THE PROBLEM OF NORM
CHAPTER

The Problem of Mora

The problem of the normative standard of judgement and values in the social satires of Evelyn Waugh deserves close attention. Like Mr Pinfold in The Ordeal of Mr Pinfold the novels of Waugh are well-made but the ambiguities of the modern and his ambivalence prevented the satirist from being explicit about the normative standard of his satires. The satirist does not affirm a definite moral standpoint. On the contrary, in "Fan-fare", an written after Brideshead Revisited, Waugh insisted that his novels are not satires. He reasoned that satire is a matter of period and that it "flourishes in a stable society and presupposes homogeneous moral standard." 1 True, the early negative satires of Waugh do not assert any such moral centre or standard of judgement in explicit terms. It seems that like Mr Pinfold Waugh "regarded his books as objects which he made, things quite external to himself to be used and judged by others." 2

Apparently, the satires of Waugh are concerned with a hollow world of chaos and confusion. The inadequacies of the modern life, its evils and vices, are seen as leading to tragic consequences. Amorphous materialism and spiritual inertness have not only blurred the moral background of the perplexed generation but also immersed it to ugliness, meaninglessness and shameless incongruitie. True, the satirist in his moral standpoint, either explicit or implied, is guided by his intellect, imagination and sympathy. Although the situation such as the present one does not provide a ready-made moral standard, a re-thinking on it, in the changed atmosphere is not abrogated altogether.

We satirist today can afford to consider his society as stable or even viable. It was different in the days of Juvenal or Swift. Evelyn Waugh knew that we live in a period of dissolving social frontiers and shifting moral affiliations. Hence homogeneous and fixed standards of judgement do not exist at all. Consequently, satire is almost impossible in the present context. Perhaps, this is too cynical a statement to be accepted at its face value. Satires are written, effectively indeed, by the modern writers. In fact, the ambiguity of statements about the standard of judgement is perhaps a mask, the satirist's strategy.

The early satires of Waugh are essentially negative. Through comic extravaganza and irrational terrorism Waugh has exposed the emptiness of what passes for civilization. The bottom has dropped out of the world picture and society has plunged into a state of nothingness oblivious of moral issues. In Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies, Black Mischief and in A Handful of Dust Waugh has depicted a world picture which is immersed in the darkness of ancient evils. No high moral purpose or any standard of judgement is discernable in such an incoherent and valueless world of irrational terrorism and temerity.

Waugh neither interefers nor apologizes for the untidy lives of his characters. It is a part of his satirical method. The world of the motley humanity is revealed through actions relevant to the plot structure. In fact, the world of utter futility, and chaos of the perplexing generation is revealed with objectivity. True, the urban objectivity of a highly sensitive man has rendered the satires of Waugh rather puzzling. It seems that the norm of life is lost in the eddies of the confused life of the decadent bourgeois.
In fact, after he has taken his altitude, his satirical stance, the satirist leaves his world to be judged by the readers. The satire in the novels of Waugh is not only an instrument of social criticism but also a strategy of conversion and quest. Thus his jestingly cynical attitude to life, his consciousness of evil at the core of the modern situation and a moral purpose determined the satirical art of Waugh. His satirical method is the telltale of his intention and motivation. The comparative reticence of the satirist about his norm is quite understandable. His early negative satires remain almost non-committed. As one critic puts it:

"Extraordinary enough, the most striking characteristic of the early novels, the one which they have perhaps attributed to childishness or snobbery or cruelty, is the absence of any positive good, either rendered or implied. In effect then, as product of rebellion (which in personal life may have been fulfilled), the early novels remain generally negative and destructive; and consequently, Waugh is criticised for lacking a high moral purpose and writing satire without moral centre."

Louis O'Coxe raised the question of moral centre in the satires of Waugh and called these a "protracted sneer". Nevertheless, it is difficult to accept such a statement on its face value. In fact, a critical examination of the overt manners and social behaviour of men and women, the human marionettes, reveal Waugh's normative standard of judgement and values. Of course this is not done openly but by nuances and suggestions. The standard of judgement or the norm is not imposed from above or outside, it evolves from inside, sometimes negatively and by implication. The grotesque

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and the apparently farcical world of Waugh moves upon an axis of truth which one should not overlook anyway. Alas, critics miss this point of truth, the moral undertone of his satires so often.

