An Age of Wars, Anxiety, Loss, Despair and Death

II. General Survey of Modern Literature and Modernism

The period of modern life has been the setting of two great and deadly events: the First and the Second World Wars. These wars brought anxiety, loss, despair and death. The different ages of human life have witnessed different changes and developments, each period has left special imprint, on all the aspects of life, with distinguished characteristics. Many writers emerged during this period and penned their feelings and ideas about the war and its impact on humanity in general.

Accordingly modern English Literature can be considered to fall into four phases; the first one from the beginning of the First World War 1914 to 1923. One of the most distinguished trends of this period was the desire of writers to go back to the old; the fabric of intellectual life of London appeared to have deteriorated. The modern England was no longer a place for civilized men and women; it was divided between a fading vision of classical order and the lively nihilism which widely invaded and darkened the modern world. Such a period was against the classical standards with which that the artists measured the world. The spirit of the old London collapsed, in some way, vanished from being a heart of the world, and became an eddy of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears and horrors. The artists started to feel as if they were strangers in their country. Therefore, in this period, a lot of works which revealed a nostalgia to the old past days were appeared where there was clear dissatisfaction with the present. It was also a retreat from the industrialization and the city into
natural, authentic and rural past. In his *Modern Nostalgia* Robert Hemmings comments:

David Lowenthal identifies nostalgia’s appeal as the celebration of ‘an ordered clarity contrasting with the chaos or imprecision of our own times’. [But] Other recent critics demonstrate that for nostalgia to take root, certain socio-historical conditions must prevail. Societies must be governed by a linear, not a cyclical conception of time, without the redemptive imperative of the future salvation of afterlife. That is, they must be secular.

(Hemmings 3-4)

The second period between 1923 and 1929 can be called "The Jazz Age". Though it particularly took place in the United States but Britain, France and other European countries were also a part of it. Martin Stannard remarked that Oxford in 1924-5 "was changing beyond recognition….The Jazz Age had arrived and….Undergraduate motored noisily from College to College for drinking parties and roared down to London at eighty miles an hour." (Stannard, 1986, 103). This period played an important role in the social and cultural changes. It is usually connected with the phenomenon of breaking traditions, like sexual transgression, change in gender roles, misuse of alcohol and drugs. Most of these things had been practiced by Evelyn Waugh and his friends through the period of their study in Oxford. Consequently there was a disposition to get rid of, deny, and mock the older morality and faith which was totally anti-Victorianism. About these great changes which affected all the aspects of life in general and literature in particular David Ayers remarks that:

SEX AND SEXUALITY DO not only have a crucial structural role in the literature dealing with war and social change, they also generate a whole literature of their own in the 1920s which is variously cynical and progressive. The treatment of sex reflects both social realities and a renewed intellectual interest in sex, and plays a key part
in the notion of this decade as ‘jazz age’...young women were connected not merely with Bolshevism but with sexuality itself. They seemed to undermine traditional gender roles at the level of appearance and behavior, sporting short haircuts such as the famous bobo and wearing shorter skirts which showed an amount of leg considered indecent before the war. Many young women took to smoking in public, another sign of modernity and independence, and began to mix with men on a much more informal basis. (Ayers 136)

The third period starts from 1929 to 1939, which can be called the years of despair, pessimism and the great depression. The fourth is the postmodern period; it is the period of the Second World War and its continuing aftermath, The Cold War from 1945 to the present time. The period which witnessed the end of modernism, Michael H. Whitworth observes that "A large number of critics…including Graham Hough, Robert Graves, and Karl Shapiro, identified 1957 as the year in which modernism died." (Whitworth 273).

Henceforth, the developments and problems of modern society like, The Industrial Revolution, The appearance of Marxism, The Aesthetic Movements, The spread of Colonialism, The Rise of Mass Culture, The decline of religious faith and the human values, Health, Education, Poverty, all these, need to be represented and reflected; therefore modernist literature, and modernist art in general, often takes Man as a point of reference to display an awareness of the complexity of the mind and the identity, it is considered to be one of the best tools that reflects and focuses on such problems and developments. Though many critics believed that the terms modernism and modernists appeared and is in use since 1908 onwards, Whitworth argued that they did not refer to themselves as modernists nor to their movement as modernism; they "defined themselves by creating distinctive groups and by contrasting their
practices with those of a previous generation…they emphasised the technical innovations necessary to realise their vision of modernity." (Whitworth 39). Gary Day also remarks that:

Modernist literature is an attempt to find new forms of representation for a new kind of society, one that seems to be constantly changing. It uses a variety of techniques to do that, from myth to stream of consciousness. But modernist literature is not just an attempt to find a more accurate form of representation, one that is true to individual experience, it also aims to diagnose the ills of modern society and to suggest a cure. (Day 7)

While Susan Stanford Friedman gave an accurate description of the cultural condition which produced and gave modernism its new form as a literary movement:

The starting point of modernism is the crisis of belief that pervades twentieth century western culture: loss of faith, experience of fragmentation and disintegration, and shattering of cultural symbols and norms. At the center of this crisis were the new technologies and methodologies of science, the epistemology of logical positivism, and the relativism of functionalist thought—in short, major aspects of the philosophical perspectives that Freud embodied. The rationalism of science and philosophy attacked the validity of traditional religious and artistic symbols while the growing technology of the industrialized world produced the catastrophes of war on the one hand and the atomization of human beings on the other. Art produced after the First World War recorded the emotional aspect of this crisis; despair, hopelessness, paralysis, angst, and a sense of meaninglessness, chaos, and fragmentation of material reality. (Friedman 97)

Writers like Ford Madox Ford, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, and Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh gained an early reputation for directly translating, satirizing and ironically underscoring the chaos, complexity and the unstable conditions of modern life reflecting the fast social changes which
appeared in the wake of the deadly historical events of the two World Wars and gave modern life its new shape. It is as Georg Simmel observes that:

The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, against the weight of the historical heritage, and the external culture and technique of life. This antagonism represents the most modern form of the conflict...man must carry on with nature for his own bodily existence. (Simmel 12)

Waugh productively mixes advanced and modern themes to depict different experiences of modern people, of which he was part, and connects them with its social moment. Like Eliot, and many other artists of his age, Waugh rejected the modern world around him and saw it as a wasteland, but his humoristic gift helped him to reform the wilderness into a circus. He depicted all the people of the modern age as sterile, paralyzed, outcast, and uprooted. Malcolm Bradbury remarks that "The view that we have passed into a special dark age is one that Waugh shares with many of the great novelists of the early part of the century." (Bradbury, 1964, 7). Consequently, Waugh’s characters emerge from the center of modern life’s conflict and the tension of his personal experiences from which they are born. About the technique of Waugh’s characterization Bradbury observes that "Repeatedly in his novels he puts his characters to the test, to see how they encounter the special conditions of modernity." (8). Hence, Waugh is not different from the elder modern writers who preceded him; they were as Virginia Woolf observed; they create modern characters with old tools. Woolf remarked that "on or about December, 1910, human character changed." (Quoted in Jeffrey Mathes McCarthy 305). Such change in the human character was the
core of different modern artistic works, whether in painting, literature, sculpture or even in architecture. These works shaped the British modernism and reflected the catastrophes of the First World War which were at the doors. Therefore, war and art were mixed together; as what McCarthy remarks that between 1912 and 1914 art became war "London painters, writers, and critics were at war before 4 August 1914 because art movements had become the vehicles for modernists to identify one another and struggle for cultural capital." (304). While George McCartney remarks that:

For Evelyn Waugh, modernism is characterized by a romantic existentialism ‘that sought fulfillment by means of an ecstatic union of subject and object, self and world, a sort of secular mysticism’ that posed itself against what it considered to be the ‘artificial strictures of Western culture.’….For Waugh, who saw the world as ‘irretrievable fallen,’ modernists, led by Bergson, Woolf, Joyce, and Proust, sought to establish ‘if only momentarily within the boundaries of their art—the prelapsarian harmony between the self and the world.’ In Waugh’s view, modernist fiction lost ‘its representational credibility because of its pernicious and…unwarranted assumption that there is no abiding pattern to be discovered in the play of experience....’Existence either has purposeful order or it does not. (McCartney, 1987, 191)

It is worth mentioning that though the masculine notion of modernism since its appearance at the last decade of the nineteenth century, but it is the Great War which significantly enhanced its virile and manly concept and domination, where women did not fight in the trenches. Due to that virile domination many activists’ women became rebellious and many female issues like the nature of sexuality, marriage, motherhood and the vote for women started to be debated among feminist societies especially in Bloomsbury literary salon where also a separate literary tradition of women’s writing in
response to these circumstances had been argued. They also confirmed that their writing was totally different from the writing of men because it related to a special female experience. Hence the feminist hardly argued that male modernism, which presented itself as a men’s club and whose members proudly loaded by the experience of the war, was an aggressive response to the growing feminist demands for more politically and culturally independent.

Consequently, such special and abnormal circumstances of wars have always, continued to provoke a significant amount of writing right up to the present time. A new generation with revolution in art had appeared to displace the old philosophy, with a modern one being compatible with the troubles and sad stories of modern life. The result is a combination of English traditions with the social decline and the inhuman behaviour of modern people which clearly appeared in most of Waugh’s novels, and a lot of other artists’ works. The Art of such periods focused on the major changes in social, philosophical, and cultural themes appeared in parallel with the wars’ crisis, like anxiety, despair, hopelessness, paralysis, sorrow, chaos, sense of meaninglessness and death. On that account Katherine Mullin remarks that "modernism can simply be labeled an art of crisis, a term Michael Levenson finds to be inevitably central in discussion of this turbulent cultural moment." (Mullin 136).

Accordingly, war literature in general and the literature of the First World War in particular, mostly represent the response of civilians who in a short time were turned to soldiers. But, during the early years of the war the literary response to the suffering and conflict came not from ordinary soldiers at the front, but from professional writers who volunteered to defend their countries. In
fact, since ancient times wars have been a source of writing material for poets and other writers, but in English Literature the term ‘war poets’ is used to mean the poets who wrote during and about the First World War.

**Poetry of the First World War**

It was almost in 1916, due to the miseries, horrors and sufferings of the war, a group of poets began to make their voices heard. These poets were Wilfred Owen (1886-1918), Robert Graves (1895-1985), Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967), Charles Hamilton Sorley (1895-1915), Edmund Blunden (1896-1974), Izzac Rosenberg (1890-1918), and others. These poets all served in the war as junior officers except Rosenberg who occupied a unique position, and was killed in April 1918. But, in spite of their participation in the war, these poets marked their disillusion and protest against the war through their poems. They all came to hate war and its jingoist propaganda. Portraying the difficulties, miseries and the sufferings of the war, Blunden remarked that:

> Among the multitudes of us shipped to the Pas de Calais a few months before the Great Push (or Drive) of the British army in 1916, I was a verse-writer; my interests were not yet changed from what life had formed before all this chaos... In May and June 1916... the grimness of war began to compete as a subject with the pastorals of peace. By the end of the year, when madness seemed totally to rule the hour, I was almost a part of the shell-holes, of ruin and of mortification. (Quoted in Day 248)

Regarding the prevalence of the First World War poetry Martin Stephen explains that there are some reasons behind its popularity:

> Poets such as Rupert Brook, Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg would almost certainly not have been called on to fight in any war prior to 1914, or felt that they had to volunteer. Secondly, the First World
War was a static war, with the great European armies facing each other sometimes across only a few hundred yards of barbed wire, and this lack of movement made it far easier, in purely practical terms, to write poetry. Thirdly, the experience of the war was so horrifying and so intense—and for many of the poets so utterly new to their experience—that it provoked an intensity of desire for self-expression unequalled by almost any other single event in history. (Stephen 274)

There were three famous English War Poets of the First World War; the first one was Wilfred Owen (1893-1918). He was an anti-war poet, while the second Rupert Brooke was a pro-war poet; in addition to the wide fame of Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967).

Owen is considered the most distinguished of the war poets because he could master many different styles used by the war poets. He mastered the realistic, colloquial and satiric style. He was a technical innovator of sound in poetry. For example, his poem ‘Strange Meeting’, is realistic, in which a friend and enemy are combining; it ends with a rhyme of ‘hammer-blow’ giving the couplet a dying fall that throws the whole poem, and its meaning, into grief. Through it, as in most of his poems, he makes the readers feel and touch the ugliness of war, the suffering of the soldiers, and his compassions extend even to his enemy. Showing his merciful concern for the victims’ bodies and the atrocity of the war, Owen revealed in a letter to his brother Harold: "One poor devil had his shin-bone crushed by a gun-carriage wheel, and the doctor had to twist it about and push it like a piston to get out the pus. Another had a hole right through the knee." (Jon Stallworthy 71).

Owen decided to return to the front in August 1918, after recovering from shell-shock, but was killed on 4 November of the same year, a week before the end of the war. The affect of the shell-
shock on the soldiers was devastating. Jenny Edkins remarks that one can imagine the dimensions of the war catastrophe when we find "...by the end of the First World War, some 80,000 cases of shell-shock had been treated in the units of the Royal Army Medical Corps in Britain and some 200,000 veterans received pensions for nervous disorders after the war." (Edkins 1)

Brooke, as a pro-war poet, was very optimistic that the war would be short and would purify Western civilization of its materialism. His reputation as a war poet came when he wrote his *Five Patriot Sonnets*, in 1914, during the first three months of the beginning of the war. ‘In England, Brooke began work on the first of the 1914 sonnets that were to make his name. Paradoxically entitled "Peace, it celebrates the discovery of a cause, a vision resembling Owen’s and Rosenberg’s: the regeneration of a world grown old and cold and weary." (Stallworthy 53). In these sonnets Brooke expresses his pleasure to join the war and his delight to leave the boring and meaningless life. Though he became a socialist and joined the Fabians but war continued to be the central concern for him in his later sonnets too. Brooke became an ideal symbol of sacrifice when he died a tragic death in April 1915 from sepsis in his army uniform on a hospital ship. (Day 243). Gabrielle McIntire observes that:

Rupert Brooke’s highly romantic, idealizing, and nationalistic war poetry – “If I shall die, think only this of me: / That there’s some corner of a foreign field / That is forever England” – gave way to Wilfred Owen’s and Siegfried Sassoon’s radical and unforgiving realism as the sign of what the war had meant. It only did so, however, over Brooke’s dead body. (McIntire 185)

Other critics like Rewey Belle Inglis and Josephine Spear argue on how the impact of such bloodiest war was on sensitive soldier poets and how these poets succeeded in portraying its miserable conditions:
World War I developed a group of young soldier poets torn by pity at the bloodshed they witnessed, but filled with hope that a better world might quickly emerge from the conflict .... In 1920’s there was such a reaction against such optimism. Young men and women talked of themselves as the Lost Generation, and the poets of the Twenties spent their energies in describing chaos, in reflecting in their poems the puzzles that they found in the world, and in reacting against evils by writing brilliant satires. (Inglis and Spear, 621)

The other famous and important poet was Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967). At the beginning of the war, Sassoon believed that the war should not be described in such realistic terms. But, after he joined the army in 1914 and had been in the trenches, he changed his mind and was totally against the war. He was brave enough to make a direct protest against the war, his verses spread rapidly among his fellow soldier poets at this time. He was like the other colleagues, though they were against the war but they continued to fight. Sassoon was involved in fighting until he was shot through the shoulder, and after healing from his wounds he quickly went back to the front. But after a while he was sent again to war hospital near Edinburgh to be cured this time from shell-shock as mentioned before. However "The war poetry of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon has established an image of the first futility of combat and death remains the most outstanding impression." (Ayers 8). While stressing Sassoon’s stand against this war and the deep injuries it left in the lives of the survivors, Inglis and Spear remark that:

The terrible toll that World War I took of young poets was not only in the loss of promising young lives but also in the bitterness it left with the survivors. “Let no one from henceforth,” said Siegfried Sassoon, “say one word countenancing war.” .... His life was abruptly changed by military service-as were the lives of hundreds of men.

(Inglis and Spear 647)
On that account and as novel has long been engaged with history as open-ended, such tragic facts has been transformed into fiction by a lot of novelists, who consider it closer to truth.

