CHARACTERIZATION
CHAPTER VII
Characterisation

The characterisation of Evelyn Waugh which blends his vision and experience in a meaningful pattern provides a vantage ground for the study of his art and motivation. The motley figures of men and women in his satire are portrayed as the caricatures of the social types. True, their fantastic gambols are uproariously funny and give the impression of unreality. But the characters of Waugh, in their levity, not only expose the society to its inherent sickness but also provide momentum for the exposition of his moral stance. Evelyn Waugh, as we understand him, was an artist with a vision and a critic. His apparently dizzying world of gaiety and glamour is only a facade. Beneath the outward gloss and glitter of the capering humanity, subsist the most painful frivolities of the post-war milieu.

In the jaunty world of macabre morbidity the human context in the satires of Waugh is developed in a very consistent manner. True, the characters of Waugh are lacking in dignity and stature, sympathy and humanity. In fact, they are the distorted images of a hectic and nervy generation swirling ridiculously in the whirls of the post-war mores. His travesty of the egotism and prodigality of the sickly band of odd creatures bears the semblance of reality. The character device of Waugh is not only instrumental to his satire and criticism but also supports his spiritual quest in an unhappy world of disease and distress. Men and women in the world of Waugh are viewed as the satirist's rationale. In fact, the satirist's concern with the reality, moral purpose and preoccupation
with the verity determined his art and method.

Apparently, the human context in fiction is constituted by men and women, acting and reflecting, through their web of relationships. Characters evolve from the inmost experience of the writer and his observations in order to give meaning and consistency to plot which indeed is the arrangement of events in time sequence with relevance to causality and identity of action. Thus, the co-relationship between character and plot is an established fact. But while in the traditional fiction the co-relationship between plot and character is established through freedom of action within the set-pattern, in the satires of Waugh where characters are only pasteboard projections, it is determined by the satirist's motivation.

Characters in fiction do not develop in a geometrical straight line. They much rather make a curve because they develop through action. In their world of action and continuity they, however, do not evolve out of a static order. It is a process, not a state, in which the truths about man's reaction to their environment, actual and potential, can be presented. Obviously, the essence of character is determined by the nature of human responsiveness to the external reality. Therefore, the character traits in fiction are traced in the evolution of a conscious being through action and reaction in the context of his life. Individually, however, is determined by the intensity, awareness and preoccupations of a conscious mind in the process of action and reaction.

A thorough analysis of his characters shows that Waugh reflected though meaningfully, from the traditional method of characterisation. His social types, the egoists and the imposers, the smugs and the philistines, the social snobs, develop almost in straight lin
Actions in the satires of Waugh get their momentum from outward events. Therefore, his characters rarely develop from within. In fact, they are set types huddled up to establish the satirist's view of life and motivation. Although Waugh was not original in his art of characterisation, he was meaningful in the contemporary situation.

The early decades of the post-war ethos were marked by the dissolving social perspectives and disintegration. The decay of the aristocratic order and the emergence of the industrial bourgeoisie had an unsettling effect on both life and literature. The traditional modes of characterisation appeared rather inadequate in the post-war imbroglio. Set-piece characterisation was possible during the eighteenth and the nineteenth century when life was simple and organized. In an expanding society of shifting allegiances and moral affiliations characters as symbols also changed their pattern. Truly, the experience of the writer in the perplexing situation of modern life and their moral visions presaged a revision of the established methods of characterisation. This was however rendered possible by the increased knowledge about human psychology and history.

The eclipse of effective individuality in the post-war mores was an inexorable tendency of the situation. Characters in modern fiction, especially in the comic tradition, are more real as types rather than as individuals, and as types they embody the complex tendencies of the modern age. The increased knowledge about psychology and the writers concern with the human situation reinforced moral and psychological tensions in such manner that writers found in
their characters an appropriate idea for explaining the modern situation and an objective co-relative for reasoned expositions of their moral crisis. Therefore, an intimate relationship between the writers and their characters became quite obvious.

The growing tendency to govern the individuality of the characters in fiction resulted in the gradual disappearance of objectivity and effective individuality. Contemporary writers have ceased to be the makers of the dynamic personalities and the objective world of beauty and variety. The problem of accommodation for the writers in the contemporary milieu has rendered the study of novels an experience with the inmost world of consciousness and moral tensions. Characterisation thus involves one to the study of human consciousness in various phases of change and continuity. Naturally, modern novels have emerged as autobiographical in content and method, and the characters, the images of the world within appear as the alter-ego of the creator.

The characters of Evelyn Waugh, the grotesque social types, explain not only the author's notion about men and society but also his moral crisis in a traumatic world. The author dramatises human potency and vitality in their multiple phases of intensity and variety. The characters of Waugh are in fact the projections of the distorted ego of the humanity and his vision and experience about them in a limbo. They however do not exist outside the author's imagination and sympathy. Thus they are the concretisation of the vision about human types and motivation.

