Chapter I

Introduction

This study aims at an analysis of male sufferings in the novels of Evelyn Waugh. The concept of suffering is referring us to the lived experience of pain, deprivation, damage, loss and injury. Here it is generally understood that human sufferings are encountered in multiple forms and that their injurious effects are manifold. But suffering is experienced and expressed; a particular emphasis is brought to bear upon the extent to which particular social conditions and distinct forms of culture both constitute and moderate the ways. With reference to “suffering,” the subjective components of sadness are rooted in social situations and conditioned by cultural position. Social worlds are impressed upon the experience of the pains.

Every human life is beset with many problems and sufferings at different levels. It is impossible for any human beings to exist without facing problems or sufferings in the world. Due to ignorance, people are entangled in various disturbances from birth to the last
breath. It is true that people have to face problems throughout their lives and there is no way to avoid them. However, some problems are man-made, created by people according to their worldly understanding of life. Human beings’ problems are always based upon how to understand the sufferings and conflict in the individuals. They have not only the physical problems but also more complicated psychological problems. Psychological problems always try to find only to rearrange their effects. Then, mental imbalance is also another big problem of human society.

The Bible, the Bhagavad-Gita and other religious books explain the cause of sufferings. They explain the resolution for sufferings and words have more importance than the understanding of the suffering itself. But any explanation and reasoning will not console the suffered men. They want only relief, but not the explanation of sufferings. Buddhism mainly points out ‘desire’ as the root cause of all types of sufferings of human beings in the world. Desire is like a great tree that has so many branches like, ill, will, anger and passions in it. The tree is mainly rooted in ignorance and the fruits of the tree are sufferings. According to the Bhagavad-Gita,
human suffering is real, but it is not permanent. It is caused by faulty thinking, perspectives, beliefs and attitudes. It depends upon the way people perceive things and react to them. These causes are still relevant in modern society and they are still effective in making people unhappy in their life with something or the other.

Most of the people are never satisfied fully in their life like children, because children frequently become satisfied with what they already have owned and shifted to another one. People always worry about their passions and possessions to enjoy, but the object of their needs passes away or breaks into it. Thus, suffering has a vital place in every day of human life and has an important and unavoidable role of the human journey of life.

Human suffering takes many forms: emotional, natural, and moral. Loneliness, anxiety, and grief are examples of emotional suffering. Fire, earthquake, storm, tsunami, and physical illnesses (e.g., cancer) are examples of natural suffering. Moral suffering is brought on by the deliberate acts of fellow human beings to cause suffering. These sufferings are always equal to each other and interweave between them.
Sufferings are caused by birth, death, sickness, old age and pain. But, real sufferings are caused by our own attitudes. Suffering is not a mistake that is a part of the self’s plan too. In other words, suffering is caused by interpretation of situations. Poverty, ignorance, and inability are other dimensions of sufferings. These are natural phenomena, which frequently cause a state of anxiety, anger, jealousy, greed and sadness. From this way, most of the people are suffering from the effects of these calamities. It naturally happens in the common life of everyone.

Sufferings can ruin a person or it can make one strong. It always depends on one’s sufferings in a positive way or a negative way. Each suffering produces its own influence on power, justice and freedom. Without faith, power and freedom, life is uncertain and the person becomes a pessimist. It is usually connected with pain and unhappiness that threatens the individual’s integrity. Through this way, sufferings are always reflection or part of existentialism.

Existentialism is historically and culturally of European origin. It was recognized as the dominating philosophy of the West in the mid-twentieth century.
Existentialism does not offer a set of doctrines or a single philosophy. It has been diversely defined and interpreted by various thinkers over the years. However, it is possible to identify certain traits of this school of thought. Existentialists emphasize the importance of the individual as well as freedom and responsibility for human being’s survival towards meaning of life. Then, they attempt to describe man’s existence and its conflicts, the origin of its conflicts and anticipation of overcoming them.

Existentialists focus their attention on certain aspects of human existence. They point out some aspects of existentialism as follows; it is never safe and it is full of suffering, conflict and guiltiness. These beliefs of existentialism have been widely reflected in the literature of the world. Almost all great writers have handled existentialism in their works. This is the main reason to handle or try to deal with man’s alienation, absurdity, anguish, bad faith, dread, responsibility, and commitment to freedom.

