

“Droogs” and “Linguists”: Resistance, Control, and Institutionalism in Anthony
Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange* and Suzette Haden Elgin’s *Native Tongue*

by

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Abstract

My thesis, which studies Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* and Suzette Haden Elgin's *Native Tongue*, discusses the success and failure of achieving agency in a dystopian society. By drawing on Althusser's theory of "State Apparatuses," I argue Alex, the protagonist of *A Clockwork Orange*, fails to gain autonomy, as he is unaware of how he has become institutionalized; yet, Nazareth, the protagonist of *Native Tongue*, achieves control through the construct of a new familial institution and the development of a female-centric language, Láadan. Chapter two focuses on how Alex is a victim of his environment, and becomes a part of the system he is trying to resist. Chapter three argues that Nazareth succeeds in gaining agency and, along with her female community, creates a matriarchal "State Apparatus." Taken together, then, these books highlight that communal effort is necessary to challenge state control.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Groucho Marx said, “Marriage is a wonderful institution, but who wants to live in an institution?” (Alberro and Stimson 1942). Many institutions, such as schools and religious institutions, are difficult to avoid, forming an environment which shapes society and its individuals. My thesis argues that institutions and organizations created or maintained by a society’s ruling body are represented as being responsible for the actions exhibited by the protagonists in Anthony Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) and Suzette Haden Elgin’s *Native Tongue* (1984). Both novels situate their protagonists within societies formed by authoritarian institutions and organizations, but each protagonist responds differently. The institutions in *A Clockwork Orange* force the protagonist, Alex, to respond in a violent way; yet, Nazareth finds support in her female contemporaries and uses Láadan to alter her environment.

Dystopian literature often represents the worst aspects of society, or highlights the possible outcomes of certain political or societal shifts. Maria Varsam argues “concrete dystopia designates those moments, events, institutions, and systems that embody and realize organized forces of violence and oppression” (209). Set in societies different from our own, yet similar enough for them to be recognized, these societies visualize the results of these “organized forces.” *A Clockwork Orange* and *Native Tongue* both provide examples of how “institutions, and systems” control people. However, the reaction from the protagonists is entirely different and worth exploration. I argue that Alex is unsuccessful in his ability to distance himself from the institutions that shape him, whereas Nazareth demonstrates an ability to reshape society. Additionally, neither of these novels has been fully explored in terms of how the ruling body controls the protagonists. Critics commonly argue that the British edition of *A Clockwork Orange* ends optimistically, but I argue the opposite is true. *Native Tongue* has been the

focus of much linguistic analyses. Relying on Althusser's theory of "State Apparatuses" in Chapter Two, I will analyze how the linguist women respond to the society that oppresses them and how institutionalism is portrayed in the dystopian society. Alex becomes a product of a violent environment, unable to alter his behaviour, because no institution allows him to identify with a non-violent form of resistance. Conversely, Nazareth, the protagonist of *Native Tongue*, is able to recognize that an alternative institution can be formed, allowing her and other women agency.

By drawing on Althusser's theory of "State Apparatuses," which examines how the ruling class maintains its control through the various societal institutions and organizations, I argue that Alex is a victim of the violent society he lives in. Alex has little awareness that he is a product of his authoritarian environment; therefore, the institutions and constructs he tries to be part of are unsuccessful or violent in nature. However, the patriarchal society which Nazareth lives in serves as a catalyst for the creation of a newly formed female institution through the protagonist's awareness of how she is being controlled. In *Native Tongue*, the female community is able to envisage a different ideology and institution created and propagated through a female-centred language, Láadan.

Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State" was published in 1971, nearly ten years after *A Clockwork Orange* and thirteen years prior to *Native Tongue*. However, Althusser's theory is important when considering the way a ruling class functions and retains its status with limited physical resistance; it does so in part by ensuring those being repressed are positioned in a way that makes them unaware of their own repression. Ultimately, the repressed population supports the system that represses them.

Althusser's theory states the ruling body has two main approaches ensuring sustained control and repression: the Repressive Apparatus and the Ideological State Apparatuses (RSA and ISAs). The RSA is made up of institutions and organizations whose purpose "consists essentially in securing by force (physical

or otherwise) the political conditions of the reproduction of relations of production” (95), such as the military and police. The ISAs control through more insidious means by instilling and maintaining ideologies that support the governing body. The types of institutions responsible for ISAs are “the educational apparatus, the religious apparatus, the family apparatus, the political apparatus, the trade-union apparatus, the communications apparatus, the ‘cultural’ apparatus, etc” (Althusser 95). The ISAs instil into the population a desire to assimilate with what the State believes is acceptable behaviour. The varying ideologies of the numerous ISAs, such as education and religion, result in a universal conformity and acceptance of the violence used by the RSA to ensure that everyone stays within the perimeters of acceptable behaviour as outlined by the State. There are moments when ISAs and the RSA intersect, but their aim remains static: to ensure the ruling body retains control and its people conform to their given positions.

Relying on Althusser’s theory, Chapter Two will argue that Alex is a product of numerous institutions that form the dystopian society in which he lives. Violence is prevalent in *A Clockwork Orange* and, although Alex is a villainous anti-hero, he is also a victim. The institutions and violent society that Alex is part of leave him with no choice. Throughout the novel, Alex attempts to identify with various groups who should enable him to transition from rebellious teenager to mature young adult. I will draw on Todd Davis’s and Kenneth Womack’s theory of the “pseudo-family,” a term used to describe the various mock family units that Alex attempts to integrate into and identify with. Analyzing these “pseudo-families” makes it evident that the protagonist of the novel is unable to transcend his violent teenage life to mature into a person capable of making empathic decisions that prevent his aptitude toward violence. *A Clockwork Orange* is not a novel that demonstrates a rite of passage, but one that demonstrates an inability to learn from childhood and adolescent experiences. Alex is incapable of achieving a sense of moral agency and identity, as there is no alternative ideology to

the violent one in which he exists. Previous analyses of *A Clockwork Orange* tend to focus on the protagonist's inability to choose after being subjected to a behaviour modification technique. I argue that Alex is unable to make that choice because he is a victim of the oppression of institutionalism used by a violent society that already removed his ability to choose even before exposing him to the modification treatment.

Written over twenty years after *A Clockwork Orange*, *Native Tongue* also depicts institutions and organizations that are used to ensure stability for the ruling class. The oppressive "state" in *Native Tongue* is an overtly patriarchal one. Althusser's theory of ISAs can be applied to *Native Tongue*'s dystopian society, where the ISAs are used to establish and maintain a status quo of female subordination. Chapter Three of my thesis argues the protagonist of *Native Tongue* is able to form new institutions through her awareness of how the "State Apparatus" functions. The women of the society are aware the ruling patriarchal institutions are deliberately constructed to oppress women; the women can be aware of their oppression because they are also aware of an alternative way of living—something which they pass on to future generations through storytelling. The ISAs are unable to work unconsciously, with some exceptions, as the developing women work together to ensure resistance to the patriarchy and establish their own institutions as a community. As the women are aware of how the institutions are oppressing them, this knowledge enables them to resist the hegemonic society. By developing a new female-centred language, Láadan, the women create their own "State Apparatus" made up of institutions of resistance, such as family and religion, with the female language at their core. Elgin's introduction of Láadan is instigated in her belief in the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which states that "language both reflects and determines the way a particular culture perceives and thinks about reality" (Anderson 92). By drawing on the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, I argue the women use Láadan as an "apparatus" to form a matriarchal state of resistance.

