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NEWS

***Brideshead Rearranged: Charm, Grace, and Waugh's Building of Worlds*¹**

Grazie Sophia Christie

In the process of writing on Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* I began to notice affinities between the novel's narrator, Captain Charles Ryder, and myself. Ryder is an artist: he publishes "splendid folios" of English architecture headed for "extinction," of "gutted palaces and cloisters" in Mexico and Central America (226-28). Wading into Waugh's starfish-and-sea-glass prose, I am similarly intent on identifying elements and processes of construction, although I am not particularly interested in capturing a doorway's low sweep, a pavilion's crumble, a cottage in a grove of trees. I have mapped out instead Waugh's own authorial architecture in *Brideshead Revisited*, the materials out of which he fashions the novel's world of charm, and more curiously, his attempt to unfurl a sort of blueprint before his readers in which the skeleton of his own composition is subtly illuminated. In *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh metafictionally engages in construction—of a world and its relationships—that depends upon pastiche, a process in which the new is assembled through a rearrangement of what already exists. The tension of this metafictional construction with the manner in which Charles builds his own Catholic world transforms the novel's meaning, its treatment of both conversion and the relationship between Catholicism and sacrifice.

Brideshead's critics have mapped out Charles Ryder's construction of a life of grace, although their analysis is associated more with narratives of journey and movement than architecture. Still, they focus on Charles's *tools*: charm, the beloved Flyte family, "forerunners" that lead Charles to grace and are then excluded from his life—or perhaps even abandoned—once grace is reached.² For these critics, Waugh associates grace and faith with material unhappiness. "Forerunners" are objects of joy, but they are also simply a means to an end, put aside when a relationship with God has been forged. *Brideshead Revisited* becomes a novel about Ryder's recognition of both the tenderness of a God present even in sin—who *uses* sin as a

¹ Winner of the John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest, 2017.

² "Forerunner" is a term introduced by Charles in his voyage back to England from New York, where he and Julia Flyte begin their affair. "You loved [Sebastian], didn't you?" Julia asks. "Oh yes," Charles replies, "He was the forerunner" (257).

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tool to build a life of grace—and the tragedy inherent in this motion toward sacred intimacy: the loss of one kind of happiness, of a world where sin and sympathy are joyfully and beautifully bound, in favor of another world with its own brand of contentment.

This reading is undermined, however, by Waugh's own authorial architecture in *Brideshead*. Waugh demonstrates to his readers the process by which worlds, and the relationships that fill them, are built. The world of charm is constructed in *Brideshead Revisited* through pastiche. Existing elements like sound, plot, even objects and architecture are recycled and rearranged into new forms. *Brideshead Revisited*, however, is also *about* world-building, the activity of Charles Ryder, who at the conclusion of the novel has assembled his own Catholic life. Waugh uses elements of theatricality and performance in the novel to reveal to his readers that the fashioning of a world of faith can involve this same mode of composition, this same pastiche.

That Charles's world-fashioning involves loss and sacrifice rather than this metafictional model of incorporation provides a new explanation for the tonal qualities of *Brideshead Revisited*, its waves of melancholy and grief. Waugh's work tells the story of a conversion that fails at pastiche, that involves unnecessary loss in its movement from charm to grace, from the profane to the sacred. For Ryder, charm and the brand of happiness associated with it are sacrificed, rather than integrated, when a faithful life has been constructed. This loss floods the novel with mournfulness, and it is through this mournfulness that Waugh's warning about conversion becomes clear. Charm and its happiness are not tools for the construction of grace to be put aside when they have served this purpose; they should be treated as materials of grace itself, incorporated into its very design.

My architectural analysis will begin with the etymological relationship between charm and grace, the foundation for Waugh's suggestion that the two should be constructed similarly. I will then examine the charming world of the Flytes, and the pastiche that marks Waugh's mode of fashioning it for the reader. Turning to performance and theatricality in the novel, I will analyze the figure of Anthony Blanche as a representation of grace's capacity for this same inclusion and rearrangement.

My paper will close by analyzing unhappiness in the novel as a symptom of what it means to pursue a conversion that fails at pastiche, that builds a world of faith where charm and other objects of human happiness are excluded. Waugh's own biography and engagement with literary tradition reveals the ways that *Brideshead* is full of unfulfilled potentialities for happiness *through* refashioning that Ryder never takes. Ryder gives up human happiness for divine contentment, but this is an unnecessary sacrifice. It is a failure of design of Ryder's own making, not a central component of Waugh's understanding of conversion.

Charm and Grace: Critical Conversation and Etymological Connection

Critical work on *Brideshead Revisited* often hinges on interpretations of the novel's full title: *Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder*.³ The sacred in the novel is embodied in the presence of grace—which Waugh points out in his 1945 preface, where he describes its plot as “the working of divine grace on a group of diverse but closely connected characters” (“Warning”). Grace is countered by charm, which represents the profane: the province of the Flyte family.

In “The Death of Charm and the Advent of Grace: Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*” Thomas Prufer writes that the “Greek word for charm and for grace is the same: *charis*” (284). He connects this etymologic root to the word for mirroring, or reversal, “chiasm” (284). While Prufer's article focuses primarily on Charles's artistic talent, the “gift and the call, the partnership and the exchange between God and man, man and God,” Prufer here describes the relationship between grace and charm in such a way that resonates with the arguments of other critics (282). Charm and grace are distinct forces, opposites, and Charles's movement in the novel is from one to the other—from one *through* the other. A testament to the design of God, Charles's love for Julia and Sebastian and the happiness of “charm” are “forerunners” for divine connection and grace.

Critical discussion of these “forerunners” is often focused on loss and sacrifice. Critics like Douglas Lane Patey and Robert Murray Davis connect this model to Neoplatonism. In *The Life of Evelyn Waugh: A Critical Biography*, Patey claims Charles's “loves form a series of steps

³ In *The Loss of Traditional Values and Continuance of Faith in Evelyn Waugh's Novels: A Handful of Dust, Brideshead Revisited, and Sword of Honor*, Wirth calls “the subtitle of *Brideshead Revisited*” an “indication of the conflict between religion and worldliness” (53).

like those on a Neoplatonic ladder...Each lesser love is real and valuable, but at the same time inadequate: each is pointing beyond itself to a more satisfactory end...and each...seeming detour or retrogression...constitutes an advance” (226).⁴ According to Davis in *Brideshead Revisited: The Past Redeemed*, this is why Charles “[regards] his past as good yet willingly [relinquishes] the people, talents, and pleasures that constituted [it]” (33). The charming and the profane are tools of utility in the conversion of Charles; they are also then expendable when Charles reaches the sacred. In *Picturesque Prison: Evelyn Waugh and his Writings*, critic Jeffrey Heath argues that Charles “knows about divine love...at the expense of other, more shadowy loves” (169). By the novel’s epilogue, Charles is a Catholic, but he is also physically alone, grieving the loss of the loves of his life. Human happiness is a forerunner for divine contentment, and happiness, like other forerunners in the novel, must be given up once it has been used as tool to forge faith. On this account, many critics, like Prufer, accuse Waugh of “theological harshness,” of connecting Catholicism with the tragedy of sacrifice (281).

This emphasis on conversion and faith-building as a process both dependent upon and ultimately incompatible with the human happiness of charm is misguided. As Waugh himself wrote in his diary on 11 May 1944, his education was “classical and historical” (*The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh* 565). As a child, on 2 October 1919, he described his “enterprising timetable” of studies for the day as “Greek, double maths, double Greek” (*The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh* 23). He was educated at Oxford, where allusions to Greek peppered daily life. In *Mad World: Evelyn Waugh and the Secrets of Brideshead*, biographer Paula Byrne writes that Waugh was a member of the “Hypocrites Club” the name of which “came from the ancient Greek word for an actor” (55). In *Picturesque Prison*, Heath states that Waugh “developed markedly classical tastes and wrote feelingly on the monuments of the Augustan age of English architecture” (7). All this to say: the fact that grace and charm are conflated in Greek, as Prufer indicated, should be privileged.

If Charles’s movement in the novel is from a world of charm to a world of grace, as so many of Waugh’s critics argue, how does this fashioning and shifting of worlds change if we look at the novel with the view that charm and grace are not merely connected, but potentially

⁴ Similar arguments are made by Susan Auty in “Language and Charm in *Brideshead Revisited*,” Myers in *Evelyn Waugh and the Problem of Evil*, and RoseMary C. Johnson in “Human Tragedy, Divine Comedy: The Painfulness of Conversion in Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*.”

even equivalent? The capacity for a life of grace to contain the happiness associated with charm becomes more feasible. Architectural analysis of *Brideshead Revisited* illuminates the way that Waugh actually resists narratives of sacrifice in relation to conversion. Waugh demonstrates the way that worlds and relationships are built through pastiche, and suggests that the same should apply to the world of faith. Human happiness should not be merely a tool to construct the edifice of faith, but an actual part of it once it *has been* constructed; a building block, an incorporated swirl in its cement, rather than a tool to be put aside on the date of completion.

***Brideshead Revisited* and Sonic Pastiche**

Charles Ryder's intimacy with the Flytes is an admission into a world of charm. His meeting of Sebastian is charged by the desire to "find that low door in the wall...which opened an enclosed and enchanted garden" (31). This door and this garden he finds; this door and this garden he eventually loses. Still, this "enchanted garden" is its own contained realm, which Waugh imbues with its own lights, its own tones, its own register. When Ryder returns to Brideshead in the prologue, this world rises up to meet him and Waugh's readers in its totality. A moment of retrospection becomes an immersive reverie hundreds of pages long.

How does Waugh build this world of charm for Ryder and his readers? One of its structural foundations is *sound*. When he arrives at Brideshead in the novel's prologue, Ryder asks his servant, "What's this place called?" (15). After receiving an answer, Charles describes feeling

an immense silence...empty at first, but gradually...full of sweet and natural and long-forgotten sounds—he had spoken a name so familiar to [him], a conjuror's name of such ancient power, that, at its mere sound, the phantoms of those haunted late years began to take flight. (15)

Sound—the sound of a name—is what actually *brings* this world into being years later, spurs the appearance of these phantoms that Ryder and his readers follow into their own long-gone realm. Sound is the agent through which the friendships, relationships, and objects of this enchanted garden become unearthed, laid out for Ryder's and Waugh's readers' inspection.

This centrality of sound in world-building makes sense. The world of charm in *Brideshead Revisited* is intensely relational, revolving around the spaces between Charles and Sebastian, between Charles and Julia, where love prospers and love flags. Sound—conversation, rapport—is always a channel for intimacy, and intimacy is the substance around which social worlds are often built.

Waugh takes his readers even closer into the blueprints of his novel, demonstrating how the conversations and the sounds of the Flyte family are actually assembled. For the charming, dialogue is a process of *re-assembly*. If conversation is an art form, the Flyte family and those figures associated with them are drawing from a pool of the same verbal materials: words, phrases, and even rhythms are rearranged and repeated throughout the novel. Their language consumes and perpetuates itself, and Waugh makes a concerted effort to make this clear. The sonic becomes architectural as Waugh draws our attention to its crafting.

Charles Ryder's introduction to Sebastian Flyte is marked by verbal repetition and the use of an adage: two cases of sonic recycling. Sebastian throws up gracefully through Charles's window, by which he has drunkenly wandered. Sebastian's host returns to apologize to Charles. His "explanations [are] repetitive" and close with the use of an adage: "To understand all is to forgive all" (29-30). This event launches Charles and Sebastian's friendship, and for Charles, the entrance to a charming world where nothing new seems to be said, where characters are ever-borrowing the words of others.

When Sebastian pretends to go hunting at Brideshead but instead escapes to South Twining for a bout of drinking, Cornelia says that Sebastian is "in disgrace" and "the words, in that clear, child's voice, had the ring of a bell tolling" for Charles (170). They are loaded, they echo, for he has heard them so many times before, and this is true for much of the Flyte family's dialogue. Waugh draws our attention to this axiomatic repetition, which suggests that he intends for these echoes to reverberate in the mind of his readers as well. Sebastian writes playfully to Charles during their Long Vacation that he is "mourning for [his] lost innocence. It never looked like living. The doctors despaired of it from the start" (72). Julia describes Sebastian's love of drink as "something chemical in him," which Charles qualifies as "the cant phrase of the time, derived from heaven knows what misconception of popular science" (129). Lady Marchmain, defending her decision that he should live with Monsignor Bell at Oxford, says Sebastian's

continued drinking is “not in the Logic of the Thing” (143). Charles immediately describes this statement as “a phrase she’s picked up from one of her intellectual hangers-on” (143). Julia Flyte speaks in “half sentences, single words, stock phrases of contemporary jargon” (235). As Charles grows intimate with the Flyte family, he assumes these habits of speech. In conversation with Rex Mottram, who refers to Lady Marchmain’s “piling it up” in her last meeting with Charles, Charles responds with a “saying:” “It doesn’t matter what people call you unless they call you pigeon pie and eat you up” (173).

At other times, characters adopt the very words of other characters in the novel; these instances of verbal mosaic are always overt, emphasized by Charles or the speakers themselves. After Charles departs from Brideshead in disgrace for providing Sebastian with the money for alcohol, Cordelia writes to him, letting him know that “Julia’s tortoise disappeared...so there goes a packet (expression of Mr. Mottram’s)” (170). Charles describes Julia and her friends, their classist practice of “[collecting] phrases that damned their user, and among themselves . . . [talking] a language made up of them” (184). Early in the novel, Sebastian says that he “[wishes]” Catholicism were “nonsense” (87). Later, speaking of Catholicism, Charles asks Julia, “You do know it’s all bosh, don’t you?” When she replies, “How I wish it was!” Charles responds, “Sebastian once said almost the same thing to me” (290). In the novel’s epilogue, Charles refers to Brideshead as belonging to “friends of [his]” and remarks that “as [he] said the words they sounded as odd in [his] ears as Sebastian’s had done, when instead of saying “It is my home,” he said, “It is where my family live”” (350).

For some characters, conversation is even a case of rhythmic rearrangement. New phrases recycle the meter, the cadence of earlier phrases. Anthony Blanche speaks in a “luxurious, self taught stammer” so that his speeches in the novel are marked by a continuity of sound (32). Sebastian speaks in “imperatives,” so that his many of his sentences are marked by similar emphatic rhythms. Charles lists examples of these and they are subsequently highlighted for the reader: “I *must* have pillar-box red pyjamas...I *have* to stay in bed until the sun works round to the windows...I’ve absolutely *got* to drink champagne tonight!” (39).

These sounds are rearranged, unoriginal; Anthony Blanche even calls them “[trite]” (56). Still, in the prologue Charles refers to them as “natural” (15). This is because they are “natural” to the realm to which they belong. Pastiche is built *into* the world of charm by Waugh and his

sonic re-assemblage, becomes part of its scaffolding and its frame, because conversation is one of the ways that charming characters and those around them grow close, construct the relationships that give their world its meaning, its figural interactions and bounds.

Brideshead and Bricolage

Pastiche makes up the world of charm in more ways than in relation to sound. The elements of plot that determines the fate of the Flytes—the activities, the architecture that surrounds them, the very names and qualities of the individuals who make up their lives—are also developed by Waugh through this same practice of bricolage.

