

The Concept of 'House' in Evelyn Waugh's Work: An Analysis of 'Decline and fall', 'Vile Bodies', 'A Handful of Dust', 'Work suspended', 'Brideshead revisited' & 'Sword of Honor'

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Abstract

Review of six novels "Decline and fall, Vile Bodies, A handful of dust, Work suspended, Brideshead revisited & Sword of Honor" written by Evelyn Waugh shows, how the terminology "house" figures as an important factor in developing the theme in the novels. Despite many variations of theme in the different groups of his novels, taken without any chronological order, there is one particular aspect, in Waugh's novels that reappears most constantly, that is the theme of the house; it is an element in his novels about which generalizations can most readily be made. It is a recurring symbol that seems to stand for a great deal that Waugh finds worth preserving and attaining even though it is nearly inaccessible and can rarely be presented to the reader seriously. Study indicates that the Country-'house' and the changing role of his father was Waugh's concern. 'House' occupies an important place in novels written by Evelyn Waugh. Analysis of fictions reveals that Waugh used the character of the house in most affluent manner. 'House' for Waugh, symbolizes transmission of customs and beliefs, occasions, morale, and culture. While elaborating the concept of house he deals with the residents with humor, respect and with pity and sorrow. Writer follows a particular pattern while addressing the house; he treats the occupants of the house stately with comic respect. His first novel "Decline and Fall", the perception and morality concerned with the noble house seems under threat. The fear of losing the country house is framed on the perception and conditioning rather than any form of learning. Waugh attaches values and reservations to the house. Contrary, in Vile Bodies it is analyzed that Waugh followed the same Pattern to expose the positive content and influence of the house. A number of characters - Adam, Nina, Agatha and others were portrayed in rebellion against the naturally followed customs and ceremony represented by Doubting Hall and Anchorage House. Evelyn Waugh tries to showcase the positive side of the English House instead of the eccentric, which was presented by his earlier novels. Evelyn Waugh projects the ineffectiveness of the modernization which is deficient in every attribute associated with the house. In handful of dust Evelyn Waugh seems to have developed a striking contrast between Tony's Gothic house and Brenda's London flat where she begins the spend most of her time later. Beaver's mother, with whose son Brenda is committing adultery, "is subdividing a small house in Bulgaria "into six small flats at three pounds a week, of one room each and a bath". In the novel scoop though Waugh may be whimsical or ambivalent about the attributes of Boot Magna, he is quite definite about Lord Copper's mansion: it is "frightful", "execrable", where Boot encounters a page-boy whose face is "of ageless evil". All that remains is for the world of Boot Magna to triumph finally over the world of politics, of Lord Copper and of London "that atrocious city". In his later novels like 'work suspended' Evelyn Waugh begins to present the positive side of the English house instead of the eccentric, which was presented in his earlier novels. The pattern is the same. By emphasizing the positive contents and influence of the House, the novelist shows the futility of the modern age, which is devoid of every virtue, order and restraint associated with the house. The hero of Work Suspended, a novelist who is looking for a "house" recognizes that the devotion of people of his generation to domestic architecture is "wistful, half romantic, and half aesthetic". John Plant himself is conscious of the house's positive value, which plays a great role in forming a man's personality. Brideshead Revisited, one of the most familiar and most disputed of country-house novels, opens sometime after the outbreak of hostilities. Like the earlier two, moreover, Waugh's novel makes the national crisis a moment for wistfully taking stock of the English Past. In Brideshead Revisited, the challenge to order and tradition is more insidious. Brideshead stands for the ideal values of aristocracy - honor, continuity and order - to which has been added Roman Catholicism. Waugh has removed every "taint" of oddness from the place, an act that seems to reveal his "true" feelings, after all: Brideshead is positive good; the civilized rural existence (steeped in a Catholic past) is one of the last remaining outposts of sanity in a preposterous society. In Sword of Honour, it directly concerned with the country-house theme the Crouchback seat of Broome, like the other elements just discussed, both resembles its counterparts in Waugh's previous novels and notably differs from them at the same time. Evelyn Waugh's funny and experimental satire of houses proclaims a new generation coming and taking on the world, they reveal the darkness and hollowness under the shining surface of high life.