Chapter 2

Institutionalized Institutionalism: Unconsciously Becoming a Cog in the System in *A Clockwork Orange*

Introduction

Written in the form of an autobiography, *A Clockwork Orange* begins with 15-year-old protagonist, Alex, describing the extremely violent actions he and his gang of “droogs” commit. This heinous list includes murder, assault, gang-rape, and Alex’s rape of two ten-year-old girls. The novel progresses by describing Alex’s capture by the police and subsequent subjection to a new behaviour modification technique, termed the Lodovico technique. Barbaric in its implementation, the technique removes Alex’s ability to choose between a violent or non-violent future. However, if we consider Alex’s behaviour in light of the RSA and ISAs of Althusser’s theory, Alex is never in a position to make a non-violent choice because he is a victim of the “State Apparatus.” Alex believes he is rebelling and resisting the system, but he is actually repeating the State’s ideology through his use of violence in all aspects of his life. The “State Apparatuses” that Alex is influenced by include the ISAs of the family, religion, education, and culture, whilst being victim to the RSA (considered a singular unit by Althusser as they all use violence) of the legal system, the police, and the penal system. The RSA in *A Clockwork Orange* uses literal violence toward Alex, whereas the ISAs promote violence and support the RSA in its use of aggression to achieve conformity. The culmination of the novel leads to Alex’s failed suicide attempt, which removes the effect of the behaviour modification, giving Alex autonomy over his future actions. To understand the importance of the Lodovico technique, it is imperative to begin by examining the different endings to the novel.

Burgess’ first edition of *A Clockwork Orange* consists of three parts, each with seven chapters. The last chapter of the book is a topic much discussed by critics and publishers. In the final chapter of this edition Alex leaves hospital after

his failed suicide attempt, no longer under the influence of the Lodovico method, and it is implied that Alex is making positive choices about his future by denouncing his violent past. Alex now desires a son, and vocalizes his intention to search for a partner in order to start a family. The American publisher, W. W. Norton, believed the ending was so optimistic an American public would not like it and published the book without the final chapter, finishing at the end of Chapter 20 with Alex envisaging and relishing the future violence he intends to commit. Stanley Kubrick's famous film adaptation, a subject of much discussion in its own right, also finishes at the end of Chapter 20 as he was unaware of the final chapter until the screenplay was near completion (Gehrke 273). The film adaptation characterizes Alex in ways that differ from the novel, but ends with a similarly threatening tone of Alex becoming excited regarding his potentially violent future. Eventually, in 1986, Burgess republished the novel reinstating the final chapter. Yet, the controversy surrounding the final chapter seems based on its optimism, simply because Alex renounces his violent past and looks towards a future where he will belong to a familial institution of his own making. However, the ending of the novel can be interpreted as pessimistic regardless of whether it ends at chapter 20 or 21. As Todd Davis and Kenneth Womack emphasize, the ending of the novel does not acknowledge the perpetuation of the anti-ethical family that led to Alex's violence tendencies:

Critics continue to ignore the role of the family as a substantial narrative force in Burgess's text. An interdisciplinary reading of *A Clockwork Orange* using recent insights in ethical criticism and family systems psychotherapy demonstrates [sic] not only the necessity of the twenty-first chapter as the fruition of Burgess's moral vision, but also the centrality of family structures as catalysts for interpersonal development and as ethical foundations for individual change. (20)

Alex's numerous attempts to find a structure he can belong to demonstrate how the family, whether real or "pseudo," is an integral part of how Alex develops. Alex's relationships with the various families in the novel contribute largely toward his behaviour, with Chapter 21 demonstrating how Alex's propensity toward violence will also be a characteristic his children will have. Because Alex and the "pseudo-families" with which he attempts to affiliate himself are subjects of the "State Apparatus," their role in Alex's development is paramount, including the vision Alex has for the future of his children.

2.1 Family and Violence

One of the institutions that serves as a catalyst for Alex's use of violence is the nuclear family. Althusser argues that historically the church worked in collaboration with the family as the prevalent ISA, but in the contemporary period the family apparatus works in conjunction with education. The institutions of the family and education fail Alex because they are subjected to the same State controlled environment as Alex. Alex's anarchy only reproduces what he is shown by the "State Apparatus." Alex's family are portrayed as a weak structure with his parents refusing to challenge Alex's behaviour. As Davis and Womack argue, "Alex's lack of any functional family system in which he can interact with mature and fully realized adult selves manifests itself in his own hyper-exaggerated sense of pseudo-self" (28). For example, when Alex returns home after a night of performing violent acts, he describes how the music speakers in his bedroom are positioned around the room. Alex then turns on his music stating, "Pee and em in their bedroom next door had learnt now not to knock on the wall with complaints of what they called noise. I had taught them. Now they would take sleep-pills" (29). The sinister tone of Alex's statement indicates his ability to manipulate his parents in a similar way to how the governing state manipulates them, through the threat of violence. Alex refuses to conform, but does not know how to reject his environment other than to use the violent methods learnt through the

RSA. Alex's parents' refusal to challenge his dictatorial ways reflects the consequences of a State that demands conformity, offering no avenue for independent thought or rejection. Alex's parents are victims of the State, in much the same way as Alex, demonstrating the success of the familial unit as an ISA.

Althusser mentions the family as one of the many ISAs used to maintain the status quo, ensuring the longevity of the ruling class (95). When considering the number of "psuedo-families" Alex tries to construct or integrate with, it must be recognized that each is important as an example of the more general familial institution. When Alex appears to optimistically renounce his violence at the end of the novel, he is still unaware of how he is a subject being controlled by the "State Apparatus." Alex's declaration at the end of Chapter 20, when he describes his violent dream of "carving the whole litso of the creeching world with my cut-throat britva" (139), emphasizes his ability to choose his future. However, I argue Alex's choice to return to violence is far less pessimistic than Alex's future, and the future of his child, which will unknowingly continue the perpetuity of the anti-ethical family, created as a result of a violent and uncaring society. Alex knows his son will carry out similar atrocities and acknowledges, "I would not really be able to stop him. And nor would he stop his own son. And so it would itty on to like the end of the world" (148). Alex's inability to see that he has been subjected to a system that has shaped his thinking and given him a propensity for violence, which it seems he has no hope of altering, is far more troubling than his open excitement for violence. With a knowledge of how he has become a subject of institutionalism, Alex may be able to halt the cycle of violence in his own child, but he will not. Alex is a product of a familial institution formed by the "State Apparatus," which has succeeded in producing an individual incapable of making moral choices or understanding that he is in a position to alter the status quo.

Alex's language is an additional signifier of how he is trying to become part of a familial institution. Alex's constant use of "my brother" to his peers and the reader demonstrates his need for fraternity and inclusivity. "Brother" becomes

a “narrative trope via which [Alex] attempts to establish family structures wherever and whenever he can” (Davis and Womack 28). However, Alex’s participation as a member of the gang is also dysfunctional, there being no displays of fraternal love, support or even friendship between Alex and the other members. As a family apparatus, the “pseudo-family” of the gang mirrors the oppression used by the State whose “laws and conditions [are] appropriate to a mechanical creation” (*A Clockwork Orange* 21), with the various members trying to assert their authority in a way they have witnessed through other violent institutions. The RSA in the dystopian society, including the police, have demonstrated that control is gained through violence “with pooshkas [guns] pushing out of the police-autowindows at the ready” (17). Therefore, Alex has no alternative model to identify with because the institution that is meant to prevent violence is inherently violent itself.

The beginning of the novel demonstrates that Alex is a product of his environment, and also shows the way the “State Apparatus” operates, as Alex becomes part of a system he believes he is resisting. Alex, like many teenagers, looks to his friends as a group with which he can identify, and through which he can defy authority and control others. Alex and his peers use an argot, termed Nadsat, which enables them to identify with each other, isolating themselves from the adult world. Nadsat, a mixture of Russian and Cockney rhyming slang, performs a number of functions in the novel, including the fact that it “create[s] a ‘*Verfremdungseffekt*’, as Bertolt Brecht did in his plays, so that the reader is distanced from the action and can concentrate on the ideas” (Adams 71). Nadsat is an enormous part of Alex’s identity and reflects the environment Alex is influenced by. Davis and Womack argue the use of Nadsat accentuates Alex’s sense of isolation and insecurity, since he uses it as a way of portraying his inner-self to the outside world. However, Alex’s inner-self is a result of the RSA and ISAs used by the ruling body in the dystopian society. Nadsat is a language of aggression “offering numerous phrases for describing acts of violence and an entire lexicon

of misogynistic tropes...it lacks noticeably any words denoting love, compassion, or the kind of interrelationship one might experience in a functional family system” (Davis and Womack 25). The language thus reflects Alex’s internal priorities as he identifies himself in the outside world. Nadsat is a reflection of the aggressive society in which Alex finds himself, but he is unable to recognize that he is subject to, and a creation of, the State’s system. Alex is unable to find an institution, familial or otherwise, that can provide him with an alternative vision, and it is this lack of choice which leads to his perpetuation of violent acts.

