Chapter V

Charles Ryder’s Struggle to Adopt his New World and the Story for Past in Brideshead Revisited

“My theme is memory, that winged host that soared about me one grey morning of war-time” (211).

This chapter presents Charles Ryder’s struggle to adopt his new world and the story for the past in Brideshead Revisited. The novel Brideshead Revisited was an immediate success and had many admirers, as well as dissenters. Indeed, besides many more objections of different kinds, the book was often criticized by socially conscious critics as the one celebrating the pre-war period when the upper classes had their prime time, conversely to the working classes, raising their voices during the war and the post-war years. It is not an unknown fact that Waugh had never tried even to disguise his contempt for the working classes. Whether it was for his disgust he had for the socialist ideas, or the lack of interest in uneducated masses that made him ignore certain layers of the society of British and the immigrant sufferings.
In his novels, Waugh’s central characters would be the uneducated protest, descending from somewhere in North England, raiding with masses to participate in the 1926 General strike and—speaking the language, that Charles Ryder or Sebastian Flyte from Brideshead Revisited did. On the whole, another one reason why Waugh is still widely read is his mastery of the English language, which creates a pleasure. That language is rich in allusions, metaphors, historical events and foreign-language words, which are characteristic for the upper classes of British society. Moreover, it has always been the highest societal circles that served as the desired model for the formation of values, tastes, attitudes and manners of the rest of the society. No other novel of Waugh has provoked so much controversy as his Brideshead Revisited and sub-titled with The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder. Lane says, “Sacred eventually sweeps all that came before it,” but in the beginning the profane dominates and is “epitomised by the pastoral Oxford scenes and the early scenes at Brideshead” (91).

When Brideshead Revisited was published, the book took the critical world by storm and set the critic by
the ears. On its publication it won more detractors than admirers. The novel’s main action takes place in England between World War I and World War II. While international events barely impact the story line, Waugh drops numerous hints in the narrative to help what is happening outside of the characters' immediate surroundings. The Prologue and the Epilogue take place in a wartime encampment in the English countryside. In this way when Waugh is writing his novel, he clearly states British upper class people’s conditions, and how they assumed and observed their life style.

Eleven years passed between the time Waugh published *A Handful of Dust* in 1934 and *Brideshead Revisited* in 1945. J.D. Beresford says:

‘*Brideshead Revisited*’ he is concerned with a titled Roman Catholic family of considerable wealth. The elder son is a religiously minded nonentity, the younger a man of great personal charm but a confirmed dipsomaniac, and the daughter who marries a divorced Canadian in face of the opposition of her family, to whom such a marriage would mean ‘living in sin,’ does not remain faithful to him. In short, Waugh’s principal themes are adultery, perversion, and drunkenness,... (Critical Heritage 233)
Clearly, he packed in those years with excitement and productivity. Soon after the Church in Rome annulled Waugh’s first marriage, he married Laura Herbert. Prior to the publication of *Brideshead Revisited*, Laura Waugh gave birth to the first three of their seven children, one of whom died at just twenty-four hours old.

The new wedding couples chose Piers Court, Stinchcombe, Gloucestershire as their home, and Waugh began to garden, a habit he would enjoy for many years. Waugh had fifty copies of *Brideshead Revisited* privately printed in 1944, and he sent them as Christmas gifts to his friends. He was excited about the book and thought from the beginning he had written a masterpiece. Most critics in the Catholic press gave it positive reviews. However, some of Waugh's earlier supporters, such as the New Yorker critic Edmund Wilson, expressed disappointment. Wilson delighted in Waugh's departure from the comic vein, but he declared the work a disaster.

During that time in England, most of the people were Catholic. So he has only written about Catholicism. Fraser says, “During the nineteenth century, approximately ten percent of England’s population was
Catholic, and most of those people were from poor Irish stock" (67).

*Brideshead Revisited* first appeared in a limited edition in December, 1944 (Waugh often published small, sometimes specially engraved and illustrated limited editions for his friends). The regular edition followed in May of the next year. For fifteen years, Waugh had been acquiring a faithful but not a huge audience. *Brideshead Revisited* made him a best-selling author for the first time. It also alienated a number of critics. In this novel too much of the scene is devoted to the Oxford period and too little to Charles Ryder’s love affair with Julia Flyte.

Charles, the narrator, the hero of this novel and round character, even if he is, at times, the mouthpiece of the author. The view that Julia Flyte, with whom Charles falls in love, is dead as mutton has been rejected lately. She, even more than Charles is seen to grow in complexity as the story proceeds. Ryder is a snob who seems clearly lacking in generosity of spirit. Moreover, Waugh, so these critics argue, compounds his difficulties by choosing Ryder as his narrator. So strong is the suggestion, even if it is erroneous, that the
first-person narrator is a mouthpiece for the author that for the first time Waugh was personally identified with his unsympathetic hero. Whereas Tony Last in A Handful of Dust has no means of redemption, the characters in Brideshead Revisited save themselves from damnation, each in his unique way. Waugh’s Catholicism does not merely give the novel its great dramatic power, but it provides the world of the novel’s characters with coherence and a sense of meaning.

Brideshead Revisited is written completely from the first person point of view; that is, solely through the eyes of Charles Ryder. David Pryce-Jones says:

Evelyn Waugh writes novels about people and therefore only inductively about what they represent. Ideas are secondary to him, as a writer he appears fundamentally disinterested in intellectual arguments or appraisals. ‘Brideshead Revisited’ is the nearest that he comes to an argument, for Charles Ryder whose memories Sacred and Profane they are, is not a catholic (in either edition) and the new order is Juxtaposed against the old,.... (Critical Heritage 273)