Keywords: Clean and square; house; philistinism; Universe; good life; architecture; humor; comic; portrayal.

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1. Evelyn Waugh as a writer

It is not possible to put Waugh's novel into one rigid category since a number of themes occur in his novels. His earliest ones, "*Decline and Fall*, *Vile Bodies*, *A Handful of Dust*", grouped together, are mainly concerned with the follies of the Bright Young People of the gay twenties; while "*Black Mischief*, *Scoop*, *Scott-King's Modern Europe* and *Love Among the Ruins*" uphold his conservative opinions and hit upon the wild, funny and so-called progressive attitude of the modern world which is devoid of virtue, reason and everything that the novelist detest. *Work Suspended* and *Put out More Flags* - deal with the theme of change, which was apparent in the English Society of the period. In his later novels, "*Brideshead Revisited*, *Helena* and the *War Trilogy* (*Men at Arms*, *Officers and Gentlemen* and *Unconditional Surrender*" the theme of Catholicism is mainly predominant with, of course, the addition of the theme of just war in the last three. The former builds up the Picture of an institution devoted to evading reality and to substituting a decadent materialism for traditional moral concept, while the latter gives us a clear insight into Waugh's life illuminating various experiences of the hallucination which he had undergone through his sea-journey to Colombo.

Despite these variations of theme in the different groups of his novels, taken without any chronological order, there is one particular aspect, in Waugh's novels that reappears most constantly. The theme of the house, it is an element in his novels about which generalizations can most readily be made. It is a recurring symbol that seems to stand for a great deal that Waugh finds worth preserving and attaining even though it is nearly inaccessible and can rarely be presented to the reader seriously. It stands for the father's world which for Waugh and others seems to date back to late Victorian or early Edwardian times. It is the pastoral heaven of the landed gentry, the centre of the "good life", and the last outpost against encroaching suburbs, flats, railroads, motorcars, sub-contracting the common man and what Arnold's generation called the "Philistinism" of the new age. He stands with a number of other English novelists in this interest for the house, apparently seeking to present through the progress of a central character, the beauty and reward implicit in the situation of the stately house. Like Lawrence and his other contemporaries, Waugh also developed his own counter symbols of community.