The characters of Waugh are flat and uproariously funny. As a satirist of the contemporary manners of the sophisticated
society Waugh develops his characters through comic gestures. Actions in his novels are rather superficial and rarely suggest any inward movement or development of the characters. Therefore, the characters in the satires of Waugh never change their essential traits. They are exposed through such actions which are ridiculous and bear the testimony of the satirist's attitude to them. Waugh eschewed the traditional method of narration, quite purposefully of course, and developed the co-relationship between his plot and character through presentation. The method of narration might have given his characters fullness, breathing freshness, verve and variety. Thus from this point of view the characters of Waugh are rather disappointing.

Waugh's characterisation is determined by the inner motivations of the satirist, his penchant for social criticism and quest for faith and religion. His characters are essentially empty and void immersed in the confusions of the social bogey. Nevertheless, Waugh's poignant observation of manners of his apparently fantastic characters has reinforced meaning and purpose to his art. The satirist's awareness of the reality and his depth of insight into the predicaments of the humanity prevented the characters of Waugh from being purely caricatures. Though comic in their appearance, the characters of Waugh suspend tragic irony at the core of the reality.

In *Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies, Black Mischief* and *A Handful of Dust*, the apparently ridiculous, the motley figures of Waugh are devised to establish the satirist's world view, his exposition of a limbo world. Margot BesteChetwynde, Grimes, Prendergast, Fagan, Sir Wilfred Lucas Dockery, the Bright Young People, Lotti Grump, Outrage, Adam Fenwick Synes, Nina, Kitty, Mrs Beaver, Abdul Akber, Lady Cockpurse and such many others constitute Waugh's
social context. The satirist's cynical attitude to his characters bears testimony of his comment on the post-war scene. Like John Plant in *Work Suspended* Waugh treats his characters almost as symbols. John Plant, the writer of thrillers believed that the characters must be reduced to symbols if they are soluble at all. Therefore, he suggests an equation of the individual experience with that of the social images. For him there is no place in literature for a live man, a man solid and active. The attitude of John Plant conveys the attitude of his author.

Contemporary knowledge about psychology furnished Waugh in the evolution of his art of characterisation. Freud in his study of characterology developed most consistently theory of the character as a system of strivings. He interpreted the dynamism of character as an expression of the libidinous sources in a living process, a process which depends on the unconscious motivic of the character. Freud's theory of the conative nature of character traits explain the specificity of one's character as the determinant of his sensory reactions to the external reality. Freud's theory of unconscious motivation and his theory of the conative nature provided meaningful clues to the study of human nature in the contemporary context. The dynamic quality of character structure of a person which Freud recognized as a particular form canalizing energy in the process of living had a far-reaching effect on the evolution of human personality in modern fiction.

True, the Freudian concept of characterology is mechanistic and human possibilities according to him are restricted biologically but his observations of the inmost tendencies of the human personality provided the psychological basis for the study of characters. Marx who claimed that consciousness is determined by
the material conditions of man is equally restricted. But his dialectical theories gave a fresh momentum to the study of man and matter relationship in the contemporary social life.

The distorted figures of humanity, the human marionettes, in the satires of Evelyn Waugh not only articulate a jaunty world of fun and frivolities but also reveal, quite consistently, an inward process of the living forces, the ego of the perplexed and the confused generation. The characters of Waugh, his heroes and the minor characters provide him a vantage ground for the exposition of his moral stance and a clear perspective for his satirical slant. His characters are designed or assigned as instruments of satire and salvation. This is a characteristic of Waugh's method.

The hero or the Candide figure in the satires of Waugh offers an interesting study of human predicaments in the modern situation. In an atmosphere of mechanised social forces where individuality is apart of the mechanised process, heroism becomes basically absurd. Heroism becomes impossible under conditions of perfect adaption. Mustafa Mond in Brave New World argues, though cynically that "civilization has absolutely no need of nobility or heroism." 1 Anyway, the inexorable forces of the modern civilization have immersed the individual's moral sense and his capacity to affect change. Ihab Hassan has rightly observed that "The individual's sense of his own potency, his power to affect change and mould events seems in steady decline." 2 Thus the eclipse of heroism in the contemporary milieu is a social phenomenon.

Heroism such as in the satires of Waugh marks a departure from the conventional pattern of the hero and the villain. There

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is no hero in the world of Waugh; there are only the victims and the victimisers. The victims have replaced the heroes and the victimisers the villains. The humanity is rendered helpless by the inevitable forces of the modern situation. The world of Waugh is seen as the purgatorio in which the hero suffers reverses for the renewal of life and values.

