Inner Quest for Oneself: The Representation of Manliness in Evelyn Waugh’s Novels

A Dissertation Presented to
The Faculty of the English and American Literature
The Graduate School of Arts, Rikkyo University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Toshiaki Onishi

November 2015
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement ........................................................................................................ iii

Introduction: The Generation Who Were Too Young to Fight ........................................... 1

CHAPTER ONE:  
Manliness in Writings of the Modernists after the First World War ........................................ 24

CHAPTER TWO:  
The Psychic Prison of Manliness: A Reflexive Gaze into the Male Subjectivity in *Decline and Fall* ........................................................................................................ 52

CHAPTER THREE:  
“Just You Look at Yourselves”: Relativisation of the Authentic Image of Masculinity in *Vile Bodies* ........................................................................................................ 71

CHAPTER FOUR:  
Funeral Rites for an Explorer: The End of Imperial Masculinity in *A Handful of Dust* ........ 93

CHAPTER FIVE:  
“Contra Mundum” Again: The Anti-Masculine Narration of *Brideshead Revisited* .......... 117

Conclusion: Searching for an Alternative Father Figure ...................................................... 141

Notes ........................................................................................................................................ 154

Works Cited ......................................................................................................................... 163
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have incurred a debt of gratitude to my many people who have contributed immeasurably to this project that began life as a dissertation. This project could not have been completed without the help of some very important and special people. I am grateful for a number of friends and teachers in encouraging me to start the work, preserve with it, and finally to accomplish it. My profoundest gratitude must go to my supervisor, Professor Akihiko Niitsuma, of Rikkyo University, who helped to define and shape this study. He was, and continues to be, my model for intellectual rigor, generosity, and scholarship. Also, to the kind of gratitude that extends way before and well beyond this occasion: I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Hiroshi and Sachiko Onishi, who gave me a chance to spend my youth in England, understood my wish to study English literature, and preserve my motivation for researching this project.

The present thesis contains materials which were previously published in the following papers: “The Psychic Prison of Manliness: A Reflexive Gaze onto the Male Subjectivity in Decline and Fall” Studies in English Literature 56 (2015): 57-73.


November 2015
Introduction: The Generation Who Were Too Young to Fight

1.

Evelyn Arthur St John Waugh, who died in 1966 at the age of 63, had extraordinary intellectual gifts to represent the problems of the modern age between the two World Wars by his satirical, humorous, and, sometimes, nostalgic styles for which he was justly famous. In earlier criticism, Waugh had long been recognised simply as a humourist, a satirist and a Catholic novelist due to his distinct characteristics of his writings. Accordingly, previous critics had often interpreted the themes of Waugh’s novels and his characters from these simplified perspectives. It had been conventional to appreciate his novels from such categorised perspectives because his consistent concern during his literary career is quite difficult to grasp. Unfortunately these categorisations of his novels created a rigid framework of criticism of his works. Such critical analyses not only regulate the interpretive possibilities but also produce a number of discourses incompatible with each other.

In contrast to such tendencies, since the 1990s, Waugh’s novels focusing on the world of the Bright Young People have been reconsidered from the perspective of their influential relation with modernism, avant-garde movements, and cinema in the historical and cultural context of his era. Through analysis of Waugh’s harsh criticism of Bergson’s idea of Becoming, George McCartney brought to light Waugh’s recognition of “a dehumanising assault on the rational self” (Waugh 142). Frederick L. Beaty, for instance, emphasised the powerful effect of cinema on Waugh and his appropriation of cinematic method in his writings. His juxtaposition of “both related and unrelated scenes” achieves an effect of highlighting “comparisons, contrasts, and incongruities without ever intruding an authorial
comment” (12-13). Some critics have provided the perspective of an inter-textual relation between Waugh’s works and Futurism and Vorticism, and clarified his satirical perspective regarding society’s absurdity after the First World War. Samuel Hynes firmly asserted, for instance that satire has to be a prominent mode of literature in the years after the war (War 395). Together, these various interpretations revealed Waugh’s strategy of satirising the mechanisation, alienation, and fragmentation of human beings in the interwar period.

Considering Waugh’s black humour in portraying the devastation of moral values, the emptiness of society and the lack of subjectivity of the young generation, Lisa Colletta connected his black humour with the sense of anxiety prevailing among the novelists after the war: “the comedic works of many British novelists between the wars are haunted by a sense of anxiety and powerlessness, marked by feelings of loss and uncertainty and shot through with the trauma of violence and the threat of further brutality” (1). She did not argue the shared “sense of anxiety and powerlessness” from the gender perspective, though, when she pointed out the peculiar sense of loss after the war, obviously it leads to the problem of the male gender heavily damaged on the battlefields of the First World War. Despite creditable achievement of these previous critical examinations, including Colletta’s insightful suggestion, little attention has been paid to the fundamental problem of what sort of psychic mechanism produced the shared sense of masculine anxiety in the youngest generation’s mind—regarded as the “post-war generation” by Samuel Hynes¹—in the interwar period.

In order to consider this problem, Martin Green instructively remarks that after 1918 “the ideals of patriarchal virtue” were on the decline and the generation born between 1900 and 1910 “no longer wanted to grow up to be men” (Children 65). In these circumstances,
their deviant attitude had been regarded as “effeminate,” which has been defined as the
countertype to healthy and natural male virtue, as well as a denial of their patriarchal society
and its norms established through the Victorian and the Edwardian era. Those men were
regarded as possessing “illicit sexual desires” (Houlbrook, “Man” 146) and were censured
through the metaphor of a social pest in London during the inter-war period. In this context,
the younger generation, including the Bright Young People, who have ambiguous
sexualities and reject the conventional norm of “manliness” can be recognised as
“effeminate”². Green’s accurate depiction of the young men’s mentality draws attention to
the question of what psychic mechanism directly worked to create the effeminised
subjectivities under the pressures of becoming a man in the era after the First World War.

2.

From the historical perspective, “manliness” is a conception that is conventionally
acquired, as John Tosh described, through obedience to “a code” that society imposes
(“What” 181). Through the normative Victorian era, “[m]anliness expresses perfectly the
important truth that boys do not become men just by growing up, but by acquiring a variety
of manly qualities and manly competencies as part of a conscious process which has no
close parallel in the traditional experience of young women” (181). “Manliness,” which has
been reinforced through the dominance of the British Empire, becomes one of the most
problematic concepts in British society after the unprecedentedly destructive battlefields of
the First World War. J. A. Mangan argued that in British society, through the lens of
Christianity, the traditional idea of “manliness,” especially in the late Victorian and the
Edwardian era, meant that: “a man’s body is given him to be trained and brought into
subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous
causes, and the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men” (137-38).
Briefly, through the will of God, normative “manliness” had become inviolable. Following
the code, men naturally accept their roles and behave according to what society demands.
For this reason, it can be said that “manliness” is defined by what a man does rather than
what he is. As Michael Roper wrote, after the late-Victorian period, “manliness was judged
largely in terms of external qualities: it was from a man’s comportment, his physical
appearance and performance, that inner qualities were judged” (347-48). From such a
perspective, the most famous exemplifications of the demand and observance relation of the
code in the twentieth century are the tragic events that, by a curious coincidence, both
occurred in 1912: the Terra Nova Expedition and the sinking of the RMS Titanic. In each
event, unstinted praise was given to the men who behaved like gentlemen and played their
assigned roles.

During the interwar period, on the one hand, through Robert Baden-Powell’s Boy
Scouts movement that began in 1908, the normative code of “manliness” in Britain
remained part of the revival of the chivalric spirit on the battlefields of the First World War.
Sir Galahad, as Alfred Tennyson portrayed him in Idylls of the King, was a symbolic figure
of a man of virtue that had a powerful influence on the education of public school students,
and became an emblem of the noble cause of the death in action. Considering that the
chivalric spirit promoted through the system of education at that time reinforced the
ideology of imperialism, the traditional concept of “manliness” came to be an essential
factor behind the expansion of the empire in the Edwardian era. As John Beynon argued:
“[popular Imperialism’s] heart was the image of the brave British soldier-hero serving
the Empire in endless colonial conflicts, with the emphasis very much upon nationalist, racist and militaristic aspects of masculinity” (30-31). Therefore, under the ideology of masculinity, vast numbers of soldiers, consciously or not, went with high spirits to the most horrible battlefields. Thus, this view of “manliness” that placed a heavy burden on men is regarded as “a synonym for the toughest and most exclusive male attributes” (Tosh, “Masculinity” 337). It refuses “men’s emotional vulnerability” and strengthens “their monopoly on courage and stoicism” (337).

In addition, the celebration of ideal “manliness,” as Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska observed, reached a peak as fascist Italy and Nazi Germany came to promote “racial regeneration” (“Building” 596). In 1930s Britain, physical health and sturdiness as ideals of “manliness” were widely disseminated in the public mind, as seen in magazines such as Health and Strength and The Superman, which welcomed “a renewed interest in physical culture” (601), and the Festival of Youth, an event held in the presence of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at Wembley Stadium in July 1937. About the literary world, Martin Francis asserted “interwar boy’s literature was frequently more violent than its predecessors, with the hero using his physical strength, rather than his wits, to overcome his enemies” (644). In this context, as noted by John M. MacKenzie, the code for young men was “to take precise forms obeying orders from elders and superiors, training in firearms, acceptance of violence as part of the natural order, preparation for war and a strict separation of sexual roles” (176). Men had to be much more beautiful and stronger than ever against the fear of degeneration and of the enemies who threatened the stability of the empire. George L. Mosse asserted: “masculinity reaffirmed and strengthened its image in confrontation with its enemies, who represented all that the manly man was not, figures
constructed largely in direct opposition to the masculine stereotype” (12). In short, “manliness,” with the soldier-hero image, had been conventionally defined in relation to the other, and thus it requires the existence of outsiders to preserve its validity. In this context, “effeminate” men had inevitably been excluded from the “healthy” heterosexual world as one of its enemies, in order to strengthen the patriarchal value system.