1.1. Literature review

As per Martin Stannard, "*Many Great novelists have had intricate, even prickly, personalities. But in Evelyn Waugh, nature and grace worked overtime to produce an extraordinary character, a full understanding of whose complexities would require the combined skills of an archaeologist, a psychiatrist, and a Jesuit confessor of the old school. Evelyn Waugh, the aesthete turned satirist of the flapper era, leaped out of literary and social obscurity precisely by limning his generation's follies in 'Decline and fall' and 'Vile Bodies'. But these works were in fact but the literary-and, more important, moral-prologue to Waugh's identity as a mature novelist: to Waugh as our most acute literary pathologist of the crisis of modernity.*" (Stannard, 1987). Edmund Wilson wrote on Waugh's novels, "*They are the only things written in England that is comparable to Fitzgerald and Hemingway. They are not so poetic; they are perhaps less intense; they belong to a more classical tradition. But I think that they are likely to figure as the only first rate comic genius that has appeared in England since Bernard Shaw*" (Wilson, 1950). Based on Waugh's World War II trilogy ("*Men at Arms*, *Officers and Gentlemen* and *Unconditional Surrender*") Mr. Gore Vidal, referred Evelyn Waugh as a "mere satirist" rather than a comic genius, "necessarily rooted in this world," who does not create, but simply "reacts". (Vidal, 1962). When Vidal labels Evelyn Waugh as a "mere satirist", he implies discernment according to genre alone. A writer can be considered as satirical only when his total them denotes that, the total theme includes, incidents, characters, episodes and other rhetorical devices, however if a novel addresses any issues with a satire like E.M. Forster's "*A Passage to India*", similarly in Ulysses James Joyce efficiently uses satire technique. None of the novels can be considered as satires as satirical elements are not predominant. Vidal was not the only one to put forth these views, but based on his work most of Waugh's critics labeled him a satirist. (Carens, 1966). A Tory gentleman ("*He only loved a lord*") is a favorite and tedious maxim of this view) or a Catholic. Edmund Wilson and Charles J. Rolo, opines that Waugh's sincerity to Catholicism in his novels has been catastrophic. Leo Hines also mentions that Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* outraged critics by its openly Catholic and conservative sentiment, and Waugh's subsequent novels, examined closely for the same symptoms, have been contrasted unfavorably with his early work. (Hines, 1962). On the other hand Catholic writers feel that his writing improves when he gets closer to God. But the pattern is complicated when we find contradictions even among those who are writing from a Catholic point of view. (Vitis, 1956). Christopher Hollis and A.A. De Vitis praise the later novels. Sean O'Faolain and Donat O'Donnell condemn them. Sean O'Faolain finds in later Waugh "*an excess of loyalty*". (O'Faolain, 1956), while Maria Cross says that Waugh carries out upon the reader his "*nostalgia*" and his "*snobbery*". (Cross, 1953)

Taken without any chronological order, there is one particular aspect in Waugh's novels that reappears most constantly, the theme of Traditionalism versus Modernity. It is a recurring symbol that seems to stand for a great deal that Waugh finds worth preserving and attaining even though it is nearly inaccessible and can rarely be presented to the reader seriously.

1.2.2 Novel 1: “Decline and fall”

Decline and Fall is the first novel written by Evelyn Waugh, The house in Waugh’s novels stands for tradition, custom, ceremony, order with beauty, which is at once aesthetic and nobly moral which were threatened. In the novel, Margot Beste-Chetwynde possessed one house each in London and Hampshire. The house in London was the most outstanding edifice between Park Lane & Bond Street, but her country-house was incomplete when Paul went to live there during the Easter holidays. In Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde’s exciting and in sometimes disgraceful career no single measure had quite so much hostile comment as the building, or rebuilding, of the remarkable house known as King’s Thursday.

Some of the visitors feel that they “have been privileged to step for an hour and a half hour of their own century into the leisurely, prosaic life of the English Renaissance”.. (Waugh, Decline and Fall, 1962, p. 116) Modernization asks for elevators and labor-saving devices, for hot and cold water-taps and electric ovens. The owner decides to sell it and is purchased by his sister-in-law, Margot (a symbol of modern age), she finds it horrible and decides to raze it to the ground so that she could have a modern house designed by Professor Otto Silenus.

During three centuries the poverty and inactivity had maintained its home consistent by any of the following fashions that lunge domestic architecture.

“No wing had been added, no window filled in; no Portico, facade, terrace, orangery, tower or battlement marred its timbered front. In the craze for coal-gas and indoor sanitation, King’s Thursday had slept unscathed by Plumber or engineer...” (Waugh, Decline and Fall, 1962, p. 137)

Evelyn Waugh portrayed a German architect of Otto Silenus through whom Waugh projected conservative British. He is referred Prof Otto Silenus as anyone who met him was impressed by his genius.

He was assigned a task to rebuild King’s Thursday; the instructions provided to him were *“something clean and square”*. He thought about the instructions and after 3 days started his design.

He had his own philosophy of architecture:

“The problem of architecture as I see it,” he elaborated a journalist visited to report the progress of his development of Ferro concrete and aluminum, “is the problem of all art – the elimination of the human element from the consideration of form. The only perfect building must be the factory, because that is built to house machines, not men. I do not think it is possible for domestic architecture to be beautiful, but I am doing my best.” “All ill comes from man,” he said gloomily; please tell your readers. Man is never beautiful; he is never happy except when he becomes the channel for the distribution of mechanical forces.”