The hero, the effete figure, in the satires of Waugh is apparently the anti-hero who suffers uncommon reversals in an unhappy world of incoherence only because he is powerless to affect any change whatsoever or even to resist the reversals. Paul Pennyfeather in Decline and Fall, Adam Fenewick Symes in Vile Bodies, William Boot in Scoop, Tony Last in A Handful of Dust and Guy Crouchback in Men at Arms, Officers and Gentlemen and Unconditional Surrender are such victims of the society who suffer unusual reversals because they do not find any vantage ground for moral accomodation or adjustment in the hectic and the nervy society of the hollow generation.

The epithet that explain the situation of the modern hero is alienation. The hero in the social satires of Evelyn Waugh is held in a peculiar tension between alienation and engagement. Although he is the key figure and is placed at the centre of the vortex, events take place without his initiative. He is either an observer or an effete sufferer without any ability to support heroism. He is unable to resist the inexorable forces that take hold of him rather surprisingly in the mire and fury of the society. Paul Pennyfeather, Adam Fenewick Symes, William Boot and Tony Last are such victims of the frivolous society of Margot Beste-Chetwynde, the Bright Young People, Mrs Beaver and the smug journalists, the exploiters of the political confusions.
The eclipse of the traditional hero in the contemporary fiction is understandable. The historical forces have reversed the situation in such a manner that the feudal heroes have emerged as the modern fools. David Daiches has observed: "If we come too close to our hero his heroism dissolves. And if the conditions of social life are such that initiative or endurance or physical courage are unnecessary or even silly then the old fashioned hero becomes the modern fool. Don Quixote standing between the feudal period and a fool for whom we retain certain admiration. He seeks the crowded hours of glorious life in a civilization which does not go in for that sort of thing."

It is clear that the eclipse of the traditional hero, the vanguard of the feudal morale is an inevitable fact of the bourgeois society. Nobility and sincerity, the *locus standi* of the feudal hero, are overshadowed by bourgeois prudence and superficiality. Indeed, in an era of commercial enterprise and class consciousness social status and individuality are determined by the economic privileges. The capacity to effect change depends on the material standard. As a result the monopolists and the utilitarians have emerged as the most powerful class in the industrial malaise. David Daiches sees the eclipse of the hero as a phenomenon of the liberal bourgeois society which encouraged prudence as the instrument of success. He says: "As we leave the feudal age further and further behind and more through commercial towards industrial civilization, we note the emergence of a new kind of hero, the prudential hero, of whom Robinson Crusoe is the first important example in English literature. The hero whose motives are prudential rather than

selfless, or who seeks safety rather than glory, can appeal to the imagination as the elder species of hero could, and Romantic attempts to revive the elder hero provide interesting testimony to man’s reluctance to accept the prudence as an ideal.  

In his concept of the satirical hero Waugh is not original anyway, but he is meaningful. His consciousness of the historical forces, experience and the emotional fervour are diluted in a manner which is aesthetically satisfying and morally valid. Unlike the current tendency which characterises the hero as either a prudent or an exploiter, Waugh has seen his heroes or the satirical anti-heroes as the innocents. The innocents or the anti-heroes of Waugh are apparently stupid and run into hazards rather foolishly. The author however does not make any pretence about their unguarded candour. They are projected as the ingénue figures, the innocents.

Waugh’s concept of the satirical anti-hero provides a vantage ground for the evaluation of the human situation in the confused state of the modern life. Therefore, as a part of his method Waugh has maintained consistency almost rigorously in his character design of the anti-heroes. In fact, they are the projections of the satirist’s idea of the natural man and his predicaments in the contemporary context. Naturally, they seem to appear as puppets though not inconsistently. The satirist’s moral purpose has always determined the movements and activities of his innocents. Therefore Paul Pennyfeather does not understand the hypocrisy of Margot until the final bump comes with a shock. Adam, likewise, remains under the s

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1. Ibid., p.109.
giddy illusions of the profane society until the final catastrophe.
Tony Last in *A Handful of Dust* suffers terribly for an accommodation
in the oddities of the cosmopolitan society but is terminated
to the painful alienation of the Brazilian jungle. It is clear
that the satirical heroes of Waugh are the victims of the
disordered society of the songs. From the naive acceptance of
life they are gradually driven to disillusionment. Nevertheless,
the innate integrity of their character is retained through
the austerity of their innocence and indifference. In fact,
the apparent stupidity of the anti-heroes of Waugh, their amusingly
simple nature, is a satirical strategy.