On the other hand, in contrast to the abstract image of the soldier-hero in the battlefields, the ideal of “manliness” was challenged by the broken bodies of the men in the battlefields of the First World War. As Mark Girouard wrote, the chivalric spirit symbolically collapsed through the images of innumerable dead bodies on the battlefields and the graveyards filled with nameless soldiers on the home front (292-93). In these circumstances, as the generational conflict after the First World War between the masculine old and the effeminate young symbolically represented, the ideologically constructed image of “manliness” was on the verge of a crisis. While one wished to preserve the nineteenth-century idea of “manliness,” represented by the role of a breadwinner in a patriarchal society and the imagined hero of the battlefield in heroic narratives, the other took a sceptical view of the ideal of “manliness,” which was heavily influenced by the political and economic instability of that period due to the Great Depression in 1929.

Then, men who found it difficult to live in the patriarchal society of post-war Britain began to doubt the image of the stereotypical manly figure, and they found their enemies in the kernel of their psychological landscapes, although this enemy remained unnamed. Extreme ways of reinforcing the code of ideal “manliness,” paradoxically, disclosed society’s anxiety about a man who was getting “effeminate.” Alison Light offered an insight into the essential problem of masculinity in the interwar period: The figurative mutation
from a masculine empire to a “feminine” insular country required a revision of the concept of “manliness”:

I maintain that the 1920s and ’30s saw a move away from formerly heroic and officially masculine public rhetorics of national destiny and from a dynamic and missionary view of the Victorian and Edwardian middle classes in ‘Great Britain’ to an Englishness at once less imperial and more inward-looking, more domestic and more private—and, in terms of pre-war standards, more ‘feminine.’ (8)

Light’s discussion of a feminised masculinity during the years between the wars challenges us to reanalyse the characters depicted by male authors in this era. The tension between the authoritative image of “manliness” and the broken image of men can be regarded as a figurative confrontation between the outward gaze reinforcing imperialistic ideology of masculinity and the inward gaze linking the decline of the empire with anxiety over their broken masculine identities. While male subjectivity is conventionally guaranteed as long as people are indiscriminately subject to the ideological code, authors of satire, especially Waugh, in this period started to doubt its validity and focused on the formation of their male subjectivity in relation to the social code. As suggested by Light’s observation that “manliness” came to be considered reflexive and “inward-looking,” satirists at that time were awakened to the psychic life of power that dominated their male subjectivity. The generation that came of age after World War I came to consider the existence of something inside themselves as prohibiting them from being “effeminate” and ordering them to be men. For novelists of Waugh’s generation, it became urgent to depict the realisation of such a
dilemma in their male characters. Thus, he and his generation got forced to be sensitive about the concept of “manliness” within their own minds, and it is a crucial undertaking for them to pay serious attention to their own psychic lives. In this sense, I would like to call this era “the period of a reflective reconsideration of male subjectivity.”

3.

To analyse young men’s unstable subjectivities emerging from the morally devastated land after the Great War, the Freudian concept of the Oedipus complex must be considered: It is engraved everywhere in the novels of Waugh’s generation and ideologically permeated the lives of Waugh’s contemporaries between the 1920s and 1930s. In 1928, Freud wrote the essay “Dostoevsky and Parricide,” focusing on the ambiguous masculinity of boys and their fears of castration. In this essay, he describes the psychic relation between sons and fathers:

The relation of a boy to his father is, as we say, an ‘ambivalent’ one. In addition to the hate which seeks to get rid of the father as a rival, a measure of tenderness for him is also habitually present. The two attitudes of mind combine to produce identification with the father; the boy wants to be like him, and also because he wants to put him out of the way. This whole development now comes up against a powerful obstacle. At a certain moment the child comes to understand that an attempt to remove his father as a rival would be punished by him with castration. So from fear of castration—that is, in the interests of preserving his masculinity—he gives up his wish to possess his mother and get rid of his father. In so far as
this wish remains in the unconscious it forms the basis of the sense of guilt. (183)

It is not necessary to verify the validity of the Freudian framework of the Oedipus complex in the field of psychoanalysis here; however, it is noteworthy that the psychic relationship between father and son and the emergence of “the sense of guilt” in the son’s mind were very relevant to the younger generation during the 1930s. Burdened by dissatisfaction, as Freud states, sons in a dilemma have to abandon their desires for their mothers’ affection or to identify with their fathers in order to preserve their male identity. In this psychic process, through the fear of castration, “the sense of guilt” remains as the superego, which represses their behaviour. However, in the interwar decade, young men would not be able to come to a compromise on the inner father figures who impose the fear of castration upon them because the ideology of “manliness” plunges into crisis after the First World War and the Great Depression.

For instance, Christopher Isherwood’s *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939)—a semiautobiographical account of his time in 1930s Berlin—provides a good example for examining the young generation’s anxiety of their male subjectivity from the perspective of Freudian psychoanalysis. In *Goodbye to Berlin*, Isherwood retrospectively depicted the queer character Peter Wilkinson, who had the experience of undergoing Freudian psychotherapy, in order to show the psychic friction between generations. Although there is no direct demonstration that Peter is homosexual, his life with a German working-class boy, Otto Nowak, deviates from the social norm. In the following passage, Isherwood reveals Peter’s conflicted relationship with his father:
He paid a visit to London and found only his father at home. They had a furious quarrel on the first evening; thereafter, they hardly exchanged a word. After a week of silence and huge meals, Peter had a mild attack of homicidal mania. All through breakfast, he couldn’t take his eyes off a pimple on his father’s throat. He was fingering the bread-knife. Suddenly the left side of his face began to twitch. It twitched and twitched, so that he had to cover his cheek with his hand. He felt certain that his father had noticed this, and was intentionally refusing to remark on it – was, in fact, deliberately torturing him. At last, Peter could stand it no longer. He jumped up and rushed out of the room, out of the house, into the garden, where he flung himself face downwards on the wet lawn. There he lay, too frightened to move. After a quarter of an hour, the twitching stopped. (99)

His unspoken confession is a good example of an Oedipal relation between a father as oppressor and a son who fears to be castrated. Although Peter once tried to kill his father, his desire could not be accomplished. His ambivalent thoughts correspond to Freud’s observation that if a child has bisexual inclinations, “under the threat to the boy’s masculinity by castration, his inclination becomes strengthened to diverge in the direction of femininity, to put himself instead in his mother’s place and take over her role as object of his father’s love. But the fear of castration makes this solution impossible as well” (Freud 183). Although he fails, Peter feels a continued need to kill his father in order to gain control of his own subjectivity. Peter’s psychic relationship with his father suggests the pervasiveness of Freudian descriptions of father and son in the interwar period. To establish an alternative male subjectivity, young men feel the need to kill their fathers.
In this context, young men’s masculine anxiety, which interwar novelists have been interested in peculiarly, must be considered in relation to the generation gap, because it can be traced to their unconquerable obsession with and abhorrence of the ideal manly figure of the preceding era, which they cannot emulate. Therefore, it is crucial to analyse literary works by Waugh’s generation from the perspective of their ambiguous attitude towards the older generation and examine their ways of representing their psychic lives. Instead of focusing exclusively on their satirical outward gazes towards society, their reflexive inward gazes towards their psychic landscapes must also be considered. Then, we can see that dead fathers symbolically haunt the younger generation’s novels and become an ideological existence internalised as the norm of “manliness” in the young men’s minds. In these circumstances, the requirement to become a man becomes internalised as his central obligation. This internalisation of the power as a dominant instinct Friedrich Nietzsche calls “conscience” in On the Genealogy of Morals:

The proud knowledge of this extraordinary privilege of responsibility, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself and over fate has sunk down into his innermost depths and has become an instinct, a dominant instinct—what will he call it, this dominant instinct, assuming that he needs a name for it? About that there can be no doubt: this sovereign man calls it his conscience . . . (41-42)

Waugh’s generation’s demonstrations of conflicting emotions about masculine subjectivity in their novels have a close relation to the internalised father figure, that is, the masculine
ideology which requires a son to be a man. While they delineate the younger generation’s powerful desire to be free from the normative code, they, at the same time, are self-consciously aware of the influence of the masculine ideology, which restricts their desires by requiring them to behave as normal men. As if sharing Freud’s psychological analysis of the son’s fear of emasculation, various novelists of the “post-war generation” represented this weight on their male identities. Compared with the heroic, manly figure on the battlefield, novelists too young to have served as soldiers bore psychological repression in common. Their works, reflecting the aftermath of the Great War, uniquely focus on the characters’ unstable subjectivity in society of this era from the perspective of the psychological landscape in contrast to the novelists of previous generations. They were struggling with the conventional image of “manliness.”

4.

Isherwood, in *Lions and Shadows* (1938), deftly stated this psychological repression: “we young writers of the middle twenties were all suffering, more or less subconsciously, from a feeling of shame that we hadn’t been old enough to take part in the European war. The shame, I have said, was subconscious: in my case, at any rate, it was suppressed by the strictest possible censorship” (46). It can be said that this sense of shame relates to their anxiety of male subjectivity. Feeling “guilty excitement,” young Isherwood regarded war as “The Test” of one’s courage, of maturity and sexual prowess. He craved to be “a Man,” but at the same time, he felt terrified that he should fail (*Lions* 46-47). Although not as bold as Isherwood, George Orwell, in the essay “My Country Right or Left” (1940), retrospectively expressed anxiety in regard to “manliness”: “my particular generation, those who had been
‘just too young,’ became conscious of the vastness of the experience they had missed. You felt yourself a little less than a man, because you had missed it” (135). These feelings surely emphasise the considerable influence of the shared image of ideal “manliness” at that time.