**Novel of the First World War**

At the time when war had its widest impact on humanity; war writers succeeded in linking the general fate of people to the fate of particular characters, this has been achieved by the affirmation of the impact of war on individuals or small groups or even on the whole society. This comes through war novels which usually portray the cultural, social and political climate of the war in general and the inter-war period in particular. Such novels can be realistic, symbolic, satiric, psychological or autobiographical work as a convincing mirror to be true to life and to reflect the real state of the war and its effect on the human life, where disillusionment, alienation and despair are obvious in such writing. Thus, fiction offers itself, as a main genre of literature, to be used by war writers, because prose narrative is taking over in part the tradition of the great epics which is suited to the full re-creation of historical events and states of society. That is why "War literature was in effect mostly treated as separate from other sorts of literature." (Holdger Klein 4).

In fact, what makes war literature special is that the fighters were not common men but they were educated, they had the artistic ability or the literary skills to recreate the conditions, events, and emotions aroused by other soldiers. Furthermore, it would be wrong only to consider works showing exclusively the front, but it also shows the interaction, with the soldiers, their experiences in the trenches and experiences in the hinterland as an essential feature of war fiction.
However, we should not forget, as most critics agree, that the atmosphere and the situation which dominated and abounded the writers of the nineteenth century were different from the circumstances of the twentieth century; in the sense that the English novel of the nineteenth century was written at a time of great confidence in British society. There was a sense of confidence in the basic structure of society. While, the writers of the twentieth century could not share this confidence; the changes in belief and political ideas were influenced strongly by the events of the First and Second World Wars, in addition to the events that led to the disappearance of the British Empire.

Thus, war novels; expose the same horrible images of war, which the war poets revealed, though the novelist’s approaches are much wider in scope and more different. Such novels are not only concerned with the vulgarity of war, but they go further to portray the army’s oppressive discipliners. Most of these novels show how the characters are living in a strange chaotic world like the world of Frankenstein with constant sketches of trench reminiscences, gangrenous corpses, barbed wire, huts, mud, explosions etc.

One of the distinguished fiction writers who wrote about the First World War is Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939). He began his literary career in 1896 with a biography of his grandfather and developed his fictional style through a close relation with William James and Joseph Conrad.

Ford founded the English Review in 1909 in which some of the great writers of the period participated; like D.H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, H. G. Wells, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Norman Douglas and others. His novel *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion* (1915)
had an appropriate title for a novel which appeared in wartime. It "...tells the story of a particular conflict in the history of modernism." McCarthy remarks (309). In a critical essay, The Denuded Place: War and Form in Parade's End and U.S.A., Malcolm Bradbury noted that:

The Good Soldier; intersects his [Ford] social and aesthetic concerns. On the one hand, he sees society redeemed from its present crass materialism by the acceptance of social responsibility and duty; on the other hand, he sees it lost by virtue of the fact that society withholds and represses, especially in the sexual realm... Like many writers in England just before the war, then, Hueffer [Ford] was experiencing a growing social disillusion coupled with a deepening interest in modernist technique. The war was to drive that process much further. (Bradbury, 1978, 195-6)

While Marina Mackay remarks that:

Ford's The Good Soldier (1915) is tauntingly titled: no war story, The Good Soldier tells of a deracinated American discovering that the perfect paragon of heroic English masculinity is privately a philandering liar, and trying to reconcile this new knowledge with his own desire to be 'a good soldier' of the same kind as his hero. (Mackay, 2007, 6)

Ford’s works reflect the miseries and different changes in all the aspects of life brought about by the First World War as in Parade's End which is the collective title Ford gave to sequence of four novels written between (1924-1928), namely Some Do Not (1924), No More Parades (1925), A Man Could Stand Up (1926) and The Last Post (1928). In fact, Parade's End is considered to be Ford’s masterpiece and one of the best narratives about war in English. It has been described by Samuel Hynes as "The greatest war novel ever written by an English man." (Quoted by Max Saunders 13). As a war trilogy novel; Parade's End portrays the disintegration of society of the pre-war period and it is concerned with the gradual collapse of the old values. In this novel, the protagonist, Christopher Tietjens, is the
hero in an age which has no place for heroes. He is portrayed as an unhappy lover, unsuccessful soldier, and a rootless, passive, unstable survivor after 1918. He epitomizes the decline of the English gentleman during and after the First World War.

The story of Christopher Tietjens began to take shape in his [Ford’s] imagination shortly after he had been invalided home from the Western Front. His memory was haunted by the dead and, increasingly, by one dead man in particular. Arthur Marwood had been the son of a well-known Yorkshire family, a brilliant mathematician in the government office of statistics…. ‘He possessed’, said Ford, ‘the clear, eighteenth century English mind which has disappeared from the earth, leaving the earth very much the poorer.’ Tuberculosis forced him into inactive retirement, but he re-emerged from his friend’s imagination metamorphosed into Christopher Tietjens. (Stallworthy 137)

The other novelist who wrote about the war was the German writer Erich Maria Remarque. His novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* (*Im Westen nichts Neues*) is considered to be one of the most celebrated and successful war novels. It depicts how the innocent and helpless individual is caught and destroyed by the machinery of armies at wartime. It came out in 1928 and was made into a highly celebrated American film in 1930. (Day 260). In his essay *Journalism into fiction: Im Westen nichts Neues*, Brain A. Rowley declared that:

*All Quiet in the Western Front* (*Im Westen nichts Neues*) is one of the most surprising phenomena in the history of literature. Its commercial success was unparalleled: in fifteen months after publication, 1,040,000 copies were sold in Germany, and total sales in all languages—there seems to be no bibliography of translations, but there were apparently 32 of them—were more 3.5 million in the same period. World sales date has been estimated at over 8 million… It also became a focus of intellectual and, indeed, of political life. (Rowley101)
Like Ford, Richard Aldington is better known as a novelist than as a poet. His novel *Death of a Hero* (1929) deals with a kind of angry paganism, and an agony of helpless grief and pity. In this novel Aldington portrays the awful war and the despair of society as embodied in the character of the ‘Hero’ itself. The novel also deals with the frustration of pre-war English society and the cheating, the stupidity and the hypocrisy of those who are engaged in the war. The tragic element in this novel is not only because the hero could never go back home but because he had no home to stay and fight. "Aldington’s war novel is therefore not particularly about war: it is about betrayal, crystallized for him by his own experience and set down as the life and death of his ‘hero’ George Winterbourne." (John Morris 183). Such disillusionment dominated his later novels, *The Colonel’s Daughter* (1931) and *All Men are Enemies* (1933). In his critical essay “Prose Writers of World War I’, about *Death of a Hero*, M.S. Greicus, observes that:

…hysterical evocations are at once a virtue and a major flaw in the novel. The work captures the mood of his [Aldington] generation... It is also guilty of every charge leveled against ‘war books’. Its subject-matter combines the sensationalism of ‘modern sex’ with the horror of war, through a narrator who holds all of modern civilisation in contempt. (Quoted in Morris 185-6)

Most critics felt that as if there was an agreement or as some called "common conspiracy" in the early 1920s between authors, publishers and readers regarding the memory of the war. That is why, the late 1920s and the early 1930s witnessed the appearance of a lot of new novels which directly engaged with loss, despair, miseries, horrors and death of the war. (Day 260). Furthermore, William York Tindall stressed that:
In *Death of a Hero* (1929), one of the best war novels, he [Aldington] bitterly describes the war again and the despicable civilians who help make war what it is. Betrayed by these and depressed by former friends, the “hero” invites his death. The savagery of Aldington, which owes much to war, more to the success of friends, is at its most agreeable in the satires of *Soft Answers* 1932. (Tindall 98)

When USA entered the First World War, it was clear that there was an opportunity for the young American men to test themselves. Among them was the American novelist Earnest Hemingway (1899-1961) who wrote significant fiction arising from the war. Hemingway had joined the First World War as an ambulance driver in order to see and be in touch with the atmosphere of the war more closely. His war experiences are fictionalized in most of his novels, especially his great successful novel *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). David Lodge remarks that:

Hemingway’s vision of life, tempered by the experience of war, was bleakly materialistic…positivist, anti-metaphysical, stoical; though by temperament he was highly sensitive, superstitious and sentimental. (Lodge, 1977, 156)

Like most of Hemingway’s novels, *A Farewell to Arms* is about love and war and the kind of courage one needs to experience them. In this novel we see how Hemingway tries to portray the hero challenging the difficulties of life and, on the other hand, how the hero has to accept the truth of life that all stories end in death. By deserting the army to be with Catherine, Frederic symbolically bids farewell to military arms and ironically, when his beloved dies, he must bid another farewell which is to the arms of his love. In an essay about love and war, on this novel Michael Garrety argues that:

They [the lovers] are trapped by society, but their escape into love is no escape from life, for death is always
waiting, in or out of war. Man is trapped socially and biologically; life is an unfair game, and the only inescapable fact he has is death. (Garrety 20)

The other main pillar of fiction of that time is Aldous Huxley (1894-1963). Huxley is well-known for his novels and is a remarkable writer of essays. He was educated at Eton and Oxford. He is basically a writer of satire and irony. He wrote a number of novels satirizing the upper-class of his time. This trend makes some younger contemporaries follow the same steps, if not imitate him. Like Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Anthony Powell and Nancy Mitford, they also wrote novels presenting stylized characters who were sophisticated, amoral, irreverent and witty. (2008eNotes.com, Inc, 1)

Huxley’s well-known novels are *Crome Yellow*, (1921), *Antic Hay* (1923), *Point Counter Point* (1928), *Brave New World* (1932) and *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936). In addition his remarkable essays are collected in the volumes called *Music at Night and Do What you Will*. About him Tindall observed that:

> Huxley, a man of more than one but of none better had a capacity for continual disillusionment. Nineteenth-century science and the war had made all meaningless. A solitary undergraduate in an Oxford depopulated by war, he became increasingly cynical and civilized. (Tindall 101)

Huxley's *Brave New World* is considered to be his masterpiece; more distinguished and celebrated novel. Josephine A. McQual remarks that some critics said that "Huxley was nothing but a clever misanthrope… and luminaries like H. G. Wells charged that Huxley's novel attacked and betrayed science. Today, Brave New World is Huxley’s best-known novel and widely considered his finest." (McQual 31). In fact *Brave New World* in particular led the way for Orwell who published his famous vision of the totalitarian world, *Nineteen Eighty Four* in 1953, and Waugh brought out his novella
Love Among the Ruins, which deals with a bitter portrait of an arid and soulless England of the future.

Through his works Huxley tries to give a message that people are ought to be given their total liberty to be able to think, work, behave and live, to accept the unidealism of human life, and to release them from such illusive idealism. Focusing on the irony and Huxley's aim of writing such a utopian novel, Lidia Vianu, professor of contemporary British Literature at the English Department of Bucharist University comments:

People are turned into sophisticated robots. As Huxley puts it, they are ‘standard men and women’, artificially produced in bottles, conditioned for a certain field of life and work. Even their happiness is planned: they get a ratio of ‘soma’ a day, a kind of drug which gives them a night's escape into ‘eternity’. All superlatives, all dreams have been achieved. Nothing to struggle for, nothing to pine for, no soul necessary anymore. An earth peopled by soulless beings, who hardly know who or why they are at all. (Vianu 3)

In addition to the above mentioned novelists, Rose Macaulay (1881–1958); is a vigorous artist: she published thirty-five books, mostly novels and biographies as well as travel writing. Most of her novels are marked by violence, cruelty, and loss. During the First World War Macaulay worked in the Department of the British Propaganda, after some time as a nurse and later as a civil servant in the War Office. Her first war-novel, Non- Combatants and Others was published in 1916, and her second war novel, What Not: A Prophetic Comedy ridicules wartime bureaucracy. Concerning her last novels, especially those about the Second World War, Andrew Sanders observed that:

Rose Macaulay (1881-1958) ended her highly romantic and impressively wide-ranging survey, Pleasure of Ruins
with ‘A Note on New Ruins’ in 1953; "a note which briefly balanced a fascination with the ‘catastrophic tipsy chaos’ of a British bomb-site against her earlier explorations of the historic wrecks of Greek and Roman cities, of jungle-swamped Inca and Buddhist temples, and of ivy-mantled Gothic abbeys. Three years before the appearance of Pleasure of Ruins, Macaulay's novel The World my Wilderness had focused on outsiders and exiles, all of them ‘displaced’ persons, finding the ruins of London a solace and refuge. (Sanders 586-7)

Henceforth, the bloody events of the First World War remained important for historians, writers and literary critics. Some postmodern novelists returned to the setting of the First World War making it the material of their writings. Among them is Pat Barker who re–imagines the events of the First World War and writes about them through a contemporary point of view using psychological and anthropological approach especially her Trilogy: Regeneration (1992). There are also other two highly – acclaimed novels based on the same theme; Sebastian Faulks' novel Birdsong (1993) and Susan Hill's Strange Meeting (1971). In her most highly – regarded Trilogy: Regeneration (1992), The Eye in the Door (1995) and The Ghost Road (1995), Barker portrays the atmosphere of the First World War using a psychological and anthropological approach. She deals with the themes of soldier's suffering, the battlefield, the psychological, physical, environmental and economical destruction. She writes about the past in a new context, and applies a modern approach to historical material. She uses the background of the war as an image for the state of modern times. Her characters rise out of the experience of war. There is a powerful description of both the First World War and the experience of war as well.
Drama of the First World War

There are two plays which reflect the dramatic reaction to the First World War. The first one is *Journey's End* (1928 – 1929) written by R. C. Sherriff (1896 – 1975), and the second one is *Oh, What A Lovely War!* (1963) written by Joan Littlewood, the director of Theatre Workshop.

*Journey's End* is a realistic play, reflecting the portrait of suffering through focusing on a few characters. It is allied to a universal theme of loss and destruction. J.B. Priestly says that "His [Sherriff’s] play… is well contrived but rather conventional and genteel, came out at the right time, ten years after the war when the public was at least ready to accept such a play." (Priestly, 1960, 737). While Gary Day finds that this play is "a well – made play about the war; it was criticized for having little action, it suggests the sense of cultural paralysis that ensued after the war." (Day 260). On the other hand, Sanders goes so far and remarks that:

*Journey's End* combines realism with the kind of restraint which is expressive of far more than the stiff – upper – lip heroics of idealized British officers. Its novelty lay in its stark portrayal of male relationships strained by an uncomfortable intimacy with discomfort, psychological dissolution, and death. It brought a frank representation of wastage and violence to the London theatre which served as effectively as Wilfred Owen’s posthumously published poetry to stir unreconciled and unhappy emotions in ex – soldiers and to exemplify the pity of war to those who had not been required to fight. (Sanders 553)

While, *Oh, What A Lovely War!,* "is very different", as Martin Stephen argues; it is "an avowedly left wing production using the pre-war ‘pierrot’ or clown – show as the basis for a series of sketches pouring satire on the war and its essential folly." (Stephen 286).

This play is a semi–documentary play which tries to make a historical review of the First World War through the use of songs and
documents of the period. It is written by Theatre Workshop whose team cooperated in a detailed research in the events and documents of the war; taking World War I as an example, it sees war as a process planned and directed by capitalists and ambitious generals for personal privileges and greed. It attacks the capitalist system bitterly. It shows the millions who were killed in the war were the victims of such an evil system that wore different masks to keep its interest. Therefore, it makes fun of war generals, who show their military achievements regardless of the millions of human beings who are killed to satisfy the whims of obsessed generals.

In fact, war in the play is dealt with as a game of nations, a game in the hands of some leading officials and ambitious generals. Henceforth, the play shows how politicians' ambition, generals' megalomania and capitalists' interests meet to make a war which is not less than a massacre.

**Between the Two World Wars**

The period after the First World War was burdened with a number of tragic memories due to the severe and horrible scenes of death and destruction. In July 1917, the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens visited the battlefields of north–eastern France to examine the need for making a monument to immortalize the huge number of war-dead. After he had seen the place, he described it to his wife in a tone of horrible surprise:

> What humanity can endure and suffer is beyond belief’…‘the battlefields-the obliteration of all human endeavour and achievement and the human achievement of destruction is bettered by the poppies and wild flowers that are as friendly to an unexploded shell as they are to the leg of a garden seat in Surrey. (Quoted in Sanders 506)

As a result of such bloody conflict, the period between the two World Wars witnessed the tangible appearance and use of political
nationalism, which developed at the end of the eighteenth century, as a means of holding power. It is worth to mention that the concept of nation had been used much earlier, but it became important in modern history.

