

### III. The Loss of Order and Identity

#### A. The Background of Modern Society

Post-Victorian time was a turning point of British Society, due to the wars with the Boers in southern Africa. Post-Victorian British were influenced in many aspects after the war, for “the Boer War jolted Victorian confidence in progress” (Speck, 115). Before the wars, the material superiority of Britain was challenged by its economic competitors, while the claim of moral leadership was doubted. It was a proof of Victorian decadence that a group of colonizers could resist the greatest Empire, which has declined from its commanding position.

Between the turn of the nineteenth century and the end of WWI, it came to a first culmination that “many of the established practices were upset and new institutions built” (Wagner 57). About 78 percent of the population lived in cities and towns by 1901, and social conditions in urban areas had improved “since the dreadful squalor and insanitary state they stood in at the accession of Victoria” (Speck, 116). It was both the case in middle-class suburbs and in poorer parts of towns. However, the nutritional standards caused their people’s poor physical conditions, which were not improved in the years between Boer War and the First World War. Yet modernization and WWI brought about the prosperity of the working class people, who benefited from the productions in the new electrical and engineering industries. “The rise in the standard of living of the workers,” said Speck “widened the gap between ‘respectable’ and ‘rough’ families” (120). Therefore, the life styles of skilled workers improved dramatically. Many of them could afford new clothes for their offspring at Whitsuntide, and went on annual holidays to the seaside.

The story of BR situates in the seaside city Brighton of post-Victorian Britain. Brighton is located on the south coast of England, and together with its immediate

neighbor Hove forms the city of Brighton and Hove. The ancient settlement of Brighthelmston emerged as an important health resort during the 18th century and a popular destination for day-trippers after the arrival of the railway in 1841. Being one of the largest and most famous seaside resorts in the United Kingdom, Brighton is a popular tourist resort with numerous hotels, restaurants and entertainment facilities which additionally serve a substantial business conference industry.

In the beginning of BR, the atmosphere of post-Victorian age and the scene of crowded day-trippers at Whitsuntide<sup>1</sup> are presented:

. . . the early summer sun, the cool Whit-sun wind off the sea, the holiday crowd. They came in by train from Victoria every five minutes, rocked down Queen's Road standing on the tops of the little local trams, stepped off in bewildered multitudes into fresh and glittering air . . . like a pale Victorian water-colour. (5)

These lines show not only post-Victorians' habit of going on a one-day trip to the seaside at Whitsuntide, but also the improvement of their life styles. The scene of one-day trippers is then described:

They had stood all the way from Victoria in crowded carriages, they would have to wait in queues for lunch, at midnight half asleep they would rock back in trains to the cramped streets and the closed pubs and the weary walk home. With immense labour and immense patience they extricated from the long day the grain of pleasure. (BR 6)

One-day trip also showed that the post-Victorian type of entertainment turned from large amount of money into smaller amount, from traveling aboard into traveling throughout the country. It might be what modernization brought about that some

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<sup>1</sup> Christian holiday; it is the week beginning on Whitsunday (especially the first 3 days), which is the seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating the emanation of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles.

people would rather spend more money on daily entertaining consumption. Of course, this change of entertaining consumption may be caused by wars.

Modernization and industrialization did affect post-Victorian habit of using money due to the improvement of life. “Industrialization had altered the nature of work and of wealth,” Wagner mentions, “what was required were new concepts of risk and of poverty” (59). Indeed, characters in BR tend to show the attitude of taking risks and the idea of climbing the class. As Marshall Berman puts it, modern people must learn “to change the world that is changing them”, and “to make it their own” (Lash, 33). One important reason for this kind of situation might be the rise of the bourgeois beginning in the last half of the nineteenth century. Because of the weakening Christian and upper-class power and the benefits from the second industry revolution, the bourgeois has come to have hegemonic effect on society. Therefore, modern researches on the advance of the bourgeois can help to illustrate some behaviors of those characters. One great bourgeois characteristic and achievement was the internationalization of daily life. By the dealings of plenty of goods they set up connections everywhere. The internationalization is presented not only in economic part, but also in “people’s most intimate inner lives” (Lash 35). The spiritual progress, as well as material one, then became common property of people. The other characteristic of modern culture was free development, which made a connection between self-development and modern economic development. Thus, a free and floating attitude was found in modern life.