The comic overtones which dominate the fictional world of Waugh not only contribute to the development of his structure, as some critics insist, but also help to establish, quite consistently, his testament of value and judgement. His uproariously chaotic world of fun and futility, agony and irrelevance in Decline and Fall, Vile Bodies, Black Mischief and A Handful of Dust help to develop the thematic pattern of his satires and reveal a definite attitude which bears the testimony of the author's moral purpose.

A passage in Decline and Fall will help to see the moral postulation of the satirist. Paul reflects: "The temperate April sunlight fell through the budding chestnuts and revealed between their trunks green glimpses of parkland and the distant radiance of a lake. 'English spring,' thought Paul. 'In the dreaming ancestral beauty of the English country.' Surely, he thought, these great chestnuts in the morning sun stood for something enduring and serene in a world that had lost its reason and would so stand when the chaos and confusion were forgotten? And surely it was the spirit of William Morris that whispered to him in Margot BesteChetwynde's motor car about seed-time and harvest, the superb succession of the seasons, the harmonious interdependence of rich and poor, of dignity, innocence, and tradition?"

The reflection is significant in its context. Through it glimmers a possible attitude in which the truth about Waugh's

moral standpoint. The uproariously funny and hilarious world of entertainment in *Decline and Fall* do not however distort the satirist's standard of moral judgement, the *locus standi* of his satirical slant. True, the comic overtones in the earlier novels of Waugh especially, where the hero is not depicted with convincing detail, moral centre tends to drop out of the picture and becomes almost indistinguishably remote. It is a part of Waugh's method, all the same. From its exposition in *Decline and Fall* to its climactic expression in *Unconditional Surrender* Evelyn Waugh has developed his moral centre, though gradually, yet in a very consistent manner. From the static personality of Paul Pennyfeather to the dynamic idealism of Guy Crouchback the satirist has traced the process with nuances.

In his negative satires where the victim or the anti-hero leads a shadowy life of indecision, the impersonal standard of judgement controlling the characters and the incidents is stated in indirection. There is always a criticism of life. Professor Silenus is a joke figure. All the same, his observation of life though cynical, bears the traces of his maker's ambivalent attitude to the contemporary malaise and his moral standpoint. His allusion to the big wheel at Luna Park as a symbol of life is meaningful. In fact, the jestingly cynical attitude of Silenus to the contemporary life, his criticism of the scrambling and excitement to get to its swirls, reveal, even if indirectly a definite viewpoint. In fact however, even in *Decline and Fall* Waugh makes his satirical norm almost clear.

Silenus suggests Paul to be a clergyman. 'It's a good thing
for you to be a clergyman,' he said at last. 'People get ideas about a thing they call life. It sets them all wrong.' Silenus then goes on to explain life in terms of the system of the big wheel at Luna Park. 'You pay five francs and go into a room with tiers of seats all round, and in the centre the floor is made of a great disc of polished wood that revolves quickly. At first you sit down and watch the others. They are all trying to sit in the wheel, and they keep getting flung off, and that makes them laugh, and you laugh too. It's great fun.'

There is truth in Silenus's symbol of life and in its movements. He is a cynic, a deliberate creation of the author, in order to mask his own attitude to life in his very first novel. Anyway, Silenus's explanation is almost a clear statement about He continues: 'You see, the nearer you can get to the hub of the wheel the slower it is moving and the easier it is to stay on. There's generally someone in the centre who stands up and sometimes does a sort of dance. Often he's paid by the management, though, or at any rate, he's allowed in free. Of course at the very centre there's a point completely at rest, if one could only find it: I'm not sure I am not very near that point myself. Lots of people just enjoy scrambling on and being whisked off and scrambling again. How they all shriek and giggle! Then there are others, like Margot, who sit as far out as they can and hold on for dear life and enjoy that. But the whole point about the wheel is that you needn't get on it at all if you don't want to. People get hold of ideas about life, and that makes them think they've got to join in the game, even

Evelyn Waugh, Decline and Fall (Great Britain, 1965), p. 206.
Ibid., p. 206.
if they don't enjoy it. It doesn't suit everyone.
'People don't see that when they say "life" they mean two different things. They can mean simply existence, with its physiological implications of growth and organic change. They can't escape that - even by death, but because that's inevitable they think the other idea of life is too - the scrambling and excitement and bumps and the effort to get to the middle, and when we do get to the middle, it's just as if we never started. It's so odd.' And in such an odd life Paul is really a static person 'who was clearly meant to stay in the seats and sit still'.