Literature is intimately related to society. Viewed as a whole, a body of literature is part of the entire culture of a people. The characteristic qualities that
distinguish the literature of one group from that of another derive from the characteristic qualities of that group. Its themes and problems emerge from group activities and group situations, and its significance lies in the extent to which it expresses and enriches the totality of culture. It is an integral part of entire cultures, tied by a tissue of connections with other elements in the culture.

Society influences literature in many ways and the connections of literature with society are integral and pervasive. In fact, the range of social influences on literature is as broad as the entire range of operating social forces. The prevailing system of social organization includes class structure, economic system, political organization, deeply rooted institutions, dominant ideas, characteristic emotional tone, and sense of the past and then the pattern of the contemporary realities. There is nothing in the compass of social life that does not play its part small or large, directly or by deflection, giving literature the impression of its surroundings.

The relation between literature and society is highly complex, and it is very difficult to determine
which element of society has exerted what influence on literature. Therefore, everyone cannot afford to isolate a single element in society, whether economic or ideological and assign to it a causal role in the final determination of literature. The whole social process including material, conceptual, emotional and institutional elements may be regarded as containing the potential influences determining the direction and character of literature of a period.

The period of the early twentieth century was a period of turmoil and desolation in Britain. The greatest industrial unrest in the history of Britain, nationwide strikes of dockworkers, railway men and miners brought the country to a standstill in 1911. Moreover, where on the one hand World War I (1914 – 1918) cost Britain the loss of an entire generation, on the other hand the Great Depression left millions unemployed. By the summer of 1921, there were over two million people unemployed and strikes were escalating. There was widespread affliction and deprivation. The worst period of the depression followed the crash of the Wall Street financial market in 1929; as a result, unemployment in Britain rose to nearly three million in 1932. Then common people of Britain
faced many restrictions and the onslaught of bombardment during the Second World War (1939 – 1945), which wrecked the life of the people. Due to all these drastic changes in politics, technology and migration of people, the cultural and social life of Britain went through radical evolution.

The declining economic prosperity after the death of Queen Victoria resulted in spreading a sense of disillusionment and skepticism among the general public. The sudden breakdown of the established order forced the people to raise questions regarding the old morals, ethics and principle. People found themselves competing with the social, political and psychological problems of the time as the self-satisfaction and optimism of the Victorian Era was fading. The scientific thought invaded the thinking of the people, and they started challenging the former assumptions regarding religion, philosophy and art. As a result, the age witnessed a strong reaction against the accepted standards of conduct and belief, which became the foundation of the Victorian era. The new age witnessed the emancipation of woman and a decline in religious beliefs. The breakdown of a rigid moral code resulted in the growing cult of hedonism. Leaving the
Victorian morals behind people started getting involved in all types of vices often for the sake of fun and pleasure. As everybody started having their own morals, the writers took inspiration from the time. The cumulative impression of the society resulted in leaving different mental impressions on the different writers, and as per these impressions, they wrote their experience in the form of prose, poetry, drama and fiction.

Unlike Victorian artists who had usually been happy to portray the mainstream middle class and its aspirations, the twentieth century writers responded by writing more rationally about exigent works by pushing the boundaries to different areas. Where on the one hand writers like George Eliot, Dickens, Thackeray, Ruskin, Arnold and Carlyle expressed their strong dissatisfaction with the norms of the Victorian era, there on the other hand writers like George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells started questioning the validity of existing social and moral structure. Though some writers appreciated the new changes and the social and moral emancipation, some other writers criticized the lack of morality in the new generation. The society of that time was full of contradictions. As some people favored the woman-
emancipation, another felt that the strife and violence promoted by feminism were repugnant to feminine character and temperament.