However, a powerful undertow of anxiety and despair was then brought about by internationalization and free development. According to Peter Wagner, “Bourgeois capitalization had indeed initiated a dynamic that entailed a number of technological innovations, the growth of industry and the growth of cities as new

economic-industrial centres” (58). To the working population, these changes provoked “strong migration flows from rural into urban areas as well as emigration” (58). People have begun to leave their mother towns for better chances of work and life, but meanwhile, it also created general uncertainty of people’s individual fate and place in society. Besides, another important factor to cause their anxiety and despair was the economical depression of post-WWI Britain, which led to the sudden rise of unemployment and the growth of gangs. So under this situation people might go to those gangs for earning their living. That may be the reason why some characters in BR tend to show the attitude of taking risks, and at the same time they show their anxiety and despair towards life.

Among the characters in BR, Hale is the one who is unlike post-Victorian with his cynical and nervous manner. That he did not belong to the holiday crowd in Brighton symbolizes his identity of not being part of the modern society: “He belonged to somewhere left behind; the waving hand only contributes to the excitement of the new experiences” (BR 146). In contrast, Ida Arnold is exactly a modern woman and the representation of the bourgeois. When Hale met Ida, therefore, he felt amazed, excited, and at the same time a little afraid of the unknown. And Hale’s attitude is presented:

. . . She was like darkness to him, shelter, knowledge, common sense; his heart ached at the sight; but, in his little inky cynical framework of bone, pride bobbed up again, taunting him, ‘Back to the womb . . . be a mother to you . . . on more standing on your own feet.’ (BR 10)

It presents the complicated attitude of traditional people when facing modern people, especially the attitude of upper-class people toward the bourgeois. What makes them afraid may be the coming loss of the original order of society, like what Hale

told Ida, “I’m going to die. I’m scared” (BR 18). But on the other hand, Hale appreciated and adored Ida, who reached Hale’s “withered and frightened and bitter little brain” with “a touch of the nursery and the mother” (BR 17).

As a modern woman, Ida Arnold shows a lot of bourgeois behaviors: “she belonged to the great middle law-abiding class, her amusement were their amusement, her superstitions their superstitions . . . she had no more love for anyone than they had” (BR 80). Being optimistic and confident, Ida always gave people the impression that she took care of herself. She lingered around bars and saloons and earned her living like a Bohemian, holding the bourgeois quality of taking risk. The death of Hale aroused her pity and doubt, and the determination to search for the truth. One of Ida’s reason was Hale’s hard working: “She liked men who did their jobs: there was a kind of vitality about it” (BR 33). Since production is the vital issue of the bourgeois, men who possess the ability of working seem to be more appreciated in society. The other reason was she took life with a deadly seriousness: “she was prepared to cause any amount of unhappiness to anyone in order to defend the only thing she believed in” (BR 36). As the representation of the bourgeois, Ida stood for law and order. Phil Corkery, who was crazy for Ida, also stood for law and order and stuck by her.

Accordingly, the bourgeois seem to have the tendency of keeping the social order and justice, as McCall argues, “Brighton Rock embodies a movement from disorder to order” (291). To Ida, life is a game with its rules, like what McCall mentions, “If life is a game, and she thinks that it is, a lack of ‘fair play’ is a sin against order, against the rules of the game” (293). What Ida did was possibly beyond her ability, and the final purpose of finding the truth, in Phil Corkery’s observation, was not for Hale, but for fun. However, it was just human nature to Ida.

She knew what was right and what was wrong with the thought: “God didn’t mind a bit of human nature—what he minded . . . to doing good, to seeing that the evil suffered . . .” (BR 151). Even Phil Corkery was shaken by “a sense of terrific force” of her. Facing Ida’s honest and kind manner, you can only guess at the goods behind: “justice, an eye for an eye, law and order, capital punishment, a bit of fun now and then, nothing nasty, nothing shady, nothing you’d be ashamed to own, nothing mysterious” (BR 77). Those goods represent the public consciousness and the hegemonic effect of the bourgeois on society, and Ida elaborates them very well, just like “the chariot in a triumph”.

