

**Pilgrimage in War:  
The Influence of the Second World War  
and the Theme of Vocation  
in Evelyn Waugh's Later Novels**

by  
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## Declarations

Chapter II of this dissertation is based on my article “Legacy for Sons: Charles Ryder’s Conversion in *Brideshead Revisited*” (*core* 42 (2013): 1-21). Chapter III and VIII are based on my article “A Canon for the Later Comers: Evelyn Waugh’s *Helena*” (*Studies in Literature and Christianity* 34 (2017): 91-105). Chapter V is based on my article “A Pilgrim with Dogs: The Connection between *Officers and Gentlemen* and Classical Literature in View of the Image of Dogs” (*Shuryu* 76 (2014): 19-37). Chapter VI is based on my presentation at the 67th Annual Meeting of the English Literary Society of Japan: The Regional Branch of Chubu District in 2016. Chapter VII is based on my article “The Funeral of Fortuna: The Transition in Evelyn Waugh’s Women Characters” (*Shuryu* 78 (2016): 25-47). These articles are in Japanese. All chapters in this dissertation are revised substantially.

When the author analyzes the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, quotations from *Men at Arms* (1952), *Officers and Gentlemen* (1955), and *Unconditional Surrender* (1961) are taken from *The Sword of Honour Trilogy* (1994) published by Alfred A. Knopf as one volume. It is abbreviated as *SHT* in this dissertation. On the contrary, when the author analyzes *Sword of Honour* (1965), the revised version of the trilogy, it is abbreviated as *SH* for quotation. Also, the author uses the following abbreviations for the sources of Evelyn Waugh’s works.

*BR*            *Brideshead Revisited*

*CSS*           *The Complete Short Stories and Selected Drawings*

- DEW*      *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*
- EAR*      *The Essays, Articles, and Reviews of Evelyn Waugh*
- MA*        *Men at Arms*
- LEW*      *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*
- POMF*    *Put Out More Flags*

## Introduction

This dissertation is on Evelyn Waugh's (1903-66) later novels, written from 1942, through the Second World War, to 1965, especially on his last ones, the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. With discussions focusing on the relationship of Waugh's works with British society of the same period, this thesis clarifies the theme of vocation, which is observed in most of his novels. The reason why the relationship between his works and British society must be analyzed is that the conditions of the society of this period heavily influenced his writing style. These influences include not only domestic ones in England but also those relating to the Roman Catholic Church in the Vatican. Since Waugh was a Roman Catholic convert, and his works contain various religious elements, it is impossible to examine his writing without considering the relationship between him and the Catholic Church.

This study pays close attention to British society during the Second World War and soon afterwards. Picking up on several historical events of the time and their influence on Waugh's works, this thesis examines his thought; it will be made clear that the concept of vocation is the most fundamental theme in Waugh's writings, based on his firm belief that all people are given a unique vocation by God, which should not be evaded.

On the matter of vocations for all people, Waugh states that God "has a particular task for each individual soul, which the individual is free to accept or decline at will, and whose ultimate destiny is determined by his response to God's vocation" (*EAR* 310). He repeatedly expresses this idea in his works. Just as Waugh conceives his vocation to be a writer, so in his

novels he makes the protagonists strive to find and pursue their vocations. Therefore, it becomes vital to understand the meaning of vocation while examining the society of England during and after the Second World War as the background to Waugh's novels.

A considerable number of studies and critical analyses of Evelyn Waugh have been published since the 1970s. In particular, *The Picturesque Prison* (1982), by Jeffrey Heath, contains detailed analyses of most of Waugh's novels. Various other studies include Frederick Beaty's *The Ironic World of Evelyn Waugh* (1992) and William Myers' *Evelyn Waugh and the Problem of Evil* (1991). Regarding his own life, Waugh began his autobiography, which, unfortunately, was cut short suddenly by his death. Besides this, there are a number of biographies, by Christopher Sykes, Douglas Lane Patey, and Selina Hastings. Waugh's brother, Alec Waugh, and Waugh's son, Auberon Waugh, wrote their own individual memoirs of Evelyn. And in 2016, Waugh's latest biography, by Philip Eade, entitled *Evelyn Waugh: A Life Revisited*, was published. Furthermore, the Evelyn Waugh Society issues periodicals. Similar to the above, writings on Evelyn Waugh have been published continuously up to the present. Most of them, however, discuss Waugh's early and middle-period novels. There are few works analysing his later novels as their main focus. Moreover, even if they do deal with Waugh's later novels, their analyses tend to be discrete, or stay on an individual work. Those which try to examine the relationship between the novels and contemporary society are rare. This dissertation will fill the gaps in the scholarship.

Before starting the analysis, it is necessary to provide a brief sketch of Waugh's life, highlighted against its contemporary social background,



including his experiences in the Second World War. Evelyn Waugh was born in 1903 to a British upper-middle-class family whose ancestors included churchmen, a pharmacist, and a number of writers. His father, Arthur, was an author and the chairman of Chapman & Hall, a famous publishing house which published books by Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, Anthony Trollope, and other eminent writers and poets. His elder brother, Alexander, often called Alec, had also been a well-known writer since Evelyn's youth. In particular, Alec's first novel, *The Loom of Youth* (1917) was widely popular in England, and had been proclaimed as a standard-bearer for literature after the First World War. Raised in such a creative family environment, Evelyn also began writing many short stories in his childhood.

Evelyn entered Hertford College, Oxford in 1922. As Michael G. Brennan points out, Catholicism was popular at Oxford in the 1920s, following the incorporation of the Jesuit Campion Hall and the Benedictine St Benet's Hall as private colleges into the university in 1918 (12). There were many who converted to Catholicism at that time among Waugh's contemporaries and friends. Brennan comments that even though it is uncertain whether Waugh himself was first attracted to Catholicism at this time, "it is clear that Oxford heightened his awareness of the dichotomy between worldly sensuality and religious asceticism" (12).

Waugh left Oxford without attaining a degree in 1924. After serving as a teacher for some time, he wrote *Rossetti* (1928), a biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a British Pre-Raphaelite painter. Waugh debuted as an author with his first novel, *Decline and Fall* (1928). He later published *Vile Bodies* (1930), *Black Mischief* (1932), and *A Handful of Dust* (1934),

building up his status as a writer. For his early novels, he found his subject matter in contemporary British high society, and particularly the social class called the “Bright Young Things”: The group of youths, including himself, who had not experienced the First World War. Waugh’s novels at this time are full of satire on the people, politics, religion, and society of his day; a society of highly developed manners and closed communities. During this period, Waugh often travelled across the Middle-East, Central America, and Africa as a journalist, and published several travel books such as *Labels* (1930), *Remote People* (1931), *Ninety-two Days* (1934), and *Waugh in Abyssinia* (1936). His experiences outside Europe are also vividly expressed in his novels.

Soon after Waugh divorced from his first wife in 1930, he converted to Roman Catholicism. Following this event, his works begin to contain more and more religious elements. When the Second World War began, Waugh entered the Royal Navy as a liaison officer. He was stationed first in Scotland and then in Egypt. In May 1941, Waugh participated in the Battle of Crete, near Egypt, a notorious battle between the German Air Force and the British Army. During this period, he became acquainted with Randolph Churchill, the first son of Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister. In 1944, Waugh went to Yugoslavia on a secret mission to support the British Army’s strategy to collaborate with the Yugoslavians in their resistance against Germany. The reality of the war betrayed his idealism. His disillusion with war led him to the deeper introspection as a Catholic.

In 1945, Waugh published *Brideshead Revisited*, a novel which focuses on the downfall of a British Catholic family in the social climate before the Second World War. It succeeded in both England and the United

States: so well that he was invited to Hollywood to sign a contract for it to be filmed, though ultimately the contract fell through. Waugh then published more notable books, including three war novels: *Men at Arms* (1952), *Officers and Gentlemen* (1954), and *Unconditional Surrender* (1961). In these three novels Waugh makes the protagonist a British Catholic soldier who takes part in various battles in Europe. The novels show the process by which the soldier realizes his true religious purpose in the world while he seeks to gain the honor of a soldier. These three novels were revised as a trilogy, *Sword of Honour*, in 1965. Waugh died in 1966, mid-way through writing his autobiography, whose first part was published as *A Little Learning* (1964).

This dissertation comprises eight chapters.

Chapter I examines *Put Out More Flags* (1942), considering it in the context of the bellicose atmosphere in England at that time by focusing on the conflict between war and art. It examines three cases in which something or somebody symbolizing art at that time gets defeated by war after all. The discussion of this conflict refers to the two opposing concepts, “conventional” and “cenobitic,” both taken from a Chinese writer’s epigraph. At the same time, this chapter explores the reasons why this novel has a male protagonist who finds comfort at the battlefield. A key point of the analysis is criticism of the bureaucracy of the army.

Chapter II deals with *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), expanding on the themes of Chapter I, particularly from the viewpoint of the influences of religion and architecture on the protagonist. It examines the deeds of its characters in three locations: Oxford, London, and Brideshead. Oxford is analyzed with its remaining religious atmosphere of Oxford Movement;

London, as the decayed city or the “Waste Land” described by T. S. Eliot; and Brideshead, as an aesthetic residence of a Catholic family. This analysis explores how these three places motivate the protagonist’s conversion, both individually and as a whole.

Chapter III examines *Helena* (1950). By analysing this historical novel about the Roman Empire, the chapter discusses various descriptions of the twentieth-century images used in this novel. In particular, the colloquialisms, architecture, and images of the Second World War are discussed as factors showing the influence of the Second World War and Fascism. This chapter explains Waugh’s intention of writing a hagiography. By analysing Helena’s quest for the True Cross, this chapter indicates that Helena’s experience is compared with the Temptation in the New Testament. The analysis also confirms that Waugh describes his lifelong theme of vocation for the first time in this novel.

Chapter IV analyzes *The Loved One* (1948) and *Love Among the Ruins* (1953). These novels are mostly based on his experiences after the Second World War. Both of them show Waugh’s critical mind turning to focus on the social conditions after the war. Waugh describes the former with a cynical view of the United States, which was immersed in commercialism and was increasing its power over the post-war world. In the latter, Waugh expresses criticisms of Clement Attlee’s cabinet, which led England to becoming a social welfare state. This chapter explains that Waugh is deeply concerned with the problem of death in both of these novels.

Chapter V analyzes *Men at Arms* (1952) and *Officers and Gentlemen* (1955). Although they are now considered to be the first and second

volumes of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy respectively, Waugh initially had the idea that he would finish the series with these two novels (*EWL* 492). These novels share a common feature that an ordinary modern protagonist is compared to traditional and historical heroes: A fictitious crusader in *Men at Arms*, and Minos in Greek mythology in *Officers and Gentlemen*. Especially for the latter, by analysing the symbolism of dogs such as Cerberus, the dog of Hell, this chapter points out that the protagonist is compared not only with Minos, the king of Crete, but also with Minos in the afterlife, the Judge of Hell. This chapter discusses that these novels also contain a critical sensibility toward the society of contemporary England.

Chapter VI examines *Unconditional Surrender* (1961), the last volume of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Six years after publishing *Officers and Gentlemen*, Waugh writes this novel in order to maintain consistency in the stories as a trilogy, and he depicts his characters more deeply. The analysis of the story reveals that a final composition of the Holy Family is proposed in this last novel of the trilogy. This chapter discusses Waugh's war novels from the viewpoint of his interest in writing styles, and his intent to emphasize the functions of communication through voices. In that process, this chapter indicates that Waugh's interest in voices is deeply connected with his lifelong theme of vocation.

Chapter VII discusses female characters throughout Waugh's novels, from *Decline and Fall* to the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, using the symbol of Fortuna, the traditional European goddess of fortune. This chapter explains that in European cultures, the goddess Fortuna, with the Wheel of Fortune, has been seen in various fields of literature, art, entertainment tools, etc.

for over thousand years. As discussed in Chapter V, the comparison of modern people to mythological figures is Waugh's forte. In particular, Virginia, the heroine of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, is analyzed in detail, as representing Waugh's final version of the Fortuna-type female character and a modern goddess who leads the protagonist to a religious life.

Chapter VIII, extending the discussions in Chapters V and VI, considers the locus of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy in Waugh's career. Especially, it observes how the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965 deeply influenced his spiritual life. This influence is reflected in the differences between the original trilogy and the revised single volume published in 1965. At the Second Vatican Council, there was a deep discussion about how to adapt the ceremonies of Roman Catholicism to modern society, and it is known that Waugh was terribly shocked by its ultimate decision, in particular, a remarkable change in liturgy such as the usage of vernacular languages in the Mass. By analysing his letters, diaries, and the introduction added on to the revised version, this chapter sheds light on Waugh's mental condition at this crucial time.

In conclusion, the theme of vocation is summarized. From *Put Out More Flags* to the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, Waugh writes about man's desire to achieve something in the world. It is conceivable that this desire can easily be linked to the desire for war in the twentieth century. Waugh's male protagonists always eagerly join the war at the beginning. However, in conclusion, it is emphasized that Waugh continues to have a critical view of the Second World War, and pursues a more religious theme in his novels: That is, describing the figure of man related to God. This theme of vocation is shown to be the final locus of Waugh's thought.

## Chapter I: War vs. Art: *Put Out More Flags*

### 1. Proposition

Waugh describes real war for the first time in *Put Out More Flags* (1942). In this novel, Waugh deals with various issues concerning war and art. War vs. art is a fundamental theme which is repeatedly seen in Waugh's later works. As referred to in detail later, *Put Out More Flags* generally received a good reputation for describing historical events of Britain in crisis. Focusing on the theme of war vs. art, this chapter analyzes Waugh's intention to write this war novel.

*Put Out More Flags* describes British society from autumn 1939 to autumn 1940. The background of the story is almost parallel with the historical events of this period. On 1 September 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. England immediately declared war on Germany to defend Poland due to their alliance. British military were concerned about German air raids that destroyed London harshly during the First World War (Weinberg 65). However, England and Germany did not commence hostilities soon. The armies of the two countries did not collide with each other on the European continent until spring 1940. This strange immobile condition is called the Phoney War and deeply connects with the background of *Put Out More Flags*. However, after conquering Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg, Germany targeted France and Britain to subjugate Western Europe, preparing for the battle against the future Eastern enemy: Soviet Union. In spring 1940, the full-scale war between Germany and France-Britain began. After the surrender of France in June, Germany set its fire on Britain. Winston Churchill became a prime

minister of Britain with his affirmative war policy. Although the air battle called “the Battle of Britain” in summer drained England exhaustively, Germany couldn’t attain control of British airspace. In autumn 1940, Germany gave up invading Great Britain. British people endured the fierce attacks of aerial bombing on cities, including Buckingham Palace. The number of casualties were less than that expected before the war (Bowman 110). *Put Out More Flags* describes the state of British society during this period when the militaristic mood grew rapidly in England.

*Put Out More Flags* was written in less than two months. Waugh began writing it when he left Alexandria after the Battle of Crete in May 1941, and finished it when he returned to England in July (Brennan 71). Waugh wrote to his father about this novel, “a minor work dashed off to occupy tedious voyage” (*LEW* 182). In the dedication of this novel to Randolph Churchill, the son of Winston Churchill and Waugh’s comrade in arms, he also stated that “[t]hese characters are no longer contemporary in sympathy; they were forgotten even before the war; . . .” (*POMF* 7). He added that he took many of its characters from his former famous works in the 1920s, such as *Decline and Fall*, *Vile Bodies* and *Black Mischief* (*POMF* 7). However, Waugh had only narrowly survived the Battle of Crete in 1941, which had seen a tremendous number of casualties and prisoners of war caused by the German Air Force’s furious bombing. It is difficult to believe that Waugh wrote this novel merely in order to earn money by recycling his past characters.

*Put Out More Flags* generally had a good reception, even if some reviewers thought that it was just a remake of Waugh’s early novels. According to *The Times*’ review, “it [*Put Out More Flags*] pointed out the



balance of farce and underlying seriousness, and recognized the novel as an important fictional document of Britain in crisis” (88). William Myers says that the characters in *Put Out More Flags* have “a new kind of fictive life” (58). He mentions that all events in *Put Out More Flags* can be related to the real historical events. He comments that “*Put Out More Flags* is not uniformly realistic . . . but history insistently intrudes and modifies the note of stylish detachment it shares with the pre-war novels” (59). Myers adds that the historical events are fleshed out with military jargon, financial problem, the theme of class in England, and the reuse of a story in Waugh’s early short story. Calvin W. Lane also comments that “*Put Out More Flags* is . . . a properly fitting, ironic forerunner to the increasingly disillusioned world of *Sword of Honour*” (87). He also mentions, “[b]ecause of increasing emphasis on character development, *Put Out More Flags* suggests that Waugh’s fiction was heading in a new direction” (88). As these comments show, *Put Out More Flags* can be recognized as Waugh’s first war novel which proves that he changed from a satirist to a serious war fiction author.

In fact, beginning with *Put Out More Flags*, Waugh’s later works written after his experience in the actual war rapidly increase the keywords linked directly with the real world. The fictitious nations such as Ruritania in *Vile Bodies* (1930), Asania in *Black Mischief* (1932), and Ishmaelia in *Scoop* (1938) disappear. Instead, his characters begin to travel in actual countries on the earth, and have actual jobs in England. Fictitious civil wars in the Third World in *Black Mischief* and *Scoop* are replaced by battles of England and Germany. This style continues until Waugh conceives the theme of Catholic vocation in wartime in the *Sword of Honour*, a trilogy of

his last war novels. *Put Out More Flags* is the first instance of this style.

*Put Out More Flags* is composed of five chapters, each with title of a season, running consecutively from autumn 1939 to autumn 1940. The story develops with the protagonist's movements at each season. In autumn 1939, the first chapter of the novel, set soon after the declaration of war against Germany, England is in a state of war. Evacuations and air-raid alarms are everyday affairs nationwide. The protagonist Basil Seal, a rich parliamentarian's son, does not have a job, although he is already in his thirties. He perpetually hangs around London relying on his family and his several mistresses, hoping that a national intelligence organization will dramatically appear to recruit him. In winter 1939, the second chapter, Basil stays in his sister's beautiful house in a small village to which evacuees come one after another. There, Basil conceives of a swindle to earn money exploiting child evacuees. In spring 1940, the third chapter, Basil returns to London, fulfilling his long-held desire to get a job at the War Office. To establish his credit at the Office, he reports on his friend, Ambrose Silk, as a traitor. But in summer 1940, the fourth chapter, he finally heads to the front to participate in the war with the Germans. Along with Basil's adventures, the novel shows the behaviors of his sister Barbara, his mistress Angela, Angela's husband Cedric, Basil's friend Ambrose, and other various British people during wartime.

In the novel, the characters in 1939 look nostalgically back at the England of the 1930s. Waugh also looks back at the Phoney War in 1939 from the view point of 1941, and simultaneously looks back at the England of the 1930s through those characters' eyes. In other words, the ordinary life for which the characters lament during the interwar period is actually

already lost in 1941. Setting Basil as the protagonist, Waugh describes the affairs that took place around him with nostalgia. In doing so, he raises two important issues about wartime: first, the conflict between war and art; and second, the comfort a male protagonist finds in war. The aim of this chapter is to analyze these issues.

Prior to the discussion of the conflict between war and art, it is necessary to explain the concepts of “war” and “art” found in this novel. “War,” of course, expresses real war and the military. Moreover, it includes the tide toward war. *Put Out More Flags* describes the people who are glad to join the army, earn money using the wartime system, and operate behind the scenes to get promoted in the military. They devote themselves to the new mass murder system which emerged in the world wars in the twentieth century. In the novel, Waugh uses a word “conventual” to explain this tide. On the contrary, he uses “cenobitic” to explain the opposite tide. Both words come from the epigraph quoted on the frontispiece of *Put Out More Flags*, which will be examined in detail in the fourth section of this chapter. “Art” expresses not only artworks but also love for art. “Art” is linked with the latter word, “cenobitic.” This word explains the attitude to be alone and away from “conventual” world to cogitate on art. In *Put Out More Flags*, a beautiful country house, an English garden, literature, and people who love them, all emblemize that attitude. “Art” expresses this attitude. “Art”, however, will be beaten by “war.” All the symbols of “art” are beaten by the symbols of “war” in this novel.

The conflict between war and art leads to the second issue: the comfort a male protagonist finds in war. The protagonist who embodies the racket of wartime England goes to the front to “rather enjoy it” (221).

Waugh describes this issue again in *Brideshead Revisited*, the next novel he wrote after *Put Out More Flags*. The analysis of these two issues in this chapter will clarify the aim of *Put Out More Flags*. However, it will also show the limits of this novel.

## **2. The Conflict Between War and Art: The Case of Malfrey**

There are three examples of the conflict between war and art in *Put Out More Flags*. One is a magnificent country house where Basil stays during the Phoney War. The other two are men, both on military service. Each of these examples shows that the conflict leads to the defeat of art.

The first example, Malfrey, is a country house where Barbara Sothill, Basil's married sister, lives alone with her servants, as her husband is away on military service. It was built over two hundred years ago and "lay, spread out, sumptuously at ease, splendid, defenceless and provocative" (9). It is praised even as "a Cleopatra among houses" (9). Malfrey, described like this, symbolizes the art and beauty of old England. However, when evacuation from cities starts in autumn 1939, the environment surrounding Malfrey changes a lot. The village around the house becomes full of evacuees, which brings about complaints from the villagers. Barbara is a billeting officer and is responsible for allotting evacuees to local houses. Servants in Malfrey leave one after another because they dislike the situation. Eventually, Barbara is left behind with only a few servants in Malfrey. Basil spends the whole winter of 1939 with his sister Barbara. At that time, Malfrey is accommodating three incorrigible children, the Conolleys. Basil sets his eyes on them and comes up with a money-making scheme. He finds a family who wants to receive evacuees, and sends the

Conolleys to their house. When the family gives up taking care of the naughty children, he takes them back, along with an amount of money as a forfeit. Then Basil seeks another victim household and repeats the swindle. He earns some extra income this way and carries on living in the beautiful, calm Malfrey alone with his sister.<sup>1</sup> In this way, Malfrey narrowly remains as it was before the war.

Although always hinted at, in a restrained tone, the relationship between Basil and Barbara is described as having an incestuous and narcissistic undercurrent. This undercurrent is what Waugh intended to put into the novel, as he wrote to his father that “it [*Put Out More Flags*] has good bits such as the half incestuous relationship of Basil and Barbara” (*LEW* 182). The description reveals their pre-war childhood when the two children could play around together without caring about their sexes. Now, as adults, Basil and Barbara cheerfully use their secret words, and amorously touch each other’s bodies. This means that Malfrey symbolizes the Garden of Eden in England in 1939, or a heaven for an adult couple who live together without children, financial problems, and any other worries yet.

It is a destiny, however, that the Garden of Eden will be lost. After spending the whole winter there, Basil is forced to leave Malfrey for two reasons. One is the return of Barbara’s husband from military service. The other is the appearance of Mr Todhunter, an unscrupulous old man who spots Basil’s dirty trick. He blackmails Basil and takes the children away to take over Basil’s swindle. “Tod” means “Death” in German; moreover, the pronunciation of his name resembles “Toad-hunter,” suggesting that he is equivalent to a snake – the serpent in the garden. Like the expulsion of

Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, Basil has to leave Malfrey and return to London to find a job, and Barbara has to accept her husband back and prepare to give birth to his children. Just like Adam received labour, and Eve the pain of childbirth, as their duty, the Seal siblings are obliged to carry out their own duties separately during wartime. After this incident, Malfrey never reappears in the story. At the beginning of the war, Malfrey, symbolizing the traditional beauty and dignity of old England, stands majestically in a world that is becoming more and more violent. However, as the atmosphere worsens with the progress of the war, the carefree residents are also compelled to leave paradise. Soon, Malfrey itself is forgotten. So, the description of Malfrey can be regarded as an example of the conflict between war and art, and the consequent defeat of art.

### **3. The Conflict Between War and Art: The Case of Ambrose Silk**

The second example of the conflict between war and art is Ambrose Silk, Basil's long-time friend since their days at Oxford University. Ambrose, a leftist and homosexual Jew, was in Germany before the war and had an affair with a young German man who was sent to a concentration camp. Ambrose can neither recover from this trauma nor become friendly with a group of young communist artists in London. After joining the Ministry of Information, he publishes a literary magazine named *Ivory Tower* and plans to write a story for it, based on his affair with the German. However, when Basil reads the story, a sinister idea occurs to him. Basil recommends that Ambrose rewrite it to make it more sympathetic to Germany. Then, to further his own promotion, Basil secretly denounces Ambrose as a German collaborator. Basil does not think that things will

become particularly serious, however. When Basil finds that his superior has blocked his promotion and that Ambrose is being followed by the police as a state criminal, he tries his utmost to help Ambrose escape to Ireland. In fact, Ireland did not participate in the Second World War on the side of the Allies, even though Belfast and Dublin were bombed by Germany in 1941. Therefore, Ambrose survives the war and even re-appears in Waugh's later short story, "Basil Seal Rides Again or The Rake's Regress" (1962) as an old acquaintance of Basil. After all, Ambrose Silk is always Basil's inversion. Ambrose has completely opposite characteristics to Basil, such as effeminacy, socialist ideals, homosexuality, an interest in literature and literary talent. Naturally, he succumbs to Basil's plans and to the hardship of wartime society in England. Here again we find that art is thwarted by war.

However, in a conversation with Basil, Ambrose remarks the important theme of *Put Out More Flags*: war vs. art: conventual vs. cenobitic:

‘You would say, wouldn't you,’ said Basil, persevering, ‘that Hitler was a figure of the present?’

‘I regard him as a page for *Punch*,’ said Ambrose. ‘To the Chinese scholar the military hero was the lowest of human types, the subject for ribaldry. We must return to Chinese scholarship. . . . European scholarship has never lost its monastic character,’ he said. ‘Chinese scholarship deals with taste and wisdom, not with the memorizing of facts. In China the man whom we make a don sat for the Imperial examinations and

became a bureaucrat. Their scholars were lonely men of few books and fewer pupils, content with a single concubine, a pine tree and the prospect of a stream. European culture has become conventual; we must make it cenobitic.’ (176)

Ambrose speaks of the concepts of the “conventual” and “cenobitic.” (In the 1966 edition of the novel, the latter was revised to “hermetic.”) In this scene, they don’t argue any further about these words. However, after several pages, a man who has no relation with Ambrose unexpectedly plays a role in this matter by commenting on these words, which will be examined in detail in the next section.

#### **4. The Conflict Between War and Art: The Case of Cedric Lyne**

Cedric Lyne, who takes over the words “conventual and cenobitic,” is the third example of the conflict between art and war. He is another mirror reflection of Basil. Although his wife, Angela, has been Basil’s mistress for several years, Cedric never complains it in anger because he and Angela no longer have any affection for each other. His tastes, too, are diametrically opposed to Basil’s. He especially loves grottos, temples, and Chinese bridges, relocating them from all over the world to his garden in Hampshire. Compared with magnificent and graceful Malfrey, which has survived for two hundred years in the district, Cedric’s garden is merely a miscellany of domestic and foreign things assembled in a hurry. Nonetheless, Cedric and his garden still symbolize a love for art, particularly for the landscape gardens which English people have loved so much since the eighteenth century.