The limiting conditions of modern satire is not any a priori view or standard. It is not an assault but an attitude, a criticism of life and not an instrument of cure. Obviously, the satirical norm is not quite an impersonal standard of judgement or values. On the contrary, it is determined by the satirist's experience and imagination, his wit and intellect. In a dissolving social perspective and shifting moral affiliations objectivity is established through such corollaries which are historically valid.

Temperamentally a post-Victorian country gentleman, Evelyn Waugh had taken for his province the whole moral and artistic organization of Europe. Civilization for him is not improvement on the material standard of living, "talking cinemas and tinned food...surgery and hygienic houses," as Evelyn Waugh puts it. Evelyn Waugh discarded modern industrial civilization as inadequate and amorphous, a perpetration of ugliness. In his autobiographical
sketches Waugh is very critical about the mechanistic and materialistic tendency of the modern civilization. He was an idealist and a cosmopolitan, a Christian visionary. Although in his early negative satires no standard of judgement is stated in explicit term, one feels in his cynical rejection of the blase sophistication that the satirist is sustained by an well-defined attitude, an integrated vision.

In Decline and Fall the cynical observations of Silenus convey the satirist's attitude to the dehumanizing and demoralising tendencies of the civilization. He reflects: 'What an immature, self-destructive, antiquated mischief is man! How obscure and gross his prancing and chattering on his little stage of evolution! How loathsome and beyond words boring all the thoughts and self-approval of his biological by-product! this half-formed, ill-conditioned body! this erratic, maladjusted mechanism of his soul: on one side the harmonious instincts and balanced responses of the animal, on the other the inflexible purpose of the engine, and between them man, equally alien from the being of Nature and the doing of the machine, the vile becoming!'

True, no standard of judgement or value is discernable in the criticism of life in the limbo world of macabre morbidity in Decline and Fall; Vile Bodies, Black Mischief and A Handful of Dust. It seems that the civilised world has lost its order and integrity in disorder, lust and lechery. In fact however, in his version of the abandoned society, the limbo, Waugh has prepared the background for his moral stance, a definite standpoint Assertion of the satirical norm in his early negative satires,

1. Ibid., pp. 120-21.
though implicit is not quite inconsistent.

As a romantic and a disenchanted individualist the quest for a vantage ground for his criticism of life, his standards, led Waugh to the mediaeval tradition, feudal aristocracy, Catholicism in a word. A passage in Decline and Fall on the vanishing genius of King's Thursday is revealing in the context. It offered the visitors an occasion to "step for an hour and a half out of their own century into the leisurely, prosaic life of the English Renaissance," Waugh writes: "It had been built in an age when twenty servants were not an unduly extravagant establishment, and it was scarcely possible to live there with fewer. But servants, the Beste-Chetwyndes found, were less responsive than their masters to the charms of Tudor simplicity; the bed-rooms originally ordained for them among the mass of rafters that supported the arches of uneven stone roofs were unsuited to modern requirements, and only the dirtiest and most tipsy cooks could be induced to inhabit the enormous stone-flagged kitchen or turn the spits at the open fire. Housemaids tended to melt away under the recurring strain of trotting in the bleak hour before breakfast up and down the narrow servants' staircases and along the interminable passages with jugs of warm water for the morning baths. Modern democracy called for lifts and labour saving devices, for hot water taps and cold water taps and (horrible innovation!) drinking water taps, for gas rings, and electric ovens. The satirist's attitude to the modern life is implicit in the irony.