Pinkie also shows his desire of maintaining the original order and power of his gang as the situation in Kite’s time. He senses the threat of others and rejects “the solicitation of a bourgeois world whose embrace invites oblivion” (Ruotolo 426). Coming from a slum district called Nelson Place, Pinkie had to face the ugly environment and the pressure from the bourgeois, like the big-time gangster Colleoni and Ida. Restating his businessman identity, Colleoni directly threatened Pinkie when meeting him in Cosmopolitan Club, “You can’t damage a business like mine” (BR 64). And Ida was the one to paralyze Pinkie’s whole plan. According to McCall, “Pinkie is tormented by disorder; Ida runs over it” (293). Pinkie’s torment by disorder added to his moving identity and thought, so the only thing he could trust and hold was power. Only by holding power did he feel the existence of his dignity.

Being a leader in his gang, Pinkie wanted everything and everyone to be under his control. He murdered his old friend Spicer and had no choice but to chase and marry Rose in order to maintain his own safety. In the process, cruelty straightened and drove Pinkie’s body like lust, but at the same time, his immaturity and selfishness kept him away from power and the trust in his gang. Soon after Pinkie pretended to

make the love affair with Rose, Ida ran after them and he began to feel anxious and worried: “He had the sense that he was losing grip . . . as he lost grip he began to realize all the things he hadn’t years enough to know” (BR 115). The unwilling and conflicting mind of chasing Rose also added to Pinkie’s pressure. Although Pinkie tried to show his dignity by depreciating Rose in every aspect, ironically, he could not help but need her. Moved by Rose’s attitude of protecting him from Ida, Pinkie was aware that “she belonged to his life, like a room or a chair: she was something which completed him” (BR 126). In fact, Rose aroused Pinkie’s faint nostalgia for they both came from Nelson Place, and what was more important was Rose’s pure goodness: “What was most evil in him needed her: it couldn’t get along without goodness” (BR 126).

According to A. A. DeVitis, “the central theme is justice, right over coming wrong, because Ida (Humanity) saves Rose (Virtue) from Pinkie (Evil)” (qtd. in McCall 290). Those characters in fact cannot be classified so simply, but what they represent make a good interpretation of the circumstance of modern society—the bourgeois over all classes. Internationalization and free development truly contribute to their effect on society, especially when they have the rightness like Ida’s—“right’s right, an eye for an eye, when you want to do a thing well, do it yourself” (BR 221).

Besides, associating with the loss of social order, the corruption of religious power is another characteristic of modern society, which results from Darwinism, imperialism, and the industrial revolution. In BR, as the representation of the bourgeois, Ida displays her attitude toward religion. As soon as Ida knew the death of Hale, she went to his funeral where her religious attitude was given a description: “She wasn’t religious. She didn’t believe in heaven or hell, only in ghosts, ouija

boards<sup>2</sup>, tables which rapped and little inept voices speaking plaintively of flowers” (BR 37). Ida’s doubtful attitude toward religion seemed to add to not only her courage of facing death but her determination of vengeance: “If you believed in God, you might leave vengeance to him, but you couldn’t trust the One, the universal spirit. Vengeance was Ida’s, just as much as reward was Ida’s . . . they both were fun” (BR 37). Even when Rose talked about confession and repentance, Ida refuted her, “That’s just religion . . . Believe me, it’s the world we got to deal with” (BR 198). Dealing with the world thus becomes a more significant issue than religion among people.

In contrast, Pinkie and Rose show a much more traditional religious sense than Ida. Ida may be one without traditional faith, but Pinkie and Rose are not. Ida always tried to “help” Rose in a bourgeois way, so that she could not take part in the common consciousness which Pinkie and Rose owned. In Brian Diemert’s words, Ida’s understanding of them is limited by “her lack of a religious sense and her adherence to a middle-class vision of society” (396). Indeed, Pinkie and Rose represent a lower class from Nelson Place, and their deeply rooted consciousness upon Christianity seems to influence their whole life. When talking about religion, Pinkie told Rose that he did not go to Mass, and she asked him if he believed it. And Pinkie said:

“Of course it’s true,” the boy said. “What else could there be . . . it’s the only thing that fits. These atheists, they don’t know nothing. Of course there’s Hell. Flames and damnation . . . torments.”

“And Heaven too,” Rose said with anxiety, while the rain fell interminably on.