(Waugh, Decline and Fall, 1962, p. 144)

Silenus completes the Job, converting King’s Thursday into an ‘aluminum and glass abortion, all clean and square’. Waugh satirizes the dehumanization of contemporary architecture and wants us to recognize that the abstract and the functional can be as lifeless and cold as machinery. The writer brings out the concept of architecture with human values, the design which is destroyed later resembles downsizing of traditional values which are now being taken over by the modernization. We find that Lord Tangent is accidentally wounded during the bogus school games. Eventually a passing reference is made to the swelling of his foot. Then, we learn later that *“Everybody” was at Grimes’ wedding, except little Lord Tangent whose foot was being amputated at the local nursing home.*” (Waugh, Decline and Fall, 1962, p. 125)

Finally Lady Circumference remarks with reference to the public reaction to the anticipated wedding of Margot and Paul: *“It’s maddening ‘Tangent having died just at this time.... People may think that that’s my reason for refusing”* (Waugh, Decline and Fall, 1962, p. 149). Even the slaying of Prendergast by a lunatic is presented in the same manner. The other characters also respond to the tortures of these ill-fated ones with great indifference. Thus they also become part of this incoherence, which pervades the universe created by Waugh.

1.2.3 Novel 2: ‘Vile bodies’

In Vile Bodies also through the same pattern, a number of characters-Adam, Nina, Agatha Runcible and some others - are represented in rebellion against the tradition and ceremony represented by Doubting Hall and Anchorage House. The old gang assembles for a party at Anchorage House at the same time when the Bright Young People are attending another Party on the deck of a ship. Anchorage House, “the only survivor in the noble house of London,” stands for “grace, dignity and other worldliness”

“Though clearly threatened by the encroachment of skyscrapers, its inhabitants are noble”“... a great concourse of pious and honorable people (many of whom made the Anchorage House reception the one outing of the year), their women folk gowned in rich and durable stuffs, their men ablaze with orders; people who had represented their country in foreign places and sent their sons to die for her in battle, people of decent and temperate life... of independent judgment and marked eccentricities... that fine phalanx of the passing order, approaching, as one day at the Last Trump they hoped to meet their Maker, with decorous and Frank cordiality.” (Waugh, Vile Bodies, 1960, p. 121)

Colonel Blount’s eccentricity his doubting Hall with its traditional meal and objects exercise a positive influence on Adam. Lottie crump’s Shepherd’s Hotel resembles the Colonel’s Doubting Hall since her place is a

reminder of the dead times of “Edwardian Certainty” from where one could draw “cool and contaminated air” and inside “*It is like a country house*” (Waugh, *Vile Bodies*, 1960, p. 35). The rebellion of the new generation is not experimental, but fashionable, a revolution in manners stabilized, popularized, flattened out”. They are conscious of themselves as a generation. Peter Pastmaster tells his step-father to go to hell after they have returned from their respective parties, one on a dirigible and one at Anchorage House. Miles Malpractice is homosexual and Agatha Runcible wears Pants apparently to their Parents’ disgust. The lower middle class, conversation in the train during Adam’s visit to Colonel Blount shows the lack of understanding between generations. One of the speakers says that her husband is opposed to the idea of their daughter’s becoming a manicurist, she says to her friend. “I am a modern, you see. “*We’re not living in the Victorian Age, I hold him*” (Waugh, *Vile Bodies*, 1960, p. 132). This implies, of course, that she and her daughter feel that the father is Victorian. The values by which Waugh Judged his society are first reflected in the tradition of Anchorage House; Judged by these values the Bright Young people appear simply ridiculous.