Step by step, nationalism was used as a legitimizing ideology to replace the idea of divine rule and to mobilize vast numbers of people to support the state, especially, after the end of the First World War when new states and borders were redefined on nationalist principles. Therefore under such circumstances the new political leaders seized the opportunity to legitimate their speeches, power and request. They started to discover that under the umbrella of nationalism they can get more support and can mobilize all their people more than depending on religion in such modern secular world; especially, as there are different religions and in each religion there are different ethnic groups. But, at the same time, in spite of the privileges of using nationalism, these leaders did not know that the playing on the string of nationalism would be timed bombs in the near future; like what happened between the Serbs and the Albanian Muslims in Kosovo some years ago, and in some other countries which witnessed bloody civil wars. On that basis, Professor Richard L. Rudolph observes:

Thus, unfortunately, one nationality's freedom and independence can mean the oppression to other nationalities. The fact that politicians use nationalism to attain and maintain power is the very key to the strength on nationalism. It should never be forgotten that the Nazi campaign in Europe, which ended with the death of ever fifty million people, was in essence merely an extreme example of nationalist fervor; the nationalist and racist extermination of "inferior" nationalities and national minorities was merely an extension of the nationalist.

(Rudolph 1992)
The Great Depression of 1932

The Great Depression as it came to be known in the United States was the biggest economic crises in history. It lasted for about a decade and led to poverty, hunger and unemployment all over the world. In September 1929 the prices of goods began to fall and on October 29, 1929 they completely collapsed on this day which is known as the Black Tuesday. It was a worldwide economic downturn and the largest and most severe economic depression in the 20th century. Many European countries did not have enough money. They had to pay a lot back to the USA because the Americans helped to win the war. Under such a critical economic situation the British people suffered much as the others in the Continent. Sherman and Salisbury states that:

One British woman echoed the feelings of many: “these last few years since I've been out of the mills … I've got no spirit for anything”. Masses of people sank into poverty, and malnutrition and diseases spread. Families suffered from new tensions as men lost their traditional role as breadwinners … Scenes of despair could be found everywhere. (Quoted in Sherman and Salisbury, 784)

The First World War had left a deep wound on the body of all humanity. Therefore, the age following this war was really an age of loss and despair. It was an important turning point from certainty to uncertainty, from order to chaos. For example Evelyn Waugh once sighed for "Something that went out of the world in 1914, at least for one generation." (Diaries 147). While W. H. Auden called it an age of Anxiety, as he makes that clear in his last longest poem The Age of Anxiety which begins in fear and doubt, and its four protagonists sharing some comfort in their catastrophe. Then, the rise to power of Mussolini and Fascism, and of Hitler and Nazism increasingly led
people to think that the danger of a new world war was inevitable; the Spanish Civil War of 1937 gave credit to that threat. Consequently, at such critical period of the appearance and clashing of different ideologies, society looked tired, sick and ailing and man looked hopelessly for peace and content. "The real circumstances between the wars were shockingly unkind. Violence on a grand scale, the loss of identity, and the increasing mechanization of society left the modern individual in a dilemma." (Lisa Colletta 9).

On the other hand, Communism and Catholicism were increasingly singled out as the suitable cures for the sufferings and sickness of the generation. Therefore, many novelists and poets of the thirties saw in Communism the practical solution for the ailments of the age. Step by step, the concept of the ideal society and revolution gripped the literary imagination of the young generation, like George Orwell, Auden, and Stephen Spender; while Catholicism was the less popular alternative mostly due to crisis of belief and loss of faith. But, Graham Greene was one of the famous novelist of this period who asserted the validity and the necessity of religious belief; sharing the same beliefs with his friend Evelyn Waugh.

The Second World War

After the painful loss of German in the First World War, Germany was depressed and powerless. This change left the German people with a severe injured pride. They were oppressed and betrayed by the victors. Accordingly, most of the Germans lost their money and property. Then, they were forced to endure high taxes to repay the Allies. They were in a state of anger and despair. As a result and due to a lot of problems whether politic, economic or social, the German government of that time was unstable and unable to deal with
these problems. Such difficult and critical circumstances with the bitterness of defeat in the First World War encouraged Hitler to move against Poland. On 1st September 1939, German troops invaded Poland which was considered the signal for the beginning of the Second World War. Tragically, this war continued for six long years and covered the globe as never before. Sherman and Salisbury points out that:

At dawn on September 1, the German launched on all-out attack on Poland by land, sea and air. Hitler remained convinced that France and Britain would not go to war over Poland. He was wrong. Two days later, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. In a poem titled “SEPTEMBER 1, 1939,” poet W.H. Auden (1907 – 1973) moaned that:

The unmentionable odor of death
Offends the September night
World War II had began

(Sherman and Salisbury 794)

The supposed peace was interrupted and troubled again, and the twenty long years of starvation, mass misery, mass unemployment, and mass fear had to stop for a while on the same door-step. It was war again and it was more destructive and horrible than the previous one.

In fact, this war, the World War II, was different than its predecessor. This war was more dangerous to the lives of people and more destructive because it was more advance in the use of technology and the weapons of mass destruction. The whole world had become the war zone. The use of modern technology and modern weapons has changed the concept of war zone. In this war, as in most modern wars, there is no limited battlefield; the whole world is a battlefield for such wars. "The Great War of 1914–1918 can seem
more like a European Civil War in comparison." (Mackay, 2009, 1). This war stressed the relationship between technology with barbarism as it was thought by a lot of historians and psychologists in the middle of the twentieth century; such relationship has become highly charged mark of a psychological, moral, and the occurrent paralysis of thought. The philosopher Simone Weil who wrote out of the experience of being inside a war; stressed that:

The mind ought to find a way out, but the mind has lost all capacity to so much as look outward … The Second World War, perhaps more than any war before it, raises the question of how war can be held in the mind when the mind itself is under siege; of what it means to experience a trauma so unrelentingly forcefully that cannot be grasped consciously. (Quoted in Lyndsey Stonebridge 194)

The Germans launched massive air attacks in July 1940, to destroy and shatter the British forces and its infra-structures, and bombing London every night for two months. (Sherman and Salisbury 794 – 795). Describing the difficult British situation and Churchill's plans Martin Gilbert states that:

In the disastrous summer of 1940, with the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk (accompanied by a massive loss of equipment) and with the intensification of German bombing of factories and airfields throughout Britain, Churchill and those in the inner circle of government knew the precise details of Britain's weakness on land, sea, and air. Despite every effort being made to increase war production, Churchill knew that it was only through a massive contribution by the United States to every facet of Britain's war – making arsenal that Britain could remain effectively at war. From the first to the last days of his premiership, the link to the United States was central to Churchill's war policy. (Gilbert 45)

Accordingly, as the war machine continued; the sufferings, horrors, miseries, hunger, emotional stress, death, physical and
psychological diseases increased everywhere, whether they were the military men or the civilians all became the scapegoat of the adventures of the statesmen; in addition to the mass pressure of the war propaganda. The globe became a theater of the most disgust bloody show, where millions of people suffered, tortured or killed in three major theaters: the Soviet Union, Western Europe and the Mediterranean, and the Pacific. It is said that one of the largest, bloodiest battles occurred in the Soviet Union in which nine millions soldiers were involved on August 1942.

The soldiers of the two world wars may have been largely conscripts, but they were soldiers nonetheless; World War II, on the other hand, was very substantially a civilian experience, and, in the eloquent words of the historian Tony Judt, "experienced not as a war of movement and battle but as a daily degradation, in the course of which men and women were betrayed and humiliated, forced into daily acts of petty crime and self-abasement, in which everyone lost something and many lost every thing."

(Mackay, 2009, 7)

However, one of the most disgusting, and most horrible fact about the Second World War was the wholesale killing of prisoners of war. In his non-fiction book Citizen Soldiers: The U S Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany June 7, 1944-May 7, 1945, published in 1997, Stephen E. Ambrose tells the real story of World War II from the viewpoint of the men and women who fought it. Ambrose portrays grotesquely the atrocity and the absurdity of such bloody war; for example, through the following conversation between a Polish and an American officer, one can imagine how brutal and tragic that war was.

Polish Captain: "Here are your prisoners."

Waters (an American Captain): "I don't want them."
Polish Captain: "But I must leave them, with you. Those are my orders."

Waters: "I still don't want them. Get them out of here."
   (Waters' orders were to accept them, but he had been told to expect 1,500; in fact there were only a couple of hundred).

Polish Captain: "But I must still leave them with you."

Waters: "Well, you were supposed to have 1,500 prisoners. Where are they?"

Polish Captain: "They are dead. We shot them. These are all that are left."

Waters: "Then why don't you shoot these too?" A pause then
   Waters corrected himself: "No you can't do that."

Polish Captain: "Oh, yes we can. They shot my countrymen."
   He took Waters by the arm and escorted him away from the others. Then he said, "Captain, we can't shoot them. We are out of ammunition." (Ambrose 105)

At the end of such a bloody and savage military action, the Second World War came to an end leaving fifty millions murdered most of them were civilians. It said only the Russians had sacrificed twenty million Soviets to defeat Germany. When the weapons kept silent and the war was over, still under such circumstances, the road ahead looked very difficult to recover from the ruin of such bloodiest war and to regain some sense of order against western and non-western societies. "Nearly five years of war had left British cities as "bedraggled, unkempt and neglected as rotten teeth," according to an American visitor, who found that "people referred to ‘before the war’ as if it were a place, not a time." (Rick Atkinson Prologue 1); where at least "More than fifty thousand British civilians had died in German air raids since 1940." (1).
The end of the Second World War was accompanied by the shrinking of the British Empire. For the first time for more than two centuries the British Empire shrunk into its small island, especially after the growth of the struggle of the colonized nations of the Third World. Britain was no more a great power and, accordingly, if it wanted to be secure and to live peacefully, it had to depend on the greater power, the United States of America, which had been chosen. In fact, till now Britain always follows the American decisions, agrees and supports them. Because of that, it is called the American's tail.

**Poetry of the Second World War**

Many critics find the poetry of the Second World War different from First World War poetry, in the sense that the Second World War for the poets was far less of a shock than it had been to the soldiers of 1914. In the early years of war there was no trench poetry because "Most of the British army was holed up in supply lines and camps, safely tucked away from bombed cities. The early war poetry was by observers in the blitzed cities themselves." (Adam Piette 14) The preconceptions of the First World War completely dominated the scene of the Second World War. The experiences of the First World War had been widely spread and talked about in symposium halls as well as being widely expressed in poetry, novels, short stories and dramas.

Keith Douglas (1920 –1944), one of the well – known poets of the Second World War stressed that "To write Second World War poetry … was to write second-rate, second-hand verse belatedly in styles borrowed from the trench poets, sons imitating fathers." (Quoted by Piette 19) Stallworthy praises Douglas’s courage stating that:
Leaving Oxford in 1940 to join a cavalry regiment, Keith Douglas embellished a photograph of himself in uniform-humorously.... Two years later, chafing at his enforced inactivity behind the lines while his regiment was engaging Rommel’s tanks in the Western Desert, Douglas drove off—in a two-ton truck and direct disobedience of orders—to join them; earning there by his batman’s commendation... His subsequent achievement as a poet was to celebrate the last stand of the chivalric hero, the doomed boy, the fool whose perfectly mannered flesh fell in opening the door for a shell as he had learnt to do at school. (Stallworthy 14)

Douglas felt the influence and weight of The First World War poets heavily on him. Stallworthy remarks that "By no means all British poets of the Second World War came from public schools, and many more spoke a language that had more in common with Owen and Rosenberg." (15). While Sanders confirms that:

Douglas, in particular, felt that the weight of an earlier tradition had initially tended to dumb found a new generation. ‘The hardships, pain and boredom; the behaviour of the living and the appearance of the dead’, he [Douglas] wrote from Tunisia in May 1943, ‘were so accurately described by the poets of the Great War that every day on the battlefields of the western desert … their poems are illustrated.’ (Sanders 582)

Douglas is best known for *From Alamein to Zem Zem* (1946). His poems are a cold ironic commentary with a powerful hint against the disasters and miseries and human loss by war. His characteristic note is one of a detached, sophisticated interest in the violence and horror of the War. His work is also philosophical and he is interested to place the war experience in a wider context. He is influenced by T. S. Eliot and Auden. He was killed in Normandy, on June 9, 1944. (Martin Stephen, 286 – 87). Adam Piette mentions that Douglas had remarked in an essay, in May 1943, on war poetry titled: *Poets of This War*:
There is nothing new, from a soldier's point of view, about this war except its mobile character. There are two reasons: hell cannot let loose twice: it was let loose in the Great War and it is the same old hell now. The hardships, pain and boredom; the behaviour of the living and the appearance of the dead, were so accurately described by the poets of the Great War that every day on the battlefields of the western desert – and no doubt on the Russian battlefields as well – their poems are illustrated. Almost all that a modern poet on active service would be inspired to write, would be tautological. (Quoted by Piette 19)

In his book "The First World War" A. J. P. Taylor portrays the gruesome reality of war, but at the same time he remarks, that this war was a powerful source of modern experience which still had an effect on the society of the present – time. (Taylor, 1978, 11). Other critics also confirm that in comparison, the Second World War did not have the dramatic impact on poets as the First World War, especially there were neither Owen and Brooke nor Sassoon to portray the grief of the victims and to glorify the sacrifices made by the shell-shocked soldiers.

The other poets who practised the plain style and had emerged in the 1930s were Alan Ross and John Jarmain. Alan Ross served in the Navy, and wrote one of the great narrative poems about the war, *J. W. 51 B: A Convoy* in (1950). John Jarmain, fought in Normandy and was killed in 1944; he wrote two war poems about a soldier's mental confusion *Fear* and *The Innocent shall Suffer* about the innocent dead of the war. Japan was heavily affected and suffered due to the Second World War, the Japanese writer Reiko Tachibana comments that:

…more than six decades after World War II, Japanese writers continue to produce literary texts about the legacy of the war, figurative or realistic or both. A-bomb literature began with writers' sense of mission—the need to record their overwhelming experiences—right after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and their memories of hellish pictures become the source of their creative power. (Tachibana 147)
Novel of the Second World War

After the end of the First World War, things were changing fast, therefore the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a lot of changes in the political, social, economic or even the literary fields. These changes affected every aspect of life, and among those affected were the writers who were either socialist or leftists. Thus, the literature of the Second World War was different from the First World War. It is said that what makes the cultural context of this War so radically different was the experience of well-educated civilians. Tindall remarks that:

To understand the postwar disillusionment of literate civilians, the disillusionment of literate belligerents must be remembered. Most of them were killed, but some-poets, novelists and essayists-survived to unfold a tale of bungling, confusion, and horror that increased despair at home. (Tindall 96)

Most of the critics observed that the English novel witnessed distinct sign of change in the fictional tradition since the period of the Second World War. It is an outstanding and genuinely modern period. In this era new generation of writers who emerged little before and after the war were radically different in temper and commitment from their predecessors. Describing the level of destruction caused by this war to people's life and the infra–structure of Britain, especially London, and its influence on the postwar literature, Sanders observes:

When the Second World War ended in Europe in the Summer of 1945, much of Britain was in ruins. Quite literally in ruins ....London, in particular, had been universally pitted and scarred and was now marked by absences where familiar landmarks had once stood. Whole districts were in ruins and most streets somehow bore in signs of blasts, shrapnel, fire bombs, or high explosives .... This landscape of ruins must also be recognized as forming an integral part of much of the literature of the late 1940s and the early 1950s. It was a
landscape which provide a metaphor for broken lives and spirits, and, in some remoter and less – defined sense, for the ruin of Great Britain itself. (Sanders 586)

Novel became a practical instrument for expression instead of being a mode of formal or imaginative experiment as it had been. There was an emphasis to return to realism to portray the breakdown of traditions of the modern phenomena of English society. A lot of distinguished novels were produced, portraying the appearance of different viewpoints and approaches to life that were affected by the deterioration of social and moral standards. Consequently modern novel seemed to mirror the anxiety, loss, despair or dilemma, as the main characteristic, of the Modern Man in general and novelists of the war period in particular. Henceforth, the English novelist tried to project realism and liberal humanism in their novels. Critics agree that the writers of the 1920s and 1930s were incredulous about any contemporary coherence, dominated by the shock, pain and sense of betrayal caused by the First World War, and needed to invent or recall stable past. They portrayed the picture of a world that was losing its center and grip over the drift and direction of events through the use of different literary techniques: satire, comedy, social critique, psychological inquiring, awful vision, scientific point of view. In an essay British Fiction of the War Rod Mengham remarks that:

Those novels that were written and published during the war often gravitated towards the problem of integration, often specifically towards the challenge of grasping the imaginative, if not the practical, means of maintaining the continuity of British traditions, customs, and ideas about identity, at a time of historical irresolution. (Mengham 26)

Anderson and Buckler in their argument about the literary situation of the 1930s and after, the main dominating features on the writers in particular, and on English literature in general; state that:
The loss of traditional values, of the social faith which animated many of the poets and novelists of the 1930s, the loss even of the conviction that the world of modern civilization will survive – all have contributed to a literary climate that is unclear and unsure. The momentous shadow of the atomic bomb, the titanic struggle between communist and noncommunist, the upheaval of nationalities through the world, the very scope and power of events themselves have obscured traditional vision.