By nature, Cedric is a man graced in the literary arts, and not in the military arts. Owing to his ability to speak French, and his personality “built rather for grace than smartness” (167), he is appointed as an intelligence officer in his battalion. He attempts to manage his job efficiently but finds himself cruelly obstructed by the arbitrary and bureaucratic orders from the army. His efforts, and failure, to ensure the embarkation of soldiers are comedically described by Waugh’s humorous touch (177-83).

The concepts of “conventual” and “cenobitic” occurs to Cedric in a battlefield. In spring 1940, Germany made a raid on northern Europe. When Cedric’s battalion confronts German armoured cars, he is obliged to walk in front of the enemy as a messenger. Walking in the silent battlefield, Cedric thinks to himself as if in a monologue, using conventual / cenobitic concepts. He contemplates the difference between a man who is alone and a man who stays in a mass, especially during wartime:

[O]ne man alone could go freely anywhere on the earth’s surface; multiply him, put him in a drove and by each addition of his fellows you subtract something that is of value, make him so much less a man; this was the crazy mathematics of war. . . .

The great weapons of modern war did not count in single lives; it took a whole section to make a target worth a burst of machine-gun fire; a platoon or a motor lorry to be worth a bomb. No one had anything against the individual; as long as he was alone he was free and safe; there’s danger in numbers; divided we stand, united we fall, thought Cedric, . . . . He did not know

it, but he was thinking exactly what Ambrose had thought when he announced that culture must cease to be conventual and become cenobitic. (208)

Cedric thinks that humans live when they are divided from one another as individuals, and die when united as a mass. This idea is easy to understand if we apply it to Nazism or totalitarianism, which prevailed across Europe at that time. Totalitarianism regards all people as belonging to some unit, irrespective of whether it is enemy or an ally. Totalitarianism always requires people to act en masse. Therefore, Cedric does the reverse. He believes that modern armour is not intended for individual death, but for mass death in the war. It is unknown whether his belief is effective on the battlefield or not – Cedric carries out his mission anyway, and returns unhurt to his battalion. Just after that, however, when the battle begins between the enemies, and his battalion fights as a unit versus a unit, Cedric is sent as a messenger again. This time, he loses his life shot with a rifle in an instant.

From the description of Ambrose and Cedric, the relation between “conventual” and “cenobitic” should be understood as follows: “Conventual” means the culture of the masses, including Western materialism, Christian unity – emphasizing self-discipline and social responsibility – and totalitarianism. In contrast, “cenobitic” means the culture of the individual, emphasizing reclusion and spiritual happiness. The latter especially has an association with Chinese culture, as Ambrose says. And the title of *Put Out More Flags* suggests it, too.

The title of *Put Out More Flags* is a quotation from an epigraph by

Lin Yutang (1895-1976), a Chinese writer and linguist at that time: “A man getting drunk at a farewell party should strike a musical tone, in order to strengthen his spirit . . . and a drunk military man should order gallons and put out more flags in order to increase his military splendour” (*POMF* 5). On the frontispiece of this novel, Waugh quotes this epigraph from *The Importance of Living* (1937). Waugh read this book on his friend’s recommendation (Heath 157). Waugh, however, uses this quotation ironically when putting a phrase from the latter sentence into the title of his war-time novel. That is to say, Waugh thinks that the people mentioned in the former sentence, who brace themselves with music in boozing, are unsuitable in wartime England. Ambrose and Cedric are among those people. One of the people in the latter sentence is obviously Basil, who succeeds in the wartime England while being addicted to women, liquor, and roguery. Therefore, it can be inferred that Waugh puts the phrase from the latter sentence on this novel’s title to characterize Basil’s behavior and the belligerent mood in England in 1939.

In addition, Waugh quotes a second epigraph: “A little injustice in the heart can be drowned by wine; but a great injustice in the world can be drowned only by the sword” (*POMF* 5). This is also from *The Importance of Living*, in which Lin introduces this epigraph as the words of Zang Chao (1650-1707), a Chinese litterateur. This also seems fitting to express the rise of a militant atmosphere in England against Nazi-Germany and the decline of those who, intoxicated by art or literature, turn their backs on the war. Incidentally, in Waugh’s works, Chinese culture is linked with aestheticism, which declines throughout the war. The next novel, *Brideshead Revisited*, written after the war, contains a sequence in a

“Chinese Room”: a luxurious room equipped with golden furnishings where the noble Lord Marchmain, the owner of Brideshead, dies. This episode also suggests the decline of aestheticism linked with Chinese culture.

*Put Out More Flags* thus shows various conflicts between war and art: Malfrey, the magnificent house still standing as the Garden of Eden; Ambrose Silk, a dilettante who escapes to Ireland; *Ivory Tower*, his literary magazine that is discontinued during the war; and Cedric Lyne, a lone soldier who loves his English landscape garden, which no one cares for any longer except him. They all symbolize the traditional forms of art and beauty which prevailed in England until the 1930s. Thereafter they are compelled to recede. In contrast, the Ministry of Information, the War Office, and the Surrealist art movement ignited by the communist group of young artists in London, come to the forefront. Communist art is described as being “conventionally arranged in the manner of Dali” (30), and Basil adds a moustache onto the face of an Aphrodite painted by one of them. This incident definitely reminds readers of Marcel Duchamp’s famous work, *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919), a postcard of *Mona Lisa* on which he drew a moustache with a pencil. At the same time, however, it is highly probable that Waugh attaches another meaning to this episode, because the moustache reminds readers of Salvador Dali, in association with Hitler. Dali’s admiration for Hitler was well known, as he painted Hitler in his works and praised him highly in his book. Dali was repeatedly denounced for that in the 1930s by his fellow Surrealists. Waugh sarcastically provides this episode to show the linkage of war and the popular art during the wartime.

### 5. The Comfort A Male Protagonist Finds in War

Lastly, it is necessary to examine the ending of *Put Out More Flags* by tracing Basil's last movements and clear up Waugh's intention in this novel. As Waugh insisted in the dedication to Randolph Churchill on the frontispiece of *Put Out More Flags*, this novel was to him something about recalling ghosts.

I am afraid that these pages may not be altogether acceptable to your ardent and sanguine nature. They deal, mostly, with a race of ghosts, the survivors of the world we both knew ten years ago, which you have outflown in the empyrean of strenuous politics, but where my imagination still fondly lingers. . . . They [the characters] lived on delightfully in holes and corners and, like everyone else, they have been disturbed in their habits by the rough intrusion of current history. Here they are in that odd, dead period before the Churchillian renaissance, which people called at the time the Great Bore [sic] War. (7)

In contrast with Ambrose and Cedric, who are forced to leave for Ireland and northern Europe respectively, Basil affirms that “[t]here’s only one serious occupation for a chap now, that’s killing Germans” (221), and leaves for the front. A personality like this is as factitious as the word “Churchillian renaissance,” which Waugh used in the above-quoted dedication, cynically dismissing the period when Winston Churchill took office as the Prime Minister and England rushed headlong into the war against Germany. Basil is a lazy rascal who expects to be called by the

secret service to be sent on a spy mission (50-51), and after he gives up working in the War Office, naturally he goes to the front in order to join in “a new racket” (220). In this way, Basil finds comfort in war. In 1942, the year when *Put Out More Flags* was published, the belligerent mood was especially at its peak because of the participation of the Soviet Union on the side of the Allies. It seems that at this point in the 1940s Waugh had to end his novel with the scene of a man leaving for the front in high spirits. It is just the same as the last scene of *Brideshead Revisited*, published in 1945. In this scene, the leading character heads for war, turning his back on the reminiscences of his youth. In fact, Waugh had to postpone writing the next stage of these scenes, the description of what men actually saw at the front, until he wrote it in his later novels, the *Sword of Honour* trilogy in the 1950s. Therefore, in *Put Out More Flags* as his first war novel, there is Waugh’s clear presentation of a fundamental theme: the conflict between war and art. At the same time, however, its ending, with the protagonist rushing to the front, leaves readers somehow in suspense. It may be this novel’s limit, leaving readers waiting for the sequel of some sort.

## Chapter II: A Legacy for Sons: *Brideshead Revisited*

### 1. Proposition

*Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder* (1945) was written from February to May in 1944.<sup>2</sup> Waugh called it his “Magnum Opus” several times in his letters (*LEW* 208, 210-11, 218). He wrote to one of his female friends to explain the idea of his new novel on 23 March 1944:

I am writing a very beautiful book to bring tears, about very rich, beautiful, high born people who live in palaces and have no troubles except what they make themselves and those are mainly the demons sex and drink which after all are easy to bear as troubles go nowadays. (*LEW* 206)

However, we should not understand it only as a family story of “very rich, beautiful, high born people who live in palaces and have no troubles.” It is true that the Flytes who live in Brideshead are indeed an aristocratic, noble family whose members are described as having strong personalities.

*Brideshead Revisited* is, however, far from being just a melodrama with decadent characters ruined from liquor and love affairs. The theme of the conflict between war and art in *Put Out More Flags* is clearly succeeded by the events in *Brideshead Revisited*. Brideshead, an incarnation of traditional art and beauty, loses its brilliance in the din and bustle of the war, as Malfrey in *Put Out More Flags*. The Flyte family’s ruin is strongly connected with the atmosphere prevailing in England at that time.

What should never be belittled with *Brideshead Revisited* is that all the story is narrated by Charles Ryder, the protagonist, as his reminiscence. He is an officer of British army, and his troops including his company are now stationed in this magnificent house in the midst of the Second World War. Brideshead symbolizes the glory of old England, which declines gradually in mid-war time, and finally gets demeaned by military occupation in wartime. However, the brilliance of the house becomes more apparent to readers through Charles' memories. His various relationships with the Flyte family at Brideshead brings about his spiritual development. It is necessary to carefully observe this standpoint. It leads to Waugh's own evaluation of this novel as "a souvenir of the Second War" (*BR* x). The meaning of this phrase is considered in the last section of this chapter.

Simultaneously, among Waugh's novels, *Brideshead Revisited* is the first to deal with the issue of faith during wartime. Religious matters must be carefully read through this book. The story of *Brideshead Revisited* develops based on the conversion of Charles to Catholicism. In order to examine his conversion, it is important to compare the transition of the locations where he lives alongside the change in his soul. In this chapter, three places are examined in relation to his spiritual development. Firstly, Oxford, the city where he lives as a university student. Secondly, London, the city where his father's house is. It is also the city symbolising the wasteland caused by the First World War. Then, finally, Brideshead is analyzed as the fateful location which has the characteristics of both Oxford and London, and which inspires Charles' conversion.

Concerning the locations in *Brideshead Revisited*, there is a study by Ruth Breeze. Breeze examines the symbolism of the locations in this novel



in her essay, “Places of the Mind: Locating *Brideshead Revisited*.” She focuses on two of the places, London and Brideshead, comparing the city and the countryside. However, to analyze this novel in terms of conversion, the comparison of these two cities is not enough. It is vital also to compare Oxford and London from the stand-point of what are embodied in them. The reasons are discussed below.

There are two reasons why comparing Oxford and London is essential. Firstly, in comparison with the fictitious Brideshead, Oxford and London are real places. So, their history and embodiments are connected in English history. In fact, most protagonists in Waugh’s novels are men of the same age as the author Waugh himself when writing them, and most have English backgrounds from the first half of the twentieth century, when Waugh himself spent his young and middle years. Therefore, understanding the thoughts and values shared by English people of that time will also help in understanding his novels. Secondly, Waugh was especially interested in modern society after the First World War, which was culturally decayed: literally a “Waste Land”, as it was called by T. S. Eliot in his poem (53-69). Waugh’s motif, the decline of this modern society, casts a dark and heavy shadow over *Brideshead Revisited*. Therefore, in order to answer the question why Charles has to convert to Catholicism, it is necessary to consider Oxford and London where Charles spends his younger days.

Thus, in this chapter, the three locations of the novel are examined in turn with their respective impacts on the protagonist’s spiritual development. Firstly, Oxford, in view of the city which will lead to the protagonist’s conversion. Secondly, London, in view of the decayed city. And thirdly, Brideshead, in view of the consequence of the protagonist’s

experiences in those two cities.

## **2. Oxford: A Shadow of Great Britain**

The novel starts with the scene: in the Second World War, the protagonist Charles Ryder, a British army officer, recalls his youth while stationed with the troops in a large country house, Brideshead. The story proceeds with his memories. Oxford University appears as the first stage in his remembering, where he and Sebastian Flyte first meet, become friends, and then separate, each going his own way. As Waugh himself studied at Oxford University, many protagonists in his works graduate from this university: for example, in *Decline and Fall*, *Vile Bodies*, *Black Mischief*, and *Put Out More Flags*. However, while those Oxford graduates are described mostly by focusing on their personalities, such as their prodigality, cunning, and innocence, Oxford University in *Brideshead Revisited* is depicted with emphasis on its religiosity and its role as an imperial institution for raising the elites who will guide the destiny of England.

Waugh describes a religious atmosphere at Oxford in the early twentieth century. In the novel, when Charles enrolls in the university in the 1920s, there is still a religious atmosphere at Oxford:

Oxford – submerged now and obliterated, irrecoverable as Lyonesse, so quickly have the waters come flooding in – Oxford, in those days, was still a city of aquatint. In her spacious and quiet streets men walked and spoke as they had done in Newman's day; her autumnal mists, her grey springtime, and the

rare glory of her summer days – such as that day – when the chestnut was in flower and the bells rang out high and clear over her gables and cupolas, exhaled the soft airs of centuries of youth. (17)

The “Newman” mentioned here is John Henry Newman, a theologian of Oxford University who led the Oxford Movement in the early nineteenth century. The Oxford Movement was a religious movement with the aim to reform the Anglican Church from the inside, which, the reformers believed, had become corrupt and lost its authority by reaching a settlement with the Catholic Church in the Vatican. The embers of this movement seem to have remained at least until the early twentieth century when Charles enters the university.

Waugh mentions also the homosexual relationship conjectured in the movement. Charles’ cousin, Jasper, denounces the group and, while introducing the campus to Charles, says, “Beware of the Anglo-Catholics – they’re all sodomites with unpleasant accents. In fact, steer clear of all the religious groups: they do nothing but harm . . .” (22). His warning about homosexuality is not unfounded, and has some grounds: for instance, Timothy Jones writes about the relationships between Newman and his comrade, Ambrose St. John, as follows:

Famously, John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman had an intense friendship with Ambrose St. John. . . . Certainly, at his own request Newman was buried in the same grave as St. John. Hilliard argues that this and many other documented “romantic

friendships” were acceptable in early Victorian England. (136)

Such facts changed into gossip, and in the 1920s it became common slander against religious people.

Charles’ conversion to Roman Catholic is a cardinal theme of *Brideshead Revisited*. In fact, however, Charles eventually becomes a Roman Catholic, without any help from the promoters of this movement. He converts with a completely different motive. It is noteworthy that he is led to the Catholicism by the association with the Flytes. In particular, the most influential one in the family is Sebastian Flyte, who opens a door for Charles to the long journey for conversion, by their close friendship in Oxford. Watching their friendship, Cara, a mistress of Sebastian’s father, says, “It is a kind of love that comes to children before they know its meaning. In England it comes when you are almost men” (92). Therefore, after all, their relation becomes what can be called a sort of “romantic friendship,” like the quotation above, echoing the relationships seen in their senior Anglo-Catholics. In that scene, the name of Newman, which appears in the memories of the middle-aged Charles is a keyword for reading this novel.

At the same time, it is necessary to examine the fact that Oxford was an imperial institution for raising elites. Charles majors in history, “[a] perfectly respectable school” (21) as Jasper points out. His love for English history is described in the prologue of the novel. Charles, reaching middle-age, accompanies a young officer, Hooper, and he is astonished every time Hooper shows little interest in English history. For Hooper, who is over twenty years Charles’ junior, English history is almost equal to the history

of legislation and industrial change, and has been taught without any of the images of English heroism that have occurred over the ages:

The history they taught him [Hooper] had had few battles in it, but, instead, a profusion of detail about humane legislation and recent industrial change. Gallipoli, Balaclava, Quebec, Lepanto, Bannockburn, Roncevaux, and Marathon –these, and the Battle in the West where Arthur fell, and a hundred such names whose trumpet-notes, even now in my sere and lawless state, called to me irresistibly across the intervening years with all the clarity and strength of boyhood, sounded in vain to Hooper. (6)

For Charles, history is a sort of extension of the epics which he admired so much in his boyhood. That is obvious in his words “my last love” (3), directed toward the army to which he belongs now as a man of thirty-nine years old. Those words are his last pride as a former student who majored in history at Oxford University, even though presently he is a single and childless officer in the army. Simultaneously, it intimates that he belongs to the last generation that believes in such elitism on the battlefield. The two ideologies at Oxford, religiousness and elitism, have firmly taken root in Charles’ soul, and been sustained even after graduation.

Moreover, it is notable that an important meaning is placed on the friendship between Charles and Sebastian at Oxford. The first chapter of this novel where their friendship is described, is titled “*Et in Arcadia Ego*,” quoted from the title of Guercino’s painting (c. 1618-1622). It is also known as the title of Nicolas Poussin’s painting.<sup>3</sup> There are two

interpretations of this Latin phrase. Firstly, if we translate it as “I was also in Arcadia,” this is a nostalgic phrase by which a person recalls old memories of life in paradise. Secondly, however, there is a more notable and contradictory translation: *Memento Mori*. If we translate it as “Even in Arcadia, there am I,” this becomes a line signifying Death, warning that every paradise carries an omen of death.<sup>4</sup> These two meanings are also perfectly layered in Charles’ memories. It intimates that he was once in a paradise of youth with Sebastian, but that also the seed of their tragedy was already sown in that paradise. The relationship between Charles and Sebastian certainly has a phase of Arcadia, in the sense of a romantic friendship between men. But Waugh shows that people cannot remain in that phase. Sebastian eventually leaves England, flying from his mother’s oppressive personality, and finds a way of reviving himself as a Christian in Morocco. He never returns to Charles. Charles comes to know that true faith does not grow from an eternal friendship.

As above, when we consider the roles of Oxford in this novel as “the remains of the Oxford Movement,” “the imperial institution to produce elites,” and “the environment of friendship between youths,” Oxford is not only a symbol of Charles’ individual nostalgia, it symbolizes old England and the vestiges of the British Empire, which cast its shadow over the twentieth century.

### **3. London: The Waste Land after the War**

Whereas Oxford represents the vestiges of the British Empire, London represents current England, where Charles spends a mundane life. In London there are not only Charles’ home but also several facilities which

are related to his painting exhibition. However, London, in contrast to Oxford, only makes Charles feel remote from the world. There is an episode to prove it. Soon after entering the university, Charles battles with his father for the first time when he returns home for the first vacation. Charles' father, Edward (Ned) Ryder, is a gentle old man who is fond of collecting antiques. Here Charles describes his father:

He was then in his late fifties, but it was his idiosyncrasy to seem much older than his years; to see him one might have put him at seventy, to hear him speak at nearly eighty. . . . When he dined at home – and he seldom dined elsewhere – he wore a frogged velvet smoking suit of the kind which had been fashionable many years before and was to be so again, but, at that time, was a deliberate archaism. (55)

Because Charles' mother had already died in the First World War as a nurse, Charles went to a public school and had lived apart from his father. The house of the Ryders becomes a kind of battleground where a father and a son fight with each other for position. They are both mature adults now and must determine who should be the master of the house. As Charles says, “[t]he dinner table was our battlefield” (58), they invite to dinner guests who are the most unappealing to each other. It is because that is the most effective way to discourage their opponent. However, beaten by his father's large network of connections, Charles runs away to Brideshead as soon as he receives Sebastian's invitation letter. Charles cannot feel at home in London.

It is difficult to figure out the intentions of Charles' father in the novel. Charles only imagines his feelings twenty years later:

He [Charles' father] never declared his war aims, and I do not to this day know whether they were purely punitive – whether he had really at the back of his mind some geopolitical idea of getting me out of the country . . . or whether, as seems most likely, he fought for the sheer love of a battle in which indeed he shone. (64)

From the phrase “the sheer love of a battle,” Mr. Ryder seems to belong to the group of unreliable fathers who appear in Waugh's early novels. Waugh had retained the theme of a son's battle against an unreliable father figure since his early novels, such as *Vile Bodies*. *Brideshead Revisited* is the last one dealing with that theme. It is noteworthy that Charles is mentally expelled from his own house by his own parent to start a new life as a *déraciné*, which he will remain for the rest of his days.

Following this incident, London becomes a place of sterility and confusion for Charles. There he experiences drunkenness, a car accident, a general strike, and endless flattery from those who visit the exhibition of his paintings. London is a veritable “Waste Land” for him. Waugh consistently expressed his dislike for London in his works. Ruth Breeze explains that tendency: “whereas Eliot glimpsed a prospect of redemption for urban man, Waugh instinctively rejected him, seeking solace away from the metropolitan crowds and if possible, away from the modern age” (137). London as described by Waugh is a fallen metropolis where imprudent



“Bright Young Things” (people who became adults after the First World War, including Waugh himself) walk around, immersed in the over-sophisticated high society. London never performs the function of an institution for raising patriotic spirits like Oxford.

As an exception, however, Charles finds serenity at a prominent place in London. The incident happens on the day when Charles holds an exhibition as a painter after he comes back from a sketching trip in Mexico. Anthony Blanche, one of Charles’ friends in Oxford, visits the exhibition when Charles is exhausted after attending to visitors all day. Anthony pulls Charles out of the exhibition, whispering, “Not quite your milieu, my dear, but mine, I assure you. After all, you have been in your milieu all day” (252). Guided by him, Charles sets foot in another milieu (ambiance), the hidden, underground London, like Alice chasing the white rabbit in Wonderland.<sup>5</sup> Charles remembers the scene:

Anthony led me from the gallery and down a side street to a door between a disreputable newsagent and a disreputable chemist, painted with the words ‘Blue Grotto Club. Members Only.’ . . . He led me downstairs, from a smell of cats to a smell of gin and cigarette-ends and the sound of a wireless. . . . The place was painted cobalt; there was cobalt linoleum on the floor. Fishes of silver and gold paper had been pasted haphazard on ceiling and walls. (252-53)

Charles gets rapidly dragged down from fashionable society into an underground gay bar, the “Blue Grotto Club.” It is full of underwater

images, for example, its underground location, cobalt paint, and paper fish. In this bar, Charles eventually grows relaxed and his mind is brought back to Oxford: “As he spoke to the bar and bar-tender . . . the whole drab and furtive joint seemed to fade, and I was back in Oxford looking out over Christ Church meadow through a window of Ruskin-Gothic” (253). Through the images of blue grotto and the air of homosexuality drifting there, this place is related to Oxford, the place where men had romantic friendships.

This scene is deeply associated with *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot. When Anthony appears in the novel for the first time as an Oxford student, he recites lines from *The Waste Land*. The lines are about a blind, androgynous prophet, Tiresias, wandering alone in London. Anthony starts:

*‘I, Tiresias, have foresuffered all,’* he sobbed to them from  
the Venetian arches;

*‘Enacted on this same d-divan or b-bed,  
I who have sat by Thebes below the wall  
And walked among the l-lowest of the dead . . .’* (28)

Here, Anthony, a pleasure-seeking homosexual traveller, is overlapped with Tiresias, who “walked among the lowest of the dead” (Eliot 63). Anthony also takes Charles to a dark, low, underground world, recalling for him the aesthetic atmosphere of Oxford. Charles later comes to himself, mocking himself ironically: “It’s been a day of nightmare. . . , ending up with half an hour’s well-reasoned abuse of my pictures in a pansy bar” (255). Thus, even some small part of the wasteland of London encourages Charles to

restore his mind with memories of Oxford in *Brideshead Revisited*.

#### **4. Brideshead: The Place of Synthesis**

Brideshead must be analyzed as the goal of Charles' spiritual journey. Oxford can be regarded as a heaven of the past British Empire, and London as a hell of current England after wartime. Both affect Charles' destiny as intermediaries. Then, finally, Brideshead is described as the place which has characteristics of both Oxford and London, and which determines Charles' fate, leading toward conversion. It is the place of synthesis.

Brideshead symbolizes the art and beauty of old England. Charles visits Brideshead for the first time during the summer vacation after his first semester at Oxford University. While he spends his days with Sebastian at Brideshead, he expresses his amazement at the splendid sight of the house:

It was an aesthetic education to live within those walls, to wander from room to room, from the Soanesque library to the Chinese drawing-room, adazzle with gilt pagodas and nodding mandarins, painted paper and Chippendale fretwork, from the Pompeian parlour to the great tapestry-hung hall which stood unchanged, as it had been designed two hundred and fifty years before. (72)

The beauty of Brideshead even spreads outside. Charles is captivated by the house standing on "massive stone ramparts above the lakes" (72), "the

groves of lime” (72) by the hillsides, part of the terrace “paved, part planted with flower-beds, the arabesques of dwarf box” (72) and so on. In front of the house, a large fountain rises which was imported from southern Italy a century ago. A dozen streams run from the spring and the statues of tropical animals leap around splashing water. In the center of the fountain, an Egyptian obelisk stands. This fountain attracts even Hooper, the pragmatic subordinate of Charles in the army, twenty years later, although eventually it comes to be used as a dustbin by the stationing soldiers (322). Since his childhood, Charles has been unduly fond of medieval arts. However, as soon as he sees Brideshead, he is suddenly fascinated by its Baroque style (73). When he listens to the echoes of the fountain, Charles’ heart is set free and thrown into ecstasies: “I felt a whole new system of nerves alive within me, as though water that sputtered and bubbled among its stones, was indeed a life-giving spring” (73-74).

Here, a question arises: whether it is possible to conclude that Brideshead is a replay of Oxford and the heaven on the earth Charles has finally reached after wandering the hell of London. If so, Charles’ spirit must end up satisfied again with this small piece of paradise. However, given that Charles’ conversion to Roman Catholicism is a fundamental subject in *Brideshead Revisited*, it is impossible to jump to such a conclusion. In fact, Brideshead is a place far from the heaven, but which instead drags the shadow of London, the hell on earth. Jeffrey Heath comments that this place is “still in some way unfinished” (165). As this phrase by Heath explains, Brideshead is not a completed paradise. It is an unfinished vessel, showing the symptoms of disintegration in spite of its elegant appearance. It is waiting for Charles to deliver the decisive blow to

the tragedy of the family living inside. Charles says later that, “[s]omething quite remote from anything the builders intended, has come out of their work, and out of the fierce little human tragedy in which I played . . .” (326). The tragedy proceeds gradually but definitely, without being noticed by anybody.

After being introduced as a friend of Sebastian, Charles often visits Brideshead and nurtures various relationships with each member of the Flyte family. After coming of age and getting married, he commits adultery with Julia, Sebastian’s younger sister, who is married to an American businessman. Thereafter, Charles has to face the problem of his faith, “[l]iving in sin” (268) with Julia at Brideshead. Furthermore, Charles comes to confront Sebastian’s mother, a stern Catholic, and repeatedly reconfirms his delicate position in this complicated family. Brideshead is, for Charles, the place where empathy and opposition occur alternately.