In Vile Bodies Waugh's satirical norm seems more explicit. The Anchorage House tradition serves to presage his affirmation

1. Ibid., p. 114.  
2. Ibid., p. 117.
of positive values, Anchorage House between the skyscrapers reveals the crisis and gradual disintegration of the Gothic tradition. The satirists penchant for the vanishing culture: its dignity and decorum, throws light on his attitude. In the homogeneous pattern of the Anchorage House Waugh finds a possible standard of judgement. His observation is quite meaningful. "This last survivor of the noble town houses of London," writes Waugh, "was, in its time, of dominating and august dimensions, and even now, when it had become a mere 'picturesque bit' lurking in a ravine between concrete skyscrapers, its pillared facade, standing back from the street and obscured by railings and some wisps of foliage, had grace and dignity and otherworldliness enough to cause a flutter or two in Mrs Hoop's heart as she drove into the forecourt."1

As a romantic Waugh's inmost liking remains with the heroic tradition of the celebrated Victorians. Anchorage House, the symbol of graciousness and integrity, provides him an impersonal standard of judgement of the decent and enduring values of life. Nevertheless, he does not say anything directly. Waugh has developed the counter-point method as his chief instrument of criticism of life and affirmation of values. In the Anchorage House passage this method seems more effective and consistently purposeful.

Mrs Hooper is fluttered as she drives into the forecourt of Anchorage House where a party of the vile bodies is arranged. 'Can't you see the ghosts?' she said to Lady Circumference on the stairs. 'Pitt and Fox and Burk and Lady Hamilton and Beau Bruzel and Dr Johnson' (a concurrence of celebrities, it may

be remarked, at which something memorable might surely have occurred). 'Can't you just see them - in their buckled shoes?'

Lady Circumference sees in the confluence of the dignitaries of the past and the present pictures of two different ages, clustered in odd contrasts.

"Lady Circumference raised her lorgnette and surveyed the stream of guests debouching from the cloak-rooms like City workers from the Underground. She saw Mr Outrage and Lord Metroland in consultation about the Censorship Bill (a statesmanlike and much-needed measure which empowered a committee of five atheists to destroy all books, pictures and films they considered undesirable, without any nonsense about defence or appeal). She saw both Archbishops, the Duke and Duchess of Stalyke, Lord Vanburgh and Lady Metroland, Lady Throbbing and Edward Throbbing and Mrs Blackwater, Mrs House and Lord Monomark and a superb Levantine, and behind and about them a great concourse of pious and honourable people (many of whom made the Anchorage House reception the one outing of the year), their women-folk well gowned in rich and durable stuffs, their men-folk ablaze with orders; people who had represented their country in foreign places and sent their sons to die for her in battle, people of decent and temperate life, uncultured, unaffected, unembarrassed, unassuming, unambitious people, of independent judgement and marked eccentricities, kind people who cared for animals and the deserving poor, brave and rather unreasonable people, that fine phalanx of the passing order, approaching, as one day at the Last Trump they hoped to meet their Maker, with decorous and frank cordiality

1. Ibid., p. 126.
to shake Lady Anchorage by the hand at the top of her staircase. Lady Circumference saw all this and sniffed the exhalation of her own herd. But she saw no ghosts.  

Waugh's rejection of the fleshly ways of the moderns is quite obvious in the contrapuntal method of the Anchorage House passage. As an epitome of the vanished culture Anchorage House serves as an objective correlative for the satirist's moral centre; an appropriate standard of judgement of values. Explaining the role of Anchorage House Carens has observed:  

"The Anchorage House passage is significant, for in it are clustered certain attitudes that help to explain Evelyn Waugh's satirical perspective. First, we must note that Anchorage House appears here as a symbol of graciousness and order, qualities also associated with the pious and honourable concourse. Secondly, the order and restraint of Anchorage House and its visitors are regarded as remnants of a nobler past; the noble folk belong to a passing order, and Anchorage House is clearly threatened by the encroachment of concrete skyscrapers."  

Thus, amidst chaos and confusion of the hedonistic and incongruous moderns, Gothic architecture, Waugh's symbol of elegance, endurance, continuity and order, emerges as a prelude to his quest for an impersonal standard, valid both morally and aesthetically. Waugh's admiration for the old architectural remains and their aesthetic values, the vanished way of life of the aristocracy are meaningful. The contrast method, the chiaroscuro style, not only expresses an attitude but also helps to find out the satirist's vantage ground for his spiritual quest. Waugh shifts and changes his satirical perspectives. Gothic architecture marks only a
definite phase, of course a consistent one, in his development of moral stance.