Robert M. Davis, in *Evelyn Waugh, Writer*, details the pastiche involved in Waugh's own writing process; he describes Waugh's "tendency... to rearrange material" (132). Waugh notes this himself in *A Little Learning*. "The novelist," he writes, "does not come to his desk devoid of experience and memory...his raw material is compounded of all he has seen and done" (106). Charles, in his retrospective narration, draws our attention to the way that beloved and charming things in the world of the Flytes are similarly made up of older materials, mosaics of familiarity and time.

For the Flyte family, and the other characters who belong to them, relationality is recurrence. Sebastian's turn to alcoholism carries the weight of another turn. This is the turning away of his father, Lord Marchmain, from Lady Marchmain, Brideshead, and Catholicism. At the "Easter party at Brideshead," where Sebastian's public drunkenness becomes "the first step in the flight from his family which brought him to ruin," Lady Marchmain remarks, "it's all happened before" (129, 136). "I've been through it all before with someone else whom I loved," she confides in Charles, "...the *running away*—*he* ran away too, you know" (137).

Julia is Sebastian transfigured, emotionally and physically. When they first meet, Charles is "confused by the double illusion of familiarity and strangeness" in her figure: "Her dark hair [is] scarcely longer than Sebastian's, and it [blows] back from her forehead as his [does]; her eyes on the darkling road [are] his, but larger, her painted mouth [is] less friendly to the world" (76). Charles's love for Sebastian is a kind of re-expression of Anthony Blanche's love for "Stefanie de Vincennes," with whom he formerly "besotted...crawling with love like lice" (52). Charles's daughter is named Caroline, after himself (230).

Architecturally and aesthetically, what draws Charles is the ancient, the rearranged, the absorptive. He “[loves] buildings that grew silently with the centuries, catching and keeping the best of each generation, while time curbed the artist’s pride and the Philistine’s vulgarity, and repaired the clumsiness of the dull workman” (226). At Brideshead, where Charles experiences his “conversion to the Baroque,” pastiche is the primary aesthetic motif, “from the Soanesque library to the Chinese drawing-room, adazzle with gilt pagodas and nodding mandarins, painted paper and Chippendale fret-work, from the Pompeian parlor to the great tapestry-hung hall which [stands] unchanged” (82, 80). Brideshead, the symbol for the Flytes and their Catholicism in the novel, is a new house built out of the very elements of the old. It was once a “castle a mile away, down by the village” (79). The Marchmains “took a fancy to the valley and pulled the castle down, carted the stones up [to the valley] and built a new house” (79).

The fountain on the terrace in Brideshead “was, indeed, found [in Southern Italy] a century ago by one of Sebastian’s ancestors; found, purchased, imported and re-erected in an alien but welcoming climate” (81). This transcontinental act of incorporation contains even more examples of pastiche; the fountain is “an oval basin within an island of formal rocks at its center; on the rocks [grow] in stone, formal tropical vegetation and wild English ferns” (81). There are “fantastic tropical animals, camels and camelopards and an ebullient lion all vomiting water; on the rocks...[stands] an Egyptian obelisk of red sandstone” (81). This fountain includes in its circular elegance the ancient, the incredible, the unlikely.

This prevalence of pastiche continues literally, visually, symbolically. Though he calls them worthless, some of Charles’s first drawings are “elaborate little pastiches” (107). Charles comes to know Julia through what amounts to a patchwork of understanding. He “[learns] about Julia, bit by bit, from the stories she [tells], from guesswork, knowing her, from what her friends said, from the odd expressions she now and then let slip, from occasional, dreamy monologues of reminiscences” (183). On the ship to London, Julia and Charles finally become lovers during a storm; in doing so, Charles once again gains access to the “enchanted garden” of charm. Tellingly, pastiche precedes and marks this consummation. Charles, before they have sex, becomes incorporated into the storm that surrounds them, “[making] its rhythm [his]... [becoming] part of [it]” (254). Davis, in *Evelyn Waugh, Writer*, cites critical work on earlier versions of the *Brideshead Revisited* and the changes Waugh made in this scene, eliminating

rather obvious suggestions that Ryder is becoming “carnally incorporated into the magic circle of Brideshead” through this sexual act (183).

Theatricality, Performance, and the Capacity for Pastiche in Grace-Building

Pastiche is the mode Waugh uses to build the world of the Flytes in *Brideshead Revisited*—the world of charm—and he uses formal elements to clue his readers into this process of composition. What does this imply about the world of grace? Is it built through pastiche as well? Waugh uses a motif of theatricality and performance throughout his novel to suggest that building the world of grace can involve this same process of recycling and rearrangement.

Theatricality is pastiche, in the sense that the lines and stage directions of a character are absorbed into the speech and the physicality of an actor. These same lines and stage directions are then rearranged, reassembled and modulated in the performance of new actors as time passes.

Theatre seems originally to be the province of the charming in *Brideshead Revisited*. The characters are always performing; this is made clear through Waugh’s use of diction. After speaking with Lady Marchmain at the tail end of the disastrous Easter Party, Charles asks himself if she had “rehearsed all the interview?” beforehand (138). Julia’s engagement to Mr. Mottram is a “scene” (187). When Julia and Charles are on the boat to England, she asks him “What is it about being on a boat that makes everyone behave like a film star?” (251). When Julia, Charles, and Celia are “left at the table” at dinner on the ship, Julia says it is “like King Lear...only each of us is all three of them” (248). Incorporation, pastiche, and theatricality here intersect.

Anthony Blanche calls Charles’s “unhealthy” paintings of America simply “English charm, playing tigers” (273). Charles and Celia’s Christmas, their “annual sacrifice,” includes the “parlor games ritually performed” (278). Charles identifies this theatricality when he stands by the fountain at Brideshead with Julia. “It’s like the setting of a comedy,” he says, “...The characters keep assembling at the fountain for no very clear reason” (291).

Waugh, however, extends this element of the dramatic to the world of faith and grace. He makes this world its destination. While examples of charming theatricality gain momentum throughout the novel, they lead ultimately to a single event and climax. This is Lord

Marchmain's conversion, and thus the conversion of Charles himself. The rituals of Catholicism are a kind of pastiche, a performance of existing prayers, signs, even movements of the body, repetition of lines from Scripture, all thousands of years old. Catholicism depends upon the recycling and the refashioning of the ancient by progressively new players. In the novel's epilogue, Charles describes Brideshead's art-nouveau chapel, its "small red flame...relit before the beaten-copper doors of a tabernacle; the flame which the old knights saw from their tombs, which they saw put out; that flame burns again for other soldiers, farther, in heart, than Acre or Jerusalem" (351).

While kneeling beside Lord Marchmain's deathbed and praying, Charles reflects on the fact that "all over the world people [are] on their knees before innumerable crosses, and here the drama [is] being played again by two men...the universal drama in which there is only one actor" (338). Theatricality both inspires and then marks Charles's conversion. Lord Marchmain's conversion happens *through* the "sign of the cross," the performance of an ancient motion. It brings to mind for Charles a passage from Scripture, that of "the veil of the temple being rent from top to bottom" (339). It spurs him to recall and repeat, at least mentally, this "phrase"—a *line*. Charles finally "understand[s]" (341). *Brideshead Revisited* is about Catholicism, and in the words of Charles, it is a "fierce little human *tragedy*" (351; emphasis added).

The motif of theatricality in *Brideshead Revisited* highlights that grace is perpetuated through pastiche, and the figure of Anthony Blanche in the novel—Charles and Sebastian's friend in Oxford—suggests that the elements available for this bricolage extend beyond prayers, gestures, lines of scripture. Grace has the capacity to incorporate elements of charm and the happiness associated with it, even when this charm or happiness is marked by profanity.

Throughout *Brideshead Revisited*, Anthony Blanche represents both the world of charm and the propensity charm has to verge on the profane. He is associated with the world of charm not only because of his friendship with Sebastian but also because of the extent to which his personality and persona engage in pastiche. His speech, as I have argued before, is sonically consistent. He also draws from the world of fashionable literary allusions in conversation, including Eliot's *The Waste Land* (33). He "[reverts]" back to the same "[incidents]" when speaking; he uses the phrase "my dear" incessantly; he references a former lover, "Stefanie de Vincennes," constantly (52).

Blanche performs the role of the “aesthete”: Charles’s first description of Anthony Blanche is both dramatic and focuses on drama (32). He is “the last guest” arriving at a party in Sebastian’s rooms; he is “caricaturing the guests at his previous luncheon; telling lubricious anecdotes...and doing more than entertain—transfiguring the party...so that three prosaic Etonians seemed suddenly to become creatures of his fancy” (32). Blanche’s conversation is a performance, a series of “polished exhibitions” before which there is always an audience: at the George bar with Charles, he remarks, “*How* the students stare!” (46, 47).

Theatricality connects Blanche to the pastiche of both charm and faith; it also renders Blanche profane in the world of Catholicism. In “Camp and the Gay Sensibility,” Jack Babuscio defines “the gay sensibility” as “reflecting a consciousness...colored, shaped, directed, and defined by the fact of one’s gayness” (19). The “four features...basic to camp” are “irony, aestheticism, theatricality, and humor” (20). Blanche is bisexual, a sexuality rejected by the Catholic Church, and his performance of the “aesthete” is partially a performance of his sexuality. Close-reading a scene featuring Blanche reveals the ways that Waugh resists the idea that “profane” things, like Blanche’s camp, should be excluded from the world of grace.

At dinner with Charles, Blanche describes an encounter with a “naughty” group of “undergraduates” who appear at his dorm, wanting to “put him in Mercury,” a fountain in Christ Church College, in a tradition of targeting and mocking aesthetes. He accompanies these “dear louts” and “[gets] in” (50).

This fountain carries symbolic weight in *Brideshead*. It invokes another fountain, the fountain at Brideshead, which symbolizes the complicated continuity of Catholicism and thus the world of grace. Ryder’s “conversion to the Baroque,” the first step in his ultimate conversion to Catholicism, happens partly because of those hours he spends “before the fountain, probing its shadows, tracing its lingering echoes, rejoicing in all clustered feats of daring and invention” (82). Charles’s relationships with the Catholic Julia and Sebastian—which ultimately lead him to Catholicism—involve constant “assembling at the fountain for no very clear reason” (291). The fountain is the locus of the Catholic house and the locus of the novel’s relationships, all of which lead Charles to Catholicism. The fountain thus becomes the locus of grace itself in the novel: Julia Flyte leaves Ryder for her faith, and the fountain is a “tender spot” with her for all its mixed associations of love, loss, sin and sanctity (347).

At the conclusion of the novel, during the war, the fountain “looks a bit untidy” for there is “wire round it” and it has been shut off (347). This is done so that the fountain can be preserved. In *The Loss of Traditional Values and Continuance of Faith in Evelyn Waugh’s Novels: A Handful of Dust, Brideshead Revisited, and Sword of Honor*, Wirth calls the fountain a symbol for the “return of Brideshead Castle to its ancient faith, Catholicism, the religion which predominated in England up until the Reformation” (94). It is also a symbol for the way that grace moves forward in the world in complicated ways, enmeshed with elements not always entirely pure. The fountain survives at the conclusion of *Brideshead Revisited*, but it is also full of “cigarette-ends and the remains of...[soldiers’] sandwiches” and of course its wild animals of “[sporting]” stone (347, 81).

Waugh uses diction to link the theatricality of these animals to the scene in which Blanche climbs into the Mercury Fountain at Oxford. Like the “fantastic tropical animals” and the “Egyptian obelisk of red sandstone,” Blanche, in his respective fountain, “[sports]... a little and [strikes] some attitudes (50; emphasis added). Blanche is *like* these wild and exotic animals. He is *like* the fountain’s later “cigarette-ends” and “sandwiches” (347). His sexuality and his theatricality, intimately related, are profanities incorporated into the circle of grace in the same mode of pastiche Waugh uses to compose the Flyte family’s world of charm. At one point in the novel, Lady Marchmain calls the “gospel...a catalogue of unexpected things” (127). “Animals are always doing the oddest things in the lives of the saints,” she says, “It’s all part of the poetry, the Alice-in-Wonderland side, of religion” (127).

It is this “Alice-in-Wonderland side” of the world of grace that Waugh is exploring in *Brideshead Revisited*: the capacity that a life of faith has to rearrange and include the “[poetic]” and the beautiful in its construction, even when those things are associated with sin or charm, like Blanche, instead of spirituality. Waugh shows us that not only is the world of grace composed like the world of charm, but also that this same composition can actually *include* charm as one of the elements of this bricolage. Grace can incorporate even elements of the profane in the bounds and the embrace of religion. Examining Ryder’s failure to build a life of faith marked by such pastiche makes clear Waugh’s own resistance to narratives of sacrifice in conversion. Waugh becomes theologically open-minded, rather than “harsh.”

Charles Ryder, Waugh, and Unnecessary Sacrifice

Exploring Waugh's use of metafiction—his choice to lay out formal signposts throughout *Brideshead* that point to the modes and models he uses to build his fictional worlds—culminates in a question: Does Charles Ryder use pastiche to build his life of grace and faith? He does not. Charles's conversion is marked by loss and sacrifice, rather than inclusion and incorporation of what has come before. This is in tension with the efforts Waugh makes in the text to demonstrate that the fashioning of grace and faith is compatible with pastiche; it is to this tension that my critical eye is drawn, for I believe it elucidates Waugh's own religious positioning in the novel.

What does Charles Ryder give up on the way to a religious life? He gives up Sebastian, Julia, charm in its entirety. He also gives up all the human happiness associated with these people and objects. In the novel's prologue and epilogue, the image we have of Charles's life is one of barrenness, despite the fact that he has converted to Catholicism. "Love [has] died between [him] and the army" (3). He's "never built anything" and he has "forfeited the right to watch [his] son grow up" (350). He is "homeless, childless, middle-aged, loveless" (350). He hears that "Lady Julia Flyte" is "abroad in some women's service" (346). Sebastian is in a "monastery near Carthage," living in service of others (303). Charles has traded the happiness associated with these figures for a life of faith, which Waugh assigns its own form of contentment. At the conclusion of Waugh's epilogue, the thought of the "small red flame" of Catholicism "burning anew among the old stones" makes Charles "unusually cheerful," and walk "more briskly to [his] camp" (351).

Many of Waugh's critics consider this "cheerful[ness]" a compensation for what Charles has lost, a Neoplatonic passage from material happiness to a greater, sacred one. In *Brideshead Revisited: The Past Redeemed*, Davis calls this gesture to "[cheer]" a sign that Charles feels the "same deep joy" he experiences with the Flytes when he finds this "permanent refuge that has lost its power to charm" (303). Pruffer claims that out of Charles's "emptiness comes a new fullness, which is more than the original, more than the destroyed fullness" (286). I find these arguments unconvincing. Waugh is a master of style: the disparity in register between the "cheer" of this grace and the happiness of charm in the novel is not accidental.