Here, Charles is the only one telling the story of his all memories. Victor Clinton-Baddeley rightly says,
“Charles Ryder is a sharply drawn character, gentle, humourous, civilised, and entirely likeable” (Critical Heritage 237). In general, Charles is a trustworthy narrator. He does not obviously exaggerate or provide unbelievable information. But, Charles is the only one person to telling a story, that person's background and experiences color the telling of the tale. In Charles' case, his childhood was a serious one, with very little happiness. His mother died when he was young and his father pays little attention to him. The absence of his own family may have made it easy for him to become intimately involved with the Flyte family, and, because of this closeness, he may be blind to some of their faults. A number of times other characters refer to the less-than-wonderful characteristics of the Flytes, including Sebastian, and this either confuses or upsets Charles. Charles tells the story of his relationship with the Flytes and Sebastian with the benefit of hindsight. He has had time during the intervening fifteen to twenty years to reconsider events. The story is framed by the present, with a Prologue and an Epilogue, but takes place primarily in the past.
In *Brideshead Revisited* Waugh employs a complex narrative technique in which the main body of the novel is sandwiched between a “Prologue” and an “Epilogue”. Besides giving the narrator a degree of externality to the events of the story such a framing device enables the narrator to present the needed contrast between the past and his present mature vision. Through the first-person retrospective narrative the narrator attempts to regain unity of, self of reconstructing the past through memory. The first one is called as “Et in Arcadia Ego”. Hardy says, the “Et in Arcadia Ego” symbolises “‘anti-Hooper,’ the values, the way of life, that command Ryder’s deepest fondness and loyalty” (161). The book has bargains generally with Ryder’s most memorable Oxford years with Sebastian, and the second one is called as, “A Twitch upon the Thread”. This book briefly follows the Marchmain family and it is through upon Ryder’s most memorable memories. Fraser says, the “Twitch upon the Thread” anticipates the “mysterious action of grace” (85). The knowledge of the self is one of the essential aspects of the spiritual quest which is given dramatic expression in the novel. Not only is time fragmented but also the self
Waugh’s fiction is a proof of the author’s identity with constantly being integral part of his artistic consciousness. Waugh encounters the sense of loss and experience of sadness torn away from his native. His experience of sadness appears in the novel *Brideshead Revisited*. This novel includes significant topics such as families and their religious perspectives. Charles Ryder is the hero of the novel and his experiences has followed as first, their memories of the past in which they are pushed into their own identities in the native land. Second, connection between individuals and often unsuccessful attempts at communication are in the new world. Third, a sense of entrapment and the desire for escape. Fourth, is the search for balance among life’s turbulent element. The use of parallel characters with the redemptive power of storytelling is the last one.

Charles Ryder’s struggle proceeded on different levels from this novel: Religion, Friendship, Family, Memory and the Past, Youth, Art and Culture, Drugs and Alcoholism, Society and Class, and love. Catholicism is the main focus of *Brideshead Revisited*. From hurried pre-
wedding conversions to dinner-table debates on dogma, religion dominates the novel’s thematic focus. Every character struggles with religion in one way or another, even the agnostic central character. The one concept everyone seems to agree on is that to be holy is to suffer. In accordance with this principle, the most religious characters in the novel choose to suffer to be closer to God.

Charles Friendship in *Brideshead Revisited* revolves around a close friendship between two young men who meet in college. Loyalty is tested when friendship comes in conflict with family, and a territorial sense of ownership means tension runs high. The relationship between these young men is undeniably one of unconditional love. Friendship is an isolating force in this novel; the closer the two young men become, the less they care to interact with the rest of the world. And the more the world impinges on their time together, the further they are driven apart.

Family is a huge source of conflict in *Brideshead Revisited*. The novel takes place in England over the course of the 1920s and '30s, when rank and titles among the aristocracy meant that expectations were high and
obligations strict; men were expected to act as the head of estates and women to marry a suitable match. Family is also the source of much of the religious conflict in the novel, since children are raised according to their mother’s religion. More than one essentially forced conversion goes down within the course of the narrative, and always in the name of marriage and family.

Charles Memory and the past in *Brideshead Revisited* is told as a first-person narrative by a middle-aged man recalling what, for him, were much better days: his college years at Oxford and the decade that followed. While his memories are laced with the bitter melancholy of nostalgia, the act of remembering is ultimately a positive one. The narrator learns from his recollection and, despite the sad and destructive end to his story, is enlightened and buoyed by the process.

Youth is repeatedly referred to as “Arcadia,” or heaven, in *Brideshead Revisited*. The novel is told as the recollection of a middle-aged man, so it may well be that a pair of rose-colored glasses is tainting the vision. Nevertheless, youth is presented in all the hazy splendor of a lovely, eternal dream. From lazy days drinking champagne to long strolls in gardens to the narrator’s
first, an eye-opening introduction to a world of art and architecture, there's little to dislike in this Arcadian paradise.

Charles Art and culture in *Brideshead Revisited* is the story of a young man’s aesthetic education as he discovers a world of architectural beauty and struggles to build a life as an artist. Nearly all the novel’s main relationships revolve around aesthetics, from love affairs based on the beauty to friendships based on friendships built solely around artistic instruction. One idea explored in the novel is the threat of charm to artistic sensibilities. British charm in particular, claims one aesthete, is deadly, as it will strangle artistic passion by keeping it all neat and orderly.

Alcoholism is at the center of *Brideshead Revisited* and essentially destroys a beautiful, charming young man. Of course, the alcoholism itself is driven by a slew of other problems, namely family and religion. The young man in question turns to the substance as a means of escaping, retreating further and further into self-imposed isolation by means of intense bouts of drinking. As is said many times in the novel, alcohol is used primarily as an escape. Regularly, Ryder and Sebastian go
drinking at the Old Hundredth. Here, like Ryder’s skull is in his room, “the pleasures of Arcady are touched by death” (Clement 133).

Society and class in *Brideshead Revisited* offers a view into the world of the British aristocracy in the 1920s and '30s. Titles are ranked, and the obligations that go with them threaten to determine the course of each character’s life. Wealth in particular is a focus of the novel, especially the vulgar extravagance of the British upper class society.

Charles Love in *Brideshead Revisited* struggles to understand and define love over the course of two decades. Hardy says, Ryder and Julia “suffer, withal good-humouredly, the champagne and the roses and the massage and the being shaved in bed, but cannot possibly be imagined to enjoy any of it” (163). The novel explores the many different kinds of love, from the “romantic” but not necessarily sexual love between young men to sexual relationships between men to stilted marriages to sibling relationships. One unique perspective the novel offers is the idea of a first and second love: boys experience this first love shortly before they become men. It is an
immature forerunner to the mature, complete love he will experience next.