1.2.4 Novel 3: ‘A handful of dust’

For Waugh’s “definitive” attitude towards the house, we should probably turn to *A Handful of Dust*. Hetton Abbey is everything that the Country-house should be and it - especially its master - succumbs to all the traditional enemies of rural life. On one level, Hetton represents the traditional order of landed England and thus offers the familiar contrast with the shallow, anarchic world of fashionable London. The quiet seclusion of the estate, with its mildly ceremonious tempo, compares favourably with the frenetic party going of Lady Cockpurse’s circle. (“*I don’t keep up the house,*” Tony explains, “*to be a hostel for a lot of bores to come and gossip in*”) (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951). Moreover rather like *Howards End*, Hetton Stands as a symbolic counter to the city flat, which to Waugh as much as to Forster is a manifestation of the nomadic uprooted and discontinuity of contemporary life. It is not an accident; therefore, that Tony, the fond master of the Abbey, is betrayed by his wife Brenda in a tiny maisonette designed by Mrs. Beaver herself, a specialist in the new tastes of the well-to-do. “*What people want she said, was somewhere to dress and telephone*”, (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 52). Indeed, it is significant that Tony’s humiliating downfall has its origins in Brenda’s boredom with her country home and her self-centered preference for the trivial excitements of the West end. At the same time, however, both Hetton and its master are themselves objects of Waugh’s satire. The “*madly feudal*” Tony is a good man in his way, but he is also naive and rather absurd. Hetton is a kind of religion for Tony. “*He loves the place, every “glazed brick” and “encaustic tile”. He still lives in Morgan Le Fay, the bedroom he lived in as a child (all the bedrooms at Hetton have received names from Mallory). The line of its battlements against the sky; the central clock tower where quarterly chimes disturbed all but the heaviest sleepers; the ecclesiastical gloom of the great hall*” (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 14), “all these create for Tony a whole Gothic world. Bored with the life of this place, Brenda says to him: “*Well, it sometimes seems to me rather pointless keeping up a house this size if we don’t now and then ask some other people to stay in it*”. (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 18).

Tony who devotes his entire life to the upkeep of this house positively answers:

“*Pointless? I can’t think what you mean. I don’t keep this house to be a hostel for a lot of bores to come and gossip in. We’ve always lived here and I hope John will be able to keep it on after me. One has a duty towards one’s employees, and towards the place too. It is a definite part of English life which would be a serious loss if...*” (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 18)

Tony does not resist them as long as only his family is at stake, but when Hetton itself is threatened he can react effectively against Brenda’s polished attack.

Evelyn Waugh seems to have developed a striking contrast between Tony’s Gothic house and Brenda’s London flat where she begins the spend most of her time later. Beaver’s mother, with whose son Brenda is committing adultery, is subdividing a small house in Bulgaria “*into six small flats at three pounds a week, of one room each and a bath*”. She believes that it will “*fill a long-felt need*”. In these flats “*the bathrooms are going to be slap-up, with limitless hot water and every translate refinement; the other room would have a large built-in wardrobe...and a space for a bed*”, so that Brenda may enjoy the charms of this building. These maisonette flats are an appropriate means for Brenda to facilitate her adultery. In the Gothic world also, which Waugh loves and mocks, comes to grief, because the defenses of the landed gentry are too naïve to resist the London invasion. But despite Tony’s fate, Hetton endures though a bit reduced in its earlier glory. Some of its rooms are closed but we learn in the final irony of the novel that Teddy last who has chosen Galahad as his room, hopes to restore Hetton to “*the glory it had enjoyed in the days of his cousin Tony*” (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 221)

Obviously Hetton Abbey is not meant to stand for any authentic living tradition. On the Contrary, its battlements, stained glass windows are all sham Gothic of the nineteenth century revival. As Richard Wasson shows in his perceptive essay on the novel, Waugh has intentionally made Hetton a ludicrous embodiment of the picturesque medievalism of those Victorians who, in their attempts to Patch up and disguise the broken tradition bequeathed to them by the Renaissance revived the trappings of a once vital past without any genuine awareness of their spiritual substance. Within its make-believe crenellated walls, Tony lives out a fantasy inherited from his

Victorian forebears and their literature and so has lost touch with the realities of the contemporary society around him.