In his concept of the satirical *naïve* Waugh has departed
not only from the romantic tradition of the English hero but also
from the current tendency of rendering the hero as prudential
or puerile. These methods appeared inadequate for the satirist's
intrinsic purpose and motivation. As the last vestiges of the
vanishing generation of the romantic hero, the naïfs of Waugh
placed rather oddly at the centre of the vortex of the social
life provide a standard of judgement. They are amusingly simple
but not stultified. They are unable to resist the incomprehensible
forces of the inglorious society. In fact, they never try.

The satirist's consciousness of the limitations of the
bourgeois society and his satirical stance determined the concept
of his heroes. Paul Pennyfeather, Adam Fenwick Smales, Tony Last
and Guy Grouchback are such types. In fact however they are more
real as potential than actual. Even Basil Seal, the specimen of
victimiser as the hero, is possessed with heroic potentiality.
But the social limitations have put them in such predicaments
that they are rendered insipid and helpless. Loneliness at the
core of their heart in a society abounding with chaos and
confusion explain the nature of their existence. Except Basil
Seal who is always ready for fresh excitements and utter
frivolous gambols no one is provoked to action by the forces
external to them. Hence there issues forth no explicit struggle
for existence, no conflict of individuality or ideal. Therefore,
the anti-heroes of Waugh, the naifs, are lacking in the dynamic
quality of the traditional hero. From Paul Pennyfeather to Guy
Grouchbeak with the exception of Basil Seal, the Waughian heroes
remain almost static. They never change essentially.

Ralph Fox has criticised this tendency of rendering the
static. His criticism of the modern novels and the writers as
decadent and reactionary bears the testimony of the Marxist
writers attitude to the post-war malaise. Ralph Fox writes:
'The modern novelists, abandoning the creation of personality of
a hero, for the minor task of rendering ordinary people in
ordinary circumstances, has thereby abandoned both realism and
life itself. This is true not only of the professed realist of
the "objective" school but also of the novelists of purely
subjective psychological analysis.'

Ralph Fox has condemned the modern approach to the concept
of hero as one of unreality. The isolation of life from the
historical forces immersed the possibility of individual's struggle
against the multiple social forces. In fact, the eclipse of the
hero is seen as a bourgeois phenomenon. Ralph Fox continues:
"Man is no longer the individual will in conflict with their
wills and personalities, for today all conflicts must be over-

shaded by the immense social conflicts also disappearing from
the novel being replaced by subjective struggles, sexual
intrigues and abstract discussions."

True, the satirical heroes of Evelyn Waugh are not heroic
in Fox's sense of the term. As a Marxist critic Ralph Fox views
heroism in terms of man and matter relationships. Heroism,
according to this school of critics is revealed through objective
struggles against the reactionary forces. The hero is seen as
a rebel. But the hero in the satires of Waugh is seen in purely
subjective struggles against the disintegrating forces and
amorality. In concurrence with the tradition of the English hero
the anti-heroes or the naives of Waugh are seen ethically. Through
sufferings they go beyond it. Experience of the amoral world, the
limbo, equip them with a sense of purpose, and faith. The heroes
are seen, quite obviously indeed, struggling in a purgatorial
crisis.

Paul Pennyfeather in Decline and Fall is the epitome of
the concept of Waughian heroes or anti-heroes. Apparently he is
a passive sufferer, a victim. As a student he is driven out
of the Soone College by the frivolous members of the Bollinger
Club; as a teacher of the Llannaba institution he suffers
disillusionments and again in the amoral society of Margot Beste-
Chetwynde he is victimised in the most sordid manner. He is the
victim of certain social forces which he finds almost irresistible.
As an effective individual Paul is almost a non-entity. In fact,
he is outsider in the abandoned society of the perverse, the
hollow generation. Paul's reaction to his predicaments show quite

1. Ibid., p. 125.
consistently that if Paul is not heroic in the traditional sense of the term, he is so at least in his capacity to endure. It is however not proper to say that Paul is such a stupid that he does not understand the nature of his society. On the contrary, he is quite conscious about the levity in the manners of the smug cosmopolitans and the inevitability of his own situation. In fact, Waugh never suggests that Paul has morally accepted the society of BestsChatwynde and its superficialities. In reality he has rejected it morally of course, though not physically.

A kind of inner logic has determined Paul's expressed behaviour. His secular experiences taint his initial simplicity and gradually he develops a kind of duality which saves him amidst chaos and confusion of the material life for a safe landing in his inner self. Paul is not devoid of every passion and sentiment. On the contrary, his relationship with Margot shows his simplicity and candour in the beginning. But experiences in her faithless and promiscuous society gradually turn him to self imposed alienation and passivity. Thus experience succeeded only in strengthening Paul's moral life, his inner logic.