(Anderson and Buckler 1171)

Henceforth, the Second World War had provided an additional means for writers, like Elizabeth Bowen (1899 – 1973); an Anglo-Irish novelist. Bowen wrote collections of short stories in the wartime, *Look at All Those Roses* (1941). Above all, her novel *The Heat of the Day* (1949); portrays the lovers; Stella Rodney and the invalid Robert Kelway who have met at the time of the first London air raids and how Stella fails to discover Robert’s secret activities for Nazi Germany because she loves him too much. It is a period of morning mists ‘charred by the smoke from ruins’. (Sanders 587)

In the introduction of her edited book *The Literature of World War II* Mariana Mackay remarks that Bowen commented in her novel of spying in the wartime, *The Heat of the Day* "War's being global meant that it ran off the edges of maps, it was uncontainable." (Mackay, 2009, 1). In this novel Bowen describes the wide range of war and the impossibility of keeping in mind the numerous locations of such war in different directions and in different settings, on and around the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific Oceans, a war fought in jungles, fields, on sea, in deserts, plains, and city streets; so, where is the front? While in his essay, *British Fiction of the War*, Rod Mengham argues that:

Elizabeth Bowen's postwar novel *The Heat of the Day* (1948) circles around a similar set of dilemmas, although the
female protagonist's deception by her lover is more overtly politicized; his activities as a Nazi agent, set within an environment of English traditions and myths of behavior, heighten his breach of trust into a betrayal not just of key individuals but of an entire way of life. (Mengham 37)

The other famous novelist of the same period is Graham Greene (1904-1991). He is one of most important writer in English literature, a prolific author whose literary output includes novels, short stories, plays, travel books, books for children and a lot of essays. He is one of those modern writers who shows his preoccupation with evil and its endless conflict with virtue. His religious maturity is faithfully mirrored in his novels.

Like Evelyn Waugh, Greene's worldview is clearly pessimistic and his vision is of a fallen, hostile and irrational world in which evil is an absolute one since it is based on the assumption of the existence of God; and salvation in Greene's world can only be obtained through sin. "He delights to expose the raw nerves of evils, showing it as a positive force in the world, a skeleton like figure working visible mischief in the ordinary, everyday affairs of men, women and children." (Mundra and Mundra 408). As with most writers of his time, the Second World War sharpened certain Greene's fictional perspectives and absorptions; "World War II was a total war…no literary imagination went unaffected." (Mackay, 2009, 7)

Most of the critics agreed that Greene’s finest works appeared between 1940–1951. The novels of this period adjust between troubled and disorienting topographies, and each one of them seems to reflect the chaotic disappointment of another. Like *The Ministry of Fear* (1943), *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) and *The End of the Affair* (1951).
*The Heart of the Matter* is one of Greene's major novels set in British West African colony, namely in Sierra Leone, during the Second World War. It deals with the theme of sin and the question of salvation, and domination. It is a dramatization of the psychological conflict, moral and spiritual disintegration of the protagonist, Major Henry Scobie, a catholic fifty–year–old Deputy Commissioner of Police, who has committed the sins of adultery, sacrilege and suicide.

Most of the key characters in these stories are Catholics; all of them are ruins, or at best ruinous. Scobie … accuses God of ‘forcing decisions on people’ and blames the Church for having all the answers (‘we Catholics are damned by our knowledge’). (Sanders, 590)

*The Heart of the Matter* is written within the framework of religion, and Catholicism. Consequently, Tindall argues:

Graham Greene, who shares with Evelyn Waugh the highest eminence among more recent converts to Catholicism, devotes his compassionate and moving novels to imperfect or seemingly imperfect Catholics. *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), centering upon impious communion, is a drama of two kinds of love - and God knows which wins. (Tindall 180)

The other important novel is George Orwell's *1984* (1948). Orwell wrote this novel directly after the end of the Second World War, wanting it to be as a warning to his readers, and wishing that the kind of future presented in the novel should never happen again; with this context David Lebedoff observes that in this novel:

The future was supposed to be clean and efficient. But then something seems wrong. Everything in this future is dirty or broken. Nothing works except the people, and their labor is involuntary. There is no privacy. Television sets watch everyone. The slightest deviation from loyalty to the head of state, Big Brother, is reported by friends or family. The world is continuously at war. Language had been deliberately perverted to prevent clear speech – and clear thought. There is no point to life save blind worship of the state – no love, no thought, no nature, no beauty – and, most important of all, no past. (Lebedoff 170 – 171)
Subsequently, the world became an endless war, as Orwell expected in his vision for such a near future. The war is being used as an excuse for the leaders to justify poverty and to mobilize the masses in order to keep on their totalitarianism. In a study *George Orwell and the Last Man in Europe* about the essential role of Orwell's own experience in moulding his pessimistic tendency, Steven Kreis stresses that "Orwell's mind and his dystopia were products not necessarily of his own imagination but more importantly of his own experience." (Kreis 4).

Thus, at the time when Orwell used the concept of Utopia, he strongly tried to steer and seize the utopian tradition to create a dystopian fictional setting in which life was extremely bad because of poverty, horror, and depression. The novel simply retells a story of struggle, failure and betrayal. Through such a world Orwell tries to portray a state in which power, privilege, property are centered in the hands of the few; a state in which class distinction and discrimination are normal features of society. The story itself is supposed to take place in London in the year 1984, a horrible place and time where the human spirit and freedom are all but crushed down; a place where people are living in wooden homes like chicken houses.

The society in *1984*, although fictional, mirrors the political weather of the societies that existed all around him. Orwell's Oceania is a terrifying society reminiscent of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union – complete repression of the human spirit, absolute governmental control of daily life, constant hunger, and the systematic “vaporization” of individuals who do not, or will not, comply with the government values. (Cliffs Notes Orwell's *1984*, 2000, 6)

Concerning the setting of *1984*, Davis remarks that:
Orwell's London is essentially the London of the end of World War II in its shabbiness and deprivation of what we in the West like to think of as normal comforts. As in many modern dystopias, the setting is urban, the characters enclosed, “the place where there is no darkness” a model for the society as a whole. (Davis, 1989, 239-240)

Like Waugh, Orwell was also influenced by Huxley's technique of writing and philosophy. Orwell wrote his two famous books for which he is generally known, *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1948). Both of them are anti-utopian novels and were almost written with the same technique and idea of Huxley's *Brave New World* which was written seventeen years before the publishing of *1984*. Confirming this idea, Abraham Lass argues that:

Like Huxley's *Brave New World*, *1984* is a reverse utopia – a vision of the future as nightmare rather than Paradise. Significantly, when Huxley wrote his book he cast his utopia six hundred years into the future. Orwell, writing seventeen years after Huxley, saw the dangers of brainwashing, rigid social control, and political bestiality as far more imminent, and placed his nightmare state only thirty-five years into the future. (Lass 347)

Both the books were a warning to England, but the main difference between the two novels is that Orwell focuses on politics of the leaders while Huxley concentrates on scientific advances. About this context, Professor Lidia Vianu observes, in an essay *Brave New Novel – Aldous Huxley* (1894 – 1963), that "Politically, Huxley is not really a prophet. Again and again, he knows too little to compete with Orwell… His scientific bias saves him from mere improvisation, but it is insufficient to create a real dystopia." (Vianu 10). While in another essay *A Handbook of Despair – George Orwell* (1903 – 1950), Vianu goes further explaining in detail the difference between Huxley's and Orwell's world, she observes that:
In contrast to Huxley's world of comfort, leisure, affluence and well being, the image of Orwell's future England (outlined sixteen years later that Huxley's) is wretched. Poverty is a major theme, and it darkens everything. It is a poverty totally opposed to Huxley's heaven of consumer goods. No sugar, not enough electricity, no coffee, no pans, no clothes, no chocolate. We know these things only too well. Only the most important members of the so – called inner Party have economic privileges, such as good cigarettes, wine, good coffee, good flats. There is one thing in abundance, however: the telescreen. The telescreen is a surveillance device and propaganda tool, as well. It exists everywhere, in every room. Everybody is watched, one is never alone, there is no privacy, the Party knows everything. (Vianu 16)

Evelyn Waugh, who was acquainted with Orwell not long before Orwell's death, wrote his novella Love Among the Ruins (1952), a dystopian story of the near future of England, with the same vision, technique and the thematic context of Orwell's 1984. On the other hand, Davis remarks that Orwell is far more pessimistic than Waugh who resists the idea that the individual can be controlled by the State, contrary to Orwell's belief. Davis adds that Orwell:

As a socialist, he was perhaps more worried about the betrayal of socialist ideals and programs than were people who never expected anything concrete of socialism or, in Waugh's case, anything at all of politics. (Davis 238)

Waugh's Sword of Honour is a trilogy war novel, comprising of Men at Arms (1952), Officers and Gentlemen (1955) in which Guy’s inspired illusion that began in the first book deflated, and the last volume of this trilogy Unconditional Surrender (1961); is the most complicated and most successful in which the crusade against the Modern Age ended in defeat. The trilogy was published as a single work in 1965. It is about the war and the individuals within it; Waugh ironically depicts the failure of the army life springing from his personal experience during the Second World War, as seen through
the exhausted and melancholy eyes of Guy Crouchback, a middle-aged civilian who joins the British army. Themes of disillusionment, conflict, chaos, decline of heroism, the barbarism of the modern age and the decline of the British power are portrayed. About this trilogy Christopher Sykes remarks that "Evelyn attempted to achieve a great ambition: to describe in terms of a fictional experience close to his own the significance to men and women of the ordeal of the crisis of civilization which reached its climax in World War II." (Sykes 415)

Commenting on Waugh's and Orwell's position against the service in military and fighting the Nazis, Lebedoff observes that:

…neither Orwell nor Waugh felt himself lucky at all. They both wanted to fight for their country against the Nazis, who, among so many other failings, embodied for them the Modern Age. They saw military service in this war as the highest possible moral obligation. (Lebedoff 91)

Orwell and Waugh, shared the same fear about the new world in the sense that the modern world is so unmistakably crazy and in future this world would be shattered to pieces and chaos would be the dominant in such a world. Therefore, in his novel 1984 Orwell portrayed the future, which is supposed to be clean and efficient, as dirty and broken. In such a world "There is no privacy. Television sets watch everyone… The world is continuously at war." (Lebedoff 170-71). Even language has lost its human sense; it becomes paralyzed and meaningless. It becomes unable to produce clear speech and clear thought. There is no love, no beauty, no truth, no nature and the most important of all, no past. In such a world everything is under the control and in the hands of the State and Big Brother. People should blindly follow what the State says; so if the State says two plus two equals five so it should be five. It is as, Martin Stephen remarks through his comment on Orwell’s 1984, that Orwell wants to say that
even "History, biography and language are plastic in the hands of the State, to be moulded and changed at will." (Stephen, 2000, 315).

Consequently, anyone can wonder, isn’t such a world, described by such talented, genius and prophetic writers, is perfectly and unfortunately the world we are living now. Even their warnings, about the cultureless modern world and the appearance of a new class of educated but rootless people, are clear and tangible not only in the period of postwar world but also may be more in the time being. In fact they saw not only their own time, but ours also; both of them were afraid and anxious about the future because they imagined the possibility of continuation of the evil of their own time to the next. They understood how the moral relativism had brought the bad people and the totalitarians to power; as what Lebedoff remarks:

They saw in modern life a terrible enemy. It was not only totalitarianism that they loathed but virtually everything that would come even if totalitarianism was defeated. They saw an end to common sense and common purpose. They saw the futility of life without roots or faith. They saw the emptiness of an existence whose only point was material consumption. And in the great work of their lives, which was to warn us of what was to come, they came to be, improbably enough, in many ways the same man. (Lebedoff XV)

Also we cannot neglect Huxley's portrait of the modern world and his accurate expectations to see just what was going to happen before Waugh and Orwell, especially in his *Brave New World* he spells out, though in an exaggerated way, the details of modern lives of many people, from the addiction to modern technical games to the decline of values. In fact, modern technology has greatly facilitated the segregation of people. In Huxley's future, self–indulgence or hedonism is everything; instant pleasure is the axis of the modern Man's life. There is no religion, no faith, and no tradition; there is
clear lack of a moral code. The replacements are materialism, capitalism and globalism. In such a modern age there is neither past nor future. Everything is available to amuse the people of the Modern Age but devoid of values which cannot escape from emptiness. However, in a way or another, the three great artists Huxley, Orwell and Waugh participated, adopted and reflected the same vision about the Modern Age.
Iii. Evelyn Waugh: The Man and Artist

Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966) did not like his name because it repeatedly involved him in mistakes of gender identity. He was a talented child, he wrote stories, verses, and diaries when he was at Lancing College. "There are few letters from Lancing, but …. There is no Oxford diary it was destroyed by Waugh." (Letters 4). At Oxford, where he studied modern history, he started to drink alcohol and was busy with self enjoyment. He was in the company of naughty boys and with them he led a completely reckless life. Due to such relationships Douglas Lane Patey states that "Waugh destroyed his Oxford diaries, perhaps because of their record of these relationships." (Patey 13). In one of his letters to his friend Dudley Carew (1924) Waugh said:

My life here has been extremely precarious ‘unstable equilibrium’ vide lux. At present I am keeping my balance but I may crash [?] any moment. We will then combine and run a Sadist brothel at Wigan… I am a little saner now. My diary for the period is destroyed. (Letters 19)

But though he was attracted to the impudent life and the unconventional behaviour of his friends at Oxford, Waugh attacked them. Later he caricatured and made them the dramatis personae of his novels especially in Decline and Fall, as Alan Pryce-Jones observed that: "At Oxford, he [Waugh] moved into the company of those contemporaries whom he calls, without hostility, ‘mad, bad and dangerous to know’." (Alan 11). With reference to Waugh's study in Oxford Robert Murray Davis remarked that:

Once he [Waugh] reached Oxford, however, he abandoned serious attempts at study and devoted himself to an extensive social life and to various literary projects for undergraduate magazines, including The Isis, whose “sole attraction” for Waugh “was that it paid its contributors”; The Cherwell, which after an episode with
a Philbrickian publisher was financed and edited by Waugh's friends, and The Oxford Broom, founded by Harold Acton. (Davis, 1989, 125)

In spite of such a disorderly life at Oxford, it was brushing up Waugh’s literary talent through his friendship and association with some of the intellectuals studying there. Among them was Harold Acton (1904-1994) who became close, lifelong friend and mentor of Waugh. He founded a new undergraduate magazine called The Oxford Broom. This magazine played an important part in young Evelyn's life. "Waugh used his influence in Oxford journalism to provide an easy market for his own contributions to Acton's campaign–short stories and, much more important, drawings." (Stannard, 1986, 87). In fact, Waugh's relationship with Acton was very interesting. Acton added many good literary devices to Waugh’s writing, extended his horizons and encouraged his talent to depend more on his artistic judgment. "A year younger than Waugh, Acton brought to Oxford a much more fully formed knowledge of the arts and commitment to modernism." (Patey10).