Waugh was also sensitive to male subjectivity throughout his life. In an article “The War and the Younger Generation,” contributed to the *Spectator* in 1929, he insisted that the First World War divided people into three generations. The first one was “the wistful generation” who were mature physically and mentally enough before the First World War broke out. The second was “the stunted and mutilated generation” who fought on the battlefields and the third was “the younger generation” who accepted the war as part of their daily lives. Waugh focused on the third generation, called the Bright Young People, and claimed that their situation was rooted in the predicament of wartime, which deprived them of “the sense of values.” Moreover, he emphasised that these three generations were “perfectly distinct classes between whom none but the most superficial sympathy can ever exist” (*Essays* 61–63). Always aware of the generation gap, Waugh had acknowledged his sense of sin since he was a public school student at Lancing. His short essay “The Youngest Generation,” written for *Lancing College Magazine* in December 1921, made an instructive suggestion for reconsidering his comical novels during the 1930s. In this article, he clearly asserted that there was a “great gulf of the war” between the older and the younger generations. In contrast to the young men of the nineties who poured out their emotion in their works, Waugh highlighted the importance of having a sense of humour “which will keep them from ‘the commission of all sins, or nearly all, save those that are worth committing’” (*Essays* 11). While his satirical viewpoint sounds humorous, it discloses, at the same time, his desire to escape from anxiety about his “sins” through superficial
laughter. This problem re-emerges in another essay, “Oxford and the Next War,” in 1924. In this essay, Waugh strongly longed for an outbreak of “another general disturbance” to show that he and his generation “have a great body of young men of all sorts of education.” His longing may be regarded as his intense desire to be a man. If a devastating social event occurred, Waugh assumed in all seriousness that soldiers, as “gentlemen-adventurers,” would be able to have an opportunity for “really intense enjoyment and really intense misery” (Essays 21). This frantic desire of the post-war generation for war would reveal his fear that in his present condition he was not a man and that he could not become one without the experience of war. It seems clear that Waugh’s essential problem during the interwar period was his unconquerable obsession with the sense of loss of his male subjectivity.

In this context, it is important to pay attention to Waugh’s delineations of both hatred and affection towards the ideology of masculinity in his satirical novels through the portrayal of the Bright Young People who seek alternative identities in order to reject the traditional value system: his ambivalence toward his father in order to precisely understand the existential struggle of post-war generation. To do so, it is consequential to note that he consciously depicted his ambivalent attitude in his works, because, while he searched for a way to escape from the authoritative code of “manliness,” he was conscious of his paradoxical desire to establish identification with the internal voice of the normative code. This suggests that he surely adopted an objective standpoint between the older and younger generations. Such a position provided him with the opportunity to realise the formation of his male subjectivity reflexively in relation to the workings of ideology.

As Christine Berberich noted, the young men and women of the late 1910s and 1920s
craved the establishment of “an alternative form of masculinity, which sought solace in decadence” to resist their fathers’ roles as empire builders (Image 102). This craving was embodied as a challenge to the rigid sexual dichotomy of the period. In their resistance to the norm of “manliness,” the Bright Young People positively adopted the ideals of dandies and aesthetes of the late nineteenth century, especially Oscar Wilde, to construct their alternative male subjectivity. The revival of decadence, which was praised by the rebellious Bright Young People, revealed young men’s dilemma about their required male subjectivity, and it brought about a promiscuous atmosphere and a radical idea of sexuality in their world. Such aspiration towards decadence can be regarded as a yearning for a return to the interior world, which reflects a problem of what male subjectivity is, as well as a rejection of the outside world.

5.

Given the emergence of the interest in male gender in the literary field after the First World War, the main purpose of this doctoral dissertation is to delve into Evelyn Waugh’s reflexive representation of the relationship between the normative masculine ideology and his male characters throughout his literary career. This perspective serves, in contrast to previous novelists as well as with his contemporaries, to emphasise his alternative way of demonstrating male subjectivity throughout his novels during the period between the First and the Second World War. This is the thematic core of Waugh’s novels. Interestingly, Waugh has gradually advanced his understanding of the relation between men in British society and the normative concept of “manliness.” He, at first, focuses on an individual dilemma under the ideological pressure of “manliness,” then, moves on to examine the
problematic relation between his generation and the masculine ideology. Later, this perspective is expanded into the cultural and economical problem of British society during the interwar period. Finally, in World War II, Waugh grapples with the problem how to narrate the plight of repressed male characters and how to sympathise with them under the pressure of the masculine ideology. It is in this progress here that we find the characteristic quality of Waugh’s novels. This analysis will provide a chance to reconsider not only the works of Waugh, but also those of other contemporary novelists who tried to realise their male subjectivities under an oppressive masculine ideology.

In order to verify Waugh’s intense desire to represent male subjectivity under the pressure of ideological masculinity, this dissertation is organised in the following manner. Chapter One focuses on the representation of “manliness” in canonical works during the inter-war period in order to highlight the prevalence of this concept. Given the entangled problems of male gender during the decades between the wars, it is highly important to reconsider the meaning of the broken bodies of the returned soldiers described in literary texts and its powerful impact on the male gender as one of cultural legacies of the First World War. In the literary field, it is certain that, highly influenced by the aftermath of the war, most novelists had a keen interest in the gender problem after the decline of the rigid binary classification of sexual roles. Therefore, the problem of how the preceding generation—modernists—portray the concept of “manliness” in the physically and mentally devastated lands after the First World War must be discussed. To consider the significant relation between modernists and the First World War from the perspective of male gender, this chapter mainly focuses on the most consequential works such as D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928), which describes the aftermath of the Great War, and
Virginia Woolf’s *Three Guineas* (1938), which focuses mainly on how to prevent the next World War. These two works are touchstones to delve into the representation of “manliness” during the inter-war period. Through the discussion of these works, this chapter serves as the basis to reexamine the writings of Evelyn Waugh’s generation during the inter-war period. Through the discussion of Lawrence’s realistic portrayal of the wounded veteran and Woolf’s insightful gaze into men who deviate from dominant masculine ideology, it is clear that the problem of male gender is already present in the modernist circle. Such a viewpoint is surely taken over by the next generation—Woolf calls it “young”—after modernism. Through this argument, we become prepared to examine the younger generation’s writings from the perspective of the psychic mechanism of male subjectivity in relation to the cultural context of the 1930s.

Chapter Two examines Waugh’s *Decline and Fall* (1928) from the perspective of masculine ideology. This novel centres on the world of the Bright Young People, and it has been considered a satire on the mechanisation, alienation, and fragmentation of human beings in the interwar period. Similarly, the protagonist Paul Pennyfeather has been regarded as a mere witness of the chaotic world of the younger generation in the Roaring Twenties. Paul’s exploration of the Bright Young People’s society is described as an “extraordinary adventure” (115), unlike the adventures in imperialistic narratives.

Considering the dominance of masculine ideology in these decades, this chapter examines the representation of “manliness” in Waugh’s *Decline and Fall*. In this context, it is useful to compare Waugh’s portrayal of male figures with those of Wyndham Lewis and Aldous Huxley, earlier satirists who were older than Waugh. Although we can easily find a similar motif in the novels of these three authors, it is critical to emphasise that with a
reflexive gaze on the relation between the male subjectivity and the ideology of masculinity, Waugh modified the conventional representation of the male subjectivity that Lewis and Huxley had already offered. Quite interestingly, Lewis and Waugh have in common their use of the setting of a prison to demonstrate their understanding of the male subjectivity. However, for Lewis, a prison makes the protagonist avert his eye from the reality, whereas for Waugh, all men find themselves confined within the “psychic prison of manliness.” From this perspective, in *Decline and Fall*, we may see that the reflexive representation of the male subjectivity occurred under the ideology of masculinity during the 1920s.

By taking this stance, Waugh’s reflexive gaze on the young men’s subjectivity is finally confirmed. His satirical descriptions in *Decline and Fall* call on young men to notice the psychic prison that is under siege by the internal voice of the masculine ideology, and to realise how their male subjectivity is established. This is the first step towards providing relief to men who have been defined as outsiders to the world from the conventional concept of “manliness”: this was the thematic core of *Decline and Fall*. It is here that one finds a characteristic feature of Waugh’s satirical novels.

Chapter Three discusses Waugh’s reflexive gaze on male subjectivity vis-à-vis the internalised normative code of “manliness” of the young male protagonist in *Vile Bodies* (1930) in a similar vein. While critics have discussed Waugh’s satirical portrayal of the unruly Bright Young People who attacked Britain’s conventional value system during the interwar era, they have never paid sufficient attention to his representation of the normative code of “manliness,” which pervades the precarious existence of the protagonist, Adam Fenwick-Symes.
Masculine ideology is relevant in this novel as well as in *Decline and Fall*; however, in *Vile Bodies*, Waugh’s scepticism toward the validity of “manliness” is much more deepened than the previous work. Unlike Paul Pennyfeather, who is an outsider to young men’s world throughout *Decline and Fall*, Waugh associates Adam as one of the younger generation in their society in *Vile Bodies*, highlighting the psychic mechanism of young men’s world from the inside that reveals the discrepancy between their desire for alternative sexualities and the impossibility of their escape from the normative code; therefore, this chapter pays particular attention to the two decisive moments. Firstly, the words that Mrs Ape utters—“*Just you look at yourselves*” (84)—at a raucous party of the Bright Young People, is discussed. And then, the moment when the declaration of war is reported to Adam is focused on. Mrs Ape’s words create an awkward moment among the guests because they cannot help feeling anxious about their subjectivities. However, they continue clinging to their superficial lives. This scene reveals the paradox within their psyches because, although they are convinced they reject the normative code, their identities are based unconsciously on their internalised ideology of the Establishment.

Unlike Paul Pennyfeather who can finally escape from the problematic world of the Bright Young People, this contradiction finally leads Adam, who has lost everything in his life, to join the battlefield without any intention or purpose. At the battlefront, despite his wretched state, Adam is ironically fabricated into the manly hero who could be awarded the Victoria Cross. In contrast to the uncritical acceptance of the heroic “manliness” in this era, Waugh’s ironical depiction of Adam, the parody of the soldier-hero, brings relativisation of the authentic concept of “manliness” during the interwar decades in that the process of constructing masculine ideology is self-reflexively described in the novel.
Chapter Four explores the literary funeral rites for the concept of “manliness” in relation to the decline and fall of British Empire that Waugh ritually depicts in his works. *A Handful of Dust* (1934) will be primarily discussed from this perspective: Tony’s adventure for regaining the patriarchal world that ends with his death can be regarded as symbolic and ritualistic obsequies for his father. Given the distinctive relation between the tragedy of the individual male protagonist and the historical context, it is important to focus on the following three significant aspects of the novel. First, there still remains a strong influence of the norm of “manliness” in London and also in Tony’s life in Hetton Abbey. Secondly, despite his wish to preserve his English life in his estate, it is almost to be destroyed by the aftermath of the Great Depression, resulting eventually in the end of the Empire and the attempt of the bloc economy. Interestingly this historical event is embodied as the existence of John Beaver. Thirdly, these two aspects of the novel finally leads us to recognise Tony’s death as an explorer in the colonial country as the symbolical funeral rites of “manliness.”

