is "a terrifying novel in which English Socialism is far worse than either the Nazi or the Russian variety"[?] (23). Orwell rightly feared the State's abuse of power, especially a State which had access to more technologically advanced methods of surveillance and behavior control, and Burgess himself concedes that much of the everyday detail of *1984* was already present in postwar Britain (33). Burgess nevertheless wishes to present an "alternative picture" to the Superstate dystopia created by Orwell, a response which differs most significantly in the extremely diminished role of the State in exercising power:

> We have the following tasks. To understand the waking origins of Orwell's bad dream – in himself and in the phase of history that helped to make him. To see where he went wrong and where he seems likely to have been right. To contrive an alternative picture – of the condition to which the seventies seem to be moving and which may well subsist in a real 1984 – or, to avoid plagiarism, 1985. (9-10)

Burgess's response is the two-part *1985*, the first half presented as a direct engagement with Orwell's text in the form of interviews, conversations and pedagogical discourse as well as a brief intersection with *A Clockwork Orange*, and the second half as the novel *1985* itself. In Burgess's dystopia[1] it is not the State which holds direct

[1] In a chapter of *1985* entitled "Cacotopia," Burgess explains the Latin and Greek origins of the word Utopia (or eutopia), saying that: "Dystopia has been opposed to eutopia, but both terms come under the utopian heading. I prefer to call

power over the individual, but rather labor unions to whom one owes allegiance; in fact, refusal to accept union membership results in disenfranchisement. In this society of totalitarian syndicalism, a subject's identity is a function of his or her union membership. Only criminals and the insane would choose not to identify with the collective, and the concept of choice, as we often see in Burgess's work, is a defining characteristic of humanity. In trying to present an "alternative picture" to *1984*, however, Burgess only partially succeeds in distinguishing the two capitalist dystopias, one a surveillance superstate, the other a society held hostage by union excesses. A network of power is deployed in much the same way, whether it is the State or the labor unions which are in control, and like any dominant ideology, the rulers have recourse to institutions which legitimate their authority: the justice system, economic manipulation, psychiatric hospitals. Rule is about power, and despite a measure of disagreement regarding the details, *1985* is not much different from *1984*; subjects are formed within a certain historical context, under a certain dominant ideology which defines reality in its own interest, and those who resist the norms established by the collective majority find themselves outcasts, either marginalized or recuperated by the dominants in institutions. Instead of an alternative picture, Burgess has given us a supplementary one, illustrating as he does the fact that the State has no unique claim as the dominant institution: "A tyranny," Burgess says in the "Bakunin's Children" chapter of *1985*, "can be born out of any social group" (81).

A necessary background element to any modern, capitalist regime of power is continuous, global war. Ongoing war as a precondition of the contemporary world began, according to Burgess, in 1945 with the development and use of nuclear weapons, in other words, with the beginning of the Cold War (3). In an account of the "Great Nuclear War of the 1950s," Burgess manages to outline very accurately the current, fundamental role of warfare in modern society, despite his fictional starting point.[2] Large-scale nuclear war would

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Orwell's imaginary society a cacotopia – on the lines of cacophony or cacodemon. It sounds worse than dystopia" (48).

[2] In a discussion of the role of a fictional text as an historical document, capable of accumulating and transmitting information, Henri Zalamansky says: "If, in other respects, we speak of information, it is because we think that, in many cases, a book is truly an act of knowledge, and that it is false to claim that the writer cannot contribute any information of value, on an equal footing with the journalist or the historian: the writer's talent permits him to convey the atmosphere of an event or of a period, to seize hold of a reality which escapes the cold flatness of objective reporting" (125). See Henri Zalamansky, "L'étude des contenus, étape fondamentale d'une sociologie

destroy society to such an extent that the ruling elite would annihilate their own power base, thus wars could only be waged with limited, conventional weapons and small, professional armies. Neither side is capable of winning, of bringing the war to an end, for the simple reason that "the war must not end." Asked why not, the narrator responds with the aforementioned concept of precondition: "War is peace, meaning war is a way of life to the new age as peace was a way of life to the old. A way of life and an aspect of political philosophy" (4-5). In a capitalist society one also must not forget the economic argument of warfare, as a means of supporting the military-industrial complex, as Burgess points out:

> To use up the products of the industrial machine, to keep the wheels turning but the standard of living low. For the well-fed, physically contented citizen, with a wide range of goods for consumption and the money to buy them, is a bad subject for an oligarchical state. A man filled with meat turns his back on the dry bones of political doctrine. Fanatical devotion to the ruling party comes more readily from the materially deprived. Moreover, loyalty and what used to be called patriotism are best sustained when the enemy seems to be at the gates. (5)

The enemy, of course, need not be real; a perceived threat works just as well, whether Emmanuel Goldstein of *1984* or non-union labor in *1985*.[3] Indeed, as Arthur Redding asserts, war or other forms of violence (or at least the image of war and violence) is what "ensures the possibility of collective action" (45). Reality has been created for the subject, generally by the dominants with the tacit consent of the dominated (the "common sense" of a given society in a certain time and place), and can change as easily as it was created and accepted. Daniel Bell defines ideology as "the conversion of ideas into social levers," highlighting its use as a tool of political manipulation, thus assuring popular support for the ruling elite in spite of continuous changes and "adjustments" of the official version of reality (370). Burgess uses, by way of example, the wavering attitude toward Stalin during and after World War II, as staunch ally or ruthless dictator, depending on the image deemed necessary for the moment (30). Such ability to deal with contradictions, to perform "doublethink" in Orwellian terminology, is necessary to a successful integration into

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de la littérature contemporaine," in R. Escarpit, *Le Littéraire et le social* (Paris: Flammarion, 1970), pages 119-129. See also Edmond Cros, *Theory and Practice of Sociocriticism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), page 7.

[3] For another example of total, continuous war as a precondition of modern society, as well as the creation of a non-existent enemy, see Burgess's *The Wanting Seed*, pages 226 and 233.

an imposed collectivity; in *1985*, it is the labor unions which determine reality, and which require unswerving allegiance to their precepts, despite contradiction, despite obvious disparities between lived experience and institutional doctrine.

The novel begins with Bev Jones arriving home for lunch, and attacked by a group of seven boys, who normally would be in school but for the ongoing teachers' strike. The physical attack is not too serious, as the assailants have just expended their energy gang-raping one of Bev's neighbors, a boy named Irwin, who is still naked and unconscious in the lobby of the apartment building (109-110). Such assaults have become commonplace in this society, so commonplace that no one has stopped to help the Irwin boy; even Bev justifies his lack of willingness to help on the current climate, so apathetic that even the ambulance may not come: "It didn't do, these days, to be too compassionate. You could spend all day and night being compassionate to the victims of street, hallway and apartment assault" (111). Thus the stage is set for a novel along the lines of *A Clockwork Orange*, a violent society where people live in fear of roaming youth gangs. But just in case the reader might think that the teachers' strike was simply a coincidence, the protagonist enters his apartment to discover, by telephone and via the television news, that the local hospital is burning, and will continue to burn, since the fire department and the army are also on strike. Bev's wife Ellie is a patient in the hospital at the moment, and she dies in the fire; her last words to Bev are "Don't let them get away with it," an imperative which will justify and define Bev's acts of resistance against forced syndicalism for the rest of the novel (113). Other examples follow Bev's personal account, significantly examples taken from outside the UK, a means of delocalizing what has become a pervasive phenomenon in the industrialized West: Bev's uncle George and Aunt Rosa in Australia, she confined to an iron lung following an illness in 1978, dead after the electric workers struck, or Bev's cousin Bert, writing letters from Duluth, Minnesota, USA, describing the electric workers' strike with the temperature at thirty-five degrees below zero Fahrenheit, leaving fifteen thousand dead of hypothermia (117-118). Bev, in his rage regarding the unions' abuse of power, has torn up his union card and demands his right to work without being a union member. Devlin, the union steward, is compassionate with Bev, but nevertheless explains the impossibility of leaving the union:

> The tearing of the card is nothing. It's like in the old Christian days when people got baptized. Tear up your baptismal certificate and it doesn't make you unbaptized. You're a union member, and that's it

> [. . .] You're a union member and you can't unmake it. The records say so, and the records are like the tablets of the Mosaic law. (126)

Bev finds himself in the situation of a contractual obligation, what Arthur Redding calls "the manufacture of consent" or "a brutality which conceals itself [. . .] under all sort of ideologies and pretenses to contractual obligation and to 'choice'" (4; 53). For Burgess, the removal of choice is the worst evil imaginable, the equivalent of dehumanization:

> Evil is at its most spectacular when it enjoys turning a living soul into a manipulable object. To confer death is evil enough, but torture has always been regarded as worse. The State has a considerable interest in dehumanizing. It tends to arrogate to itself all matters of moral choice, and it does not care much to see the individual making up his own mind. (57)

In Bev's case, it is not primarily the State, but the labor unions, which are guilty of dehumanization in a very literal sense; as we will see, Bev's lack of viable alternatives will result in his becoming a non-person. Bev obviously has no real choice in the matter, given the pressure of economic necessity; in order to be allowed to work, he must be a union member, and the union steward knows that Bev will come to his senses and abandon his protest after his grief has passed. Opting out of the system is not regarded as a possibility by "sensible" people.

But Bev does not give in. For at least the second time in his professional life, he makes a difficult choice based on principle. The first was when he gave up his job as a history teacher when new directives were issued, limiting course content to the history of the trade union movement (119-120), and now, with dramatic effect, Bev will sacrifice his candy factory job by reporting for work during a strike and insisting that he be allowed in, thus exposing himself to the pickets' threats and the possibility of "permanent unemployment," all the while being filmed by a crew from Thames Television (130-131). When Bev is formally dismissed from his job shortly after Christmas, he tries to draw an unemployment pension, and is refused as he has "wantonly rejected employment as laid down in the Trade Union Enactment (Compulsory Membership) in 1979" (136). As a last resort, he goes to see his Member of Parliament, who tells him he is powerless to help against enormous union power: "You're fighting history. [. . .] Strictly speaking I'm forbidden even to open my mouth in a *token* way on your behalf. Because you're outside the law. Union membership is a basic condition of franchise. You're not represented anymore" (140). Almost immediately, Bev becomes a non-person, evicted from his apartment, living on the street and

accepting the charity of the Salvation army, his daughter in a girls' home. Bev had lamented to his MP that there is no longer an opposition party, that labels like Socialist and Conservative have nothing left but "nostalgic historical meaning" (139), yet in his downfall Bev comes into contact with other out-of-work teachers, artists and students who have formed an underground network which could become the agent of revolution and reform. If the teacher's highest ideal is subversion, Bev has found, in the underworld of kumina street gangs, students who are both intelligent and motivated to learn anything "useless," in other words anything forbidden by the State schools which favor sociology and Workers' English – instead, these outcast students prefer history, Latin and Greek (144). Anti-state teachers dispense "real education" in a sort of underground university, paid for by the students' robbery, the perverse effect being that, since the State schools have been weeding out material deemed unnecessary for workers, the underground university students are actually receiving the better education, especially as regards critical thinking and cultural analysis (see page 144).

The kumina gang students, like Bev, are critical of the lack of opposition in the current climate, which, as Bev explains, at least regarding British syndicalism, needs an opponent to function properly:

> [. . .] the State is the main employer. You still have the old dichotomy of employer and employee. The workers have to regard their own political executive not as an aspect of themselves but as an entity they have to oppose. They oppose, and the opposition has to give in, because it's not true opposition. Hence all wage demands are met and inflation flourishes. (146)