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<sup>2</sup> An Ouija board is commonly used in divination and spiritualism with the letters of the alphabet.



“Oh, maybe,” the boy said, “maybe.” (BR 52)

It is revealed that Pinkie’s and Rose’s life are based on a part sense of Christianity. What is different is that Pinkie often sees the negative side of it and goes to the evil way. Pinkie told Rose not to listen too much to the priests, and when thinking about the religious punishments, he showed a slighting attitude: “It didn’t matter anyway . . . he wasn’t made for peace, he couldn’t believe in it. Heaven was a word: hell was something he can trust” (BR 228). Though Pinkie tried to ignore and doubt about Christianity, he was still under its effect.

Comparing to Pinkie, Rose is a real Christian, but her faith keeps being shaken by him. Under the influence of Pinkie, Rose could still conceptualize good and evil: “Belief in her mind had the bright clarity of images, of the crib at Christmas: here goodness ended, past the cow and the sheep, and there evil began” (BR 241). Meanwhile, because they were two Romans who understood each other, Rose used “terms common to heaven and hell” in front of Pinkie. However, Rose’s attitude toward good and evil was still changed: “The evil act was the honest act, the bold and the faithful—it was only lack of courage, it seemed to her, that spoke so virtuously” (BR 242). Although Pinkie was a Catholic in reality, the priest appearing in the final pages told Rose, “A Catholic is more capable of evil than anyone” (BR 246). It is because people are more in touch with the devil than other people. Also, it is revealed that modern people have lost their trust and belief in religion and they would rather believe its opposite and evil part, which is at least more honest and reliable to them. Hence, the attitude of many modern people toward religion is just like the words in the Mass: “He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not”.

## B. Pinkie's Situation and His Identity

As a post-Victorian, many of Pinkie's characteristics can be corresponded to the environmental effect. According to Freud, terrible wars should be responsible for an immense number of maladies called traumatic neurosis such as hypochondria or melancholia, especially after the First World War. Of course, not every post-Victorian suffered from such maladies, but a series of wars did affect people's common consciousness reflecting on behaviors. The rising of gangs after the war, a common phenomenon at that time, was especially a turning point for Pinkie.

In BR, Pinkie represents a fact that the pleasure principle is strongly against the reality principle. That is, the id may be severely against the superego, and feeling the pressure from both sides, the ego is busy in dealing with them. We cannot say that Pinkie's situation is nothing about the environment, because it is the environment that invokes his strong id and super-ego. When the id is strong and the super-ego is powerful, the ego is then suffered from being tired of modulating and coordinating the need of both sides. As long as the ego fails to deal with this situation, the need of the id will struggle for fulfillment in substitute ways and the conscience of the super-ego will keep give the ego pressure. That is the origin of some neuroses and abnormal psychology.

Nelson Place, where Pinkie was born and Pinkie's characteristics were formed, provided him nothing but an inferiority complex, which is common in neurotics. It is often heard that pride is a representation or the reflection of inferiority, and Pinkie revealed his pride to everyone in spite of Kite, the former gang leader who he regarded as his father. The reason may be that Pinkie sensed the pressure from Brighton—a boy from poor Nelson Place like him will easily be ignored and he cannot make a stand there. Therefore, Pinkie's self-abasement adds to his pride and

cruelty, which construct most of his characteristics, and the repression of his mental world also forms his strict superego to resist his vigorous id.

One of the reasons of Pinkie's oppressive id is the strong feelings of bitterness. As what Freud mentions, the unpleasurable feelings impel towards change and discharge, and "that is why we interpret unpleasure as implying a heightening and pleasure a lowering of energetic cathexis" (Ego and Id, 12). Pinkie thus receives the stimulation from his experiences of unpleasurable feelings, and in the process of formation his id becomes a powerful one. That means all the unpleasurable feelings, the unsatisfying of his needs, definitely add to the starving desire of the id, so eventually the id grows strong. Another reason is the function of the Oedipus complex. For a boy, the desire of getting his mother's attention and caresses cannot be stopped, but facing his father's superiority, he cannot help but imitate and identify with him. The two processes are called object-cathexis, which is the object-finding of the libido, and identification, which is the result of ego defense<sup>3</sup>. However, witnessing the sexual actions of his parents, the boy Pinkie's object-cathexis and anger is highly aroused with the violation of his sexual object, and the process of identification with his father is accordingly stopped. The unfulfilled needs then construct Pinkie's starving id.