When it comes to Charles's experiences with the Flyte family, "cheer" pales in comparison to Waugh's descriptions of a joy that is intense, "heavenly," Edenic. One of the first scenes that feature Charles and Sebastian together showcase the pair on their way to visit

Brideshead on a “day of peculiar splendor” (21). They “seek...shade...on a sheep-cropped knoll under a clump of elms” (24). “Sebastian’s eyes [are] on the leaves above him” while “[Charles’s][are] on his profile” and the “fumes of the sweet, golden wine seemed to lift [them] a finger’s breadth above the turf and hold [them] suspended” (24). Here is where Charles remains throughout the course of his relationship with the Flyte family: in a state of elevation, high above life’s banalities in an excess of happiness and aesthetic beauty.

When Charles visits Sebastian at Brideshead in August, he feels “a sense of liberation and peace such as [he] was to know years later, when, after a night of unrest, the sirens sounded the All Clear” (78). For Charles, “those languid days at Brideshead” are “very near heaven” (79). The “sun [stands] still in the heavens and the earth [throbs] to [their] own pulse” (79). Scenes between Charles and Sebastian are idyllic, recalled hungrily in the present tense by Charles so that their joy is proximate to the reader. There is Sebastian “in his wheel-chair spinning down the box-edged walks of the kitchen gardens in search of alpine strawberries and warm figs, propelling himself through the succession of hothouses, from scent to scent and climate to climate, to...choose orchids for [their] buttonholes” (80). There is Sebastian, again, “sitting beside [Charles] on the thread-bare, flowered carpet with the toy-cupboard empty about [them] and Nanny Hawkins stitching complacently in the corner” (80). The two sip wine, sit “drunkenly” beside Brideshead’s fountain; they live and they love fantastically. Their time in Venice is so lush, so ripe that it becomes a “confused memory” for Charles of “fierce sunlight on the sands and cool, marble interiors; of water, everywhere...reflected in a dapple of light on painted ceilings” (101). The pair spend a “Byronic night fishing for scampi in the shallows of Chioggia” (101). They wake up to “melon and *prosciutto* on the balcony in the cool of the morning” (101).

Charles’s time with Julia is joyful too. He hears stories of Julia’s childhood on the ship when they first fall in love; through these he “[lives] long, sunny days with her in the meadows...[sleeps] quiet nights under the dome with the religious pictures fading around the cot” (257). Their time together in Brideshead is material “peace:” they have “got their happiness in spite of [all mankind, and God, too]” (279). Before Julia’s religious guilt really arises, their evenings are “tranquil, lime-scented” (276). Waugh again offers us images of the idyllic: we see Julia sitting “on the rim of the fountain...in a tight little gold tunic and a white gown, one hand in

the water idly turning an emerald ring to catch the fire of the sunset; the carved animals mounted over her dark head in a cumulus of green moss and glowing stone and dense shadow” (277).

How can the “cheer” of Catholicism not seem terribly pedestrian when juxtaposed by the totality of all this joy?⁵ How can it compensate for its loss—a loss so awesome that Charles seems unable to properly express it in his narration? When Sebastian first gets drunk before his family at the Easter Party at Brideshead, the real beginning of the alcoholism that leads Charles to lose him, he “[weeps]” to Charles, “Why do you take their side against me? I knew you would if I let you meet them. Why do you spy on me?” (134). Charles claims that Sebastian “[says] more than [he] can bear to remember, even at twenty years’ distance” (134). Charles’s break with Julia carries with it the same sense of being beyond our reach: Waugh offers his readers only a few “broken sentences” (339). Even for us, the spectators, Charles’s pain carries with it the gravitas, the weight, of the unendurable.

Brideshead Revisited tells the story of a conversion, but it *feels* like a tragedy. Some critics identify this as the crux of meaning in the novel, transforming *Brideshead Revisited* into a story about the necessity of sacrifice in Catholicism.⁶ In *The Life of Evelyn Waugh: A Critical Biography*, Patey argues that the novel’s “final scenes of destruction and renunciation suggest less a transition to “God’s better beauty” than a stark conviction of the *truth* of faith” and its inherent cruelty (244). In *Picturesque Prison*, Heath writes that for Waugh, “personal happiness” must be “[subordinated]” through grace to the “divine purpose” (182).

⁵ In his 1945 preface to the novel, his “Warning,” Waugh tries to account for the intensity of these scenes between Charles and the Flyte family. He attributes its “gluttony, for food and wine, for the splendors of the recent past, and for rhetorical and ornamental language,” to the fact that it was written during the course of the war, when it “seemed...that the ancestral seats which were our chief national artistic achievement were doomed to decay.” He accordingly “piled it on.” Waugh’s explanation of his style as a mere response to the privations of war is too reductive to be fully believed. What Charles has sacrificed is not the opulence of pre-war charm, but the joy of Sebastian and Julia, his “forerunners.” The “silk shirts and liqueurs and cigars,” all symbols of pre-war wealth, are only important to Charles because they are the “toys” of the “happy childhood” that is his love of the Flytes: they are mere accessories (*BR* 45).

⁶ Other critics, however, point to Waugh’s style throughout the novel as a representation of his own mixed feelings about youth. Auty, in “Language and Charm in *Brideshead Revisited*,” calls Waugh’s “imagery and...elegiac suggestions of impending tragedy” a sign of his “ambivalence,” his “simultaneous celebration and rejection of the world’s charm” (291). Heath also signals this ambivalence in *Picturesque Prison*, writing, “We encounter a central contradiction in Waugh: even while attacking immaturity, Waugh loved it: he advocated growth and responsibility, but it would be idle to argue that he did not at the same time resent the repressive adult world as stodgy, boring...unstylish” (9).

My own architectural analysis of *Brideshead Revisited* highlights what these critics miss. Ryder is not unhappy at the end of his conversion because that is what conversion demands. He is unhappy because he has converted—he has built his own world of grace—*incorrectly*. He has failed at pastiche, the mode of incorporation and rearrangement Waugh has metafictionally stressed throughout the novel. He has treated his “forerunners” as tools of utility rather than elements of the past worthy of inclusion.

Waugh puts up possible avenues of pastiche for Charles that, if taken, would have allowed Charles to incorporate the happiness of charm and “forerunners” into his new life of grace. This would have been a process of rearrangement and pastiche in the sense that his relationships with Julia and Sebastian would have to have undergone changes in order to be doctrinally correct and consistent with his religious beliefs.

Examining Waugh’s own life highlights two ways that Charles’s relationship with Julia is salvageable both after Charles’s conversion and Julia’s return to the Church. In *Evelyn Waugh: The Later Years*, Martin Stannard describes Waugh’s love for a “Catholic girl, Olivia Plunket Greene” after he “left his first post in North Wales” (xviii). While Waugh’s love was one-sided and Charles’s love for Julia is not, Olivia is one of the many women after which Julia Flyte was modeled. In *Picturesque Prison*, Heath writes that the “Plunket-Greenes... in the sense that Waugh loved them all, correspond to the Flytes” (179). Heath adds, “Like Lady Marchmain, Gwen Plunket-Greene was separated from her husband; Waugh was a good friend of her son Richard, whose sister Olivia became the focus of Waugh’s love and then rejected it” (179). Here Olivia and Julia’s paths diverge. Julia is gone from Charles’s life after the end of their relationship, even after he converts to Catholicism—the religion for which Julia left Charles. Contrastingly, years later, in 1930, after Waugh’s divorce, Olivia and Waugh were still close, although her role in his life had been transformed. In *Evelyn Waugh: A Literary Life*, David Wykes cites an entry in Waugh’s diary from Wednesday, 2 July 1930 (73). Waugh writes “To tea...with Olivia [Plunket Greene]. I said would she please find a Jesuit to instruct me.” Olivia becomes a key player in Waugh’s conversion, a role Julia could very well have taken on for Charles.

Waugh’s life features another example for a way that Julia could have been included in the life of Charles’s even after he achieves grace. Waugh, like Charles and Julia, was divorced

from his first wife, Evelyn Gardner. They married in June of 1928, and she was unfaithful and they divorced in September of 1929 (Patey 37, 41). Waugh converted to Catholicism a year later, and joined the Church in September of 1930 (Patey 35). Instead of remaining single for the rest of his life, for the Catholic Church does not recognize divorce, Waugh sought to have his first marriage annulled; an annulment was granted in July of 1936 (Patey 151). He was married to his second wife, Laura Herbert, in April 1937 (Patey 151). Julia left Charles because “starting a life with [Charles]—that is, continuing to “live in sin” with Charles, or marrying him outside of the Church as a divorced woman—would be a life “without Him” (285, 340). Annulment, a case of legal rearrangement, would have resolved this terrible dilemma.

The relationship between Charles and Sebastian draws from a tradition of literature in which gay lovers in Oxford continue their relationship after the University in new forms. Patey describes the resemblance between Sebastian and Julia, remarking, “Such resemblance of brother and sister was in fact common in a class of tales about young men coming to maturity, which Paul Ruccio has shown, provided an important source for *Brideshead*: the school novel” (227). Patey claims that these stories were intended to “teach Thomas Arnold’s doctrine that the ‘friendships’ formed among boys in youth ‘may be part of the business of eternity’” (227). In these stories, “often the schoolboy hero visits the sickroom of his closest friend, and eventually meets his family...especially his sister, whose physical resemblance to an already admired brother helps draw the hero from friendship to mature love and marriage” (227). Patey cites a passage from J.E.C. Welldon’s *Gerald Eversley’s Friendship* (1895) wherein the title character “reflects” on the “sister of his school chum Harry,” concluding that “to be linked to her was to be linked to him, to him perpetually...the old schoolboy friendship would be consolidated, nay it would be sanctified by a deeper and holier sympathy” (227).

Here is a clear avenue available to Charles for keeping Sebastian in his life as a Catholic: marriage to Julia, which Charles approximates but never achieves. Charles doubly fails to follow this model to which Waugh gestures. Not only is Charles unable to marry Julia, despite loving her, he also fails to keep Sebastian close for the time he *is* with Julia. Sebastian is instead with Kurt, and then in a monastery near Carthage.

Waugh’s autobiographical and literary allusions emphasize the unexplored availability of happiness through rearrangement or pastiche in Charles’s life. *Brideshead Revisited* is not about

“forerunners” who lead Charles to grace and then must be let go; *Brideshead Revisited* is not about the necessity of sacrificing happiness in conversion. *Brideshead Revisited* is about the errors that Charles Ryder makes in world-building and the needless tragedy that arises as a result, all of which becomes illuminated by looking at Waugh’s own authorial architecture.

Conclusion

In *Picturesque Prison*, Heath describes Waugh’s writings on architecture, his tendency to “[seek]...(within the classical canons of harmony and proportion) the unusual and the singular” (41). The same could be said about Waugh’s orientation towards religion in general. Waugh’s treatment of Catholicism in *Brideshead Revisited*, despite the opinion of many critics, is broad and generous. He argues for modes of faith composition that privilege inclusion over loss, that fuse human happiness with the contentment that comes from grace. He does so through metafiction, and through a character whose own conversion follows an alternate course of faith construction with tragic results.

What does it look like when someone converts to Catholicism, but includes beloved elements of a former life through pastiche? There is, of course, Waugh, who like Charles had gay love affairs in Oxford. Even as a Catholic, Waugh managed to integrate threads of gay camp and its associations with stylistic performance into his daily life. In *Evelyn Waugh: The Later Years*, Stannard details how “the dandy in [Waugh] was only suppressed during periods of melancholia...in May 1942 his anticipation of happiness did not focus on the birth of his fourth child but on long hair, a watch-chain, new regimentals, and a length of ghastly tweed to make up a suit for Laura [his wife]” (67). In *The Life of Evelyn Waugh*, Patey claims that “throughout his life [Waugh] maintained affectionate friendships with various” gay men (241).

There is also Sebastian. He, like Charles, arrives at grace through a forerunner, although his forerunner is alcohol. Alcohol leads him to abandon his family, and find Kurt, the “gruesome,” wounded German for whom he comes to care (306). Sebastian comes to understand that “as long as he [has] Kurt to look after, he [is] happy” (306). When Kurt dies, Sebastian “[turns] up” at a monastery in Carthage, asking to become a missionary, to serve “the simplest people...the cannibals...lepers” (304-305). Sebastian’s return to religion happens in the context

of selflessness; alcohol leads him to understand his purpose, or his calling.⁷ Just as Charles's love for Sebastian and Julia lead to his faith in God, Sebastian's love of alcohol leads ultimately to his love for caring for others, which in turn restores Sebastian's relationship with the divine.

The trajectories of Charles and Sebastian differ in two ways. Sebastian keeps his "forerunner" in his life after his conversion, while Charles does not, and Sebastian, at the conclusion of the novel, has a life that is happier than the life of Charles. Sebastian, working as an "under-porter" in the monastery, "keeps a bottle and takes a swig now and then on the sly" (308). While Charles's life is admittedly empty at the end of *Brideshead Revisited*, Sebastian has found his own, peculiar kind of fulfillment. Cordelia predicts that he will become a "familiar figure pottering round [the monastery]" (308). She continues: "If he lives long enough...missionaries in all kinds of remote places will ... remember him in their masses" (309). She offers even an image of his death: "Then one morning...he'll be picked up at the gate dying, and show by a mere flicker of the eyelid that he is conscious when they give him the last sacraments" (309). Cordelia concludes, "It's not such a bad way of getting through one's life" (309). It is odd, but at the end of *Brideshead Revisited*, I am not sure I can say the same about the lifestyle of Charles Ryder.

Perhaps my paper is best concluded by looking back at a particular moment in *Brideshead Revisited* in which Waugh sketches out for his readers just what it would have been like if Charles Ryder had gone to seek out Sebastian after his conversion.

In Charles's first year at Oxford, he passes through crowds of "church-goers" heading to "St. Barnabas, St. Columba, St. Aloysius, St. Mary's, Pusey House...and heaven knows where besides" on the way to Sebastian's rooms on the "last Sunday of the term" (58-59). There is the sound of "the single chime, which warned the city that service was about to start" (59). He passes the Mayor, "in procession to the preaching at the City Church" and a "crocodile of choir-boys... on the way to Tome Gate and the Cathedral" (60). "So through a world of piety," Charles says, "I made my way to Sebastian" (60). Thinking back to the relationship between Charles and Sebastian – the tenderness of Charles's eyes on "Sebastian's profile" in the shade of elm trees, the beauty of their time together in Venice, backlit by the "phosphorescent wake" of their "little

⁷ Heath makes a similar claim in *Picturesque Prison*, 177.

ship” for night fishing—makes me wish that this statement were true (24, 101). I would hazard a guess that Waugh felt similarly.

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Waugh and the Profession¹

Robert Murray Davis

Evelyn Waugh to Laura on three versions of *Brideshead*:

“you may, must study them to see the changes.”

My invitation to speak at this symposium said that I might discuss first, “how the academic environment has evolved” and second, “whether responses to the challenges faced by the humanities that have emerged during the course of my career have been encouraging or inadequate.” After a little reflection I realized that, like the elder Plant in *Work Suspended*, “I am a Dodo.” Both my research and the challenges facing the profession can be understood by comparing the demographic, political, and economic factors that influenced me with those affecting my successors.

I was born in the American Dust Bowl in 1934 during a period when the birth rate was at a low not surpassed until the mid-1960s. After World War II, the economic boom in general and the GI Bill in particular led Americans who earlier would not have considered sending their children to college to regard it as not just possible but inevitable. And graduate study followed, modestly, a similar trend.