As the novel begins, Ryder, a thirty-nine-year-old captain of infantry, is transferred, along with his battalion, to a new camp. Hooper represents what Ryder seems to be wrong with the world. Hooper the Platoon Commander in Charles Company was a symbol of hypocrisy and superficiality in its prime stage, an embodiment of modern degenerated man. Ryder says, “Hooper became a symbol to me of Young England” (7). Ryder and Hooper experienced vastly different upbringings. Ryder studied the major wars that influenced the history of England while Hooper studied details about the recent industrial change. Ryder studied victories and defeats when soldiers were called upon, “to preserve national or cultural identity” (Schleuter 213). Hooper studied efficiency. Ryder volunteered for duty in the army while Hooper came to it reluctantly, after making every effort to avoid it. The troops do not like Hooper, because he is uninformed, careless, and unreliable. These deficiencies lead John Edward Hardy to assert that Hooper symbolises, “the new age of the war without ideals, of the substitution of a history of social movements for that of the glory of
English and ancient arms in the education of the young" (161). Hooper refers to the “madmen” in the lunatic asylum located close to the first military camp and says, in a gruesome comment, that he feels that his countrymen “can learn a thing or two” from Hitler (2). Hooper, with no sense of the past, symbolises the decay of the values of the times.

The total army group has shipped into another camp. The armed forces arrived at the midnight at Brideshead, and Ryder does not understand until the following morning that he has come back to Brideshead estate. J.D. Beresford says:

There is a prologue which introduces the narrator, Charles Ryder, as an infantry commander in this war; at the end of a long journey in darkness... grounds of Brideshead castle in Wiltshire. Back he goes in memory to ... Flyte family,... his friendship at Oxford with Lord Sebastian,... the beginning of ... his soul’s dependence upon the mercy of god....
(Critical Heritage 234)

Once Charles remembers that the country estate of Brideshead is the exquisite nation home of the Marchmains. Ulf Schonberg contends that Brideshead Castle signifies, “faith and its development both in personal
and historical terms” (85). He notices all the Brideshead places and he has recollected all of his memory.

Charles Ryder is a fresher, just arrived in Oxford. He is a well-to-do, London middle-class orphan invested with the premature maturity that the public school system has programmed him for, and the bleakness that his social background and an estranged parent-child relationship have provided him with throughout his entire life. His father, a mythically (and very entertainingly) distracted erudite living in a parallel, wacky universe of his own, has not kissed him since his nursery days. He is a dead world of emotional restraint and dullness. Were it not for his fascinatingly deranged sense of humor and sarcasm, the atmosphere in Charles’s house could be described as dominated by moral paralysis. Despite the brilliant satire in the pages dedicated to him, and the articulateness of both characters, it is apparent that their communication is not much more fluent than the one between both, father and son. Ryder lives through his fresher term as subjected to a new alienating routine. This will result in a strong bond with Sebastian Flyte, who has grounds for such a mood, too. Their friendship will appear to quench Charles’s longing for something
else, for something different, his spiritual thirst for love, wonder and discovery.

Charles Ryder and Sebastian met at Oxford University. Oxford University is a historic English university that is the novel’s second great anchor. Ryder enjoys his first floor rooms, partly because of the fragrant wildflowers growing below the windows which symbolise “Oxford’s natural beauty” (Going 91). There Charles meets Sebastian and most of the friends he retains through the rest of his life. The heady charm of Oxford’s dreaming spires and intense friendships of youth influence Charles more than the university’s intellectual opportunities. Aldous Huxley says:

In the beginning it is gay enough – an affectionately ironic picture of Oxford in 1923, the sunflower estheticism, plovers’ eggs and getting drunk at luncheon, the lively, small banter, the happy irresponsibility, ‘Antic Hay’... (Critical Heritage 243)

The unimaginably wealthy and charming Sebastian introduces Charles to a new world of art and pleasure. Although Charles leaves Oxford without taking a degree and becomes a successful artist, Oxford continues to inspire him and remain a touchstone of his youth.
Much as the Oxford scenes in the book reflect Waugh’s own sense of nostalgia, there is a touch of irony in the descriptions. Writing long after the days of youth, the narrator persona looks upon the period with a detached view of a man who has no more illusions of his past. The epigraph gives a clue to the ironic detachment of the narrator. Evoking as it does the golden Arcady of a forgotten age; it suggests a sense of inevitable doom. Ryder did not then realize that the Oxford days were numbered and that he would encounter before long the teasing questions of existence. In the post-apiarian world, rife with evil and pain as a consequence of its abandonment of God, it would be futile to look for rural innocence and simplicity.

The extravagance of the hero’s suffering is covered by Christian journey with two characters Julia and Sebastian. Marquis Marchmain turns back to Italy with his mistress Cara. Lady Teresa Marchmain has lived with his four children: Brideshead, Sebastian, Julia and Cordelia with maintaining the true religious faith, “’Well,’ I said, ‘if you can believe all that and you don’t want to be good, where’s the difficulty about your religion?’ ‘If you can’t see, you can’t’” (78). In Marchmain family two
of the children Bridey and Cordelia look like as Teresa and another two of them Julia and Sebastian as look like Marquis. Two of the Flyte’s have not forgotten their religious aspects, but sometimes they could forget their strict religious principles. Both of the two Flyte’s have failed to communicate with their religion. Sebastian has failed to communicate with his religious faith by his drinking habits. Julia has also struggled with his marriage partner and she married Rex Mottram with her outside faith.