As a critic of amorphous materialism of the moderns and their nerviness, Waugh has never allowed his standard of judgement to drop out of the picture. The structure and the tone, the method and the content of his fictional world are managed in a very consistent manner. Beneath the gloss of comic overtones there is always the under-current of criticism.

Architecture is seen as marking the transition, though with nuances, of a cultural pattern and its forces. The decay and disintegration of the ancestral houses has been viewed as the eclipse of the tradition which Waugh admired so much. The coming of the Margot Best Chatwyndes, the Apes and the Beavers, the medley humanity, as the violent forces of the mechanistic civilization, threatened the integrity and order of the tradition of the ancestral houses. As a critic of the bourgeois utilitarianism and the philistine ways smug Europeans Waugh inveighed the current tendencies of vilification and distortion of the even face of the earth.

A taste for aesthetic pattern, noticeable in the Gothic architectural design, suggests quite convincingly, Evelyn Waugh's attitude and interests. Art is a part of life. The aesthetic pattern of the feudal architecture, its order and elegance provide Waugh with his notions of norm both in life and in art. He sees in the moral and aesthetic affiliations of the ancestors a definite norm and a standard of judgement. The counterpoint method in his satires thus helps to establish his viewpoint.

A passage on King's Thursday brings into focus the enduring
values of the Gothic tradition. King's Thursday, the ancestral seat of the Earls of Pastmaster is threatened by the forces of materialism. But the satirist writes:

"For three centuries the poverty and inertia of this noble family had preserved its home unmodified by any of the succeeding fashions that fell upon domestic architecture. No wing had been added, no window filled in; no portico, facade, terrace, orangery, tower, or battlement marred its timbered front. In the era for coal-gas and indoor sanitation, King's Thursday had slept unscathed by plumber or engineer. The estate carpenter, an office hereditary in the family of the original joiner who had panelled the halls and carved the great staircase, did such restorations as became necessary from time to time for the maintenance of the fabric working with the same tools and with the traditional methods, so that in a few years his work became indistinguishable from that of his grandparents. Rushlights still flickered in the bedrooms long after all Lord Pastmasters neighbours were blazing away electricity, and in the last fifty years Hampshire had gradually become proud of King's Thursday. From having been considered rather a blot on the progressive county, King's Thursday gradually became the Mecca of week-end parties."

In an era of the elimination of the human element from the consideration of form, Waugh views King's Thursday as 'the finest piece of domestic Tudor in England'.

Work Suspended is almost an elegy on the dying aristocracy, its aesthetic perception and moral affiliations. The hero of the novel, John Plant, who is in search of a house is very critical

1. Evelyn Waugh, Decline and Fall (Great Britain,1965), pp. 115-16.  
2. Ibid., p. 120.  
3. Ibid., p. 116.
in his observation of the inadequacies of his generation.
Architecture appears as 'a machine to live in' and the moderns
as philistines.

"It was one of the peculiarities of my generation, and there
is no accounting for it. In youth we had pruned our aesthetic
emotions hard back so that in many cases they had reverted to
brier stock; we none of us wrote or read poetry, or, if we did, it
was a kind which left unsatisfied those wistful, half-romantic
peculiarly British longing which, in the past, used to find
expression in so many slim lambskin volumes. When the poetic
mood was on us, we turned to buildings, and gave them the place
which our fathers accorded to Nature to almost any buildings,
but particularly those in the classical tradition and, more
particularly, in its decay. It was a kind of nostalgia for the
style of living which we emphatically rejected in practical
affairs. The nobilities of Whig society became, for us, what the
Arthurian paladins were in the time of Tennyson. There was never
a time when so many landless men could talk at length about
landscape gardening."