Acton encouraged Waugh to read and study the works of Ronald Firbank (1880–1926), Edith Sitwell (1887–1964), T. S. Eliot (1888–1965), Ezra Pound (1885–1972), Lewis Carroll (1832–1898), and Earnest Hemingway (1899–1961). Due to his influence and the close relationship Waugh dedicated his first novel Decline and Fall (1928) to Acton ‘in homage and affection’. "Waugh was enchanted: ‘Harold led me far away from Crease to the baroque and the rococo and the Waste Land’." (Quoted in Patey 11)

In the early times at Oxford Waugh made good use of his friends who wrote gossip columns like Tom Driberg (1905-1976), Patrick Balfour (1904-1976), and reviews such as Peter Quennell

After leaving Oxford without a degree Waugh had to do a job of school master in 1925, at Arnold House Preparatory School in North Wales which was a bad experience for the rebellious young Waugh who refused to live an orderly life. In his diary, Waugh expressed his disgust of being in Wales which seemed to him as if it were Africa "Everyone in Wales has black spittle and whenever he meets you say “borra–da” and spits. I was frightened at first but after a time I became accustomed to it." (Diaries 201). In a letter from Wales Waugh mentioned to his friend Acton, in Feb. 1925, that "... a bad school as schools go but it is a sorry waste of time & energy. I do not think that I am good at teaching–at any rate I have not succeeded so far in getting any idea into anyone's head." (Letters 31). However, Arnold House was the original episode of Llanabba School in his first novel Decline and Fall.

In A Little Learning Waugh portrayed himself as a detested schoolteacher at Arnold House, depressing and alienated. He hated everything even himself. "Waugh felt like a criminal transported to an output of civilization." (Stannard, 1986, 108). Now he was fully depressed and disillusioned, he saw no light at the end of the tunnel. The future looked even darker than before, so he started thinking of destroying himself. Suicide seemed the only logical option to put an end for such a depressed life, especially after he received the news from Italy saying that there was no hope for the job he was waiting for. But though most critics agreed that no one knew how serious was Waugh’s intention to kill himself, but he was making it look perfectly
clear in his last autobiography, *A Little Learning*. Patey remarked that "This story is not really quite true but I have recounted it in so many letters that I have begun to believe it." (Patey 19). In a brilliant literary passage and comically ironic way Waugh mentioned in his last book, *A Little Learning: The First Volume of an Autobiography*, how the suicide was let down by a jellyfish:

One night, soon after I got the news from Pisa, I went down alone to the beach with my thoughts full of death. I took off my clothes and began swimming out to sea… I left a note with my clothes, the quotation from Euripides about the sea which washes away all human ills… I swam slowly out but, long before I reached the point of no return, the Shropshire Lad was disturbed by a smart on the shoulder. I had run into a jelly-fish. A few more strokes, a second more painful sting. The placid waters were full of the creatures… I turned about, swam back… to the sands… With some difficulty I dressed and tore into small pieces my pretentious classical tag, leaving them to the sea… Then I climbed the sharp hill that led to all the years ahead. (*A Little Learning* 229-230)

Henceforth, he left his job in Wales and tried working in another school. In March 1927 he joined school in Notting Hill, but he stayed there for a very short time, because he did not like it. He described it in his *Diaries*, on 28 February, as a very bad place to work in "The School in Notting Hill is quite awful. All the masters drop their aitches & spit in the fire and scratch their genitals. The boys have close cropped head & steel rimmed spectacles wound with worsted. They pick their noses & scream at each other in a Cockney accent." (*Diaries* 281). So his new career as a schoolmaster came to an end in April 1927. Finally, Evelyn got a job as a reporter for the *Daily Express*, but it also seemed that he was not satisfied with it, as he commented "I don't know how much I shall like that,’ but it will be worth trying." (Quoted in Sykes 111).
Acton described the four years of Waugh's life from 1924 to 1928 as Waugh's ‘Destoiievski period’, in the sense that through these years Waugh led "an aimless round of occasional employment, parties in London, weekend trips back to Oxford…afternoons whiled away in the cinema, and, drunkenness." (Patey 16). Hence, after focusing on Waugh's early life, one can feel that, though, he had been born into a comfortable middleclass family, but when he became a man he moved among the British upper classes. He financed his pleasures by becoming one of the best-paid authors of his generation. He appeared to be an example of success in the press circles. Though he was well known as a funny man but, only his closest friends knew of his depression and fear of failure.

In July 1927, he started writing his first work, a life of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. In fact, *Rossetti, His Life and Works*, is the first real attempt for Waugh in writing literary books. It is a book in which Waugh reflects his fascination and appreciation for the Pre-Raphaelites; praising their approach as painters, scribes, writers and craftsmen. Through this book Waugh early declared his admiration for traditional Arts. The book was published in the Spring of 1928. In a letter to Waugh, after reading this book, his friend Acton encouraged and praised Waugh observing:

> I can now say that I have read and honestly enjoyed your *Rossetti*. Your maturity of mind alarms and terrifies me, it is so tremendously able and considered….As it is you have written in your own genuine and agreeable style, and dealt quietly and eloquently with your subject….All my congratulations. I am sure it will get the success it deserves, and it must have been hard work writing. (Acton 69)

With the publishing of *Rossetti* in 1928 Waugh's name appeared now as a writer to be taken seriously. Commenting on Waugh’s style of writing this book, Sykes remarked that "The style shows a leap
towards maturity, though he had not yet attained mastery. He was always to use occasionally the grand manner, the purple patch, but with more discipline than he showed in *Rossetti.*" (Sykes 123).

In one of the parties of the Bright Young People, he was introduced to Evelyn Gardner. She was young of the same age of Waugh, beautiful and a frivolous girl, from the Herberts, the high class family. They married on June 27\textsuperscript{th} 1928. As a new married couple, they travelled together in a four–month Mediterranean tour to Paris, Monte Carlo, Malta, Haifa, Port Said in Egypt, Cairo, Algiers, Barcelona, Gibraltar, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Athens, Turkey, Soviet Union and other countries. By mid–April 1929, they returned to England, and Waugh felt that he came back richly loaded with travel experiences and material for his writings.

The result of this Mediterranean journey is a travel book, under the title *Labels* (1930), with a description of his travels and comments on the places he visited. In this book Waugh portrays different types of modern travellers and different places from Europe to the Middle East and North Africa; from Egyptian pyramids and Italian churches to Maltese sailors and Moroccan merchants; places that seem to be the archetype of a remarkable old civilisation. After this as he sailed around the Mediterranean Waugh’s pen put down beautiful description for everything he saw in addition to a lot of camera pictures to give an entertaining portrait of a long lost world of traveling we are longing for nowadays. His tales depict beautiful pictures of a lost world that has gone, where the places he visited already "fully labelled" in people's minds as he said. "With *Labels,* Mr. Waugh has definitely established his reputation as a minor critic and master of modern manners and a very amusing and intelligent
writer." (Unsigned Review, ‘New Statesman’ 18 October 1930 in Stannard, 2002, 116). While Sykes remarked that what made this book a unique one among the other six books of Evelyn’s travel books was that he fictionalized it: "It was the first of the six travel books he wrote, and unique among them for its artful mixture of factual record and fiction." (Sykes 151).

After the married couple came back to London Waugh noticed that a lot of things in the Londoners social life were changing. He found scenes of disorderly social extravagance, and society had become the main topic of news for the gossip column. New design clothes had appeared. It was the period of short skirts, cloche hats, and shingled hair. The cocktail and bottle parties were common and modern fashions elaborate fancy–dress parties became widespread. Negro jazz singers ran a chain of illegal clubs. The parties became more aggressive and wilder, the drinking heavier and the divorce rate became much higher. A class of rich people appeared who were willing to do anything even about sexual affairs and would talk openly which was contrary to the conservative time of the Victorians. New bohemian life became familiar, there was drugs abuse among the Bright Young People*, their disorderly life was the material of Waugh's next novel Vile Bodies. Waugh’s wife fell in love with one of his friends named John Heygate an active member of the Bright Young People.

Consequently his marriage failed and it was a great turning point in his life. "He felt lost again in a world where he believed that, at last, after a painful struggle, he had found safety. He fell into a state

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* The Bright Young People is a nickname given to a group of young aristocrats and socialites who constituted the 'lost generation' of the period between the Two World Wars 1920s and 30s in London. "The generic term for any decadent members of the younger generation who behaved badly, or irresponsibly, during the later half of the 1920s." (Nicholas Courtney in Lebedoff 60).
of absolute despair. Some of his friends even feared for his sanity." (Sykes 139-140). David Wykes observed that "the collapse of this marriage was the most important event of his life….Certainly it was a trauma that left a mark on everything of any importance that he wrote thereafter." (Wykes 63-64). On the other hand, Patey states that "Waugh's pain in the autumn of 1929 seems to have been more humiliation than heartbreak." (Patey, 32). He wrote that, "The trouble about the world today is that there's not enough religion in it. There's nothing to stop young people doing whatever they feel like doing at the moment." (32). This speech reflects that Waugh’s philosophy about religion is the same as that of T.S. Eliot’s, as John Xiros Cooper remarks:

For him [Eliot], religion was the key, not simply as a form of cultural expression but rather as a supernatural power finding expression, not as culture, but as something spiritually immanent in the worldly state. Religion grounds the values that Eliot endorsed, not religion as transcendence, but religion as woven into concrete existence via institutions, historical practices, sacred texts, and those specially trained in the maintenance of the faith. (Cooper 31)

On the other hand due to such difficult circumstances, Evelyn Waugh had to stop working on his next novel *Vile Bodies* for a while; and so he took to journalism. Hence, though he succeeded in gathering up the remaining part of his shattered self-esteem, but such harshness, bitterness and disillusionment was never absent from his next books. Ian Littlewood noted that "It was probably the most painful experience of Waugh's life, and its shock waves can be felt through successive novels for the rest of his career." (Littlewood 11).

Thus, Evelyn had to start a new life and to regain some of his lost dignity, at least through completing the novel which he had postponed. So, the publication and success of his second full-length
work of a comic fiction *Vile Bodies* on January 1930 gave him a strong push. Now, he became widely read and began to be more famous. His social life was more restrained than before. The basic materials of this novel were the activities of the Bright Young People. It is an epic satire of English high society after the Great War. In this novel Waugh satirizes the modern behaviour of the upper class embodied in the unusual activities of the Bright Young People. In *Vile Bodies* Waugh reflects his high level of disillusionment with the English society of his day where the values of the Western civilisation have suffered a total collapse. The modern world becomes like a wasteland; dry, empty and devoid of any significance or coherence. People behave and do whatever they like without shame or any code of morality. It is an era clearly signaling the end of the England’s golden age. Commenting on this novel James W. Nichols remarks that:

> Despite the putative inferiority of second to first novels, *Vile Bodies* (1930) is very nearly up to the standard set by *Decline and Fall*. The hero, Adam Fenwick-Symes, is more substantial and active than Paul Pennyfeather. Adam's adventures in clearing customs, as a society reporter, his attempts to raise enough money to marry Nina Blount, and so on, are the main plot, but the action includes the whole Mayfair set to which Nina and Adam belong, and the novel as a whole is a satiric picture of fashionable London society midway between two world wars. (Nichols 52)

In addition to their impudent parties, the Bright Young People were busy with the mechanical modes of transport, like cars, airplanes, and motor bikes. Waugh wants to say that those machines have added nothing in the way of real aesthetic enjoyment or spiritual life. The sounds of the race cars and its barbarously offensive noise are vulgarly signalled, providing a disharmony that suggests unending
chaos. Through that Waugh portrayed extreme and obscure spree, crazy and excited pleasure, in the aftermath of the Great War. Pointing out such a social scene of this period Kathleen Emmet Darman argued that:

As the '20s waned, the dandies' world shifted from Oxford to London, and the circle expanded to include younger, more daring elements - the Bright Young People of Vile Bodies, whose parties were theatrical productions, lavishly executed in full costume. Condemned by the newspapers as the epitome of reckless modern youth, the Bright Young People obligingly turned London into an immense children's playground. Their parties and hoaxes were duly reported in the gossip columns and consumed with relish and indignation... in Vile Bodies, Waugh makes the frailty and unreality of his so-called Bright Young Things very clear.... But Waugh remained enchanted with their antics, and the enchantment lasted all his life. (Darman 164-165)

In this novel Waugh focuses specifically upon urban life and the characteristics of a modern city in the twentieth century. He tries satirically to juxtapose the quiet and pure life of the past days with the noisy and chaotic one of his days where the machines in Vile Bodies produce for the most part not exhilaration but nausea. He shows the modern world as anarchic and incoherent. The sterility, futility and boredom of life are depicted through the Bright Young People and their numberless parties, immoral love affairs and vile bodies through which Waugh expresses his frustration and disgust with all the parties and shallowness of these people. Waugh tries to reflect the degeneration of moral values, the dullness of life and the disintegration of the social relations among those Bright Young People in particular and the modern English society in general. Lisa Colletta remarks that "In Vile Bodies the modern world is synthetic and mechanized, and individuals are...overwhelmed by chaotic and
ceaseless change…where everything from individual identity and personal relationships …and religious faith have become shame and too bogus." (Colletta 83).

On the other hand, in Vile Bodies, Waugh shows his respect for the past and revealed his ill-feeling towards the modern world, Waugh portrays modern life as hopelessly violent and absurd, while the vanished past is introduced as the most ordered and reasonable one; as in the image of the party in Anchorage House where the guests representing the Church of England, the old aristocracy, the commercial plutocracy, and Parliament who are so clinched with tradition as to be completely out of touch with the young rebels. Consequently McCartney observes that:

By juxtaposing party scenes in Vile Bodies, Waugh satirizes the generational division that afflicts his society. While the elders settle into Anchorage House, a revered family eats, for an evening during which they will reassure themselves that all is right with their world, some miles away their off-spring stumble about in a tethered dirigible that floats a few feet above the ground. These Bright Young People, eager martyrs to modernity, are quite willing to suffer the nausea that inevitably results under the combined influence of drink and the uncertain footing of their swaying quarter. (McCartney, 2004, 21)

While Frederick L. Beaty observes that Waugh not only satirises the behaviour of the new generation but he also ridicules the elders. Waugh implies that the elders are mainly responsible for the collapse of normal relations with the new generation.

…notions of England’s former glory against what he considers to be her present state of degradation, the author portrays an entire society oblivious to the gravity of its true situation. Not only does he poke fun at the Bright Young People for their obviously unrealistic approach to life; he also ridicules their supposedly more sensible elders. (Beaty 51)
Another portrait of insensibility, futility, and triviality of the Bright Young People is harshly portrayed when Adam goes to sell his beloved Nina in auction as goods. He tells Ginger:

“I will sell my share in her for a hundred pounds”
“fifty”
“A hundred”
“seventy five”
“I'll take seventy eight pounds sixteen and two pence. I can't go lower than that,”
“All right I will pay that. You really will go away?” (VB 197)

After this auction, Adam told Nina that he had sold her to Ginger in order to settle his financial problem to win Lottie Crump's Hotel after paying his unpaid loans. Due to their vile nature both of them appeared neither sorry nor affected about what happened; on the contrary, Nina’s letter to Adam gave an impression that she was satisfied and happy with what happened, though she loved Adam, she said "If only you were as rich as Ginger, or only half as rich. Or if only you had any money at all." (VB 271). This scene clearly reveals the highest point of Waugh's harsh satire in which the material relation is more worthy than the human feelings in such a materialistic and senseless world. Waugh reveals that the human bodies in this novel are certainly vile, anxious, hypocrites, immoral and out of control and their main concerns are worldly. Revealing such characteristics Wykes comments that "Nina deserts the penniless Adam for Ginger Littlejohn but later resumes her affair with Adam. The letter Adam reads from her on the battlefield indicates that she is bearing his child, but that Ginger believes himself to be the father." (Wykes 70).

In fact Waugh’s clinging to the past, like many writers of his age; can be compared with James Joyce’s stand of praising the past
and the deeds of the olds which cannot be compared with the paralysis and futility of their young generation. In their fictions, there is a sense of comparison between the new life and the old heroic one. They wished the modern life and their society to be as great as it was before. They want their people to be strong, united, trustful, faithful and truthful; they want them to be great people. For both of them the dead and the past are more powerful than the senseless livings. They portray their characters as they are incapable of love as of movement, like most of Joyce’s characters in the *Dubliners*. This superiority of the past over the present tends to be the writers’ dominant theme in most of their works.