From this point of view, while his theme of the previous novels is to depict and relativise the functions of the ideological masculinity internalised in the psychic landscape of the male protagonists, in *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh clearly aims to delineate the decisive relation between the diminishing image of “manliness” and the decline of the Empire in order to disclose the violent feature of the authoritative patriarchal code of “manliness.” In order to do so, Waugh focuses particularly on the socio-political events, including the Great Depression to actualise the unstable male subjectivity in relation to the historical context of 1930s. It is demonstrated unobtrusively as the backdrop of the portrayal of the Tony Last’s life and death in old-fashioned manner.

Chapter Five focuses on the male subjectivity of Charles Ryder in *Brideshead*
Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder (1945) within the cultural and historical context of the decades following World War I in order to analyse Ryder’s reflection on his lost friendship with Sebastian Flyte. Taking into account Waugh’s Catholicism, critics have interpreted the novel from a religious perspective, and most have paid special attention to whether Ryder is finally relieved of his profane life on the mentally devastating battlefields of World War II — that is, upon his final conversion to Catholicism. However, since David Leon Higdon, in his problematic essay, pointed out the homoerotic relationship between Charles and Sebastian, queer studies readers have attempted to clarify their sexually ambiguous friendship in light of the identity politics today.

However, these critics have never paid sufficient attention to two highly related issues. One is Ryder’s subjectivity under masculine gender ideology, which, during the interwar period, complementarily reinforced the validity of the British Empire and World War I. Given Waugh’s obsessive interest in the normative gender ideology from the beginning of his literary career, it is highly relevant to emphasise Ryder’s sense of masculine anxiety. The other issue is Ryder’s reflexive narration of his lamentable past with Sebastian. Through his first-person narrative, Ryder highlights that the normative masculine ideology that demands their “manliness” is the cause of their mental separation.

First, I shall argue that Charles’s potential “effeminacy” exists in relation to his fear of femininity and the symbolical loss of his father as a model of ideal “manliness.” His latent fear of being “effeminate” is revealed in the scene where Julia abruptly intrudes into the romantic friendship between Charles and Sebastian. Her hard stare at their intimate relationship makes them uncomfortable and forces them to confront the necessity of entering into heterosexual relationships in the post-war British society. Influenced
unconsciously by the authoritative masculine ideology, Charles uncritically moves from the romantic friendship with Sebastian to the heterosexual relationship with Julia. His lack of a reflexive gaze into his male subjectivity finally leads him to a wretched state on the battlefields of World War II. After experiencing the monotonous service of the army, he realises that there is something completely wrong in blindly following the dominant masculine ideology.

Second, this chapter examines Ryder’s reflexive narration, through which he reconstructs and analyses his past, and which allows him to strongly deny institutionalised heterosexism, and self-reproachfully demonstrates the decisive moment in the shipwreck of his friendship with Sebastian, who could not escape from the heavy pressure of his mother’s beliefs and finally succumbed to alcoholism. In this scene, both Charles and Sebastian are aware of the imminent end of their friendship and drink together, saying “contra mundum” (139). At this moment, Charles, who is about to move to the heterosexual world does not carefully consider the meaning of these words; however, as the narrator, Ryder recollects this scene with critical comment, observing that there was something deceitful behind his words. Such a self-reproachful narration challenges the authoritative gender ideology that he once followed. Therefore, this study labels his narration “anti-Masculine.” Through his reflexive narration, Ryder can find a way to resist the normative code, even if it is only possible for him by repeatedly looking back on his past.

Each chapter attempts to provide an alternative interpretation of one of Waugh’s novels; however, these novels do not exist independently. Each point of view and conclusion organically cooperates with those of the others because in the thematic core of his entire novels there appears his deep concern with the First World War. For instance, the
thematic relation between the concept of “manliness” and the Empire presented mainly in the chapter of *A Handful of Dust* can also be seen in *Decline and Fall* or *Vile Bodies*. Or, the anti-masculine narrative of *Brideshead Revisited* provides a good opportunity to reconsider Waugh’s consistent standpoint and his objective narration of his previous novels. Therefore, I hope that every interpretation and every idea produced in four chapters can contribute to future examinations of Evelyn Waugh’s whole works and also those of other contemporary novelists’. This doctoral dissertation provides a reconsideration of not only the works of Waugh but also those of other novelists who tried to realise their male subjectivity from the post-First World War to the present because Waugh’s generation, searching for an alternative male subjectivity instead of the authoritarian masculinity, becomes a great watershed from the perspective of male gender.
Chapter One: Manliness in Writings of the Modernists after the First World War

1.

During the Edwardian era, the aim of war, which was regarded as a kind of sport, was expected to prevent human beings from degeneration; however, it did not take much time for such an optimistic point of view to be completely destroyed by the tragic battlefields in history to produce numerous returned soldiers with physical and mental injuries. Expecting the war to be a short decisive battle, at the beginning, innumerable numbers of soldiers sent to the battlefields by their fathers’ generation were filled with joyful expectation to show their heroic strength and sturdiness, that is, their appropriate subordination to “manliness.” However, such excessive optimism ended up in one of the greatest tragedies in history with, at least in Britain, around 920,000 casualties. In these battlefronts, the Victorian value system was thoroughly challenged in the no-man’s-land between the trenches. The values of a heroic “manliness” and the virtue of gentlemanly behaviour collapsed under the potential vulnerability of self. Therefore, the First World War brought about one of the most drastic changes in Western Civilisation.

In such situations, Deborah Parsons writes: “[the] task that post-war literary Modernism took up was exactly that of aesthetic expression and reconstruction out of the ambivalent remembering and forgetting of its recent history” (190); however, from the perspective of gender, it is necessary to point out that the modernists attempted not only to reconstruct aesthetic value of writings but also to reconsider the validity of conventional masculine patriarchy. Considering the prevailing anxiety about the symbolical impotence and disability of man after the First World War, Sarah Cole describes the permeation of the
sense of “brokenness” (192) through the physical and mental wounds of returned soldiers in the post-Great War period, which made an enormous impact on the imaginative construction of the human condition, especially of men, and on the sexual division of labour spiritually, psychologically, and culturally. It inevitably came to be seen as a definite sign of decline in the conventional image and power of “manliness.” This concept of “brokenness” is historically connected with Max Nordau’s concept of degeneration and the Freudian anxiety over the limitation of human bodies.

Given the entangled problems of male gender during this period, it is highly important to reconsider the meaning of the broken bodies of returned soldiers described in literary texts and its powerful impact on the male gender as one of cultural legacies of the First World War. In the literary field, it is certain that, highly influenced by the aftermath of the war, most of the novelists had a keen interest in the gender problem after the decline of the rigid binary of sexual roles. Therefore, the problem of how the preceding generation—the modernists—portrayed the concept of “manliness” in the physically and mentally devastated lands after the First World War must be discussed. To consider the significant relation between modernists and the First World War from the perspective of male gender, this chapter mainly focuses on the most consequential works, such as D. H. Lawrence’ Lady Chatterley’s Lover (1928), which describes the aftermath of the Great War, and Virginia Woolf’s Three Guineas (1938), which focuses mainly on how to prevent the next World War. These two works are touchstones for understanding the representation of “manliness” during the inter-war period. Through the discussion of these works, this chapter serves as the background to a reexamination of the writings of Evelyn Waugh’s generation during the inter-war period.
2.

Like other modernists, D. H. Lawrence incorporated mythic and apocalyptic motifs in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in order to accomplish the aesthetic revival of humanity. For instance, Frank Kermode foregrounds Lawrence’s adaptation of apocalypse in describing the post-war world of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (160), and, Dennis Jackson emphasises the relevance of the motif of a primitive religion in the work from the perspective of the author’s strong interest in *The Golden Bough* (129). Such critical views highlight Lawrence’s hope for a great revival to come after the collapse of the post-war human nature. In other words, such critics suggest that Lawrence is going to heal the anxiety over the fragmentation or mechanisation of humanity after the First World War, by using primitive religious and a mythical themes and images. Therefore, the focal points of preceding studies of Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* mostly have been the sexual and spiritual relationship between Connie and Mellors, which implies the rebirth of primitive human vitality in response to the sense of alienation by industrial capitalism in the modern age. However, these studies, positively regarding the intention of Lawrence as the spiritual revival of a broken England through these characters’ erotic love affair, have frequently excluded the impotent Clifford Chatterley from consideration.

Lawrence does not necessarily express a primitive or optimistic view of reproduction in conformity with the cycle of the seasons from winter to spring. On the contrary, the more positively he portrays the world before the Great War, the stronger he feels the flow of irreversible time and represents the impossibility of the circulating process of rebirth. Accordingly, he, as a male novelist suffering from the anxiety of impotence, chooses to
portray the lameness of Clifford in the post-First World War period realistically. Focusing on the wounded soldiers, Cole pays particular attention to Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and highlights the broken body of Clifford, which has been come to be recognised as the symbol of inhuman industry. Through a comparison with the vigorous Mellors, a gamekeeper, Clifford becomes “a metaphor and catalyst for a psychic and spiritual breakdown among his class” (191). In the post-war period, Joanna Bourke has pointed out that the heroic valuation of wounded soldiers drastically changed from manly hero to a burden, which reminded people of the pitiful experiences of the Great War (70). And Connie and Mellors exclude Clifford as the embodiment of “brokenness.” Thus, they had to forget the wounded veteran and eliminate his existence in order to describe the evanescent peace of the post-war era. It is necessary for them to ignore him in order to posit the reconstruction of a new physical and spiritual world.