Alex and his gang of “droogs” are a microcosm of the State and its apparatus. Alex is the self-elected leader who uses the members of his gang in a way that is self-serving, ruling by violence and using the gang members in a similar way to the RSA. When the members of Alex’s gang do not behave in the manner he wants them to, he uses violence against them. For example, throughout the novel Alex demonstrates a love of classical music, and when Dim interrupts a woman singing opera Alex physically attacks him. When the other members of the gang attempt to tell Alex that his behaviour is not acceptable, Alex responds by slashing two of them, using violence to reestablish his position and retain control. Alex’s megalomaniac tendencies are ones learnt through a violent society. It is clear in the novel that the anarchic behaviour of Alex is not atypical for him or his contemporaries. Alex states as he comes across his first victim, “You never really saw many of the older bourgeois type out after nightfall those days, what with the shortage of police and we fine young malchickiwicks about” (8). Aggression and violence has become integrated into the psyche of the society through its overt use. Similarly, the ideologies of the various structures and institutions in the novel either fail to question the insidious violence, serving to promote violence through a deliberate ignorance, or actively promote violence as a form of control through the RSA.

Davis and Womack argue that Alex’s repetition of “like,” which is not part of the Nadsat language but idiosyncratic to Alex’s lexicon, is a signifier of “his so-

cial dislocation and his emotional separation from the world beyond the self" (26). Although a word common to adolescent speech, I argue Alex uses this word more frequently at times of imposed reflection. If Alex is a product of his environment, and his behaviour is a result of his "relationship" with his "real conditions of existence" (Althusser 95), it appears that Alex's use of "like" is injected when he is confronted with a situation where the relationship comes into question, which is usually at a time of heightened emotion. For example, after his rape of two young girls, Alex says, "They are like waking up to what had been done to their malenky persons and saying they wanted to go home and like I was a wild beast" (39). It is at these emotionally charged moments when Alex seems capable of questioning his position and relationship with the external world. However, the word "like" appears to form a barrier between his acknowledgement not only of his actions, but the reasons behind them. It is at these moments of possible understanding and reflection when the various institutions are shown to have given Alex his position, and when his position is challenged he forms a mental barrier through his interjection of "like," preventing further exploration of his feelings.

Alex's feelings of superiority are also encouraged through his relationship with his parents. Like his "droogs," Alex's parents give him the opportunity to become the self-appointed leader, allowing his threatening actions to become a source of self-gratification. When Alex's father informs him of his dream where Alex is assaulted and left lying in his own blood, Alex placates his father by giving him money to buy whisky. Although his father is aware that Alex has previous convictions for violent acts, the receiving of a financial bribe shows a willingness to ignore Alex's behaviour. Again, the portrayal of the familial institution is reflective of the governing one where the subjects are unaware of how the State uses violence. In a similar way Slavoj Žižek, in his book *Violence*, explains how the 1922 Russian government expelled a number of intellectuals who opposed the communist regime. Žižek argues that those who opposed the system were igno-

rant of “the violence inherent in a system: not only direct physical violence, but also the more subtle forms of coercion that sustain relations of domination and exploration, including the threat of violence” (9). Alex’s family show a similar attitude; they are unaware their environment has led to a position where they are coerced by their son into receiving tokens of bribery for their assimilation to his ruling order. Alex positions himself as the ruling body and his parents, like his gang members, are his subjects. Alex uses small scale versions of the RSA and ISAs of his own making to ensure conformity. As parents, his mother and father have no real recourse other than violence, in which Alex has shown his superiority. Alex demonstrates an understanding of their conformity to both him and the external ruling body describing them “at their tired meal after the day’s rabbiting in factory the one, store the other. The poor old. The pitiable starry” (40), where “starry” means ancient. However, Alex admits he wears the “guise of loving only son” (40), as this portrayal is necessary to ensure the familial institution continues to retain the status quo, in the same way the ruling class will portray the image of concern to ensure the longevity of its governance. The different “pseudo-families” that Alex encounters throughout the novel thus only reinforce his violence, and this reinforcement is further supported by the larger institutions within the dystopian society of *A Clockwork Orange*.

2.2 State, School, and Prison

There are a number of other ISAs that appear in *A Clockwork Orange* that further constitute Alex’s environment. Although school is one institution that does not appear, its absence is worth comment. As education is an important ISA, in Althusser’s opinion taking priority over the church, Alex’s rejection of school demonstrates his denial to comply with the ruling body’s attempts to assimilate him. As a result, Alex becomes a problem. When Alex’s Post-Corrective Advisor visits, the Advisor reminds Alex that if Alex reoffends “it’s not going to be the corrective school any more” (32). The ISAs that have been put in place to force

compliance have failed because Alex does not want to change, an issue which is raised throughout the novel and shall be discussed later in relation to the Lodovico technique's implementation. As Beryl Schlossman argues, Alex "plays out the consequences of original sin, perhaps in response to the evil world filled with unattractive institutions that seek total control over the masses: at work, in school, at the police station or in prison, the traces of individual identity or moral choice are erased" (273). Alex ponders how God is proud of what God has created, whether it be good or evil. By rejecting the institution of education, Alex adopts violence and becomes part of the problem in the system he is resisting. Alex is aware of his resistance to the State and recognizes his performing atrocities means individuality, stating:

badness is of the self, the one...But the not-self cannot have the bad, meaning they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave malenky selves fighting these big machines? (34)

Even though Alex admits enjoying his heinous actions, he is aware there is a system he is revolting against.

However, what Alex refuses to realize is he is a victim of that system, rather than an anarchist. Ironically, when he meets F. Alexander, the person whose wife Alex and his peers gang-rape, Alex is presented with an alternative life, but is unable to see it. As Alex reads an extract from Alexander's book:

Rather than astutely heeding Alexander's words as a warning about the inherent dangers in all forms of hierarchy power structures—including governments, religious organizations, educational institutions, and even families themselves—Alex co-opts the writer's clockwork orange metaphor as a means for justifying the pseudo-self that sanctions his horrific violations of the humanity of others. (Davis and Womack 28)

Davis and Womack argue Alex is employing free will in his choice. Yet, I argue Alex's choice has also been largely formed by his environment and the violent society in which he lives, so it is questionable whether Alex's choice can be considered free-will if he has been shown no alternative to attrition or violence.

During Alex's incarceration and subsequent subjection to the Lodovico technique, he experiences a number of other institutions within the dystopian society. The prison is portrayed as a predominantly violent institution, with guards and inmates using acts of aggression as a means of control. Peter Steinfelds argues, "Recognizing that prisons themselves are behaviour controlling 'total institutions' means recognizing that they control the behaviour not only of inmates but of guards and scientists and psychiatrists and whoever attempts to work within this context" (12). Additionally, all persons related to the prison are part of the society exposed to the RSA and ISAs, even if they are part of the overall mechanism of State control. Like Alex, the guards have no understanding of alternate forms of control, but feel vindicated because the ISAs have ensured members of the RSA and ISAs feel their roles are necessary. For example, when Alex is taken into custody and his Post Correctional Advisor arrives the police tell P. R. Deltoid, "If you'd like to bash him [Alex] in the chops, sir...don't mind us. We'll hold him down" (57). The police, like Alex, see violence as a way of control and ensuring conformity. As the police have been subjected to the same ideologies as Alex the perpetuation of violence continues, but the penal system is supported by the State and the public to maintain the status quo.