The shadows of the godless world close upon Charles Ryder and Sebastian Flyte of the Marchmain family, "Often, almost daily, since I had known Sebastian, some chance word in his conversation had reminded me that he was a Catholic, but I took it as a foible, like his Teddy-bear" (77). The Flytes—Sebastian and his sister Julia—as their names suggest, are apostates who separate themselves from the traditional values which their religion has helped nourish in their childhood. Young Sebastian himself with his exquisite charm and beauty is ever trying to escape from a painful, self-conscious present by retreating more and more into infantilism. Fallen into a comically limited and fragmented world, yet
the characters are unaware that they are helpless victims of time, mutability and death.

Ryder’s life, not only bustling Oxford with its innumerable attractions, but the home of the Flytes, Brideshead constitutes the seductive illusions which blind Ryder and others to life’s true meaning. What attracts Charles to the Flytes—Sebastian first and then his twin like sister Julia—is not the beauty of Catholicism, of which Lady Marchmain is a solid and a living symbol but their incredible physical charm. His love for Julia Mottrom later in the story proves to be one of the biggest obstacles to his faith, although at the same time his love for Julia is a forerunner of the greater love of God.

Lady Marchmain’s friendship with Charles through whom she hopes to wean Sebastian away from his weakness arouses the latter’s angry suspicion of his once close friend and ally. The brief imprisonment that Sebastian along with Ryder and Mulcaster undergoes for drunken driving in the company of couple of prostitutes, instead of sobering him up, only makes him more introverted and uncongenial. Lady Marchmain’s treatment of the incident with humorous resignation only exacerbates Sebastian’s
hatred of himself and others. Sebastian gets disgustingly drunk and marks another stride in his flight from the family, which brings him to ruin. He is especially resentful of Ryder, whom he unfairly suspects of taking sides against him.

Like the heroes in the early novels, Charles Ryder is the one character who moves in all the worlds presented in the book. His experiences are part of his growing up. He himself is unaware of the impact his introduction into the Brideshead household was going to have on his life. It is as if Ryder is predestined in the economy of God’s grace to be one of his elect. So vital sense his presence in the Brideshead family that Lady Marchmain not only looks upon him as part of the family, but comes to depend on him in restoring her son Sebastian back into the health of the community. Lady Marchmain approves of the idea of Julia divorcing Mottrom and having Charles as her second husband. The possible inheritance of the property is a hint of the wealth of spiritual inheritance that is in store of Ryder.

In many ways, therefore, the novel is about tracing one's history by studying the traces and sites of memory that provide one with a sense of historical identity.
This historical identity is uniquely modern and as portrayed in the novel results from awareness of the distance between a coherent, meaningful past identity, enclosed and enshrined in memory, and a present experience of dislocation, of having been severed from an ancient bond of identity. On one side of this gulf, seen in the novel, is an intimate link to a tradition of memory, namely the Catholic culture that once gave ground and direction to members of the Marchmain family. On the other side are characters drawn away from this enclosed culture, either willingly or unwillingly, by other relationships, by political forces, and by the broad possibilities for alternate modes of existence in a modern mass culture.

‘You must see the garden front and the fountain.’ He leaned forward and put the car into gear. ‘It’s where my family live.’ And even then, rapt in the vision, I felt, momentarily, like a wind stirring the tapestry, an ominous chill at the words he used - not ‘That is my house,” but ‘It’s where my family live.’ (29)

Both Sebastian and Lord Marchmain seem desperate to escape the heavy responsibility attendant on maintaining
membership in their family’s isolated Catholic culture, and so seek other identities in other relationships: Sebastian, shutting out the world to become the “subject of charity” with Kurt; and Lord Marchmain, the Byronic exile with Cara in Italy. The other characters like from this novel, Julia with Rex, she keeps family tradition in a limitation. The Second World War and the strike of 1926 represent the broader political forces that surround and threaten the insular aristocratic paradise at Brideshead. Even Cordelia, who chooses social service over the stability of aristocratic Catholic culture, is drawn away from Brideshead where she experiences a violent modern world.

Ryder’s sexual relationship with Julia allows him to exchange his self-proclaimed agnosticism for his own unique Anglo-Catholic belonging to the range of faith experiences depicted amongst the members of the Flyte family. Alvin B. Kerman aptly says:

Waugh has frequently been accused of being a snob and deadly conservative, but in fact he treats the representatives of the old order as savagely as he does the new barbarians. He defends tradition, not the status quo; social order, not the establishment. The standards
against which his fools are measured and found to be fools is not, in his early novels, located in any individual but in the values and social forms to which his characters without knowing what they are doing still give voice....(210)

Ryder’s revelation also provides a moment of solidity for his fluid, non-hetero normative sexual existence, illustrated by non-consummated homosexualy oriented affections transitioning into habitual heterosexual desire. Charles’s love object choice, embodied by his affections towards Julia Flyte, serves as the bridge of this transition occurring in his sexual development. The sex scene described between Ryder and Julia operates as this site of heterosexual desire simultaneously serves as a site of legitimation for Ryder’s affection for Sebastian. Waugh’s choice of how he staged this particular scene, pertaining to its illustrative language, ultimately allows for Charles to inhabit his heterosexual and homosexual desires simultaneously. The overlapping interpretative lenses of shame, sexuality, and religion together, rather than as separate narrative elements, allow for a nuanced interpretation of Charles’s religious and sexual identity. *Brideshead Revisited*
denounces the importance of Charles’s relationship with Julia and Sebastian Flyte or reduces them to mistakes and distractions, overlooking the depth of their interrelated nature of Charles Ryder’s faith.

Waugh portrays his characters in *Brideshead Revisited* as modern outsiders, modern misfits, always trying to get inside of a more meaningful existence, always experiencing life on the fringes. Throughout his fictional existence, Charles has always been the outsider lacking an experience of being inside. His childhood has left him without any knowledge of what it means to be in a family:

I went there uncertainly, for it was foreign ground and there was a tiny, priggish, warning voice in my ear which in the tones of Collins told me it was seemly to hold back. But I was in search of love in those days, and I went full of curiosity and the faint, unrecognised apprehension that here, at last, I should find that low door in the wall, which others, I knew, had found before me, which opened on an enclosed and enchanted garden, which was somewhere, not overlooked by any window, in the heart of that grey city. (26)
Later, Ryder tries successively in different ways to get inside of Brideshead. At first, his love for Sebastian offers him one level of entry into the world of Brideshead. At Oxford, he follows Sebastian through the door in the wall and which enchanted garden, an experience leading into other gardens, orchards, and parlors during their languid summer at Brideshead. This first extended stay at Brideshead offers Charles a chance to relive a more meaningful childhood. Brideshead becomes a kind of nursery where he is given an “aesthetic education” simply by living in its environs with Sebastian. Moreover, Charles develops a powerful, art historian's attraction toward all he sees at Brideshead, and he carefully records each detail of landscape, architecture, artwork, and interior design. Yet despite his appreciation of the physical environment, Charles's entry into Brideshead at this point goes nowhere beyond a comprehension of its historical and aesthetic significance.