Pinkie's ego is busy and tired of dealing with not only the oppressive id but the strict super-ego, which comes partly from his self-abasement caused by the environment. In fact, Pinkie's strict super-ego also comes from the influence of identification, because behind the super-ego there lies an individual's first and most important identification—the one with the father. It is the gang leader Kite that

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<sup>3</sup> Under the threat of the father, one's ego has a defense mechanism to give up the object-cathexis and turn the cathexis to itself, because "the ego is the true and original reservoir of the libido which is extended to the object only from this" (Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, 66). So the process of identification is regarded as ego defense.

completed Pinkie's process of identification instead of Pinkie's father. He took Pinkie as his own son and taught him how to survive in Brighton, and Pinkie also saw him as a father, constructing his super-ego in the process of identification.

According to Freud, the super-ego has the task of repressing the Oedipus complex because it retains the character of the father. Whereas, to say that Pinkie's identification with Kite is over the object-cathexis to his mother is not definitely correct, but Kite does distract his attention caused by the Oedipus complex. Therefore, Pinkie's object-cathexis to his mother is temperately ignored, and the identification formed in the gang turns his attention to power and living.

In addition, religion also takes part in the formation of Pinkie's strict super-ego by ego-ideal and conscience. In Freud's opinion, as a substitute for a longing for the father, super-ego contains "the germ from which all religions have involved" (Ego and Id, 27). That is, as a child grows up, the role of father goes on by teachers and others in authority (like priests), and their injunctions and prohibitions remain powerful in the super-ego. Coming from a slum area, Pinkie's deeply rooted consciousness upon Christianity seems to contribute to his strict super-ego. The fact that Pinkie strongly shows no fear for hell is a reflection of his deep belief in Christianity, which reveals the domination of his strict super-ego "in the form of conscience or perhaps an unconscious sense of guilt" (Freud, Ego and Id, 25). Though Pinkie's identification with his father cannot be made, the power of religion still works on him in the form of conscience and moral censorship.

As far as Pinkie is concerned, in the tug of war of the id and the super-ego, his ego suffered from the oppressive requirement to fulfill the needs of the id, and at the same time from the strict moral censorship and conscience given by the super-ego. It seems that Pinkie's id gets the upper hand, and in my opinion, the inappropriate

identification of Pinkie with Kite as a substitute for father helps to establish this situation. Through the identification with Kite, Pinkie learns all the stuffs that gangsters in Brighton would do to the id's wishes. On the other hand, those behaviors also invoke more wishes of Pinkie's id. However, that is just one part of Pinkie's super-ego; the other part related to religion still functions on giving the ego pressure in the way of conscience. So the sense of guilt caused by conscience keeps pressing Pinkie with the murders he does, and it less or more constitutes his symptoms of some neuroses. Those symptoms, connected also with the influence of home, will be discussed later in Chapter III.

As what is mentioned before, Pinkie's torment by disorder added to his moving identity, and under the effect of inferiority complex and improper identification, only by holding power did he feel the existence of his dignity. The moving identity, representing the conflicts among the id, the ego, and the super-ego, then serves as a danger to Pinkie's sense of safety. When Pinkie is still young in Nelson Place, his id is controlled by the ego, and in the function of reality principle many of his wishes are oppressed. Also, Pinkie's super-ego formed mostly by Christianity is not so strict on his ego, because the conscience does not make its greatest function according to his behaviors. Therefore, Pinkie at this time does not suffer from the sense of guilt which the super-ego may give out, and his ego has enough energy to deal with both the id and the super-ego.

After coming to Brighton and joining Kite's gang, Pinkie's identity changes from a poor village boy to a vicious city gangster. The wishes of Pinkie's id get the chance to be realized, and the identification with Kite arouses more needs of his id. At that time Pinkie should have the most of his sense of safety, for he gets a father-like anchor to rely on and the pleasure principle goes without any obstacle.