Religion works alongside the prison to subject the inmates to further violent images. Alex forms a relationship with the prison chaplain, who appears "very fond of myself [Alex], me being young and now also interested in the big book" (64). The chaplain, who drinks Scotch and believes convincing the inmates of the existence of hell will reform them, plays an important part as an ISA of the state. By telling the prison inmates that there is "a place, darker than any prison, hotter than any flame of human fire, where souls of unrepentant criminal sinners

like yourselves...scream in endless and intolerable agony” (63), the chaplain tries to convince the inmates that violence continues into the next life, underlining the State’s ideology that non-conformity will result in violent acts against the perpetrator. Similarly, the chaplain believes Alex’s interest in the Bible is one of salvation, not recognizing that Alex enjoys reading about “starry yahoodies tolchocking each other and then peeing their Hebrew vino and getting on the bed with their wives’ like hand-maidens, real horrorshow” (64). The Bible, the Old Testament in particular, is shown to be inherently violent, which adds tolerance toward the violence the State allows as shown through the ISA of religion, and the RSA of the prison guards. “We are shocked and outraged when we see ‘citizens’ victimized by ‘criminals,’ but we are shocked far less by everyday violence. Foucault recognized that this separation legitimates certain forms of violence while casting others as illegitimate or evil” (Gherke 281). Alex’s interest in the Bible exemplifies how the State dictates to the populous what is acceptable violence and what is not. Through its ISAs, the State allows the violence used by the RSA to become acceptable.

2.3 The Lodovico Treatment: Where the State Meets the Family

State institutions and the family structure also work together in Burgess’s novel. The occupants who share a cell with Alex provide an additional “pseudo-family” construct in the same way as his gang of peers. Like his earlier gang, they also reflect a structure similar to the State. Having established a hierarchal system, the inmates of the cell react when an additional prisoner arrives who refuses to conform. Although this is a family-like construct Alex does not want to be part of, the other occupants of the cell unite with him in violence and eventually beat the new prisoner to death. In an imitation of the penal system, one of the inmates completes the assault commenting “Let him dream perhaps of being a better boy in the future” (71). When the body is discovered by the guards the Minister of the Interior visits the “Staja” and indicates the political shift occurring

claiming “Soon we may be needing all our prison space for political offenders” (73). The indication that those who will not conform to the State ideology prerequisites Alex’s subjection to the Lodovico technique. If the RSA and ISAs of the State cannot maintain the status quo, the State will develop and use alternative methods to ensure conformity.

Alex is persuaded to take part in the Lodovico method with the promise that he will be able to leave prison. The Prison Chaplain expresses concern it may be “horrible to be good,” but stresses that Alex’s choice to take part in the experiment is symbolic of an ethical choice. The Chaplain cannot see a difference between the violent choices of the men in the prison, and his conscious choice to remain silent regarding the barbarity of the Lodovico technique.

During the implementation of the technique Alex encounters a familial institution in which he assumes the conventional role of a child: “The doctors in *Orange*, like the doctors Foucault describes, become fathers and mothers, judging and executing as necessary, justifying the process through kindness and love rather than punishment. They attempt to reinforce in Alex that he was sick and that he is now getting better” (Gehrke 277-78). As subjects of the ruling body themselves, the doctors and scientists are also subjected to the RSA and ISAs, resulting in a belief they are working in the best interests of their subject. Alex is now part of an institution which, like the family, becomes an ISA ensuring Alex will become a compliant member of society, accepting his position and maintaining the status quo. Alex’s belief in the ISAs and their relevant institutions is evident in the way he responds to the doctors and scientists, feeling “really grateful to this very nice Dr Branom” (78). Althusser explains that the influence of the State Apparatus begins from the moment a person is born (106), and for Alex his “blind faith in the implicit goodness and charity of government and its institutions rewards him with disillusionment and hopelessness” (Davis and Womack 31). The influence of the institutions allows them to manipulate Alex into surrendering his ability to choose. This is an example of how the RSA of the penal system and

the ISA of medical and scientific institutions, as well as a pseudo-family ISA, work in tandem to secure control of Alex.

The Lodovico technique also inadvertently removes Alex's ability to enjoy classical music, as it is used to heighten his reaction to the films he is forced to watch, demonstrating how the State values conformity above anything else. The State's attempt to rehabilitate Alex not to use violence does not work for a number of reasons, the most obvious reason being Alex's lack of choice: "At the conclusion of conditioning and even after he is back on the streets Alex still likes violence and brutality, and likes to think about them, but finds that he cannot without being nauseated. Consequently there is an incredible dissonance between what Alex can do and what he likes to do" (Palmer 302). However, the issue for the State is to ensure conformity, regardless of whether it is a choice. As violence is an integral part of the system used to ensure the ruling class maintain their position, Alex is unable to consider a true alternative and will always desire violence as it has become an integral part of his character. Alex is a result of a violent society, unable to choose to make a true non-violent choice, as he is unaware of how to.

Once Alex is deemed a successful receiver of the Lodovico experiment he is released and returns home where he finds a paying lodger has assumed the role of surrogate son to Alex's parents. Alex's aggressive, vitriolic response signifies how he may have been conditioned, but is not rehabilitated. Gehrke argues "According to Foucault, discipline, to be meaningful, has to be self-sustaining. It is less corporeal than a politics of the body and should have more of an effect upon the mind. However, Alex's experience in the prison had little such effect" (277). Alex's aggression is not unusual, but he is no longer able to manifest his aggression into a violent act. Subsequently, Alex leaves his parents only to become a victim to the elderly man he attacked at the start of the novel. The man recognizes Alex, resulting in "a sea of vonny runny dirty old men trying to get at me with their like feeble rookeries and horny old claws, creeching and

panting on to me, but our crystal droog was there in front, dealing out tolchock after tolchock” (114). The elderly gentlemen, like Alex, use violence as a form of control and revenge. As part of a violent society, it is not surprising that all sectors have the capacity for similar aggressive responses. In the novel, even the most liberal minded characters, such as the Post-Corrective Advisor and F. Alexander, eventually succumb to violence; the advisor demonstrates an assimilation with ideologies of the State when he spits on Alex after Alex’s arrest, whereas F. Alexander and the earlier victim become problematic as they are using violent actions deemed unacceptable by the State.

The police who intercede in the assault on Alex are his former gang member, Dim, and Billyboy, the leader of the opposite gang. Remembering the violence Alex had used against them, they justify their intention to hurt Alex by claiming “we must have our say in the State’s name” (116). Dim and Billyboy’s aggression is now accepted as they are using it as part of the RSA. Like Alex, Dim and Billyboy are also a products of their environment, but manage to find positions where society will accept the violence they use. Robert Evans argues “The best that can be hoped for in the world of Burgess is that the young will eventually grow up into copies of their parents. Physical and mental attrition will set in — it does for some of the gang. Dim and Billyboy, for example, end up as millicents (policemen)” (409). Dim and Billyboy have become conformists to the State without having to alter their violent behaviour.

After Alex is aggressively assaulted by Dim and Billyboy, Alex looks for sanctuary and arrives at F. Alexander’s “HOME”. Alex’s need of a familial institution that can offer him security and safety manifests itself in Alexander’s house. It is in a safe and non-threatening environment that Alex eventually demonstrates an insight into how he may have acted differently in an alternative set of familial and societal institutions. Alex states “Those horrible grahzny bratchnies...making me need help and kindness now and forcing me to want to give help and kind-

ness myself, if anybody would take it” (120). Yet the use of the word “forcing” demonstrates Alex’s own understanding that this is not an independent choice.