The kumina boys see themselves not as genuine criminals, but rather as Robin Hood-style rebels, regarding their learning of forbidden subjects and their violent *actes gratuits* as the only things which define them as free human beings, as able to choose, set apart from the collective identity of the union "sheep" whom they refuse to follow (147). What worker's rhetoric calls "equality" is for them only intellectual levelling, a lowering of standards which simplifies the process of providing "the same cultural and educational entitlement" to everyone, with no worries of inequality or inferiority (see 147). From these boys, Bev learns of the existence of yet another opposition group, the UC or Underground Christ, headquartered in a closed section of the District Line, holding love suppers and practicing the "Christnique" of loving one's enemies (148). Bev insists, for himself as well as for his underground students, on the necessity of keeping up opposition against the dominant power, saying, "The only things

of importance are subversive. Art is subversive. Philosophy too. The State killed Socrates" (148). The same is true for the out-of-work professors and artists with whom Bev is keeping company, sleeping in a disused mattress factory and living by stealing food; they too have refused compulsory union membership and participate in the underground movement, including an underground press (155). Not all of the opposition is underground, however. A new newspaper, *The Free Briton*, is advertising for what seems to be the most menacing of all opposition groups, a private army, "outside the law," with the stated objective of maintaining minimum public services during strikes, including strikes by the regular army (156-157). Pay is exceptionally good, and only one opposition group has the financial capability to raise a private army. Bev's suspicions are confirmed as he reads the bottom of page four, after a short reminder that duty to God comes before duty to country: "I do not mean the cricket-playing gentlemanly God that the Anglicans have created. I mean the God of the prophets, from Abraham to Mohammed . . ." (158). Wealthy Arab investors, and by extension the Islamic religion, intend to take power by armed force, knowing that a large measure of popular support will be easily obtained, given people's frustration with the unions' abuse of power.

Every union in the country is represented at New Transport House, under the banner of The Trades Union Congress of The United Kingdom, hence the UK has been called Tucland (126). Bev remarks that in fact the building is rented from the Arabs, who have a considerable financial presence in the country, thanks to oil from the middle east as well as North Sea oil, formerly in British hands but since given up as payment on a loan from Arab financiers, a loan which Britain was incapable of repaying (127-128). Bev understands the level of foreign ownership in the country:

> Where would Tucland be without the Arabs? [. . .] They owned Al-Dorchester, Al-Klaridges, Al-Browns, various Al-Hiltons and Al-Idayinns, with soft drinks in the bars and no bacon for breakfast. [. . .] And, in Great Smith Street, soon would stand the symbol of their strength – the Masjik-ul-Haram or Great Mosque of London. (128)

As a result of heavy Arab investment, the presence of Islam has become much more physical as well, since immigration laws have been eased to allow easier entry for "hard-working Pakistanis and East African Muslims" (128). It is from this base of financial and physical power that the Free Briton army hopes, not unrealistically, to draw its strength and its recruits in the days and weeks ahead, counting as well on a large measure of recruits from disenchanted former union hostages like Bev, the underground networks and the

kumina gangs. As the first general strike in Britain since 1926 begins to take hold, the Head of the Pan-Islamic commission is killed by an angry mob, leaving open the possibility of "punitive" invasion, given that public services are on strike and NATO, fearing for its supply of oil, will refuse to intervene (219). With great symbolic effect, the site of the first great confrontation between union and non-union labor is the Great Mosque, still under construction. Non-union workers, Muslim, Jew, Christian and atheist, have been making sure that the mosque project continue during the strike. For a time, at least, they are protected by the police as they work, but in their turn the police union too goes on strike. To everyone's amazement, a platoon of green-uniformed Free Briton soldiers arrives to take up where the police left off, insuring the safety of the scab workers and the continuation of the mosque's construction (216-217).