However, considering the historical importance of Clifford, Lawrence’s reference to the characterisation of Clifford and Connie in “The Propos of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*” must be focused on:

As to whether the “symbolism” is intentional—I don’t know. Certainly not in the beginning, when Clifford was created. When I created Clifford and Connie, I had no idea what they were or why they were. They just came, pretty much as they are. But the novel was written, from start to finish, three times. And when I read the first version, I recognized that the lameness of Clifford was symbolic of the paralysis, the deeper emotional or passionnal paralysis, of most men of his sort and class, today. I realized that it was perhaps taking an unfair advantage of Connie, to paralyse him
technically. It made it so much more vulgar of her to leave him. Yet the story came as it did, by itself, so I left it alone. Whether we call it symbolism or not, it is, in the sense of its happening, inevitable. (333)

In regard to the question of whether or not the disability of Clifford becomes “symbolic of the paralysis,” Lawrence warily holds his judgement in suspense; however, he, at the same time, realises that Clifford’s lameness is “inevitable” to delineate the wasteland after the Great War. Lawrence knows that Connie’s illicit relationship with Mellors appears unfair due to her husband’s disability. Yet he cannot help depicting the sense of “brokenness” engraved on Clifford’s body. In this point of view, we should give due consideration to the lameness and paralysis of Clifford as the setting of the novel and reconsider this novel in the context of male gender in the post-war era. Contemplating the historical background, we can see that Clifford’s suffering of “male hysteria” by learning of his wife’s betrayal is quite relevant. It leads us to consider Lawrence’s intention to reveal the hardships of men in the post-war period. In this context, Clifford’s tears have a powerful reality in that they represent the disastrous condition of the wounded soldier who is excluded from any vision of post-war euphoria. Therefore, Lawrence’s realistic portrayal of the hardships of men after the Great War gives us a good opportunity to focus on the vulnerability of male identity during the inter-war period.

3.

For the time being, in order to reconfirm Lawrence’s thoughts about the male gender, let us consider his short novel, “England, My England,” which clearly shows the relation
between the male body and the First World War. “England, My England,” published in 1915 during the First World War, and later, after the war, rewritten for the English Review in 1922, centres directly on the relation between a male character and the First World War. Interestingly, while the name of the protagonist in the version of 1915 was “Evelyn,” which sounds feminine, it is revised in 1922 to “Egbert,” which is the name of the first England King, perhaps in order to appear more masculine. The character has undergone a complete transfiguration to someone who highly esteems the values of an idyllic world. Egbert, who wants to live in an ancient land with “[the] spirit of place” (5), is portrayed as a beautiful man with a strong physique like “an English archer” (6). This short story portrays the life of the protagonist in the rural district Crockham who, refusing to take part in a capitalist society, hopes to live a pre-modern life in order to cultivate his ancestral land. Nevertheless, he and his wife Winifred’s life depends on the economic strength of his father-in-law, Godfrey Marshall. However, triggered by his daughter Joyce’s accident due to his own fault, Egbert’s lack of paternity and his role as a breadwinner are dramatically foregrounded. After the Great War breaks out, because he has lost his position in the family circle, he cannot but go to the battlefield, and finally is killed in action. There are major differences in the plot between the 1915 and 1922 versions, but the number of battlefield scenes has been reduced, and the protagonist’s physical beauty as an Anglo-Saxon and his nostalgia for the good old days are emphasised in 1922. As David Trotter precisely asserts, such an excessively idealised world for a beautiful man serves as a parody of Englishness (162).

Lawrence’s rhetoric that links primitivism and aestheticism often expresses harsh criticism of the capitalistic society after modernisation. In his essay, “Nottingham and the Mining Countryside,” he calls the recreation of England by human hands “the tragedy of
The real tragedy of England, as I see it, is the tragedy of ugliness. The country is so lovely: the man-made England is so vile. I know that ordinary collier, when I was a boy, had a peculiar sense of beauty, coming from his intuitive and instinctive consciousness, which was awakened down pit. And the fact that he met with just cold ugliness and raw materialism when he came up into daylight, and particularly when he came to the Square or the Breach, and to his own table, killed something in him and in a sense, spoiled him as a man. (*Late Essays* 291)

In contrast to the beautiful and instinctive underground world of the coal miners, Lawrence resolutely censures the ugliness of the materialised social world that deprives men of their manliness. Raymond Williams characterises Lawrence as an “exile” who expects social reform to restore the native land (205). Essentially, the characterisation of Egbert is based on Lawrence’s wish to keep materialism away from a pristine nature. Thus, Egbert’s beautiful body embodies the author’s ideal manliness, one that is free from the ugly materialism. His tragedy is caused by the ideological requirement to take part in capitalistic society and become a man like his father-in-law:

Why didn’t Egbert do something, then? Why didn’t he come to grips with life? Why wasn’t he like Winifred’s father, a pillar of society, even if a slender, exquisite column? Why didn’t he go into harness of some sort? Why didn’t he take some direction? (14)
After his daughter becomes disabled in an accident, he cannot help abandoning his ideal world and he becomes a member of society like his father-in-law, who has “the old smoky torch of paternal godhead” (16). He feels that he must choose to live in a materialistic society like Godfrey or go to the war. Finally, he goes to war and is shot in the head by a German sniper. In the version of 1915, the protagonist heroically kills a German soldier before he dies; however, in 1922 his death is described as nothing but to be forgotten:

No world, no people. Better the agony of dissolution ahead than the nausea of the effort backwards. Better the terrible work should go forward, the dissolving into the black sea of death, in the extremity of dissolution, than that there should be any reaching back towards life. To forget! To forget! Utterly, utterly to forget, in the great forgetting of death. To break the core and the unit of life, and to lapse out on the great darkness. Only that. To break the clue, and mingle and commingle with one darkness, without afterwards of forwards. Let the black sea of death itself solve the problem of futurity. Let the will of man break and give up. (33)

This revised ending clearly shows Lawrence’s understanding of men’s plight in British society after the First World War. In this version, the heroes in the battlefields have already gone, and there just remains a sense of forgetfulness. Like the numerous returned soldiers who are rejected on the home front, Egbert dissolves into darkness in his last moments and waits to be forgotten. Along with the historical fact that wounded veterans are forgotten by the people on the home front, Lawrence suggests that Egbert’s tragic death on the battlefield
means nothing on the home front. The tragedy of Egbert is succeeded by that of Clifford. However, while Egbert cannot return to his homeland, Clifford is brought back “more or less in bits” (5). Therefore, in the description of Clifford, we can see the post-war masculine anxiety and their hardship, which “England, My England” has not represented.

4.

After two revisions, in 1928 Lady Chatterley’s Lover is published in its current form. Samuel Hynes points out the importance of the year 1928 in the period between wars. He explains that in this year the sense of living in the age after World War I transforms into a sense of living before the Second World War (Auden 40). It is important to pay attention to the fact that uneasiness about human nature was actualised in a chain of “experienced tragedy” in the First World War and “the imminent tragedy” of the next World War around 1928. This uneasiness makes Lawrence depict the famous opening sentences in Lady Chatterley’s Lover:

Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We’ve got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen. (5)

In this paragraph, after describing the difficult circumstances after the war, Lawrence expresses his strong wish to live by looking ahead. However, his earnest wish paradoxically
foregrounds his sense of the uneasiness. In addition to his depiction of the sexual life of Connie and Mellors, Lawrence’s realistic description of Clifford as a wounded soldier offers us an opportunity to see the tragic world in the post-war period from Clifford’s point of view. Critics have tended to focus on the sexual relationship between Mellors and Connie in order to highlight the rebirth of human nature; however such interpretations, like the tendency of people on home front to forget the wounded soldiers, consign Clifford to oblivion as an unwelcome presence in their peaceful world. However, the relationship between the gamekeeper and the master’s wife is at the expense of those who physically deviate from the ideal of beautiful human beings. In this reading of the novel, even if they are to be forgotten, the injured men only serve as a background to healthy and beautiful bodies.

Like Egbert in “England, My England,” Clifford is not simply an obstacle who hinders “normal” sexual love. Similar to Egbert, who hates the national tendency to regard war as a good and evil binary, Clifford, before joining the army, is portrayed as a person who resists the war system that oppresses the individual. He calls everything, including “his class,” “convention,” and “any sort of real authority,” “ridiculous” (10). Then, after the death of his elder brother Herbert on the battlefield, he feels a strong sense of the “absurd” (11). His rebellious attitude is firmly connected with his way of living. He intentionally keeps the industrialised society and his own class at a distance. However, interestingly enough, he has to change his pessimistic way of thinking after the First World War.

After a period of convalescence, Clifford starts his life as a modernist-like novelist. James C. Cowan suggests that Lawrence projects himself to Clifford in order to criticise himself for not being a hero (143). It is worthwhile reconsidering Clifford from the
viewpoint of his talent as a writer. Although Julian Moynahan defines Clifford’s decision to become a professional writer as his “first pattern of obstruction” because he feels the necessity to earn money “as the visible yet abstract emblem of success” (79), it must be emphasised that there remains problematic aspects of Clifford’s works:

Still he was ambitious. He had taken to writing stories, curious, very personal stories about people he had known, clever, rather spiteful, and yet in some mysterious way, meaningless. The observation was extraordinary and peculiar. But there was no touch, no actual contact. It was as if the whole thing took place on an artificial earth.—And since the field of life is largely an artificially-lighted stage today, the stories were curiously true to modern life—to the modern psychology, that is. (16)

Although Clifford’s insight into the materialistic modern world is represented in his novel, his work and his existence itself are regarded as “nothing in it” (17) and both are completely ignored by Connie and her father. Similar to the situations of returned soldiers, the world represented from the viewpoint of Clifford is regarded as meaninglessness. However, given that his “artificial” style of writing a novel without “actual content” seems to follow the school of modernism, his presence as a writer has a powerful reality in the post-war era. His interest in the material of the artificial world is resonant with Lawrence’s interest in it.