F. Alexander’s discovery that Alex has been subjected to the Lodovico technique leads Alexander to claim “Before we know where we are we shall have the full apparatus of totalitarianism” (125). Alexander appears to be the only character wholly aware of how the State uses numerous methods to ensure conformity and retention of the status quo. However, even with this knowledge Alexander also, eventually, succumbs to using violence when he discovers that Alex is the person responsible for the rape and subsequent death of his wife. Eventually, Alexander is incarcerated as the two Alexs’ roles are reversed. The incarceration of Alexander, for threatening to kill, demonstrates the strength of the State forcing conformity through the RSA and the ISAs having power to infiltrate the most liberal minded. The news of Alexander’s arrest is delivered to Alex by the Minister of the Interior; he claims that the government want to be “friends” with Alex. The attempt by the State to control Alex now takes a different route, as the standard RSA and ISAs have not worked; yet, Alex is now only interested in returning to his violent activities.

Conclusion

It is with this return to violence that W.W. Norton believed the book should end, with Alex in control of the institutions that surround him. But Chapter 21 is not the positive ending depicted by critics. Alex is a product of his environment, and it is implied that his ambition to start a family will continue to perpetuate the assimilation of future generations to the violent RSA and control via the ISAs. When Alex discusses having a son he states how his son “would do all the veshches I had done, yes perhaps even killing some poor stray forella...and I would not be able to really stop him” (148). Alex fails to recognize that he, and his son, are subjects of the “State Apparatus” and so the cycle continues. Alex believes he is rejecting a system through his violent actions, but remains incapable

of recognizing how his actions allow the State to retain its control. Alex is unable to resist the power the State exerts over him, and uses what he has learnt from the State to form his own actions. Because Alex is unable to comprehend that he is a product of the institutions he is exposed to, Alex cannot offer any true resistance. *A Clockwork Orange* is a novel about choice and how choice is taken away; yet, Alex's choices have always been restricted and moulded by the violent society in which he exists, offering no escape or truly independent choice. The ideologies Alex is exposed to do not allow him opportunity to question how his behaviour is being dictated by the ruling body. Alex's lack of choice remains the same in Chapter 21 as it does in Chapter 20; however, now he is more acceptable to the Totalitarian State, which is the State's ultimate goal.

In my next chapter I argue that, unlike Alex, the women in *Native Tongue* are aware of their oppression and are able to use their knowledge of the RSA and ISAs to assist their resistance. Both novels show the consequences of "State Apparatuses" that are attempting to maintain the status quo, but unlike Alex, the women of *Native Tongue* are able to resist becomes nothing more than machines of production.

Chapter 3

A Designer Institution

A Clockwork Orange delivers a pessimistic view that resistance is unachievable when challenging an oppressive “State Apparatus,” but there are other novels that demonstrate a more optimistic view. *Native Tongue*, written by the linguist Suzette Haden Elgin, is the first novel in a trilogy set in America during a near-future time when women are oppressed by a rigid patriarchal system. The novel responds to the feminist movement of the 1970s when “sexuality and reproductive rights were dominant issues, and much of the movement’s energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex” (Rampton). The novel is set in a time when the amendment has been repealed, and the men of the dystopian society are removing all women’s rights, although the women remain conscious of a time when equality was possible and being implemented. Within the patriarchal society there are linguists, a group of people despised by the government and public because linguists are the only people capable of interpreting the languages of alien societies and, therefore, are essential for America to trade and negotiate with other planets. The linguists, like the public, maintain a strict patriarchal system, additionally using the women to produce linguist children and to work for the various linguist households as translators. The American government is equally patriarchal, but fixated on finding a solution to interfacing with alien societies, using babies in horrific experiments in order to learn how to communicate with aliens.

Written in the form of a rescued text by “the women of Chornyak Barren House” (6), the novel is situated as a valuable piece of history, giving the reader a chance to glimpse the life of a linguist woman. At the opening of several chapters are epigraphs, many of which explain the ideologies behind a number of institutions and how they support the patriarchy. I argue that, unlike Alex in *A*

Clockwork Orange, the women in *Native Tongue* are aware they are repressed and subjected to the various institutions, and this awareness allows them to resist the dominant “State Apparatus.” The women linguists not only resist the ruling patriarchal system, but by the end of the novel have begun to form their own female-centric institutions through the creation of a new gender-specific language, Láadan. Láadan becomes an institution through the way it shapes people’s thinking, helping the linguist women build a new “State Apparatus” as Láadan will alter the political reality of their society. Láadan is thus unlike Nadsat in Burgess’s novel, which only appears to resist the dominant culture, but actually helps repeat dominant forms of violence. Nadsat is used by Alex to belong to a group, but for self-serving reasons, unlike Láadan that is used to promote a community. By identifying how they are oppressed, working as a community, and understanding the power of a female-centred language, the female linguists are able to begin the formation of non-violent resistance, with Láadan as its nucleus.

Althusser’s theory of “State Apparatus” can explain how the patriarchal system in *Native Tongue* operates and is able to maintain control, but my focus will be on the ways in which the women work collectively, with a knowledge of how they are oppressed, to manage their situation, positioning themselves to resist their oppression and begin to assume control. Finally, with reference to Hélène Cixous’s “Laugh of the Medusa,” I argue Láadan is being used to form a new, female-centred “State Apparatus.” By considering the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and the way language shapes people’s perceptions of the world, I argue the women linguists in *Native Tongue* attempt to take control of and alter the institutions that patriarchy is based on (for example, the church), transforming them into a matriarchy.

3.1 Patriarchal ISAs and the Repression of Women

Native Tongue is unusual because there are two ruling establishments. Althusser’s theory discusses one “State Apparatus,” which seeks to maintain

control through its use of the RSA and ISAs. However, in the patriarchal society of the novel both the government and linguist men have control, operating as independent structures but also in conjunction with one another. Both can be considered a “State Apparatus,” forced to work together for economic gain. The government and the public it governs create ideologies that lead to an institutionalized hatred of the linguists, as one older linguist remembers “the Anti-linguist Riots of 2130, with people throwing rocks at the children and setting fire to the linguists’ houses” (81). Similarly, the linguist men find the American government equally distasteful and ignorant: the Head of the linguist dynasty, Thomas Chornyak, believes that “Governments, and people in general, were likely to take power and do damn fool things with it...The linguists had a way to curb some of that, an awesome power for all its limitations, and they would keep it in the Lines where it would never be subject to the follies of bureaucrats or simple ignorance” (69).

However, these two structures are united in their repression of women. Both the linguists and the American government use the RSA and ISAs to ensure conformity to a patriarchal society. Although, unlike *A Clockwork Orange*, violence is not often used overtly, the RSA of the legal system supports the ISAs and vice versa to ensure that women in both systems are controlled by men. The patriarchy of both systems is what unites these two apparatuses and, despite their mutual antagonism, both structures support and implement the various institutions and ideologies that oppress all women. The women are aware of their oppression, as many of the institutions openly declare and document their belief in the inferiority of women. The insidiousness of the ISAs relies on the men adopting the belief that they are superior and, as a result, they assume that the women believe this too.

Much of the focus of this novel is on the linguist women, as their ability to speak alien languages is the source for economic gain and power for the linguist men and, ultimately, for the success of the American economy. Althusser’s theory

is an extension of Marx's belief that, "The ultimate condition of production is...the reproduction of the conditions of production" (Althusser 86). Althusser argues that,

unlike social formations characterized by slavery or serfdom, this reproduction of the skills of labour power tends (this is a tendential law) decreasingly to be provided for 'on the spot' (apprenticeship within production itself), but it is achieved more and more outside production: by the capitalist education system, and by other instances and institutions. (88)

The women in *Native Tongue* can be considered both serfs and slaves, but they also become the product that is the means to financial gain. The continual reproduction of the existing system is dependent on the Linguistic State introducing, using, or adapting recognized institutions to allow men to gain control and maintain it. The women remember a time when there was equality. They tell the female children stories of "the long ago time when women could vote and be doctors and fly spaceships" (158). The act of storytelling becomes an act of remembrance, and they ensure this memory is passed down to future generations of linguist women.