Charles's expected marriage to Julia renews the promise of entering and possessing Brideshead. However, just as he feels about to get inside, the vision eludes him. Through this final disappointment, Waugh tells us
that Charles has misunderstood what it means to get inside of Brideshead. For an outsider, getting inside of Brideshead requires more than an understanding of Brideshead as an historical monument dedicated to aristocratic and aesthetic values. Getting inside requires that one understands Brideshead above all as a shrine dedicated to an ancient religious tradition, and more specifically as a refuge or sanctuary where one finds the living heart of a Catholic family memory.

Charles learns later in life, to truly enter Brideshead would be to merge into this living tradition of memory, like Nanny Hawkins does. But since he arrives at this understanding too late, it seems the low door in the wall closed to him for good. The closest he can come to interiorize the memory that Brideshead evokes and preserve it through a personal acceptance of Catholic faith. The ending is somewhat illogical, however, when considering that by becoming a Catholic, Charles eventually could have been reunited with Julia; the two of them could then have returned to inherit Brideshead and there revitalize a Catholic family and tradition. But to go this route, Waugh would have had to make Charles's conversion more obvious, and thus make his theme too
exclusive. As it actually stands, the plan of the novel enables Charles to become a broader type of character, a representative modern Western individual. Charles's experience represents the modern experience of human subjectivity in its almost constant state of flux.

Sebastian is a more tragic type of modern misfit, torn more radically than Charles between the pull of competing impulses. The spell of memory continually pulls him back toward a primal identity associated with family, ritual, and a specific place. Still, Sebastian rebels against his tradition and he does not stop to consume the drinking habits and he does not want to adopt with his family:

It was during this term that I began to realise that Sebastian was a drunkard in quite a different sense to myself. I got drunk often, but through an excess of high spirits, in the love of the moment, and the wish to prolong and enhance it; Sebastian drank to escape. As we together grew older and more serious I drank less, he more. I found that sometimes after I had gone back to my college, he sat up late and alone, soaking. A succession of disasters came on him so swiftly and with such unexpected violence that it is hard to say.... (118)
Yet memory more than anything is what Sebastian resists through drink. However, Sebastian’s behaviors do not necessarily reflect an urge to be alone, but rather let alone—that is, free to pursue happiness through art and its interpretation from a lens of the surreal.

Sebastian Flyte’s identity as a dandy is easily identified as a search for a kind of fleeting artistic realization, uninhibited by the external “truths” of the society he principally rejects. To separate himself from social realities, Sebastian immerses himself in the unusual and the startling. To separate himself from social realities, Sebastian immerses himself in the unusual and the startling. Waugh primarily displays this in Sebastian’s regression into immaturity and alcoholism, his isolation in the haven of Brideshead estate, and his relationship with the spiritual elements of Catholicism. From the first occasion that he is presented, Sebastian deliberately removes himself from the mature world. Sebastian’s behavior effectively separates him from his peers at his university as an outsider and an oddity. Sebastian creates a realm for himself as a child in a world of adults: an immaturity only increasingly surreal when continued on the grounds of Brideshead estate.
To understand the effect Charles has on Sebastian, it is useful to analyze Waugh’s construction of the pair’s religious beliefs and practices. Perhaps more accurately, clarify that this conflict is between the opposing means and definitions of achieving divine grace. Characteristically, Sebastian’s concept of Catholicism is grounded in a belief in the unseen. However, it is clear that Waugh inherently rejects this unrealistic lifestyle and utilization of religion, drowning Sebastian in his own self-indulgence and misery and proving that art cannot exist for itself or for the sake of beauty and happiness alone. Without this necessary service of divine morality, Sebastian’s exploration of beauty is profane. Yet when he is forced into a matrix of religious consequence and made part of its system, he is forced into a common sort of reality and consequently deprived of his creative ability of dissociation.

Thus, it is not so much the existence of this kind of religion that harms Sebastian, but rather the constant imposition of morality and the mundane that shatters his carefully constructed haven of surreal beauty. Waugh primarily develops this concept in contrast to Charles’s relationship with religion. Lady Marchmain seeks to
convert Charles’ alliance via Christianity, and by the end of the novel, it seems that this change has been effectively completed in Charles’s melodramatic prayer for salvation on behalf of the dying Lord Marchmain. Charles is not a true Christian, because he lacks the characteristic that Sebastian, ironically, has a faith in the unseen. Charles feels a flame of religious passion, but his belief is unavoidably restricted by the “beaten” physicality that grounds him to reality. Here, Sebastian’s place has a fracture one in the Brideshead outer world. At first, Charles has charmed by Sebastian at Oxford days and they share all the beauty of life and divine grace. But, soon Charles changed his ways to give much more importance to Marchmain family and their religious perspectives. After Charles has felt more for his less participation with Sebastian.

In the Marchmain family Charles has seen religion play an important role through the three characters Bridey, Lady Marchmain, and Julia. Bridey is a man of integrity and enormous man about his religion and he is a strict follower. Bridey knows all about his religious regulations and he never moves back from his catholic aspects. Bridey’s strong faithfulness follows in all of
his family functions and he expects his thought of
religion from all of his family members. Lady Marchmain
has come from families of old Catholics. She is a
sympathetic and trusting religious perceiver and she
sacrifices all of his life and richness as well. Lady
Marchmain lives for others. Lady Marchmain has suffered
by her husband Marquis. Cordelia is the youngest child of
Marchmain, she is a very intelligent and diversion child
and she has the most faith in her religious aspects.
Cordelia has always differed from Julia. Cordelia follows
strictly with their religious than Julia. Waugh portrays
Julia’s husband Rex as an empty man of handsome, powerful
and rich. But he also differs from his religious
perspective.