Indeed, Tony's absurd doom is forecast and mirrored by Hetton itself. With the bedrooms named preposterously after the knights and ladies of Arthurian legend, Hetton becomes a parody of ancient Camelot. Tony's own room "*Morgan le Fay, which has been his since childhood and which still houses "a gallery representative of every Phrase of his adolescence"*" (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 15) reflects the boyish immaturity incapable of coping with Brenda's duplicity. At each stage of Tony's downfall Hetton plays its part. Though he lives for his house and for keeping it up, Tony sacrifices needed repairs to give Brenda a flat in London and thus unwittingly assists her infidelity. Soon after the death of John Andrew, his only son and heir to the family seat, Tony learns of his wife's relationship with Beaver when she writes that she will not return to Hetton and wishes a divorce. To ease her divorce, he goes through a staged adultery in a seaside hotel that serves as a humiliating contrast to the quiet decency of Hetton. And his most painful disillusionment comes when Brenda admits to him that she expects Hetton to be sold to meet her demands for alimony: "A whole Gothic world had come to grief...there are now no armour, glittering in the forest glades, no embroidered feet on the greensward; the cream and dappled unicorns had fled" (Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*, 1951, p. 209)

1.2.5 Novel 4: Work suspended

In his later novels Evelyn Waugh begins to present the positive side of the English house instead of the eccentric, which was presented in his earlier novels. The pattern is the same. By emphasizing the positive contents and influence of the House, the novelist shows the futility of the modern age, which is devoid of every virtue, order and restraint associated with the house. The hero of *Work Suspended*, a novelist who is looking for a "house" recognizes that the devotion of people of his generation to domestic architecture is "wistful, half romantic, and half aesthetic". John Plant himself is conscious of the house's positive value, which plays a great role in forming a man's personality. He realizes the permanence of the country-house. Plant has always disliked possessions but now deprived of a place "to hang my hat", he is conscious that they shape a way of life:

"Country houses were permanent; even when the owner was abroad, the house was there, with a couple of servants or, at the worst, someone at a cottage who came into light fires and open windows, someone who, at a Pinch, could be persuaded also to make the bed and wash up. They were places where wives and children could be left for long Periods, where one retired to write a book, where one could be ill, where in the course of a love affair, one could take a girl and, by being her guide and sponsor in strange surroundings, establish a degree of proprietorship impossible on the natural ground of London. The owners of these places were, by their nature, a Patient race, but repeated abuse was apt to soar the" (Waugh, *Work Suspended*, 1950).

Plant is of the opinion that country-houses were more permanent than men. Men were merely temporary dwellers in the long life of these houses. While human beings perished, the houses survived. Not only Plant but his friends also who profess left wing opinions, have the same nostalgia for the old house. Roger's advice, though a communist, to Plant seems to be odd but it is there:

'I tell you what. Why don't you buy a nice quiet house in the country? I shall want somewhere to stay while this baby is born.' " (Waugh, *Work Suspended*, 1950, p. 135).

In the end, plant, conscious of the worth of the house, invites Atwater "*why don't you come and live with me. I've got a house in the country, plenty of room. Stay as long as you like. Die there*". " (Waugh, *Work Suspended*, 1950).