It is through the reversal of amendments to the American Constitution that the men in *Native Tongue* institutionalize the oppression of women. The men of *Native Tongue* remove all amendments to the Constitution that award rights to women, raising concerns regarding the debates surrounding the Equal Rights Amendment that were occurring at the time Elgin was writing the novel. Althusser argues, "If the ISAs 'function' massively and predominantly by ideology, what unifies their diversity is precisely this functioning, insofar as the ideology by which they function is always in fact unified, despite its diversity and contradictions" (93). The men, as the ruling class, unify all ISAs in their repression of women through altering the Constitution back to its original state, allowing

the men to feed their own beliefs in their superiority and justify their oppressive actions.

The additions to the Constitution are manipulated to ensure the ideology of male superiority is continued. Elgin uses the novel, particularly the epigraphs, to highlight the patriarchy of institutions such as the Church and science. In one epigraph a Senator is quoted as saying,

Our forefathers did not know—despite the clear statements of Darwin, Ellis, Feldeer, and many others on the subject—they did not have the scientific *proof* of the inherent mental inferiority of women...it is to our credit that we then moved so swiftly to set right the wrongs that we had, in our lamentable ignorance, inflicted. (72-73)

Through constitutional change, education and scientific ISAs the men are supposedly able to offer evidence for male dominance. The “State Apparatus” takes arguments for male supremacy, which are already in existence, and uses them to justify the status quo to themselves and women.

As in *A Clockwork Orange*, the importance of the church as an ISA is highlighted in *Native Tongue*. As religion is used to control and rehabilitate the prison inmates in *A Clockwork Orange*, the Church is used in *Native Tongue* by the men as a method of controlling women. Althusser states of the pre-Enlightenment period that “it is absolutely clear that *there was one dominant Ideological State Apparatus, the Church*” (96), but still this institution maintains influence in the present and, in Elgin’s view, into the future. The men and women in *Native Tongue* follow a Christian belief, making religion an essential ISA to justify the inferiority of women. “Krat Lourd, Ph.D.” at “The Annual Meeting of the American Association of Feminologists” states, “We must continue to counsel our clients to encourage their females to be religious, because religion offers one of the most reliable methods for the proper management of women ever devised; religion offers a superb cure for the woman who might otherwise tend to be rebellious and

uncontrolled” (131). However, the men’s myopic view of religion as a means of control enables the women to use it for manipulation. For example, when Aquina poisons Nazareth in order to have her moved to Barren House, Belle-Anne is able to convince the detective she poisoned Nazareth because she and Nazareth were “the brides of Christ, and reserved to Him only” (133), resulting in the men believing the action a consequence of the women’s over-zealousness in their worship, rather than assuming the women were controlling the situation.

Nazareth also questions the dominant patriarchy of religion. When Nazareth is ridiculed for declaring love to a male linguist, she considers how “Only a male god could have created this repulsive, abominable world” (198). Portraying the masculine nature of the Christian god negatively, this passage demonstrates a shift in thinking towards the oldest and most dominant of the ISAs, underlining Cixous’s argument concerning the difficulty a woman has in expressing herself outside the oppressive patriarchal perimeters of society (879).

There are occasions the women are unaware of their integration into the ISAs used in *Native Tongue*. Michaela, who is not a linguist, does believe the government’s propaganda regarding the linguists and how the linguists abuse their ability to speak alien languages, which encourages her decision to murder as many linguists as possible. The linguist women are religious and there are those, like Rachel, who display a belief in the inferiority of women, indicative in Rachel’s comment regarding Aaron being “stupid, and vindictive, and petty—he’s worse than any woman” (150-151). Mohr argues:

A combination of legal repressions (women as legal minors) and internalized consent (manipulation and indoctrination via Church, science, and media) ensures the hegemony of men over women and of elite classes (linguists, government) over the masses. Ideological conditioning creates willing subjects of both sexes and all classes and races who are ready to collaborate in their own oppression (89).

Although there are examples of women adopting the beliefs of the patriarchal institutions, I argue Mohr's point is too restrictive, and that the women, aware they are oppressed, on many occasions devise their own methods to gain agency within their restricted situation. The women's attitude toward medicine is an example. In *Native Tongue* the men take what can be considered as an obviously female branch of medicine and use it to express male superiority. In a "welcoming address" at a medical facility the speaker is quoted as saying "Let me tell you what gynaecology is. What it really is. Gentleman, it is health care for your fellow *man*—whose women you are maintaining in that state of wellness that allows the men to pursue their lives as they were intended to pursue them" (225). The women realize they are required to produce healthy children at regular intervals and their bodies are not their own, yet the women devise their own medical practice having "surgical instruments and [a] medical lab...For such things to be in the possession of women was absolutely illegal. Especially those items whose only use was for performing abortions" (124). The female linguists take non-violent action to assert some agency, knowing they are resisting the patriarchal system. If linguist children are products, then the women's knowledge of their subjection to the "State Apparatus" leads them to control the method of production, an action which, although it does not prevent the State from maintaining its position, becomes a form of resistance.

The men's inability to understand they are subjects of ISAs, in a similar way to Alex in *A Clockwork Orange*, or their inclination to believe the given ideologies because they are self-serving, leaves the men vulnerable to resistance because they no longer believe in the women's capacity or ability for resistance and intelligent thought.

3.2 Women's Resistance

The women in *Native Tongue* are representative of a class struggle. Unlike the proletariat of Marx and Althusser, the women are aware of their oppression

as the ISAs of the patriarchal system have, on the whole, been unsuccessful in subjecting the women to their ideologies. Althusser argues “the State and its Apparatus only have meaning from the point of view of the class struggle... But there is no class struggle without antagonistic classes. Whoever says class struggle of the ruling class says resistance, revolt and class struggle of the ruled class” (109). If the women are representative of the ruled class, then they can also be subdivided into linguist and non-linguist women. I argue that, as a class, the linguist women are struggling against their oppressors and are successful in their resistance because they work together to create a safe space to initiate their own institutions.

When Nazareth undergoes a mastectomy the nurses are aware she is a linguist and, as a result, treat her roughly. Nazareth reflects that “It hurt her not just physically...it hurt her simply because they were women. Women hurting other women...that was ugly. And it hurt her because they were deformed of spirit through no fault of their own and there was nothing whatsoever that she could do to help them” (227). Nazareth recognizes that the institutionalized hatred of the linguists has pervaded the non-linguist women, but Nazareth also recognizes that working together can offer the women agency and resistance. Nazareth’s distaste for women being indoctrinated into a philosophy where it is acceptable for women to attack each other resembles Cixous’s theory of “antilove.” Cixous states, “Men have committed the greatest crime against women. Insidiously, violently, they have led them to hate women, to be their own enemies, to mobilize their immense strength against themselves...They have constructed the infamous logic of antilove” (878). However, the institutionalized oppression of the linguist men toward the linguist women achieves the opposite, encouraging the women to become a community that supports itself, and so the women foster resistance and begin to form their own institutions. Unlike Alex’s unsuccessful attempts to belong to “pseudo-family,” the linguist women are successful in forming their own family institution.

There are instances throughout *Native Tongue* when the linguist women work together to resist the patriarchal system. Not only do the women form their own medical institution, but they have a unique social structure based on the understanding that their oppression is shared. As Nazareth reflects, “Every woman was a prisoner for life; it was not some burden she bore uniquely” (159). The linguist women use this understanding of their uniform oppression to support each other physically and mentally. The women’s support network becomes a prerequisite for their emancipation through Láadan. When “Belle-Anne confesses to poisoning Nazareth in order to forestall the search that would inevitably expose all the women’s secret sources of resistance—linguistic, social, and medicinal” (Squier and Vedder 318) she does so willingly, as it benefits all the women linguists. The women do not hesitate to ask Belle-Anne to sacrifice herself and she complies without hesitation. The women have developed an ideology within their structure that is based on what is in the best interests for the community they have constructed, and hence their discussions tend to repeat the pronoun “we.” For example, when discussing how to control the situation when Aquina poisons Nazareth, Susannah says “We *must* come to a decision, quickly...We have to decide what we are going to do” (125). The ideology of the women is one of protecting the community, which is integral to resisting the patriarchal institutions and retaining some agency.