The open discussion about the sex-relationship in the writings of D.H. Lawrence and H.G. Wells came in for severe criticism. The custodians of Victorian morals severely criticized the unconventional portrayal of the subject in the *The Woman Did* and *Ann Veronica* by Grant Allen and H.G. Wells. Lawrence’s novels like *Rainbow*, *Women in Love* and *Lady Chatterley Lover* were declared obscene, and the writer like Henry Vizetelly was imprisoned for publishing translations of Zola’s novels. All this resulted in characterizing the new age as an extraordinary social and intellectual ferment. Thus, all the literature of that time shows the desolation of the period in different manners. The writers of early 20th century were the writers of transition as they found themselves in a dilemma. Due to the changes in the society, on the one hand, they failed to identify themselves with the old world of the Victorian era and on the other hand they had nowhere to go.

Thus, the fiction of the era can be divided into different forms. Novelists like John Galsworthy continued
writing in a more traditional style, and won great acclaim in the interwar period. Their novels have plots, characterization, and other usual characteristics of the novel. The story has a linear progression. The plot moves round the real life situations presented to point out the absurdities and abnormalities of the social fabric.

The stream of consciousness techniques found its expression in the novels of Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and Dorothy Richardson, who cultivated the technique in all its complexities. It consists of literary representations of ordinary thought and the story moves backward and forward in time. The novelist uses the flashback technique to bring home his viewpoint. It was affected to a great extent by the psychological theory of Sigmund Freud. Virginia Woolf’s novels like To the Lighthouse, Mrs. Dalloway, and The Waves; James Joyce’s novel Ulysses are the examples of this type of fiction.

The writers of realistic novels rejected idealizing reality in favour of beauty, and unreal things like super naturalism. Their main concern was to present reality in its straight form without beautifying it and inspired from earlier writers like Charles Dickens and Thackerey. modern writers like H.G. Wells, Galsworthy, Arnold
Bennett and Evelyn Waugh wrote realistic novels to express themselves. They harnessed their pen in the novel form to describe the social and domestic problems of the middle and upper middle class. Their novels were purposive in character. H.G. Wells in his novels advocated social reform in the field of education. Galsworthy tried to portray the conflict between materialism and cultural values, his novel *Forsyte Saga* shows the lust of wealth and the materialistic life in the upper middle class society.

Inspired by the French novels, Arnold Bennett used in his novels the technique of intense description. In his novel *Riceyman Steps* (1923), he portrays the grim life of a miser and in the *Imperial Palace* (1930), he presented all the details of hotel life. As his reputation rests on his thirty novels, his famous novels include *Anna of the Five Towns* (1902), *The Old Wives' Tale* (1908), *Clayhanger* (1910) and *Riceyman Steps* (1923). However, apart from all of them, the novels of Evelyn Waugh portrayed the moral confusion and the dissolution of the human race. By using well-chiseled words, he tried to bring out the hypocrisy and superficiality in the aristocratic society of England. His earlier novels
Decline and Fall (1928), Vile Bodies (1930) and A Handful of Dust (1934) are a brilliant satire on the superficial life as led in the London’s cocktail society. Impressed by T.S.Eliot’s “The Waste Land,” he brings forth the point that the modern society is deteriorating at a fast pace. Whereas his later novels like Brideshead Revisited (1945), Put Out More Flags (1942), and The Sword of Honour Trilogy (1965) brings out the corruption and moral degradation that exists in every place in the modern society including army.

Though the basic concept of Realistic and Naturalistic novels was the same, but they differed on the point of objectivity. Whereas on the one hand realistic novels described the situation realistically pointing out the accurate picture of the society, morals, religion and cultural aspect, on the other hand naturalistic novels presented the stark reality. They have pointed out that man has become a puppet in the hands of mechanical and chemical forces of the society. Therefore, he has lost his free will to take a decision as per his inner conscience. Emile Zola and Balzac started this concept in their works Nana and Le Roman Experimentale respectively. Later in modern literature
inspired from the French revolution, novelist like George Gissing felt attracted towards this genre of writing. After getting awfully disgusted with modern industrial life, he made his novels an attack upon the industrialism of the age. In his novel *Thysa, The Nether World, Grab Street* and *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecraft*, he tried to portray the woes and sufferings of poor people. Whereas writers like Butler and Huxley criticized in their works the modern craze for materialism and machinery. Aldous Huxley’s book *Crome Yellow* illustrates postwar disillusionment and immortality. Moreover, in this novel and in *Those Barren Leaves* he tries to expose the hypocrisy and futility of the London society.