By the time I went to graduate school, 1955—and in my limited experience, more of my cadre were doing so than our predecessors—we were in a seller’s market because universities needed teaching assistants, especially in English departments, to deal with a growing number of undergraduates.

I went on the job market at the Modern Language Association meeting in December, 1961, and had fourteen pre-arranged interviews—a number now almost inconceivable for anyone who isn’t a star, and I was no star. The interviewer from Wayne State said that I could have an instructorship if I wanted it, but that I wouldn’t want it.

¹ Initially presented at the Evelyn Waugh Conference at The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, in May 2017.

Years later, at my urging, the English department at Oklahoma began to hire instructors on term appointments to provide temporary refuge for a few of the many Ph.D.'s who could not find tenure-track jobs. One of my colleagues protested that the very rank of instructor was immoral. I replied that it had temporarily disappeared in the 1960s and was now re-emerging for reasons that were political and economic—when any tenure-line job advertisement would draw four hundred responses—and surely a Marxist should understand that.

This was after the Denver MLA conference of 1969, the humanities' equivalent of Wall Street's Black Tuesday of 1929. Leaders of the profession, ignoring demographics and common sense, had been urging the streamlining of existing graduate programs and the founding of new ones to produce more and more Ph.D.'s to fill jobs that suddenly weren't there.

I had a job, but it began to look that in writing about Waugh, I had backed the wrong horse. That was the implication in Walter Sullivan's review of my *Evelyn Waugh, Writer*, in which he said that I had been writing about Waugh when there wasn't any money in it. He was wrong to imply that there ever has been any, or much. However, if he meant that the literary and scholarly worlds by and large regarded Waugh as unworthy of serious attention, he was, like Sir Joseph Mainwaring in *Put out More Flags*, "bang right."

Younger generations, accustomed to praise of Waugh, at least in the popular press, as a master stylist and one of the most important English novelists of the twentieth century, may find this difficult to believe. But when I began my scholarly career, writing about Waugh was like swimming against a very powerful stream. A good example of what Waugh enthusiasts were up against is Steven Marcus's "Evelyn Waugh and the Art of Entertainment," published in *Partisan Review*, a citadel of high seriousness. He'd studied with Lionel Trilling and F. R. Leavis and was a Freudian besides. He confessed to enjoying Waugh's novels but seemed to feel a little guilty because they were funny.

Others dismissed Waugh on the grounds of his political and social views, or because of his Catholicism, which emerged in *Brideshead Revisited* and horrified Edmund Wilson, who had praised the early, seemingly anarchic novels from *Decline and Fall* up through *Put Out More Flags*.

I didn't know any of this when I read my first Waugh novel—*The Loved One*— to review it in order to get out of writing a term paper for a Milton course. Another professor said later, “When I knew what you had chosen, I knew you'd win.”

He was right. The novel appealed to me partly because, although Waugh had been certified as a leading Catholic writer in those days of Catholic cultural ghettoization, his novel showed no obvious signs that his religious views affected the book. I don't know what would have happened had my first encounter been with *Brideshead Revisited*. Probably the Oxford scenes would have been too rich for a young man living in Spartan conditions and eating even more Spartan food; the Catholicism too overt for someone raised with lots of sexual guilt; and the style at times too William Bootish and feather-footed for someone planning to be a newspaperman rather than a journalist. At any rate, I put Waugh aside.

Until 1958, when a Conrad seminar was cancelled several weeks into the semester, and each student was asked to submit the name of a writer they'd like to work on. I was lucky to be assigned to Ricardo Quintana, author of *The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift*, even though he gave me almost no direction and no feedback on the lengthy paper I produced. But he seemed not to regard Waugh as minor, and he showed my paper to professors who worked in twentieth-century literature, a welcome boost for someone who had heretofore been faceless in the mob of doctoral candidates.

After I finished my degree and began to try to establish myself as a scholar, Waugh's relative neglect by the academic establishment turned in a way to my advantage because he had received little scholarly attention, and that left me with a great deal to do. I had learned from my study of other writers that it was necessary to have as full a record as possible of publications by and about an author, and from John D. Gordan's *Joseph Conrad: The Making of a Novelist* that study of manuscripts and variant editions could produce insights not accessible to most critical approaches then available. I didn't know how to get access to manuscripts and other materials of the kind that Gordan had used, but I'd already compared, with the help of my then wife, a Penguin edition of *Brideshead*, based on the 1945 first edition, with the 1960 revision and could see that there was a great deal more to say about the effects of the revisions than reviewers had space to do. But it was not until I began work leading up to the volume in the *Complete Works of*

Evelyn Waugh, in progress more than half a century later, did I realize how much more there was.

In the meantime, judging from reactions both inside and outside the academy, it became clear that Waugh's reputation seemed a bit shaky for a would-be scholar to build a career on. In 1966 I was told, as part of my first and last annual review at the University of California, Santa Barbara, that I would have no future there because I worked on minor writers. At the MLA convention in Denver in 1969, I asked Maynard Mack, who had earlier commissioned me to edit a collection of articles on the theory of the novel, about doing a *Twentieth-Century Views* volume on Waugh. He said that there was not enough interest in Waugh to warrant a volume.

About that time I encountered F. Warren Roberts, the director of the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas-Austin. He wanted someone to survey manuscript holdings of American writers in Oklahoma. I figured that these holdings were like Goldsmith's chapter on snakes in Iceland—there weren't any—and at any rate I wanted to catalogue the Waugh collection, recently acquired by the HRC. We agreed on both projects.

Not long after I had accepted the assignment, a colleague at the University of Oklahoma wondered how I could have so much faith in scholarship that I would undertake the task. I wondered, privately, what he thought scholarship involved. (Later he gave up tenure to sell real estate, which in a way answered my question.) I tried to explain that I was being given a five-year lead—this was well before the authorized biography or selections from Waugh's diaries or letters were published—to examine unique materials that could lead to publications far more significant than the catalogue, in effect giving me a way out of the dead end I thought I had reached at the end of the Sixties. But anyone who has enjoyed rummaging through an attic will understand my real motives: anticipation of what I might find, curiosity about someone I knew from a very limited perspective, hope to discover the unexpected.

Most unexpected was the fact that the HRC came to occupy a major place in my scholarly life. I first went to the Center in 1966 in my early thirties; my last visit came in my late seventies. The Center became part of an alternative universe, entirely separate from everyday life of family and colleagues a day's drive to the north.

I discovered that some material is primarily enjoyable in itself, such as the carnation he wore on the day of his marriage to Evelyn Gardner. But a great deal more is crucial, as numerous scholars have since discovered, to understanding the man and his work: all of his surviving diaries and some letters; marginal annotations in books, including advice for embalmers from which he drew details in *The Loved One*; manuscripts of all but two of his novels and some of his non-fiction books. These materials have informed all of the serious scholarship on Waugh since the early 1970s.

When I began to examine the archive, the Humanities Research Center had not moved to its new, monolithic quarters and been re-named the Harry Ransom Center, and the operation was run in so casual and leisurely a fashion that the reading room closed for lunch.

Before very long, I was gratified and a little surprised to find evidence that I had known what I was doing in making earlier speculations about Waugh's inability to identify with other people and his tendency to classify, analyze, separate, and judge. I was fascinated and sometimes touched to see Waugh's habit of ruthless analysis applied to himself. And I was frustrated not only at having to flatten Waugh's barbed and lucid phrases in describing the contents of his letters but also at the impossibility of putting something more succinctly than the most precise and economical writer of his century. One example: Waugh asked his brother "Did H. G. Wells fuck Mrs. Jacobs? I need to know." Try summarizing that.

More somber was my meeting with Cyril Connolly, at the Center for the opening of the exhibit based on his list of important books of the modern movement. As we passed a display case on our way back from lunch, an opened copy of his *The Unquiet Grave* caught his eye—annotated, in severe, almost contemptuous terms, by Evelyn Waugh. Connolly had the copy brought upstairs so that he could go through the whole book, and he was devastated. I tried to console him by pointing out that Waugh was in Yugoslavia surrounded by Communists and drinking bad wine, but my attempts obviously failed. I did wonder why Connolly was that surprised, since Waugh teased him mercilessly for decades.

That was at the old HRC on the fourth floor of the Undergraduate Library. The new and current building was in its original floor plan more forbidding, not least because it sought to

preserve materials in case of fire by including a system that, water being out of the question, would flood the building with a noxious fire-suppressant. That would extinguish not only the fire but all of the patrons and staff. We were assured that the system had been disconnected.

Whatever the technical arrangements, I hated to leave when the reading room closed because I felt a purity of purpose in being able—not forced—to focus on a task which consumed me. Sometimes it was almost overwhelmingly consuming, and I suffered from what one of the authors in the history of the HRC calls “writer’s indigestion” when Warren Roberts informed me that the Center had acquired the files of A. D. Peters, Waugh’s literary agent, amounting to eighteen crammed file boxes.

The Peters files cover the years 1928-1963, the 1,256 items by Waugh a mere fraction of the whole. This extended my task as well as my knowledge considerably. Aesthetically, I came to regard the Peters files as an extraordinarily loose and baggy epistolary/documentary novel, with a central character exhibited in various moods and modes of action.

In a featured role is Augustus Detlof Peters himself, often Sancho to Waugh’s Quixote, sometimes Perry Mason to Waugh as hapless client. He tried to mediate and sometimes intervene between Waugh and those who supplicated for or demanded his services. He exclaimed in pain and horror at Waugh’s desire to buy a painting in which a husband disguised as a priest hears his wife’s confession. He bought cigars and wine for Waugh and helped to consume both. He gave advice on the infrequent occasions when it was asked and advanced money on the many more occasions when it was requested.

There are minor characters with luminous names. The solicitor Wilfred Ariel Evill established the Waugh Trust, which Waugh used as a tax dodge to amass much of the collection which found its way to Texas. Percy A. Popkin tried to handle Waugh’s increasingly complicated taxes. S. Benjamin Fisz hoped to film *Scoop*. Peregrine Worsthorne negotiated with Waugh for a series of articles on India until both got too drunk to remember what they had decided. Zane Gertzman wanted to make *The Loved One* into a musical comedy. Not amusingly named but dickensianly long-suffering was Alex. McLachlan, Waugh’s typist, who sometimes wrote plaintively to Peters about his difficulties with Waugh’s handwriting.

I was delighted to see this material, but I was beginning to wonder if the HRC would ever stop buying more. What I had seen was enough to occupy the next two decades of my career. The personal resources were at least as or more important, for the HRC widened my circle of friends among the staff and the other students of Waugh attracted by the collection. At one point, there were scholars from France, England, and Australia in the reading room—Alain Blayac, Martin Stannard, and Donat Gallagher. Moreover, the presence of people at all stages of their careers working on a variety of projects, not just on Waugh, gave me a sense that I was involved in a larger community.

My work at the HRC brought me into closer contact with others in the nascent group of Waugh scholars. In the early 1960s, as I said, scholarly apparatus for Waugh was rudimentary. Paul A. Doyle and Charles E. Linck, Jr. had published brief bibliographies, crucial to me for my dissertation and for the articles that followed, but like all bibliographies, they were obsolete before they were printed. But I had neither the knowledge nor the means to supplement them.

Then, not long after I began cataloguing the collection at the HRC, Stephen Goode of Whitston Publishing Company wrote to ask if I had enough material to expand into a book the Ronald Firbank checklist I had published earlier. No, I said, but I could certainly, with help, produce enough for the first book-length bibliography of Waugh.

In fact, even with the help of the HRC, I couldn't, but by this time I knew people who could. Charles had put me in touch with Paul, founder of the Evelyn Waugh Newsletter, prudently after the death of Waugh. Over the years Paul provided crucial information and loaned me rare books while supporting the *Newsletter* out of his own pocket. He and Linck, along with Heinz Kosok, who concentrated on secondary material, were the most obvious and richest sources of material, and together we produced in 1972 the *Checklist* of works by and about Waugh.

The *Checklist* drew the attention of a Canadian, Winnifred Bogaards, and of an Australian, Donat Gallagher, and they helped to produce the *Bibliography of Evelyn Waugh*, which appeared fourteen years later. The resulting book, which Alexander Waugh has been generous enough to regard as “the Bible,” was more than twice as long as the *Checklist*, not

merely because of the fifteen additional years of secondary material but because Gallagher had discovered 240 new items by Waugh and the Canadian scholar Margaret Morriss had found over 1,000 additional items about Waugh published within the span covered by the *Checklist*.

Getting and organizing the material laid the groundwork for my *Evelyn Waugh, Writer*. The manuscript faced considerable obstacles. Depending upon detailed analysis of manuscript and other material, it makes for rather dense reading. But a reader for Princeton University Press praised it without any reservations that I can remember, and I was elated—until the editorial board voted it down because they didn't want to publish anything about Waugh. Someone at the Press advised me to send the manuscript to the University of North Carolina Press, which, in the grand tradition of academic presses, dithered for months before returning the manuscript.

At that point I seemed to have run out of options. But a senior colleague, Paul Ruggiers, a man of boundless energy, was in the early stages of organizing the Chaucer Variorum, and as a sideline had started Pilgrim Books, for which he was seeking material. He asked to see the manuscript, agreed to publish it, saw it through editing and publication, and sent out review copies to leading journals in England and America.

The timing of publication, like so much else in my association with Waugh, was fortunate. Interest in him as a character, if not as a writer, began to develop in the mid-1970s, first with Christopher Sykes's authorized biography. That and subsequent biographies tend to portray Waugh as barely human, if no less fascinating on that account. The blackening of Waugh's character turned attention from the work to the man. As a result, the writer got lost in the gossip, much of it scurrilous and not a little of it misinformed. *Evelyn Waugh, Writer*, in its own modest way, at least tried to focus on Waugh as artist.

Some of these biographies were published by major commercial presses on both sides of the Atlantic. Donat Gallagher, who has been chasing down and trying to correct errors of fact and emphasis for decades, has finally been able to get his findings into hard cover in *In the Picture: The Facts behind the Fiction in Evelyn Waugh's Sword of Honour*, in collaboration with Carlos Villar Flor.

Gallagher drew upon archival evidence, much of it not previously available. However, it seems unlikely to change many minds, even among self-styled scholars. It was issued by a small and specialized academic press. An independent researcher at work on a book about Waugh in World War II, after being told that he must consult this book or be out of date before he began, replied that he could not afford it and apparently had no intention of seeking out a copy. Another writer, more or less aware of Gallagher's arguments, said that he would rather trust Anthony Beevor, whom Gallagher refutes point by point, because he had a sterling reputation. Besides, as the scholar does not say, Gallagher and a number of other experts are only colonials, or descendants of colonials, so what can they possibly have to say of interest?