Charles eventually finds his way by watching an incident at Brideshead. It is the scene where he witnesses the death of Lord Marchmain, the head of the Flyte family and the father of Sebastian and Julia. Lord Marchmain has also neglected religion, like Charles throughout his life. When he marries a Roman Catholic woman, he also becomes a Catholic. However, his marriage breaks down. Since returning from the First World War, he does not come back to Brideshead, but lives in Italy with another woman. He remains there nurturing strong hatred for his wife, Lady Marchmain, and with a grudge against God. But when he returns to Brideshead with a fatal disease at the end of his life, he dies as a Christian, making the sign of the cross. His death shocks Charles, who has lived by himself, unable to see his own father as a moral model, nor finding a strong

pivot in his life like religion. Eventually, it brings about an opportunity for Charles to convert to Catholicism.

Charles observes and describes Lord Marchmain's last days at Brideshead in detail. Lord Marchmain becomes bedridden, breathing through an oxygen tube, in a large room called "the Chinese drawing-room," with splendid furniture, fabrics, and paintings. Day by day, his consciousness is tuned toward death. He talks to his younger daughter about his wife, who is already dead at this time:

‘Then I [Lord Marchmain] went away –left her [Lady Marchmain] in the chapel praying. It was hers. It was the place for her. I never came back to disturb her prayers. They said we were fighting for freedom; I had my own victory. Was it a crime?’

‘I think it was, papa.’

‘Crying to heaven for vengeance? Is that why they’ve locked me in this cave, do you think, with a black tube of air and the little yellow men along the walls, who live without breathing? Do you think that, child? But the wind will come soon, tomorrow perhaps, and we’ll breathe again. The ill wind that will blow me good. Better tomorrow.’ (313-14)

Even with these words, Lord Marchmain never offers an apology to his wife. He is still fighting with “all the illusions of boyhood – innocence, God, hope” (93) which have been reflected in his wife. He has hated what is inside him; in his mistress’ words, “[w]hen people hate with all that energy,

it is something in themselves they are hating” (93). Now, surrounded by the best of earthly beauty, Brideshead, his body is trapped by an oxygen mask and oxygen cylinders, within a room decorated in gold. If this situation is a punishment for his own sin, how can this sin be purified? The answer is shown in the following scene.

When people argue that Lord Marchmain should receive the sacrament of extreme unction, only Charles gives a counter argument. He says, “It would be an outrage. No one could have made it clearer, all his life, what he thought of religion” (304). However, in the end, the Flytes decide to have Lord Marchmain receive the sacrament while he is unconscious. When Lord Marchmain recovers consciousness, the priest starts the ceremony of the sacrament. Charles then wishes, in spite of himself, that Lord Marchmain will receive the sacrament and show a sign of conversion, even if it is against his ideology. Then he sees this scene. Lord Marchmain touches his forehead as if he wants to wipe away the oil:

But there was no need to fear; the hand moved slowly down his breast, then to his shoulder, and Lord Marchmain made the sign of the cross. Then I knew that the sign I asked for was not a little thing, not a passing nod of recognition, and a phrase came back to me from my childhood of the veil of the temple being rent from top to bottom. (317)

This scene is the last stage prepared for Charles at Brideshead. At this moment, he witnesses the scene of a man’s conversion, and receives a shock almost equal to the biblical event, “the veil of the temple being rent from

top to bottom” (cf. Matthew 27.51). The original phrase in the Bible is used to describe the cataclysm which happened on the day when Jesus died on the cross. Therefore, it can be inferred that this is also the moment of Charles’ revelation and the time when his spiritual journey ends. All the events that mark his journey in the novel culminate and are integrated in his reaction at this moment. Before this, Charles desired to destroy the burden of religion on the Flyte family, especially since he fell in love with Julia. It is supposed that Lord Marchmain’s anti-religious attitude has been an emotional support for him. Furthermore, Lord Marchmain wrote a will to leave his house to Julia and Charles (308). So, it can surely be conjectured that Charles has been holding a wish to assimilate himself with Lord Marchmain as his son-in-law by sharing the same opinion.

Charles’ spiritual embroilment at this time is a replay of his battle in London, a fight to find a place for his existence. Failing to have a satisfactory spiritual relationship with his own father, Charles has had to yearn for his paternal figure outside. As for Lord Marchmain, his battle against his past has been equal to his battle against religion. Likewise, for Charles, his battle for existence has been equal to his battle against religion. Therefore, when he sees his spiritual father, Lord Marchmain, receiving religion in his last moments, Charles’ thinking breaks down and is forced to reconstruct itself. It is no longer difficult to find the motive of his conversion in that process.

Here the protagonist’s journey ends, which has passed through the paradise of Oxford, the wasteland of London, and the synthetic world of Brideshead. At the same time, it is the curtain-fall of the tragedy in *Brideshead Revisited* – the tragedy of the disintegration of an English noble



family. The seeds of the tragedy were already sown in the hearts of the Flyte family, and Charles adds up the final straw. However, it is significant that nobody but Charles – neither the men connected with the Flyte family nor even Lord Marchmain’s sons – could play the role of the last performer of the tragedy. Charles responds to the behavior of Lord Marchmain, who has seen both heaven and hell on earth as a wanderer like him. The flame of faith, which was unconsciously lit in Oxford, and has passed through the wasteland of London, is fixed in Charles’ heart in Brideshead.

### **5. A Legacy for Sons**

Lastly, it is necessary to consider the outcome of the protagonist’s long journey from Oxford through London to Brideshead, which is also the outcome of the story. Middle-aged Charles revisits Brideshead as a military officer with the troops. He prays in the chapel, feeling that all is vanity and so is the beauty of Brideshead. But he suddenly notices that there is not only a ruin of his youth but also a significant mission in the current Brideshead. After praying, Charles leaves there satisfied with “a small red flame” (326) which continues burning there literally and symbolically. Since the medieval period to the present time, the flames in church have calmly shone over knights and soldiers who battled for England as the symbol of faith. Charles recognizes that he “found it this morning, burning anew among the old stones” (326). He returns to his soldiers, “looking unusually cheerful” (326) with this discovery. The story ends with a mental satisfaction of the protagonist.

In order to understand this last scene better, it is worthy to refer to the preface Waugh wrote for the revised version of *Brideshead Revisited*

published in 1960, in which he expressed the following:

It was impossible to foresee, in the spring of 1944, the present cult of the English country house. . . . Much of this book therefore is a panegyric preached over an empty coffin. But it would be impossible to bring it up to date without totally destroying it. It is offered to a younger generation of readers as a souvenir of the Second War rather than of the twenties or of the thirties, with which it ostensibly deals. (x)

Waugh's message is seen in the above-quoted sentence: "It is offered to a younger generation of readers as a souvenir of the Second War rather than of the twenties or of the thirties, with which it ostensibly deals." Yet this message has more distinct and wider meanings when it is superimposed on Charles Ryder's life. Passing through Oxford and London, Charles eventually accomplishes his spiritual pilgrimage to find the opportunity to convert at Brideshead. In that process, there has always been a quest for a father. Rejected by his own father, Charles finds his spiritual father in Lord Marchmain, and finally in God, the ultimate paternal figure from a higher perspective. This overlaps with Waugh's own quest. Waugh also converted to Catholicism in his thirties, and, after his father died during the Second World War, he sublimated his faith in this splendid novel.

However, what the overlap shows is not limited to that. What Waugh achieved as the author of *Brideshead Revisited* is that he himself came to adopt the position of a father, to offer a souvenir to the next generation after he buried his own father. Waugh wrote this experience as the memoir

of the protagonist in this novel. And the protagonist is aware that something eternal is existing with the flame in a chapel, although it is during wartime. Waugh tried to deliver it as “a souvenir of the Second War” to the younger generation who didn’t experience the Second World War. It is possible to say that the handover of this souvenir, or rather legacy, is the mission of *Brideshead Revisited*.

### Chapter III: The Canon of Late-Comers: *Helena*

#### 1. Proposition

This chapter discusses *Helena* (1950), a historical novel that Waugh wrote soon after the Second World War. This novel deals with the ancient Roman Empire in the fourth century. Helena, the title character, is mother of Constantine I (Constantine the Great), the Roman Emperor (reign A.D.306-337). She is also known in Christian history as Saint Helena, who discovered the True Cross, the remains of the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Jacobus de Voragine, an Italian bishop in the thirteenth century who wrote *The Golden Legend*, a voluminous work on saints' lives, described Helena's achievement in detail, summarizing it in a chapter titled "Of the Invention of the Holy Cross" (169-76).<sup>6</sup> Based on this volume, Waugh wrote a novel set in the ancient Roman Empire, from the period of the barracks emperors to the reign of Constantine the Great.

*Helena* has been interpreted in different ways. Waugh told Christopher Sykes, his friend and a biographer, that "[i]t's far the best book I have ever written or ever will write" (428). Sykes added that "Evelyn, to the end of his life, believed *Helena* to be his best book, combining good construction, permissible invention, grasp of the period dealt with and the authorities upon it, in a satisfying work of fiction" (428). However, most readers made unfavourable comments on the book, so Waugh had to cope with emotional hurt as a result (Sykes 428). He exerted himself in all possible ways to make people understand *Helena* correctly. For instance, he spoke on the radio when the BBC adapted the novel into a radio drama in 1951.

Waugh emphasizes in *Helena* why Helena was able to discover the Cross rather than how she did it. To begin with, nothing is known about Saint Helena except her achievement in the procuring of the True Cross. Neither her birthplace nor her original status are known. Although she made this splendid achievement in Christian history, even her feast day has not been determined. Instead of such biographical matters, Waugh made *Helena* represent his view of vocation, the activity given by God to humans as their particular mission. Waugh's view that "He [God] wants a different thing from each of us, . . . but something which only we can do and for which we were each created" (*EAR* 410) is realized in *Helena* more fully than in *Brideshead Revisited*. In *Helena*, Helena's will to pursue her vocation is the most emphasized point.

Waugh depicts young Helena, using one of several uncertain legends about her origin. In Waugh's novel, Helena is established as a princess of ancient Britain, a girl who is curious about history and philosophy, and who values the pursuit of the veracity of historical events. Although Helena marries Chlorus, an officer of the Roman army, she is divorced by him as soon as he becomes emperor. He regards her origin, a princess from a small, rustic island, as unsuitable for an empress. On retiring to the countryside, Helena becomes a Christian. When her son Constantine becomes the Emperor, Helena goes to Rome and witnesses the whirl of scheming and maneuvering in the political world, and even her relatives' gory deaths from the endless power struggles. Finally, in her later years, she visits Jerusalem to discover the True Cross.

The character of this protagonist stimulates discussion. Irina Kabanova discusses *Helena*, comparing it with *A Life: Edmund Campion*

(1935), Waugh's biographical work dealing with a Jesuit martyred in the Reformation in the Elizabethan era. Concerning the sovereign power common in these two works, Kabanova explains that "[t]he disciplining, normalizing, coercive practices of modern democracies were identified by Foucault, but Waugh was naturally more interested in power embodied in a person" (87). She adds that "Waugh's studies of sovereign figures expose the drives inherent in human nature, including the pleasure principle, the power drive, and the death wish" (95). Actually, in *Helena*, Waugh describes many Roman Emperors' highs and lows, the intrigues at the Roman court, and Constantine's arrogant authority in reconstructing the Roman Empire as a Christian country, which leads to the conflict with Helena. In this way, *Helena* suggests that such arrogant sovereignty is totally different from the vocation which this heroine advocates.

On the other hand, in order to understand *Helena*, it is also necessary to examine Waugh's actual wretched condition at that time. *Helena* was written from 1946 through 1949, just after the Second World War. England at that time was suffering from poverty more dreadfully than during the Second World War itself. Waugh himself, as a Tory, was deeply depressed by the policies of the Labour cabinet which was in power. Clement Attlee, the Leader of the Labour Party, formed a leftist cabinet in July 1945. Led by this cabinet, post-war England started to rehabilitate, although the society was crippled with destitution and complaint. People were forced to live in dire need, worse than during wartime. The rationing system of food, clothes, and oil was conducted more strictly, and the reduction in paper supply caused acute damage to publishing. Taxes also increased (Patey 250). The international situation at this time was also far from peaceful.

Ethnic conflicts broke out in various districts in the world, and many refugees were dispersed. During this period, Waugh narrowly avoided distress in his life by asking for Randolph Churchill's help to obtain food, by helping his relatives emigrate to Australia, and by accepting a Yugoslavian refugee at his home as a worker (Patey 249-50). At this time, not only Waugh but other writers, such as T. S. Eliot, Elizabeth Bowen, and Peter Flemings, criticized the socialist cabinet harshly (Patey 248).

In these depressing situations both within and outside England, Waugh intensifies his thought on religious mind. He writes the following in the foreword to Thomas Merton's autobiography, *Elected Silence*;

In the natural order the modern world is rapidly being made uninhabitable by the scientists and politicians. . . . As in the Dark Ages the cloister offers the sanest and most civilized way of life.

And in the supernatural order the times require more than a tepid and dutiful piety. Prayer must become heroic. (*EAR* 369)

As his words show, Waugh insists that what people should do in such hard times is to be more conscious of devout prayer. And above all, this prayer should be "heroic." Waugh's decision in such circumstances to write *Helena*, a story of a saint who discovered a relic, hints to readers of his thoughts during this period. Moreover, in order to deliver his thoughts to readers, Waugh uses various images of the Second World War, which were still vivid memories for everyone at that time. They are definitely the keys to unlocking *Helena*. This chapter, then, will examine *Helena* not only as a

historical but also as a religious novel, both reflecting the English society of that period and also encouraging people to be devout; a novel in which Waugh puts various images of the Second World War. It will be clarified that this novel forms a part of Waugh's canon, linking the theme of war and religion.

## **2. The Images of the Twentieth Century in *Helena***

First, it is worthy to examine the images of the twentieth century depicted in *Helena*. In *Helena* whose background is Rome of the fourth century, numerous things of the twentieth century are described. Readers find modern colloquialisms and scenery here and there in the novel. Things related with the Second World War also are included. Such description shows how the novel perceives and expresses the times.

As to anachronism in *Helena*, Marcel DeCoste's analysis is informative. He analyzes it in the essay "The World's Anachronism: The Timelessness of the Secular in Evelyn Waugh's *Helena*," and mentions three points: First, the frequent use of English idioms popular in modern times; Second, the fact that characters have contemporary knowledge of the twentieth century; Third, that Waugh used the same style when writing both about the fourth century and the twentieth century. According to DeCoste, it is certain that Waugh intentionally employed these methods ("World's Anachronism" 160-71).

Extending the analysis by DeCoste, this thesis examines the images of the twentieth century seen in the novel, dividing them into three groups. One is Waugh's strong interest in using words popular in the twentieth century to describe conversations of the characters. Another is his attention



to modern architecture to depict the scenery in Rome. And the other is his constant obsession with the Second World War. Regarding the words in *Helena*, DeCoste and Selina Hastings, Waugh's biographer, have already discussed them. But the images of architecture have not been discussed enough. Especially, the images of the Second World War have not been discussed yet. These images should be delved into, as they appear so often in this novel.

### A. Modern Words in *Helena*

In *Helena*, modern words and colloquialisms are intentionally used and they evoke a feeling of contemporariness to readers. Some characters frequently use jargon and slang popular in twentieth-century England. For instance, the young Helena says to her tutor who reads the *Iliad*, "What a lark! . . . Oh, What sucks!" to express her doubts about the story (20). She calls her father, King Coel of Britain, "papa" (16), and his banquet "tonight's beano" (14). Not only in her childhood but also after her marriage, Helena is suspicious of the esoteric ritual of Mithraism and says, "It's all bosh, isn't it?" (43). Even in her senescence, when she abandons the scholars due to their silly statements about the True Cross, she snaps out derisively, "nonsense" (140) and "Bosh" (141). Helena's words like these give the impression that she is a girl with modern personality.

It is not only Helena who uses such words. Helena's son, Constantine, also says to Helena, "You don't understand modern politics, mamma" (74). People use colloquialisms from the twentieth century, such as things being "the rage" (17), meaning that they are popular, an "eyesore" (71) for an ugly new palace built in a favourite place, and "togs" (148) for

casual clothes. Particularly, the repeating of one word, “modern,” disregards the basic background of the novel: ancient Rome. These expressions evoke a strong feeling of contemporariness in readers.

### **B. Twentieth-Century Architecture in *Helena***

In *Helena*, there are several descriptions of scenery with images drawn from the twentieth century. When Helena enters Rome for the first time, she sees that “everywhere behind the façades of the temples and the historic buildings of the Republic stood the huge, new shabby apartment houses, island-blocks ten storeys high made of rubble and timber” (91-92). Naturally, this fits with the Italy of the twentieth century better than that of the fourth century. The same can be seen in the scenes where “concrete mixers” (143) are used in a construction site and “the chain of signal-posts” (134) are standing to send news from a distance to the Emperor. It is known that the Roman Empire had the techniques needed to produce concrete. In addition, it may be possible to say that “signal” means the beacon fire that the Romans used. However, what is notable here is Waugh’s technique of creating his ancient world by depicting the language and scenery of the twentieth century. Roman people in *Helena* who use the language and skills of the twentieth century are shown to readers as the people who overlap in modern society. Readers can follow their thoughts, recognise their distress, and even understand their intrigues as if it were readers themselves who did these deeds. By setting the Roman Empire as its stage, *Helena* freely moves between the past and the present. Waugh intentionally employs this avant-garde style in the novel, which has the effect to make the gap in history more prominent.

Incidentally, there is a scene which reinforces the recognition of this style of Waugh. It relates with architecture: a triumph arch. Constantine and a sculptor argue on an arch which is under construction. While Constantine expects the arch like that of Trajan with “representational” (108) sculptures of lively strong soldiers, the sculptor explains that the one in progress is “modified to suit modern tradition” (106). His “decorative applications” (106) are highly deformed with “certain surfaces which had . . . a certain monotony. The eye was not held” (106). DeCoste mentions that this sequence deliberately involves some images of modern art (“World’s Anachronism” 165). As DeCoste mentions, here is an art controversy between realism and modernism. Thus, this scene also shows Waugh’s technique to adopt an argument which was popular at the early twentieth century into the story of ancient Rome.

### **C. Images of the Second World War in *Helena***

As a novel with foreign background, Rome, the source of materials in *Helena* is wide-ranging. Waugh frequently went abroad in the 1930s. He travelled to Brazil, the Middle East, and Africa as a journalist, and introduced the experiences into his travel books and novels. He visited several countries as an officer of the Royal Navy, and after the Second World War he observed the Nuremberg Trials, the International Military Trial held by the Allies in 1946 (Hastings 499). In *Helena*, in addition to these experiences he also introduced the images of Fascism which swept across Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. Although this point has not been discussed enough in the past studies and criticisms, it is a very important characteristic of *Helena*.

A typical example showing the images of Fascism is described in the prophesy of a young prophetess. Constantine's wife, Fausta, conspires to exclude Helena from the Roman Court, fearing Helena's influence on her husband. Fausta hires magicians to prophesy the future and encourages Constantine to listen to their prophecies, which slander Helena. The prophecy made by one juvenile prophetess makes no sense to the ancient Romans who listen to it, but it is strikingly comprehensible for readers in the twentieth century. The prophetess, in a state of divine possession, shouts as she begins the prophecy, "Zivio! Viva! Arriba! Heil!" (116). For the Romans, who know nothing about these words, they only sound like a mantra, with no special meanings. However, in the 1930s and 1940s "Zivio" was a cheer that resounded for Tito in Yugoslavia, while "Viva" and "Arriba" were cries of support for Mussolini in Italy and Franco in Spain respectively. Of course, "Heil" was a greeting honouring Hitler in Germany.<sup>7</sup> With these words, the prophetess calls upon the ghosts, or spirits, of the Second World War in ancient Rome, bringing the enthusiasm for Fascism of modern times into the milieu of the ancient Roman Empire.

It is Nazi Germany which is particularly often hinted at in the prophecy. The expression "Plenty big chief from the Rhine to the Nile" (116) reminds readers of the fact that Hitler's Germany extended its territory from Germany to Egypt. Another expression, "Gobbles his chop in tip-top style" (116), involves the word "Gobbles," whose pronunciation is similar to Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Minister. The lines "Got a heap of chips worth a million lives. / Shook the bones for the world and the City" (116) also resemble the doings of Nazi Germany. Finally, the girl finishes her prophecy with the line "Ave atque vale! Heil!" (116). This is a

parody of a verse by Gaius Valerius Catullus, a Roman poet. “Ave atque vale” means “Hail and Farewell” in English, and the “Hail” leads us again to German “Heil” through a pun. These lines by a possessed girl increase the confusion of words in *Helena*. Generally, possessed prophets when invoking a deity are thought to draw upon the spirits of the past. In *Helena*, however, they call upon spirits from the future, without knowing it. These episodes show that the figures of Hitler and Nazi Germany are emphatically introduced.

The images of Nazi Germany are also applicable to the sequence about the death of Fausta. Using the words “British guile” (116) in the prophecy, Fausta defames Helena to Constantine. However, Constantine spots Fausta’s intrigue beforehand and orders his men on a secret mission to kill her, because “[h]e thought *Fausta had gone too far*” (115). Eventually, Fausta is suffocated to death while she is in a sauna. The sauna is locked from the outside and a boiler is left burning without any servant to control it (118-19). Whereas it is a historical fact that Constantine I’s wife was assassinated in a bathroom,<sup>8</sup> the sequence in *Helena* inevitably reminds readers of another dreadful event in history. Linked with the prophecy filled with numerous images of Nazi Germany, the scene of Fausta’s death certainly recalls to readers the mass murders in Nazi concentration camps where naked people were cruelly asphyxiated with gas in locked chambers.

Thus, *Helena* contains many images drawn from twentieth-century society, from the scenes of daily life to scenes of death. It includes colloquialisms in daily conversation, common scenery with buildings on the streets, military scenes during wartime, cruel massacre in gas chamber, and

so on. It is a remarkable characteristic of *Helena* as a historical novel depicting the Roman era.

### 3. Waugh's Commentary on *Helena*

To understand this novel better, it is helpful to examine Waugh's commentary explaining his intention when writing *Helena*, and on the situation he was in when he wrote it. When *Helena* was broadcast by the BBC as a radio drama in December 1951, Waugh himself announced on the radio what his intention had been in writing this novel. Waugh, above all, bemoans the trend for producing many fictions that mainly draw upon readers' sympathy, and that in fact those fictions are received positively by people:

It is said that great popularity in fiction and film is only attained by works into which readers and audience can transpose themselves and be vicariously endangered, loved, and applauded. This kind of reverie is not meditation, even when its objects are worthy of high devotion. (*EAR* 407)

His opinion, that fictions are not merely for vicarious satisfaction of readers, is true for his view on a hagiography, too. In his essay, "St. Helena Empress," Waugh writes as follows:

We can invoke the help of the saints and study the workings of God in them, but if we delude ourselves that we are walking in their shoes, seeing through their eyes and thinking with their

minds, we lose sight of the one certain course of our salvation.  
(*EAR* 407)

Moreover, he continues that people should rather pay attention to “the saints who are remembered for a single act” (*EAR* 407), like Helena. This means that people should follow obscure saints intently, avoiding the folly of identifying themselves with famous saints. Thus, Waugh’s intention becomes clear. He thinks it is worthy that we have little official information about Helena, because this prevents us from empathising with her too easily and encourages deeper introspection.

Waugh’s intention like this relates to the reason why Helena’s conversion is kept obscure. The characteristic aspect of *Helena* as a religious novel, or a hagiography, is that it never clarifies the details of how Helena becomes a Catholic. Waugh writes that she converted to Catholicism in an utterly ordinary way in her middle-age:

None knows when or where. No record was made. Nothing was built or founded. There was no public holiday. Privately and humbly, like thousands of others, she[Helena] stepped down into the font and emerged a new woman. . . . Did she merely conform to the prevailing fashion, lie open unresisting Divine Grace and so without design become its brimming vehicle? (89-90)

As an answer for the question in the above quotation, it will be conjectured that the purpose of *Helena*’s story is not her conversion but her quest for the Cross, and, furthermore, the very fact that Helena discovered the Cross.

Those who make a remarkable achievement do not have to have a lofty spirit from the beginning. They just show their spirit by the process of their activities. The ambiguity of Helena's conversion can be interpreted like that. The uncertainty of the details of Helena's conversion deters readers from understanding it frivolously. Moreover, the images of the twentieth century that re-occur in the novel allow readers to reexperience the memories of the Second World War, which were still vivid for people at that time. In this way, Waugh consciously urges readers to reflect on the past themselves.

Waugh comments eagerly on the main subject, Helena's quest for the Cross. In the essay quoted above, Waugh indicates that Helena's quest for the Cross is the most fundamental element in support of Christian dogma. For more than 2,000 years, many things have been discussed, sometimes changed, and even diminished: Uncertainties including the priesthood, the sacramental system, standards of living, and the study of Christianity itself (*EAR* 410). But the most basic principle for maintaining Christianity, according to Waugh, is "the unreasonable assertion that God became man and died on the Cross; not a myth or an allegory; true God, truly incarnate, tortured to death at a particular moment in time, at a particular geographical place, as a matter of plain historical fact" (*EAR* 410). Helena tried to show this belief "as a matter of plain historical fact" (*EAR* 410) to a world which was confused, both religiously and militarily, in the fourth century.

Waugh concludes his commentary with his strong belief in a vocation: "He [God] wants a different thing from each of us, . . . something which only we can do and for which we were each created" (*EAR* 410).



Waugh's intimate friend and mentor, Father Martin D'Arcy, attested that "his [Waugh's] own personal thesis was best put forth in it: that God put man on this earth to do a special task" (Patey 296). Given this remark, Waugh's proud statement that *Helena* was his best novel would not be an exaggeration by any means.

In *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh writes the process of a British man's conversion to Catholicism. In *Helena*, moreover, Waugh focuses on what the protagonist, a famed Catholic, accomplishes with her heart and soul. Helena's quest for the half-imaginary Cross in Jerusalem reminds readers of the adventure of Tony Last, the protagonist of Waugh's early novel, *A Handful of Dust* (1934), who tries to discover the Holy City along the Amazon. However, in contrast with the failure of Tony, who is a modern Englishman far from faith, Helena, amazingly, succeeds in her quest. Thus, *Helena* represents Waugh's mental development of a theme which is carried on from his earlier novels.

Waugh expects readers' introspection, not their sympathy with his characters. That is his utmost intention in writing *Helena*. Also, it shows why he uses the images of the twentieth century in *Helena*, trying to make readers think themselves and better understand this novel. As the basic material of a hagiography written for English people who suffered through the Second World War, Waugh chooses the memories of war and Fascism, not fantasy and spectacle.

#### **4. The Devil's Temptation in *Helena***

This section examines in more detail the expressions relating to Christianity and a believer's spirit in *Helena*. As examined in the previous

section, *Helena* does not show Helena's conversion. Likewise, it lacks any depiction of the advent of Jesus. Naturally, it is common in hagiographies that Jesus or angels appear before the saints to guide them to faith.

However, *Helena* does not include any such scene. Waugh's idea is that, when Helena decides to seek the Cross, the evidence of Jesus' existence, she does not need divine guidance, even by Jesus himself.