In the Gothic art and in its impersonality Waugh has found
the basis of his satirical norm in time, space and unity. In
his devotion to the stately houses of the aristocracy critics
have traced the symptoms of Evelyn Waugh's snobbery for the
vanished culture, the feudal cult. But, then it is purposeful
snobbery. As a thwarted romantic and an idealist of the old order
Waugh discovered in the Gothic architectural remains and in the
aristocratic ways of life, the poise and design of the old world
a valid pattern, an object of contemplation.

In fact, in the chaotic world of unreason and blatant frivolities King's Thursday, Anchorage House, Hetton Abbey, Broom and Brideshead are amazing and attractive symbols of a cultural unity and continuity. The fictional world of Waugh is marked by gradual transition from the chaos and confusions of the amoral life to the poise, passivity and calm resignation of the spiritual life. In his secular satires Waugh finds the validity of his norm in the aesthetically satisfying symbols of architecture. In A Handful of Dust, a biting satire on blasé sophistication, Hetton Abbey, the ancestral seat of the Lasts, reinforces Waugh's concern with the normative standard and the traditional architecture in a very convincing manner.

In the painful marital crisis of Tony Last and Brenda Waugh views the crisis and conflicts of the two cultures, and between the swirling eddies of the two opposing cultural forces stands Hetton Abbey as a watch-dog. True, the integrity of Hetton is threatened. Says Brenda:

'Well, it sometimes seems to me rather pointless keeping up a house this size if we don't now and then ask some other people to stay in it.'

'Pointless? I can't think what you mean. I don't keep up this house to be a hostel for a lot of bores to come and gossip in. We've always lived here and I hope John will be able to keep it on after me. One has a duty towards one's employees, and towards the place too. It's a definite part of English life which would be a serious loss...'

Although the element of snobbery and philistinism cannot be

overlooked in Tony's attitude to Hetton, Waugh shares his passion, though with certain reservations. In *A Handful of Dust* Waugh is criticised for his devotion to the Hetton tradition, his almost snobbish view of the vanishing era and its values. In fact however, Waugh believed that the perplexing situation of the jazz generation, its faithlessness and perversities could be countered only by the endurance, purposefulness and order of the Gothic tradition. Thus in *A Handful of Dust* Waugh plays off Tony's Gothic world against the chaotic world of the Beavers. Mrs Beaver's modernised flat near the Belgrave Square is a contrast in the context of the novel.

In *Brideshead Revisited* the Gothic architecture is again at the centre holding up the balance between the moral and the amoral forces. Evelyn Waugh's nostalgia for the great tradition is indeed a romantic's preoccupation with the remote world of beauty and aesthetic pleasure. But the romanticism of Waugh is not biased like that of Tony. He was a romantic and a rationalist too. As a thing of beauty and moral values Hetton like King's Thursday and Anchorage House attracted his attention. In Brideshead the satirist's nostalgia for the noble tradition continues as an aspect of order and aesthetic fulfilment. "It was an aesthetic education to live within the walls, to wonder from room to room, from the Soanesque library to the Chinese drawing room, dazzle with girt pagodas and nodding mandarins, painted papers, Chippendale fretwork, from the Pompeian parlour to the great tapestry-hung hall which stood unchanged, as it has been designed two hundred and fifty years before; to sit hour after hour, in the shade looking out on the terrace."\(^1\)

\(^1\) Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (Great Britain, 1945), p. 78.
Nevertheless, one feels in *Brideshead Revisited* a definite step forward in the satirist's stance. In his nostalgia for the ancient regime and the baroque art new added Catholicism a significant advance anyway. In his early negative satires art is seen apart from religion. The ancestral buildings and the pre-industrial aristocratic culture as the standard of judgement of value seemed to fulfill the satirist's romantic notions, his emotional leanings. Beaver's flat, the avant-garde architecture is ridiculed as a specimen of the modern mechanised life without sanctity. Mrs Beaver's passion for chromium plating suggests how inadequate it is in its emotional content and value. The fragmented and abstract form of art of the moderns shows their indifference and apathy to the integrity of the emotional life.

But in *Brideshead Revisited* religion, the supporting faith, emerges as an inseparable part of Waugh's viewpoint, his satirical norm.