Charles is the hero of the novel and he is
considered Julia’s second husband and Charles has greater
potential than Rex. The two persons were commonly both in
their physical perspectives, but Charles's worldliness is
civilized. When the novel opens he is an outsider and he
gets through his experienced as an insider. At the same
time Rex has moved the inside world to the outside world.
Lord Marchmain’s love affair with Lady Marchmain has been
enveloped with the religious perspective. Lord Marchmain
said to Lady Marchmain after his marriage took back family faith from their ancestors. But soon they have failed to understand each other and separate each other. But Lord Marchmain gives sufferings to lady Marchmain by his action of giving his children. Like Sebastian he is a person of drinking habits, and he escapes from the world of reality.

Charles shows the life of Sebastian as real and discernible to others. Sebastian’s all childhood qualities have torn away from him. But, Charles has tried to renew Sebastian’s life, but he fails. In Brideshead Lord Marchmain, Sebastian, and Julia start their war with Catholicism at Brideshead and Charles becomes a painter by his own way.

Rex Mottram was a true aristocrat. His unwillingness to break his immoral relationship with Mrs. Brenda Champion even after his marriage with Julia Flyte clearly proves that he never wanted to lose that ladder due to which he succeeded in making his mark in the society and who could be of much help to him in the near future. However, this further depreciated his value as people started identifying him less because of his own qualities
and more because of his illegitimate affair with Mrs. Brenda Champion.

Rex’s love for Julia was also a medium through which he wanted to attain the social heights and so he was keen to have the marriage settlements in order to avoid any financial loss, which brings out his materialistic nature, as he wanted to use her dowry for his own needs. Thus, he became highly disappointed when Julia became a social outcast after marrying him in a Protestant Church against her mother’s wish, as it deprived him of the entire dowry as well as the social connections. The narrator proves, through this example that he was nothing more than an opportunist that the modern society is producing.

The tortoise that he gave to Julia with her name set in diamonds on the shell was a symbol of his superficial and materialistic thinking. That time Julia liked it a lot, soon a year after her marriage, she realized that Rex was not a complete man, but a mere epitome of this degenerated modern world. He was in love with himself and so he failed to love Julia and was unmoved even after the death of her unborn daughter just because she was a girl, which kills the sympathy for this character. His
indifference to the illegitimate relationship between his wife Julia and Charles brings out the weakness of his character. He only objected quite later when Julia decided to divorce him in order to marry Charles but even then his objection was not due to his love for Julia but because of the material loss, he would be facing after the divorce, as his political career was not going smoothly at that time.

The second part of the book describes Ryder's unhappy marriage to Celia Mulcaster and his adulterous love affair with Julia. David Wykes referred to her as a more cuckolding wife than anyone found in Waugh’s previous novels. “... a loveless marriage for Ryder, betrayed by his wife, who has gone a step further than the earlier cuckolding wives in that she has fathered on him the child of her adultery” (142). One minor character emerges when Ryder marries Celia Mulcaster. Celia symbolises, “the epitome of the modern new woman, successful in high society circle... ambitious and indistinguishable from the crowd of ‘friends’ with whom she surrounds herself” (Wirth 60). Celia symbolises all that Ryder, “has come to despise about modern society which lacks all semblance of traditional values” (Wirth
60). The marriage is not a good one because Ryder does not love her. He is grateful when she commits adultery. After Ryder takes a two-year trip to Mexico and Central America, he shows his work in New York. He and Celia meet there for the exhibition after not seeing each other for two years, and Ryder shows no interest in the children and no love for his wife. Celia symbolises, “unreality, unrealism, and irresponsibility of Charles’s own attitudes... his capitulation to the soullessness of modern civilisation” (Hardy 166).

In this novel through the characters of Julia’s husband Rex and Charles wife Celia is from the people of spoiling world. They destroyed their life by spoiled ideals and they do not get any moral code from the world. The people from the decaying world want to live a luxurious life and they do not care about others. Charles’ wife Celia was also an embodiment of this degenerating cocktail society. Enjoying the rich life as a wife of successful architectural painter, she was a deteriorated soul and she makes infidelity to her husband. In this way Waugh has satire about this kind of cocktail society. The people of cocktail society are they want to enjoy in social life. For these reasons, Charles
hates her and admits with Julia. In this novel Celia has proved as not an ideal wife for his husband Charles.

No doubt she proved to be an ideal wife for Charles as far as his professional career was concerned as she shrewdly promoted Charles’ career by arranging cocktail parties in the aristocratic circles, and by taking care of critics (holding private exhibitions of paintings for them on Friday so that they can have a weekend to write about the paintings). However, in return, she enjoyed the social status, pelf and power earned by her husband without any moral obligation as she continued having a dissipated relationship with Robin. Morally she was an empty character. With the help of her brother Boy Mulcaster, she manipulated Charles to give her a good financial alimony, including the financial support for children that were not his. Celia spends much of money to his squander relationship with Robin. At this point, Robin is an empty character from this novel and he uses all of Charles’s fortune through Celia.

Robin is an incarnation like John Beaver in *A Handful of Dust*. In the two novels, *A Handful of Dust* and *Brideshead Revisited*, Tony and Charles fame has expenses for the characters like Robin and Beaver. In the divorce
time Boy Mulcaster asked for favours for him and his sister Celia. Charles soon gives all his fame to them and Celia has continually enjoyed their lives in the degenerating society. Charles gets more pressure than pleasure from his wife Celia. Ryder divorces Celia and she soon remarries. Here, Waugh gives the picture of Celia's infidelity. These kinds of people have corrupted the good society as well. Even some of them can only have relief from this kind of people like Charles and they also lose all fortune.