Another significant turning point came in Waugh’s life when he decided to be a Roman Catholic. He was received into the Roman Catholic Church on 29 September 1930 for his conversion to Catholicism. On this matter, his brother Alec Waugh wrote that "I have no doubt that the break–up of his marriage hastened his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith." (Alec 192). While Sykes suspected about the reason mentioned by Waugh’s brother, saying that "The opinion, still commonly maintained among Evelyn’s acquaintance, that he became a Catholic to compensate himself for the emotional wound he had received on the break-up of his marriage, is supported by no evidence." (Sykes 135).

It is also worth noting that, through focusing on Waugh's life, one can find that he had a religious spirit since early time. In fact, even through his atheistic times at Oxford he used to attend the Church ceremonies and was interested in religious affairs. "His first contact with Catholics was with Oxford friends, who in turn put him in touch with the Jesuit Fathers of Mount Street, and with Father Martin D’Arcy, who instructed and received him." (Stopp 29). Yet, as
it seems that the collapse of his marriage only fastened events already under way. Waugh began to feel that the Protestant started to intervene in the basic rules of the religion and fashioned Christianity to justify human behaviour. What attracted Waugh to Catholicism was his strong belief that without Christianity people cannot maintain human civilisation; and to do so, people have to choose completely organized system of Christian philosophy which they can find only in Catholicism. In an article, written in 1930, Waugh explained his dissatisfaction with the Protestants’ attitude of going to the Church which hastened his conversion to Catholicism; he commented once that the "Protestant attitude seems often to be, 'I am good; therefore I go to church', while the 'Catholic's is, 'I am very far from God; therefore I go to church." (Donat Gallagher 367). Within this context, Alexander Boyle asserts that Waugh’s Catholic beliefs affected not only his personal life but his fiction as well. "Waugh has a Catholic view of life, and it is this that has influenced his novels more than anything else." (Boyle 78). Waugh also believed that the craftsmanship of the artist and the priest engaged with a similar task. Another reason which motivated Waugh to escape from Protestant to Catholicism was his disdain for the Church of England; as what Davis argued that Waugh's scorn for the Church of England was characterized by:

Sterility and inefficacy… in the moral order caused not only by “lack of vital contact with the Mystical Body of the True Church” but also by “the social injustice and the class oppression on which it is based: for, since it is mostly a class religion, it contracts the guilt of the class from which it is inseparable. (Davis 96)

Thus, religion to Waugh was more important than social climbing which he was in love. In one of his essays Waugh wrote "Man without God is less than Man." (Quoted in Patey 54). Consequently Wykes remarks "He [Waugh] believed that God had
assigned a task to every human soul, and that to live in harmony with God’s will meant identifying correctly the task assigned and doing it to the best of one’s ability." (Wykes 76). Concerning this point of view Lebedoff observed:

Waugh believed that life without a moral code was chaos, that Christianity provided the moral code on which Western civilization rested, and that Catholicism was the purest form of Christianity. His faith was indeed a rational, not an emotional, choice, and it brought order and purpose to his life. (Lebedoff 69)

About the processes of change of Waugh's faith, Father Martin D'Arcy remarked in an article, *The Religion of Evelyn Waugh*, that "The first ten years of his life proved to him that life in England or anywhere else was ‘unintelligible and unendurable without God’. Once he had arrived to this conclusion, he turned inevitably to the Catholic Church." (D'Arcy 63). D'Arcy adds that "The steps which brought him [Waugh] to his embracing the Catholic faith are visible in the themes of his novels." (62) In the following words Waugh explained his feelings and his religious attitude toward Christianity when he first met Father D'Arcy:

As I said when we first met, I realize that the Roman Catholic Church is the only genuine form of Christianity. Also that Christianity is the essential and formative constituent of western culture. In our conversation and in what I have read or heard since, I have been able to understand a great deal of the dogma and discipline which seemed odd to me before. But the trouble is that I don't feel Christian in the absolute sense. The question seems to be must I wait until I do feel this– which I suppose is a gift from God which no amount of instruction can give one, or can I become a Catholic when I am in such an incomplete state– and so get the benefit of the sacraments and receive faith afterward? (Quoted in Patey 41)

This conversion caused a kind of self isolation for Waugh from a lot of his acquaintances due to the Protestants’ domination in the
country at that time, but actually it is not clear whether Waugh isolated himself because of his dissatisfaction with the Protestants or they moved away from him. In an article *Evelyn Waugh: Sanity and Catholicism* (Autumn, 1962) Patricia Corr observed that:

> In a country predominantly Protestant or Agnostic, the Catholic convert isolates himself from his fellows. This theme of isolation runs through the Catholic novels of Mr Waugh quietly expressed in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* but much more heavily underlined in the larger canvasses of *Brideshead Revisited*, and the war novels. Catholicism replaces the more generally defined personal integrity of the hero as the isolating factor in these later novels. Mr Waugh is not only separated from his non-Catholic friends, he is equally distant from the Catholic members of society. (Corr 394)

However "Evelyn, too, was at the start of a new life." As his brother Alec remarked and added that now "He was without responsibilities; he had money in the bank… mentally and spiritually he would be at peace. Socially too, his life would have a different focus." (Alec 196).

Waugh resumed his travels, in early October 1930, starting with a visit to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) as a special correspondent of *The Times* to cover the celebration of the coronation of its ruler Negus Ras Tafari who wanted to crown himself as Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia; in a hope that this experience would enhance his literary career and expand his vision. He arrived at Addis Ababa at the suitable time before the ceremonies of the coronation in November. He travelled many places in Ethiopia and from there to Djibouti, Aden, Harare, Sudan, Zanzibar, Kenya, Belgian Congo, and Cape Town. In early March of 1931, Waugh came back home loaded with very interesting experiences and good material he needed for his next works.

Thus, the result of his first experience of this journey was recorded in his next book, *Remote People* (1931). It is a sympathetic
one, filled with boredom and disillusionment. It is relished in a tone of mockery to reflect the savage nature of the Africans and the gap between civilisation and barbarism. In this book Waugh calls a series of seemingly absolute twofold oppositions between primitive Africans and civilized Europeans to confirm the distance between the European Catholicism and the magical Ethiopian Christianity. Through that Waugh tries to depict the religious practices of the Ethiopian Christians which are filled with an air of mystery that contrasts with the clarity of European Catholicism where their darkness is opposed to European light. For instance, Waugh harshly criticizes the African priests in Debra Lebanos which was considered the centre of the Abyssinian spiritual life. He says that they do not look like religious men; they do not go to Church, most of them carried rifles and swords, and all of them have mistresses and children. Wykes remarked that "Remote People was Waugh’s first book as a Catholic and he made clear in it that henceforth he would be a Catholic author…. The moment of revelation he gave himself at the monastery should have left no one in doubt of the religious commitment of his work." (Wykes 91).

The second result of this journey was the writing of his third satirical novel Black Mischief (1932). The novel is set in the fictional kingdom of Azania based on Waugh’s personal experiences in Abyssinia. It is a satirical comment on the West's naive attempts to civilize Africa as the country lurches from one upheaval to another. There is clear conflict between civilisation and barbarism through creating wild and anarchic scenes. "Azania is a place where the savage and the civilized come into collision every day." (Littlewood 47). In this novel, Waugh tries to reflect a triumph of barbarity over progress as an inevitable result of the futile risky attempt to marry European
progress to African barbarism. Witnessing Waugh's progress in his literary career and the tangible improvement in his style, Sykes observed that:

The writing in *Black Mischief* shows advance on his style in the preceding two novels. From *Rossetti* onwards Evelyn's writing always showed the virtues of conciseness and economy, but in *Black Mischief* he brought to them a new mastery. Nowhere in this book as in the earlier ones can the reader find the odd unnecessary word. Adjectives are only used when needed and adverbs almost disappear. The structure of the book presented Evelyn with a new challenge. (Sykes 174)

*Black Mischief* has primarily been read as a grim satire on Western ideals of progress and on the futility of the West’s attempts to civilise the savages. In many novels, Waugh describes the fragility of the dual opposition between barbarism and civilisation and shows how, once the trimmings of civilisation are removed, people resort to the most savage behaviour such as cannibalism. It provoked a lot of debates and was denounced in the Catholic press, for its immorality, primarily for its portrayal of casual sex and for the scene where one of the central characters, Basil Seal, an English upper class man who has graduated from Oxford and came to Azania to help his University friend Seth, the emperor, to modernize Azania whose one of his naive decisions was that he will hang any man barefooted. *"Black Mischief"*’s most elaborate parallel between Europe and Africa is that between Basil and Seth themselves, civilized barbarian and barbarian civilizer." (Patey 103).

Without knowing Basil partakes in a cannibalistic feast, at which his girlfriend Prudence has been cooked and eaten. Basil directly returns to London apparently unflustered by the horrific act of cannibalism which was an ancient taboo that, for most readers, has
darkly damaged the hoarse laughter of the novel, though Waugh creates comic and funny situations from scenes of miseries and death in most of his works "Waugh’s primary concern is to create a world in which there is nothing that cannot be laughed at." (Littlewood 53). Supporting this idea Wykes observes that:

Most of all, this comic novel is replete with deaths, from Amurath’s hangings in Chapter 1 to Prudence’s culinary obsequies in Chapter 7. Death in a multitude of forms is there to indicate the cost of barbarism. (it is hard to see Prudence as a barbarian, but by Waugh’s definitions she undoubtedly is), and the price is paid mundanely, every day, and not just extraordinarily and extravagantly….The savagery of Black Mischief is sometimes attributed solely to Waugh’s temperament, by calling it ‘cruelty’, but the gravity of his judgment of barbarism, strongly reinforced by his religion, acquits him. His power of being wonderfully funny while deadly serious continues to wrong-foot some of his readers, and the ferocity of elements of Black Mischief and the author’s insistence on letting things speak for themselves caused a famous uproar over the novel that became one of the major events of Waugh’s literary life. (Wykes 95)

However, through such a cannibal feast Waugh wants to make the point at which the distinction between civilisation and barbarism is clearly confirmed by the tragedy of savagism’s triumph though Seth, the emperor, is the main figure of the African barbarism, but he becomes a victim of not only the African savagism but the British barbarism as well. Justifying Waugh’s intention, some critics emphasize that Black Mischief makes obvious that modernity cannot be imported because it is not a series of material objects but a state of mind. A reality which is completely met with what Beaty remarked about the wrong estimation of the emperor Seth who has graduated from Oxford and returned to Azania to assume the throne:

What Seth gains from his own education at Oxford proves inadequate in another sense: he so focuses on the surface manifestations of Western culture that he
becomes overcivilized to the point of decadence. Captivated with European society, he adopts its externals-elegant dress, refined manners, and titles of nobility, ceremony, literature, social change, and machinery—in the mistaken belief that these outward signs of advancement will instantaneously transform his backward nation into a twentieth-century marvel. But without sufficient awareness of the concepts upon which civilized institutions are built, he interprets his newly acquired knowledge according to primitive instincts, illogically creating a fetish out of modern progress. Deceiving himself that his alignment with civilization makes him invincible. (Beaty 70)

One of the harshest condemnations in the press, for Waugh’s breaking such an ancient taboo, was in *The Tablet* during January and February 1933, by its editor Ernest Oldmeadow who used to criticize Waugh’s writings, and now he condemned Waugh’s third novel, *Black Mischief*, as a shame to any person of Catholic principles. Oldmeadow appeared to have been particularly annoyed by Waugh’s presentation of a cannibal feast, which literary critics have often read as a parody of the Eucharist. Though many literary figures including Wyndham Lewis defended Waugh’s satirical novel, Waugh wrote a letter of protest, in May 1933, to Cardinal Bourne, the Archbishop of Westminster, who was the owner of *The Tablet*. In this letter, though Waugh could not change the context or the manner of cannibalism but he argued that:

> The story deals with the conflict of civilization, with all its attendant and deplorable ills, and barbarism…. I introduced the cannibal theme…and the incident of the soldiers eating their boots….to prepare the reader for the sudden tragedy when barbarism at last emerges from the shadows and usurps the stage. (*Letters* 90-91)

While discussing the context of Waugh's early novels, and what Waugh adopted or took from the work of his predecessors, Davis states that there are a lot of similarities among the works of the 1920s,

All of these novels are set in London or Paris or New York; all present highly sophisticated characters whose major occupation is amusing themselves; all not only reflect disillusion with conventional morals but indicate that new styles of behaviour are not entirely satisfactory. All demonstrate an overt awareness not only of new modes of behaving but of new forms in which to describe them. All of them describe worlds in which, to use Dr. Fagan's words, “taste and dignity…go unhampered”…. All consciously embody a new approach to fiction as well as to life. (Davis 31–32)

In his first interview to BBC on 18th November 1932, Waugh compared the failure of the university education which failed to fulfill its glorious aim in building a society of responsibility with the failure of the economic system of that time which failed to guarantee jobs for a lot of unemployed, especially the educated young men. Waugh believes that such failure symbolizes a society courting its own destruction. He thinks that society is responsible for many things in the life of the people. He observed that:

…in the part of society which moulds the ideas, manners and art of its generation, psychological symptoms of futility, inferiority and a revolt from culture…. Uncertain of his economic future and his right to property, a young man today shrinks from the responsibility of marriage or else
translates it into quite other terms and makes it a temporary emotional relationship instead of a permanent social one. Physical sterility, whether artificial or organic, results from sterility of spirit. (Quoted in Stannard, 1986, 293)

Consequently, such thoughts reflect Waugh’s ideas about modern people who became paralyzed. They are physically alive but spiritually dead. They are unable to love; they are failures in relationships concerning love and marriage. They are sterile; they are unproductive humans. They are unable to take any firm action to improve their social conditions because they have lost faith in themselves and their religion; they became unfaithful. They are the slaves of their personal lusts. Such thoughts confirmed that Waugh is strongly influenced by T. S. Eliot's philosophy about modern Man. In the same way Leonard Ungbr has remarked that:

This theme of the failure of communication, of a positive relationship, between a man and a woman is found again in the other early poems ‘Hysteria’ and ‘La Figlia che Piange,’ and it is indeed a major theme of the whole body of Eliot's work. It appears early in *The Waste Land* with the image of the ‘hyacinth girl. (Ungbr 10).

While John Xiros Cooper remarked that "Eliot was no transcendentalist mystic. He was certainly a Christian believer but he understood, as did his Roman Catholic contemporaries Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh, the necessity of recognizing the human state in all its fallen and tragic forms as still penetrated, in those very forms, by divine grace." (Cooper 84). With this notion, Patey observes that:

All Waugh's fiction of the thirties explores the implications of modernism— his sense, as he put it in 1931, that ‘the enlightened people of Northern Europe’, ‘having lost their belief in revealed religion’, are now ‘falling back helplessly for moral guidance on their own tenderer feelings’. (Patey 55)
After a long conflict of unrestlessness in London, Waugh decided to another travel abroad. He decided to go to South America in the Winter of 1932 in search for an ideal home. His first destination was the Brazilian city Boa Vista. At the beginning of this visit he showed his admiration for the city, but sooner his vision changed after "He heard dismaying details from the few people he met who knew the place, but the vision persisted until at last he reached this run–down hopeless wreck of a place." (Sykes 186) Hence, the unhappiness coloured the whole of his journey to South America where he spent 92 days in British Guiana. This experience produced a travel book called *Ninety– Two days*, in which Waugh portrayed his escape from Boa Vista. It is a fine and painful comedy, in addition to Waugh's masterpiece *A Handful of Dust* which was published in early September 1934. In this novel an honest man, Tony Last, has been drawn as a victim. Most critics observe that this novel marked a new development in Evelyn's writing, and it was considered his best book to date. On *Ninety– Two Days* critics observe that it is less important travel book than *Remote People*; it is a book of memories rather than of strong narrative, though it contains some of Evelyn's best travel writing and description of scenery. About this book and Waugh’s journey Wykes remarks that:

It had been ‘a journey of the greatest misery’… The journey he had chosen to make would supply exactly the wrong kind of experience for his writing….And British Guiana had little in the way of culture or history. Interesting people were an absolute requisite, and on this trip he met mostly boring, ordinary, nice people, and found himself again and again in situations of frustration and tedium….In *Ninety– Two Days* Waugh took his sensibility on an exhausting and frustrating cross-country slog, and came close at times to making his reader wonder why he ever left home. (Wykes 100)
On the other hand Patey states that: both Waugh’s trips to South America and the book (Ninety–Two Days) that emerged, proved a disappointment to the readers. Many readers of this book have described Waugh's trip as ‘penitential’ as if he were actually seeking to punish himself in the jungle. (Patey 106). While in his Diaries Waugh mentions that "The journey to Brazil on which he embarked in the winter of 1932…contains a hint of penance." (Diaries 354).