Still, fugitive and previously unpublished work by Waugh continues to focus attention on a man far more complex than journalists and some biographers have been able to perceive. Donat Gallagher had in 1977 published a brief selection of Waugh's nonfiction in *A Little Order: A Selection from His Journalism*, and the book was widely reviewed. But six years later the volume's successor, *Essays, Articles and Reviews of Evelyn Waugh*, gave evidence of a major shift in Waugh's reputation. The range of the volume was important, but so were Gallagher's commentaries, the result of long and careful attention to Waugh's place in social and intellectual history. Figures are sometimes a poor indication of significance, but the publishers allowed Gallagher to expand from the fifty-five items in just under 200 pages in *Order* to 237 items and 662 pages in *Essays*. Now Gallagher is preparing four volumes of Waugh's fugitive nonfiction for the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh*.

A different and probably unwelcome kind of attention came in the early 1980s from the television series based on *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh's best-known and in some ways least-characteristic novel. One major theme of the book is the need to redeem the times—not just the present, the bleak condition of England during World War II, but also the glamorous past at Oxford and the world of the aristocracy.

Waugh's readers were not entirely to blame for largely ignoring this theme, since, as he confessed in the preface to the 1960 revision, "the book is infused with a kind of gluttony, for food and wine, for the splendours of the recent past, and for rhetorical and ornamental

language....” But the teddy-bear craze that followed the television production ignored Waugh’s emphasis on the dangers of being in love with one’s own childhood.

It’s arguable that the television series made it easier to publish on *Brideshead* and perhaps more broadly on Waugh. For example, absent the aid of television, it seems highly unlikely that Twayne would have thought of commissioning my study of the novel for its Masterwork Series. And while it’s hard to fathom the motives of a committee, it’s possible that the television series had some influence on the decision to fund the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* project.

Work on this edition will provide a capstone to the careers of many of those who have worked on Waugh for years and possibly to others new to Waugh scholarship who bring to the project their expertise in editing. The former is especially true in my case, for in 1968 I published “Notes toward a Variorum *Brideshead*,” a proposal which I never expected to come to fruition in my lifetime, if at all.

Younger scholars who wished to join the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh*, or had the task wished on them, are to an extent insulated from the vagaries of an academic world very different from the one we Dodds moved in. Not everyone is this fortunate. Prophecies about the job market are now grim enough for a naturalist novel. A Google search for “jobs for Humanities Ph.D.’s” turns up only non-academic possibilities.

Aside from the fact that, without the basic security offered by traditional academic positions, there will be fewer people to do scholarship of any type, financial support is an issue separate from the question of “How,” in the words of the second topic the speakers were invited to address at this symposium, “might textual editors influence perception of Waugh’s writing through the principles by which they order and represent its witnesses? Is it possible to collate without effacement?”

Now, with the end of a half-century process in sight, perhaps like Moses viewing the promised land he will not enter, I can answer the questions posed for this symposium a bit ruefully: a little; over a long period; and probably not.

Even at the best of times the work of textual scholars puzzles many people in academe and seems at best an incomprehensible hobby to the common reader, though it is heartening to find that Waugh spent part of Christmas Day 1946 comparing the book version of George Grossmith's *Diary of a Nobody* with the serialized version in *Punch*. Still, only a few specialists are going to see any of the volumes of the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* or of any scholarly edition, first because they will probably be so expensive that not even all research libraries will buy them, second because only the most dedicated specialists will want to see what they offer.

Most readers of *Brideshead*, especially those lured by reruns of the Granada television series, will have no idea, and will care even less, that there are variant texts, and even many serious readers will probably not want to pay the premium prices which Oxford may need to charge to make the project viable. Take the Cambridge collected D. H. Lawrence. Hard cover editions of some works cost just under \$200; paperbacks cost almost \$60.00. Of course, paperback editions without the scholarly apparatus are considerably cheaper, and even cheaper are those not based on the Cambridge edition.

Let's assume that Oxford will follow the example of Cambridge and will publish texts based on scholarship without the apparatus. Readers, however, will almost certainly pick up any version that is handy. Still, word that a better text is available will spread, however slowly.

It's not clear how or if "the principles by which [the editors] order and represent its witnesses"--if by that the conveners mean the listing of textual variants--can affect the reading experience. Someone trying to follow variants as they occur from line to line will nod back and forth from the copy text to variants while trying to keep moving forward as a reader, discovering before very long that he or she is trying to employ irreconcilable processes. For example, I recorded and arranged variant readings in *Brideshead*, but I can't function much better in dealing with this material than someone examining it for the first time. However, I will defer to Lewis MacLeod, who comes to *Brideshead* later and from a different perspective.

But worrying about the reading experience is not the point of doing the job. These variants show us, if we are patient enough and diligent enough, something about the ways in which the author thought in order to arrive at the meaning he sought and the means by which he

preserved it. In other words, people will have to examine the variants and reach conclusions about their effects.

Can all of this effort, in the words of the call for papers, “constitute a consolidation and defense of humanities knowledge in a time of disciplinary crisis”? It can’t hurt, but looked at soberly, textual editing, collecting, and archiving have, strictly, little or nothing to do with “humanities knowledge,” whether “in a time of disciplinary crisis” or not. The skills demanded by textual editing are not all that different from those required of a forensic accountant, and similar parallels to other professions could be drawn for collectors and archivists. True, the passion for humane knowledge drives these activities, but they are in themselves not humane.

Perhaps like Uncle Peregrine Crouchback, I am not so much mad as “appallingly sane”—and equally boring. At any rate, it’s now more than sixty years since I first read anything by Waugh, and more than fifty since I first published anything about him, and I suppose it’s fair to ask not what I have given to the study of Waugh’s works—that’s for others to decide—but what I have gotten from it.

1. I learned from careful reading and rereading of Waugh’s published writing and especially from working with his manuscripts something about style and rhythm that has affected my writing more by immersion than by imitation. One correspondent thought I was an Englishman; another, judging from my telephone voice and from my writing, that I was short and fat—at the time an inaccurate description.

2. I learned something, from Waugh, as well as from mentors equally unconscious of their effect, of the joys as well as the pains of being deeply engaged with one’s work, of never taking one’s own words as inviolable—this is at least the fourth or fifth draft of the talk I am almost finished giving—and of the pride in doing work carefully and promptly, though not always as carefully and promptly as I should have.

3. I learned that if I worked hard enough and, more important, long enough, I would get to go to places that I had barely imagined, and that I could meet a wide variety of stimulating and agreeable people.

4. To adapt to the scholarly life Alfred Doolittle's remark on undeserving poverty—*pace* Walter Sullivan again—it's the only life that has any spice to it, like. I wish my successors the same joy that I have had.

5. It is never, at least in my experience, a mistake to share your findings with other scholars. Help given pays manifold returns. And it's humbling to remember how much you owe to others.

6. I hope that I can say, as Waugh did to Julian Jebb, that I have done my best—or at least that I have not failed to repay all of those, so many, who have helped, encouraged, and criticized me over more than fifty years and have become a kind of extended family who get the point of jokes that would be unintelligible to my biological family.

7. The work of many people has enabled me to meet and learn from a new generation of scholars, notably the late John Howard Wilson, who single-handedly kept the *Newsletter* going and established the Waugh Society on an international basis. Younger scholars like Jonathan Pitcher and Patrick Query have kept *Evelyn Waugh Studies* going, and Lewis MacLeod, Marcel DeCoste and others help to keep the study of Waugh alive. I think I can say with my contemporaries and few remaining elders that they will know more than we ancients. Perhaps it is not too egotistical, though it may be vain, to hope that we are at least a little of that which they know. And that, unlike Mr. Plant's characterization of his son, they won't become petrified Dodo eggs.

8. I have learned, lately and reluctantly, to know when enough is enough. It's said of aging athletes that they have lost a step. I've lost a whole staircase, at least.

9. I learned never to say that I'll study Waugh no more. Although I don't plan to do any more extended work on him, it's possible I may continue to glare at the computer screen through thicker and thicker reading glasses, trying to avoid getting drool on the keyboard.

10. A more encouraging way of looking at our work can be found in John Steinbeck's anecdote about a mother approached by her children for information about where babies come from. She begins to tell them about birds and bees, but they say, impatiently, "We know all about

that. What we don't understand is why people do it at all." She thinks for a moment and says, "Because it's fun." So my final word of advice is: relax and enjoy it. And try to keep those eggs warm.

“The highest achievement of man:” Evelyn Waugh Preaching Divine Purpose through Temporal Creations

Maria Salenius

Evelyn Waugh presented his deepest analysis of man through minute detail and linguistic precision; often his method was imagery and symbolism. One way to reach for Waugh’s rhetorical genius is to compare and equate two houses in two novels: Hetton and Brideshead, in *A Handful of Dust* (1934) and *Brideshead Revisited* (1945; revised version 1960) respectively. Although *A Handful of Dust*, illustrating the life of a bored upper-class woman and her disillusioned husband, is often more readily associated with his early society satires (see McDonnell 45), and is even called a “comic novel” (Wykes 107), it has also been recognised as “the beginning of a new phase” in Waugh’s writing (Cook 123), a move from fantasy to depicting the real world (Allen 219). It is a novel with an astute moral intention, and it is (as the title’s allusion to T. S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land” suggests) a book about fear. Waugh himself called it his “humanist” novel (*Essays* 304). When read in the continuum of his spiritual journey, signposted with his conversion to Catholicism in 1930 and his biography of Edmund Campion of 1935, considering *A Handful of Dust* together with *Brideshead Revisited* may be even more warranted. The latter notably elaborates on a variety of themes (like love, friendship, class, art), and it is “not meant to be funny” (Waugh on the first dust-jacket, *Essays* 288), but the main theme of the novel is that of religion. Having been born an Anglican and converted to Roman Catholicism, Waugh’s interest in moral and spiritual questions shows as a prominent trait throughout his writing. In both these novels, the central protagonist reaches for deeper understanding of life.

The purpose of this article is to explore some of the rhetorical choices made by Waugh in the text of *A Handful of Dust* as well as in *Brideshead Revisited*, with special reference to changes made between the first edition (1945) and the second (1960) of the latter, specifically from the point of view of rendering the aspect of divine guidance and conversion. Between the first and the final edition of *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh made several versions and worked fervently on the language as well as the structure of the novel (see Davis 107–86). In addition to purely literary aims, it seems evident that Waugh is presenting his “*magnum opus*” (cf. *Letters*

176) as a treatise of the Catholic faith, and the climax of the death of Lord Marchmain and the subsequent conversion of the agnostic Charles Ryder, is foregrounded with ample rhetorical device.¹ *A Handful of Dust*, too, saw a number of revisions and restructurings, especially when negotiating between the serialised and the book-form publication of the novel (Davis 73–6). Looking at the final forms of both novels within the context of structural symbolism shows the use of a similar method, and alludes to a similar aim. *A Handful of Dust* “looks ahead to Waugh’s explorations... of the interrelated order of nature and grace” (Patey 118), and Waugh stated as the primary aim of *Brideshead Revisited* “to trace the workings of the divine purpose in a pagan world” (*Essays* 288).

For Waugh, meaning is created with form, with the building and the (rhetorical) structure of his novels. Patterns and events make sense in the larger scheme of things. Numbers and symbols become codes to unlocking the underlying secret – eventually the secret of heaven and salvation. Although, traditionally, these novels are more easily interpreted as representing different sub-genres and different eras of the author’s oeuvre (see Bradbury), considering them from the point of view of the building/structures shows that they have a similar framework. In order to persuade, to bring his reader to the same realisation and insight as Charles Ryder, or the same sense of liberation as Tony Last, Waugh moves subtly through the plot while building the structures and forming the arguments into an interconnected and interrelated pattern, on the larger structural level (*taxis*) as well as the lexical (*lexis*) (see Nash 32–33).

In his novels in general, and especially in *A Handful of Dust* and *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh constructs much of his narrative around the image of a building (Heath 2–3); Tony Last’s love for Hetton Abbey and Charles Ryder’s fascination with Brideshead House present the building as a vehicle for Waugh’s metaphor, the trope to carry his didactic intention. Waugh creates verbal structures depicting the buildings, where in a way “sign-values” of the images are to an extent even “subordinated to their importance as a structure of interconnected motifs” (Frye 74). The main aim in this article is to focus on this metaphor and show how Waugh creates physical space in order to present developments in the moral environment of the novel, or the movements into and within the influence of divine power (or God). By using the framework of (the *medieval* definition of) *ekphrasis*, Waugh creates a space and a place for the movement of

¹ For further discussion on *Brideshead Revisited* and Waugh’s rhetorical purpose, see Salenius.

divine grace as an element in the narrative. The place is what words make it to be. Although, on one level, we can read Waugh's irony in the references to the Gothic-Victorian scene *vis-à-vis* the theme of adultery and failure of marriage in *A Handful of Dust*, the same image also serves as a metaphor on a deeper level. When contemplating the role of man and the pursuit for virtue, the (structure of the) house stands for tradition, stability and righteousness; the irony in the book is “not an attack on [the main protagonist's] values” (Cook 134). In *Brideshead Revisited*, then, the house is more directly symbolic of divine intervention. The below will present some of the author's literary and linguistic choices in the novels in order to trace the rhetorical purpose of his presentation, and to show how the later novel is, ultimately, a work of religious *persuasio*.

Furthermore, the aim is to show that not only does Waugh use the ekphrastic method in the narrower (and more contemporary) sense of the description of images and buildings as such, but he predominantly employs the medieval aspect of focusing on the *effect* of the verbal description (see Webb *Ekphrasis, Imagination*). Verbal descriptions are used to consecrate and deconsecrate (as well as re-consecrate) a place: a building, a room, a space – and, through this, transform a situation, a relation, and a faith. Waugh creates verbal images of places in order to illustrate an abstract element in the narrative (morality in *A Handful of Dust* and “divine grace” in *Brideshead Revisited* 1960, “Preface,” 9), and by linking the element to the description of the building, the words form the place to serve the purpose of the story. Furthermore, Waugh uses *ekphrasis* to valorise a subject matter in his narrative – virtue or faith (God) – thus heeding a didactic principle of his rhetorical pursuit.²

When applying the method of medieval *ekphrasis* to topics of morality and religion, this point becomes even more poignant: it remains a question of conviction or faith. Just as these rhetorical devices were originally used to recreate the image of a past or distant monument (James and Webb 11–12; see also Bachelard xvi), they are here also used to visualise an ideal

² The starting point for rhetorical *ekphrasis* can be found in Medieval Byzantine (4th–14th c.), with the practice of using verbal descriptions to validate religious art and to valorise God (James 2), preferably in minute detail (Webb *Ekphrasis* 67–68). Byzantine *rhetors* like Procopius of Caesarea (6th c. AD, especially in his final work, the panegyric of the Emperor Justinian, through the tribute to the great Constantinople church Hagia Sophia, *De Aedificiis*) developed this practice further, and for them the description of building became a vehicle to celebrate God (or, with Procopius especially, an emperor) (Elsner 40; Whitby 47). In Byzantine practice of *ekphrasis*, where the writers had often not seen the works (or buildings) that they were describing (James 3), the aim was almost literally “to bring before the eyes” an imagined image of that which could not be seen (Webb *Ekphrasis, Imagination* 20).

state of an abstract phenomenon. Thus, they are, as for Procopius, simultaneously both a panegyric and a description (Elsner 35), yet using the tangible quality of the image of the building to conceptualise the nature of man's struggle for right and wrong, or his relationship with his God. With the descriptions, Waugh is constructing a verbal "intimate space," a Bachelardian "object" within which to define this abstract issue (Bachelard 190), and to bring it "before the eyes" of the reader (Webb *Ekphrasis, Imagination* 20).