Historical novels describe in fiction the lost era. Though many writers tried to write in this genre, Robert Graves turned out to be one of the famous writers of historical novels as his fiction includes his famous Claudius novels (*Claudius and Claudius the God*). He wrote a dozen historical novels. Moreover, in almost in all his novels he has tried to explore the present-day problems through historical settings, which instead of making his fiction an escape from the present situation, helps him
in raising the pertinent questions regarding the modern decaying world.

Twentieth century also saw the growth of expressionist novels, which found its place in the British fiction quite late, though number of international novelists like - Hamsun, Kafka, Celine, Canetti, Cela, Lagerkvist, Djuna Barnes, Ralph Ellison, Juan Rulfo, Maurice Blanchot, Ernesto Sabato, and Bessie Head wrote their work in this genre. The prominent British writers of this genre are - Wyndham Lewis, Jean Rhys, Charles William, Anna Kavan, Malcolm Lowry, Nicholas Mosley, Martin Amis, Angela Carter and D. M. Thomas.

Though there were other writers like Ivy Compton-Burnett, who reinvented dialogue novel. Samuel Butler, who satirised the realism of modern civilization and its persistence on machinery in his novel titled Erewhon that is an anagram for nowhere. E.M Forester who criticised materialism and so in his novel Howards End he satirised the worship of business in the industrialized England, and writers like Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, Haggard, and Maurice Hewlett who once again popularized romance and reacted against the realism of the period.
Thus, over the period British Fiction grew with the passage of time from realism to high modernism, each one having different writers expressing themselves through their novels. The writers who portrayed realism in their novels constitute mostly all the writers from Arnold Bennett to Helen Simpson which include writers like Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Barbara Pym, Margaret Drabble, etc. Novelists who wrote postmodern fiction were novelists like Henry James, Elizabeth Bowen, Anthony Powell, and Elizabeth Howard to the latest novelist like Graham Swift, Kazuo Ishiguro, etc. However, writing in the genre of high modernism comprises not only the writers between the two world wars but also the writers who tried to provide a solution to the modern problems and so it includes writers like Evelyn Waugh whose work travelled the distance from realistic to postmodern novel.

After seeing the people becoming morally corrupt with no moral codes of values applicable in the society, Evelyn Waugh felt disgusted with this social scenario. Belonging to the aristocratic circle of British society, he found himself a part of that deteriorating world and so he decided to criticize it in order to ameliorate it.
Describing Waugh’s novels Gene Kellogg aptly says, “Their vitality is such that when one reads them the lost generation and all the tragic emptiness that beset England after the First World War live again in startling immediacy” (103). Himself being a part of the aimless young people of 1920s and while living in upper middle class society, he succeeded in providing a vivid description of that world. He proved that though from outer side it seemed to be a glittering and glamorous world from inside it was losing its moral ethics and codes.

There was a lack of affection between the families and so both parents and their children used to feel themselves alienated from the family as well as from the society. They were attached to the society through mere superficial threads of duty. The hypocrisy was at its height as people started having double standards and the mask parties of that time became an epitome of the disguises that people generally used to wear in their social life. However, as slowly that mask started to become their identity, they started facing the problem of the loss of their real identity. The other problem that persisted at that time was that being rich and powerful,
people of upper class found themselves above the law and the legal system as a result they started moulding it as per their needs, which resulted in an increase in corruption. Finally, the crucial circle started, in which one vice gave birth to another. Facing the problems of the world head-on, Waugh raises some pertinent questions regarding the degradation of the modern man and exposes their moral blankness and spiritual depravity through his novels.

All the writers take impressions from the society and then express them in different genres. Waugh’s contemporary writers also wrote as per their impressions of the society. Joseph Conrad emphasized the principle of fidelity in human relations and laid greater stress on moral values than material values. Betrayal of trust and deception of one’s fellow men seemed to him to be heinous sins and all his sea tales, particularly Under Western Eye and Lord Jim illustrate the philosophical strength of his moral convictions. George Orwell the British writer, on the other hand, gained recognition mainly due to his two novels – Animal Farm, which was a political allegory and a satire on corrupt politics, and his other novel
*Nineteen Eighty Four*, which described totalitarian mechanism of thought control.