Bev is taken on as a commissioned officer by Colonel Lawrence of the Free Britons, as his press attaché and official spokesman. Significantly, Bev never does take the oath of obedience to which Lawrence often refers, which would have, in the manner of a contractual obligation, put him "properly" under the regime of military discipline (226). As an educated man, the work comes easily to him, and while Bev is glad to be working, earning pay as a non-union employee, he is also skeptical about the long-term motives of the Free Briton army, given its foundation in a religious ideology. Colonel Lawrence confirms some of Bev's doubts:

> The only way out of Britain's troubles, Mr. Jones, is a return to responsibility, loyalty, religion. A return to God. And who will show us God now? The Christians? Christianity was abolished by the Second Vatican Council. The Jews? They worship a bloody tribal deity. [. . .] I had dreamt of no Islamic revolution in Britain but rather of a slow conversion, helped by an Islamic infiltration expressed in terms of Islamic wealth and moral influence [. . .] But sometimes the North African blood that is my dear dead mother's cries out for fast action . . . (220)

Whether by a slow process of infiltration or a fast-paced revolution, Islam has become the major party of opposition to counter the union-induced dystopia of *1985*, and Bev, as an educated historian, understands that replacing one ideology by another represents nothing more than yet another repetition within the cycle of history. Although the institution which holds power may from time to time change, such a shift represents no real evolution, no positive social transformation. Bev's fears are further confirmed by what he sees as he reports on the General Strike in his "Strike Diary," in his official role as press attaché for the Free Briton army. As he makes his rounds

gathering news, Bev sees conditions deteriorating, as one expects during a general strike, with trash piling up, fighting for scarce food supplies and the like. He also sees some strikers waver in their devotion to the union party line: "*Free Britons trying to control. Strangely, some of the strikers help. Hope there. Bloody ideological nonsense from top of unions must fail sometime, workers basically decent, must see sense."* (225; original italics). The Free Briton army, which had claimed to be unarmed, clearly is now, and is receiving additional supplies of weapons (224-225), and is also treating cases of desertion as mutiny, rather than as cases of someone who merely refuses to work in a paid job:

> *Five or six mosque workers wanted to pack the job in. [. . .] They wanted to re-enter the ranks of the unionized construction workers and quit the Free Britons. They were marched off under heavy guard and not seen again. [. . .] Disciplinary action necessary against the defaulters of any army, [Colonel Lawrence] said. [. . .] Mutiny totally impermissible.* (230-231; original italics)

The Free Briton army "volunteers" are in the same position as their union counterparts, unable to opt out of the institution once they have signed the agreement, once they have entered into a contractual obligation; like a union card, an engagement with the army seems to be treated like "the tablets of the Mosaic law" (126). Colonel Lawrence's objectives also become more clear as the General Strike wears on. Although he makes some vague apologies for the violence employed by the Free Briton army, justifying himself by the historical conditions of the moment, he refuses to withdraw the army even when it becomes clear that the strike could be ended by such a gesture, with union workers taking over where they had left off. The Free Briton army, after all, had ostensibly been formed only as a non-union organism which would insure the provision of minimum services during strikes. Accused of prolonging the army's intervention unnecessarily, Lawrence responds *"Once for all, no possibility of compromise, Islamic leaders will not accept unionized labour, the British union leaders must be made to see reason"* (227; original italics). Begun as a volunteer organization to insure a necessary minimum of essential services, attracting workers by offering good pay, the Free Briton army has quickly shown its true colors, that of a real army using real violence to do battle against its adversary, in this case the unions. Despite the revolutionary rhetoric on both sides, Bev is pessimistic about the outcome of this confrontation, knowing as he does that the larger network of power will not change in any fundamental way, no matter who happens to wield power for the moment. And, unlike Orwell's dystopia, the State is not involved in

this struggle for power; in fact, throughout *1985*, the State is largely a non-entity, existing only as a matter of form (228-229, for example). It doesn't really matter who wins in this power struggle, and Bev realizes that he has found himself, once again, caught in the midst of an institution that promised to be an agent of change, and instead has become, in its turn, the agent of oppression. And once again, he decides to abandon the oppressor and continue his resistance, noting that the latest acts of warfare have resolved nothing, leaving the situation as contradictory and hopeless as before. The majority of the people simply want peace, or at the very least, what Burgess calls a life which is "adequately fed and fairly dull" (67):