The symbolic significance of the building in general – and of creating an illusive construction – is underlined further with a number of references in Waugh's novels. In the context of a game of patience, Waugh explains in *A Handful of Dust* how "under [Mrs Rattery's] fingers order grew out of chaos; she established sequence and precedence; the symbols before her became coherent, interrelated" (110). In *Brideshead Revisited*, too, the process of building the house "before the eyes" is a kind of an illusionist's trick. When discussing religious argument, the older Marchmain son, Bridey, states that he has to "turn a thing round and round, like a piece of ivory in a Chinese puzzle, until – click! – it fits into place – but by that time it's upside down to everyone else. But it's the same bit of ivory, you know" (145 [1945]). In both novels the art of *persuasio* is also linked to the power to create a visual image.

For Waugh, the main vehicle for his metaphor is the building, the house of Hetton, or Brideshead. He also concentrates his main rhetorical argument around these metaphorical constructions. Originally, Hetton was a Gothic Abbey, rebuilt in 1864 for its upper-class occupants (*HD* 14); Brideshead used to be a castle, and it was taken down and rebuilt as a manor house, only a mile from its original site, for an equally prominent family (*BR* 94–5 [1960]). In both these cases the actual historical scope of the building thus reaches much further back in time and tradition and beyond the memory of the present characters than, for example, the "worst possible 1860" (Waugh *Letters* 88) in *A Handful of Dust*. Also, in both narratives the building represents the aspiration of the characters: the fulfilment of their needs and dreams. Although the present house is mocked for being "devoid of interest" (*HD* 14) or ravished by the military transport going "smack through the box-hedge and [carrying] away all that balustrade" (*BR* 391), and although some of the scholarship seems ready to accept Waugh's scornfulness of the "bogus neo-Gothic ethos" (Beaty 90) so readily interpreted as Waugh's main agenda especially in *A Handful of Dust*, the symbolic value of the building runs much deeper. In the 1945 edition of

Brideshead Revisited Waugh presents his own ekphrastic perspective (in the words of the architectural painter and narrator Charles Ryder):

I have always loved building, holding it to be not only the highest achievement of man but one in which, at the moment of consummation, things were most clearly taken out of his hands and perfected, without his intention, by other means, and I regarded men as something much less than the buildings they made and inhabited, as mere lodgers and short-term sub-lessees of small importance in the long, fruitful life of their homes. (198)

This is a very accurate description, and as such a powerful metaphor: it is only by restructuring that the old building, consummated at one point in time, lives on “by other means.” Beyond the social satire, Waugh, through his presentation of these buildings, “portrays his belief in the aristocracy as a link between the present and the meaningful past (DeVitis 33), and while the reader may laugh at the tragic-comedy, “Tony does believe.. in Hetton” (Patey 120).

Further support for reading these two novels together is that it has been convincingly shown (Byrne; Mulvagh) that the house upon which both *Hetton* and *Brideshead* are modelled is Madresfield House, the ancestral site of Waugh’s longtime friends, the Lygon family. While the two fictional houses both in their different ways differ from the actual Madresfield, the overall structure is similar in all three, and, particularly, the history of Madresfield, like that of both *Hetton* and *Brideshead*, includes layered construction through centuries; and they all include a chapel. Waugh first visited Madresfield in 1931, and the two novels where the house is recreated for fictional and rhetorical purpose suggest that the house also had a spiritual significance for the recently converted author. Furthermore, *A Handful of Dust* has sometimes been seen as the most biographical of Waugh’s novels, with Tony Last being “the fictional recreation of Waugh’s pre-Catholic self” (Wykes 106), and in *Brideshead Revisited*, too, Waugh rewrites his own life events (Byrne 300–301) as well as, specifically, those of the Lygon family (Mulvagh; Sykes 252). While in *A Handful of Dust* the biographical element is focussed on Tony Last, a central character and the present owner of *Hetton*, depicted in the third person, in *Brideshead Revisited* we can see Waugh himself in the character of Charles Ryder, the narrator and a visitor to the house, the overall rhetorical method in the two novels is the same. Waugh is using the characters, and the different roles of the characters in relation to the house, within the structure of the novel

and the structure of the house to illustrate his argument about values, tradition, and the workings of God.

In the final version of *A Handful of Dust*, three of the novel's seven chapters are named "English Gothic" (numbered I, II and III), which all in turn present an aspect of the narrative. The first "gothic" chapter focusses on the worldly life of the family, including deception and boredom, with descriptions ranging from "the line of its battlements against the sky" and "the central clock tower" with "quarterly chimes" (14). These images are slightly conventional, yet reassuringly established. The second "gothic" chapter occurs in the aftermath of the tragic death, thus illustrating the most desolate state of the characters and their souls. The chapter is distinguished most prominently by the fact that it takes place *away* from Hetton. The final "gothic" chapter finds the main protagonists lost to the world or at least to virtue, but it presents the reawakening of the house to a new beginning. As in the first chapter, there is work to be done "when death duties were paid off" (14), but the general mood is lighter and more optimistic:

High overhead among its gargoyles and crockets the clock chimed for the hour and solemnly struck fourteen. It was half-past eight. The clock has been irregular lately. It was one of the things Richard Last intended to see to, when death duties were paid and silver foxes began to show a profit. (218)

This notable symmetry of form is a central structural element of the novel, and it is underlined with the symmetry of the chapter titles (Davis 75). The recurring references to the chimes and the building emphasise this symmetry further.

The 1945 edition of *Brideshead Revisited* is divided into two main parts ("Books") in addition to the Prologue and Epilogue (both titled "Brideshead Revisited"). Book One, "Et in Arcadia Ego," contains the uncomplicated pleasures youth, with an increasing sense of loss and nostalgia as life proceeds. The title of Book Two, "A Twitch upon a Thread," with its reference to the Father Brown story by C. K. Chesterton from the troubled scene in the first part of the book, suggests that in this second part of the book God will gather home his chosen ones (or those who choose him) – to faith, to salvation, or to his church. Thematically, the books in the 1945 edition are organized temporally and present two time periods approximately ten years apart. The themes, which include the subsections where Charles Ryder takes leave of Brideshead

as well as the Flyte family's London residence Marchmain House, cover the pleasures of youth as well as notions of loss. The revised edition, however, separates the themes of youth and love from those of loss and solitude in partitioning the subsections on leave-taking in the first book into a separate book (Book Two, "Brideshead Deserted").

The 1960 edition of *Brideshead Revisited* is thus divided into three main books (again, in addition to the Prologue and Epilogue both titled "Brideshead Revisited"). Book One ("Et in Arcadia Ego") sees the narrator first enter the house of his friends, Brideshead Castle. In Book Two ("Brideshead Deserted"), then, Charles Ryder leaves his friends and their house – and is furthest away from God and salvation, much like the Lasts in "English Gothic II" in *A Handful of Dust* – whereas in Book Three ("A Twitch upon the Thread") Charles returns, and eventually finds God.

In *Brideshead Revisited* (after the long passage about the significance of buildings which was cut from the 1960 edition, quoted above), Waugh also presents Charles's declaration (retained in the revised version) of his love for buildings "that grew silently with the centuries, catching and keeping the best of each generation, while time curbed the artist's pride and the Philistine's vulgarity, and repaired the clumsiness of the dull workman" (198 [1960]). In the revised edition, however, with the long elaboration omitted, this point is more strongly emphasised in the *structure* of the book. The section (Book Two) title "Brideshead Deserted" brings focus to the aspect of the building while at the same time constructing a balanced set of three. Furthermore, the revised division underlines both the gravity of the loss in the narrative and the importance of the house as a symbol for the church and for faith, and eventually for redemption. After entering the house in courtship in youth, and deserting it in crisis, the house is re-entered in the end, both before the conversion at the end of Book Three and for solace and consolation in the Epilogue.³ Similarly, in *A Handful of Dust* the house is deserted in crisis and reoccupied in an air of consolation.

³ If we look at the thematic value/information added by the structural alterations in the revised division of *Brideshead Revisited*, we can see that Waugh in the additional division retains Books One and Three with a number of subsections divisible by (the holy number) three whereas the middle section (Book Two) presents seven subdivisions in the narrative, thus introducing the particularly holy number seven. Here this number can be seen to signify the deserted house, Charles Ryder's journey (geographically and mentally) farthest away from Brideshead, and faith, his seven-year famine, as it were – what he refers to as the "ten dead years" (with the word "dead" added in this later edition). The section can also be further interpreted symbolically as a seven-day (re-)creation of the soul,

The Catholic chapel of Brideshead, which has been moved to the site and rebuilt by the previously Protestant Lord Marchmain as a wedding present for his devout Catholic wife (48 [1960]), is a strong rhetorical argument in the novel.⁴ The descriptions of the chapel are first reported by the agnostic youth Charles Ryder, only cautiously reaching for the glamour of Catholicism and referring to the “arts-and-crafts style of the last decade of the nineteenth century,” the “trptych of pale oak, carved so as to give it the peculiar property of seeming to have been moulded in Plasticine,” and the “sanctuary lamp... of bronze, hand-beaten to the patina of a pock-marked skin” (48 [1960]). After Lady Marchmain’s death the chapel is closed, and the next description is one by her most devout daughter, Cordelia, watching the priest reverse the act of consecration with his wordless action. Cordelia’s description of the chapel shows the same structures and details as Charles Ryder’s, but it paints a different picture, focussing on the priest taking out “the altar stone and [putting] it in his bag,” burning “the wads of wool with the holy oil on them and [throwing] the ash outside,” emptying “the holy-water stoop and [blowing] out the lamp in the sanctuary,” finally leaving “the tabernacle open and empty, as though from now on it was always to be Good Friday,” and leaving Cordelia, not in a chapel, but in “just an oddly decorated room” (252–53 [1960]).

During the Second World War the chapel is reopened by the elder Marchmain sister, Lady Julia, and Charles Ryder visits it again upon his return to Brideshead in the Epilogue. Again, the chapel is the same, but the words are different, more commonplace at first, but eventually rather respectful, and the description becomes more abstract by referring to buildings in general. Most importantly, this description “before the eyes” of the reader is now experienced “by conversion” (DeCoste 41) and given by a man of faith:

Something quite remote from anything the builders intended, has come out of their work, and out of the fierce little human tragedy in which I played; something none of us thought about at the time; a small red flame – a beaten-copper lamp of deplorable design relit before the beaten-copper doors of a tabernacle; the flame which the old knights saw from their tombs, which they saw put out; that flame burns again for other soldiers, far from home, farther, in heart, than Acre or Jerusalem. It could not have been lit but for the

or the Jewish seven-day purification. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that *A Handful of Dust*, too, is constructed in a format with *seven* chapters (see above).

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the chapel in *Brideshead Revisited*, see Polvinen and Salenius.

builders and the tragedians, and there I found it this morning, burning anew among the old stones. (395 [1960])

Hetton manor, too, has housed a chapel, which had been in use until Tony Last's succession (*HD*, 21). After the death of Tony, there is a suggestion that the chapel be opened as a chantry, but nothing seems to come of it (146). This is a relevant detail as Tony, unlike Charles Ryder, is not saved by faith. However, the small local church has a central role in the novel. It is a place that Tony frequents as his obligation, and it is also where his wife Brenda wants to be seen with her husband to establish her loyalty and the perseverance of their marriage. The absurdity of the space of church/chapel created by Reverend Tendril's preaching in *A Handful of Dust* and even to some extent by Charles's initial impression of the Brideshead chapel (see above), occurs on the level of the social satire. Although Waugh at the time of his conversion in 1930 suggested that "all the finest ecclesiastical buildings are in the hands of the Anglican Church" and thus the Catholic Church cannot compete with "the purely aesthetic appeal" (*Essays* 103), he still depicts special solace in the ageless stone and timber of the chapel, and here he uses the hallowed building as a symbol for tradition and continuity.

Brideshead Revisited and *A Handful of Dust* also carry strong symbolic references to the cycle of the Resurrection on a number of levels. Firstly, the above-mentioned references to the structural presence of Brideshead castle in *Brideshead Revisited* and the English Gothic theme in *A Handful of Dust*, as well as, even more explicitly, the chapel-image, are all presented in threes. Jeffrey Heath suggests that Waugh in *A Handful of Dust* "is not yet in a stage where he enshrines affirmative values in character or symbol," but that his readers "must seek them instead in his language and structure" (104–05). However, the linguistic structure and the structure of the novel are too intertwined here to be ignored or read separately. This is as such a conventional narrative technique. However, it receives its specific religious significance from its thematic structure: in *Brideshead Revisited*, first, the (worldly) introduction to the temporal world, referring to Christ the man; secondly, the de-consecration and blowing out of the lamp in the sanctuary, denoting Good Friday and the death of Christ; and finally, the re-entrance, this time of the believer, to a re-consecrated chapel representing Resurrection. In *A Handful of Dust* the same structure prevails: the first English Gothic chapter presents the worldly, temporal view; the second chapter, like "Brideshead Deserted," denotes death and despair. In the final chapter there is "a

light breeze in the dewy orchards; brilliant cool sunshine over meadows and copses; the elms were all in bud in the avenue” (218). Here, too, the biblical cycle frames the narrative and gives it its resonance, and the final chapter points to rebirth and, eventually, to Resurrection.

From the point of view of the overall rhetorical structure of Waugh’s argument, it may be of interest to note how this biblical cycle of threes is also supported by the role of the women in the narrative. In *Brideshead Revisited* it is the male narrator who tells the story, and also recounts the chapel scenes; in the New Testament the gospel is related by men. Yet, the chapel is opened for a woman, like the child given to Mary. Cordelia observes the deconsecration in the corner of the chapel, much in the vein of the women who observed Christ’s death in silence on Good Friday; and finally, as it was the women who brought the gospel of the Easter morning – relit the lamp, witnessed the Resurrection – so Lady Julia makes penance by perpetuating the sacred light. This is, of course, as such a very traditional and conservative (or biblical) reading of the narrative. The early Christian congregation often had to resort to meeting underground, often supported by wealthy women providing the secret meeting rooms (see Romans 16: 1–2), and thus it is only appropriate that the chapel in *Brideshead Revisited* is located – and is dependent upon – the home of Lady Marchmain. The conversion of Charles Ryder in *Brideshead Revisited* is accommodated by a woman, by his love for Julia (DeCoste 39), whereas the conversion as such is related by a male narrator, as in the Gospels and the Epistles. In *A Handful of Dust*, with a similarly biblical indication, it is the weakness and transgression of the woman that leads to demise, also of the man in the story. The vice of the woman and her responsibility for the man’s fall, in all its irony, is almost Miltonic in scope, but eventually morality prevails, in the new generation of occupants of Hetton. Furthermore, Mrs Beaver and Mrs Rattery seem to carry the plot in a taciturn manner very similar to the silent women in the Bible. While Waugh does not make a point about gender in the plot of the novels, it is significant to note his use of the biblical allusion as a structural and rhetorical device.