Instead, in this novel, a Jew shows Helena the place where the Cross is buried. He appears in Helena's dream at dawn on the Epiphany, the day when she breaks her fast, in Jerusalem, which she visits to find the Cross. Although he does not introduce himself, readers easily realize that he is a Wandering Jew, a man destined to wander around the world immortally because he drove away Jesus from the doorstep of his shop in Jerusalem when Jesus was carrying the cross on his back on the crucial day of his crucifixion. The man does not even tell his name. To identify him, it is enough to hear his lines, such as: "I stopped counting birthdays after the hundred and fiftieth" (150), and "They were talking about Jerusalem . . . how the Romans were putting up a new temple here . . . . That took me back a bit. Took me back three hundred years to be exact" (149), and his memory of the day when Jesus died.

Helena walks around Jerusalem, talking with the Jew in her dream. During the walk, she is forced to see a vision of the future Jerusalem. It is the future that will be produced by her discovery of the Cross. She sees an abominable vision of the city full of depravity, bloodshed, and especially mammonism, where shady business prevails, with genuine and fake sacred relics both offered to sightseers, a practice which Jesus would have hated most.

Helena listened and in her mind saw, clear as all else on that brilliant timeless morning, what was in store. She saw the sanctuaries of Christendom become a fair ground, stalls hung with beads and medals, substances yet unknown pressed into sacred emblems; heard a chatter of haggling in tongues yet unspoken. She saw the treasuries of the Church filled with forgeries and impostures. She saw Christians fighting and stealing to get possession of trash. She saw all this, considered it and said:

‘It’s a stiff price’; and then: ‘Show me the cross.’ (151)

The Wandering Jew, a time traveller, shows Helena a ghost of the future, just as the prophetess girl had done. However, Helena stubbornly demands to know the place of the cross, although she understands that blood and money may defile the dignity of the Church through her doings. Then, the Jew briefly answers: “They threw it in an old underground cistern” (151). He succumbs to her strong will.

What is the role of this Jew in *Helena*? It may seem expedient that Helena so easily finds the place of the True Cross by a revelation in a dream. But the Jew should not be considered as a Deus ex Machina. To analyze this sequence, the scene must be inspected when Helena really finds out the exact spot where she met with the Jew in the dream. The text reads: “there was a print in the dust that looked as though it had been left by a goat’s hoof. Helena gently rubbed it out and set in its place her own mark, a little cross of pebbles” (152). From the image of “a goat’s hoof,” it

is recognised that Waugh intends readers to regard the Jew as a devil. However, if readers conclude from this that Helena discovered the cross guided by a devil, the signification of the True Cross is totally missed. Here remains a question why a devil appears before Helena.

To answer this question, it is necessary to construe that the conversation between Helena and the Jew reproduces the Temptation in the New Testament. In the New Testament, the Devil tempts Jesus, saying that, if Jesus yields to the Devil, he will have all the kingdoms over the world; but Jesus refuses the temptation (Matthew 4.1-11). In *Helena*, the Devil appears in front of the Roman Empress Dowager and threatens her that, if she discovers the Cross and helps Christianity spread, it will cause never-ending war and the corruption of the Church. Helena, however, understanding everything, sticks to her intention to discover the Cross. The Devil fails in temptation again.

Concerning the position of the Jew, there is a difference between a legend and Waugh's *Helena*. In *The Golden Legend*, Voragine wrote that Helena violently tortured the Jew to extract a confession from him about where the Cross was (173). Waugh has the Jew appear as the Wandering Jew, instead of adopting Voragine's description. Moreover, Waugh writes that Helena was tempted by the Devil in the guise of the Wandering Jew, composing a very opposite scene to the torture scene that Voragine wrote.

In hagiography, pious saints are often tempted by a devil to abandon their beliefs. Helena is also tempted by the Devil after enduring a fast, like Jesus in the wilderness. And she defeats the Devil by remaining steadfast in her belief about the pieces of wood, in the same way that Jesus defeated the Devil, saying, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt

thou serve” (Matthew 4.10). Thus, in *Helena*, Jesus is established as a precursor.

It would be necessary here to examine what was sought after by Roman people at that time. More than 300 years have passed since Jesus was crucified, and many Christians have been persecuted in the history of the Roman Empire. Roman people in the fourth century in *Helena* are seeking something to rely on, after seeing that even Emperors are assassinated, one after another. For Fausta, it is omnipotence which allows her to kill all her enemies and live surrounded only by her admirers. For Constantine, it is his power as the Emperor which allows him to arrange things as he likes and build a new empire, because he cannot help thinking that all people are “just *things*, in the way, in the wrong place, that have to be moved and put to use or thrown away” (122). For priests such as Pope Sylvester and Bishop Macarius, it is their sense of holy duty to maintain the Church under the power of the Roman Empire. They need Christianity in their life as an idea to depend on. They always seem to be beset with doubts and fears.

In contrast, what Helena needs are merely wooden pieces. She admonishes Constantine, her son who spends time in self-pity after ordering his wife’s death, about wielding “[p]ower without grace” (122), and persuades him not to pretend to be a savior himself.

‘Sometimes,’ Helena continued, ‘I have a terrible dream of the future. Not now, but presently, people may forget their loyalty to their kings and emperors and take power for themselves. Instead of letting one victim bear this frightful curse they will take it all

on themselves, each one of them. Think of the misery of a whole world possessed of Power without Grace.’ (122)

For Helena, the only important thing is the crucifixion and death of Jesus, who bore the torture caused by all humans’ sins on behalf of them. It is unforgivable for her that an ordinary man pities himself after wielding power, as if he were the savior. Helena wants to show the Cross which proves the existence of Jesus, thinking that it will guide the people who are lost in this world. When Helena converses with Pope Sylvester, she declares that hope.

‘Nothing “stands to reason” with God. If He had wanted us to have it, no doubt He would have given it to us. But He hasn’t chosen to. He gives us enough.’ [Sylvester said]

‘But how do you know He doesn’t want us to have it – the cross, I mean? I bet He’s just waiting for one of us to go and find it – just at this moment when it’s most needed. Just at this moment when everyone is forgetting it and chattering about the hypostatic union, there’s a solid chunk of wood waiting for them to have their silly head knocked against. I’m going off to find it,’ said Helena. (128)

As this quotation shows, her hope and her will to realise it, for which she is neither afraid nor doubtful as others do, are simple and strong.

Moreover, Helena’s view on the existence of Jesus is clearly shown in her monologue. Before she discovers the Cross, she talks in her mind to the

Three Kings who visited Jesus after his birth in Jerusalem.

‘Like me,’ she [Helena] said to them [the Three Kings], ‘you were late in coming. . . .

‘Yet you came, and were not turned away. You too found room before the manger. . . . In that new order of charity that had just come to life, there was room for you, too. You were not lower in the eyes of the holy family than the ox or the ass.

‘You are my especial patrons,’ said Helena, ‘and patrons of all late-comers, of all who have a tedious journey to make to the truth, of all who are confused with knowledge and speculation, of all who through politeness make themselves partner in guilt, of all who stand in danger by reason of their talents.’ (144-45)

The first thing she points out in her monologue is the fact of the Three Kings’ late arrival and the holy family’s love in receiving them. Then she cautiously accepts their lateness like her own, and prays that there is room also for her. Helena is convinced of the existence of the True Cross, and she regards the discovery of the wood as the very purpose of her life, even if she finds it late.

Here, Waugh’s intention in writing *Helena* can be reaffirmed. Waugh describes Helena as a woman who could withstand the Devil’s temptation, just as Jesus did. Waugh praises her strong mind as equal to Jesus’, even though she was “a late-comer” and could not hear Jesus’ teachings from his own mouth. It implies Waugh’s deep respect for her, whom he calls in his essay, “at a time, literally, the most important woman in the world” (*EAR*

407). Thus, by making his heroine face and overcome the same suffering as Jesus, Waugh sublimated his novel into a hagiography appropriate for the twentieth century. Surely, with the images of the Second World War interlaced here and there, readers can understand it more deeply for their own mental sustenance. *Helena* is an important part of Waugh's canon, thus linking the theme of religion and war.



## Chapter IV: The Shadow of Death: *The Loved One* and *Love Among the Ruins*

### 1. Proposition

Waugh's works from the late 1940s toward the early 1950s not only contain his individual experiences but are directed more toward the rapidly changing aspect of the world after the Second World War. In fact, in England, Labour Party won the general election and Clement Richard Attlee's socialist Cabinet came to power in 1945. Subsequently, social welfare policies were steadily introduced, while hard controls were imposed on people's daily lives. At the same time, the United States greatly increased in economic prosperity and took a leadership role in the world. This is symbolically proven, for instance, by the fact that the headquarters of the United Nations was established in New York City, supported by an American billionaire, J. D. Rockefeller (Bowman 137), and by the fact that England and other European countries relied on loans from the United States for their recovery from the Second World War (Bowman 137).

Waugh novelizes such situations employing a heavy cynicism. One of those novels is *The Loved One* (1949), which deals with the thriving funeral industry in the United States, and the other is *Love Among the Ruins* (1953), which describes England as a future ultimate welfare country. Between these two novels he writes *Helena*, which includes a history of a saint, a work intended to encourage people to become pious by blending the saint's story with Waugh's harsh reminiscences of the Second World War. Unlike *Helena*, however, in both *The Loved One* and *Love Among the Ruins* Waugh describes issues concerning the death of individuals: suicides in the

former and euthanasia in the latter. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify why Waugh considers these issues at this time. It is true that Waugh in those days was in need of restoration himself – recovery from mental stress as much as from his poor economic and physical circumstances after the war (Hastings 495). It is probable that he wrote these novels to restore him, but it cannot be the only reason. This chapter examines these two unique works by observing Waugh’s view of the state or his vision of the nation, because his views of the United States and of the future England are frequently seen in these two works as the stories develop.

There are a few studies on *The Loved One* and *Love Among the Ruins*. Jeffrey Heath and Katharyn W. Crabbe spend quite a few pages analyzing *The Loved One*. Crabbe especially watches the lack of communication through language (106-17), suggesting that *The Loved One* is a novel which uses language “to disguise or deny experience” (116), where most characters misunderstand what others are saying. For *Love Among the Ruins*, Julie Morère provides a detailed analysis. Most studies agree that these works were written by Waugh in a period of transition towards his more religious ones. Selina Hastings writes:

The religious conception of life for Evelyn had become of paramount importance. Since his return from the war this was evident even to his most atheistical acquaintance. The relationship of man to God, of his own personal relationship to his Creator, dominated his consciousness. (503)

Following on from this analysis, this chapter also examines Waugh’s

consciousness of death in the two novels.

## **2. *The Loved One*: The Combination of the Cinematic World and Death**

In 1947, two years after publishing *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh visited the United States to negotiate its filmization at Hollywood. The negotiation broke down. While staying in the US, however, he saw a pets' cemetery, and furthermore was astonished by Forest Lawn, the huge funeral park behind Hollywood, the center of the film industry. Waugh regards them as a remarkable combination of the world of the cinema and death, mentioning "I found a deep mine of literary gold" in his diary on 7 April 1947 (*DEW* 711). After returning to England, he wrote a novel based on the impressions he had of the United States, which was growing more and more influential in Europe after the Second World War. This is *The Loved One: An Anglo-American Tragedy* (1949).

*The Loved One*'s leading character is Dennis Barlow, a young British former soldier who published a book of poems during the Second World War. He is living in Los Angeles as a staff member at a pets' cemetery and staying at Sir Francis Hindsley's house. Sir Francis, also British, is an old scriptwriter for Megalopolitan studios in Hollywood, but he is laid off because of his age, and commits suicide. Dennis visits Whispering Glades, a huge funeral park like the real Forest Lawn, to manage Sir Francis' funeral. There he encounters Aimée Thanatogenos, a young American woman whose job is embalming bodies, and becomes intimate with her. Aimée has been proposed to by her middle-aged superior, Mr. Joyboy, who promises her that she will keep her position at Whispering Glades if she agrees. As she cannot decide for herself who will be her

fiancé, hesitating to choose between the cold-hearted but well-educated Dennis or the mama's boy Joyboy, Aimée secretly kills herself in Joyboy's office. Joyboy then implores Dennis to help him avoid suspicion of murder. Dennis finally burns Aimée's body at his pets' cemetery in exchange for money to return to England. Intimating that he will restart his life as a poet, the novel ends.

What is inferred from this story is the mental and social decline of typical British people after the Second World War. Both Dennis and Sir Francis are British men who once aspired to become poets in England. However, as Jeffrey Heath adroitly shows in analysing their situations in the United States, they fail as writers and waste time in sloth both physically and mentally (191). At this point, they are almost dead in the United States. Later, however, it is shown how Dennis leaves the United States and restarts his life in England. The story ends with an intimation of departure and rebirth.

Nevertheless, by the time Dennis manages to get out of hardship, two sacrifices have had to be offered: that is, the suicides of Sir Francis and Aimée. Dennis is responsible for both suicides. A member of the British community in Los Angeles claims that Sir Francis was laid off because he allowed Dennis, "a fellow who worked in the pets' cemetery" (31), to stay at his house. He says, "In a world of competition people are taken at their face value. . . . Lose that and you lose everything. Frank lost face. I will say no more" (31-32). These lines show that the British men of the community despise not only Dennis but Sir Francis, because Sir Francis is "disgracing himself and letting down his people" (31) by sharing a house with Dennis. Old and isolated, Sir Francis is laid off from a cinema

company, which leads to his suicide. And for Aimée, Dennis is a dreadfully insincere lover because his love-letters all plagiarise from old English poetry. Moreover, he feels little shame in saying “It is I [Dennis] who should be disillusioned when I think that I have been squandering my affections on a girl ignorant of the commonest treasures of literature” (108). Lastly, Dennis conducts both of their funerals, one formally in the Whispering Glades, the other informally in his pets’ cemetery.

Sir Francis is a negative mentor for Dennis, showing him what the future will be if Dennis remains in the United States. Sir Francis gave up his career as a poet even before Dennis began reading the alphabet, threw all his works away, and never writes a single verse in the United States. And Aimée is a negative Muse for Dennis, who praises his mental sluggishness by misunderstanding it as cultivation. Here it is possible to infer Waugh’s intention that sometimes artists must bury and do away with these negative figures. It seems Waugh cynically insists that ultimately it is England that remains the bedrock of literature after all.

### **3. Waugh’s Book of the Dead**

As discussed in the previous section, the main motif of *The Loved One* is associated with death. Waugh serenely writes about all of the people’s and animals’ ruthless deaths in contrast with their splendid cheerful funerals in American business. The cremation of a “non-sectarian chimpanzee” is “ritualistic, almost orgiastic” (23), and a canary is buried along with a performance of joyful music by a squad of Marine buglers (23). Aimée proudly speaks of the up-to-date system of embalming in Whispering Glades. Even in the face of a suicide who hanged himself like

Sir Francis, “the Radiant Childhood Smile” (56) on the corpse is shaped by Mr Joyboy. Then the staff pose the corpse, apply make-up, and cover it with a nicely sewn, brand-new shroud.

The description of this work done by the staff of the funeral company is based on Waugh’s real observations made in Los Angeles. In his essay “Half in Love with Easeful Death: An Examination of Californian Burial Customs” (1947), written after returning from the United States, Waugh explains the process of embalming in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, the funeral park behind Hollywood. He writes that “[t]here is more than a hint, indeed, throughout Forest Lawn, that death is a form of infancy, a Wordsworthian return to innocence” (*EAR* 336). Then he contemplates the concept of death in America, which was very different from that in Europe:

We are very far here from the traditional conception of an adult soul naked at the judgment seat and a body turning to corruption. . . . In those realistic times Hell waited for the wicked and a long purgation for all but the saints, but Heaven, if at last attained, was a place of perfect knowledge. In Forest Lawn, as the builder claims, these old values are reversed. The body does not decay; it lives on, more chic in death than ever before, in its indestructible class A steel and concrete shelf; the soul goes straight from the Slumber Room to Paradise, where it enjoys an endless infancy . . . . (*EAR* 336-37)

This quotation shows Waugh’s opinion that the concept of death reflects the culture of the region, just as the funerals at Forest Lawn reflect showy

commercialism in America. Consequently, this quotation reminds readers of Waugh's thoughts on the ancient Egyptians who devoted themselves to the process of funerals, working on mummies over 5,000 years ago. Waugh tells, his friend, Christopher Sykes, about his impressions of a classical Egyptian work, *The Book of the Dead*:

[I]f the ancient Egyptians had not been morbidly obsessed with funerary celebration we should know little about them. Suppose that our age became best known to the remote future through our burial customs and monuments to the dead, would distant posterity perhaps have clue to the kind of mind that prevails in the twentieth century, as we believe we have the clue to the prevailing ideas of the ancient Egyptians? (Sykes 417)

In brief, Waugh thinks that the way people treat the dead and perform funeral services is the key to understanding their dominant ideas. In other words, *The Loved One* is Waugh's *Book of the Dead*, in which he discloses modern American culture's characteristic view on death.

In consideration of the view on death, Waugh uses a combination of death and the world of cinema. Douglas Lane Patey comments that the novel indicates "the connection of studio and cemetery, one falsifying life, the other death" (275). Geographically, Whispering Glades is located back to back with Hollywood. Each room in Whispering Glades is separated from the others as a compartment, each with different staff and different supplies, and each looking like a separate film studio. Dennis receives a strong impression when he visits Whispering Glades for the first time. The

impression overwhelms him even more strongly than the feelings he had in Los Angeles:

When as a newcomer to the Megalopolitan Studios he first toured the lots, it had strained his imagination to realize that those solid-seeming streets and squares of every period and climate were in fact plaster façades whose backs revealed the structure of bill-boardings. Here the illusion was quite otherwise. Only with an effort could Dennis believe that the building before him was three-dimensional and permanent; but here, as everywhere in Whispering Glades, failing credulity was fortified by the painted word.

*This perfect replica of an old English Manor, a notice said, like all the buildings of Whispering Glades, is constructed throughout of Grade A steel and concrete . . . . (35)*

Whispering Glades is not only armed with its huge garden and gaudy buildings, but with the words of God – that is, the founder of the company, Wilbur Kenworthy. In addition, the words of British poets such as Robert Burns and William Butler Yeats are engraved here and there to give authority to the location. Judging from the fact that such an emphasis is placed on the authoritative words engraved all around, the cemetery can be associated with a church. At the same time, a film studio, which produces stars and cinematic spectacles, reminds readers of a medieval church, which tried to attract people with gorgeous decorations and ceremonies. In this way, the funeral company, the film studio, and the church are linked along



one line. The funeral company prepares an altar like a church, but its devotion is not to God, but to death.

Moreover, *The Loved One* emphasizes death by describing infertility. Dennis writes to Aimée by plagiarizing old English poetry instead of writing original poems. He cannot write even a fragment of poetry in the United States, even though he received six literary prizes when he was in England for the book which he wrote during wartime (69). Most of the male characters in the novel appear without wives or children. The bees buzzing in the garden in *Whispering Glades* are unreal. They are machines sounding a humming sound (67-68). “Kaiser’s Stoneless Peaches” become a bestselling fruit as they have no seeds (68). These are all the examples of infertility described in this novel. However, it should be remembered that Waugh’s characters rarely abandon marriage and give up the opportunity to have children. Although Waugh does not praise love and marriage openly, his characters often fall in love, get married, and have children, even during wartime, as if it is a matter of course. Therefore, infertility, an atmosphere of discordance between men and women after the Second World War, is a remarkable characteristic of *The Loved One*.

#### **4. *Love Among the Ruins*: Waugh’s Dystopia**

*Love Among the Ruins: A Romance of the Near Future* (1953) is a dystopian SF novel describing the future England, which is really unusual in Waugh’s works. This novel cynically shows his strong distrust of various near-future events, such as plastic surgery, euthanasia, and the counselling support given to criminals. Although Waugh started to write it in 1949, it was published more than three years later. Along with *The Loved One*, *Love*

*Among the Ruins* also should be examined as a novel which shows Waugh's view on death, but especially as the novel which is deeply related to the real society of England soon after the Second World War.

Various new aspects of society are predicted in the near-future England of the novel. The death penalty is abolished.<sup>9</sup> Felons must be returned to society after medical treatment due to the New Law "that no man could be held responsible for the consequences of his own acts" (450).<sup>10</sup> Miles Plastic, the young protagonist, is detained in a facility converted from a beautiful country house, Mountjoy, for the crime of incendiarism which he committed while he was in the Air Force. After he stays peacefully in Mountjoy, enjoying classical music and beautiful landscapes for twenty months, Miles is released because "the State" decides that he has been recuperated. Miles is given a position as a staff member of the euthanasia center, where he meets a beautiful ballet dancer, Clara. She is unfortunately forced to be sterilized by the head of the ballet company. As its side effect, she grows a beard. Now useless as a prima ballerina, she is sent to the euthanasia center. Miles loves Clara because of her individuality and her taste for traditional art, which has been missing from the people for a long time. However, she has plastic surgery to remove her beard and gets a rubber chin instead. In addition, Miles finds she has aborted their baby. In despair, Miles sets fire to Mountjoy. But the State hampers his arrest, to avoid a scandal, and appoints him as a lecturer promoting the State's policy in order to prove that prisons are no longer necessary.

It is necessary to examine why Waugh wrote this dystopian SF novel in 1949. As Patey points out (311), this novel is apparently influenced by

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and *Ape and Essence* (1949), Henry Green's *Concluding* (1948) and others, as well as Peter Flemings' *Sixth Column* (1951). In addition to the influence of these dystopian novels, however, it is important to point out the antipathy toward Clement Attlee's Labour Party cabinet at that time. *Love Among the Ruins* contemptuously describes a society where people dismiss all kinds of religious beliefs and ceremonies, devoting themselves only to production and social improvement. In other words, it symbolizes the society where socialism is ultimately accomplished. For example, Christmas is set only as "Santa Claus Day," the day when television shows an old folk play simply to awaken historical interest (472). The euthanasia center does an enormous amount of business every day because everyone rushes into this place, preferring painless death to a "welfare-weary" life (459). Without sacrament or prayer, patients are sent to a gas chamber. The last scene, where Miles sees the flame of a cigarette-lighter, is similar to the last scene of *Brideshead Revisited*, where Charles sees the flame of a burning lamp in the chapel. However, where the small light in *Brideshead Revisited* symbolizes the perpetual faith and religious belief throughout human history, the light in *Love Among the Ruins* is only a comfort to the personal desire of Miles, an arsonist, even though it is "gemlike, hymeneal, auspicious" (483). Julie Morère comments that Miles' lighter implies the atomic bomb in her essay "Evelyn Waugh's Artistic Outcry in *Love among the Ruins* of a Godless World" [sic]. (par.7) Although her comment seems to be extreme, it is an acute observation in the sense that the state might be destroyed at one moment.

Not only concerning himself with religion here, Waugh depicts

English society of the near future, where all values are turned upside-down. Criminals are kept in detention facilities to “rehabilitate,” with no consideration of prison terms or penalties. They are not assigned to work as prisoners, but just enjoy a peaceful life there (445-47). Children grow up surrounded by the works of Cubist artists like Picasso and Leger and are psychoanalyzed every month, while their lives are recorded, microfilmed, and filed. Then, they are transferred to jobs judged to be most suitable for them (448). Major offences escape indictment and are reduced to the simple charge of Antisocial Activity. In the Court, psychologists plead the prisoners’ innocence. In the case of Miles, they claim that “the prisoner had performed a perfectly normal act and, moreover, had shown more than normal intelligence in its execution” (449). Citizens’ clothes are drab, serge robes which are surprisingly like the chitons in Ancient Greece. Homosexuals are distinguished by their coloured robes (448). The weather is planned and controlled by the State (445). Traditional education has almost disappeared, because the new law in 1955 exempts workers from taxation, which reduces people’s will to go into higher education to gain promotion (459). In this way, Waugh describes a severe and stark future world developing with policies based on workers’ pleasure, psychiatry, and the slighting of the traditional high-brow culture with which Waugh was familiar. It shows Waugh’s strong satirical implication of the future that would result from the then English socialist government.

### **5. Waugh’s Complaint Against the Socialist Cabinet**

Waugh had a harsh view of the Attlee Cabinet. In his diary on 23 November 1946, he wrote: “The French called the occupying German army

‘the grey lice.’ That is precisely how I regard the occupying army of English socialist government” (*DEW* 698). In *Love Among the Ruins*, the socialistic state which Clement Attlee’s Cabinet advanced is widely criticized. Although the criticisms are on various topics, they have a common aim. Three examples of his criticisms on Attlee’s Cabinet can be pointed out.

Firstly, there is a hint in the illustrations attached to the novel. Waugh inserts several illustrations, retouching the engravings of Henry Moses modelled on Antonio Canova’s works, an Italian Neoclassical sculptor. But Waugh drew one illustration himself. In the illustration, Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary in the Attlee Cabinet, and Sir Stafford Cripps, the Chancellor, are caricatured individually as two figures representing the Minister of Rest and Culture and the Minister of Welfare (*Patey* 313). They speak to Miles: “In the New Britain which we are building, there are no criminals. There are only the victims of inadequate social services” (451) and call him “our Result” (453). They only see young Miles as a figure to use for propaganda promoting their policy to treat criminals with psychiatric therapy. They do not care whether Miles is really cured or not. One patient laughs at Miles because he, enjoying life in Mountjoy, has been too submissive and so “made it too easy for them to say you [Miles] was [sic] cured” (447). Waugh depicts this episode as a caricature of the future welfare state.

Secondly, there is a fact that Waugh had continually been attacking two left-wing English poets, Wystan Hugh Auden and Christopher Isherwood for avoiding the war and emigrating to the US. Waugh makes two characters mocking them, Parsnip and Pimpnel, and repeatedly uses them

in the novel. In *Love Among the Ruins*, Pimpernel is described as one of the first patients who died in the euthanasia center, and Parsnip, who is depicted as a decrepit old man in an illustration, is sent to a gas chamber, too. In this way, Waugh “buries” Auden and Isherwood fictionally in his novel. However, it is well known that Auden and Isherwood were both famous leftist poets. In spite of this fact, in this novel, old Parsnip is only “a comic character in the department [Miles’ office], this veteran poet” (477). According to Dr. Beamish, Miles’ superior in the center, a leftist book club, *New Writing*, was quite popular in the 1930s, and “they [the club members] were all the rage” (477-78). Therefore, it is conceivable that Waugh uses the trick that Pimpernel and Parsnip voluntarily die in the socialistic system they believed in. They are never blamed by angry English people for running away from the war. They ask for death on their own in the leftist world because of boredom and outmodedness. It should be noticed that in this way Waugh intimates what is the true fear of the State where people come to wish to die, even if they approve of the State’s system. This fear also leads to the terror of the euthanasia center, the symbol of the State.

The third example of Waugh’s attack on socialism is concerned with this euthanasia center itself. In order to show the terrible prosperity of the euthanasia center, Waugh makes one character claim the system. Dr. Beamish, the head of the center, says he wants to charge people if everyone keeps forming a long line to be euthanized and make him work without a break. Asked by Miles whether the ministry will agree to introduce a charge, he answers like this:

‘The Ministry will never agree to that, surely, sir?’