In order to reconsider the world depicted by Clifford, it will be helpful to discuss Mark Gertler’s classic, *Merry-Go-Round* (1916), which Lawrence extravagantly admires in his letter 9th Oct. 1916. The painting, which Lawrence calls “great, and true,” feeling
“horrible and terrifying,” depicts a view of the modern world similar to that of Clifford’s artificial novel (*Letters* 660). Gertler’s work depicts mechanised human beings of various classes, occupations, and gender with standardised expressionless faces on a mechanical merry-go-round. They are deprived of their subjectivities and represent the sense of “brokenness” prevailing after the First World War. Gertler’s picture and Clifford’s artificial novel present a realistic expression of the artificial and mechanical aspects of the post-war world with scepticism of humanity. Mellors grasps that something unnatural is going on in this world:

> It was not woman’s fault, nor even love’s fault, nor the fault of sex. The fault lay there, out there, in those evil electric lights and diabolical rattling of engines. There, in the world of the mechanical greedy, greedy mechanism and mechanised greed, sparkling with lights and gushing hot metal and roaring with traffic, there lay the vast evil thing, ready to destroy whatever did not conform. Soon it would destroy the wood, and the bluebells would spring no more. All vulnerable things must perish under the rolling and running of iron. (119)

His fear of the mechanisation of humanity is firmly connected with the tendency of people on the home front to forget the Great War. However, even Connie’s praise of the natural and healthy human relationship with Mellors cannot escape from this anxiety. Through the attempt to forget the existence of Clifford and to regard him as a “[d]ead fish of a gentleman” with a “celluloid soul” (194), she tries to protect herself from the sense of “brokenness.” However, they cannot escape from the sense of the “ridiculous” (126), which intrudes into
their sex life. Given the potential anxiety of Mellors and Connie, Clifford’s dark vision of the world has a powerful meaning.

The tragedy of Clifford reaches a climax when Connie confesses to her unfaithfulness with Mellors and asks Clifford to divorce her. After learning the truth, he clings to the nurse, Mrs Bolton, and is choked with tears. Gerald Doherty asserts that Clifford’s degradation symbolises the adverse process from the genital to the oral phase (374). However, in order to understand the meaning of Clifford’s tears, Mrs Bolton’s interpretation must be considered:

The face in the bed seemed to deepen its expression of wild, but motionless distraction. Mrs Bolton looked at it and was worried. She knew what she was up against: male hysteria. She had not nursed soldiers without learning something about that very unpleasant disease. (289)

Mrs Bolton, who has nursed many soldiers and has witnessed male hysteria, regards the hysterical confusion of Clifford as his refusal to recognise his wife’s infidelity. His male hysteria is surely caused by his unsuitability for the male gender role due to his impotency. The sense of “brokenness” that he has contributes to his lack of “manliness,” which is completely destroyed in the battlefields of the First World War. Therefore, his childish tears are recognised as the tears of returned soldiers with wounded bodies and also as the tears of those who refuse to be forgotten after the war.

In *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, Lawrence attempts to portray the realistic situation of returned soldiers who lost their “manliness” in the battlefields through the tragedy of
Clifford. From this point of view, he successfully reveals the sense of “brokenness” of men prevailing in the mentally devastated land of the post-war era. From the perspective of male gender in the inter-war period, Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is a milestone that has a great impact on the writings of the next generation.

5.

Along with the sense of “brokenness” of male bodies that Lawrence realistically depicts in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, it is also important to regard the First World War as the decisive moment for the traditional division between a masculine public sphere and a feminine private sphere. In other words, the battlefields of the Great War invalidated the conventional binary gender roles and brought about an anxiety in regard to “manliness” on the home front. As Sandra M. Gilbert powerfully states, the First World War was a turning point in “the battle of the sexes” (426). In this battle, as Gilbert argues: “all have become not just No Men, nobodies, but not men, unmen. That twentieth-century Everyman, the faceless cipher, their authors seem to suggest, is not just publicly powerless, he is privately impotent” (423). After the Great War, through the rhetoric of “the battle of the sexes,” it has been said that the conventional male role has been gradually changed both in the public and private sphere. In the first-wave feminism that demanded equality between men and women, the ever-increasing participation of women in public affairs began. With the anxiety of hegemonic “manliness,” the atmosphere of this change gave birth to a dichotomised antagonism between men and women. However, in contrast to this tendency, as Laura Marcus argues: “Woolf’s fiction and non-fiction of the 1920s, for example, is substantially concerned with the relative fixities or mutabilities of sexual and gender identities” (154).
In this context, we should consider Virginia Woolf’s controversial conception of “androgyny” in *A Room of One’s Own* (1929). It brought about the famous dispute of whether or not Woolf was feminist writer between Elaine Showalter and Toril Moi. On the one hand, for Showalter, “androgyny was the myth that helped her evade confrontation with her own painful femaleness and enabled her to choke and repress her anger and ambition” (*Literature* 264). On the other hand, Moi regarded it as Woolf’s challenge to “radically undermine the notion of the unitary self, the central concept of Western male humanism and one crucial to Showalter’s feminism” (7).

From feminist viewpoints, in order to analyse Woolf’s political attitude and her ambivalent relation to feminism in the interwar period, *Three Guineas* has often been examined in various criticisms. In this long and even contentious essay concerning how to prevent war, Woolf, as an “educated man’s daughter” (157), argues for women’s financial independence from men, which is to be accomplished education and employment. If women, especially from the middle class, do not have opportunities for education and work, they will remain subordinate to paternalistic discipline and support war. Woolf, as a pacifist, harshly points to the casual relationship between patriarchal society and fascism. Against this system, she locates herself as an “outsider” (309), which enables her to maintain a distance from first-wave feminists, who, aiming at the equality of men and women in the existing conditions of society of the time, paradoxically reinforce paternalism.

However, because of her severe attack on patriarchy for the independence of the “educated man’s daughter,” some critics have tended to focus on her statement on the necessity of the difference and fluidity of the female gender. However, Woolf’s delineation in *Three Guineas* of men who are estranged from masculine power has tended to be
overlooked. Therefore, in order to contemplate a society that guarantees “the power of difference” in Woolf’s works, it is not sufficient to analyse her statements on women. Considering her standpoint as an “outsider” in Three Guineas, we must try to examine her gender image from the “androgyyny” in A Room of One’s Own. This point suggest the possibility that Three Guineas can be read as her rehearsal of androgynous writing against the authoritative masculine ideology. This argument is based on a reconsideration of her depiction of the antagonism between the old and the young. Given the depiction of Wilfred Owen and Septimus Warren Smith, the returned soldier with shattered nerves, in Mrs Dalloway (1925), it is important to focus on Woolf’s representation of men’s anger toward the older generation. This point of view will indicate the literary and sympathetic relation between Virginia Woolf and Wilfred Owen. It will lead us to reconsider her usage of the first person plural “we”(163) in Three Guineas, the meaning of her position as “outsider” and her understanding of the concept of masculinity during the inter-war period.

6.

Considering her attitude toward feminism in the interwar period, Michèle Barrett’s analysis clearly shows Woolf’s ideological shift in regard to the idea of gender from A Room of One’s Own to Three Guineas. According to her research, it is possible to see “a reflection of the central dilemma of feminism”:

Sometimes summarized as the ‘equality/difference debate’, this revolves around whether feminism should press for egalitarian and even ‘androgynous’ solutions to present iniquities or whether feminism should built on existing differences
between women and men in its search for a society and policy with better values.

Virginia Woolf’s own emphasis moved from upholding an ideal of androgyny in art to a recognition of the power of difference – notably in her insistence that women were social ‘outsiders’. (‘Introduction’ in A Room of One’s Own/Three Guineas x)

Woolf’s concept of gender has changed from the ideal of androgynous unity between men and women in a patriarchal society to the idea of diversity in women’s gender role. However, we should note that her concept of androgyny still survives in Three Guineas, and it is crystallised as a powerful countertype against the hegemonic masculine ideology.

Although Laura Marcus explains that “[a]nger and ‘androgyny’ were the two terms most central to ‘second-wave feminist debates on Woolf’, in Three Guineas, she argues that ‘androgyny’ is replaced by an emphasis on women as ‘outsiders’, both different from and separate from men” (162). However, given the equality brought by the understanding of difference in Three Guineas, the quotation below contains a debatable problem:

For it seems plain that we cannot understand each other because of these differences. It seems plain that we think differently according as we are born differently; there is a Grenfell point of view; a Knebworth point of view; a Wilfred Owen point of view and the point of view of an educated man’s daughter.

All differ. (163 emphases added)

In this quotation, by including the comedian, the nobility, Owen and also “educated man’s
daughter” in the word “all,” Woolf emphasises the necessity of an equality based on the concept of difference. In her ideal society, there is no binary difference between officer and gentleman, rich and poor, or even men and women. At least, it can be said that Woolf does not represent the image of man as monolithic. This point leads us to contemplate on her ambiguous usage of the first person pronoun “we.”

In order to clarify and construct her feminist point of view, feminist criticisms on Virginia Woolf’s works have, consciously or not, recognised her sense of masculinity as monolithic and hegemonic, and these assumptions have given masculinity an undifferentiated position in her writings. From this point of view, compared with “you” that represents conventional patriarchy, the first person pronoun “we” has been understood just as the view of an “educated men’s daughter” in a weak position:

It would seem to follow then as an indisputable fact that ‘we’ – meaning by ‘we’ a whole made up of body, brain and spirit, influenced by memory and tradition – must still differ in some essential respects from ‘you’, whose body, brain and spirit have been so differently trained and are so differently influenced by memory and tradition. Though we see the same world, we see it through different eyes. Any help we can give you must be different from that you can give yourselves, and perhaps the value of that help may lie in the fact of that difference. (175-76)

In this passage, it is apparent that the existence of “you” traditionally has a power and a position as an intellectual. They are men who can afford to be educated in public schools
and universities, and finally have an opportunity to get prestigious occupations. Moreover, Woolf focuses on men’s clothes in ritual events. In comparison to women, who are plainly dressed, through the pictures of men who are ritually wearing military or ceremonial uniforms, Woolf pays particular attention to their extremely ornate clothes that express their authority.

In this context, as opposed to the authoritative “you,” “we” surely demonstrates the powerless existence of women, especially that of an “educated men’s daughter.” However, it is arguable whether or not Woolf regards men as monolithic because she ironically illuminates “the battle of the sexes” from the outsider’s position in her works. Although Woolf appears to dichotomise gender problems in Three Guineas, it is unclear whom she includes in the authoritative position and whom she does not.