The association of religion with the romantic tradition of aristocracy and art not only marks an apotheosis of the cherished ideals of Waugh but also a definite moral standpoint. In Roman Catholic Religion Waugh has displayed his climactic expression of the ideals of his life and art. The affirmation of Catholicism as an way of life, a complete change of stance, provided the satirist with a dynamic standard of judgement. In *Decline and Fall*, *Vile Bodies* and *A Handful of Dust* one feels that the satirist is chiefly concerned with the secular aspects of the tradition. His normative standard of judgement is determined by his emotional leanings and aesthetic taste. The idealisation of the tradition in his earlier satires provided the satirist an emotionally
satisfying and morally valid soaring amidst chaos and confusion of the modern situation. The predicaments of his anti-heroes or the victims reveal that a growing pessimism was taking hold of their maker in the early period of his experience. In *A Handful of Dust*, *soup-de-prase* of the satirist's experience and disillusionment in the heedless and spiritually aimless society, reveals quite consistently the inadequacy inherent even in the ways and affiliations of Tony. He is convinced that philistinism or any superficial admiration of the old aesthetic pattern is unable to sustain the integrity and order in life in the contemporary moods.

The fusion of religion and aesthetic pattern in the life and attitude of the Marshmauns in *Brideshead Revisited* is meaningful. The association of the ideal values of aristocracy with the Catholic cult marks Evelyn Waugh's quest for normative standard for his art and life. Brideshead and Broome are his true norms expressed in terms of time, space and continuity. Thus in Broome and Brideshead Waugh has found his answer to the frivolities and confusions of his age. Thus the ills of the waste land which he had so admirably defined in his early novels found a measure of antidote in his later novels. In Catholicism the satirist with his heroes or anti-heroes has discovered a possible ray of hope and permanence. The burning of the sacristy lamp amidst almost ruined Brideshead is quite meaningful.

Waugh's faith in the eternal verities is his normative standard. Faith as the norm of satire is something new in the history of English satire. Tenets of the conservative Catholic cult provided him with a tenable position and the certitude of history.

"England was Catholic for nine hundred years," writes Waugh, "then
Protestant for three hundred then agnostic for a century. The Catholic structure still lies lightly buried beneath every phase of English life; history, topography, law, archeology, everywhere revealed Catholic origins. Foreign travels (in Europe) reveals the local, temporary characters of heresies and schisms and the universal, eternal character of the church. It was self-evident to me that heresy or schism could be right and church wrong. It was possible that all were wrong, that the whole Christian revelation was an imposter or a misconception. But if the Christian revelation were true, then the church was the society founded by Christ and all other bodies were only good, so far as they had salvaged something from the wrecks of the Great Schism and the Reformation. This proposition seemed so plain to me that it admitted of no discussion. It only remained to examine the historical and philosophical ground for supposing the Christian revelation to be genuine. 1

The historicity of the Catholic church met a need of Waugh's nature. The evils and inadequacies that surrounded the contemporary life were real and it was evident that abstract idealism and emotions were not enough to contain the evils of modern life. The revulsion with the topical led him to look for the transcendental. Through trans-valuation of values Waugh establishes his norm. Mediaeval art, aristocracy and Catholicism as symbols of unity and integrity of the European civilization state Waugh's vision of faith and the normative values of life in clear terms. They are in fact the spatialization of Waugh's ideals and values in concrete form and pattern.

The Crouchback trilogy, especially the character of Guy marks a step forward in Waugh's quest for a valid standard. With his religion is an inextricable aspect of an integrated life. It is not something extrinsic or a matter of conventional piety. Guy's commitment to the Catholic faith and dynamic humanism uphold Waugh's testament of faith in the eternal verities and rational judgement. Guy's experience in the whirls of life abounding with evils and his grim struggle against deceptive influences of the modern times for a tenable position reveal the profundity of Waugh's vision of life and faith. In the dogmatism of the Catholic church Guy Crouchback finds a bulwark against the perils of scepticism and profanities of the biligerent moderns.

Explaining his conversion Waugh has written: "Those who have read my works will perhaps understand the character of the world into which I exuberantly launched myself. Ten years of that world sufficed to show me that life there, or anywhere, was unintelligible and unendurable without God." It is however clear that Waugh sought his normative standard of the judgement of faith and values in his experience. From Paul Pennyfeather's predicaments to Guy Crouchback's journey to the end of chaos which Waugh has seen as a pilgrim's progress from cynicism to salvation confirm the satirist's experience and realisation in a world reeking with evils.