‘Dammed sentimentalists. My father and mother hanged themselves in their own back-yard with their own clothes-line. Now no one will lift a finger to help himself. There’s something wrong in the system, Plastic. There are still rivers to drown in, trains –every now and then– to put your head under; gas-fires in some of the huts. The country is full of the natural resources of death, but everyone has to come to us.’ (460)

Waugh seems to be heavily concerned about the euthanasia center, which brings sloth and a death-wish across the nation. The present patients in the euthanasia center are ordinary “welfare-weary” (459) citizens, but in the future, low-graded children and surplus immigrants are planned to be sent to the center (458). Even if so many people die in the center, the State will carry on promoting procreation as part of the education curriculum for children (466), so that the population will be maintained. This cycle definitely reminds readers of the system of Nazi Germany. As hinted from the line in the novel that the euthanasia center uses “cyanide” (460) and “a gas chamber” (478), Miles’ workplace is actually an extermination camp, though subtly masked by its pretended role in promoting public welfare. Here is Waugh’s reproach that the opulent people’s death-wish will surely lead to the massacre of weak people, just as Nazi Germany drove people to war and the murder of Jews, physically and mentally handicapped people, and any other minorities. It seems clear that this is Waugh’s strong, cynical criticism of the Attlee Labour Cabinet’s “welfare state.”

As seen in Dr. Beamish’s saying quoted above, and Waugh’s other

works like *Vile Bodies* and *The Loved One*, Waugh never denies the presence of suicide itself. Suicide is of course a serious sin in Christianity, but Waugh describes it as an inescapable end for a character who is rejected by modern society. Suicide is always an important incident in Waugh's works, and he often describes the scene from a suicide's view. Since Waugh was plagued with drinking, insomnia, and drug use throughout his life, death and suicide are naturally his lifelong companions. Waugh, as a Catholic, has a strong belief in each person's mission, which should drive them to continue in this world: "He [God] wants a different thing from each of us, laborious or easy, conspicuous or quite private, but something which only we can do and for which we were each created" (*EAR* 410). In this context, suicide is an abandonment of one's mission. If society aids and abets suicide, this is the more malicious sin.

Besides its cynical attack on the Attlee Cabinet's welfare policy, *Love Among the Ruins* continuously represents a state of infertility. Unlike Aimée, who commits suicide in *The Loved One*, Clara becomes pregnant and chooses abortion to support her career as a ballerina. The heroine who gets confused by an undesirable pregnancy and chooses abortion is repeated in Waugh's later novels, comprising the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Abortion is another serious choice for women. After the Second World War, Waugh starts to describe various types of women different from the heroines in his early works, who were mostly wealthy British ladies in upper society who live nonchalantly. Aimée in *The Loved One* and Clara in *Love Among the Ruins*, both from the lower class, are the forerunners of the various women in Waugh's later novels.

Waugh himself was possessed by the shadow of death in this period,



and his novels also tend to focus on the topics of death, funerals, dystopia, etc. Nonetheless, it is obvious that he is trying hard to warn the society by writing these novels. Although *Love Among the Ruins* was published in England, it was rejected by numerous American magazines, including *Life*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *The New Yorker* (Hastings 553). English reviewers made harsh comments (Patey 320), but Waugh did not mind. As he wrote to Graham Greene in June 1953, the novel “was a bit of nonsense begun 3 years ago & hastily finished & injudiciously published. But I [Waugh] don’t think it quite as bad as most reviewers do” (LEW 459). From this period on, however, Waugh’s health and economic circumstances tumble down further. His abuse of drugs, heavy drinking, and insomnia get worse. In 1954, after being interviewed by the BBC at home, he went on a sea trip alone to recuperate, heading for Rangoon. But he came back to England suffering from aural hallucinations and received drug treatment in London. He novelizes this period as *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold: A Conversation Piece* (1957). It takes more time for him to recover and begin writing war novels – the *Sword of Honour* trilogy – again wholeheartedly.

## 6. Novels in a Period of Transition

As the last consideration, a question remains: what position do *The Loved One* and *Love Among the Ruins* occupy in Waugh’s works? Both of these novels depict the state of society after the Second World War in the United States and in England, focusing on the individual deaths which arise from the social state itself. To put it another way, they reveal how individual lives are placed under constraint by society. The stories express Waugh’s doubts, and these novels can be seen as his questions proposed to

that kind of society. Conversely, they illuminate Waugh's view of the social state and his anticipation of the future. Therefore, they can be regarded as works written in a period of transition, probably moving towards more religious and directly confrontational ones.

## Chapter V: A Crusader and Minos in the Second World War: *Men at Arms and Officers and Gentlemen*

### 1. Proposition

The *Sword of Honour* trilogy is Waugh's comprehensive masterpiece created in his late years. It consists of *Men at Arms* (1952), *Officers and Gentlemen* (1955), and *Unconditional Surrender* (1961). Later, Waugh revised the three novels into a single volume titled *Sword of Honour* (1965). The trilogy deals with the six years when England was engulfed by the flames of the Second World War. Waugh himself joined the Royal Navy as a liaison officer in November 1939 (Brennan 70) and was sent to many different fronts. As a result, his experiences of warfare heavily influenced his writing. His view of war as a comedic racket, which was a distinctive element of his early novels, disappears. Instead, he finally regards war as more of a social phenomenon characterized by conflict among allies, tainted by bureaucracy and the decline of the human spirit. The *Sword of Honour* trilogy is the compilation of these observations, which can be considered as Waugh's view of war, and at the same time, his overall view of humanity.

All the novels of the trilogy describe the war experiences of a middle-aged British Catholic soldier, Guy Crouchback, who joins the British army at the beginning of the Second World War. Having trained in a Royal Halberdiers Brigade in England, he moves to various places such as Dakar, Scotland, Alexandria, Crete, Italy, and Yugoslavia, and takes part in many battles. Initially, Guy's aim in joining the war is to achieve great things as a soldier, like the saint whom he worships, Sir Roger. Nazi Germany and

the Soviet Union are the two enemies which Britain was mainly fighting against at that time, so Guy regards the war as a modern Crusade: a holy war against evil, totalitarian countries. However, as the war goes on and he experiences the war in various ways, his consciousness begins to be bound for a holier achievement as a Roman Catholic, rather than chasing these more earthly exploits. This moral progress of Guy is the consistent theme of the trilogy.

The first two novels of the trilogy which this chapter examines, *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen*, were written consecutively. Although Waugh initially intended to finish up with them, he later wrote the third novel, *Unconditional Surrender*, to provide a kind of conclusion to the story of the protagonist Guy's moral pilgrimage. In order to examine these first two novels, it is important to analyze them in association with legends and mythology. This is because in *Men at Arms* a legend of a Crusader, Sir Roger casts a shadow over the formation of the protagonist's character. This chapter examines *Men at Arms* by focusing on this legend. On the other hand, in *Officers and Gentlemen*, many episodes from Greco Roman mythology are used. In regard to this, Archie K. Loss comments as follows:

Like Charles Ryder in *Brideshead Revisited*, Guy ends by kindling the flame of hope at the altar of religion, and the novels that tell his story take their place with other major works of modern literature in which classical epic and myth serve to reinforce the emptiness of modern experience – the work of Eliot, of Pound, and of Joyce. (“History” 55)

This means that Waugh is a successor of the Modernist writers such as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce, who made “the emptiness of modern experience” emerge in their writing by overlaying ancient stories on to modern life. Referring to Loss’ comment, this chapter examines *Officers and Gentlemen*, specially focusing on Minos in Greek mythology.

## **2. A Present-day Crusader: *Men at Arms***

*Men at Arms* is concerned with the gap between a heroic ideal and reality, which is depicted based on the story in which Guy adores a crusader. This is the principle framework of *Men at Arms*. The title of the trilogy, *Sword of Honour* is also taken from this episode. The story starts in September 1939, when Guy lives in an old Italian castle called Castello Crouchback. Castello Crouchback has been owned by the Crouchbacks for three generations before Guy. When the story begins, he has been staying in this castle for eight years, isolated from society, ever since he divorced his wife, Virginia. However, when he hears that his homeland, England, has declared war on the totalitarian states of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, he decides to return to England and join the army. Guy’s moral model at that time is set on a legendary saint, Sir Roger de Waybroke. Sir Roger is an English knight who set sail from Genoa for the Second Crusade, but who was drowned off the coast of Saint Dulcina, the town where Castello stands. He was buried in the town and has been revered by the inhabitants for generations. The sword set on his tomb has become an object at which they can pray. Guy especially has strong affinities with this “il Santo Inglese” (*SHT* 11), this English saint.

There is a scene which symbolizes Guy’s worship for Sir Roger. He

visits the tomb in the morning of the day when he returns to England:

Guy had felt an especial kinship with ‘il Santo Inglese’. Now, on his last day, he made straight for the tomb and ran his finger, as the fisherman did, along the knight’s sword. ‘Sir Roger, pray for me,’ he said, ‘and for our endangered kingdom.’ (*SHT* 11)

Although this is a minor scene, it marks the starting line for Guy’s long journey in the trilogy. Following this scene, he goes through a series of ceremonial behaviors similar to a Crusader’s departure. It shows that Guy’s moral standard is not based on the current world situation, but on the reconstruction of medieval chivalry as a Crusader. However, it should not be overlooked that Sir Roger was a failure as a Crusader because he died before getting to Jerusalem, and has been sanctified in a foreign town that bears no relation either to himself, his homeland, or his destination. Here it is possible to recognize three major themes repeated throughout this war trilogy: idealising the feudal period; the protagonist as a parody of an ancient hero; and the failure of his quest.

The title of the trilogy, *Sword of Honour*, is also symbolic. This title was used for the first time when the revised single volume of the trilogy was published in 1965, and it is obvious that it refers to Sir Roger’s sword. However, there is another meaning to it. In the third volume, *Unconditional Surrender*, the British government sends a sword to Stalin of the Soviet Union, celebrating Stalin’s victory over Nazi Germany at the battle of Stalingrad in 1943, and the English people form a long line to see it at Westminster Abbey.<sup>11</sup> Here is a heavy irony that the sword to which Guy

prayed for victory against totalitarianism changes into a sword dedicated to the victory a totalitarian country achieves in the changing world during the Second World War.

Another symbolic scene contains a hidden biblical message. Guy receives a piece of cake as a farewell gift from a servant. Finding the cake difficult to eat all in one go, he gives it to the Vice-Consul whom he has to talk to about closing the Castello (*SHT* 13-15). John Howard Wilson has looked closely at this seemingly trivial scene and the fact that Waugh did not delete it from the revised volume of *Sword of Honour*. Wilson links it to the biblical episode where Elijah receives food from an angel (1 Kings 19. 4-8). He further points out that the “death wish” that Elijah has when suffering intolerable agony becomes a significant key word in *Unconditional Surrender* (*SHT* 419). Unlike Elijah, Guy does not eat the food given to him and therefore his potential salvation is cast in doubt. And yet, as Wilson points out, this scene should be carefully read.

As examined above, *Men at Arms* starts with legendary and religious episodes. In his actual military career, Guy joins the British army and experiences many hardships, both on the battlefield and in army life. In the end, though, as if hinted at by the legend of Sir Roger or even the story of Elijah, Guy remains with his hopes unachieved. Thus, *Men at Arms* is a story of a present-day Crusader with an unattained dream.

### **3. Minos in the Second World War: *Officers and Gentlemen***

In examining the second novel of the trilogy, *Officers and Gentlemen*, it is important to inspect episodes from Greek mythology. Minos, King of Crete in Greek mythology, can be identified as the model of

Guy's character. One significant reason for this is that the main battlefield in *Officers and Gentlemen* is on Crete. However, another, more important reason is that it is not only an aspect of Minos as the King of Crete but also his drastic transformation into a judge in Hell which can be clearly related to the formation of Guy's character.

In *Officers and Gentleman*, the myth of Minos can first be linked to the symbolism of dogs, which are described in various forms. It may be readily imagined that a notable symbol of Crete, especially when combined with a confused battlefield that is described like a labyrinth, is the Minotaur, an ox. However, Waugh does not feature an ox in his novel.<sup>12</sup> In fact, dogs are the animals which most frequently appear in *Officers and Gentlemen*. Jeffrey Heath analyzes those characters who are similar to dogs. In doing so, however, he does not mention the ancient mythology of Crete. Numerous dogs from living dogs to symbolic ones appear around Guy in *Officers and Gentlemen*. They take multi-layered roles in Guy's actual or mythological positioning in the story, combined with the episodes from Greco-Roman literature. Therefore, this thesis discusses the symbolism of dogs based on ancient mythology, and points out that the symbolism of dogs reveals Guy's activities and role in Crete compared with Minos of Greek myth. This symbolism can be related to Crete more closely than that of oxen, following the ways of modern literature – to make “the emptiness of modern experience” emerge by overlaying ancient stories on modern life, as was mentioned earlier in the proposition of this chapter. Eventually, examining this symbolism along with Waugh's satirical style will clarify the position of *Officers and Gentlemen* in the trilogy.



### A. Two Scyllas: Guy in Scotland

Not a few characters are described with their dogs in *Officers and Gentlemen*, who thus remind readers of the association with Homer's *Odyssey* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In his first post Scotland, Guy promptly meets such characters. The association also features two women with the same name. One is a monster in the *Odyssey* and the other is a princess in *Metamorphoses*. The association of Scylla, in turn, clarifies that Guy is compared with Minos, King of Crete in Greek mythology.

Guy's gentle father, Mr. Crouchback, is the first person who is described with his dog in *Officers and Gentlemen*. In *Men at Arms*, he is staying in a small hotel during wartime with his Labrador retriever, after selling his country house by auction. In *Officers and Gentlemen*, Mr. Crouchback selects American foods sent from his grandsons, checking if they are edible for dogs. His tender affection toward his dog gives the impression of a warm relationship between a British gentleman and a dog in the midst of a war while his son, Guy, is taking part in fierce battles overseas.

This depiction of Mr. Crouchback and his dog is, however, a precursor of another connection between an old man and his dogs. In *Officers and Gentlemen*, Guy first goes to the Isle of Mugg, a fictitious island in Scotland, assigned as a member of the newly formed X Commando. Guy and his superior officer are invited for dinner by the lord of the isle. The lord and his wife who enter the hall with their six dogs are described as follows:

Six dogs, ranging in size from a couple of deerhounds to an

almost hairless Pomeranian, gave tongue in inverse proportion to their size. . . . Presently the piper, too, was hushed and in the stunning silence an aged lady and gentleman emerged through the smoke. (*SHT* 288)

It is important to note that the number of dogs is specified as six. They make up a figure composed of the landlord and the lady, with the barking dogs at their feet, resembling a monster who has six heads of dogs hanging from the body, seen from the position of Guy who is sitting in front of them. This figure reminds readers of Scylla, the sea monster which has six dog heads like tentacles emerging from her body around the waist in Homer's *Odyssey*.<sup>13</sup> Scylla is represented in the *Odyssey* as: "Her [Scylla's] legs – and there are twelve – are like great tentacles, unjointed, and upon her serpent necks are borne six heads like nightmares of ferocity, with triple serried rows of fangs and deep gullets of black death" (212). In *Officers and Gentlemen*, the lord is a senile bomb-maniac, and the Isle of Mugg is a solitary island which is "neglected by those romantic early-Victorian English ladies who so prodigally enriched the balladry, folklore and costume of the Scottish Highlands" (*SHT* 274). Scylla is a suitable figure to link such an eccentric figure to such an eccentric island.

The name Scylla also leads us to another Scylla in classical literature, a princess of Megara in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Ovid 179-83). Although Megara was invaded by Minos, the king of Crete, Scylla falls in love with Minos at first sight. She cuts off a lock of her father's hair while he is sleeping and gives it to Minos as proof of her love. However, disgusted with her deed, Minos stops the invasion and returns to Crete.

Scylla, humiliated and unable to return to Megara, turns into a sea eagle to fly away. This episode of a noble woman who betrays her country for a man, but then receives cold treatment from him, is adapted in *Officers and Gentlemen*. When Guy sits at the dinner table, one of the lord's relatives, Katie Carmichael, places herself next to him. Katie, with her eccentric appearance and behavior, makes Guy unsure whether she is unstable or not. His suspicions grow stronger when she scribbles "POLITICAL PRISONER" [sic] (*SHT* 293) on the tablecloth. She emphasizes that she is a trueborn Scottish and insults England, blurting out that "[w]hen the Germans land in Scotland, the glens will be full of marching men come to greet them, and the professors themselves at the universities will seize the towns" (*SHT* 294). Yet, on the other hand, she favors Guy for unknown reasons during the dinner and puts a bunch of inflammatory documents calling for the defeat of England into Guy's car. In this way, Katie as Scylla tries to draw attention of Guy as Minos.

This episode reflects the political situation of Scotland in the 1930s. Because of the declining population and increasing social problems after the First World War, Scottish nationalism was rising to power during the Second World War. Although in 1934 the Scottish National Party was established, claiming independence from England, Scotland was nevertheless forced to take part in the war under Churchill's government. It is intimated in the novel that young Katie is influenced by that demand, and purposely praises Germany in front of Guy and his superior officer, both English soldiers.

There is another scene which indicates the association of Katie with Scylla. On the next morning, Guy is handed the inflammatory documents by

his driver, but he stumbles over the steps at the entrance of the billet:

He[Guy] dropped the papers, breaking the frail bond of knitting-wool which held them together and saved himself from falling only by clutching at the departing driver. A great gust of wind came as they stood embracing and bore away the treasonable documents, scattering them high in the darkness. (*SHT* 297)

In this scene, the documents scattering in the air overlap with the bird which Scylla metamorphosed into and flew away. Also, the bond of wool which Katie used to fix the papers overlaps with the lock of the hair of Scylla's father. Moreover, Katie never again appears in the novel after this scene, and Guy also never cares about her but leaves for Crete, his next place of appointment. This situation also resembles the ending of the story of Scylla and Minos. The association of Katie with Scylla emphasizes the association of Guy with Minos.

Thus, the dogs on the Isle of Mugg are depicted as heralds of mythological monsters and of an abortive affair, far different from the warm bond between a man and his dog that they represent in England. Their role also can be read as an omen of the sufferings which await Guy. Furthermore, by featuring two Scyllas, the comparison of Guy with Minos, the king of Crete, becomes clear. This comparison has a more significant meaning in the Battle of Crete, which is described in the latter half of *Officers and Gentlemen*.

## **B. Cerberus: Guy in Crete**

The relations of men with dogs in Guy's next post Crete are described more symbolically. In Book Two of *Officers and Gentlemen*, X Commando, to which Guy belongs, is dispatched to Crete, one of the fiercest battlefields in the Second World War.<sup>14</sup> Guy has three colleagues in X Commando and they become more significant characters for him during his time in Crete. All of the three soldiers have characteristics relating to dogs. Their peculiar relations with dogs must be closely examined to clarify the symbolism of dogs used in this novel.

The first case to be examined is Ivor Claire, the soldier whom Guy first meets on the Isle of Mugg. Injured in training, Clair is lying down with a turban and slippers hemstitched with gold threads, on a sofa which is covered with a Turkish carpet. His elegant and decadent appearance is described: "[t]he pictorial effect was of a young prince of the Near East in his grand divan in the early years of the century" (*SHT* 276). He has a white Pekinese, with which he is strongly infatuated. He habitually wipes its eyes with a silk handkerchief, and, when he receives a command to the front, he spends more time arranging to send the Pekinese home than packing his belongings (*SHT* 312). Before the war, Claire and Guy were in the same club in London. Bedazzled by Claire's beauty, orientalist decadence, gracefulness as a quintessential English gentleman, and sportsmanship as a horseman, Guy grows to love and respect him highly:

Guy remembered Claire as he first saw him in the Roman spring in the afternoon sunlight amid the embossing cypresses of the Borghese Gardens, putting his horse faultlessly over the jumps, concentrated as a man in prayer. Ivor Claire, Guy thought, was the

fine flower of them all. He was quintessential England, the man Hitler had not taken into account, Guy thought. (*SHT* 342)

Thus, a dog lover, Ivor Claire, fascinates Guy with a kind of feigned English heart. However, later, his real nature is exposed to be as mean as a dog in Crete.

The second person related with a dog is Major Hound, who joins X Commando in Egypt. Even his name, Hound, indicates his connection with a dog. He appears at first as a soldier who “was not clever enough to pass into the civil service” (*SHT* 347), and, naturally, he functions as a comic relief, lacking intelligence. But in Crete, his personality begins to collapse. Suffering stress from frequent air raids, chronic lack of sleep, and diminished consciousness from lack of provisions, Hound gradually becomes insane. He even pesters his subordinate for food in front of other soldiers, including Guy. Waugh, without mercy, describes Hound as being probed and tempted: whether he will keep his pride as an officer or degrade himself like a dog which begs food servilely:

Not Guy or the ragged, unshaven Sergeant, not Fido [Major Hound] himself who was dizzy with hunger and lack of sleep, nor anyone on that fragrant hillside could know that this was the moment of probation. Fido stood at the parting of the ways. Behind him lay a life of blameless professional progress; before him the proverbial alternatives: the steep path of duty and the heady precipice of sensual appetite. It was the first great temptation of Fido’s life. He fell. (*SHT* 405)

Like Jesus in the New Testament, who was tempted by Devil, Hound is forced to make a choice: keep his pride, or else yield to his appetite. However, unable to resist the temptation, Hound chooses the way of the beast, which draws contempt from everyone there, and requires him to abandon his pride. His nickname, Fido, truly shows his character. Hound has told Guy that he wants to be called “Fido,” because it is his nickname. Fido, a common name for a dog, is apparently derived from his surname. However, from the moment when he puts into words these two names, Hound and Fido, they begin to be mixed up with each other in *Officers and Gentleman*. Hound is called Fido even in the narration and his behaviors are described like the actions of dogs: “Fido raised his muzzle” (*SHT* 416), “His tail was right down” (*SHT* 416). The depiction of a human gradually turning into a beast without knowing it like this reminds readers of the cases described in *Metamorphoses* with horror.

The third person to be linked to a dog is Corporal-Major Ludvic, who was Claire’s former subordinate. He also joins X Commando in Egypt, and in Crete he is assigned under Guy. He secretly goes out, shoots Hound who has already become insane and strayed away, and returns to Guy. His strange deeds like these are all merely because Ludvic wants to escape from the madness of the battlefield. Ludvic loyally follows Guy like a dog, and, when a group of soldiers on the verge of death, including them, escape from Crete in a boat, he pushes all the crew into the sea except Guy (*SHT* 457-58) and then disappears into Egypt. He then reappears in the third volume of the trilogy, *Unconditional Surrender*, with a Pekinese “Fido” named after the man he killed. His ruthlessness and loyalty are two sides of the same

coin, and he clings to Guy throughout the rest of the trilogy like a dog.

Given that Guy experiences the fierce battle in Crete with these three soldiers, who are all related to dogs, the comparison of Guy with Minos in Greek mythology must be considered again. According to Homer's *Odyssey*, after death Minos becomes a judge in Hell, who punishes the dead according to the seriousness of their crimes committed in this world (204). Accompanying him is the famous dog in Hell, Cerberus, the three-headed monster dog. It is described in Virgil's *Aeneid* that Minos takes Cerberus along him when he judges the dead (158-59). So, Guy with his three colleagues, all connected to dogs, can be compared with Minos accompanied by Cerberus. The parallel between Guy and Minos, first seen in Scotland, still continues in Crete. That is, Guy in Scotland is compared with the living Minos, whereas Guy in Crete is compared with Minos in the afterlife. Hence, it is vital to consider whether Guy succeeds or not in carrying out the role of Minos, the judge holding the scales to measure people's sins. This is the last and most critical trial for Guy in *Officers and Gentleman*.

### **C. The Judge Minos: Guy after Crete**

Ivor Claire is the final obstacle of Guy's last test as the judge Minos in Crete. This is because Claire's behavior, who was once praised by Guy as the quintessence of an English gentleman, puts the real nature of a gentleman in the modern world under Guy's nose. Guy receives an order from the headquarters in Crete that his party should surrender as prisoners of the German army once they have sent friendly troops off the island. On the night when the last ship leaves the island, Claire suddenly comes to



Guy and gives his opinion about the honor of gentlemen which has been sustained since the nineteenth century. Claire enthusiastically states that a gentleman may be allowed to hand his subordinates over to his enemy and maintain his honor in a future where democracy is continuing to develop:

‘And in the next war, when we are completely democratic, I expect it will be quite honourable for officers to leave their men behind. It’ll be laid down in King’s Regulations as their duty – to keep a cadre going to train new men to take the place of prisoners.’ (*SHT* 449)

On the next day, however, Guy finds that Claire has left the island on the last ship, deserting the front without orders. It proves that Claire’s words on the previous night were only his self-vindication. Guy reports this to his senior officer in Egypt, but the officer stammers that they should not subject Claire to trial by court-martial because Claire has a connection with the “higher-ups.” Guy now sees a system where officers connive in supporting another officer’s treachery. As William Myers comments, “it is not his [Claire’s] disgrace but his rehabilitation which disabuses Guy of his dream” (110).

The news that the German-Soviet War has begun gives further impacts on Guy. While the British are delighted at the union of the powerful Soviet Union with the Allies, Guy is extremely shocked, because his original purpose in joining the army was to beat both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. His reason, which he swore by Sir Roger, to defeat the totalitarian countries vanishes like mist when his country and its enemy

form an alliance. For Guy, this is the highest treason by his country, equivalent to an act of disgracing one's country's honor by itself. Betrayed by both his friend and his country, Guy burns his pocket-book which shows the order to stay on Crete. As a result, Guy's army life for two years, which had continued since 1939, comes to an end. The denouement is summarised as follows:

Now that hallucination was dissolved, . . . and he [Guy] was back after less than two years' pilgrimage in a Holy Land of illusion in the old ambiguous world, where priests were spies and gallant friends proved traitors and his country was led blundering into dishonour. (*SHT* 468)

Another episode shows that his will is again hindered. At a small village in Crete that he happens upon, he finds a British soldier's body, led by two local girls. The composition of the soldier's body, the two girls, and Guy at that moment is very much like that of Jesus's body, the two Marias (the Blessed Mary and Mary Magdalene), and the apostle John. The body of the soldier is described: "[t]his soldier lay like an effigy on the tomb – like Sir Roger in his shadowy shrine at Santa Dulcina" (*SHT* 434). Guy takes off the soldier's identity disc. Guy, wounded and hospitalised in Egypt, tries at least to send it back to the soldier's family. However, he ultimately fails to do so, betrayed by a high-ranking officer's wife with whom he entrusted a letter enclosing the disc. Restoration of the honor of the soldier is never accomplished in this world.

Thus, Guy's intentions fail in fulfilment one after another. Guy can

neither judge Claire's betrayal nor restore the honor of the soldier who died alone in a foreign land; and ultimately Guy cannot play the role of Minos, the rigid judge. This anti-climax is the finale of *Officers and Gentlemen*.

#### **4. Anti-climax But Not A Dead End**

Why did Waugh end *Officers and Gentlemen* with an anti-climax? In regard to this, Steven Trout analyzes the characteristic aspect of anti-climax common in Waugh's works.

Taken as a whole, the trilogy offers an impressive panorama, its "theatre of operations" ranging from London to Africa, from the Hebrides to Yugoslavia, but the trend in most scene is toward the miniature, the collapse of seemingly gigantic events or profound historical moments into small-scale farce. (128)

About Waugh's method of translating facts into farce and of comparing his protagonists to historical heroes, George McCartney also points out:

They [Waugh's protagonists] constitute an antithesis to the classical hero whose place in the world was established by his carefully memorialized ancestry, his personal reputation, and his determination to achieve his destiny. (94).