> *There is great confusion now, a blurring of the conflict, an indistinctness of frontier. [. . .] Many of the strikers want to go back to work. There is a strong collective desire for a nice piece of meat, a quiet bottle of beer, an evening with the TV. Union speakers on top of trucks (fewer now, there being no petrol around) are howled down. But, of course, they are also cheered. [. . .] The illness has to be resolved. How?* (231; original italics)

The "illness" to be resolved is the cycle of domination and submission, the continual struggle for power, a society based on binary opposition, where groups of people consider only short-term self-interest rather than long-term social progress. Syndicalism has not been the answer to capitalist oppression any more than the Free Briton army of "liberation" has been, and Bev, in his refusal to identify with the dominant power, finds himself once again on the margin, disenfranchised, a non-person.

At least twice during the novel, Bev is referred to institutions as a result of his ongoing protests, with the goal of reorienting his thinking along the lines of the dominant majority. The first institution which serves the interest of the dominant power is the justice system; Bev is sent before the judge for stealing a bottle of gin, though Bev's real crime is always the same, namely his refusal to admit to union membership. Now, as he stands before the judge, Bev protests that the justice system itself is incapable of functioning properly, given the overwhelming power of the unions:

> I'm a human being deprived of work because I stand by a principle. I object to being a unionized sheep. [. . .] Justice has been corrupted by syndicalism. Not only justice in the wider sense but justice as meted and administered in the courts. Send a union man to jail and you have a strike on your hands. (166)

Indeed, the judge sentences Bev based on his crime of non-conformity rather than on the petty theft, saying "Justice *in the wider sense* demands that your circumstances of life be so modified that the urge

to commit crime is quelled and eliminated," before placing Bev on what is euphemistically called "probation" (167). Probation is in fact compulsory rehabilitation at the Crawford Manor facility, hardly a neutral therapeutic setting, as the facility was founded by the Trade Union's Congress and is partly financed by the State Treasury. The goal of rehabilitation is not coercion, Bev is assured, but an opportunity for him to "reconsider his position" in order that he might choose "to be welcomed back into the comity of the nation's workers" (167). The judge's goal is not to ascertain the facts of the case, but to see that Bev's future behavior is altered according to the current social climate. The judge has institutional authority behind him, and he behaves like what Thomas Szasz calls a "benevolent despot," "whether political or psychiatric, [who] does not like to have his benevolence questioned. If it is, he resorts to the classic tactic of the oppressor: he tries to silence his critic, and, if this fails, he tries to degrade him. The psychiatrist accomplishes this by calling those who disagree with him 'hostile' or 'mentally ill' (39). Bev is escorted to Crawford Manor, along with nineteen other candidates for rehabilitation, by an armed guard who is both a law enforcement officer and an agent of the Trade Unions' Congress; almost comically, guard and prisoners must finish the trip to the Manor on foot, as the train service goes on strike in mid-journey (169-171). Crawford Manor is run by a man named Pettigrew, who is not coincidentally the permanent chairman of the TUC Presidium (173), and who gives the impression of a benevolent healer as he discusses the conflicts between the inner and outer worlds, the individual self versus a collective identity, with his attentive audience. From his sudden mood changes, however, Bev deduces that he is insane (177), and like the judge, Pettigrew has no interest in the particular details of the inmates in his charge; he cares only about the definition and control of resistant subjects. After his course of treatment, including seminars and films, Bev maintains his opposition, though he does so alone among the other inmates. He debates questions of liberty, patriotism, power, and consumption with Pettigrew, at one point physically attacking him, only to be restrained by two metalworkers who label him a "nutcake case" (189). Before being released from Crawford Manor, inmates must fulfil three conditions: accept a job, accept a new union card, and finally, sign "a formal recantation of heresy," which Pettigrew admits is to be used for TUC's own propaganda purposes (188). When Bev refuses, he is taken to the cellar and tortured (192-194), then spending several days in the constant company of Pettigrew and a male nurse, since all of the other candidates for rehabilitation have successfully completed their programs and

agreed to the conditions of release; the one-on-one with Pettigrew, despite his entreaties and threats does not affect Bev, and finally he is allowed to leave the Manor, a "flaw in the system" (195). One of Pettigrew's final threats to Bev is the possibility of having him declared insane, meaning of course abnormal in relation to a majority-established norm, which, as Bev knows, would be easy for Pettigrew to do:

> . . . the distinction between the place of penal detention and the mental home must, of necessity, progressively narrow. Which represents, in terms of the amenities of enforced confinement, an improvement. Mental homes don't become like prisons, I mean – it's the other way round. You can see that this had to happen. (197).