Temperamentally Paul belongs to the feudal tradition and its secular and moral affiliations. But he is wrongly placed in such a society which does not provide any niche for such associations. Therefore his disgusts and detachments are quite natural. After his initial swearing at the temerity of the Bollinger members, "God damn and blast them all to hell," Paul neversswears again. He is convinced that the disease is endemic. From Llannaba to Egdon Heath Settlement nothing remains to take him with surprise. He realises that "anyone who has been to an English Public school

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will always feel comparatively at home in prison", bears the
testimony of his experience and a definite attitude to life.
The swirls of the surface life no longer influence the inner
consistency of his moral life. Paul has no interest in the outward
life or he does not understand it. Therefore, the conflict
which emerges in a state of imbalance rarely bothers him.

His apparently impervious stupidity and indifference makes
Paul a comic figure, an anti-hero. At one place Waugh observes
that Paul Pennyfeather "would never have made a hero, and the
only interest about him arises from the unusual series of events
of which his shadow was witness." His presence in the interview
for jobs in Latin-American Entertainment Co, Ltd of Margot
is rendered almost funny by his stupidity. Even after the whole
business is over Paul does not understand why young women are
taken on higher wages. He asks: 'I say, Margot, there was one
thing I couldn't understand. Why was it that the less experience
those chorus girls had, the more you seemed to want them? You
offered much higher wages to the ones who said they'd never
had a job before.'

The comic overtones in the satirical method of Waugh though
appears confusing, it does not distort the inner consistency of
his moral purpose and motivation. In fact, his method not only
absolves him from conventional constructions of such fictional
world but supports his moral purpose too. One who fails to see
this fails ultimately to understand the satirical stance of
Evelyn Waugh. The anti-heroes of Waugh instrumentalise gradual
exposition of his vision and reality.

1. Ibid., p. 146. 2. Ibid., p. 146.
The heroes or the victims in the satires of Waugh are seen as an unitary character trait developing slowly but consistently through meaningful shifts and changes. In fact, one can read in them the development of a single idea in series, Waugh's idea of naives, his pilgrims in a profane society. Therefore, there is no fundamental difference in the essential character of Waugh's anti-heroes. Innocence at the bottom of their personality is dominant in all situations. Innocence, the raison d'être of Paul's personality, is the dominant characteristic of Adam, Tony Last and Guy Crouchback in changed locales. They are a development of allied ideas. Adam in Vile Bodies; Tony Last in A Handful of Dust; and Guy Crouchback in Crouchback trilogy establish the fundamental element of Paul's character, his innocence.

Developing from a state of indifference and passivity to the extrinsic forces of the society, to a state of conscious commitment and affirmation of faith and value, the innocent characters of Waugh reinforce the satirist's attitude to the contemporary dilemma. Thus, through the projection of anti-heroes or innocents in a climactic society, Waugh has managed to create a link between himself and the real world not only to make an off-hand commentary on the contemporary situation but also to establish his rationale for faith and value.

Innocence, the reason for existence of Waughian anti-heroes, serves, though ironically, the dual purpose of evaluation and affirmation. Unlike the chaotic and nervy intellectuals, the angry young men, their cant and callow, the anti-heroes or the naives of
are reactionaries and almost insipid asserting the validity of their existence through innocence and integrity. Their innocence, viable of course, not only provide the satirist a leaven for social criticism but also a strategy for his quest for verity. De Vittis has observed, "Into a setting of high life and pseudo-sophistication Waugh places an individual spiritually unequipped to understand the evil of the world. This innocence is ironical. And it serves as a leaven."¹

In his observation of life and its predicaments Waugh is provoked not by outside motives only but by inner consistency of his innocents, their convictions. Paul Pennyfeather, for instance, placed at the centre, although ironically, seems quite apart from the surface. Amusingly rather we are not interested about what he does but how he reacts. In fact, his innocence provides the satirist his basis for moral judgement and religion. Writing about the innocence of Paul Pennyfeather Carens has said: "His innocence is tougher than life. Since at time this hero plays the fool, he succeeds in underscoring the irony; his very foolishness, a portion of his innocence, establishes the moral perspective. He becomes the link between the author and the real world...The innocence maintains the balance between the secular and the religious world."²

In fact, the satirical anti-heroes of Waugh beginning with Paul and finding its climactic expression in Guy Crouchback reveals the satirical stance of the satirist, a Christian's concern with experience and innocence. It is shown through the operation of innocence in its various phases of influence and experience. From Paul Pennyfeather to Guy Crouchback one can

see a Christian pilgrim's progress through a society abounding
with evil, the satirist's purgatorio, from innocence to experience
and cynicism to salvation. It is a progress which Waugh has
traced with consistency and purpose. Paul Pennyfeather is involved
in the sordid profession of Margot, Adam Fenwick Symes seems
almost a sinner in the doomed society of the bright young
generation, Tony Last, the philistine, is put under fire in the
mire and fury of the eddying society of the Beavers, but something
inside them saves them from being outright villains and sinners.
Only Basil Seal, the cannibal, illustrates Waugh's view of a
blatant sin and sacrilege. Yet he is not totally devoid of
redemption. However, the satirist's experiment with sin and
salvation finds its ultimate expression in Guy Crouchback. Thus
innocence emerges as a merit, a redeeming feature, in the
contemporary malaise.