1.2.6 Novel 5: Brideshead revisited

Brideshead Revisited, one of the most familiar and most disputed of country-house novels, opens sometime after the outbreak of hostilities. Like the earlier two, moreover, Waugh's novel makes the national crisis a moment for wistfully taking stock of the English Past. In *Brideshead Revisited*, the challenge to order and tradition is more insidious. Brideshead stands for the ideal values of aristocracy - honour, continuity and order - to which has been added Roman Catholicism. Waugh has removed every "taint" of oddness from the place, an act that seems to reveal his "true" feelings, after all: Brideshead is positive good; the civilized rural existence (steeped in a Catholic past) is one of the last remaining outposts of sanity in a preposterous society. According to Frank Kermode: "*The great house of England becomes, by an easy transition, types of the Catholic city*". (Kermode, 1962)

Waugh employs a first person point of view and a flashback technique allowing the reader to see the house he presents and also during revealing moments of the past. In the prologue the narrator, Charles Ryder a middle-aged officer, finds himself stationed at an army camp in the vicinity of Brideshead Castle, the family seat of the Marchmains, an Old Catholic family. This coincidence unlocks a flood of memories that form the substance of the plot: Ryder's friendship with Sebastian Flyte, the younger son of Lord Marchmain, at Oxford during the twenties; his first and later visits to the enchanting house; and his associations with its aristocratic occupants whose Personal crises, including Marchmain's infidelity and eventual return to Brideshead, he chronicles along with its own. But what makes the novel memorable to most readers – despite questionable aspect of Plotting and characterization – is the Presentation of the house itself. Beginning with his nostalgic recollections of Brideshead, Charles Ryder

closes with still another attempt, in the epilogue, to place the great house in the large changing context of England's social and religious history.

Throughout the novel Waugh has developed, with great voluptuous care, the beauty of the great country seat of Brideshead with all the loveliness of its gardens and the splendor of its baroque fountain. Charles Ryder is so much enchanted with it that while leaving it he feels as if he had left a part of his own self behind: "*But as I drove away and turned back in the car to take what promised to be my last view of the house, I felt that I was leaving part of myself behind, and that wherever I went afterwards I should feel the lack of it, and search for it hopelessly, as ghosts are said to do, frequenting the spots where they buried material treasures without which they cannot pay their way to neither world*", (Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited, The Sacred & Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder*, 1945).

During the early years of Charles Ryder's friendship with Sebastian, the sanctuary light in the Pre-Raphaelite chapel continues to burn, but with the death of Lady Marchmain, the Sacristy lamp is extinguished. The Modern are has again had its victory. Waugh Positively deploras the invasion or meadows and parklands by the builders of suburban housing development. The signs of rural decay in the modern age are apparent:

"The Camp stood where, until quite lately, had been pasture and Ploughland; the farmhouse still stood in a fold of the hill and had served us for battalion officers; ivy still supported part of what had once been the walls of fruit garden; half an acre of mutilated old trees behind the wash-houses survived of an orchard. The place had been marked for destruction before the army came to it. Had there been another year of peace, there would have been no farmhouse, no wall, no apple trees. Already half a mile of concrete road lay between bare clay banks....", (Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited, The Sacred & Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder*, 1945). As if that was not enough he adds something more to it to show the madness of the modern world as against the calm and order of the old country-houses: "Over the way, the subject of much ironical comment, half hidden even in winter by its embosoming trees, lay the municipal asylum, whose cast iron railings and noble gates put our rough wire to shame. We could watch the madmen, on clement days, sauntering and skipping among the trim gravel walks and Pleasantly Planted lawns...the undisputed heirs-at-law of a century of Progress, enjoying the heritage at ease. As we marched past, the men used to shout greetings to them through the railings – 'Keep a bed warm for me chum. I shan't be long' - ..." (Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited, The Sacred & Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder*, 1945).

This change in the modern outlook has threatened the existence of these great country-houses. Despite Brideshead's Positive goodness, the protagonist, Ryder, does not get it. Perhaps because it has been associated with the father's world and without the father behind it and divested of the compelling trappings of eccentricity, it simply wasn't worth having, imaginatively at least. Brideshead Castle-symbolically affirm some kind of communality and order against the anarchy of a world at war and even in the face of threatened disaster they give promise of a human and historical continuum.