Charles has broken with his marriage life and his worthless behaviour to find pleasure in army life, but he has suffered and lost all of his happiness. He is disappointed and compares both marriage life and army life. He has discovered all of his sufferings through his experience. Charles does not only suffer by marriage with Celia but the rest of the characters also: Rex and Julia; Bridey and Widow Mrs. Beryl Musapratt. Bridey is also suffering by his married life. His wife Beryl is a mother of three children and she decides to marry Bridey for her financial needs for her children, because she is financially poor. Beryl has a religion tool to impress Bridey and she marries him. *Brideshead Revisited* draws
out the destiny of marriage life benefit for aristocratic societies. Here, marriage life is stable, but in this novel we see the failed marriage of Charles and Celia, Rex and Julia and Bridey and Mrs. Beryl Musapratt. Strong affection should keep a strong relationship with married couples, but here the couples have failed to understand their life. Even though they have a good relationship with themselves, they unknowingly search outside of the world.

Soon Julia turns back to religion with his family. She thinks that religion is better than her first husband Rex. So Julia chooses religion strictly. After the marriage fails, she follows Rex in America and soon she discovers Rex’s Folly. At the same time Charles is also bored in his second marriage and he searches a new place. Unfortunately, both Charles and Julia meet each other and again come to Brideshead.

The torment of Sebastian is always distracting and he dislikes everyone off from his society. Sebastian’s futile life keeps away from his family and it brings insecurity for him. Sebastian’s destruction becomes true by the ways of Charles. At the same time, Sebastian goes out from his society, and Charles enters inside of the
society. This creates feelings between both and Sebastian keeps the distance between Charles and he has escaped from the inner world. But no one has understood the inner sufferings of Sebastian.

Sebastian thinks Charles is very close to his family and Sebastian keeps distance between his families. Another distinction is Marchmain has always compared Sebastian with his dead brothers. In yet another interpretation, the chapel is a symbol of order and meaning in the world. Wooten suggests that, “Sebastian, in his search for Arcadia and in his flight from Lady Marchmain’s indulgent tyranny, is fleeing chiefly from the meaning of the chapel” (362). Even though Sebastian feels as his mother also does not understand him. These all incidents, Sebastian gets away from all of his family and Charles as well. Soon, Charles understood Lady Marchmain’s mistake comparing Sebastian to his dead brothers. But Lady Marchmain has forgotten the distinctive people, diverse identities and his family conditions. For all other mistakes Charles developed his drinking habits and he hates all. Besides, such a lot of misusing assumed has helped Sebastian break from this
world that he disdained and after never returned even to his mother’s death.

Nanny Hawkins, another minor character, has raised the Flyte children, and although the children are now grown, she continues to live at Brideshead. In fact, at the end of the book, she represents the only family member still living at Brideshead House. Although technically she is not a relative of the Flytes, traditionally, British nannies are considered part of the family and continue to live throughout their retirement in the family home. Significantly, the Flytes provide with her own servant. Nanny Hawkins is a Catholic and totally devoted to the Flytes. Warm and inviting, her room reflects, her love for the children because it is full of treasures the children have bestowed upon her over the years. McDonnell says, “Nanny symbolises the true values and sentiments of motherhood” (128). Nanny Hawkins never seems to change. She continues to treat the Flytes as children and always provides a haven for them. She is the only person living at Brideshead whom Sebastian cares to introduce to Ryder. Sebastian visits her regularly and even considers taking her to Oxford
with him, but he knows he cannot because she would constantly want to send him to church.

Thus, Waugh clearly brings out that more than a blind adherence to religion, morality, ethics and purity of heart are more essential to lead a happy life. Further, Waugh successfully brings out the aimlessness of the people in this chaotic modern world. Charles’ asking about the place is symbolic of his search for an aim or purpose in life that he does not have. Sebastian also confirms about the same aimlessness in Lord Brideshead, when he tells Charles that Bridey is not sure about the aim of his life and so keeps changing his mind. Sebastian himself kept wandering throughout his life escaping from his family, Charles got attracted towards him due to his good looks, his habit of carrying a teddy bear and his eccentric behavior, but in reality Sebastian due to lack of purpose in life was reluctant to give up his childhood and take on the responsibilities like a man.

Another minor character is Cara. Osborne says that, the name Cara means dear in Italian and suggests “worldly love” (3). She appears in the novel only twice, and Osborne proposes that:
In her first appearance, Cara has a long talk with Ryder when he and Sebastian visit Lord Marchmain in Italy. She tells Ryder that Sebastian will be unhappy because he clings to the illusions of innocence. She recognises that Ryder drinks for pleasure and that Sebastian drinks for escape. Although Cara understands the risky path Sebastian walks, she does not understand spirituality.

In the second appearance, she has gone to live at Brideshead Castle with Lord Marchmain, while he prepares to die. Osborne thinks, “this sets the stage for the confrontation between Lord Marchmain and the priest” (4). It is clear that Cara does not understand the significance of absolution. Even though she has a Catholic background, her religion is like Tony Last’s religion; she merely goes through the motions and possesses no real faith.

Ryder's unhappy marriage to Celia Mulcaster and his adulterous love affair with Julia, Ryder and Julia
divorce their respective spouses and plan to marry each other. Henry Reed aptly says:

Ten years later, Charles again meets Sebastian’s sister, Julia, unhappily married to the barbarian Rex. The family charm works again, Charles falls in love with her, and is, in a curious phrase, ‘made free of her narrow loins’ during a gale in mid-Atlantic. For two years their love survives happily; they are both about to be divorced in order to marry each other,.... (Critical Heritage 240)

At first, Julia refuses to accept the fact that, according to the tenets of her religion, she is living in sin and that all possibility of redemption is lost to her as long as she continues to live with Ryder. Sebastian drinks more and more to shut out the demands of his conscience. He ends up as a drunkard and a penitent living in a monastery. Because of impending war in Italy and his ill health, Lord Marchmain returns to Brideshead to die. He fears death because he deserted his Catholic faith twenty-five years ago. Various members of the family converse with Lord Marchmain as his condition weakens. Some of the children decide that the elder Marchmain should have the opportunity to receive the sacraments before he dies. Although Lord Marchmain
initially sends the priest away, as his condition worsens, Julia brings the priest back. Her father seems nearer to death than life as the priest administers the sacrament of absolution. There is an intense moment when everyone in the room prays for the dying man to be reconciled to God, and he moves his hand and makes the sign of the cross. Lord Marchmain's deathbed conversion affects Julia, and in the end she knows that a marriage to Ryder, although legally achievable, would be no marriage in the eyes of God. Ryder joins in the prayer for Lord Marchmain's conversion, because he knows how much it will mean to Julia if her father makes peace with God.