In order to consider Woolf’s sense of gender in this work, it is important to begin with Winifred Holtby’s impression of Woolf’s “androgyny” in A Room of One’s Own:

The difficulty of sex-differentiation is overcome by taking as criterion some measure of value greater than the measure of sexual difference. That criterion is the relationship of the individual to reality – a relationship which men and women share alike. (185)

Her ambiguous reference to “the relationship of the individual to reality” euphemistically indicates the circumstances in which individuals live under the patriarchy. However, she does not clearly show what the word “men” or “women” mean. To avoid the generalisation, it must be necessary to reconsider the decisive part where Woolf refers to androgyny. When
Woolf vaguely sees the city from a window, she witnesses a couple getting into a taxi-cab. This scene gives her an opportunity to contemplate on “androgyne”:

Now it was bringing from one side of the street to the other diagonally a girl in patent leather boots, and then a young man in a maroon overcoat; it was also bringing a taxi-cab; and it brought all three together at a point directly beneath my window; where the taxi stopped; and the girl and the young man stopped; and they got into the taxi; and then the cab glided off as if it were swept on by the current elsewhere. (125)

In this scene, what makes her come up with the idea of androgyne? As Moi claims, Woolf’s “androgyne” means not “the union of masculinity and femininity” but “the deconstruction on the duality” (14). If her conception of androgyne has the power to deconstruct the conventional gender binary, how does she do it and for what purpose? It is important to remember that her essays not only disclose the existing problems of gender but also imagine a new way of living in the future. In this sense, it is important to focus on the “youngness” of the couple who leads her to imagine an idealistic conception of gender. Woolf, consciously or not, depicts the couple getting in the taxi-cab as young. It can be said that her perspective on “youngness” is one of the important and future-oriented aspects in Woolf’s writings. This problem was profoundly rooted in Woolf’s mind after the Great War.

7.

From the feminist point of view, in *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and*
Elaine Showalter clearly suggests that men’s physical and mental defects brought on by the Great War have been regarded as feminine “symptom of hysteria”:

Both men and officers had internalized these expectations as thoroughly as any Victorian woman had internalized her lesson about feminine nature. When all signs of physical fear were judged as weakness and where alternatives to combat – pacifism, conscientious objection, desertion, even suicide – were viewed as unmanly, men were silenced and immobilized and forced, like women, to express their conflicts through the body. Placed in intolerable circumstances of stress, and expected to react with unnatural “courage,” thousands of soldiers reacted instead with the symptoms of hysteria. (171)

As Showalter argues here, the Victorian clear division of gender roles in the battlefields and at home forces men to present a manly and heroic posture. If they are not able to behave as the public requires them to be, they are regarded as “effeminate,” even as feminine. This atmosphere is depicted in Woolf’s Mrs Dalloway in the figure of the returned soldier, Septimus. In an examination, his usual doctor, Dr Holmes, whose name reminds us of “home,” takes a paternal attitude and urges Septimus to perform the traditional male gender role:

‘So you’re in a funk,’ he said agreeably, sitting down by his patient’s side. He had actually talked of killing himself to his wife, quite a girl, a foreigner, wasn’t she?
Didn’t that give her a very odd idea of English husbands? Didn’t one owe perhaps a duty to one’s wife? Wouldn’t it be better to do something instead of lying in bed? For he had had forty year’s experience behind him; and Septimus could take Dr Holmes’s word for it – there was nothing whatever the matter with him. And next time Dr Holmes came he hoped to find Smith out of bed and not making that charming little lady his wife anxious about him. (78)

Holmes counsels Septimus, who is suffering from the hallucinations, to behave like “English husbands.” His suggestion is rooted in the convictions of the traditional gender binary system. When Septimus leaps from a window to commit suicide, Dr Holmes calls him as “coward” (127). His unconscious choice of this word is the directly opposite character to “manliness” as Showalter argues. In this scene, a man suffering from the mental disease is regarded as “unman.” Through the relationship between Septimus and Holmes, it can be said that Woolf, in the mid 1920s, ironically represents the gender problem of the pressure upon men who are alienated from the conventional concept of “manliness” after the First World War.

However, in Three Guineas, Woolf gives particular meaning to such a person, that is, to Wilfred Owen who, as Jean Thomson has written, resembles Septimus (59). Given Woolf’s idea of gender and masculinity in the interwar period, it is important to give thought to the reason why she repeatedly reminds us of Wilfred Owen, who died on a battlefield of the Great War in 1918, in Three Guineas. These references to the young poet, who as Woolf reminds us, despondently regards the war as “barbarous” and “inhuman” (166), leads us to reflect on Woolf’s sense of gender, not only in regard to women but also
to men. She still ponders on the problem of gender over the aftermath of the First World War during the inter-war period. However, her reference to this poet has not been paid due attention.

Woolf’s repeated references to Owen also remind us of her fundamental question in *Three Guineas*: “What sort of education will teach the young to hate war?” (182) It is important to note that her purpose is not merely to criticise the inequity between men and women but also to consider the existence of “the young” generation who represent the future. In this context, “the young” is hardly defined; however, when she uses the word “the young,” she does not specify the gender binary. It might have meaning only when she compares “the young” with the authoritative old.

For her, it is obvious: “the same sex holds very different opinions about the same thing” (161). Then, what brings forth these “different opinions” among “the same sex,” especially men? In *Three Guineas*, the gap between the old generation and young generations plays a significant role. About the relation between gender and war, Woolf writes ironically: “[war] is also an outlet for manly qualities, without which men would deteriorate” (160). This is highly controversial, however, because when she mentions “manly qualities,” she seems to exclude “the young,” who bear the future. In this sense, in contrast to “manly” soldiers and airmen, she quotes Owen’s statement on his dislike of war and bestows him with a symbolical role. After this citation, she continues:

But that these feelings and opinions are by no means universally held by your sex is proved by the following extract from another biography, the life of a poet who was killed in the European war; Wilfred Owen. (160)
Unlike “manly” and mature men, Woolf intentionally depicts Owen as a representative of a younger generation. This suggests that, in order to formulate her idea of gender, the generation gap between mature and young men is useful key to argue her sense of masculinity and gender. It is necessary to pay attention to the difference in age of men when she blames the system of patriarchy.

Samuel Hynes claims: “[all] wars divide – divide not only ours side from theirs, but soldiers from civilians, men from women, one generation from another, war-lovers from war-haters” (*War* 337). After the war, a sense of fracture, especially between young and old generation, has a significant meaning. One of the most famous of Owen’s poems, entitled “The Parable of the Old Man and the Young,” may be the best example to verify his sharp consciousness in regard to this gap. In this poem, making good use of the biblical tale of Abram, and Issac, Owen suggests that the old generation kills their young as a sacrifice in the battlefields of the Great War:

> When lo! an Angel called him out of heaven,
> Saying, Lay not thy hand upon the lad,
> Neither do anything to him, thy son.
> Behold! Caught in a thicket by its horns,
> A Ram. Offer the Ram of Pride instead.

> But the old man would not so, but slew his son,
> And half the seed of Europe, one by one. (11-16)
In spite of the Angel’s directions not to slay his son, Abraham kills Issac without mercy.

Owen creates the image of the younger generation being slaughtered by the older generation in the First World War. In this poem, he figuratively calls young men as “the seed of Europe,” which will bloom in the future to create a new world.

Interestingly, Septimus in Mrs Dalloway bitterly shares this fissure between generations. He went to the war as “one of the first to volunteer” to save England; however, losing his comrade, Evans, in the battlefield, he returns to home in despair. Like Owen, Septimus has a great anger toward the older generation:

This was now revealed to Septimus; the message hidden in the beauty of words.

The secret signal which one generation passes, under disguise, to the next is loathing, hatred, despair. (75)

Both of them have similar feelings, such as “loathing, hatred, despair,” toward the older generation who sent them to the battlefields. In this sense, the old generation represents militarism and paternalism. This similarity between Owen and Septimus urges us to consider Woolf’s depiction of men in Three Guineas from the viewpoint of the generational gap. After the Great War, through the representations of Owen and Septimus, Woolf intentionally demonstrates the great fissure between generations.

While, in Mrs Dalloway, Woolf satirically discloses how men like Septimus who cannot follow the conventional concept of “manliness” are repressed under the patriarchal society that requires that they play the conventional male gender role, she creates a role that
powerfully criticises the monolithic patriarchy and heroic masculinity based on Wilfred Owen in *Three Guineas*. His poems are popularly recognised as a counter-attack against the war. One of his poems, “Dulce et Decorum Est” is, as Dominic Hibberd mentions, “originally drafted as a ‘counter-attack’ against the recruiting-verses of Miss Jessie Pope, the right-wing press. More widely, the attack is against civilian heroic notions in general” (114). Through the delineation of Owen, Woolf deconstructs the traditional gender binary that reinforces the patriarchy, not by demanding equality between men and women in a male dominant society, but by rescuing men from the patriarchal concept of “manliness.” This understanding is important in understanding Woolf’s strategy to deconstruct the monolithic authoritative paternalism. In *Three Guineas*, it is the only way for human beings to acquire equality under the understanding of their differences:

Some more energetic, some more active method of expressing our belief that war is barbarous, that war is inhuman, that war, as Wilfred Owen put it, is supportable, horrible and beastly seems to be required. (166)

In her statement of antagonism toward war, patriarchy, and fascism, Woolf cleverly employs the voice of Wilfred Owen as one of the younger generation. Through her references to Owen, it seems that the first person pronoun “we” includes not only women, especially “the educated man’s daughter,” but also the younger generation of men who are alienated from masculine ideology. This point leads us to reconsider her idea of “outsider” in *Three Guineas*. In order to deconstruct the conventional gender binary, the concept of “outsider” should be recognised from an androgynous perspective.
Woolf’s sense of gender in *Three Guineas* is ambiguous; however, it is highly significant to understand that, in resistance to monolithic and authoritative masculinity, her depiction of Wilfred Owen has a powerful meaning to deconstruct gender binary in the post-war era. He is depicted as an indicator of the generation gap. Woolf appreciated that the rise of women in society and the rescue of men from hegemonic masculinity have to take place at the same time in order to change society. In this sense, the “outsider’s” pronoun “we” transcends the binary of conventional roles of gender which early feminism unconsciously reinforced.