His remark shows that there are always antitheses to the heroes in the whole of Waugh's works. If Trout and McCarthy are referred to, anti-climax is an inevitable result of Waugh's works, which describe modern people

who have been reduced from their ancestral heroes in capability and credibility.

Likewise, in *Officers and Gentlemen*, the wartime hero is only a commercial being made by the media. One of Guy's friends, Ian Kilbannock, the information officer in the Royal Air Force, says that the heroes in the Second World War should be found from the proletariat in contrast to those in the First World War such as Rupert Brooke (*SHT* 329). At first sight, his view is rather positive, because it has a premonition that democracy is developing in people's mind. However, in Waugh's consciousness, it is a process of humanity's decline. Ian says:

‘This is a People's War’ said Ian prophetically, ‘and the People won't have poetry and they won't have flowers. Flowers stink. The upper classes are on the secret list. We want heroes of the people, to or for the people, by, with and from the people.’ (*SHT* 329)

This idea shows that what was once thought of as noble and graceful such as poets and flowers, has become extinct in the modern war. That is symbolically proven by the characters in *Officers and Gentlemen*, such as Ivor Claire.

The three soldiers likened to Cerberus are all fallen figures, who have degraded from the status of officers who should be genuine gentlemen. Thus, what Waugh denounces in this novel is the deterioration of quality in humans, which is also true of the dogs which follow them. *Officers and Gentlemen* shows Waugh's resignation that the war in the twentieth century

is transformed into the wasteland where such pseudo heroes and filthy dogs are rampant. Archie K. Loss points out, “Thus Guy, who because of his age and personal inclination has trouble enough fulfilling any heroic purpose, is faced also with the fact that the heroes of the modern age are the products of puffery” (“History” 22). As Loss states, *Officers and Gentlemen* traces a path in which Guy, completely depressed, comes to realize the counterfeit nature of the modern war.

If the story had ended here, however, *Officers and Gentlemen* would not have gone beyond Waugh’s former novels which describe the desolation of the modern world compared to the heroic era. It is true that Waugh had the idea to end Guy’s story with *Officers and Gentlemen*. This can be confirmed by Waugh’s remark in his letter to Nancy Mitford on 16 November 1954: “It [*Officers and Gentlemen*] is short and funny & completes the story I began in *Men at Arms* which threatened to drag out to the grave” (*EWL* 492). Six years later, however, Waugh published *Unconditional Surrender* in 1961 as the last novel of the trilogy. Civil Connolly quotes Waugh’s words in his review written right after publishing *Unconditional Surrender*:

Mr. Waugh writes: ‘In 1950 I [Waugh] wrote of “Officers and Gentlemen”, “I thought at first the story would run into three volumes. I find that two will do the trick.” This was not quite candid. I knew that a third volume was needed.’ (430)

Waugh’s words in the quotation above prove that he had the idea of writing three volumes from the beginning. Also, in an interview which appeared in

*Paris Review* in April 1962, Waugh explained that the need for the third volume emerged after finishing the second one, saying “It [the trilogy] changed a lot in the writing. . . . The third volume really arose from the fact that Ludvic needed explaining” (“Evelyn Waugh, *The Art of Fiction* No.30”). Naturally, however, it was not only because he needed to delve more deeply into each character. He needed to give Guy a higher aim in his life.

After losing all hope for England at the end of *Officers and Gentlemen*, Guy begins to seek a higher aim than honor or glory in the army. On his quest, he comes back to his father, who is a pious Roman Catholic and gives to Guy a piece of important advice. It leads to Guy’s efforts in *Unconditional Surrender*: Guy makes every effort to show charity during wartime. In other words, the descriptions of the battlefields in *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen* are indispensable in order to expel from Guy the remnants of feudal times, of knighthood, and of ancient heroic figures like Sir Roger. Guy, unable to play any of the roles of a warrior, a pagan hero, or a mythical Crusader, chooses to live as a civilian Catholic in *Unconditional Surrender*. The symbolic dogs in *Officers and Gentlemen* should be considered as companions of a pilgrim Guy in the hell of the battlefield. *Officers and Gentlemen* ends with anti-climax but not a dead end. From this viewpoint, *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen* can be read as an important checkpoint for both Guy and the author Waugh: to see the present world, relieved of the past.

## Chapter VI: The Potentiality of Dialogue: *Unconditional Surrender*

### 1. Proposition

This chapter mainly examines the third volume of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, *Unconditional Surrender* (1961), focusing on the potentiality of dialogue as its key theme. In *Unconditional Surrender*, the protagonist, Guy, is dispatched to Yugoslavia as a secret agent of the British army. He encounters a group of Jewish refugees there and tries to help them flee. His conversation with their leader becomes a turning point in his life. The potentiality of dialogue as a form of expression is the key subject of this novel. Since this subject leads to the theme of vocation at the end of *Unconditional Surrender*, the discussion of this potentiality of dialogue occupies an important part of this dissertation.

In the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, the characters use various forms of expression for communication. These forms of expression can be divided into two groups, official ones and private ones. In the trilogy, official expressions are mostly represented by one-way communication using the written word, such as letters, telegrams, and newspaper articles, while private expressions are mostly represented by interpersonal communication or dialogue such as conversations and intimate family letters. Waugh exchanged many letters with writers, editors, priests, and so on, and it is true that these letters represent a useful perspective from which to examine his works. In his novels, however, letters, passing through the military organizations, sometimes bring miscommunication. Waugh criticizes the fact that this kind of miscommunication occurs as a negative effect of the army system during wartime, partly due to censorship, and partly due to

mechanical treatment in the system. In contrast, dialogue sometimes inspires characters greatly. This chapter emphasizes Waugh's intention to adapt this potentiality of dialogue in describing how the protagonist reaches an awakening about his role in life. In addition, Waugh's reliance on the potentiality of dialogue will be discussed, related to his interest in the voice, ranging from telephone conversation to the ubiquitous, but silent, voice of God.

There are some critics who have shown interest in the way the characters express themselves in Waugh's novels. David Lodge devotes one particular chapter of *The Art of Fiction* to explaining the quality of conversation in Waugh's novels:

Evelyn Waugh belonged to a generation of novelists—Henry Green, Christopher Isherwood and Ivy Compton-Burnett are other names that come to mind—who were particularly interested in the expressive possibilities of dialogue in fiction. Their work tends towards the effect I called “staying on the surface”. . . the characters revealing, or betraying, or condemning themselves by what they say, while the narrator maintains a dry detachment, abstaining from moral comment or psychological analysis. (170)

Actually, as Lodge states, a specific characteristic of Waugh's works is the reduction of narratorial explanation so that readers are left to conjecture about the meaning of characters' actions. This is consistently true in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. However, conversations in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy do not always “stay on the surface.” They sometimes bring about an



important turning point in the protagonist's life. This point is clarified in this chapter.

On the other hand, Katharyn W. Crabbe analyzes communication in the trilogy without separating the official cases from the private ones: "Throughout, the novel is marked by various failures of language in many forms and contexts. People switch radios on, looking for information about the war, but nothing is to be learned" (152). Crabbe comments that the "theme of this failure to communicate is repeated throughout the trilogy and provides a consistent comic touch whenever it is sounded" (154). However, certain differences can surely be found between communication using official papers and that expressed in private dialogues in the trilogy. The differences need to be carefully analyzed in detail. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to examine several examples of expressions which show these differences, and make it clear that the differences come from the trends of the world in which Waugh lived. Moreover, it will be shown that these differences are deeply related to Waugh's thinking as a Roman Catholic, which he delivers to his readers in the last part of *Unconditional Surrender* as the conclusion of the trilogy.

## **2. Miscommunication in Official Expressions through the Written Words**

It is notable that miscommunication often occurs in official communications through the written words. As the *Sword of Honour* trilogy is a war novel, many documents described in the trilogy are connected with the army. They are used for communication in army life, and communication to or from battlefields. Waugh depicts three kinds of

communication methods used in such cases: letters, telegrams, and newspaper articles.

### **A. Letters Failing to Communicate**

There are two examples of letters which fail to deliver their messages to the addressees. One appears in *Men at Arms*. Guy Crouchback, the protagonist, returns from Italy to England in 1939 and writes letters to the officers of the British army, applying to join up. Although he tries to develop connections with the army, all his efforts are in vain because he is nearly thirty-six years old and has no experience of actual fighting. He sends application letters one after another, which bring him no good results:

‘Dear General Cutter, Please forgive me for troubling you at this busy time. I hope you remember as I do the happy day when the Bradshaws brought you to my house at Santa Dulcina and we went out together in the boat and so ignominiously failed to spear pulp . . .’

‘Dear Colonel Glover, I am writing to you because I know you served with my brother Gervase and were a friend of his . . .’

‘Dear Sam, Though we have not since Downside I have followed your career with distant admiration and vicarious pride . . .’

‘Dear Molly, I am sure I ought not to know, but I *do* know that Alex is Someone Very Important and Secret at the Admiralty.

I know that you have him completely under your thumb. So do you think you could possibly be an angel . . . ’

He had become a facile professional beggar. (*SHT* 21)

Finally, the letters drive him into a corner, as if he were “a facile professional beggar.” Fortunately, Guy is eventually able to join the army due to the mediation of an officer with whom Guy becomes acquainted by chance. This episode must be remembered as the first demonstration of the negative result of letter-writing connected with the army, which fails as a form of communication. This also serves as a threshold moment because the efficacy of Guy’s letters to officials will fail from this time on, and his requests will be denied.

The other example of a miscommunicating letter appears in *Officers and Gentlemen*. In 1941, after Guy and his unit escape from the battlefield in Crete, he wants to return the identity disc of a young soldier who died on the island to his family. However, when he entrusts the envelope containing the disc to a high-ranking officer’s wife, to whom he is heavily indebted, she suspects that the letter in the envelope might express sentiments damaging to the army, and throws it away into a wastepaper basket. Guy’s letter again fails to deliver the message to the addressee:

‘Just a bit of unfinished business from Crete. I don’t know the right man to send it to. Algie’s secretary will know.’

Mrs Stitch took the envelope. She noted the address. Then she fondly kissed Guy.

As he drove away she waved the envelope; then turned indoors and dropped it into a wastepaper basket. Her eyes were one immense sea, full of flying galleys. (*SHT* 472)

These two examples show that the letters from Guy to or through army officials fail to convey his wishes. And they are a forewarning of the miscommunication which occurs in and around the army.

### **B. Telegrams with Wrong Messages**

Official telegrams sometimes bring about miscommunication. An obvious example appears in *Unconditional Surrender*. Guy, now in Yugoslavia, receives telegrams saying that his wife, Virginia, has given birth to a boy:

*P/302/B Personal for Crouchback. Message begins Virginia gave bath son today both well Crouchback message end. Kindly note personal messages of great importance only accepted for transmission Gilpin for brigadier.*

‘Query “bath”,’ Guy told his signaller. (*SHT* 655)

The word “birth” is misspelt as “bath,” and the next telegram arrives with another misspelling – “birch.” The third telegram at last tells him “Congratulations” with the correctly spelt word: “birth.” This episode suggests that the routine work in the army causes miscommunications, with no careful attention paid to private matters.

In contrast to this routine work conducted by organizations which causes miscommunication, Waugh describes the heartfelt sincerity of private family letters. Although there is a difference of form between telegrams and letters, it is worthwhile here comparing the result of routine work and what the sincerity of family letters conveys. Waugh describes an example in the scene following the delivery of the telegrams examined above. Guy receives a letter from Virginia in which she refers to the mistake of the telegrams, commenting, “You can’t trust telegrams any more” (*SHT* 666). However, Guy immediately afterwards learns that Virginia was already dead, one month before he reads this letter. He finds out this fact in a letter with condolences from his sister which he opens just after Virginia’s; the first line reads: “Virginia has been killed” (*SHT* 666). At this moment, readers are ironically reminded of Virginia’s words that you cannot trust official telegrams. Her comment and Guy’s sister’s letter testify that the facts of the world are conveyed by intimate private letters into which the army does not intervene. Unlike Guy’s letters to officials, examined in the former section, these family letters speak from the heart and tell of recent situations from the viewpoint of citizens. The gap between their loving letters and the cruel facts then appalls readers. This episode emphasizes that it is not the routine work of the army but the sincerity of the sender that truly conveys real messages.

### **C. Newspapers Trumpeting a Fake Hero**

Miscommunication through written words questions the credibility of newspaper articles in the *Sword of Honour*. On this issue, Ian Kilbannock, Guy’s friend and an information officer in the Royal Air Force, must be

examined as a key character. Ian finds a soldier from a commando unit and builds up a hero story through exaggeration in a newspaper. As a result, people in England get utterly deceived by this illusory hero figure. Even Guy's father, a noble Roman Catholic, praises England which produces heroes who cross over classes, commenting that "[w]e've got no junker class in this country, thank God" (*SHT* 379). Ian talks to Guy about the ideal image of heroes required by people and made up by journalism in the Second World War:

'Heroes are in strong demand. Heroes are urgently required to boost civilian morale. . . . But not about your racket, Guy. They just won't do, you know. Delightful fellows, heroes too, I dare say, but the Wrong Period. Last-war stuff, Guy. Went out with Rupert Brooke.'

'You find us poetic?'

'No.' said Ian, stopping in his path and turning to face Guy in the darkness. 'Perhaps not poetic, exactly, but Upper Class. Hopelessly upper class. You're the "Fine Flower of the Nation." You can't deny it and *it won't do*.'

In the various stages of inebriation, facetiously itemized for centuries, the category, 'prophetically drunk,' deserves a place.

'This is a People's War,' said Ian prophetically, 'and the People won't have poetry and they won't have flowers. Flowers stink. The upper classes are on the secret list. We want heroes of the people, to or for the people, by, with and from the people.'  
(*SHT* 329)

According to Ian, the ideal hero in the Second World War is not the elegant one, the flower of the nation, who was worshipped in the First World War, but someone down to earth, selected from among ordinary people.

Moreover, Ian proves that such a hero is created by wartime journalism on its own initiative. The episode where Ian bustles about making “heroes of the people, to or for the people, by, with and from the people” occupies quite a few pages in *Officers and Gentlemen*. This episode shows Waugh’s sharp eye for criticizing wartime England. One point is that the press in England was corrupt in those times. The other is that even such dubious newspapers were the only way for people to get information. After all, this episode also emphasizes the fact that sometimes the official expressions made through the written words do not convey the truth, and that people can be easily agitated and deceived by the army and the government.

These three examples of official expressions connected with the army – the letter thrown in a wastepaper basket, the misspelt telegrams, and the fabricated newspaper articles – come in one place and symbolize real situations of miscommunication, where only some specific people in the army, a huge bureaucratic system, control information with ulterior motives. As discussed above, communication expressed through or related to the army does not go well in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Waugh exposes and criticizes the evil and ill effect of this kind of expression, in which officials intervene during the wartime emergency.

### **3. Inspiration in Private Expressions through Dialogue**

Contrary to official expressions using written words which often produce miscommunication, private expressions using dialogue are more reliable in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. In the trilogy, Waugh maintains his belief that humans should be responsible for their own words, especially for sincere communication. This belief arouses readers' interests in the issue of dialogue. As examples of this belief, Waugh describes numerous scenes where dialogue leads the characters to the next step in their life. Among them, especially, two important scenes must be examined. One is Guy's calling out to his father, and the other is his conversation with a foreign woman. Both of these scenes show that his dialogue with somebody inspires him to experience an awakening.

The former example is seen at Guy's father's funeral in Book Two of *Unconditional Surrender*. Thinking about his own death, which was so near in the battlefield, and will be near again in his next mission, Guy prays at the funeral. This scene is described: "Guy's prayers were directed to, rather than for, his father" (*SHT* 540). Usually prayers are raised to God for somebody or something. Therefore, the quotation suggests that, at this moment, Guy is trying to talk to both his father and God. In other words, in Guy's heart, his father is equivalent to God. Waugh describes, "He[Guy] reported for duty saying to God: 'I don't ask anything from you'" (*SHT* 540, emphasis added). As Guy calls God "you," this talk is his dialogue with God. In fact, the word "vocation" comes from "vocare" in Latin ("vocation"), which means "to call," with connotation of "voice" or "vocal"; and "vocation" means what is given by God following the caller's appeal. So, it is not contentious to say that Guy is talking with God at this moment. Guy's psychology here is described in detail as follows:



In the recesses of Guy's conscience there lay the belief that somewhere, somehow, something would be required of him; that he must be attentive to the summons when it came. They also served who only stood and waited. . . . One day he would get the chance to do some small service which only he could perform, for which he had been created. (*SHT* 540)

Actually, this state of mind is almost the same as the one Waugh writes about vocation in his essay "St. Helena Empress." The above-quoted sentence is substantially the same as the sentence in this essay: "He [God] wants a different thing from each of us, . . . something which only we can do and for which we were each created" (*EAR* 410). Waugh puts the same belief that he wrote in the essay fifteen years previously into the last novel of the trilogy, reconfirming his thoughts about vocation. Although God does not respond to Guy quickly, Guy gradually thinks of what God wants from him. If he can find his role in life, it means that God is replying to him. In this way, his dialogue with God continues. This is the first example of the important talks Guy experiences in pursuing the meaning of his life.

The second example of dialogue is also concerned with Waugh's thoughts on vocation, maintained throughout the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. In *Unconditional Surrender*, Guy is dispatched to Yugoslavia and meets a Jewish woman, Mme Kanyi, who is the leader of a Jewish refugee group. Escaping from persecution by the German army, these refugees are trying to cross Yugoslavia. While Guy is making an effort to help them flee from

their predicament, he comes to talk with Mme Kanyi privately. Mme Kanyi condemns the will to war which is found everywhere, speaking as follows:

‘Is there any place that is free from evil? It is too simple to say that only Nazis wanted war. These communists wanted it too. It was the only way in which they could come to power. Many of my people wanted it, to be revenged on the Germans, to hasten the creation of the national state. It seems to me there was a will to war, a death wish, everywhere. Even good men thought their private honour would be satisfied by war. They could accept their manhood by killing and being killed. They would accept hardships in recompense for having been selfish and lazy. Danger justified privilege. I knew Italians – not very many perhaps – who felt this. Were there none in England?’

‘God forgive me,’ said Guy. ‘I was one of them.’ (*SHT* 702)

Mme Kanyi’s words blame not only Nazi Germany, but all the soldiers who are connected with this war. Guy agrees with her, and admits that he is one of them. At this moment, he realizes that his thought and philosophy are wrong. Although her words completely refute Guy’s belief, held up till then, that he is a good soldier, he does not protest. In fact, he has already lost all the most precious things to him in the war – his friends, father, and wife. Guy, who has come through life-and-death struggles in the war, notices at this moment the fact that he also thought his “private honour would be satisfied by war,” and that the present situation is the harsh end of his quest which started at the tomb of Sir Roger. He calmly answers that

she is right, admitting that he was among such men with a will to war, a death wish. After this conversation, and following a few more episodes of Guy's departure from Yugoslavia, the *Sword of Honour* trilogy comes to an end. At the end of *Unconditional Surrender*, Guy retreats to his home and never returns to military service. This shows that his dialogue with Mme Kanyi led him to experience revelation. It is surely possible to see here the author's strong consciousness of the potentiality of dialogue.

It is necessary to examine in more detail the role of Mme Kanyi in the process of Guy's spiritual awakening. Although Christianity plays a significant role in Waugh's early works, there are no scenes where a member of a completely different religion admonishes a Christian. In *Helena*, Waugh breaks this rule and has a wandering Jew appear before the heroine to help her find the True Cross. In *Unconditional Surrender*, Waugh goes a step further. Mme Kanyi in *Unconditional Surrender* is not only a civilian but one of the Jewish refugees, the most violently oppressed people in the Second World War. In a sense, she is the opposite of Guy, who eagerly attends to his military duties, following the image of an ancient Crusader. However, she never thinks that her race is the only victim. Instead, she condemns a "death wish" that swept across Europe and absorbed many people during the early twentieth century. A "death wish" is a violent impulse to ruin both oneself and others. It is commonly seen not only in individuals but also among the masses; not only in Totalitarianism and Fascism but also in anti-Totalitarianism and anti-Fascism. Guy was also one of those who were possessed by the impulse<sup>15</sup>. He had an ardent wish to crush the evil totalitarian countries (Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union) by joining the war. It is at this very time that Mme Kanyi appears before

Guy. She indicates to him a clear road through wartime Europe, and awakens him. In this way, her role takes her one step forward from that of the mere wandering Jew. As it were, she is a symbol of Jesus, who was absent from *Helena*. Her subsequent death by hanging, executed by the People's Court, strengthens this interpretation. It would be no exaggeration to regard Mme Kanyi, one of the most victimised refugees in the story, and the woman who awakens a guy (a common noun), as Jesus in the Second World War.

#### **4. Voice More Dependable for Waugh**

As suggested above, Waugh relies on the potentiality of dialogue, and has a tendency to place conversations at the climax of his stories. This is consistent from his early works to the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. This tendency is related to his interest in voice. It should be examined why Waugh attaches importance to this means of communication. One reason that can be pointed out is the rapid spread of telephone culture in England in the early twentieth century. In fact, on 1 January 1912 the Postmaster-General took over the system of the National Telephone Company, which provided for more than 500,000 subscribers altogether in England (Freshwater, "UK Telephone History"). In the 1930s, public phone booths were set up all over England. Having made his debut in the literary world in 1928, Waugh naturally made use of the telephone in his works. David Lodge writes that "Evelyn Waugh was one of the first English novelists to recognize the importance of the telephone in modern social life, and its potential for comic and dramatic effect" (170). In his early novels, Waugh was skilful at depicting the young generation after the First World War, for

whom all Victorian morality had been lost. In order for him to depict this young, cynical generation, telephones were very suitable. Faceless, point-to-point communication with the telephone was so typical of their lifestyle. Undoubtedly, his interest in the voice inspired by the telephone was long-lasting.

Another and no less important reason why voice was dependable to Waugh is connected with his Roman Catholicism. The “Voice from above,” or “Voice of God,” was so important for him. In *Unconditional Surrender*, as already examined in the scene of his father’s funeral, Guy prays that God help him realise his mission. In his dialogue with God, he expects a sign from the “Voice from above” or “Voice of God.” As already pointed out, the word “vocation” – assigned by God – is linked with “vocal.” Therefore, voice is always important both to him and the author, Waugh. In the dialogue with God, he prays, “Show me what to do and help me to do it” (*SHT* 540). He thinks that he must be attentive to the summons when it comes (*SHT* 540). He strains to hear the voice of God. In fact, after the war, Guy retires from the army and makes up his mind to bring up his ex-wife Virginia’s illegitimate son, living with his second wife. He begins to bring up this orphan as his mission assigned from God. This is the moment when he hears the silent voice of God and realizes what it is that only he can do. At this moment, he finds out the true meaning of human’s life, and the limitations of a soldier’s life. In this way, Waugh’s trust in the voice can be explained both from the viewpoint of modern culture and that of religion.

Needless to say, Waugh does not regard conversation as consistently reliable. Waugh’s works are full of miscommunication, such as lies and misunderstandings. None the less, Waugh unchangingly believes that voice

has significant power to deliver truth to people and ultimately to decide one's fate. This belief is linked to his trust in the potentiality of dialogue. As it were, he raises it from being a mere product of daily life up to the level of a philosophical proposition. Guy's long pilgrimage as a soldier ends up with his revelation that he is a Roman Catholic husband and father, supported by the potentiality of dialogue which remained a permanent and consistent theme in all Waugh's works.

## Chapter VII: The Burial of Fortuna: Women in Waugh's Works

### 1. Proposition

This chapter examines the changes in the portrayal of female characters in Waugh's works. His heroines are consistently given the image of Fortuna, the goddess of fortune: from his first novel, *Decline and Fall*, to the last ones in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. However, Waugh reflects upon and revises his depiction of women with the passage of time. Concerning Waugh's female characters, Jacqueline McDonnel, in her thesis "Women in the Novels of Evelyn Waugh," examines them from various viewpoints of their temperaments, such as their intelligence, victimisation in the novels, their attitude to modern architecture and furnishings, etc. On the contrary, this chapter investigates Waugh's female characters by focusing on the mythological figure of Fortuna as a characteristic image of women. Finally, this examination will explain that Waugh's description of Fortuna leads to the fundamental theme of his novels: awakening to one's own role, or vocation.

Most female characters in Waugh's novels are given strong personalities. They are by no means modest and chaste. Christopher Sykes notes in a cynical vein that "all his attractive women had been bitches or idiots or both, sometimes, . . . not far off criminality" (286). However, these women are selected deliberately as heroines. In most cases, they enjoy a high status in society and have a dominant influence on the male protagonists. When these female characters are observed closely, the figure of Fortuna, the goddess of fortune, is found to be at work behind them. Waugh uses this motif deliberately in creating his female characters. Yet,

given that he spent as long as forty years as a writer, it is possible to say that Waugh does not adhere to a consistent image of the goddess for his heroines, but rather intentionally modifies it in his late works. Therefore, this chapter makes it clear that the changes in the portrayal of women in Waugh's works is closely related to the change in his thoughts.

## **2. Conspicuous Fortunas in Waugh's Early Novels**

Fortuna is the goddess of fortune in classical European cultures. Originally, the goddess Tyche in Greek mythology was adapted to create the goddess of fortune in ancient Rome. Tyche is represented as a blind woman in the statuary of the Hellenistic period because she was believed to rule human fate unpredictably or arbitrarily. Thereafter, this blind female figure has been worshipped as the goddess Fortuna.

Fortuna has been described throughout Europe for over thousand years. Boethius, a Roman philosopher in the sixth century, writes in his *Consolation of Philosophy* that Fortuna has a spinning wheel and makes low people high, high people low (Izumi 490). At that time, it was commonly understood that people could not know what would happen even the following day because the world was full of wars, droughts and plagues, where even kings were killed frequently. The iconography combining Fortuna with a wheel rapidly became popular among people and appeared in various manuscripts from the medieval period to the Renaissance. For example, in thirteenth century, Guillaume de Lorris wrote the *Roman de la Rose* in France. In this long allegorical love poem, Fortuna is depicted with the wheel of fortune, letting people fall down from or cling to it, and sometimes even making off with what she once gave them (Izumi 490).



*Carmina Burana*, a Latin and German manuscript written in the fourteenth century, contains an illustration of Fortuna carrying a wheel on her back, and four people of different social status are clinging to the revolving wheel (Schmeller 1). The image in this manuscript is followed by the Tarot card named the “Wheel of Fortune.” Thereafter, this illustration has sometimes been simplified to depict only a wheel, or a wheel with God (Kirkpatrick 48-49). Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare also refer to Fortuna and the wheel of fortune, using them as plot motivations in their works.<sup>16</sup> Later, Edward Burne-Jones, a Pre-Raphaelite artist in the nineteenth century, painted *The Wheel of Fortune* (1883). This painting shows a gigantic goddess with closed eyes putting her left hand on a large wheel. Three naked men – a king, a poet, and a slave – are bound to the wheel, one after another. The slave is stamping on the head of the king, who is in turn stamping on the head of the poet laureate. Even though we cannot know whether the goddess with closed eyes is blind or not, it is clear that she is paying no attention to any of the men. Thus, Fortuna with the wheel has been seen in various fields of art, literature, entertainment tools, etc. in European cultures.