In the later edition of *Brideshead Revisited* Waugh’s textual additions and omissions are very subtle, but they do persistently direct the reader to follow the rhetorical point. Waugh seems to have omitted some obvious and perhaps too conspicuous religious references from the beginning of the revised edition. In the opening description of Charles’s first visit to Brideshead, the phrase “when leaf and flower and bird-and sun-lit stone and shadow seem all to proclaim the

glory of God” (20 [1945]) has been omitted. Also, in a description of the “languor of Youth” the phrase “the sun standing still in the heavens and the earth throbbing to our own pulse” (71 [1945]), with its rather direct reference to Joshua commanding the sun to stand still in the sky,⁵ is omitted and only the more worldly description remains. Later still, when it is said of Julia that “[f]rom that moment she shut her mind against her religion” (167 [1945]), the words “come to church [and]” are omitted from her priest’s appeal for her to come to confession. It seems evident that Waugh wants to present the topic even more delicately in the revised edition, cutting the religious/biblical references from the episodes where they would draw unnecessary attention to the underlying design. Also, the religious references are not forced in the narrator’s discourse at times of his life when he (the originally agnostic Charles Ryder) would not have been aware of the development himself, but rather through subconscious numerical structures.

There are also two significant additions in the revised edition of *Brideshead Revisited*. The first one is in the scene where Charles first enters Brideshead and makes his way with Sebastian up to see Nanny Hawkins at “the nurseries, high in the dome in the centre of the main block” (33 [1945]). In the revised edition Waugh has added the observation: “The dome was false” (44 [1960]). It is notable that this addition is introduced here, at a time when the building is entered for the wrong reason, as it were, for temporal, not celestial love. Secondly, a subtle but highly significant addition for the tone of the final “Book” of the novel is the adjective in the phrase “For nearly ten *dead* years after that evening with Cordelia” (259 [1960]; emphasis added). Instead of an elaboration on memory, which is omitted in the revision,⁶ Waugh inserts

⁵ “Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. / And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.” (Joshua 10: 12–13)

⁶ These memories are the memorials and pledges of the vital hours of a lifetime. These hours of afflatus in the human spirit, the springs of art, are, in their mystery, akin to the epochs of history, when a race which for centuries has lived content, unknown, behind its own frontiers, digging, eating, sleeping, begetting, doing, what was requisite for survival and nothing else, will, for a generation or two, stupefy the world, bring to birth and nurture a teeming brood of genius, droop soon with the weight of its grandeur, fall, but leave behind a record of new rewards won for all mankind; the vision fades, the soul sickens, and the routine of survival starts again. The human soul enjoys these rare, classic periods, but, apart from them, we are seldom single or unique; we keep company in this world with a hoard of abstractions and reflexions and counterfeits of ourselves – the sensual man, the economic man, the man of reason, the beast, the machine and the sleep-walker, and heaven knows what else besides, all in our own image, indistinguishable from ourselves to the outward eye. We get borne along, out of sight in the press, unresisting, till we get the chance to drop behind unnoticed, or to dodge down a side street, pause, breathe freely and take our bearings, or to push ahead, outdistance our shadows, lead them a dance, so that when at length they catch up with us, they look at one another askance, knowing we have a secret we shall never share. (197–8 [1945])

one little word, “*dead*,” that describes the years away from Brideshead, away from true love – and away from God – and readjusts the focus of the story.

Brideshead Revisited is a novel about entering the house of God and about finding salvation. This topic was fundamental for Waugh. The novel may – and will – attract on several levels, but its primary aim was to tell the story of the conversion of Charles Ryder, thus “being God’s creature with a defined purpose” (Waugh in 1946, *Essays* 302). Like Edmund Campion, he wanted to engage in a *linguistic* argument for his cause (Waugh *Edmund* 15). This is especially evident when discussing the changes between the editions of *Brideshead Revisited* and in comparison to his rhetorical techniques in *A Handful of Dust*. On the level of the overall structure of both novels discussed here, Waugh shifts the focus from the story to the symbolism of the building (i.e. Hetton as an emblem of forsaken values, or Brideshead as a symbol for the house of God). He underlines the movement *to* and *from* the building in the three-part division, and thus the actual geographical location of the characters (particularly of Charles Ryder and Tony Last) becomes relevant for the plot.⁷

As a symbol and framework for an abstract idea, the building is a solid construction. As with the Byzantine writers, however, creating depictions of imaginary or distant buildings carries an even stronger purpose. For Waugh, creating place with words, raising the image of the building, is larger than stone and timber, and while it is also more significant than any human being, by reflecting, illustrating and expounding man’s life, his morality, and his faith, it is also “the highest achievement of man.” Tony Last can be seen to fail in his quest for peace and, finally, even God, but Charles Ryder finds the lamp burning again in the chapel in the Epilogue. Tony cannot be saved because he “embodies the humanist endeavour to live a good life without religion” (McDonnell 73) and “without faith [humanism] is no better than barbarism” (Heath 105). Charles, however, receives “the strength to go on alone” (McDonnell 149), or perhaps more accurately owing to his awakened faith, with God. Even with the opposite endings, though – or perhaps very much because of them – both novels serve the same purpose: showing how “finding a way out of the waste land” goes “through the doors of the Church” (DeVitis 52).

⁷ It has frequently been noted how travel played an important part in Evelyn Waugh’s thinking and writing (see Patey; Wykes 103), which shows in how his work stretches to depictions of several continents. This also brings a further metaphorical level to his narrative.

Maybe, in *Brideshead*, we are structurally revisiting *Hetton*, in order to give the protagonist a chance for a happier ending.

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REVIEWS

“Through the Glass of a Tank”

Anthony Powell: Dancing to the Music of Time, by Hilary Spurling. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2017. 525 pp. £25. New York: Knopf, 14 August 2018. 528 pp. \$35.00.

Reviewed by Jeffrey Manley

Hilary Spurling, best noted for her biographies of artist Henri Matisse and novelist Ivy Compton-Burnett, has now written a biography of Anthony Powell under an arrangement made between her and Powell near the end of his life giving her exclusive access to his archives. He offered to start while he was still alive, making himself available to her for interviews. After giving that a try, she decided she needed to put some distance between them before starting the book. This may have been because they had become friends since she had worked with him on a guide to the 12 novels making up *Dance to the Music of Time* near the beginning of her own writing career. This was published as *Invitation to the Dance* (Boston, 1978; London, 1977).

The book she has now completed traces Powell’s family and professional life over most of his 90 years. He outlived nearly all of his contemporaries and ended up providing source materials used in the biographies of many of the leading British writers from the interwar and postwar periods. These included George Orwell, Cyril Connolly, Henry Yorke, Graham Greene, and Julian Maclaren-Ross. Evelyn Waugh also belongs on this list.

He and Powell go back to their undergraduate days at Oxford. This is, quite appropriately, where Spurling begins the story of their relationship, but she gets off on a slightly wrong foot when she says that Powell only knew Waugh at Oxford “by reputation” (86). That suggests that there was no direct social contact. Both writers agree in their memoirs of Oxford that they were not “in friendship” as undergraduates. But they certainly knew each other personally through contacts at the Hypocrites Club where both were members. Powell also recalls other social gatherings where they met, such as Col. Kolkhorst’s tea parties on Beaumont Street. Waugh knew Powell well enough to invite him to “offal dinners” in his rooms at Hertford College (Powell, *Infants of the Spring*: London, 1976, 166-67).

Spurling next moves on to their closer friendship in London. According to Powell, “This was the period when I knew and liked Waugh best” (88). Waugh would probably agree with that. Powell was two years younger than Waugh and by the time Powell had graduated Waugh was also back in London after nearly two years of what Spurling describes as “penitential stints” school-mastering following his departure from Oxford (86). Powell had an apprentice level job at Duckworths the publishers and contacted Waugh, perhaps along with several other friends, with an essentially *pro forma* letter asking if Waugh might have something he wanted to publish. This resulted in a meeting with Thomas Balston, Powell’s superior, who was looking for someone to write a biography of Dante Rossetti to mark his centenary. At the interview, Waugh produced the booklet he had written for Alastair Graham’s Stratford-based printing house the previous year (*P.R.B. An Essay on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*) and impressed Balston to such a degree that he gave Waugh the commission at double the usual Duckworth’s advance.¹

As a result of these early meetings, Waugh and Powell continued to see each other and became friends. The details of their friendship in this period are important because they provide the framework for a lasting and productive relationship that continued through and survived some bad patches after the breakup of Waugh’s first marriage. Spurling gets it mostly right (with the help of Powell’s memoirs and the two writers’ correspondence). Powell became a frequent visitor at the Waugh household in this period and met and quite liked both Waugh parents. He recalls that Arthur Waugh (also a publisher) was doubtful that the Duckworths book project would be successful and feared he would have to make good the advance (87). What most impressed Powell about the Waugh family, according to Spurling, is that it was the “first

¹ Spurling does not mention the role of *P.R.B.* in securing Waugh’s commission, but Powell explains this in his memoirs (*Messengers of Day*, London, 1978, 22-23). According to Powell, Waugh may not have known that Balston was looking for someone to write about Rossetti but brought the copy of *P.R.B.* as an example of his writing. In the Introduction to the *Rossetti* volume of the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* (Volume 16, *Rossetti: His Life and Works* [2017]), the editor Michael Brennan claims that Powell, and not Waugh, showed the essay to Balston (xxxv). Powell does mention in *Messengers* (22) that Waugh had given him a copy of *P.R.B.* but is quite specific on who showed the essay to Balston: “Waugh brought a copy of *P.R.B.* with him as evidence of literacy. Balston, on the strength of the essay, immediately suggested Rossetti as a theme.” Indeed, in the *CWEW* Introduction, a few pages after making Powell the source of the pamphlet, there is an extensive quote from an explanatory note that Waugh wrote in 1961 for the projected sale of the *Rossetti* manuscript: “Next year, when I was seeking a commission to write a biography, I showed this essay [*P.R.B.*] to Mr. Balston of Duckworth’s (Mr. Anthony Powell introducing me) and since a centenary was imminent he very kindly set me to work on Rossetti” (xl).

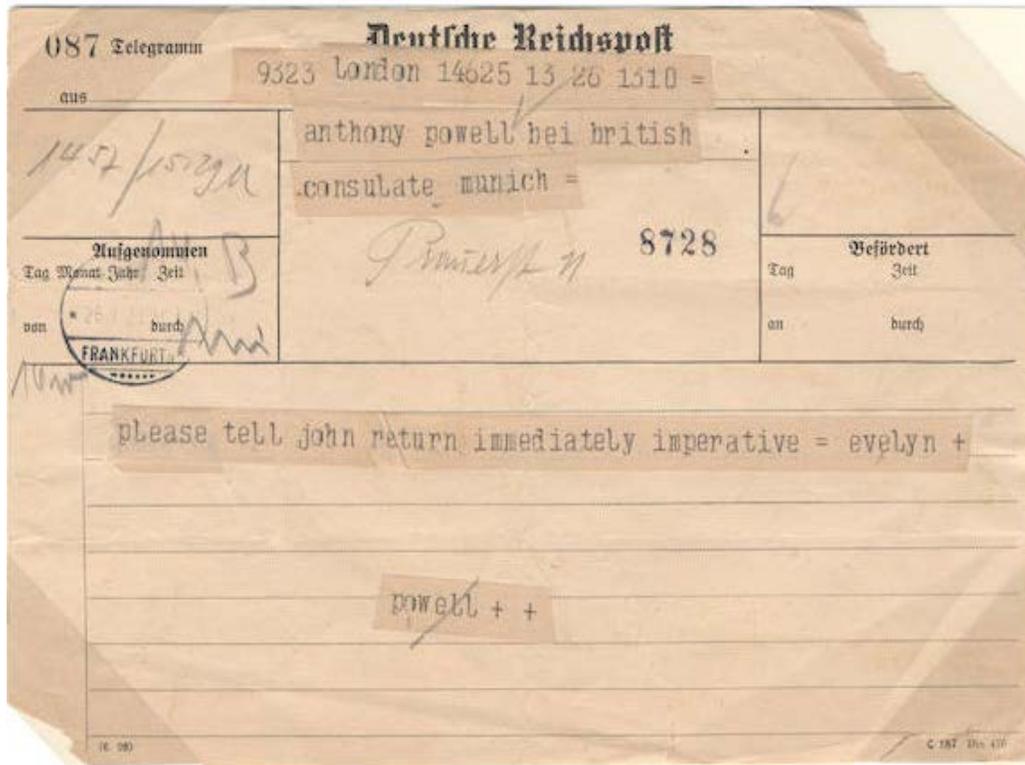
genuinely literary household he had ever encountered,” with books everywhere. Powell was rather distant from his own parents—an only child of an older mother and difficult father whose professional military career was already foundering by the late 1920s. There are no mentions of reciprocal visits by Waugh (or any of Powell’s other friends, for that matter) to the Powell household.

The book offer arranged by Powell at Duckworths marked a turning point in Waugh’s life. He had few prospects; at the time, he described himself as “very hard up,” having failed at school-teaching and dabbling in artistic pursuits to no particular advantage.² Indeed, while he was writing the Rossetti book, he had enrolled to study carpentry at the Holborn Polytechnic without telling Powell, who was sent there by his employers to study printing and met Waugh unexpectedly in the halls. By the time *Rossetti* was published, Waugh had organized his life sufficiently to start work on what became *Decline and Fall*. But he was also at work on the courtship of Evelyn Gardner. This was opposed by her family and turned out to be a problem with his publisher as well. Powell was familiar with the novel from having read and enjoyed advance drafts and arranged to have it offered to Duckworths. The head of the firm, Gerald Duckworth, was related to Evelyn Gardner and was quite aware of Waugh’s courtship and that it was unwanted by Gardner’s family; he intervened and had the novel turned down. Balston cited some spurious modifications but made no objection on the merits, as explained by Spurling (98). Waugh refused to make the modifications and took the book to his father’s firm. They published it after he agreed to make changes similar to those demanded by Balston. After the book was published, Waugh presented a copy to Balston with the inscription, “the stone that the builder rejected” (99).

Powell and Waugh remained on friendly terms after Waugh’s marriage (and Duckworths continued to publish Waugh’s nonfiction). Indeed, it was through the Waughs that Powell met and became friends with John Heygate. Although they had overlapped at Eton and Balliol, they did not become acquainted until they met at one of the Waughs’ parties in their Islington flat. Spurling tells the now familiar story (114-15) of how the Waughs broke up due to an affair between Heygate and Waugh’s wife. Powell was caught in the middle and was on a motor trip to Germany with Heygate when the news reached both of them that the Waughs were separating.

² *A Little Learning*, London, 1964, 201.

Mrs Waugh demanded that Heygate return at once—sending that same message to both Heygate and Powell.³ Heygate dutifully returned, “taking the precaution of buying a revolver on the way.” This last bit of information is new and is sourced from letters that Heygate wrote to Powell (still travelling in Germany) on Heygate’s way back to England.