After Kite is killed, whereas, Pinkie's sense of safety is endangered with the loss of the anchor. The duty to succeed in Kite's gang makes Pinkie's super-ego strict and his ego busy, and now the reality principle is over the pleasure principle. Here Pinkie's identity changes again, from a gangster to a gang leader. Being a gang leader is always not easy, especially when facing another big-time gang leader like Colleoni. Pinkie's strong id is then oppressed, and the sense of guilt about maintaining Kite's gang adds to his purpose of murder.

The unconscious sense of guilt may turn people into criminals. "In many criminals," Freud notes, "especially youthful ones, it is possible to detect a very powerful sense of guilt which existed before the crime, and is therefore not its result but its motive" (Ego and Id, 42). In my view, Pinkie's sense of guilt does not directly lead to his motives of murder, but with the increasing number of his murder, the function of conscience and the sense of guilt given by the super-ego certainly invoke the rebellion of his id. Pinkie's ego thus struggles to fulfill both sides' demands, and he gradually loses the sense of safety and goes to crazy because of the identity of a murderer and the unconscious sense of guilt. Finally, Pinkie loses himself and finds that his identity remains being a poor boy from Nelson Place.

I believe that Pinkie's moving identity is under the influence of the environment and the loss of the order: the prosperity of gangs after wars, the immigrating population to big cities, and the changes that the bourgeois does to the world. It is obvious that Pinkie suffered from confusion and despair caused by the rapid changes of his identity. The struggle among the id, the ego, and the super-ego, then makes Pinkie go to the evil way, which contains his abnormal behaviors and the symptoms of neuroses. In the next chapter those conditions will be put in deeper discussion.

### C. The Background of Post-modern Society

After the First World War, the political and economic situation of Britain faced enormous changes, which turned Britain into an unstable country. The economical effect might just last for years, but the political situation at that time turned out to be the political mode of modern Britain. Under the competition between political parties, British government instituted many laws for their rights of election and education, but it also caused some problems. The triumph of the Conservatives in 1924 symbolized the rise of pragmatic conservatism and anti-socialist, and Stanley Baldwin regarded it as “class reconciliation rather than conflict” (Speak, 155). However, it was the beginning of a series of strikes because the most industrial dispute of twentieth century happened. So the government supported the passing of the Trades Disputes Act in 1927 and the general election under full adult suffrage in 1929.

Also, World Wars had caused the economic difficulty of Britain. Post-war governments faced “problems caused by the decline of staple industries and the need to repay war debts to the United States of America” (Speck, 161). What came after were over-production, stock market crashes, and a sudden rise of unemployment. The severe competition of political parties did not contribute to the improvement of this situation. The maintenance of the parity of the pound was extremely difficult, and the devil’s decade<sup>4</sup> of unemployment was argued and debated. By 1945, Britain was a major debtor, and most of her debt was to United States. Not until the Queen Elizabeth enthroned did the situation improve and become stable.

In fact, how the governments coped with those economical difficulties revealed the conflicts between political parties in modern Britain, and they turned out to be

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<sup>4</sup> It is a very difficult time for the unemployment of British people in 1930s.

public conflicts. The general strike happened and became the most serious industrial dispute, because Baldwin, the representative of the Conservatives, “aligned his government with the employers against [organized] labour” (Speck, 156). The conflict between the Trades Union Congress and the ministers then gave the Labour party a chance to form their second minority government. However, it faced the most serious economic depression and gave the Conservatives a chance. The Liberal then merged with the Conservatives before the general election of 1935. WWII added to the severe conflicts among all political parties, and “the gulf between the parties seemed wide” (Speck, 172). Public opinion also moved to the left during the war: Labour politicians played a major role in the wartime, and they benefited from plans for post-war reconstruction. Unfortunately, the Korean War and Britain’s military involvement in it brought about a financial crisis, and in the summer of 1951 the Labour government was overwhelmed by payments deficit. The government’s maintenance of controls, especially rationing, gave the Conservatives a chance to win in 1951, and “a two-party system had entrenched itself in British political life” (Speck, 179). In 1956, the Suez crisis invoked the severe debates in the House of Commons, and it also divided people outside the House by demonstrations against the use of force. Again the political conflicts turned into public conflicts, and the society “was split from top to bottom by Suez affair” (Speck, 185). By 1960 Britain’s economy was in decline in relative terms, since other industrial nations had more significant rates of growth.