Another contemporary of Waugh, who gained recognition at that time, was Aldous Huxley, who gained recognition with his first novel *Crome Yellow* (1921), which was a witty satire on the intellectual pretensions of that time. His famous book *Brave New World* (1932), proved to be a bitter satire about the inhumane society, which is in control of the modern technology. On the other hand Waugh’s dissatisfaction with his age also forced him to criticize the situation but without getting bitter. Through his writings, he started mocking at the system, with a moral purpose to ameliorate it. His writings profoundly conveyed that the hypocrite, superficial and deceitful world cannot provide the meaning and aim to the currently aimless world, and so one must start cherishing the older values of love, compassion and truthfulness in order to attain spiritual growth. His thoughts provided an anchor to the otherwise emotionally deprived people. As a result, his clarity of thought succeeded in providing them a point where to end.

As a novelist, Evelyn Waugh explores the emotional world and the darker side of life of suffering people and
downtrodden. Waugh further examines his protagonists as individuals who find themselves forced into uncongenial environments, fighting against the odds. Then, his writings portray these problems of the tragic tension between the individual and their unfavorable environment acquires the dimensions of existential anguish. Waugh’s characters are self-conscious of the reality around them and they carry a sense of loneliness, alienation and pessimism. He adds the realities of life and plunges the deep-depths of the human psyche to score out its mysteries and chaos in the minds of characters.

Close study of the texture and theme of the novels in relation to the tenets of existentialism justifies the above observation. Waugh’s works deal with the existential anxiety experienced by his suffered protagonists. Thus, the existential themes of solitude, alienation, the futility of human existence and struggle for survival are the major themes of his works. Evelyn Waugh expresses his personal feelings over suffering heroes through his works with existentialism.

Evelyn Waugh has an extraordinary sense and he has a soft corner for the downtrodden and innocent people. He exposes the evils of exploitation of the male by the
women in his novels. He handled many common problems of great classes, religious, economic and literary activities in day-to-day life in his respective nation. Then, Poverty, ignorance, and inability interlink with individuals and society that role the characters with pragmatic way of life.

Throughout his life Waugh worked at various levels, such as writer, worked school teacher, journalist for the London Daily Express, and war correspondent in Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), Military service: Royal Marines in 1939-40, Commandos at 1940-43, and the Royal Horse Guards in 1943-45; served in Crete, North Africa, and Yugoslavia; became major.

Waugh won many prizes for his works. They are, Hawthornden Prize, for Edmund Campion: Scholar, Priest, Hero, and Martyr at 1936; James Tait Black Memorial Prize for Best Novel, University of Edinburgh, for Men at Arms at 1952; Royal Society of Literature fellow and companion of literature at 1963; honorary degree from Loyola College; refused to accept Commander of the British Empire award; Brideshead Revisited was voted “one of the 100 best-loved novels” by the British public as part of
the BBC's The Big Read at 2003. He composed a number of novels, and story collections.

Arthur Evelyn St. John Waugh was born in a middle class London suburb. He was born on October 28, 1903, in Hampstead, London, England and died on April 10, 1966, in Combe Florey, Somerset, England. He is the son of Arthur (an editor and publisher) and Catherine Charlotte (Raban) Waugh. He first married Evelyn Gardner in 1928. Soon he receives divorce from her in 1930. In 1937 he married Laura Herbert, a cousin of his first wife, and from this time made his home in the West Country, first at Piers Court in Gloucestershire, then at Combe Florey in Somerset, where he cultivated the image of the country squire, with, eventually, a family of six children, namely, Auberon, Margaret, Teresa, Harriet, James and Septimus. He was educated at Lancing and Hertford College, Oxford, where he devoted himself more to social than to academic life; his literary and artistic interests were strengthened by new friendships, notably with H. Acton.

Reading and writing were a daily part of the Waugh’s home environment. The parents read stories aloud to their sons, and books were a major topic of discussion
in the household. When Evelyn was only seven, he wrote a short story, "The Curse of the Horse Race," which has been preserved and published in an adult collection of narratives. He and a group of his friends formed their own boys' club, called The Pistol Troop, and even produced (when Evelyn was nine) their own magazine, which was typed by his father's secretary. To these youthful literary influences was added an early interest in religion. Evelyn's father was a practicing Anglican and a regular churchgoer, although not rigid or doctrinaire in outlook.