During the mid thirties, Waugh felt restless and homeless, he started to note radical changes that happened in London; the city, he was in love became disordered. Concerning Waugh's vision of these days Stannard remarked that:

The London he [Waugh] had always loved was disappearing—‘a place full of front doors, long, decent rows of them soberly painted, with bright brass handleless’—beneath the onslaught of the Common Man…. But this temporary disruption of order is seen to intimate a more permanent dissolution…. Like many writers in the mid– thirties, Waugh was beginning to ask how much longer London could survive as a repository of civilised values… The old world was dying and Waugh chose to write of its demise in the deep seclusion of the English countryside and in allegorical form. (Stannard, 1986, 390)

On 7 August 1934, Waugh left to Ethiopia as the Daily Mail war correspondent to report the invasion of Italy to Abyssinia. On his way back to England, he visited Jerusalem, Baghdad; and before his coming back home in January 1936 he visited Rome where he met the Duce, Mussolini, giving him a very gloomy account of the difficulties facing his army in the battle field but at the same time Evelyn showed his admiration of the Duce who had a very impressive personality as Evelyn said. (225– 226)

Concerning, the European presence in Africa, Waugh asserts that colonies appear in too many ways, under too many forms, for
politicians and economists to generalize about them. Colonialism's supporters may often be cruel racialists among whom Anglo–Saxons are perhaps worse than any. However, Waugh sees the colonial project as inevitable and doomed, romantically appealing but a lost cause. Therefore, according to Waugh's point of view, the European powers are seen to be keen to exploit and are engaged in a network of codes and espionage.

However, the literary result of Waugh's second visit to Ethiopia was the publishing of another travel book *Waugh in Abyssinia*. In this book Waugh recounts his experiences as a war correspondent and impressions he got from his second journey to Abyssinia under the Italian occupation. In one of his letters from there he wrote to Katharine Asquith in August 1936 remarking that "I am sick of Abyssinia and my book about it. It was fun being pro-Italian when it was unpopular and (I thought) losing cause. I have sympathy with these exultant fascist now." (*Letters* 126). Because of this, Rose Macaulay has called this book ‘a fascist tract’. But Littlewood argued that Waugh’s romanticism in this book "was not essentially political; it was, like his humour, an aspect of the refusal to accept a world that was grey while he still had the resources to make it vivid." (Littlewood 84). Whereas Michael De La Bedoyere, in a way or another, supported Waugh’s opinion and blamed Abyssinia a barbaric country and not to the invaders; claiming in an article *Catholic Herald'a* on 31 October 1936, 3, that:

Abyssinia itself was not capable of rising to the status of a member of that international society of nations. She remained the same impossible, barbarous, provoking hopeless neighbour. It was evident that she had within her no seeds of new life, but must sooner or later come under the domination of an imported civilisation. (De La Bedoyere 187)
Directly, after the publication of *Waugh in Abyssinia* in 1936, Waugh began writing his fifth novel *Scoop*. It was published in May 1938. In this novel Waugh portrayed in a cold-blooded irony the mission of William Boot, a journalist who wrote the Lush Places column for the *Daily Beast*. Boot is sent by mistake to report a Civil War in the Negro State of Ishmaelia where Civil War is expected to break out. In spite of being the most popular of Waugh's novels by the sales figure but Waugh disliked this novel because the book took too much time to get completed. And also, "One of Waugh's more sensible critics suggests that the ‘shallow imaginative roots’ of this novel are owed to its ‘lack of strong autobiographical impulse’." (Wykes 115). However, *Scoop* carries an ingenious plot and a cracking of jokes only a little less good than those of his first novel *Decline and Fall*. In this novel Waugh gives full rein to his fanciful humour. So he re-established himself as a popular humorist, satirising the methods of modern sensational journalism, though some reviewers for *Scoop* stated that Waugh's job is to provide laughter, and he does it in a good way, but he is not a satirist. Stopp remarked that "*Scoop* depicts some of the more incredible activities of the international group of journalists planted for the war in Addis Ababa by their respective employers, set against an international backcloth of the rival ideologies of Communism and Fascism." (Stopp 83).

In 1938, though Waugh was pessimistic about the future but he was full of hope and believed that the Church Militant might secure order. However, life in general was better for Waugh. He became well known in the literary circles as a considerable satirical comic novelist. He and Laura Herbert were married on 17 April 1937.

In March 1938 Waugh and his wife visited Mexico on a request, to write a book on Mexico, from Clive Pearson who
represented the Cowdray Estate which had massive financial interests in Mexican oil. At that time there was a crisis between the Mexican government and the oil companies working there. Among them was a British company, the Mexican Eagle which was prominent among the companies expropriated. Waugh visited Mexico and after coming back he wrote *Robbery Under Law: The Mexican Object– Lesson*; a short but dull book about Mexico. In this book he recounts his experience in Mexico describing the outrageous treatment of the Mexican Government towards the English oil company and portraying an impassionate history of the State's persecution of the Church. "He cannot forgive the Mexicans for having seized the oil industry, for having dispossessed the Church. His book, as he himself admits, is a collection of ‘notes on anarchy’." (Harold Nicolson 203).

As a result Waugh came back home from Mexico with bitter anger and frustration due to what he had seen there, Mexico's poverty because of the irresponsible and stupid behaviour of the government and the country's lack of a landed gentry. He believed stealing, murder and religious maltreatment had been legalized in such a chaotic place. Consequently, Waugh wrote a brilliant literary and philosophical passage showing in greater clarity his political convictions and expressing his faith and his view of human destiny, by observing:

I believe that man is, by nature, an exile and will never by self– sufficient or complete on this earth; that his chances of happiness and virtue, here, remain more or less constant through the centuries….I believe in government; that men cannot live together without rules but that these should be kept at the bare minimum of safety; that there is no form of government ordained from God as being better than any other; that the anarchic elements in society are so strong that it is a whole time task to keep the peace.

(Quoted in Sykes 256-7)
Waugh was too young to fight in the First World War, now in 1939 he was old enough to join the Second World War. But, despite he regarded the imminent conflict as an adventure, he was determined to prove himself and to feel the Test of Manhood in such an honourable service as most English people believed. "With the same traditional enthusiasm, Waugh welcomed World War II as a heroic renaissance for himself and for England." (Darman 166). So he succeeded to be enlisted in the Royal Marines as an officer and commissioned immediately as a second–lieutenant, though he was physically unfit, inactive, overweight, out of condition and very short–sighted. Happily he celebrated his entry into the army. His friend Sykes remarked that "Evelyn's career as a solider… left him deeply disillusioned, a fact which tended to increase his disposition towards melancholy." (Sykes 278).

Waugh believed that his military service would offer him a new experience of war life about which he would be able to write. In fact he had got such experience but he was not a successful solider. He saw cowardice and the breakdown of order everywhere. Such facts and atmosphere play a considerable role in Waugh's next literary life; Wykes observed that:

He did not know that his anarchic and in some ways defensive personality would make his military service an experience of frustration, bitterness, and disillusionment, and that it would push the changes he was effecting in his literary personality in unexpected and difficult directions. Waugh's experience of the Second World War was skewed from the start by his interpretation of the nature of the conflict. (Wykes 124)

Wykes adds that "Wartime put Waugh into a mood of retrospection, sometimes rising or sinking to nostalgia that endured to the end of his career." (133).
While he was in the army, Waugh wrote a fragment novel called *Work Suspended*, which was published, incomplete, in a limited edition at the end of 1942. Waugh commented that it was his best writing up till then. It is a novel of two chapters. Chapter one describes how the protagonist, John Plant, a young man who wrote detective fiction; came back to England from Morocco after the death of his father. Chapter two describes how Plant fell in love with Lucy, the wife of his writer friend Roger Simmonds who was a professional humorist. This novel is written in different innovative style and different narrative method than Waugh's previous fiction. It is told in the first person narration by Plant. In an article, on December 1946 in *Horizon* 371, Rose Macaulay remarked that "It [*Work Suspended*] is carefully composed; it lacks the earlier sparkle; it has a seriousness of tone…. The style is quiet and full. That it was not finished one feels a loss." (Macaulay 232). While Stannard remarks that "*Work Suspended* is the most enigmatic of Waugh's writings." (Stannard, 1986, 490)

In his next novel *Put Out More Flags* (1942) Waugh portrays the world at war. It is a satirical novel describing the influence of war on society. It was written on board ship from 12 July to 3 September 1941 when Waugh's military unit was coming back from Africa. Marina Mackay remarked that "*Put Out More Flags* describes how creative dissidence is victimized by political expediency masquerading as patriotic duty." (Mackay, 2007, 121). This novel can be considered as Waugh's farewell to comic fiction. It also seems that Waugh had lost the ability to see people funny and instead he began to loathe and express real fear of the modern world and modern people which was going to constitute the main theme of his next writings. "He knew in 1939 that he was finished as solely the comic
nologist, but he was not yet clear in his mind as to what he would fully become when he next returned to fiction." (Wykes 119). Confirming this impression, George Dangerfield observed that:

*Put Out More Flags* comes less close to tragedy than do some of his earlier books, because the characters are no longer involved in a personal dilemma. The joke was always on them, but now they have no answer; and when they have no answer they cease to be persons. The world is at war in this novel, and-wriggle as they will-they can find no place for themselves in it. They are not persons any more, but just unhappy examples of a bad and silly society. They are out of date and therefore dead. (Dangerfield 217)

Most of the critics agreed that *Put Out More Flags* can be considered as a literary turning point in Waugh's writings. In this novel there is clear change in the terms of the narrative technique. It is narrated through the use of omniscient narrator who knows everything and his voice is heard everywhere. In this novel one can feel that Waugh brought the world of his comic fiction to an end. It was successful and very well received. At this time Evelyn Waugh was in a strong position in the world of contemporary literature. He started to see the world with a different vision; a vision which reflects the new spirit of the new world, as full of fear and miseries, where Waugh has lost the ability to see people as funny.

He wrote *Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder*; which was finished by June 1944 and published in May 1945. It was another turning–point in Waugh's career. It is a novel with a religious theme; it deals with two interrelated things: the world and the spirit. In this novel, as most critics agree, Waugh completed the development in his novels from disorder to repentance. It is considered as a shift from the youthful recklessness to gravity, in which his own Catholicism came to the forefront.
As a productive writer Waugh did not stop writing; he published his next book *Scott– King's Modern Europe*, in 1947, it is slim, almost not more than a short story about a harmless schoolmaster caught in the hardship and restrictions of the modern world. Through it Waugh portrays an imaginary image of dictator-state of Neutralia. Though a lot of comic situations permeate this story but it is described by Stopp as "a sad little story." (Stopp 136). Due to some sharp critical reviews accusing Waugh of being ill-humoured in writing such a weak story, he showed his anger in a letter to his close friend Nancy Mitford by ironically criticising them saying that "All the reviews of *Scott-King*, instead of being about the book, have been about me saying that I am ill-tempered and self-infatuated....All my most valued books have been eaten by tiny spiders." (Letters 303). While Wykes remarks: "*In Scott-King’s Modern Europe* (1949), the protagonist expresses Waugh's view that the war had ‘cast its heroic and chivalrous disguise and become a sweaty tug-of-war between teams of indistinguishable louts.’" (Wykes 124).

Scott-King is a man of 43 years, classic master at Granchester, a respectable but not fashionable English public school, a praiser of the past, and a lover of exact scholarship. He fights a gradually losing battle against what he regards as the degradation of modern education. He is a traditional person who disbelieves in progress and refuses to differentiate between one version of progress and another. After adventures Scott-King ends up naked in a camp for illegal Jewish immigrants in Palestine. In an article, about this story, in the *New Republic* on 21 March 1949 John Woodburn observed that:

In this new, or perhaps I should say current, story, Waugh directs his satire at the totalitarian state, an aspect of
modern Europe which Waugh, as an individualist and a conservative Catholic, views with a special loathing.... Scott-King suffers from two of the diseases of our time: world-guilt and world-pain, but endures them with a kind of hypochondria. He is both appalled and fascinated by the decadence of the modern world, and finds a masochistic stimulation in surveying the spread of barbarism, as he takes a perverse comfort in the climate of his own obscurity and failure. (Woodburn 297)

Then, Waugh wrote *The Loved One*, in 1948, after his visit to America in 1947. During this visit Waugh was fascinated by the fabulous cemetery in Whispering Glades, as he was to rename it Forest Lawn, in Southern California. He was fascinated by the ritual for disguising death which is big business there. In this novel, Waugh depicts the city and the cemetery with irony as a kind of leisure resort where "The images of Art and Death and Love are to be located in the Eden of Whispering Glades in a state of sterility and uprootedness." as Malcolm Bradbury remarked, (Bradbury, 1973, 177). Ironically, Waugh tries to show how the people of the twentieth century pay much attention to glorify the dead, decayed physical body while they neglect the immortal soul. About it Waugh said that "*Loved One* is being well received in intellectual circles. They think my heart is in the right place after all. I’ll show them." (*Letters* 313). In his study *Ironic Vision of Modern Life in Evelyn Waugh’s The Loved One* Harbir Singh Randhawa argued that:

His novel *The Loved One* throws light upon the modern life. Though on first reading the novel could easily be divided into two parts- the satirical treatment of America’s communalized burial system by Waugh and secondly the shattered hopes of British expatriates who came to Hollywood with their American dream and later found themselves bewildered with the changing circumstances. But in its depth the novel deals with the decaying modern world where the survivors are the emotionally deprived people like Dennis and Mr. Joyboy and the idealistic
people like Sir Francis and Aimee who had no other option but to commit suicide. (Randhawa 241-2)

In this novel Waugh strongly criticizes the way of modern people dealing with their dead through the mortuary business, when people fail to love, respect and reward a person while he is alive but after his death, they spend thousands on his mummifying just to make him presentable for maintaining their status in the society, which is exactly what is happening nowadays in our age. Not only people, but government also rewards the distinguished people only after their death; whoever they are: writers, artists, athletes…etc. especially sometimes things become more difficult, a lot of them become poor, old, physically weak and sick at the end of their lives and they do not have the cost of their medicine. However, through such behaviour of rewarding the dead body of their beloved; they are rewarding death itself but not their beloved due to the fear from it because they become hypocrite, faithless and faraway from God. McCartney reflects the core of Waugh’s philosophy by saying "Below, the fake warmth of pseudo-traditional architecture and decoration, aged wood and soft carpeting; above, the chrome-cold intelligence that has contrived this travesty of funeral customs to profit from the public’s exorbitant fear of death." (McCartney 65).

In March 1950 Waugh finished Helena on which he had spent longer time than on any other novel. In one of his letters to Nancy Mitford after coming back from a visit to America Waugh wrote "Home, now, thank God, and at work again on Helena which is to be my MASTERPIECE. [and ironically said that] No one will like it at all." (Letters 357). It is deceptively simple. In this novel Waugh portrays the world as his own which opens as timeless, historical and like a fairy tale. Waugh depicts the same conflicts which arise in the main body of his contemporary fiction. It reflects Waugh’s
disillusionment, in which the atmosphere is one of darkness, confusion, arbitrary violence produced by a progressive culture.