Here, Julia and Charles have thought that they have committed a wrong infatuated with one another. Finally, Julia and Charles have accepted the religious values and they think that their religion will save their punishment. Finally, the two of them are separated from their meaningful life and failed by their achievement. Now Julia has surrendered, and needs help from the faith of her religion. In Julia’s life, religion plays an important role in her marriage. Then, Julia also thinks that, if she would marry Charles, she feels as sin in
front of his religious faith. The two of the lovers do not betray each other, but they separate from their religious view. In last words also Charles thinks that Julia’s heart may be broken for his absence. The love affair with both has ended in the last of the novel.

The resolutions of Brideshead present two more similarities, betrayal and separation. In Brideshead, Julia's husband Rex betrays her, Charles's wife Celia betrays him, and both Julia and Charles return the favor by proving unfaithful. Love fails in novels because the protagonists are converted to different ways of thinking. In Brideshead, Charles describes himself as an agnostic. However, like all his other novels, Waugh’s moral concern seems visible in this novel also when he emphasizes for a return to traditional values and morals, but he was not a conservative person, who has closed his eyes towards the changes in the modern world. He was a firm supporter of ethics and reasoning and so anybody diverging from the path of righteousness became a butt of his satire. The novel in totality warns the society as a whole to save itself from the evil effects of modernization and shows a path of ‘Return to tradition’ to save itself from annihilation. Waugh used genteel satire to serve his
purpose by denouncing the degenerate souls like Rex Mottram, Celia Ryder, Hooper, etc.

Lord Marchmain's deathbed conversion affects Julia. At the novel's end, Julia faces the inevitable truth—that a marriage to Charles, legally achievable by his divorce from Celia and hers from Rex, would be no marriage in the eyes of God. Evelyn Waugh is indeed a Catholic novelist, permitting us to experience the transformation worked with Charles through his contact with the Marchmain family. At the last meet of Charles, years later, as he revisits the Brideshead estate which has called forth these memories that make up the novel's story. Further, Charles knows he cannot refuse to respond with obedience when God has so clearly revealed his presence. Ironically, Charles's tone is one of regret. Tragically, Charles has lost everything, and in return has gained only the love of a God he was eager to avoid. This painful conversion does not even succeed in providing his life with meaning. His conversion has not resolved the tension between human and divine goods.

In the last few paragraphs of the Epilogue, Charles experiences another conversion, one that emphasizes the ultimately comic nature of conversion. Puzzling over his
disparate memories, Charles finally recognizes the role that divine providence has played in guiding his adventures and misadventures. At the deathbed of Lord Marchmain, Charles recognizes the reality and authority of God, but only in the Epilogue does he see how God has mercifully acted in his life to bring him to conversion.

In the Epilogue, Ryder refers to “human tragedy” and to the builders who worked without knowing what their work would eventually mean. He discovers that the man sometimes builds and suffers in the world for reasons he may never know. He understands that man is necessary for the purpose of the divine force symbolised by the burning lamp. Wooten says, “Man regrettably may suffer in the world, but man must be in the world in order for the lamp that declares the presence of God to be lit, or relit, and witnessed” (373).

The tension between human and divine goods—a tension that has dominated the novel—is resolved by the crucifixion because the crucifixion reveals Christ as a lover who seeks to share with men the entire human experience. The ordinary, tragic events of human life have not been eliminated by the crucifixion; instead, they have been transformed into the means by which God
identifies himself with men, and so reveals his love. Consequently, it is a mistake to ignore the tragic elements of *Brideshead Revisited*. The adherents of *Brideshead Revisited* have had little success in defending Waugh's portrayal of conversion; it might be because they too seldom recognized the depth of human tragedy in the novel.

In addition, modern man is blindly following everything in the name of religion without understanding its depth. Christian religion has maintained its sanctity by its existence for nearly two thousand years, but what she forgot was that though Christianity has maintained its sanctity, but modern church does not contain those ideals, which were the very foundations of Christianity. It is true that the modern church has failed to resurrect the values of traditional from his ancestors. The conversation between Sebastian and Charles brings out Waugh’s feelings regarding his religion. Through the two characters Waugh tries to bring his own particular in clash about religion. Waugh expected the aristocratic society to stand for those moral values, but was disappointed on seeing the moral degradation in the upper strata of the society, but the aristocratic people
corrupt the society and the moral value has loss his faith.

Through this novel Waugh satirizes those people who use religion as a handmaiden tool for curbing human desires and for serving their own selfish purposes. The acceptance of religion by Lord Marchmain at the time of his death after living a sinful life with his mistress Cara proves that people come back to religion only in their hour of need, pain and sufferings. People are selfish by their wrong doing activities. Here, people are living in the world with sin and they forget about their religious faith.

Thus, the novel succeeds in establishing the value of tradition in the modern world. After showing the modern degenerate world, the narrator efficiently conveys that only an adherence to traditional values can provide salvation to human life. While establishing the value of faith in life, the narrator also warns the modern man from blindly following it without understanding its deeper meaning. The novel brings forth the point that religion is not merely a shelter for morally degenerate people, but a place for those who want to understand the true meaning and aim in life as it helps the man in
rising above perishable materialistic pleasures and by this attain salvation. Thus, where people like Cordelia and Sebastian succeeded in their attempt to find the true meaning of their life, there on the other hand people like Bridey and Lady Marchmain, despite following the religion fervently failed to attain salvation.