CO is established on this political background, and though it is a story situated in Britain in 2017, it reveals some similarities to this background because Burgess projected it to the future. Based on the political situation of modern Britain, CO reflects one thing which has begun to make great influence on society since late



modern time—the state. In early modern time, what affected the society importantly was country and less importantly religion. However, as what Marshall Berman mentions, “the primary source of ‘miracle, mystery and authority’ is not the church, but the state” (Lash, 39), the state and its governments have gradually played a vital role on society since religion has lost the ability to maintain the order. According to Wagner, “the possibility of the emergence of ‘political entrepreneurship’” (136) has helped the development of tight party system. Ironically, the tight party system does not seem to help the cultivation of “political entrepreneurship”, but causes the non-stopping conflicts between all parties. Berman also argues, “Modern states enlisted subjects who were seething with rage . . . and mobilized them to displace their repressed private enmities onto socially sanctioned public enemies” (Lash, 41). So the conflicts between political parties may turn into public conflicts, which may not be a good thing to both the people and the state.

The government in CO seemed to have a hegemonic effect on society. After Alex was released from the jail, he found the front pages of a government gazette full of “the need for every [veck]<sup>5</sup> to make sure he put the Government back in again on the next General Election” (CO 104). Moreover, the content of the gazette was all boastful news about increased export, excellent foreign policy, and improved social service, and it especially stated the peace of the night streets kept by the tougher police with young hooligans or burglars. Beside the gazette, the government also seemed to adopt some policies to control people. Julian Coleman notes about it in his essay:

The state in Burgess’ work has regulated everyone’s life: it has subjected the masses to dehumanizing flatblock living; it represses free speech and

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<sup>5</sup> Veck means a citizen here.

free expression of individuality; it deadens the mind. (62)

Indeed, the totalitarianism of the government in CO was revealed by “recruiting brutal young roughs for the police” and “proposing debilitating and will-sapping techniques of conditioning” (CO 125). The brutal young hooligans should not be recruited for the police unless they are strictly trained, and Ludovico’s Technique<sup>6</sup> should not be put into practice without full consideration and test.

Alex, the protagonist of CO, thus bore the enormous shock which the government gives him. According to some early commentators, the theme of CO is “the conflict between the natural and untainted Individual and the artificial and corrupt State” (Ray, 479), so Alex in fact is the representation of all individuals. Alex himself knew well about the conflict as a natural individual: “. . . 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” (CO 34). Due to his smart and anti-social mind, Alex kept facing betrayal and injustice, even in jail. So Alex had been forced to be nice and friendly under Ludovico’s Technique, which had “destroyed a human being since humanity is defined by freedom or moral choice” (Ray, 481). However, it was not a well-developed technique with many experts’ support, and the freedom of moral choice was still a big question. In the government’s “ignorance of psychic symbiosis of good and evil” (Coleman, 63), Alex had lost his former identity and was turned into someone who had no freedom to choose.

The writer F. Alexander in CO, a fighter of freedom, is extremely unsatisfied with the government, especially Ludovico’s Technique. As what he says, with this technique, the government may decide “what is and what is not crime and pump out

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<sup>6</sup> Techniques of conditioning which bring people strict conscience by stimulation and violence. People who accept these techniques will face the deprivation of their moral choice.

the life and guts and will of whoever sees fit to displease the government” (CO 125). The state then becomes the apparatus of totalitarianism, which may be the reason of another political party’s conspiracy. Whereas, according to Marsball Berman, people will grow even stronger if powers of social control grow stronger, and after being devalued they can create new values (Lash, 40). It is obviously a characteristic of modern people, so the state in CO completely changed Alex’s life and his life attitude but he finally found a way out. Significantly, the process of Alex’s growing up is in fact the socialization of modern people.

Under the influence of the circumstance, Pinkie and Alex both find their way out and live the life they want. What is different is that Pinkie is completely anti-social by denying the existence of love and trust and tending to refuse change, but Alex accepts change and completes the process of socialization. The difference is still under the influence of circumstances. We can find post-modern people have more capability of progressing socialization than modern people, and their identities would not be shook and moved easily, since they can create their own value.

