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CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION
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The exploratory nature of Burgess's novels makes them the most significant achievement as a writer. Taken together they can be said to constitute consciousness of every man. They may be called a quest for spiritual life. However, Burgess's vision of life in his fiction does not have a fixed, static rounded off form; it is a developing vision. They evoke the development of his soul. They express the experience of his self. The desires, aspirations and struggles dramatized in his novels are not only his but also of a large section of humanity.

Burgess held the view that evil is connected with free will in his novels. Speaking about it he says, "... our only freedom is to fall, the rest is out of our hands". ¹

The first three novels, A Malayan Trilogy, does not reveal Burgess as "a bloody racist"² as Achebe puts it, nor is he able to see from inside the Malayan life as does Achebe's comprehensive presentation of Ibo life in his novels. We do not have in Burgess, Conrad's derogatory language in describing the Malayans. But he uses it for the evocation of decadent "Britishdom". Yet his attitude to the East is complex, itself critical of
racism, often sympathetic, sometimes superficial. If, sometimes, Burgess’s image of the Malayans seems negative, his presentation of the British is even more so. He presents Nabby Adams as a gregarious dipsomaniac who depends on Crabbe for his security. Boothby is incapable of love, while each of them is possessed by greed, lust and moral corruption, confusion and self delusion.

Though his Malayan world is predominately authentic, yet Burgess is unable to rise above the petty Western prejudices, so far as Muslim belief in Islam and their practises are concerned.

Burgess himself is not consistent in his spellings. We have 'Malaya' and 'Malasians' used frequently in the novel.

Burgess clearly reveals in his characterization and building up of situations a remarkable influence of Conrad and E.M. Forster on him. For instance, the school sports day reveals such an influence.

In spite of such influence on him, he evokes a post-colonial attitude which is independent of these influences.

Burgess in A Clockwork Orange creates an adolescent anti-hero, who is innocent and hence incapable of carrying the thematic burden imposed on him. It is a futurist
novel written to a thesis. His experiment with English language 'nadsat' shows James Joyce's influence on him.

While *A Clockwork Orange* exhibits James Joyce's influence on Burgess, *The Wanting Seed* is full of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Moreover, this novel reveals George Orwell's influence on Burgess. The novel evokes Burgess's "despair at spiritual death".

*Tremor of Intent*, *MP* and *Earthly Powers* show a strong struggle of the author to evoke eclectic belief based on Gnostic, Christian and Pagan elements. There is an evocation of dualistic antithesis between light and darkness, good and evil, God and Satan, the soul and the body. Burgess dramatizes a perpetual battle between these antithetical forces. We recall Graham Greene's influence on him in showing the fallen and sinful people worthy of salvation and regeneration.

Looking close at *Tremor of Intent*, the novel reveals Burgess's confusion in evoking Devi's image. She is represented as exhibiting antithetical influence on Hillier. Her depiction does not stand much looking into. The image pattern used to evoke her totters to a muddle. For instance, Venus-Actaeon image used for Hillier - Devi relationship does not help one in getting an overall vision of the novel.

Burgess is at his best in depicting Nazi tortures of the Jaw's in *Earthly Powers*. His self-commenting novel
a novel about writing a novel, puts him in the tradition of Sterne, Backett, Pirandello and Pinter.

Burgess's *The Doctor is Sick* is a comic novel. Sometimes it is deficient in comic situations but is a highly witty and entertaining novel.

From the novels I have studied, Burgess impresses me most in depicting characters like Edwin, Toomey, Miss Devi, Carlo, Alex and Nabby Adams.

His fictional genius discovers for us a new world within the known world. The imperfections of his novels are a part of their greatness. He has attempted to yoke together the grotesque, futuristic, theological, imperialistic debates of our century. This has resulted in his prolific novel *Earthly Powers* which reminds us of the leisurely days of the 19th century and *MP* which compelled the author to explain as to what all he did in it.

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MY QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANTHONY BURGESS'S RESPONSE
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To
Anthony Burgess
44 Rue GRIMALDI, MC 98000,
MONACO (MONACO)

Dear Sir:

I have submitted my synopsis for a Ph.D. thesis on your novels. The topic of my Thesis for Ph.D. is: "A Critical Study of Anthony Burgess's Fiction". And my husband, who is at the English Department, South Gujrat University, Surat, (India) has sent an advertisement calling for scholarly articles on your novels. (A copy of his advertisement on your novels is enclosed for your reference).

We need your help in our ventures. Please send me answers to the following questions for my article: "Anthony Burgess and Islam." I have to submit my thesis within two months. Hence, I request you to answer my questions at your earliest.

(1) Did you have close Muslim friends?
(2) Did you know Muslims from inside?
(3) Did you know the Quran in Arabic?
(4) How far were you influenced by Islam?
(5) How did you know about the Malayas?
(6) What did you know of Arabs?
(7) Did you derive information on Islam from your reading?
(8) Have you lived with Muslims?
(9) Did you come across Christian condemnation of Islam or its thoughtful appraisal?
(10) Did you see Islam in a new light or did you identify yourself with its principles and tenets?
(11) Why did you call the Quran a dry book?

For my husband's forthcoming book please furnish us with the addresses of the critics who would be willing to write articles on your novels. Is there any publisher, either in the U.S.A. or Europe who would undertake to publish the collection of critical essays on you? Kindly give us the addresses of the publisher.

Thanking you,

Sincerely yours,

(F.A. INAMDAR)
Dear Mrs Inamdar and Dr Inamdar,

I have just received your letter of February 23, so I hasten to reply to your questions.

1. I had very close Muslim friends in Malaysia and Brunei. I have had none since 1959.
2. I knew Islam very much from the inside, having proposed my own conversion under the name of Yahya bin Abdullah.
3. I am at the moment reading the Quran, with some difficulty, in the original.
4. I was influenced by the ethos of Islam in becoming convinced that the need for God's incarnation as Christ was unnecessary, and that the notion was blasphemous. I have changed my view since then.
5. I lived in Malaya and Borneo from 1954 to 1959.
6. Very little.
7. Partly from reading; mostly from direct and daily contact.
8. In Malaya, yes.
9. I never discovered Christian condemnation of the faith in the multicultural colonies. Approval I rarely found.
10. The identification with Islam was radically changed by the rise of fundamentalism, especially in Iran. It has changed into resentment since the condemnation of my colleague Salman Rushdie.
11. I find the Quran repetitive. It lacks the poetry and also the compassion of the New Testament.

As for the question about critics of my work, I'm unable to help directly. I suggest you apply to Professor Geoffrey Aggeler of the English Department, University of Utah, Salt Lake City. My publisher in Britain, Hutchinson, might be interested in your project.

Thank you for your letter, and good wishes for your project.

Very sincerely,

[Signature]

[Handwritten Signature]
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