Space is an important aspect of the linguist women’s community and crucial to their gaining agency, allowing them to form and maintain their own institution. As part of the linguist household, the women’s bodies do not belong to themselves, as marriages are arranged in accordance with family politics and genetic engineering. When the women are no longer able to produce children they are moved to Barren House where, although the men may enter, the women are left in relative isolation as long as they continue to perform their work duties. Situated within a garden, the house has Freudian implications regarding the women’s sexual organs and the house’s prominence as a space the women

dominate. As Robert Rouselle argues, “Freud has commented on the general identification of the garden with the female genitals” (196). Barren House is where the women regain ownership over their bodies, but also gives birth to a matriarchal “State Apparatus” through Láadan.

When Nazareth discovers she is to go to Barren House after her mastectomy, she thinks, “She would never have to bear a man’s eyes upon her scarred body...no man would ever see her naked, or touch her body, again” (243). Nazareth’s scarred body emphasizes her individuality, as does Belle-Anne’s ability to use her own body to abort the babies she does not want after being forced into a marriage to produce linguist children. The men treat the women’s bodies as a mechanism of production and for male gratification. However, as Cixous argues “you can’t talk about a female sexuality, uniform, homogenous, classifiable into codes—any more than you can talk about one unconscious resembling another” (876). In Barren House the women are able to choose what happens to their individual bodies, no longer having to worry about the space of the womb being used by the men. The women are now free from the patriarchal attitude that sees women as one, to be treated uniformly, with no personal sexual identity or feelings.

Barren House is a building that offers sanctity to the Linguist women “And a kind of freedom” (*Native Tongue* 243). The men misunderstand the fact that the women seek solace in Barren House. For example, Thomas Chornyak believes that “A pregnant woman has extraordinary importance...It makes it very hard on the women who can’t participate in childbearing,” and so the men, he explains, “for [the barren women’s] own good...built them a separate residence” (121). The assumption that women have the same ideology as men is indicative of the men’s lack of understanding of the women, and their belief in the ISAs they have formed as a ruling state, allowing the women to gain a space to devise their own community and institution.

Barren House becomes a building associated with a sense of agency for the linguist women, incubating the concept of a female-centric language. Barren House embodies the qualities of the linguist women, allowing them to express their individuality whilst functioning as a community. The linguist men force the women to live communally. When Michaela questions the fact that the women have no privacy, she is told that communal living starts in childhood and is part of their life, and that the women who sometimes put themselves in individual rooms are soon “hankering to come back” (205) to the communal dormitory. The sense of community is passed to the younger linguist girls who regularly visit the older women, ensuring the continuing ideology of support through community. The women form a community, helping them resist the patriarchal system and providing opportunity to oppose the “antilove” of the patriarchy. The linguist women create a situation where “Everything will be changed once woman gives woman to another woman” (Cixous 881), as women are allowed to be themselves with each other outside the patriarchal framework.

This concept of female support and community is further extended at Barren House with the creation of Láadan. Unlike the “psuedo-family” of the prison in *A Clockwork Orange*, where the men support each other through violence, the women of Barren House work together to produce a society and institutions that are non-violent. Willing to sacrifice themselves to help others, the linguist women function as a society that has its own methods of negotiation and justice that are non-violent. In her essay, “A Feminist is a What?” Elgin describes this situation as a new reality, which she names “Reality O”: “Reality O is my cover term for a society and culture that can be sustained without violence; patriarchy requires violence in the same way that human beings require oxygen” (46). Not only is the use of a female language a non-aggressive form of resistance, but the women demonstrate this same ideology in nearly all aspects of their society. For example, the most violent act by any of the linguist women occurs when Caroline punches a wall, angry at Aquina’s attempt to poison Nazareth. However, this

episode results in nothing more than the women “thr[owing] up their hands and walk[ing] out on her” (115). The linguist women’s ideology, under such dehumanizing patriarchal conditions, never results in violence towards each other or the men. In the patriarchal society of *Native Tongue* capital punishment is used, government workers kill babies in an attempt to learn about alien interfacing, and women are victims of domestic violence; as Rachel states “If Thomas had been many husbands, he would have slapped her face” (108). The linguist women avoid violence and are not influenced by the violent RSA or ISAs of the patriarchal society that Elgin believes are unavoidable.

However, Michaela is a non-linguist woman who commits murder. As Michaela has had exposure to life outside the linguist society, it is possible she has been influenced by the RSA and ISAs of the dominant “State Apparatus.” Michaela is isolated and, before working for the linguists, she has no exposure to an alternative system, much like Alex in *A Clockwork Orange*. Michaela, a woman who is bought for her husband, Ned Landry, murders him when he gives their baby away to government researchers. Ned justifies giving away the baby by blaming the linguists’ refusal to share the secret of their interfacing abilities. Landry tells Michaela “it was what any right-thinking American would be proud to do” (41). In this instance Landry uses the ideologies to justify his actions, acting for selfish reasons and not necessity. Michaela, believing the linguists also had culpability in the loss of her baby, takes action by murdering them. However, when Michaela witnesses the linguist women in Barren House she begins to change. Michaela not only begins to feel guilt over her killing of the linguists, but starts to question the ideologies of the “State Apparatus” outside of the linguist dynasty. Finally, it is the linguist women’s communal structure that changes Michaela. Michaela states “their devotion to one another...devotion even to the most irritating among them, touched Michaela’s heart. She had not seen anything like this outside the Lines. But then outside the Lines women never were together in this way” (213).

Initially, Michaela affords a contrast to the female, non-violent approach of a female community. Michaela understands and appreciates the importance of providing an alternative to the “antilove” of women and a society built on non-violent ideologies. Michaela’s last act of violence is one of sacrifice for the women. When Michaela realizes Thomas Chornyak knows the women have developed Láadan, she murders him. As Anderson argues “Though she is not a linguist, she kills to protect Láadan. This is the only instance of androcide” (“The Great Divorce” 92). Michaela has been forced into a situation where, arguably, violence is the only solution. Michaela demonstrates women are capable of violence when circumstances make it the only viable option, but it is not inherent in a female society whose institutions are derived from the nucleus of a female community. However, Michaela was prepared to use violence and to sacrifice herself as she understands how revolutionary the women’s creation of a female language is.

Barren House and the ability for the women to have a safe place leads to the birth of Láadan: a language rooted in how women perceive the world. Elgin believes in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which emphasizes the way language is integral to a society’s formation. This linguistic theory

recognizes the objective nature of reality; but since the perception of reality is influenced by our linguistic habits, it follows that language plays an active role in the process of cognition...The language we speak and think in shapes the way we perceive the world...“Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society.” (Husserl 642-43)

If language is part of the make-up of society, framing the way a society functions in all aspects of its culture, then language must be seen as an important part of the “State Apparatus.” Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” does not discuss language as an ISA, even though language is such an impor-

tant part of how institutions work and the way people perceive or become part of them. For example, as previously discussed, the language of the church is inherently patriarchal, and Althusser cites the Church as one of the dominant ISAs, but does not emphasize the role language plays in how the ISA operates. Through Láadan, Elgin allows the women to form their own State with institutions becoming inherently matriarchal. Additionally, the power of a female-centric language alters the way people think. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has been further developed and “Brain imaging experiments...demonstrate[] that learning a word ‘rewires’ cognitive circuits in the brain, learning a color name moves perception from right to left hemisphere” (Perlovsky 2). By using Láadan, not only are the women gaining agency and resisting patriarchal rule, they are allowing themselves and children who learn it to think differently which allows institutions, such as religion, to return to their origins and have an alternate “genesis,” so to speak (an action which is taken up in the novel’s sequel, *Judas Rose*).