Through *Helena*, Waugh tries to return to a dream of a historical fiction in which artistic and social values could be maintained only by an effort of the imagination. Rome is disordered with apartment houses peopled by an ambitious, materialist middle class; the artists have lost the skills of representation and are sliding into a chaos of pure abstraction. Murder is commonplace and spiritual values are neglected; marriage and divorce have become a solely material concern. The journey, Helena makes, from the interior to the coast, is like the one Waugh made as a soldier carrying his burden of guilt away from the massacres of war. Praising Waugh's style of writing this novel, Sykes says that "I find *Helena* a very difficult book to judge. All Evelyn's merits are present in it, his wit, his broad humour, his irony; in addition it contains some of the best pieces of evocative writing that he achieved at anytime." (Sykes 428). On the other hand, Wykes considered *Helena* not as an autobiographical; he argued that "In general, *Helena* is the least autobiographical of Waugh's novels. Its intellectual concerns are his own, but to dramatize ideas without the embodiment of personal experience cut his fiction off from its greatest source of vitality." (Wykes 159). In his article *The Religion of Evelyn Waugh* Father Martin D’Arcy also makes clear remarks about the production of *Helena* considering it the main result of Waugh’s conversion to Catholicism and to his notable belief to the characteristic of Divine which became the key to his religious philosophy; accordingly D’Arcy adds that:

Her history suggests that she accepted God’s will in first making her an Empress, and later a discarded one, so that she might live on as old lady….In reading her history
despite all that might be legendary in it, Evelyn felt that he had given an insight, though a distance one, into God’s dealing with human souls. God ‘Wants a different thing from each of us, laborious or easy, conspicuous or quite private, but something which only we can do and for which we are created’. To those of us who knew of this strong conviction of his [Waugh], the manner of his sudden death seemed to be almost foreseen and to be a seal upon his work and religious hope. (D’Arcy 78-79)

In 1953, Waugh published *Love Among the Ruins*. It is a fantasy novella of the future, with a hero called Miles Plastic who fell in love with a lady of ‘a long, silken, corn-gold beard’ living in the glorification of the nanny state where people are fed with lies. It is a short nightmare on the issue of the idealistic social state which offers free euthanasia for its citizens and the abnormal behaviour of modern man as the main scene of the story.

In his last two years, Waugh published *A Little Leaning: The First Volume of an Autobiography* in 1964, and later in 1965 he revised the three novels of his war trilogy to be published in one single volume entitled *Sword of Honour*. Shortly, in the trilogy Waugh examined the individual of the Second World War, his relationship with the eternal struggle between good and evil in particular, and the earthly struggle between civilization and barbarism in general. "With the completion of trilogy Evelyn's career as a serious writer of fiction drew to an end." (Sykes 569). In April 1966 Waugh died suddenly at his home.

In his study of Waugh's personality and life, Stannard concludes that: "There was a streak of mild sadism in him. But it was only mild. He enjoyed the struggle, the competition of life, and was intolerant of those who backed away from it…he was gifted with a sensitive, contemplative intelligence, and was acutely self– critical." (Stannard,
While Berberich remarked that what Waugh saw in others behaviour he did not see it in his. "Waugh was consequently a double standard: he expected and encouraged perfect behaviour in others; but displayed an altogether different one himself." (Berberich 133).

In such an atmosphere, all the powers that would reduce the individual to nothingness were transformed into a source of pleasure by making different jokes out of chaos, loneliness, powerlessness, stupidity, authority, nihilism, pain and death; as with Clara, the heroine of Waugh's novella *Love Among the Ruins*, where the central joke is that Clara has 'a long, silken, corn– gold beard.'

Due to the drastic changes in the system of life of his age, Waugh was under great depression and disappointed. He felt alienated and he wanted to be gone; to anywhere, from his home in Piers Court, from England or even from life to death. Therefore, under such critical moments, he believed that he had to be careful enough because if he continued to get enjoyment from hurting others through satirising them, so, no one would love him; but, the biggest problem he felt, if he could not feel sorry for his lack of compassion, even God could not love him which was very painful. Consequently, Stannard argued that Waugh could not stop himself from hurting others. "Evelyn Waugh was a tormented man. He hurt people and somehow could not stop himself from doing it….‘I am a bigot and a philistine’, he wrote to Lord David Cecil." (Stannard, 1994, 247). Sykes commented that "Certainly Evelyn had hurt more people than he should have done, but this belated revenge did not credit to the injured." (Sykes 594). While McCartney remarks that it must first be said that Waugh's:

\[\text{\ldots satiric objective was not moral but metaphysical and it is on this ground his work achieves consistency of purpose\ldots He fully expected people would behave badly} \]
with or without moral standards and had no hesitation in admitting his feelings. In his view, the real issue was the general disillusionment with the notion of the absolutes, whether moral or metaphysical. (McCartney, 2004, 2)

Although, Waugh admired and was fascinated by old and past morals but he believed that man is inherently corrupt and wicked therefore there had never been a period of relatively moral behaviour. Reflecting this philosophy Wykes observed accurately that "The eternal war of civilization against the chaos and anarchy that originate in man’s originally corrupt nature is the foundation theme of all of Waugh’s fiction." (Wykes 80). For that reason, though his adherence to traditionalism he is not considered as a traditional satirist, in the sense that traditional satire seeks to correct morals and manners in a stable society. Accordingly Waugh himself denied in one of his articles in 1946 that he was writing satire at all; he argued that:

Satire is a matter of period. It flourishes in a stable society and presupposes homogenous moral standards - the early Roman Empire and 18th Century Europe. It is aimed at inconsistency and hypocrisy. It exposes polite cruelty and folly by exaggerating them. It seeks to produce shame. All this has no place in the Century of the Common Man where vice no longer pays lip service to virtue. The artist's only service to the disintegrated society of today is to create little independent systems of order of his own.

(Gallagher 251)

One can find Waugh's literary energy sprang from anger, in the sense that when he had something to complain about, he could only write amusingly to extend the range of his enemies. He taught his children never to be humble, always to attack, always to scorn with wit and to be funny. He had an extraordinary power to make people pleasing him.

What makes many critics praise Waugh's style of writing is its economy, or in other words ‘not a word is wasted’ in his writing.
"Waugh was greatly concerned with language…. He wrote with purity because he owed it to himself and to God to do his best at what he did best." (Lebedoff 205–6). In fact, Waugh himself made a grand announcement of his love for the English language when style has become a main concern and writing a pleasure; saying that "it is the most lavish and delicate which mankind has ever known….I have never, until quite lately, enjoyed writing." (Quoted in Wykes 205).

Critics also stressed that, in all Waugh's writing, especially at the time of his later works, he was infatuated by craftsmanship and by the relationship between language and class. He had been fascinated by any complex; like the internally coherent social system with its own language and the correct and expected way to behave. He believed that a good novel should reflect this; that is why he admired Hemingway's style for instance and adopted Dickens' style in writing autobiographical fiction.

Though Waugh believed in the idealism of Art-for-Art's-sake, but he refused to separate it from the artist's responsibility to communicate, preserve and enrich tradition. Waugh said of his work: "I regard writing not as investigation of character but an exercise in the use of language, and with this I am obsessed. I have no technical and psychological interest. It is drama, speech and events that interest me." (Quoted by Penguin Books in the introduction of Waugh's Decline and Fall, 2003). About Waugh's artistic abilities Wykes observed that:

He [Waugh] possessed the comic intelligence that has persisted in the English novel, through Fielding and Jane Austen and Dickens, into the twentieth century and into the six comic novels that came before Brideshead Revisited in 1945. Waugh's comic intelligence matches Jane Austen's and his exuberance in those six books is Dickensian. No account, biographical or otherwise, can
explain how he came by this power… for it is the comedy of Waugh's earlier novels that supports the entirety of his reputation and gives him his permanent place in the history of the English novel. (Wykes 1)

Waugh was also influenced by some of his predecessors of the English novel, such as Ronald Firbank, Hilair Belloc, Harold Bloom, Charles Dickens, Jane Austen and Edward Gibbon. He considered Gibbon's greatest value as a model historian, a model adoptable by a novelist. Waugh also appreciated Gibbon's position against the Church when he blamed Christianity for the decline and fall. His friend Sykes remarks that "Evelyn was always prepared to learn from other people, unlike conceited writers of less assured talent, I never knew him to show envy of other writers' achievements or success." (Sykes 422).

To reflect the confusion of his age Waugh found in Firbank's objectivity the suitable way to do that. Such style gave him the ability "to avoid both the restrictive conventions of realism and the psychoanalytic excesses of modernism." (McCartney 71). This method of writing enabled Waugh to reflect the contemporary lack of certainty without cramping him in the traps of subjectivity. Consequently Davis finds that:

Waugh was more interested in Firbank's solution to the peculiarly twentieth-century problem of “making an art form out of [nineteenth-century] raw material of narration emphasizing the way in which….The talk goes on, delicate, chic, exquisitely humorous, and seemingly without point or plan.” (Davis 70)

Through close focus on Waugh's late life one can find that Waugh lived with guilt and sadness, in spite of the happy life he tried to show and to amuse the people around him. It was resentment about the devaluation of modern life, the fading of serious and devoted faith, and the loss of the hierarchy and order which maintained civilisation. In his second book, the later years of Waugh's life, Stannard noted that:
Beneath all this, deeply buried, there lay that seed of guilt: guilt at his failure to do more in Yugoslavia; guilt at his lack of affection for his children; guilt at his instinctive cruelty; above all, guilt at not feeling guilty. There was a religious dryness in his soul which hurt him, a lack of contrition, and he found it difficult to pray. His faith remained one of intellectual conviction rather than of emotional release. (Stannard, 1994, 157)

Hence, as religion was the centre of Evelyn's life, he made no secret of his disdain for the reform-movement in the Catholic Church in the post-war years. In fact, Waugh believed that through its long history the Church had developed a ritual which enabled an ordinary sensual man to approach God and be aware of sanctity and divinity. And though Waugh lost faith in his last years; but some of his close friends, said that the truth was not that Waugh lost faith but he lived with fear that he might lose his faith. Sykes states that:

Evelyn's private life went through much the same vicissitudes disappointments, unexpected turns of fate and frustrations as most people endured during the uncomfortable period of convalescence following the removal of the disease of Nazism and the Allied victory of 1945. (Sykes 395)

Consequently, as he paid much attention to moral and human behaviour and beliefs; Waugh believed, especially in the last two decades of his life, that a complete and successful life can only be lived when the fact of Death is kept firmly in mind. He believed that Man should always consider Death as a welcome friend at any time. "In the greatest and smallest human affairs remember that Death is at the elbow." (Quoted in Stannard, 1994, 182). Waugh's friend Frances Donaldson also mentioned that:

Evelyn suffered from a melancholia of Johnsonian proportions, and he found life so terrible boring he could hardly endure from day to day; he was often ill, seldom completely well; he was the only person I have ever
known who seemed sincerely to long for death; he was terrifying to a stranger, merciless to a friend; but it is true that his house and life revolved round jokes, very, very funny jokes. (Donaldson xiii–xiv)

Waugh's last years were not happy. He wished and prayed for death. He believed that 'all fates are worse than death.' He completely believed that Man is created to worship and be happy with the love of God, a love which he expresses in service. Therefore, if Man consciously turns away from that enjoyment, he is denying the purpose of his existence. Due to Waugh's fear and depression Wykes argues:

It is evident that he had suffered for years from depression, a disease that is made worse by alcohol and that seems to find an unusual proportion of its victims among writers. And his depression could only have been deepened by his refusal to attribute it to any but spiritual causes. In the mid–1960s, Church matters and their implications for his own spiritual condition hugely compound his depression. (Wykes 210)

Like most of the critics, Bradbury asserts that Waugh is "a totally modern novelist, offering his own values with assertive prejudice, but in a world where the really truthful statement is that of the flux and anarchy." (Quoted in James F. Carens xvi). On that account, and as a result of the futile and absurd life of the period, after the Great War, the decline of moral values, the loss of faith and identity, the boredom of life, the sterility of the social relations and the disintegration of the English family, Waugh directs his sharp satire against these modern phenomena. "Modern times pressed hard on Waugh in his last decades. The decline of the aristocracy, the encroachment of American power, and, above all, the ascendance of the liberal movement in the Catholic Church appalled and depressed him." (Darman 166). In another article Bradbury adds that:
Waugh is very much a novelist of the disillusioned Twenties, in that he shares the prevailing obsession of the decade with barbarism and vitalism as the alternative to rational civilisation; it is an essential part of his comic thrust and subject-matter….Like other writers who began in the 1920s—Aldous Huxley and…Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Nathanael West – he is obsessed with the world of an irrevocable modernity, a world of psychological stress, dissolving relationships, new lifestyles, novel technologies and environments; his creative energy takes him readily into encounters with such people and milieux, with a curiosity divorced from moral judgment and fascinated by extravagant behavior.  

(Bradbury, 1973, 171-2)

Therefore, Waugh completely believed that the best cure for these phenomena is the restoration of the old traditions. He believed without tradition and without guidance, the individual is lost and at every moment he will try to reinvent himself. Such philosophy is clear and tangible in the life of Paul Pennyfeather and Adam Fenwick, the heroes of Decline and Fall and Vile Bodies, who are suffering from the lack of any traditional tools without which they cannot achieve any self-restraint. In these novels, Waugh portrays these heroes as orphan, young men thrown, without guidance, into the world on their own, to find themselves among visible symbols of the passing traditional order. They seem empty, naive and without psychological depth because they have no ability to analyze and understand neither themselves nor the world they are living in. The world that has been portrayed in most of Waugh's works is a degenerative one; scene after scene Waugh satirically tried to evoke indiscipline, infidelity and self-indulgence in the form of illegal sex, drinking, drug-taking, self-serving hypocrisy and theft. With reference to this period of time Randhawa remarks that:

The period of early 20th century was a period of great turmoil and desolation in Britain, due to various social and political reasons and later First World War augmented the miseries and pain of the period helps us to
witness the social and moral changes that took place during that time. Where few writers tried to avoid the problems that persisted by delving deep into the romantic literature, there on the other hand writers like Evelyn Waugh tried to raise some pertinent questions regarding the deterioration of the modern man which are more relevant today because of the continuous degradation in the morals of the society. (Randhawa 241)

Waugh tried to convey a sense of modern disorder and explain its causes. He believed that modernity became the main danger to individuality which cannot exist apart from the roots of traditional morality and religious conventions. Without such roots, no real personality can flourish. Confirming these ideas, McCartney says that:

In novel after novel, Waugh portrayed the consequences of jettisoning the traditions that had created the society and culture of Western Europe since the collapse of the Roman Empire...he was convinced the core of the older order's sensibility would be retained. He believed it would become the cornerstone for whatever new edifice was being built by an increasingly technological society. While he could never be fully in sympathy with such a world, as a matter of faith he concluded it would have to build on the Greek, Hebrew, and Christian past. (McCartney x)

As a result readers cannot feel sympathy with most of Waugh's characters; "Waugh, no less than Greene...he views his characters with the eye of the naturalist. They are animals, savage, unscrupulous, selfish... and weak. There are those who prey and those who are preyed upon. For both writers life is a jungle." (Boyle 76). With the same notion, Davis argues that:

One of the traits of Waugh's character obvious to him as well as to everyone who ever knew him or read his work was the inability to sympathize with or even to attempt to understand those who did not share his tastes.... Even when he liked people, he could keep them at the point of his barbed style and regard them as specimen. (Davis 53)

With this sense Wykes debates that "The human behaviour that Waugh depicted in his books is that of exiles, outcasts, people with no
valid landmarks or guideposts." (Wykes 2). Because of that one may notice that in most of his fictions Waugh showed how he hates and fears the Age of the Common Man, the lower-middle-class man, who is the inheritor of the future. Such philosophy concurred with the American Vice-president's declaration about the Age of the Common Man, not long before Evelyn began to write the novel *Brideshead Revisited* in February 1944 the Vice-president of the United States, Henry Wallace, had declared that "the century on which we are entering…can and must be the century of the common man." (Quoted in Patey 205). But the fact is that Waugh continued insisting that "The Common Man does not exist. He is an abstraction invented by bores for bores." (Gallagher 302). Waugh has also confirmed his opinion with the interviewers of a programme called ‘Frankly Speaking’ in the BBC in 1953, who were gravely horned; when they asked Evelyn Waugh:

‘You have not much sympathy with the man in the street, have you, Mr Waugh?’ [Waugh answered that]… ‘you must understand’… ‘that the man in the street does not exist. He is a modern myth. There are individual men and women, each one of whom has an individual and immortal soul, and such beings need to sue streets time to time.’ (Quoted in Sykes 477)

Waugh has got a commanding position among writers whether in England or in America where people started to reevaluate the previous judgement against him as an unimportant novelist with distinct satiric predispositions. Thus, by the mid half of the last century, Waugh’s name began to reappear widely and appealed to by different scholars and critics like Martin Stannard, Frederic J. Stopp, George McCartney, John Kenneth Galbraith, William F. Buckley, Gore Vidal, and Barbara Bush, Robert Murray Davis, Frank Kermode and others.