It is easy to connect Waugh with the idea of Fortuna. Waugh, an art enthusiast from his youth, published *Rossetti: His Life and Works* in 1928 as his first work. It is a biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, another Pre-Raphaelite painter, who influenced Burn-Jones and had close relation with him in life. It is quite probable that Waugh was aware of *The Wheel of Fortune* painted by Burne-Jones. Moreover, Waugh writes his own opinion of Fortuna in his travel book, *Labels: A Mediterranean Journal* (1930):

While I still stood on the boat-deck we ran into another belt of mist. The engines changed to slow and then to dead slow, and the fog-horn began dolefully sounding the half minutes.

. . . I woke up several times in the night to hear the horn again sounding through the wet night air. It was a very dismal sound, premonitory, perhaps, of coming trouble, for Fortune is the least capricious of deities, and arranges things on the just and rigid system that no one shall be very happy for very long.  
(168)

With reference to this brief summary, this thesis examines two of Waugh's earliest novels in which the motif of Fortuna is employed most openly: One is *Decline and Fall* (1928), and the other is *A Handful of Dust* (1934).

#### **A. Margot: A Procuress in *Decline and Fall***

*Decline and Fall* shows an earliest example of the Fortuna-type woman and the wheel of fortune among Waugh's works. At the end of *Decline and Fall*, a conversation between Paul Pennyfeather, the protagonist, and his acquaintance Otto Silenus, draws attention, because it reminds readers of the wheel of fortune and Fortuna. Silenus compares life to the big wheel in an amusement park.

' . . . Shall I tell you about life?' [asked Silenus]

'Yes, do,' said Paul politely.

‘Well, it’s like the big wheel at Luna Park. . . . You pay five francs and go into a room with tiers of seats all round, and in the centre the floor is made of a great disc of polished wood that revolves quickly. At first you sit down and watch the others. They are all trying to sit in the wheel, and they keep getting flung off, and that makes them laugh, and you laugh too. It’s great fun.’

‘I don’t think that sounds very much like life,’ said Paul rather sadly.

‘Oh, but it is, though. . . . Lots of people just enjoy scrambling on and being whisked off and scrambling on again. . . .’ (208)

It is necessary to examine this “big wheel at Luna Park,” which is compared to human life in the conversation. In amusement parks, people often see this ride from the ground, but if it is observed from the sky, it becomes very similar to the illustration of the wheel of fortune in *Carmina Burana*, or Burne-Jones’ painting, which depicts people clinging onto a big wheel. As Silenus says, when people get on this ride and the ride revolves, they are in the wheel, and keep getting flung off. At this moment, the people who are frolicking on the ride trying not to get flung off seem to be literally equivalent to the people clinging onto the wheel of fortune. Thus, Waugh transfers the traditional image of the wheel of fortune to a modern amusement ride in the twentieth century.

Then, the figure of Fortuna in this novel must be analyzed. Following the conversation quoted above, their topic veers around to a woman who

plays the role of Fortuna. Silenus says, “Then there are others, like Margot, who sit as far out as they can and hold on for dear life and enjoy that” (208). Margot Beste-Chetwynde, the heroine of the novel, represents a Fortuna figure. She is a rich, beautiful widow living in a country house in England, but she is also a procuress who sells white women to brothels in South America. Margot uses men as her tools from the beginning to the end of the novel. In the case of Paul, at first, she invites him as her son’s honoured teacher to her house and treats him warmly as an orphan having no kin. She forces him to get engaged to her through a sexual relationship, then pins the crime of organizing prostitution on him, and finally releases him from prison through bribery. Judging from how Margot handles Paul’s fortunes, raising them up and down, it is not controversial to call her Fortuna. However, it is noteworthy that the image of Fortuna for Waugh is slightly different from the traditional one. When Silenus says, “Margot, who sits as far out as they can and hold on for dear life and enjoy that,” this means that Margot is also clinging onto the wheel. In fact, in this way Margot enjoys her thrilling life in the novel. Therefore, it is possible to say that this shows Waugh’s intention: while she follows the traditional image, the Fortuna of the twentieth century herself clings to the wheel of fortune together with men, and enjoys it.

### **B. Mrs Rattery: A Fortune-Teller in *A Handful of Dust***

In *A Handful of Dust*, Mrs Rattery, a card-player can be regarded as Fortuna. There is a scene where Mrs Rattery tells fortunes with playing-cards. Tony Last, the protagonist, loses his son during a fox hunt. He waits for his wife, Brenda, to come home from London, where she is secretly

committing adultery. While waiting for her, he has to spend time with Mrs Rattery, one of his guests, in a room for several hours. While Tony rambles on about his grief over his son's death, she starts playing a card game, but the game ends fruitlessly. This suggests the fruitless future of the protagonist.

When talking about the female figure who control the male protagonist in this novel, the symbolism of Fortuna is given to Mrs Rattery. Mrs Rattery is described as a highly modern woman of the 1920s to the 1930s, and, naturally, an alien in Tony's country house, where the Edwardian lifestyle is still observed. She is an American married woman and moves alone from hotel to hotel earning money by playing bridge, accompanied neither by her husband nor her children. She comes to Tony's country house by jet plane, which she pilots herself. She never praises his gorgeous house, saying only that "I never notice houses much" (100). Thus, she behaves as she wants, being indifferent to Tony's house or status as her host. At the beginning, she stands like Fortuna, a little apart from the protagonist.

The description of her while playing a card game includes several allusions to the image of Fortuna. Mrs Rattery starts playing patience, a card game for a single player, in front of Tony.

Mrs Rattery sat intent over her game, moving little groups of cards adroitly backwards and forwards about the table like shuttles across a loom; under her fingers order grew out of chaos; she established sequence and precedence; the symbols before her became coherent, interrelated. (111)

The movement of Mrs Rattery's hands playing cards is likened to the movement of shuttles on a weaving machine. To play patience, a player has to line up cards and then arrange them in several heaps, side by side, and the player has to move their hands sideways across the table. That is why the words "shuttles" and "a loom" are used here.

Shuttles and a loom remind readers of their relationship with Clotho, another goddess of fortune. Clotho is one of the Moirai, known as the three goddesses of fortune in Greek mythology. Her job is spinning the thread of a human's life, which symbolizes the length and strength of their life. To spin the thread, a spinning wheel is used. Diego Velazques' (1599-1660) painting *The Fable of Arachne* (c. 1657) shows a good example of a woman spinning thread on a spinning wheel. "Shuttles" and "a loom" relate to the act of spinning thread, because shuttles always move the thread. To use a shuttle and a loom, one must first spin the thread. Here it is easy to find the association between shuttles, spinning, and a spinning wheel; the spinning wheel is naturally associated with the wheel of fortune. In the scene quoted above, Mrs Rattery is arranging cards as if weaving a cloth with "shuttles across a loom." In this way she tries to tell Tony's and her fortunes. She plays a complicated game of patience with four sets of cards – over two hundred cards, which suggests their complicated life. Given the allusion to the wheel to spin the thread of fortune and her role as a fortune-teller, Mrs Rattery is also one of Waugh's Fortunas, a goddess of fortune.

The outcome of the game also symbolizes the fate of the characters. This game ends in deadlock, as it is described that "[i]t had nearly come to a solution at time, but for a six of diamonds out of place, and a stubbornly

congested patch at one corner, where nothing could be made to move” (111-12). When Mrs Rattery mutters “It’s a heartbreaking game” (112), it should be considered that she means not only the result of the card game but also the development of their future. In fact, soon after this, Tony divorces Brenda. He goes abroad to explore the jungle along the Amazon and gets lost there. Mrs Rattery’s game, which was discontinued without a clear result, hints at the fate of Tony, who gets lost in his life. Mrs Rattery also steps off the stage in the novel. It is true that Mrs Rattery is only a fortune-teller, not strong enough to handle people’s fate. However, like Margot in *Decline and Fall*, Mrs Rattery also is a Fortuna of the twentieth century, bound to the wheel of fortune with others. She moves around the world enjoying with her cards, but all the while her own fate is as shaky as the fate of people sitting on a revolving ride.

Waugh continues to create women whose fates are played with, even while they play with the lives of the male protagonists. At a time when England was moving towards the Second World War, these heroines with both devilishness and weakness were particularly indispensable to Waugh. Thereafter, Fortunas are repeatedly described in Waugh’s works: Queen Elizabeth in *Edmund Campion: A Life* (1935), Barbara Sothill in *Put Out More Flags* (1942), Lady Marchmain in *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), and so on. These works contain highly-sophisticated British women who do not hesitate to exert their powers, sailing on the tide of their times. However, gradually they are swept away by the tide and out of control. Along with the movements of these women, Waugh describes the restless people and unquiet situation of England as it grows closer to the era of the Second World War.

### 3. The Appearance of New Heroines after the Second World War

Waugh brings an obvious change in writing female characters after the Second World War. The new heroines are different from his previous Fortuna-type women in their origin, social status, time, and region. In *The Loved One* (1948), an ordinary American working girl is featured, and in *Helena* (1950), the Empress Dowager of Rome. It is necessary to trace the turning point of this change in the flow of his thought after the war.

#### A. Aimée: A Working Girl in *The Loved One*

*The Loved One* shows a remarkable change in Waugh's female characters. Its heroine, Aimée Thanatogenos, is far different from the cruel and sophisticated women whom Waugh wrote about before. Aimée, an ordinary American girl born into a poor Christian family, is wooed by two men. One is Dennis Barlow, a young British man who works for a small pet cemetery, and the other is Mr. Joyboy, a middle-aged American man who is her supervisor at a large cemetery in Los Angeles, for which Aimée works as an embalmer. Unable to choose one of them as her fiancée, and being hurt emotionally by both men, Aimée calls a fortune-teller she finds in a magazine to ask for advice. Since the fortune-teller is too drunk to be capable and irresponsible, he rejects her and shows a violent reaction by saying, "Find a nice window and jump out" (115). Aimée follows this advice and commits suicide by injecting herself with cyanide in Mr. Joyboy's office. The suicide of the heroine strikes readers as a change in Waugh's female characters.

It is important to notice that Aimée's suicide is the only case of the



heroine's suicide though there are several characters who kill themselves in Waugh's novels. Waugh's description of how Aimée is absorbed in thought just before committing suicide embodies revelations.

Her mind was quite free from anxiety. Somehow, somewhere in the blank black hours she had found counsel; she had communed perhaps with the spirits of her ancestors, the impious and haunted race who had deserted the altars of the old Gods, had taken ship and wandered, driven by what pursuing furies through what mean streets and among what barbarous tongues! . . . Attic voices prompted Aimée to a higher destiny; voices which far away and in another age had sung of the Minotaur, stamping far underground at the end of passage; which spoke to her more sweetly of the still Boeotian water-front, the armed men all silent in the windless morning, the fleet motionless at anchor, and Agamemnon turning away his eyes; spoke of Alcestis and proud Antigone. (116, emphasis added)

In this scene, the illusions of heroes and ghosts from the pre-Christian, ancient Greek period bring revelations to her. Aimée, who is despairing at the insincerity of men and the modern consumer society surrounding her, communicates with a world which is far beyond her in time and space. Waugh intensively describes that this occurs just at dawn, a time when “[i]n all the diurnal revolution these first fresh hours alone are untainted by man” (116). It is significant that Waugh has Aimée communicate with ancient ghosts just before committing suicide.

Waugh uses symbols of infertility in various ways in *The Loved One*. They are informative in the sense that infertility leads to Aimée's suicide. As already examined in Chapter IV of this dissertation, mechanical beehives (66) and "Kaiser's Stoneless Peaches" (68) are clear examples of infertility. The fact that most characters are single is another symbol of infertility. The funeral industry surrounding Aimée is alienated from life, no matter how skilfully the dead may be embellished through embalmment. Aimée has innocently received all things symbolizing infertility as natural things with no doubt, and even the infertile love of the two men without reservation. Waugh attributes her reception of the infertile love to her situation that she is a working girl who faithfully obeys her superior, easily trusts others, and has little knowledge of literature. It is a natural consequence that she ends her life without having offspring, betrayed by the men whom she believes to be her mentors in life. That is why she finally asks for help from a magazine writer, even without noticing religion as a source of emotional support.

However, Waugh gives a succour to Aimée at the last moment when she leaves this world. In her revelation at dawn, voices which "prompted Aimée to a higher destiny," speak to her from "far away" and "another age" (116). If Aimée had been born in the ancient Greek or Roman period, she might have played a role in serving the higher spirits, for instance, as a priestess. Although Waugh criticizes the system of commercialistic funerals in modern America, he does not accuse a girl who is involved in that system while believing it to be sacred. The factors contributing to her defeat are cruelty, nonunderstanding, and crudeness of the men whom she relies on; most of all, the fact that she was born into a capitalistic society lacking any

respect for life and death. That is why Waugh shows her some beautiful illusions before her death, according to her higher spiritual position than any other male characters on earth, and gives her fateful names:

“Thanatogenos,” meaning “bearing death” in Greek, and “Aimée,” meaning “the loved one” in French. After suffering much on the sinful earth, where people play with death in commercialism, she manages to enter the world of real death, the world of the exalted spirits and ancient deities.

The story does not completely protect Aimée, however. Unfortunately, at this stage, Waugh was emphasising irony and satire in his works, and the heroine is given no means to access history or myth. Aimée is unable to play a role important enough to engrave her name in history. Nonetheless, it is certain that Waugh is describing a new female figure in *The Loved One*, different from the British ladies in his former novels. *The Loved One* is a tragedy of a woman crushed by a commercialistic society. So long as this novel is read in that way, it proves that Waugh is no longer writing novels with female characters of the Fortuna type.

### **B. Helena: A Saint in *Helena***

In comparison with *The Loved One*, the shift in Waugh’s female characters becomes more apparent in *Helena* (1950) with its self-confident and independent heroine. Its story is based on St. Helena, who found the True Cross on which Jesus was crucified. The heroine of *Helena* is the Empress Dowager Helena in the Roman Empire who devotes herself to Christianity. She is convinced of the fact that Jesus was crucified. She rejects the conventional religions or philosophies composed of theories and ceremonies, because such religions or philosophies seem empty and silly to

her. To prove the crucifixion of Jesus as a fact, Helena starts to investigate the True Cross, and eventually excavates it. Before the investigation, she converses with Pope Silvester about God's will.

‘It must be somewhere. Wood doesn't just melt like snow. It's not three hundred years old. The temples here are full of beams and panelling twice that age. It stands to reason God would take more care of the cross than of them.’ [Helena said]

‘Nothing “stands to reason” with God. If He had wanted us to have it, no doubt He would have given it to us. But He hasn't chosen to. He gives us enough.’ [Silvester said]

‘But how do you know He doesn't want us to have it – the cross, I mean? I bet He's just waiting for one of us to go and find it – just at this moment when it's most needed. Just at this moment when everyone is forgetting it and chattering about the hypostatic union, there's a solid chunk of wood waiting for them to have their silly head knocked against. I'm going off to find it,’ said Helena. (128)

Silvester denies Helena's assertion that the cross on which Jesus was crucified still exists. Yet Helena refutes him, because she is confident that wood lasts long, even for hundreds of years. Her assertion is always based on the fact or real things which she can see or touch herself.

Helena is a new type of female character who follows her beliefs. Helena's argument is logical based on her conviction. When Silvester says that people should not expect additional gifts from God, Helena opposes

him with an argument that gifts are already given, waiting to be found. She thinks it is her mission to find such a gift. She is never controlled easily by her husband and son, though both of them are Roman emperors. However, Helena does not flaunt her power. Far from the world of politics, she struggles alone to establish the truth of her religion by piling up proofs. It is possible to say that the description of such a new heroine shows a significant turning point in Waugh's novels after the war. In the end, Helena finds out the cross and proudly takes it back to Rome. Waugh is convinced that Helena's beneficial influence still exists even in his own time when Christianity has become merely formal, with little veneration from people. His conviction can be seen briefly in the last line of the novel: "Above all the babble of her age and ours, she makes one blunt assertion. And there alone lies Hope" (159).

A simple comparison of Aimée and Helena is useless because they have completely different origins and characters. Furthermore, there are extremely wide distinctions in their choices and gains. However, they share distinctive, unique features in the continuous record of female characters with the image of Fortuna in Waugh's novels. It is not contentious that Aimée and Helena are the key to understanding the female characters in Waugh's novels after the Second World War. Especially, Helena plays a role to convey the concept of religious belief to readers, which becomes the most important subject of Waugh after the Second World War.

#### **4. The Burial of Fortuna: The *Sword of Honour* trilogy**

To make his new female characters advance, Waugh needs to bury the old Fortuna as his heroines. As if he tried to prove the burial, he creates

Virginia Troy as his last Fortuna in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy written from 1952 to 1961. Virginia is the ex-wife of Guy Crouchback, the protagonist. Although she has been married to an American millionaire, she returns to England during the Second World War, “when everyone else is running the other way” (*SHT* 76). Although the *Sword of Honour* trilogy is a series of war novels which describes the protagonist Guy’s various experiences at battlefields, simultaneously, the existence of Virginia always intervenes in Guy’s way, shaking his life. It proves that she is also one of the Fortuna-type heroines who were seen in Waugh’s early novels.

However, Virginia is not a mere remake of such kind of female characters. Waugh inserts various episodes in the relation between Guy and Virginia to show that the connection between them is not linear. The following episode is one example. Despite the fact that Guy divorced her eight years before the war, he still has an irresistible yearning for her. While he is being trained in the army, he gets acquainted with a Catholic priest, and hears a story of a man who reunited with his ex-wife. Guy asks the priest: “You mean to say that theologically the original husband committed no sin in resuming sexual relations with his former wife? (112)” The priest answers, “Certainly not” (112). Gaining confidence from the priest’s answer, Guy tries to have a sexual relationship with Virginia before going to the battlefield. However, Virginia becomes enraged realizing Guy’s intention. She disappears out of Guy’s sight, arguing strongly that he has insulted her by choosing her as a sexual partner not because he loves her but because she is the only adequate woman for him from a religious viewpoint (*SHT* 124-25). This episode shows that Virginia (Fortuna) does not control Guy (man) in one way, but her life is controlled also by him. In

the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, Waugh describes Fortuna as a woman who is trifled also during wartime.

Virginia also plays the role of Fortuna, but she is different from other Fortunas, because the result of her behavior leads to the course correction of the protagonist's life. The following episode shows the example of such a result. In *Officers and Gentlemen*, she has an affair with Guy's ex-colleague soldier while Guy is away on the battlefield. In *Unconditional Surrender*, she is made pregnant by this man. Divorced from her American husband, and unable to get an abortion, she returns to Guy, wishing to be accepted again. One of Guy's female friends blames Virginia for her selfishness, without knowing of the past incident between Guy and Virginia. Guy tells this friend that he will agree to marry Virginia again. The conversation between Guy and the friend is as follows:

‘My dear Guy, the world is full of unwanted children. Half the population of Europe are homeless – refugees and prisoners. What is one child more or less in all that misery?’

‘I can't do anything about all those others. This is just one case where I can help. And only I, really. I was Virginia's last resort. So I couldn't do anything else. Don't you *see*?’ (624)

At this time, what is in Guy's mind is a letter from his father, a pious Catholic. The letter says, “Quantitative judgements don't apply” (491). Guy interprets this remark as equal to saying that: although the Eurasian continent is full of numerous unwed mothers and orphans, it is reasonable to help Virginia and her baby first of all, who are in need of him. Guy

loyally follows his father's words. He frees Virginia from the fear of poverty and abortion because he believes it is appropriate to his Catholic faith. Even though Guy's behavior as a Catholic was once rejected by Virginia, this time it redeems both of them from sin. Thus, she influences Guy's wheel of fortune; they then hold onto the wheel together. This time, however, her role is not only to hurt a man, but to let him grow religiously. It is on this point that she is far apart from the Fortuna-type heroines in Waugh's early works. She first flusters the protagonist and controls his social position, and yet, as a result, she directs him to become a good Christian. As it is also apparent that Virginia acts just on impulse, without any lofty intent, she must be regarded as one of Waugh's heroines who symbolize Fortuna in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, it is highly conceivable that Waugh features her to improve the protagonist.

Incidentally, it is necessary to examine the characteristic of this Fortuna personified as Virginia. The scene of Virginia's death is informative in quite a few senses. Firstly, Waugh describes her as the belle of the society, and positions her as the last comer of that type. After getting remarried to Guy, Virginia dies in London in the air raids conducted by the German air force. Many upper-class Londoners mourn the death of Virginia. Edward Spruce, an editor who was on close terms with Virginia, laments in his monologue: "Virginia Troy was the last of twenty years' succession of heroines, [t]he ghosts of romance who walked between the two wars" (*SHT* 670). He continues:

'. . . Virginia was the last of them – the exquisite, the doomed, and the damming, with expiring voices – a whole generation



younger. We shall never see anyone like her again in literature or in life and I'm very glad to have known her.' (*SHT* 671).

Spruce's monologue directly explains Waugh's female characters. "The ghosts of romance" indicates the heroines Waugh wrote in his early novels. The time "between the two wars" coincides with the period which Waugh skilfully depicted in his early novels, from *Decline and Fall* to *Brideshead Revisited*: that is, from the 1920s to the 1930s. Judging from the phrases, "the ghosts of romance" and "the last of them . . . a whole generation younger," it is apparent that Waugh positions Virginia as the final version of his Fortuna-type heroines.

Moreover, the scene of Virginia's death suggests that Waugh makes Virginia exit from the novel in an instant by a bomb falling from the sky rather than by a love entanglement. She is "killed instantly" as explained in Guy's sister's letter to Guy, who is positioned in Yugoslavia at that time (*SHT* 666). As Virginia cannot end her life herself, she is also one of the people who go down clinging to the wheel of fortune and never come up. However, it is certainly possible to say that her instantaneous death in the air raids is suitable for the death of a goddess, because her life ends without the help from any others. Furthermore, Waugh uses a word, "providence," to describe Virginia's death in a conversation between two women:

'What were we talking about?'

'Virginia.'

'Of course. . . . I can't regard her death as pure tragedy.'

There's a special providence in the fall of a bomb. God forgive me for thinking so, but I was never quite confident her new disposition would last. She was killed at the one time in her life when she could be sure of heaven – eventually.'

'One couldn't help liking her,' said Angela. (*SHT* 672)

By having a character say that there's a special providence in the fall of a bomb, Waugh entombs his Fortuna, whom he has kept at hand for nearly thirty years.

It is also important to contemplate the symbolical name, Virginia. Her surname, Troy, readily reminds us of the Trojan War, especially when we consider the background of the novels and that her American husband's first name is Hector. It is not difficult to associate her with Helene in Greek mythology, who is referred to as the most beautiful woman in the world and is fought over by several men. Besides this, her first name, Virginia, is a kind of shortened form of the Virgin Mary; the Virginia in the novel also bears a child out of wedlock, just like the Virgin Mary. Therefore, it is obvious that Virginia occupies a highly important position in Waugh's novels, symbolizing two of the most significant women in European cultures, both in Greek mythology and in the Bible. This is also relevant to the original figure of Fortuna, a goddess mixed up with many female figures in multiple cultures in the world.

Beginning with England in the 1920s, and sometimes reaching forward to the post-war United States and back to the ancient Roman Empire of the fourth century, Waugh ultimately decides to set the burial of his heroines at the end of the Second World War. In a way, the completion

of the war trilogy is parallel to the burial of Fortuna. Incidentally, Waugh later writes a short story titled “Basil Seal Rides Again or The Rake’s Regress” (1963). In this short story, he re-introduces several British ladies who appeared in his previous works and now who are living in the United States after the war. Waugh tenderly, and a little ironically, depicts these old Fortunas, who once spun the wheel of fortune, clinging to the wheel with their men in a changing world, and now are enjoying the rest of their lives in tranquillity. It shows, in the opposite sense, how deeply Waugh loves Fortuna, but he clearly recites the last words to her in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy.

### **5. Deconstruction and Reconstruction of the Family**

Finally, it remains to contemplate why the burial of Fortuna is necessary for Waugh. Firstly, the lack of motherhood in his heroines gives a hint to answer this question. In Waugh’s novels, there are few descriptions of mothers, whether married or unmarried, who care for and protect their children. For example, Brenda Last in *A Handful of Dust* says, “Oh thank God” (119) when she hears of the death of her son, because first she misunderstands the news, believing that her paramour has died, but then finds with relief that it was not him but her son who has been killed. Margot Beste-Chetwynde in *Decline and Fall* is completely taken up by her love affairs and her secret job, the white women trade, and wholly neglects her son. Lady Marchmain in *Brideshead Revisited* is a proper Catholic noble lady, but she constantly sends men into her son’s group in order to keep watch on his conduct. She does not even mind separating her son and his friends to make them watch him like spies. And Virginia, the heroine in

the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, is the same type. Although it sounds tender-hearted that she entrusts her baby to her sister-in-law for evacuation, in fact she spends all of her free time enjoying parties in wartime London. She always calls her baby “it” (*SHT* 660), never by name. Helena in *Helena* seems to have better intentions towards her son, compared with these women. However, her motives rather require his reliance on her than embrace him with love. Her impression in the novel is mainly that of the Empress Dowager of the Roman Empire, who has the proper stern characteristics needed for the position. Waugh uses these mental distances between Waugh’s heroines and their children – most of them are sons – to point out these women’s characteristics.

Secondly, the theme of deconstruction of the family more drastically explains the necessity of Fortuna’s burial in Waugh’s novels. Based on the social system of marriage and family, British society supported a standard of construction of the family in literature in the nineteenth century. However, there appears a tendency to resist that standard in the twentieth century. Many of Waugh’s novels also deal with the broken families which have no functions to support warm relationships. His Fortunas play significant roles in this context. Waugh’s heroines, who betray their husbands, mislead their lovers, and abandon their children, exactly symbolize Fortuna, who plays with the men trapped on the wheel of fortune without worrying deconstruction of the family. It is highly considerable that Waugh writes Fortuna’s burial in this context: deconstruction of the family.

However, Waugh brings a solution to the theme of deconstruction of the family in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy. Douglas Lane Patey also

comments on this point:

In adopting Trimmer's child, Guy fulfils (ironically) Mr Goodall's words in *Men at Arms* about another Catholic who perpetuates his family by returning to his engaged wife: 'Explain it how you will, I see the working of Providence there'. . . . Taking up parental responsibility, Guy begins to fulfil the task of emulating his father – and brings to resolution the theme of broken families (and the broken selves who spring from them) that had haunted Waugh's fiction since *Decline and Fall*. (305-06)

Patey's analysis is persuasive, given the following scene. At the end of the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, Guy is remarried to an ordinary Catholic woman after Virginia's death. He lives with his wife and a boy who was born to Virginia. The story ends, hinting that Guy will nurture this boy as his son. This last scene shows that Guy awakens to having a family and becoming a father, after various hardships and sacrifices during wartime. Because he has no blood relation with this adopted boy, fatherhood will demand more conscientiousness and effort: as it were, Guy's new ordeal of paternity. However, it is his last decision on his pilgrimage; and also it shows Waugh's solution to the prolonged theme of deconstruction of the family in his works. This is emphasized in the revised version, the single volume of *Sword of Honour* (1965). Although Guy has two other children of his own, in addition to this adopted son, in *Unconditional Surrender*, he has no children of his own in this revised edition. The revised version more clearly

throws Guy's fatherhood into relief. In this way, Waugh proposes a solution to the theme of deconstruction of the family. It is even possible to associate Guy's family with the Holy Family: a father, a mother, and a child with no blood relation with the father. This issue of the association with the Holy Family is discussed in detail in Chapter VIII of this dissertation.