In the Crouchback trilogy Waugh has made his commitment to his cherished ideals and faith but his commitment is based on sound rational grounds. The religion of Guy marks a complete

1. Ibid., p. 20.
change of stance, though not an inconsistent one. In Guy's
commitment to the Catholic dogmatism and rational humanism Waugh
has made his religion universal; at least he has tried so in his
own way. Thus from the negation of values in his early satires
to its affirmation in the later ones one feels a gradual exposition
of the satirist's vision and his norm. His almost sustained
reticence about his satirical norm or standard is understandable.

The criticism that Evelyn Waugh's satires, especially his
early satires, are without a moral centre, or at least it is not
discernible there, does not appear very convincing. True, satire
as satire presupposes a normative standard of judgement. In its
absence criticism tends to become almost a cynical jeering. The
criticism of life in the novels of Waugh, its profundity and
depth, and his loyalty to the decent tradition of the English
culture show that his concern with the reality did not obviate
his loyalty to the great tradition. On the contrary, it serves
as a leaven.

While Waugh insists that his novels are not satires, he is
in fact holding up a mask, a defensive mask of course, for his
deeper and more profound loyalty to faith and humanity, order
and integrity. The satires of Waugh cannot be disputed as such.
Absence of clarity is the source of confusion and ambiguity.

Although in the fictional world of his early negative satires
satirical norm is almost imperceptible and Waugh hardly states
any extrinsic standard of judgement of the contemporary mores.
In fact, Waugh does not state, he reveals. The moral centre of
his satire is implied in his vision. The truth is revealed
through exposition. The satirical method of Evelyn Waugh is
always the tell-tale sign of his norm. Tone and structure, irony and ambivalence, fantasy and exaggeration, in short the content and method in the satires of Waugh contribute to the consistent development of his norm.

The experience and realisations of Guy Crouchback in Unconditional Surrender marks the climax of Waugh's search for a norm, valid both morally and aesthetically. In this novel the author has emerged with a widened vision, deeper sympathies and unfailing humanity. The ideals and values which are expressed only indirectly or with nuances are confidently recognized in Unconditional Surrender. A reviewer for the Times Literary Supplement suggested not without reason of course that Waugh of the Crouchback trilogy is very different from the author of the early novels. Analysis shows that Waugh of Unconditional Surrender is not different anyway. The moral standpoint and vision adduced in Decline and Fall are consistently developed in the Crouchback trilogy. Guy is an extension of the personality of Paul Pennyfeather. None in the satires of Waugh is not an a priori standard of judgement but a view of life. Criticism of life in the satires of Waugh postulates his awareness of ideals and values. His shifts and transitions are always dominated by the inner logic of his vision and postulations.

Thus a critical assessment of the major and the minor satires of Waugh reveals that his criticism of life is sustained by the consistency of his vision and motivation. Between his early negative satires and his positive satires of the later period, there are a few minor novels such as Scott-King's Modern Bums, The Loved One and Love Among the Ruins which are essentially secular
in their content and method, hold the satirist's viewpoints and his normative standard in logical consistency. In these novels one is quite aware of the satirist's object of criticism, his growing disgust for the vulgar and the inimical tendencies abounding with the modern civilization. Scott-King's revulsion for everything that associated with the modern age, Dennis Burold's cynical rejection of the blatant profanity of the pets' mortuary, and Miles Plastic's burning of the Mountjoy are shattering ironies on the evils of the modern age. Evelyn Waugh's criticism of the modern society was influenced by his deep rooted conservatism. His commitment to the Catholic church not only fulfils his conservatism but at the same time it marks an apotheosis of his norm. In the personality of Guy Crouchback, his sense of order, loyalty, endurance, humanity and religion Waugh actuates his idea of norm.

In fact, his critical, satirical awareness of the contemporary scene has gone hand in hand with larger loyalties. The satires of Waugh in their totality are not only a personal testament but also the witty and agonized confession of an age on the rocks returning to the Rock of the Age.