Native Tongue highlights the patriarchal nature of institutions that, as Althusser suggests, are ISAs that have insidiously become part of how society functions. Raewyn Connell argues,

Gender inequalities are embedded in a multidimensional structure of relationships between women and men, which, as the modern sociology of gender shows, operates [sic] at every level of human experience...Moving toward a gender-equal society involves profound institutional change as well as change in everyday life and personal conduct. (1801)

However, if language continues to be the same or, as *Native Tongue* demonstrates, becomes more divided by gender, class, and other categories, it is unlikely that a “profound institutional change” can take place. As Cixous argues, “It is by writing, from and toward women, and by taking up the challenge of speech which has been governed by the phallus, that women will confirm women in a place other than that which is reserved in and by the symbolic, that is, in a place

other than silence” (881). Láadan would provide the language which would realize Cixous’s theory. A language that helps shape a world from a feminine perspective would, essentially, be resetting the way the world is viewed and the institutions formed. When the Encodings—which are words or parts of words that are used to initiate the new language— are shown to be successful in their dissemination to other households as part of the Láadan language, Nazareth is asked how she knew everything would work out positively. Nazareth tells the women it is impossible to explain, stating, “The hypothesis was that if we put the project into effect it would *change reality*...you weren’t taking the hypothesis seriously... Because all your plans were based on the *old* reality. The one before the change” (296). Nazareth realizes the use of Láadan does more than empower the women, it alters everything. Cixous argues “the new history is coming; it’s not a dream, though it does extend beyond men’s imagination, and for good reason. It’s going to deprive them of their conceptual orthopedics, beginning with the destruction of their enticement machine” (883). Nazareth understands Láadan has to be viewed outside the current frameworks of the patriarchal society, and acknowledges the difficulties associated in imagining a paradigm that has never existed. Nazareth tells the other women “We have pseudo-sciences, in which we extrapolate for a reality that would be nothing more than a minor variation on the one we have...but the science of actual reality change has not yet been proposed, much less formalized” (296). Láadan is more than a vehicle for female resistance and emancipation, it is a route to a matriarchal society of non-violent institutions. Láadan’s intention is to empower women, creating an environment where women are able to communicate their selves without pre-conceived ideas gained through patriarchal institutions.

Men have the language to vocalize their experiences and emotions. Elgin demonstrates through her application of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that a female-centric language allows women to express emotions in a way that has never been possible. Language, “Along with its constitutive and manipulative pow-

ers...also has the power to produce emotional comfort through consensual validation” (Squier and Vedder 312). Láadan can be used by women to vocalize what they really mean and feel. Not only does Láadan give women the vocabulary to express their true meaning, it also fosters community and understanding. The women discuss how the younger females adopted Láadan readily, commenting how it is “Such a relief, to have a language with the right words in it!” Well, no wonder they are so knit together...Remember that some of them have had that blissful resource from the day they were born” (267). Having a generation of linguist girls growing with the ability to express themselves on gender specific terms means “the women can actually be seen to be creating a new Symbolic order” (Relf 142). Following Cixous's belief that a feminine language will allow women to express themselves outside of the “phallogentric” paradigm, Láadan is achieving the new reality.

However, Peter Fitting argues “Rather than providing a way of transforming the world, this new language will condition the women to accept their inferior and exploited state” (148). Láadan can be seen as a way of the women having some agency whilst continuing to live within the patriarchal society and institutions they have always lived, with the “State Apparatus” continuing to maintain their power. However, the women are consciously aware they are devising a new institution, which allows them to control the new reality and ensure its endurance. For example, in the following novel, *Judas Rose*, the Bible is rewritten using Láadan. The women are using their new institution as an ISA not in the insidious way that Althusser suggests, but consciously shaping institutions to reflect a female origin.

If the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is true in the world of the novel, and Láadan becomes the revolutionary language of a newly formed reality, it must be considered what becomes of the men. As Anderson argues “Elgin’s books accept the assumption that women are inherently better than men and capable of making a better society than the one men have created” (*The Great Divorce* 93). Although

Láadan shows the women's intentions to build a reality that is non-violent and based on communal spirit, it still promotes a gender division. If the new reality is formed on a female-centric language it will remove the ability for men and boys to communicate in a language of their own understanding. A society based on Láadan will have a "State Apparatus" that is matriarchal, making the ISAs and RSAs associated with maintaining that reality as gender biased as those demonstrated by men. It would still not offer an inclusive society, just a variation on the original. As Squier and Vedder argue "If gender is essential, then feminists should work for equal valuation of the inherent qualities in both men and women," (320) and a neutral language that enables all institutions to offer equality may be the one to be striving for.

Conclusion

Nazareth and the linguist women are successful in resisting the patriarchal society of *Native Tongue*. By working together, the linguist women are able to form a familial institution and begin disseminating Láadan to women in other linguist families. The next novel in the trilogy answers Aquina's problem "to decide how we go about offering Láadan to women outside the Lines..." (296), indicating that the new language will contrast the current patriarchal society where linguists and non-linguists live acrimoniously. Láadan is used as the genesis for a new "State Apparatus" that will be inclusive, allowing all women agency.

Elgin's novel highlights the concerns surrounding the Equal Rights Amendment and the possibility of the American Constitution returning to its original form. Additionally, *Native Tongue* emphasizes the inherent patriarchy in a number of extant institutions and their ideologies. Through Elgin's application of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to Láadan, Elgin offers the possibility of a matriarchal society that would be non-violent and allow women to express themselves in a way that has never been possible.

Unlike the resistance—and inability to belong— Alex believes he is displaying in *A Clockwork Orange*, Nazareth and the women linguists form a successful family based on unselfish principles. The cohesion of the linguist women in a safe space is the catalyst for Láadan, which gives them control. The women's understanding of how the "State Apparatuses" work is imperative in their ability to resist the system and allows them success in their vision of a new future.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

A Clockwork Orange and *Native Tongue* are dystopian societies with controlling “State Apparatuses” at work. The governing bodies and dominant institutions in both novels want to retain their positions and power by ensuring their subjects conform. Alex is unaware he is being controlled by a government that has insidiously taught him violence is self-serving and enjoyable. Alex never understands he has been manipulated or that there is a possibility of an alternative reality, because he has never been shown that there is a different life to be had and he is incapable of perceiving one. All structures that Alex comes into contact with either use violence against him, or reaffirm his desire to use violence for self-gratification.

A Clockwork Orange demonstrates Althusser’s theory of the RSA and ISAs working in tandem to ensure the repressed classes are convinced they are following their own ideologies and beliefs. The cyclical nature of the State Apparatus is demonstrated in the final chapter when Alex acknowledges his son will behave the same way as he, and there is nothing to prevent it. Because Alex is unable to acknowledge that his reality is defined by the State, he is unable to offer an alternative to his child, in the same way as Alex is never shown a different reality. Alternatively, the patriarchal “State Apparatus” of *Native Tongue* makes its patriarchal ISAs obvious. Because the women know they are being manipulated, they are able to resist the influence of the ISAs. Acknowledging how the ruling body works allows the women not only to resist their influence, but also to devise ways of creating their own institutions. By having a space which the women associate with freedom, they form a community based on mutual respect, and make decisions in the best interests of their community. Eventually, the women are able to perceive a new reality through the female-centric language, Láadan. Understanding how the men are trying to control them, the women use the men’s

own ISAs against the men, demonstrating the possibility of emancipation through the formation of a matriarchal institution.

Both *Native Tongue* and *A Clockwork Orange* are novels that have oppression at their core and language is used by the protagonists in an attempt to form a community. In both novels there are a number of ideologies and institutions that are prominent in demanding contrition and conformity through a variety of methods, violent or ideological. *Native Tongue* and *A Clockwork Orange* demonstrate that successful resistance to oppression can only be gained through understanding how the ruling body is manipulating its subjects through institutions. The novels give examples of successful and unsuccessful resistance, and stress the importance of community and knowledge of how societies are formed through the “State Apparatus” if a person is to obtain genuine choice and agency.

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