Guy's life should be recalled here again for conclusion. In *Men at Arms*, Guy went to the front in high spirits, dreaming of becoming Sir Roger, a crusader in the twentieth century. However, after experiencing the more callous aspects of war and a world "where priests were spies and gallant friends proved traitors and his country was led blundering into dishonour" (*SHT* 468), the only thing he receives is the boy born to his wife and another man. If he has no child carried by his second wife, this illegitimate boy will naturally inherit the Crouchback family as the only heir. It can be readily supposed that Waugh writes this ironical situation to describe the religious moment when Guy realizes his role in life after the war: awakening to his vocation. Virginia's death is essential for Guy to pursue the way to paternity and a holy family. Her death, the burial of Fortuna, is the inevitable process for Waugh to write the reconstruction or restoration of a British family in the post-war world.

## Chapter VIII: Consistency in Catholicism: The Second Vatican Council and *Sword of Honour*

### 1. Proposition

Waugh was strongly influenced in his late years by the Second Vatican Council, which was held from 1962 to 1965. The analysis of its influence on Waugh's soul, and his reaction to it, will lead to determining the significance of *Sword of Honour* (1965) in Waugh's life. *Sword of Honour* is the revised edition of his war trilogy, and, moreover, is a kind of compilation of his works. It is meaningful to examine why and how Waugh worked on the revision while the Second Vatican Council was being held. During that time, he was worried terribly over the progress of its agenda. Most of Waugh's biographers, including Hastings, Patey, and Michael G. Brennan, emphasize the Council's strong impact on Waugh. There have been, however, very few articles which discuss the influence of the Council on Waugh's publication of *Sword of Honour*. This chapter clears up this influence on the publication and why *Sword of Honour* can be considered as a compilation of his works.

At the time when Waugh completed *Helena* in 1949, he ended the story with a hopeful expression, "And there alone lies Hope" (159). When he finished *Unconditional Surrender* in 1961, he ended the story allowing a slight rest for the protagonist Guy's family life, after experiencing various hardships and sacrifices during wartime. Although this rest is slight, it is calm and not under strain. However, while the Catholic Church was undergoing a major change at the Second Vatican Council, Waugh was extremely depressed. Therefore, it is necessary to elucidate why and how he

revised the *Sword of Honour* trilogy during this time under such mental stress. The aim of this chapter is to answer the questions.

## **2. The Impact of the Second Vatican Council on Waugh**

In order to examine the strong impact of the Second Vatican Council on Waugh, it is worthwhile to survey the history of the Council. In 1869, nearly a century before that, the First Vatican Council was held by Pope Pius IX. However, it was discontinued without any clear declaration in 1870 as an Italian army occupied Rome during the Franco-Prussian War. In 1962 the Second Vatican Council, the twenty-first ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church, began under the leadership of Pope John XXIII. He had already announced the intention to hold the council in 1959, and had prepared the agenda. The council continued for more than three years, from October 1962 until it was closed by Pope Paul VI in December 1965.

The Second Council mainly dealt with those matters which were left undiscussed at the First Council. The Second Vatican Council summoned participants from Catholic churches worldwide, and invited a number of observers from other Christian churches and communities. Among delegate-observers were representatives of major Protestant denominations, “in itself a sign of sweeping change” (Bowman 166). Many Catholic auditors were also invited. This ecumenical council was intended as a means of spiritual renewal for the Church, and as an occasion for Christians separated from Rome to join in a search for reunion (“Vatican Council, Second”).

The progress of the Council with numerous agenda heavily depressed Waugh. The discussions of the Council were concerned with ecclesiology, liturgy, scripture, the role of bishops, and so on. Based on ecumenism as



the Council's motto, the Council was directed toward making the Roman Catholic Church more open to the outside world, with more conversation and cooperation among the various denominations. The Council justified changing aspects of Catholic thought and practice which had been defensive and inflexible for a long time. Also, it encouraged the further participation of the laity in the activities of the Church. One of the most important agendas which had a direct effect on believers' lives was the liturgy. The Council recommended changes in ceremonial matters: for instance, admitting the use of vernacular languages into the Mass, which had previously been standardized in Latin all over the world ("Vatican Council, Second"). What depressed Waugh most was the progress of the Council toward these changes.

Since one important aim of these changes in the Council was to hasten greater participation of the lay persons in the ritual, it was expected that considerable changes would happen in their lives. Waugh's journal essay entitled "The Same Again, Please" (1962) harshly attacks these changes while they were still being discussed in the Council:

As the service proceeded in its familiar way I wondered how many of us wanted to see any change. The church is rather dark. The priest stood rather far away. His voice was not clear and the language he spoke was not that of everyday use. This was the Mass for whose restoration the Elizabethan martyrs had gone to the scaffold. (*EAR* 606)

Waugh especially protests against the use of vernacular language in the

Mass, asserting as follows:

I think it highly doubtful whether the average churchgoer either needs or desires to have complete intellectual, verbal comprehension of all that is said. . . . In most of the historic Churches the act of consecration takes place behind curtains or doors. The idea of crowding round the priest and watching all he does is quite alien there. It cannot be pure coincidence that so many independent bodies should all have evolved in just the same way. Awe is the natural predisposition to prayer. . . . (*EAR* 608)

For Waugh, awe is a more important element in the Mass than easy understanding. He also writes a frank opinion about Mass to one of his acquaintances on 15 March 1963.

I should feel jolly shy dancing & I feel shy praying out loud. Every parish might have one rowdy Mass a Sunday for those who like it. But there should be silent ones for those who like quiet. (*LEW* 680)

These remarks show that Waugh strongly wishes for the continuance of the liturgy as it had been observed throughout the long history of Catholicism.

As his view on religion, Waugh states clearly that the essential role of Christianity lies in preserving civilization. He also emphasizes that the Roman Catholic Church expresses the complete form of Christianity. His

view is clearly stated in an essay, “Converted to Rome: Why It Has Happened to Me,” which he wrote soon after he converted to Catholicism in October 1930. Concerning the role of Christianity, he writes as follows:

It seems to me that in the present phase of European history the essential issue is no longer between Catholicism, on one side, and Protestantism, on the other, but between Christianity and Chaos. It is much the same situation as existed in the early Middle Ages. . . . Civilization . . . has not in itself the power of survival. It came into being through Christianity, and without it has no significance or power to command allegiance. (*EAR* 103-04)

Then, on the completeness in religion, he states that “Christianity exists in its most complete and vital form in the Roman Catholic Church,” (*EAR* 104). Further, he adds that the completeness and vitality in religion requires that “its teaching shall be coherent and consistent” (*EAR* 104).

For Waugh, coherence and consistency are the essential conditions of a religious organization. Completeness, vitality, and consistency should be united in a faith, and the Roman Catholic Church definitely embodies this unification. Waugh maintains this idea in his novels. In an extension of this idea, there is the heroic prayer, which he conceives in *Helena* and links to the people during and after the Second World War in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy.

The change in policy due to the Second Vatican Council must have been extremely depressing to Waugh, who had a high regard for the

consistency of the Church. Thomas J. Brennan points out that Waugh's letters in this period are filled with the fear that he might be abandoned by the Church (74-75). Furthermore, contrary to his expectation, Waugh finds that the clergymen around him have a more detached attitude to the direction that the Council is taking than he does, which makes Waugh's mental state even more depressed (75). Hastings comments that "[h]is [Waugh's] grief over the Church weighed crushingly on him, the vast brocade disintegrating before his eyes as the measures prescribed by the Council in Rome began to make themselves felt" (622). Brennan's remarks show that Waugh's shock was by far conspicuous, while Hastings' comments show that Waugh's mental condition was reaching the limits of endurance. This Council seems to have dealt a devastating blow to his mental condition, in addition to Waugh's unstable physical condition at this time.

### **3. Publication of *Sword of Honour***

Tormented with the uneasiness caused by the Council, Waugh published his last novel, *Sword of Honour*, in 1965, combining his war trilogy. The trilogy was all written before the Second Vatican Council began – when he was still convinced of the consistency of the Catholic Church. It is highly probable that Waugh, who saw the progress of the Council making so many major changes, needed to retain his conviction and support himself by any means. Naturally, it is not difficult to presume that he tried to maintain his belief by republishing his previous works, which he had written with conviction.

In the preface to *Sword of Honour* Waugh expresses his sentiment at

that time:

On reading the book I realized that I had done something quite outside my original intention. I had written an obituary of the Roman Catholic Church in England as it had existed for many centuries. All the rites and most of the opinions here described are already obsolete. . . . It never occurred to me, writing *Sword of Honour* that the Church was susceptible to change. I was wrong and I have seen a superficial revolution in what then seemed permanent. Despite the faith of many of the characters, *Sword of Honour* was not specifically a religious book. Recent developments have made it, in fact, a document of Catholic usage of my youth. (*SH* xxxiv)

This remark seems to express his lament over the changes to the Roman Catholic Church, meaning that the description in his book has become “obsolete.” However, close reading of this remark will make readers notice Waugh’s strong resentment toward the “superficial revolution” against what had once seemed permanent. With severe cynicism, and half in jest, he complains that his book has become a document of his youth, led by Catholicism, because of its “superficial revolution.” Despite the sorrow, resentment, and cynicism, however, Waugh’s strong desire to publish this book at this time can be proven in this preface. If it had not been for this intent, he would not have republished such an “obsolete” book. It is necessary to clarify what his intention was – why and how he deliberately revised the book for republication during the crucial time for Roman

Catholic Churches.

Revising three novels into a single volume has several effects. It surely makes it easier for readers to read through the book. In addition, he took advantages of correcting several errors in the previously published edition. The most remarkable revision is, however, the change he made to the protagonist Guy's family structure. At the end of *Unconditional Surrender*, Guy lives quietly with his Catholic wife after the war, bringing up a little boy born to his previous wife, Virginia. Guy and his present wife also have their own two children. In the last line of the novel, knowing that Guy has remarried a Catholic woman and has two boys, Arthur Box-Bender, Guy's brother-in-law, mutters at a party, "things have turned out very conveniently for Guy" (*SHT* 710). In contrast, in *Sword of Honour*, republished in 1965, Guy has no children of his own. He lives only with his second wife and the little boy born to his ex-wife. In this version it is hinted that this illegitimate child will become the heir of the Crouchback family. Considering the right of family inheritance, his brother-in-law's comment, "very conveniently," sounds much more ironic. However, here, in the last stage, there is an establishment of a new type of family that consists of a father and a mother, and a son who has no blood relationship with his father. This family is associated with the Holy Family. Waugh in this way brings to the fore the advent of the Holy Family, which is the basic, foundational unit of the Catholic faith. What Waugh really wanted to emphasize in the revised book is this advent of the Holy family.

There is an episode which also suggests Waugh's intention to rewrite this family part. Prior to this revision, Waugh was surprised to learn that Nancy Mitford, one of his friends, and also a writer, had commented

that the ending of *Unconditional Surrender* was a happy one because Guy was blessed with his own children. Waugh wrote to Mitford that “only Box-Bender thought the ending happy” (*LEW* 652). Waugh did not intend a happy ending in this novel. In *Sword of Honour*, it is clear how little Guy earns in the war. He loses his wife, father, and many friends. He lets a Jewish woman die from his own fault. This incident brings him bitter grief and regret. He inherits a child whose father is a humble soldier whom he really hates. The child will probably inherit the fortune of the Crouchback family, noble Christians. The quiet, peaceful life with his present family is the only hope he attains after so many sacrifices. To confirm that Guy has such little hope, Waugh likens the composition of Guy’s family to that of the Holy Family. He needs to erase Guy’s own children in order to make this composition clearer, and prevent any misunderstanding like Mitford’s. This would have been the reason why he revised the ending; and at the same time, it is a very important result of the revision. Waugh wrote in his letter on 4 August 1961 that “. . . God creates no man without a special purpose. Guy’s was to rescue Trimmer’s son from a disastrous upbringing” (*LEW* 644). In *Sword of Honour*, Waugh seems to have made Guy pursue this purpose more intensively.

It was not only the protagonist, Guy, but Waugh himself who needed a little hope. Under the severe stress brought on by the progress of the Second Vatican Council, Waugh had to find his own hope as a Catholic in England. It might not be a mistake to say that the parallels between the author and his character of this time led the author to revise the book. From *Put Out More Flags*, through *Helena*, to *Sword of Honour*, Waugh’s novels show his decision to express the belief that people should go back to their

religious origin, and realize Catholicism's independence and consistency: its capacity to fulfil their lives at any time, especially during evil times such as wartime. In that sense, the revised *Sword of Honour* is not only a combination of his three war novels, but a compilation of all his works. By overcoming religious hardships, Waugh did his utmost to reconfirm his belief and perform his duty to deliver this message to readers. In addition, when we consider that Waugh died one year later, in 1966, it is evident how much more important the *Sword of Honour* trilogy was in Waugh's life as his final work.

## **Conclusion**



In conclusion, it is important to clarify the final locus of Waugh's thought in his writing. For the discussion, it is of interest to see how the British reaction to the Second World War relates to the evaluation of Waugh's novels in contemporary society. The significant point is whether this evaluation correctly reflects the context of his novels. At the time when England entered the war, the situation brought about overwhelming feelings of exaltation across the country, such as an emotional lift in support of the war, driven by a sense of justice, and strong antipathy toward Nazi Germany. Opinions supporting the justifiability of the war based on these feelings were maintained for a long time after the war. According to John W. Osborne, "not until the 1960's did literature critical of 'Their Finest Hour'<sup>17</sup> have much impact" (7).

In fact, critical feelings grew strong in the 1960s when the anti-war movement prevailed worldwide. When Angus Calder, a social critic, questioned in his book *The People's War* (1969), the image of national unity pushing for victory in wartime England, he severely denounced Waugh's war novels, as if they took part in encouraging the war (513-14). However, it is questionable if this view on Waugh's novels correctly evaluates them. The answer is probably not, because Waugh's stance toward the war is completely different from this view: It is consistently negative, as is shown by his discussion on the conflict between war vs. art in *Put Out More Flags*. It is true that his antipathy toward Nazi Germany was a reason strong enough to let his protagonists join the war. However, he was disgusted with the British-Soviet alliance forged after the German invasion of Russia, because he had hostility to both Nazism and Totalitarianism, and had no sympathy for the war itself.

Fortunately, Calder changes his initial view and praises Waugh in his short essay “Britain’s Good War?” (1995). He admits that Waugh’s novels are powerful in disclosing the belief of victorious “People’s War,” which inhibited realization of what war had in fact entailed (55-61). Osborne comments on this:

Calder correctly identifies the source of Waugh’s reservations about the legitimacy of World War II. . . . Waugh’s disgust with the Russian alliance could indeed account for his later strictures on the campaign in Crete. (8)

It is apparent that “his later strictures on the campaign in Crete” refers to the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, especially *Officers and Gentlemen*. Due to Waugh’s roundabout writing style, full of irony and self-concealment, some readers may misread his war novels as pro-war fiction. However, every sentence, paragraph, chapter, and story in each of his novels displays his constant negative stance toward the war, as long as they are read in close relation to each other. In fact, this is one of the most interesting ways to read Waugh’s works.

Waugh’s antipathy toward Totalitarianism and Communism is shown most overtly in *Officers and Gentlemen* and *Unconditional Surrender*. How the alliance between the Soviet Union and the Allies shocked the protagonist, Guy Crouchback, is described in two notable scenes: One is the scene where Guy despairs of the British government in *Officers and Gentlemen*, and the other is the scene in *Unconditional Surrender* where the Londoners come to see the Sword of Stalingrad on display in Westminster

Abbey as if adoring a holy relic, even though they hated the totalitarian country when the war began. Waugh continues to maintain doubts also about Leftists after the war. He severely satirizes the concept of the welfare state promoted by the Labour Party, for instance, in *Love Among the Ruins*, because he feels that there is a similarity between the welfare state and Nazi Germany.

It is worthwhile considering Waugh's opinion on the "People's War," especially the hero drawn from the people. In *Officers and Gentlemen*, Waugh devotes quite a few pages to how journalism creates a hero during wartime. Waugh is apprehensive of a hero born among ordinary people who brings nationalistic enthusiasm to his country as a result. To Waugh, such a hero is far from the ideal image of Jesus, who atones for all the crimes of the world with his death. Jesus, even though born among ordinary people, was crucified, carrying all people's sins on his shoulders as his responsibility. However, the "war hero" fabricated by journalism carries nothing on his shoulders, but scatters nationalistic enthusiasm across the country. Waugh strongly cautions against such heroism in the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, repeatedly criticizing the dangerous system of creating a hero in the war in more detail.

In contrast to the "war hero," it is obvious that the protagonist Guy begins to trace his path more closely aligned to Waugh's literary theme of vocation. Vocation is the most significant theme Waugh pursues in his later works both during and after the Second World War: People should carry out their mission to play their role in this world, however small and trivial the role may be. From *Put Out More Flags* to *Sword of Honour*, Waugh's protagonists search for this role and, ultimately, Guy, his last protagonist,

manages to find it. He brings up an orphaned child. This role is given to him neither by society nor by the army. He notices this role himself. Moreover, it is highly notable that Waugh urges the idea that this role is given also to women in *Helena* and *The Loved One*. Although he had this idea already in 1950, when he finished *Helena*, it seems that people at that time did not recognize it. That is why he wrote the *Sword of Honour* trilogy, roughly eleven years later, with changes in his views on women and on the realities of the war.

Eventually, Waugh's anxiety is targeted at Totalitarianism and the real situation that England seems to be stepping towards idealism, even though it once got rid of it in the Second World War. He warns against excessive idealism in *Love Among the Ruins*. In the 1960s, however, he was threatened by another menace: The changes in the Roman Catholic Church. He sees this as a harsh attack on him, but manages to stand against it in his works by revising *Sword of Honour*.

Finally, Waugh's strict piety needs to be mentioned. Among the three theological virtues of Christianity, love, hope, and faith, Waugh's works tend to be inclined towards faith, as seen in his focused writing on vocation. Selina Hastings comments that, "[l]ike many converts, Evelyn had a simple, meticulous approach to his faith which he clung to with an exaggerated orthodoxy; he was intolerant and quick to condemn, impelled by an almost fanatical search for perfection" (504). His demand for perfection induces his protagonist to long for the life of a perfect Christian. In an essay "Fan-Fare," which he wrote in April 1946 right after publishing *Brideshead Revisited*, he introduces a question from one of his readers: "When can we expect another *Brideshead Revisited*?" In the same essay, he

answers that he “can never hope to engage your [the reader’s] attention again in quite the same way” (*EAR* 302). He writes as follows:

[I]n my future books there will be two things to make them unpopular: a preoccupation with style and the attempt to represent man more fully, which, to me, means only one thing, man in his relation to God. (302)

This remark explains why the best praise, and the greatest popularity, was reserved for *Brideshead Revisited* among all of his works, both in England and the United States. As this remark predicts, after *Brideshead Revisited*, his purpose is directed to expressing “man in his relation to God” throughout the period after the Second World War. For that purpose, he uses not only the conditions of his times but also the images of historical episodes to emphasize the nature of the characters who cannot behave as heroes in the era of modern war. Thenceforth, he repeatedly criticizes the war in each novel. It depends on these various ways that he succeeds in leaving proof of his faith as a Roman Catholic, which he has retained from the 1930s, in his works. To Waugh, faith was more significant, as it was needed in a turbulent age when the Catholic Church was changing drastically. Thus, in this dissertation, the sincerity of Waugh’s faith as a believer is elucidated as the final locus of his thought.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> William Myers indicates that Basil's swindle in *Put Out More Flags* is a remake of "An Englishman's Home" (1938) (61). In "An Englishman's Home," two brothers living in a country house cheat English local family for property tax. Myers, however, stresses that the descriptions of swindle and adultery in *Put Out More Flags* are keener to "realism" than that in "An Englishman's Home" because its content is more connected with real war, and readers could accept it as their own matters.

<sup>2</sup> Waugh started writing the draft of *Brideshead Revisited* in January 1944 while he was on leave because of his injury during the training of parachuting in the previous year (Brennan 77). In that year, 1943, his father, Arthur Waugh died from natural causes. Evelyn was deeply shocked in spite of a long strife between them since Evelyn's childhood. According to Alexander Waugh, Evelyn's grandson, "Alec [Evelyn's elder brother] claimed that the new emotionalism of his brother's writing was directly caused by Arthur's death" (282).

<sup>3</sup> "*Et in Arcadia Ego*" was first used as the title of a painting by an Italian Baroque artist, Giovanni Francesco Barbien (Guercino) (1591-1666). A skull is symbolic in the painting. Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) also used the phrase as the title of his painting, which is also known as *Arcadian Shepherds*. The theme of *Memento Mori* was already popular in ancient Rome. Many artists and writers have gained inspiration from the phrase.

<sup>4</sup> There are several suggestions in *Brideshead Revisited* that Charles is Death appearing at Brideshead. In his room at Oxford University, he has a human skull replica engraved with "*Et in Arcadia Ego*" in a bowl of roses

(36-37). Later, as a prominent architectural painter, Charles travels around England to paint the country houses which are to be demolished. He talks about his job: “After my first exhibition I was called to all parts of the country to make portraits of houses that were soon to be deserted or debased; indeed, my arrival seemed often to be only a few paces ahead of the auctioneer’s, a presage of doom” (212). And finally, in the Second World War, Captain Charles Ryder’s troops occupy Brideshead. From the viewpoint of the Flytes, Charles is really “a presage of doom” who puts an end to the fate of the family and their house.

<sup>5</sup> In *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) by Lewis Carroll (1832-1898), Alice chases a rabbit and falls through a rabbit hole. From there she is dragged into a strange underworld, and her adventure starts.

<sup>6</sup> The word “invention” now means “fabrication,” but it originally meant “discovery.” Waugh of course knew that and, in the preface of *Helena*, he introduces a joke (but he believed it actually happened) that there was a lady who thought the legend of “the Invention of the Cross” was an absolute fabrication by a British woman named Ellen (9).

<sup>7</sup> In *Life* (12 Sep. 1949), John Phillips’ article contains a report on Yugoslavian factory workers praising Tito by calling out “Zivio Tito! Long live Tito and Tito’s party!” (48). “Viva” is a salute or cheer used in Italy and Spain. It was used to salute Mussolini in Italy, while “Viva Franco, Arriba España!” was a common phrase to praise the government during Francisco Franco’s reign in Spain. “Heil” was, of course, used to praise Hitler in Nazi Germany.

<sup>8</sup> Fausta, Constantine I’s wife, was assassinated after her son-in-law, Crispus, was executed for treachery. Chris Scarre introduces several

reasons for that, such as her adultery with Crispus, or because of an intrigue by Helena (215-16). Waugh does not follow either interpretation but describes Fausta's death as being caused by her own scheme, denying Helena's involvement.

<sup>9</sup> Actually, in the United Kingdom the death penalty was abolished gradually – in 1969 in England, in 1973 in Northern Ireland. And in 1999, capital punishment was formally ended throughout the United Kingdom.

<sup>10</sup> *Love Among the Ruins* was first published by Chapman and Hall in 1953 as a single volume (out of print now). The quoted page numbers in this thesis are from *The Complete Short Stories and Selected Drawings* by Everyman's Library.

<sup>11</sup> In February 1943, the Soviet Union won the battle of Stalingrad, defeating Nazi Germany. To celebrate this victory, at the Teheran Conference, Winston Churchill, on behalf of the United Kingdom, handed a bejewelled long sword to Joseph Stalin on 29 November 1943. In Book One of *Unconditional Surrender*, "State Sword", Waugh describes the sight of the sword displayed in Westminster Abbey before being sent to Stalin, and the people in London forming a long queue just to get a glimpse of it. The sword was guarded by many guards and "stood upright between two candles, on a table counterfeiting an altar" (*SHT* 496). The British people "venerated the sword as the symbol of their own generous and spontaneous emotion" (*SHT* 496), whereas Guy pays no heed to the enthusiasm when the continuous victories of the Soviet Union are broadcast on radio.

<sup>12</sup> There is an episode in *Officers and Gentlemen* that a cow escaping from the basement was captured again in Guy's Castello (*SHT* 325). Although the image of a cow in the basement is similar to Minotaur in the



labyrinth, it is inappropriate to regard this episode as a symbol of Waugh's ironical satire on the modern days.

<sup>13</sup> Heath explains that the characters in the Isle of Mugg "provide an even better parody of heroism" and reads the influence of Greek myth in *Officers and Gentlemen* (SHT 229), but he does not mention the monster which can be inferred from the number of the dogs.

<sup>14</sup> According to Gerhard L. Weinberg, the air raids by German aircrafts from 20 to 26 May 1941 caused British army in Crete to yield about 16,000 casualties and, eventually three quarters of the number became prisoners. German soldiers were also killed in the field so much that the German army switched their war tactics from land routes to sea and air routes. It is considered that the victory of German army in Crete might be their foothold toward invasion of the Middle East until the Russian-German war began in June 1941 (227-30).

<sup>15</sup> Before arriving in Yugoslavia, Guy encounters a musician in Italy. Told by this man that "Crouchback has the death wish" (SHT 641), Guy goes to a church two days later to make confession, and says to a priest, "I wish to die" (SHT 642). But the priest says, "To wish to die is quite usual today" (SHT 642) and, "There is no sin there. This is a mere scruple" (SHT 642). Then, while Guy is in Yugoslavia, Ludovic, Guy's former colleague, writes a novel titled "*THE DEATH WISH*" (SHT 660), which becomes a bestseller. Using the impulsive words of a commoner and the title of a fictitious bestseller during wartime, Waugh expresses the mood of early twentieth-century Europe and shows that it turned into reality as the war progressed.

<sup>16</sup> In Shakespeare's *Hamlet* Act II Scene 2, Hamlet, Rosencrantz, and

Guildestern chat about Goddess Fortune, making nasty jokes (215). In *Henry V* Act III Scene 6, when Pistol says, “And giddy Fortune's furious fickle wheel, / That goddess blind, / That stands upon the rolling restless stone”, Fluellen continues, “Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler afore her eyes, to signify to you that Fortune is blind; and she is painted also with a wheel, to signify to you, which is a moral of it, that she is turning, and inconstant, and mutability, and variation: and her foot, look you, is fixed upon a spherical stone, which rolls and rolls, and rolls” (187-88). In *As You Like It*, Celia says, “Let us sit and mock the good housewife Fortune from her wheel” and has a conversation about Fortune with Rosalind (106). Geoffrey Chaucer uses the concept of the wheel of fortune as a main theme of “The Monk’s tale” in *The Canterbury Tales* (534-60).

<sup>17</sup> “Their Finest Hour” is the phrase used in Winston Churchill’s historic speech in the House of Commons on 18 June 1941. After the battle of Dunkirk, in which the British and French Armies were defeated by the German Army, the speech was addressed to the English people asking them to unite together: “. . . Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say ‘This was their finest hour’” (“Their Finest Hour”).

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