In fact, like the Angry Young Generation of Wyndham Lewis,
Osborne and Kingsley Amis and the cynics and agnostics of Aldous
Huxley, the anti-heroes, the snobs and the sinners of Waugh
remain almost lonely at heart. They never find a mooring in the
hectic and nervous society of dizzying gaiety. Like the author
creator, the anti-heroes of Waugh are never able to see any pattern
in the vanishing perspective of the social life. Like Jim Dixon
in Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim or John Osborne's Jimmy Porter
in Look Back in Anger or the antics and the disillusioned artists
and intellectuals of Huxley, the anti-heroes of Waugh such as Paul
Pennyfeather, Adam Fenwick Symes, Tony Last, John Plant, Mr Pinfold,
and Guy Crouchback are quite conscious of the hollowness of
their society and civilization. Adam's "Nina, do you ever feel things's simply can't go on much longer?", explain his intrinsic feeling. In the animating world of the human puppets, the antics, Adam feels almost immersed in the murky whirlwind of sound and fury signifying nothing. Tony Last, an epitome feudal innocence and the values of consciousness, sees in the disintegration a prelude to decline. He discovers painfully of course that "for a month now he had lived in a world suddenly bereft of order; it was as though the whole reasonable and decent constitutions of things, the sum of all he had experienced or learned to expect were an inconspicuous, inconsiderable object mislaid somewhere on the dressing table...".

But the distressing situation of the innocents or anti-heroes of Waugh does not however lead them to any such cynical rejection of values and ultimate faith which the Angry Young Generation perpetrated rather listlessly, Experience and disillusionment led the radicals of Wyndham Lewis, John Osborne, Noel Coward, Kingsley Amis and Aldous Huxley to maimed spirituality and lose of faith, to a kind of swirling existence which scarcely provided them a mooring. On the other hand the predicaments of Waughian anti-heroes are seen ethically. There is indeed a cyclical movement in their progress. From Paul Pennyfeather to Guy Crouchback the spiritual progress is thus established in a very consistent manner. Paul however illustrates Waugh's view of a Christian in his natural state of existence. The removal of Paul from the Scone college marks the beginning of Sin and resultant purgation. Adam and Tony suffer painfully under fire because of their sins. In fact, they illustrate Waugh's idea of nature and consequence of the

purgatorial crisis. In Guy Crouchback however Waugh arrives at the consummation of a pilgrim's progress, a Christian's quest for salvation which started with Paul Pennyfeather. Thus experience strengthens the spiritual life of Waugh's seemingly naive heroes. Paul is only a prelude to Waugh's concept of hero as a naïf.

Guy Crouchback marks the triumph of innocence. In the personality and experience of Guy, Waugh's notion about innocence as a Christian merit reaches its culmination. Guy marks the **soup d'grade** of Waugh's theme of innocence in the mores. His rooted innocence saves Guy from complete self-immolation or even immersion. The activities of Guy, however funny and grotesque, provide means of understanding his time for the recovery of Christian faith and value. Guy's conviction in *Unconditional Surrender* that "one day he would get the chance to do some small service which only he could perform, for which he had been created," gives meaning and relevance to the innocence of Waughian heroes in an unitary series, marked by a consistent development from archaic innocence to rational humanism.

Through his satirical heroes or anti-heroes Waugh has developed his notion about individual freedom in a fragmented and menaced world of the industrial bourgeoisie. In fact, there is no scope for freedom in his spiritually sterile society of the diseased humanity, the antics. It must be obtained from within. Loss of innocence leads to chaos and confusion, deprivation and boredom. Adam, Basil and Tony are examples of such naïves doomed to

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and monotony of caged life because they tried for moral adjustment within the society. The loss of fundamental innocence landed Adam, Tony and even Basil Seal in the painful sequence of life, in the macabre morbidity of the secular ways.

Attempts for reconciliation within the superficialities of the spiritually dead society of the snugs and philistines led to the loss of innocence and sense of values. Such tendencies presaged an unhappy return to the world of ancient evils, to the life of archaism and instinct. But with Paul and Guy the experience is quite different. They are never exposed to the levity of their fundamental innocence. Their inmost life of moral consciousness of Paul Pennyfeather, Guy Crouchback and even Sebastian remain outside the influence of the profanities of the secular ways. Paul is saved by his commitment to the traditional values and religious orthodoxies saves Guy from complete deluge. In the innocence of Paul Pennyfeather and Guy Crouchback Waugh has idealised the strong points of innocence.