Evelyn himself took an early interest in Anglo-Catholicism. When the time came to preparatory school, Arthur Waugh chose for his son Lancing, which had a reputation for High Anglicanism and for educating the sons of clergymen. At Lancing, chapel attendance every morning and evening was compulsory, and on Sundays attendance at three services was required. In his autobiography Waugh recalls that he did not at the time think this requirement excessive. As his education continued, however, Waugh came in contact with more rebellious and undisciplined schoolmates. He and his artistically and literarily inclined companions formed
the dilettantes and began to dominate Lancing school life. This group has been frequently cruel and snobbish to those outside their intellectual and sophisticated circle.

Before he left Lancing, Waugh realized that he had ceased being a Christian. This change occurred not only because of his association with more freethinking companions and considerable reading (for example, of the philosophy of Leibnitz and the Enlightenment), but also, ironically, because one of his Anglican clergyman-instructors instilled in him serious doubts about religious truths and orthodoxy. Although religious skepticism was new to Waugh, he continued his literary and debating interests, editing the school magazine, writing the prize poem, and winning the English Literature Prize.

Apart from his schooling and his life at Oxford, the other things that shaped his satirical vision include his marriage with Evelyn Gardner. It turned out to be a typical 1920s marriage, because due to various reasons it lasted a very short time as a result, Waugh reacted against his generations. He started searching for social and moral norms that can provide assurance. After his
divorce, with Evelyn Gardener his disenchantment with modern society led in 1930 to his conversion to Catholicism. However, about his accepting Catholicism, he admitted that it was a decision taken not by his heart, but by his mind, as he was impressed by the years old presence and continuity of the Church. Too soon he realized that traditions that forced him to opt for the church were not there anymore and thus his later novels termed as Catholic novels by certain critics, in reality present his dissatisfaction with the modern church.

After his divorce and before his second marriage Waugh travelled constantly, often as a correspondent. During this period, he wrote a number of travel books and novels. In 1927, he started to compose relentlessly, and, after the publication of some short stories, an article on the Pre-Raphaelites, and a biography of Rossetti, he made success in 1928 with the publication of his first novel, *Decline and Fall*, a book recorded by Cyril Connolly as one of the one hundred key works of the modern development in literature.

His travelogue *Remote People* (1931), and third novel *Black Mischief* (1932), were the results of his voyage to Ethiopia. The social, cultural and economic differences
between Ethiopia and England inspired him to write the novel *Black Mischief*, which portrays the absurdities generated after the collision of two different cultures and thus brings out the variety of Waugh’s satire. Due to his wide travelling as a journalist, in *Black Mischief*, Waugh succeeded in depicting the complete picture of a tribal country.

After Lancing, Waugh continued his studies (after a fashion) in 1921 at Oxford. This part of his life has been given much attention as a result of the first part of *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) and the recently published diaries (1976). Waugh soon became associated with Harold Acton and the other aesthetes who were then a well-established group at the university. This arty crowd engaged in a considerable amount of socializing, party-going, and drinking. Homosexuality was not uncommon, and Waugh went through a homosexual phase. He was active in the debating society and wrote for the *Isis*, the *Cherwell*, and the *Oxford Broom*. He also contributed drawings to these three university publications. He did only the minimum amount of studying, however, and therefore left in his third year (1924) without taking a degree and saddled with debts.
His father paid for his tuition at a London art school, but Waugh felt he was not making progress. He decided to become a schoolmaster, but he was sacked from three schools in less than two years, drank heavily, and gradually became so depressed with his lack of success that he attempted suicide. As he was to note many years later, he was really attempting in this period to avoid the vocation that had obviously been his from childhood.

Waugh’s works are marked by two main themes: satire of the vulgarity of modern society and the redemptive promise of traditional Catholicism. Waugh published his first novel *Decline and Fall* in 1928. This novel focuses about the protagonist, Paul Pennyfeather’s experiences in Oxford, Llanabba, Kings Thursday and Prison. He is the hapless and victim person by the scoundrels like Dr. Fagan, Philbrick, Margot Beste-Chetwynde, Prendergast, and Captain Grimes.