Bev understands the likelihood that, although he is being released for the moment, he will later be incarcerated, *"pursued by his own kind"* (200; original italics), a prediction which will prove surprisingly accurate.

Bev is ultimately sentenced to a state institution, SI-Five, Purfleet Castle, for an indeterminate period, although he feels unbeaten since he is still non-unionized and free to live in "the large periphery of his brain" (239). Bev is not mad in any objective sense, of course, but instead occupies the place of a madman in his resistance to the prevailing social norms. In other words, he is mad in a political, moral and / or ethical sense, what Szasz calls a "manufactured" madness, a means for the dominant power to isolate and thus limit opposition (9). Bev tries to justify his "insanity" to the doctors, who make no pretense to therapeutic neutrality, given that they judge "normality" on the basis of current community beliefs; Bev is "insane" because he resists changing, will not accept "reality" as imposed by the dominant power:[4]

> Look, I can't see where I've gone wrong. I was brought up in a particular tradition that was regarded as sane. I was brought up under a system of government that was regarded as the triumph of centuries

[4] Shoshana Felman mentions Foucault's work regarding the mental hospital as an institution in service of the dominant power: "The philosophical decree of exclusion anticipates the political decree of the "great internment" (*le grand renfermement*), by which, one morning in Paris, 6000 people were taken – fools, madmen, loiterers, drunks, tramps, paupers, and profaners – to be confined: that is how, in 1657, the General Hospital was created. This General Hospital, however, was not a medical institution; it was "the third force of repression" (*Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, page 61), a semi-judiciary structure which, working alongside the law and the police, had the power to try, to convict, and to execute – outside of court. (39). See *Writing and Madness: Literature / Philosophy / Psychoanalysis*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).

> of instinctual sanity. I see the world changed. Am I obliged to change with it? (240)

No attempt is made to change Bev's attitude, unlike his earlier experience at Crawford Manor. Years pass in uneventful daily routine, and what little news is to be had from the outside world is of little interest, with the exception of the break-up of the Islamic union and the coming war which is implied (244). All sentences are indefinite, which generally means that the inmates die in confinement; some who are very old and feeble are released to their families (244). Bev chooses another way out. Realizing that, despite his dead wife's injunction not to let them get away with it, in fact, "they all got away with it; they always would," he commits suicide by throwing himself against the electrified perimeter fence (246). And indeed, the dominant powers have got away with it, not only in Bev's particular case, but on a much larger scale as well. The network of abusive power is still in place, functioning as before, with continual warfare as the background element which assures a relatively low standard of living and the formation of antagonistic groups, ready to adhere to the dominant doctrine of the moment. In the Epilogue to *1985*, Burgess warns about the shifting definitions of words like love, duty, God and fidelity, saying "It's here that the danger lies. Any dictatorial regime can take hold of these words, exploit the emotional response they excite, but provide its own definitions" (269). A person who refuses to accept the current, official definition of reality, who refuses, like Bev Jones, to be part of the "flock of sheep," finds himself outcast, disenfranchised, a non-person. A person who has the audacity to oppose warfare, to publicly decry the evils of war (especially war in service of the dominant capitalist regime), finds himself incarcerated, removed from society, silenced, condemned as a criminal or as a madman, perhaps "rehabilitated," perhaps not. If from Orwell we learn to fear too much power in the hands of the State, from Burgess we learn to beware of too much power in *anybody's* hands, regardless of the program of revolutionary liberation which they promise.

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