Despite the fact that Powell remained friends with Heygate and his new wife and continued to see them socially in what had been the Waugh’s flat in Canonbury Square, Powell also remained on friendly terms with Waugh, albeit somewhat distant. Waugh sent Powell a copy of his travel book *Labels* (published by Duckworths) inscribed “from his brother of the pen.”⁴ A few years later when Powell published his third novel, *From a View to a Death*, Waugh named Powell, based on that book, as the only writer he could think of who had produced new work in

³ Martin Stannard, in the recent *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* edition of *Vile Bodies*, states that the telegram came from Mr. Evelyn Waugh, not his wife. This is based on (1) a detailed reconstruction of Waugh’s movements during the period when his writing of *Vile Bodies* was disrupted by his wife’s desertion and (2) the text of the telegram to Powell that was recently auctioned by the Powell Estate and which Powell had misquoted in his memoirs (xxxv).

⁴ Spurling (126) describes this as a “dedication” of the book to Powell, but the book was dedicated to Bryan and Diana Guinness. What she refers to was a presentation copy to Powell with the quoted language inscribed. Unfortunately, Spurling often gets these terms confused.

1933 that showed future promise (162). This was in a *Harper's Bazaar* article, and was volunteered despite the fact the book was dedicated to "John and Evelyn"—*i.e.*, the Heygates (a detail Spurling fails to mention).⁵ One reason for Waugh's continued friendship was no doubt his recognition that Powell deserved a considerable amount of the credit for turning his life around at what was probably its lowest ebb. When he gave Powell a copy of *Decline and Fall*, Waugh wrote in it, "For Tony who rescued the author from a fate worse than death" (87).

The next contact between the two writers mentioned by Spurling (323) comes in 1952 when Waugh visited the Powells' new house in Somerset and sent a letter recording his impression.⁶ They had seen each other at a dinner party in London (not mentioned by Spurling) near the end of the war, probably arranged through contacts between Waugh's wife Laura and her sister Gabriel who was married to Powell's friend Alick Dru (*Diaries*, 13 April 1945, 625).⁷ Powell served with Dru in the same Army unit. The Drus were actually tenants for a time during and after the war in the Powells' London house near Regent's Park. Powell also saw Waugh at Piers Court during his house-hunting in the early 1950s. But for most of the 1930s (after Waugh's divorce) and 1940s there was little direct contact. By the 1950s Powell was no longer close to John Heygate, who had moved to Northern Ireland after the war, and this may have made things easier for frequent contacts with Waugh to resume. The Powells' new house was not far from where Waugh lived near Dursley in Gloucestershire; it was also about a mile from Mells where he frequently visited Katharine Asquith and Ronald Knox, and not far from Downside Abbey and its School that Auberon Waugh was attending.⁸

Spurling describes the relaxed and friendly relationship between the families in this period, with casual visits occurring on both sides (354-55). This is also the period after Powell had begun *Dance to the Music of Time*. He was writing the third volume (*The Acceptance World*)

⁵ In subsequent editions of the book, that dedication was deleted. George Lilley, *Anthony Powell: A Bibliography* (1993, 11-20).

⁶ On p. 260, Spurling seems to suggest that they met after Waugh returned to London with the Commandos following the Battle of Crete in 1941. But no such meeting is recorded so far as I am aware. The reference is sourced from a September 1941 letter from Powell to his wife (463), but the text is not given, and he may have merely mentioned the fact that Waugh had returned, not that he had met with him.

⁷ Waugh writes in his diary that Powell and his wife "came unexpectedly to dinner" with Alick Dru. At the time, Waugh seemed to be staying at the Hyde Park Hotel in London while Laura and the children were still living in her parents' home at Pixton Park, although she was visiting Waugh in London at the time of the dinner.

⁸ When the Waughs moved to Combe Florey in west Somerset in 1956, they were about the same distance from The Chantry as they were in Gloucestershire.

when they moved to Somerset in 1952. He was also reviewing for *Punch* in this period and gave politely favorable but somewhat reserved notices to Waugh's novels of the time--*Scott-King*, *Men at War* and *Officers and Gentlemen*--and a politely negative review to *Helena*. But the novel from Waugh that most impressed Powell was *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. Spurling quotes Powell's review of the book in *Punch* as "the most searching of Waugh's works...the 'voices' on the boat seem to me to make a sequence unequalled in their combined funniness and macabre horror" (355). Spurling also quotes from the writers' letters in which they comment favorably and critically on each other's books. She concludes: "If Waugh won hands down in popularity and sales, Powell of all people understood what it cost him in loneliness, self-doubt and depression...Powell admired above all in Waugh a relentless honesty, quite different from his own but no less exacting..." (356).

Waugh was at this time captivated by Powell's novel sequence and anxiously awaited each new volume. He would comment in his letters to Powell on each of the novels as it appeared. *At Lady Molly's* (1957) was his favorite, and he told Powell he had "been looking forward to it like seven days' leave, and read it without interruption" (356). The first of the books Waugh reviewed was the next in the series, *Casanova's Chinese Restaurant* (1960). The review in the *Spectator* expressed his disappointment in the story's takeover by the newly introduced musical characters, centering on Hugh Moreland (closely based on Powell's friend, conductor and composer Constant Lambert). Waugh wanted more Widmerpool and instead got the bickering Maclinticks and gossipy music critics. That review is not among those mentioned by Spurling. It is, however, the only one about *Dance* collected in Waugh's *Essays, Articles and Reviews*, and this gives the misleading impression that Waugh had formed a negative overall assessment of the series. This is put to rest in his review of the next book *The Kindly Ones* (1962), also in the *Spectator*. In this he found Powell was back on form. Spurling in her book quotes Waugh's assessment of the series in that review, and this has become what is probably the most frequently quoted passage in the UK reviews of her book. It was also read out in the BBC Radio 4 broadcast of an abridged version of the biography in its *Book of the Week* series (episode 5, first broadcast 3 November 2017):

The life of the series is generated within it...Less original novelists tenaciously follow their protagonists. In the *Music of Time* we watch through the glass of a tank; one after

another of the various specimens swim toward us; we see them clearly, then with a barely perceptible flick of fin or tail, they are off into the murk. This is how our encounters occur in real life. Friends or acquaintances approach or recede year by year.... Their presence has no particular significance. It is recorded as part of the permeating and inebriating atmosphere of the haphazard which is the essence of Mr. Powell's art. (366)

Powell reviewed Waugh's last book, *A Little Learning*, *supra*, a few years later and, according to Spurling, tried "to counteract an increasingly prevalent image of Waugh as a frivolous and over-rated minor writer, perhaps also to combat his old friend's terminal depression" (394). After Waugh's death "his reputation had taken a steep posthumous downturn" which Powell tried to rectify in his reviews of works such as Waugh's *Diaries*, *Letters* and *Essays, Articles and Reviews* as well as the biographies of Waugh by Christopher Sykes and Martin Stannard. Spurling concludes her consideration of Waugh's reputation as seen by Powell with this:

In these years when Waugh was subjected to every kind of slight and barb, Powell's view of him never wavered. 'Surely the time has come to abandon trivialities,' he wrote sternly in the *Daily Telegraph* when the furore [*sic*] about the diaries first arose, 'and treat him as a great writer.' (395)

Spurling's consideration of Powell's life ends with the appearance of the last volume of *Dance to the Music of Time* in 1975. This is just as well for Waugh because, in his later life, Powell underwent a change of heart. Powell spent the 1970s writing his memoirs; these four volumes--published together and abridged as *To Keep the Ball Rolling* (Harmondsworth, 1983)--were published individually between 1976 and 1982. Discussions of Waugh in these memoirs were largely reflective of Powell's contemporaneous efforts to rehabilitate Waugh's reputation. In January 1982, however, Powell began to keep a detailed *Journal*. Whether this was intended to be published after his death is never stated, but he completed it in 1992, and its publication began under the editorial supervision of his wife Violet in 1995 (when he was 90), appearing in three volumes at one-year intervals thereafter.

The commencement of the *Journals* coincided with the notable revival of Waugh's popularity following the 1981 ITV broadcast of the *Brideshead Revisited* TV series. Powell had

been frustrated in several attempts to arrange a TV adaptation by the BBC of *Dance to the Music of Time*. The huge success of the *Brideshead* adaptation may well have added to this frustration. Whatever may have been the cause, the early *Journals* were riddled with negative references to Waugh the man and somewhat less so to his early works. These references were out of keeping with Powell's efforts over the preceding years to rehabilitate Waugh's reputation. The great success of the *Brideshead* TV series may have made any further such efforts by Powell appear superfluous, but they do not fully explain why Powell seemed to reverse direction. In fact, the negativity toward Waugh trailed off in the final two volumes of the *Journal* (1987-92). This would again support the theory that jealousy fueled by the *Brideshead*-fed revival of Waugh's popularity may have been the primary cause.⁹

No hint of this belated animosity appears in Spurling's book, although she does refer briefly to another incident in this later period that indirectly implicates Waugh. This involved a 1990 review by Auberon Waugh of Powell's collected essays *Miscellaneous Verdicts*. This appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph* and was harshly negative toward both Powell's writings and the man himself. This can in no way have been a response to Powell's own negativity toward Evelyn Waugh in the *Journals* since those did not start appearing in print until 5 years later. Whatever may have motivated Auberon's review, Powell blamed the *Telegraph* for publishing what he saw as a personal attack on him by his own long-time employer and quickly resigned. Spurling was also employed by the *Telegraph* at that time, writing the lead book review in the intervals between those of Powell that appeared every other week. She describes how she felt caught in the middle of this dispute and undertook to have the *Telegraph* mend the fences by commissioning a bust of Powell to be displayed in its offices. But she offers little explanation of what may have motivated Auberon Waugh to write the starkly negative review, aside from his having suffered "a barrage of taunts and merciless disparagements" by his father who had unreservedly admired Powell's works (422-25).¹⁰

⁹ For a more detailed discussion of these writings, see my essay "Anthony Powell and Evelyn Waugh: A London Literary Friendship."

¹⁰ An earlier biographer (Michael Barber, *Anthony Powell*, London: Duckworth, 2005) wondered whether the publication of the negative review may have been part of an effort to secure Powell's retirement from book reviewing. Already nearly 90, he may have been seen by the *Telegraph's* management as past his prime. In an article appearing in *The Spectator* ("Why I've been written out of Anthony Powell's history," 27 January 2018), Nicholas Shakespeare, at that time literary editor of the *Telegraph*, explains that the assignment of the review to Auberon was the result of a recent reorganization at the *Telegraph* and was in no way motivated by a desire that

Spurling's book is well written and produced and has enjoyed a favorable UK critical reception comparable to that accorded to the recent biography of Waugh by Philip Eade. It may well do more for Powell's reputation than a popular TV adaptation would have achieved.¹¹ But it does make one thing quite clear. Powell as a person was not the sort of self-promoter Waugh turned out to be. Powell in himself was not particularly interesting whereas Waugh the person was and is. Waugh created a memorable personality that still helps sell his books today even if much of what he projected appears snobbish or a bit mean. His life also makes interesting reading in a biography and may explain why there have been six published. Powell as a personality, on the other hand, hardly exists outside his writings and, even where those writings include a character based on Powell, such as Nick Jenkins, the narrator of *Dance*, it is Jenkins' (or Powell's) vivid and realistic descriptions of other people that one remembers. Powell was widely interviewed in his later years as he became the last living relic of the interwar generation, and what he says is thoughtful and relevant but neither controversial nor particularly exciting. What you get from him in his fiction is not what he projects in interviews or, as in this case, biographies. As he himself once admitted in explaining why he appeared so rarely in his memoirs: "I have absolutely no picture of myself. Never have had."¹²

Powell retire (retrieved from internet on 25 January 2018). In a review of Spurling's book in the *TLS* ("Temporary King," 28 November 2017), A N Wilson wrote that Auberon's animus was based on his mistaken assumption that Powell had blocked an entry for the Waugh family in a new edition of *Burke's Landed Gentry*. The source of the story was Hugh Massingberd. It was his decision, as editor, to exclude the Waughs, not Powell's, who merely wrote the introduction.

¹¹ UK's Channel 4 produced a four-episode, 7-hour series of *Dance to the Music of Time* in the late 1990s (shortly before Powell's death), but it did not achieve nearly the degree of popularity that was enjoyed by ITV's *Brideshead* series (a rather unfairly high bar for comparison, perhaps).

¹² Quoted in Spurling, (419) and sourced (486) from an interview by Lynn Barber that originally appeared in the *Independent on Sunday*, 8 March 1992.

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NEWS

John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest

Submissions are welcome for the John H. Wilson Jr. Evelyn Waugh Undergraduate Essay Contest. Essays (normally limited to 20 pages or 5000 words) are invited on any aspect of Waugh's life or work and will be judged by the *Evelyn Waugh Studies* editorial board. The winning essay will be published in the journal, and the author will receive a prize of \$500. Deadline: 31 December 2018. Email submissions to jpitcher@bennington.edu or Patrick.Query@usma.edu.

Discount for Society Members on *Complete Works*

The editors are pleased to share this offer from Berit Henrickson of Oxford University Press: a 30% discount on the volumes in the *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* collection:

<https://global.oup.com/academic/content/series/c/the-complete-works-of-evelyn-waugh-cwew>

From OUP: "The Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh offers the first scholarly edition of Waugh's work, bringing together all of his extant writings and graphic art: novels, biographies, travel writing, short fiction, essays, articles, reportage, reviews, poems, juvenilia, parerga, drawings, and designs. No other edition of a British novelist has been undertaken on this scale. Only 15% of Waugh's letters have previously been published. Alexander Waugh, Evelyn Waugh's grandson, is editing a twelve-volume Personal Writings sequence for the series, intercalating over 10,000 letters with the complete, unexpurgated diaries. All volumes will be beautifully produced, and have comprehensive introductions and detailed annotation. Fiction and non-fiction volumes will also contain a full account of each text's manuscript development and textual variants."

Lost Domains

David Fensome kindly informed the editors that he has recently published a short work on Waugh for download on the Amazon platform. It is titled *Lost Domains & Worlds Regained: Evelyn Waugh's Brideshead Revisited*. Click [here](#) to go to the page on Amazon.

Evelyn Waugh Society

The Waugh Society has 186 members. To join, please go to <http://evelynwaughsociety.org/>.

The Evelyn Waugh Discussion List has 80 members. To join, please visit

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Evelyn_Waugh.

The Evelyn Waugh Society is also on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/evelynwaughsoc>.

The Waugh Society is providing an RSS feed: <http://evelynwaughsociety.org/feed>.

And the Waugh Society's web site has opportunities for threaded discussions:

<http://evelynwaughsociety.org/forums/>.

The Evelyn Waugh Society is seeking a new Secretary. If you are interested or would like further information, please contact the current Secretary, Patrick Query, at Patrick.Query@usma.edu.

Submission Guidelines

Essays as well as notes and news about Waugh and his work may be submitted to *Evelyn Waugh Studies* by mail or email to (jpitcher@bennington.edu, patrick.query@usma.edu). Submissions should follow MLA style and be no more than 5000 words in length. Since most readers will be familiar with Waugh's work, authors should minimize unnecessary quotations and explanatory references. All submitted essays are first screened by the Editors and if deemed acceptable for publication are then sent to Associate Editors for further review. Authors should expect to be notified of the editors' final decision within twelve weeks of submission.

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