His second novel *Vile Bodies* was published in 1930. This novel focused on the Oxford university experience and Bright Young Things, and who commits crimes in the amoral world. Adam Symes is a young writer. His main intention is to marry his fiancee Nina Blount. Finally, Adam was disillusioned by Nina Blount. In third novel
Black Mischief published in 1932. This novel focused about the western culture. The hero of the novel is Emperor Seth. He wants to civilize his nation, but it turns into tragedy for his citizens. His fourth novel A Handful of Dust published in 1934. This novel focused about the victim as a hero. The novel clearly picture about the women’s infidelity. Here, Brenda betrays her husband and makes the illegal relationship with Beaver. His fifth novel Scoop was published in 1938. This novel mainly focused about the journal man’s life.

Then he published Put Out More Flags in 1942. This novel focused on the World War II experiences. Waugh published Brideshead Revisited in 1945. This novel focused on the theme of Catholicism. Soon he published The Loved One in 1948. This novel mainly portrays modern life in the 1940s. Waugh published Sword of Honour in 1965. This one is called war trilogy. This novel includes Men at Arms in 1952; Officers and Gentlemen in 1955; Unconditional Surrender in 1961. Sword of Honour mainly deals with the war experience of Guy Crouchback.

Waugh’s novels seem to be a complete group instead of individual novels because he wrote his novels as per the experiences he gained during his life and his each
novel represents a time-period of his life, which makes his entire fiction a growing oeuvre. Further, his novels are completely real observations, many of them personally experienced by him and some of the situations invented for the sake of the novel. Though autobiographical element is visible in all his novels, yet they are fictions and not autobiographies. The other important point that makes his novels a complete block is the continuity of the same theme in almost all his novels. Through all his novels, he tries to bring home the point that modern man is a deprived soul and so there is a desperate need to ameliorate this moral and intellectual depravity.

Waugh is a true moralist and his humourous detachment, which in a real sense is satirical, strengthens his situation as a writer. He uses the technique of ‘modern art’ to ridicule the ‘modern way of life’. The humour lies in the ridiculing through which he demonstrates the failure of a feckless and faithless world, the futility of a society that has lost its fundamental values. Taking a high moral line, Waugh exposes the futility and smugness of people living in a world full of anomalies, injustices, follies and crimes.
Waugh’s writing comprises not only his novels, but also his travelogues and his personal diaries, as they all are replete with the theme of modern degeneration, witnessed by Waugh in different forms in almost all the sections of the society. However, his novels are the most refined form of his experiences as only after writing his observations in his diaries and expressing them in his travelogues he uses to colour it with imagination to give shape to his fiction. In his earlier novels Waugh used to mock at the system, by being completely indifferent even to the fate of his protagonist, as he considered him nothing but a mere tool to bring home his point of view about the corrupt modern world, however in his later novels he started using him as his spokesman at certain points.

Therefore, throughout his life Waugh was a moralist, satirising the anomalies in the society, with his genteel and humourous tone. His novels and travelogues depicted the real society of that time, as they were not written while sitting in the ivory tower. He could even be termed as a historical novelist with his books transcending current history. As a result, his portrayal of the Second World War succeeded in bringing out not only the moral
depravity of the people, with corruption having its heyday but also the British unpreparedness before the war. The main objective of Waugh in his novels is to underline the fact that a man has to show a respect to an authority or tradition outside him, otherwise he has no chance to redeem himself. In all his novels, he has given great value equally to moral and aesthetic disciplines.

Evelyn Waugh’s works seem to be say that a creator conveys a mirror for the dusty ways of British society. Broadly speaking, all his novels portray the ennui, the disintegration, and moral confusion of the human race. Hence, the author shows the characters of poor people as a life of their own. Evelyn Waugh satirises vehemently the exploitations of the powerful people over the poor and downtrodden. Evelyn Waugh uses his works as a weapon against the exploiters. It has a deeper insight of political, nativity, and struggles such as, ‘a slice of life’ of British and picturesque of suffering people.