Carens has seen Charles Ryder in *Brideshead Revisited* and Guy Crouchback apart from the series of Waughian victims and anti-heroes. He says that “Ryder and Crouchback possess capacities which set them apart from a victim and anti-hero such as Tony Last. Their courage, their stoic and silent endurance of suffering, their capacity for avoiding despair - all these go back to their religious commitment to Roman Catholicism. They suffer, but they are sustained by the knowledge that the sanctuary lamp burns at Brideshead and Broom. However, Guy Crouchback attains a degree of self knowledge that is inadequate in any other of Waugh’s
central characters. Learning that honour cannot be achieved through violence and that only through charity may the individual hope to redeem the times, he seeks (and does not entirely fail) to bring some personal order into the chaos of social and political upheaval.¹

Carens cannot be accepted altogether. The method of seeing Guy Crouchback and Charles Ryder apart from the series of Waughian innocents or anti-heroes does not bear relevance to the satirical stance of Waugh. In fact, Guy marks the culmination of Waugh's exposition of the predicaments of innocence and his quest for a valid faith, a mooring amidst chaos and confusion of the contemporary situation. Indeed, Guy is not apart from such victims or anti-heroes as Tony Last or Adam Fenwick Symes but an integral part of the series of anti-heroes and victims, only placed in a different phase of experience and realisation. The victims or anti-heroes of Waugh do not however raise separate issue, but continue almost the same in different phases of experience and development.

Basil Seal is an exception in the world of Waugh's anti-heroes or victims. He is almost a victimiser, a seducer. But his innocence at the core of his personality cannot be overlooked. Through meaningful suggestions Waugh has established this aspect of his personality. However, in the personality of Basil Waugh studies the seedy ways of an essentially dynamic character. His amorality finds expression in odd extremities and violence. In fact Waugh has shown in him the other aspect of natural innocence, its cruel and violent aspects. Waugh has portrayed in him an innocent

youth without direction, a bounder. DeVittis has observed that "the innocence that characterised Paul Pennyfeather and Adam Symes finds a strange expression in the character of Basil Seal. In his Waugh prefers to examine the qualities of childhood which are boisterous, cruel and often sadistic." Basil illustrates the negative aspect of innocence.

Waugh's method of exposing the natural innocence of his anti-heroes follows almost the same pattern. It is revealed through their preoccupation with the childhood memories and occasional return to nursery games in moments of strain. Basil Seal plays Happy Families with Alastair and Sonia Thrumpington before his surreptitious escape to Azania.

"After dinner they all played happy families. 'Have you got Miss Chips the Carpenter's daughter?'

'Not at home but have you got Mr Chips the Carpenter? Thank you and Mrs Chips and Carpenter's wife? Thank you and Basil have you got Miss Chipps? Thank you. That's the Chips family.' Basil left early so as to see his mother before she went to bed."2

In A Handful of Dust Tony plays Bow-Bow in a state of crisis following the death of John Andrew.

'What was the game you said you know? Animal something?'

'Snap.'

'I'll buy it.'

'It's just a child's game. It would be ridiculous with two.'

'Show me.'

'Well each of us chooses an animal.'

'All right, I'm a dog and you're a hen. Now what?'3

2. Evelyn Waugh, Black Mischief (Great Britain, 1965), p. 79.
Finally they play. And Waugh's brilliant handling of the situation contributes to the exposition of Tony's inmost crisis, the dilemma of an innocent.

"They each took a pack and began dealing. Soon a pair of eights appeared. 'Bow-Wow,' said Mrs Rattery, scooping in the cards. Another pair, Bow-Wow,' said Mrs Rattery. 'You know you aren't putting your heart into this.'

'Oh,' said Tony, 'Coop-coop-coop.'

Presently he said again, 'Coop-coop-coop.'

'Don't be dumb,' said Mrs Rattery, 'that isn't a pair...'

They were still playing when Albert came in to draw the curtain. Tony had only two cards left which he turned over regularly; Mrs Rattery was obliged to divide hers, they were too many to hold. They stopped playing when they found that Albert was in the room."

D.S. Savage has pointed out, the innocents or the anti-heroes of Waugh reveal the predicaments of childhood immaturity and is hardly any development in their character. Commenting on his treatment and method of character delineation Savage writes: "As a comic writer he remains at a distance from experience which he views with a premature cynicism; as a serious novelist he endeavours to comprehend experience but is prevented by the mists of sentiment exhaled from a childish and adolescent innocence which has never really been outgrown. Like so many sophisticates he is at bottom romantically idealist. His conservatism which some have called neo-fascist, is merely the desire for the perpetuation of a social pattern known and locked in childhood and youth."