#### D. Alex's Situation and His Identity

One who lives in the post-modern world like Alex would certainly face a confused situation due to the question of how much social control the state should give to people. In the name of democracy, there are many things that people will do to disturb the order and the rightness, and within them social control and social education are greatly relevant. In CO, Alex serves as a representation of the victim under the improper social control given by the government. Being not clever and concentrated enough in school lessons, Alex is treated as a potential delinquent under the observation of the authority. Therefore, unlike Pinkie's freedom, Alex's life is in all respects under the government's control.

Born in a normal family, Alex's parents are busy with their work, and instead of giving their time to the company, they give Alex plenty of freedom to do what he wants. If Pinkie's process of forming the super-ego is retardant and abrupt, Alex's is much faster for sure, because the object-cathexis to mother and the identification with father are no problem to him. In my opinion, Alex's process of forming the identification with his father happens very early. That may contribute to his strong ego, for the ego is based on different identifications. However, the object-cathexis to Alex's mother is so strong that the identification with his father is weak in contrast. Although Alex's ego is strong, the ego-ideal and conscience on Pinkie seem not enough to form the qualified super-ego. Accordingly, just like Alex's freedom to do what he wants, Alex's id gets enormously strong.

The only thing which forms the strict super-ego to repress the needs of Alex's id is social control, for father, religion, and school cannot be referred to the formation of Alex's super-ego. Alex's father seems not to be authoritative, and religion and the school are not even in Alex's mind. So the vital factor of Alex's super-ego must

come from social control. Being not clever and obedient in the school, Alex's performance is under the control of the Post-Corrective Adviser, who serves as a representation of the authorities to control Alex's behaviors. The strategy that the authorities firstly adopt is just repressing Alex's id by warning or threat. The conscience within Alex's super-ego is then not invoked.

Not until the thing that Alex is backstabbed by his gang do the authorities find a chance to put him into jail. In the jail, however, Alex's strong ego still makes its greatest function to fulfill Alex's temporarily repressed id. Then the conscience keeps staying in a low profile, for the government also adopt the strategy of threatening criminals. Though those criminals are forced to go to the churches in the jail, I believe that most of them are not under the influence of the conscience which Christianity makes. Therefore, the strategy of force or threat may not help much on curing those criminals' abnormal behaviors. Of course, a smart boy like Alex becomes trickier and more flattering in the jail.

After taking Ludovico's Technique, Alex suffers from the extreme bitterness and the sense of guilt. Ludovico's Technique, in my opinion, comes to be a radical way to construct Alex's strict super-ego and a forced way to change the society, within which the ego ideal is highly esteemed and it can help to reduce crime. Whereas, conscience and the moral censorship are not in the purpose of this technique, for the government are concerned only "with cutting down crime" and "with relieving the ghastly congestion" (CO 99) in the prisons. So not only Alex does not form the complete super-ego to balance his strong id and ego but his wishes of id are highly repressed. The only hope to construct Alex's complete super-ego is F. Alexander, the writer with radical political view, but his rage and hatred from Alex's murdering of his wife make it failed.

As far as Alex is concerned, the cooperation of the id and the ego realize both the pleasure and the reality principle. At the very beginning, Alex's identity is a little gangster, or exactly, a juvenile delinquent. The wishes of Alex's id can be put into practice almost without any obstacle. Alex is then caught by the police and sent into jail, being treated as a criminal. The identity of prisoner makes Alex suffered from the repression of his id's needs, which comes to the greatest extent in Alex's acceptance of Ludovico's Technique. At that time, Alex's identity is not like human but like a clockwork apparatus of being good and kind only. As soon as Alex meets F. Alexander, he becomes a puppet of his partners in the politic party but he loses any ability to be against them. Alex does not get his original identity back until he is forced to commit suicide by them and gets cured.

In the transformation of different identities, Alex not only establishes the integrity of his super-ego but also completes the process of socialization. Unlike Pinkie, Alex learns to find balance between the id and the super-ego with his strong ego, and the moving identity thus makes positive effect on him. Although there are many factors to stop a complete development of Alex's super-ego, processing the loss and regain of the freedom, Alex has learned to see things in different views. The ego ideal and conscience within Alex's super-ego may still not develop very well, but he seems to make more and more identifications with his father and the society. Through the identifications and the work of ego Alex gradually gets out of the abnormal psychology and leads his own life, while Pinkie keeps the identity of a juvenile delinquent and ends in death. The key of their different fate will also be discussed in the next chapter.