The aim of the present study is to discuss the oppressed and suffering male protagonists in the novels of Evelyn Waugh. The thesis closely examines an outstanding characteristic of the modern novel with an emphasis placed on the relationship between the
environment and the person. The novelist represents the conflicts resulting from this relationship by showing the tragic or comic effect of a person’s inability or unwillingness to adjust to accepted standards, or he may use the novel to show the defects in the society and show how self-realisation is frustrated by the assumed social standards. In the first step, the novelist emphasises the individual’s problems and is only indirectly critical of the environment. In the latter step, the novelist stresses the faults and weaknesses of the conventions and traditions of the society to bring about changes in social conditions; the point of view is consciously didactic. In both steps the environment is the determining factor in the development of the individual. The novelist’s interpretation of society in terms of social ideas depends on his negative or positive reaction to the environment. However, without being a misanthrope, still there is some hope for the morally deprived modern man, and the respect and revival of the tradition and older values can save the world from further corrosion. It will pave the path for the peaceful life on the earth. The novels – *Decline and Fall*, *Vile Bodies*, *A Handful of
Dust, and Brideshead Revisited – have been selected for this purpose.

Describing British society and upper class people, Waugh’s novels portray how the society is affected and how the people misuse other persons. Alain Blayac aptly says:

Waugh is a genuine moralist and satirist who draws on all the forms of humour to propound in an oblique manner the moral, religious and philosophical principles which he advocates for the saving of the individual and society. (122)

Describing the hypocritical and superficial world as shown in Waugh’s early novels, Patricia Corr aptly says:

The world depicted in the novels is one of seemingly irreparable futility. It is a sham world of hypocrisy and dishonesty, of irresponsibility and license, a world from which all spiritual values have been eliminated.... (390)

It is clear that society stands as one of the important problem poses in many of Waugh’s novels. It was the primary reason for the harsh world war that fragmented the remains of the British community and split its people into two different poles. Describing Waugh’s early novels Steven Marcus aptly says:
In his early novels Waugh was able to sustain a tone of bemused mournfulness over a society bent on smashing itself to pieces, while at the same time depicting the feckless innocence of both those who were most active in the smashing and those most hurt by it. The matrix of his comedy is this conjunction of the most abrupt and violent events with the most innocent villains. (95)

Peter Hinchcliffe writes about the creative process undertaken by the human follies, and innocent becomes a victim people. He rightly says:

Waugh sees the world of the “so-called twentieth century” as a place of anarchy and unreason where the good and the innocent are victimised. He describes it in comic terms because that is his bent, but his novels are filled with death and madness and the breakdown of social institutions. These are the major themes that are repeated and reworked in his novels. (293)

Anthony Burgess, after arguing that the seemingly gratuitous violence in many of Waugh’s plots is really salutary in its final effect tells us:

If we look below the surface, we shall find that Waugh is recording an age, so lacking in roots or moral convictions that enormities like
even cannibalism (in Black Mischief) can find no category of judgement. (54)

Frederick J. Stopp argues that traditional satire proceeds from an informed sense of an ordered system of morals and manners, and Waugh’s satiric novels simply do not use along these generically sanctioned lines. Instead, he finds:

Mr. Waugh’s earlier comic extravaganzas are to traditional, objective satire as existentialism is to academic philosophy – the bottom has dropped out of the world picture. There is no correction, but only rejection. (194-195)

The thesis consists of six chapters. The introductory chapter discusses Evelyn Waugh as a socialist writer, and generally focuses on sufferings and sorrows, the role of the novel, bringing reformation in the society and a brief outline of the writer’s life and career, and his contribution to literature in general and British literature specifically. The second chapter deals with the protagonist’s oppressed and painful experiences under the corrupt society. The third chapter examines the sufferings of man in frenetic and empty lives of the Bright Young Things. The fourth chapter deals with British families and their traditions and individual
struggles. The fifth chapter focuses upon dreadfulness committed in the operation of divine grace in the associations of a similar set of people. The concluding chapter summarises the evaluation of the earlier chapters and Evelyn Waugh proves himself a socially conscious novelist. The concepts of betrayal and ignorance are interlinked with people and societies revolve around the characters’ pragmatic way of life. Evelyn Waugh’s humanism reveals itself in the depiction of male and others.