The criticism of Savage cannot however be accepted at
its face value since the victims and the anti-heroes of Waugh,
apparently, the puppets rather than personalities, develop
through shifts and transitions, though not in any secular sense
but spiritually. A gradual development of their inner life
can be traced in their experiences, the experience which leads
them to the realisation of the verities. A sustained development
from negation to affirmation and from cynicism to salvation
holds the victims or the anti-heroes Waugh in a meaningful
process. Thus they are funny but not futile.

The travesty of human potentiality finds its most cogent
expression in the motley figures, the human marionettes of
Waugh's minor characters. They are social types representing
the social forces in the eddies. The achievement of Waugh's
art of characterisation is established through his meticulous
treatment of the minor characters, the manikins, in order to
perpetuate his social perspective.

As social types the brilliant gallery of Waugh's minor
characters, their flippancy and fantastic gambols, represent
in their exuberance and impetuosity, the chaotic forces of
the disintegrating society. The merit of Waugh's art and method
lies in portraying them with such unique precision, cogency and
economy. They are funny or frivolous, futile or hollow but not
inconsistent. They are shadow figures, the human profiles, represent
the secular or the profane aspects of the society. The farcical
and the comic characters of the sophisticated group, the commercial
bourgeois, the bureaucrats, the vanishing aristocrats, the prodigal
and the perverted, presage the tragic consciousness of the satirist.
As a group the minor characters of Waugh establish his idea of evil
The female characters of Waugh, a brilliant menagerie of
the cold, the lustful, and the predatory women, are distinguished
by their exuberant virility and verve. In most of his major novels
females remain at the centre of activities. In *Decline and Fall*
Margot Beste-Chetwynde, in *Vile Bodies*, Mrs Ape, in *A Handful of*
Dust* Mrs Beaver, take initiative in the development of actions.
As pivots of social undoings the females of Waugh, his spinsters,
are seen as victimisers and lustful exploiters. The satirist's
attitude to their unscrupulous manners and volitality, their
blasé sophistication and vile profanity is almost hostile. Margot's
Latin-American Enterprise; Mrs Ape's company of prostitutes and
Mrs Beavers cosmopolitanism explain the satirist's attitude to
them. In fact, they are seen as the corrosive forces of the
society, the evils.

Love and marriage in the satires of Waugh are determined by
the seedy a-morality and sedition inherent in the contemporary
situation. Waugh's affiliation to the orthodox views, however,
influenced his cant about romance and sex relationships. In the
society of the vile bodies romance leads to loneliness and
marriage to divorce. In fact, there is no marriage in the satires
of Waugh, but divorce and infidelity, thwarted love and scandalous
liaison. The dissolving perspectives of the social life, its
shifting balances are shown through the dynamism of his females.

As a realist Waugh's satirical purpose is to explore the
evils and hollowness abounding with spiritually maimed society
of the post war malaise. His social types are the concretisations
of the decadent passions and egotism, the innocence and humanity.
Apparently they seem rather fantastic, but it is the actuality
that is striking. The puppets and the human dwarfs of Waugh are specimens of social types demand our sympathy and humanity for credibility. They are real only if we humanise them. The medley of humanity in fantastic capers and gaiety mirror the agony and futility, the chaos and crisis of a disintegrating society. The world of Waugh is indeed a world of cultural crisis.

Evelyn Waugh's art of characterisation is marked by a fine sense of justice. The violence, terror, unregarded deaths and the fantastic escapes, however grotesque and farcical, are sustained by a clear poetic justice. The murder of Prendergast, the escape of Grimes, the tragic death of Agatha Runcible, Adam's cynical rejection of values, the cannibalism of Basil, the living death of Tony Last, the suicide of Aimee Thanatogenos, though cruel bear the testimony of their author-creator's moral commentary.

Thus the excellance of Waugh's satirical art of characterisation his unfailing craftsmanship and keen intellectual grasp reveal the unsettling reality and moving potentiality of the nervy generation infested with evils. Paul West has observed:

"Waugh is altogether more giddy than Huxley; his touch is more Dickensian, and the gaga gallery of Aimee Thanatogenos, Margot Metroland, Mile Malpractice, Parsnip and Pimpernell, Sebastian with his teddy-bear, Mrs Melrose Ape and Miss Runcible is the perfect demonstration of energy without heart. These appalling marionettes make vain echoes in the sterile chambers called Public School, University and Society. Waugh diligently records the noises they make, the capers they cut. His virtuous people"
are passive; it is the fathead who have all the energy and cavort among fake fungi in the airconditioned nightmare of cultivated society.