1.2.7 Novel 6: Sword of honor

In *Sword of Honour*, it directly concerned with the country-house theme the Crouchback seat of Broome, like the other elements just discussed, both resembles its counterparts in Waugh's previous novels and notably differs from them at the same time. Not so obviously central to the main action as Hetton Abbey and Brideshead are in their respective novels, Broome, through frequent allusion-it is mentioned on the first page and on the last-remains nonetheless a point of symbolic reference through the long and varied narrative of the war years. Like Brideshead, Broome is a repository of chivalric traditions and Catholic faith; in fact, it is almost unique in contemporary England, the reader is told, in that it has been held in uninterrupted succession by the male heir since the reign of Henry I and has never lacked a priest for its chapel. Yet Broome is not at all romanticized nor invested with the enchantments that the nostalgic Charles Ryder associated with Brideshead; on the contrary, it possesses an everyday solidity missing from the other's dreamlike ambience. Rather than seeming secret and aloof from the world of the commonplace, Broome is physically close to its village-the approaching drive being a continuation of the village street-and so the Guy's father recalls an age when the proximity of a great house to its neighbors made for easy and expected community.

"*Every good house stands on a road or a river or a rock,*" the old man observes, adding in support of Waugh's Catholic thesis: "*Only hunting lodges belong in a Park. It was after the reformation that new rich men began hiding away from their people.*" (Waugh, *Sword of Honor*, 1945).

Broome's recent fate has also been quite different from Brideshead's. In what appears to be an allusion to Ryder's closing words about the light burning in the chapel of the Marchmains, the novelist observes that "*the sanctuary lamp still burned at Broome as of old*" (Waugh, *Sword of Honor*, 1945). But this is not a sign that the house has been left untouched by the changing world outside. In fact, Guy's father has rented the estate to a convent school for girls, and it is in their chapel- converted from one of the long, paneled galleries-that the lamp now burns. Had such alterations been made at Brideshead, they might have seemed desecrations of the wonderland Ryder wished to remember; but to Broome they bring a sense of continuity and restored vigor much like that which old

Wilcher Perceives in his nephew's farming at Tolbrook. Waugh, indeed, describes the activities of the schoolgirls- the old great hall is now their recreation room- rather matter-of-factly, with only friendly irony and no trace of sentimentality. Guy's father, "for whom family pride was a schoolboy hobby compared with his religious faith," never mourns the loss of Broome but simply remains fortified by its memory: "*He still inhabited it as he had known it bright boyhood and in early, requited love*" (Waugh, *Sword of Honor*, 1945). Furthermore, because Broome has survived, retaining its religious affiliations, it serves as a kind of spiritual lodestone through Guy's unsettling peregrinations, and with its traditions of chivalry and charity, adds a communal import to his seemingly quixotic personal choices.

Finally, Guy's returns to Broome after the war, his settling down- significantly in the "Lesser House" and not the main hall- with his second wife, the practical Domenica, and the son of Virginia and Trimmer, furnishes the needed coda for Waugh's unpredictable modulations of the country-house motif. In keeping with the theme and tone of the rest of the trilogy, it is an ambiguous coda, ironic and Christian at once. For who is the heir to Broome after all but young Trimmer, the offspring of the man who personifies for Waugh the intolerable vulgarity and deracination of the modern world.

1.2. Conclusion

Evelyn Waugh's funny and experimental satire of houses proclaims a new generation coming and taking on the world, they reveal the darkness and hollowness under the shining surface of high life. He with his unique style is able to bring out smiles on people and make them ponder; the critical statements made by the writer are able to impress the readers. He through the characters not only through the people but also through the non living objects is able to proclaim social criticism. Using black humor through house characterization, symbolizing to wealth, he targeted and parodied the existing flaws, pretensions, imprecise values and dissipation of the aristocracy.

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