8.

Through the discussion of Lawrence’s realistic portrayal of the wounded veteran and Woolf’s insight into men, it is clear that the problem of male gender has already been depicted in the modernist’s circle. Such a viewpoint is surely taken over by the next generation—Woolf calls them young—after modernism. We are now able to examine the younger generation’s writings from the perspective of the male subjectivity in relation to the cultural context of 1930s. The works of Waugh were heavily influenced by the aftermath of World War I. He shares a critical point of view of the male gender with Lawrence and Woolf, while keeping distance from the experimental techniques of the modernism. Sharing the depiction of male hardship and scepticism toward authoritative masculine ideology with Lawrence and Woolf, Waugh in the next generation deepens the understanding of the establishment of male subjectivity and attempts to grasp the problem of male gender in the psychological landscape. Therefore, the following chapters focus on his concern with male subjectivity under the dominance of masculine ideology and his resistance to the concept of
“manliness” in order to search for alternative ways of living.
Chapter Two: The Psychic Prison of Manliness: A Reflexive Gaze into the Male

Subjectivity in Decline and Fall

1.

During the initial stages of his literary career, Waugh did not create protagonists with striking personalities. Paul Pennyfeather in Decline and Fall, the notoriously passive protagonist of the interwar decades, hardly articulates his subjectivity. Expelled from Oxford University on account of false accusation of indecent behaviour and later entering the world of the Bright Young People, he is called a “shadow” (115) because he is a mere witness to the world. His exploration of the young men’s chaotic world during the Roaring Twenties is regarded as an “extraordinary adventure” (115), unlike the adventures in imperialistic narratives. Through these settings, he is portrayed as a man lacking any will or aims in interwar British society. He seems to be just drifting around a chaotic world without a stable subjectivity. Such a hero can be considered, as Walter Allen remarked, as “an innocent caught up in and done down by the machinations of a wicked world” (208), or more positively as “the anti-Hero,” who attempts “to establish his own personal, supra-social codes” (O’Faolain 16-17).

Since the 1990s, Waugh’s early novels that centre on the precarious protagonists in the world of the Bright Young People have been reconsidered from the perspective of their influential relations with modernism, the avant-garde movement, cinema and also other satirists’ works. Moreover, according to Samuel Hynes, satire was a prominent literary genre in the devastated years after World War I (War 395). Malcolm Bradbury, focusing on three satirists, Wyndham Lewis, Aldous Huxley and Waugh instructively noted that the
common features of the modern comedy, which was revived in the 1920s, indicate authors’ “indifference” towards describing characters’ consciousness to which modernists pay particular attention (154). Like Bradbury, David Bradshaw points out the incompatibility between modernism and satire. Unlike the modernist’s high level of interest in psychoanalysis of consciousness, these three satirists “untroubled by the convention[s]” seem not to have any interest “in the representation of consciousness, being almost exclusively focused on the exposure of folly” (231). Together, these various interpretations have revealed Waugh’s strategy for satirising the absurd mechanisation, alienation and fragmentation of human beings in the interwar period.

It might be nice to think of these authors’ satirical attitudes toward consciousness of modernists as defining their position in the history of literature, but we must be wary of affirming that even if Waugh, as well as Lewis and Huxley, demonstrated a dehumanised world, they did not have any interest in the gender problem, especially men’s consciousness of their subjectivity. On the contrary, in the interwar period Waugh is haunted by the problem of the true meaning of manliness. In his works, Waugh obsessively delineates effeminate characters who seek in vain to achieve a manly personality. Waugh’s novels of this era draw particular attention to the masculine ideology, which forces the effeminate male to behave like a Man. Waugh tried to perceive the male subjectivity in relation to the authoritarian masculine ideology.

For instance, we can see his interest in the concept of masculinity in the scene at the public school in Wales. Paul is wedded strictly to the conventional virtue of gentlemanliness. He refuses the offer of compensation from the assailant, Digby-Vaine-Trumpington, who is the cause of Paul’s expulsion from the university, because he takes pride in being as a
‘. . . But,’ said Paul Pennyfeather, ‘there is my honour. For generations the British bourgeoisie have spoken of themselves as gentlemen, and by that they have meant, among other things, a self-respecting scorn of irregular perquisites. It is the quality that distinguishes the gentleman from both the artist and the aristocrat. Now I am a gentleman. I can’t help it: it’s born in me. I just can’t take that money.’ (44)

In this moment, Paul doubtlessly considers that he is by nature a gentleman and should not accede to such a silly offer; however, when he learns that his frivolous colleague of the private school, Grimes, has already accepted the offer for him by sending off a wire under the name of “Pennyfeather,” “in spite of himself,” he feels “a great wave of satisfaction surge up within him” (44). Paul’s spontaneous reaction betrays that “gentlemanliness,” which Paul asserts is “born in him,” is not considered an innate nature in *Decline and Fall*. Despite his proud words, Paul does not realise what is his own self, “the same Paul Pennyfeather” he has “respected so long” (43). This episode indicates that there is a deep gulf between what he really is and what he thinks he should be. However, it is highly significant to contemplate the reason why, in spite of his effeminacy, Paul unconsciously feels the necessity for verifying his “gentlemanliness” as his identity. This problem leads us to consider what psychic mechanism makes him cling to the British bourgeoisie’s virtue of “gentleman.”

During the years between the wars, Waugh certainly illuminated in his works the
psychic mechanism that established a man’s subjectivity. Considering the dominance of the male subjectivity in these decades, this chapter examines the representation of manliness in Waugh’s *Decline and Fall*. In this context, it is useful to compare Waugh’s portrayal of male figures with those of Lewis and Huxley, earlier satirists who were older than Waugh. Although we can easily find a similar motif in the novels of these three authors, it is critical to emphasise that with a reflexive gaze on the relation between the male subjectivity and the ideology of Manliness, Waugh modified the conventional representation of the male subjectivity that Lewis and Huxley had already offered. Quite interestingly, Lewis and Waugh have in common their use of the setting of prisons to demonstrate their understanding of the male subjectivity. However, for Lewis, a prison makes the protagonist avert his eye from the reality, whereas for Waugh, we are led to consider that all men find themselves confined within the psychic prison of Manliness. From this perspective, in *Decline and Fall*, we may see that the reflexive turn in the male subjectivity occurred under the ideology of manliness during the 1920s.

2.

Prior to Waugh, Huxley had expressed his concern for manliness through depicting anti-masculine characters in his early novels. Among these effeminate characters, Gumbril Junior in *Antic Hay* (1923), who is always failing to be a “man of action,” represents a specific model and the way in which Huxley and other writers of satire understood manliness in this period. Gumbril perceives his effeminacy, and so he behaves like “the Complete Man” by wearing a false beard and antique Malacca cane belonging to his father when he wants to get a woman or to succeed in his business:
He sighed a little wearily as he took his seat on the green iron chair. But then, recollecting that he was now the Complete Man, and that the Complete Man must do everything with a flourish and a high hand, he leaned forward and, smiling with a charming insolence through his beard . . .’ (115)

It should be emphasised that, against this traditional understanding, like Waugh, Huxley pokes fun at the conventional notion that to be manly is a voluntary feeling, and discloses the performative aspect of the manly personality. Although Huxley’s viewpoint clearly shows that masculinity is not spontaneous but performative, there still remains a problem. He does not completely doubt the ideal image of manliness, and does not consider the reason why these effeminate characters fundamentally suffer from a sense of inadequacy about their gender in patriarchal society. Therefore, Huxley mocks the performativity of manliness, but at the same time he paradoxically reinforces the authenticity of the ideal image of man. As Waugh precisely maintained in London Magazine, Gumbril is delineated as a “clever, zestful cad” in a heterosexual society, and despite his unstable sense of his manliness is untroubled in “a wide, smiling continent full of wine and pictures and loose young women” (Essays 472). In Antic Hay, Gumbril, if he noticed his own effeminacy, would have the desire to acquire a manly identity. For Huxley, it appears that being manly is better than being effeminate. Manliness is still an inviolable code that society imposes on a male. Gumbril, like other Huxley’s characters, surely notices that he, by nature, is not manly, and that he feels the need to wear the personality of “the Complete Man,” which is the ideal image of manliness that all of men should aim for. However, Huxley does not
regard the concept of manliness as the psychic one.

Interestingly, most of Waugh’s male protagonists already lost their fathers before the opening of the novels. Paul’s parents have died in a colony, which reflects the decline of the British Empire: “Both his parents had died in India at the time when he won the essay prize at his preparatory school” (9). In *Vile Bodies* and *Black Mischief* (1932), the fathers of Adam and Basil, respectively, are already dead, causing the young men to lose the foundations of their identities and economic well-being. These circumstances drive them to “extraordinary” and absurd adventures. Throughout his literary career, Waugh did not or could not portray a father figure in his novels.

Considering the deaths of male protagonists’ fathers, the absurd plots in his novels can be regarded, quite significantly, as the anti-thesis of imperialistic adventure novels. Waugh boldly reveals his attitude towards such adventure-hero narratives, which he ironically labels “extraordinary adventures,” in the world of the Bright Young People:

For an evening Paul became a real person again, but next day he woke up leaving himself disembodied somewhere between Sloane Square and Onslow Square. He had to meet Beste-Chetwynde and catch a morning train to King’s Thursday, and there his extraordinary adventures began anew. From the point of view of this story Paul’s second disappearance is necessary, because, as the reader will probably have discerned already, Paul Pennyfeather would never have made a hero, and the only interest about him arises from the unusual series of events of which his shadow was witness. (115)
Paul’s “extraordinary adventures” in his chaotic world are not like the adventures for boys in the interwar period, but rather a parody of them. By representing the world as “extraordinary,” Waugh satirised both imperialistic masculinity and masculine adventure novels, which were conducive to reinforcing imperialism. In this world, Samuel Smiles’s book *Self-Help* (1859), which was considered a bible for those who regarded success under capitalism as a manly virtue, must have “torn the last hundred and eight pages” (177) to represent the death of a manly virtue as a breadwinner. Moreover, the scene of the King Arthur’s solemn death and the expectations for his rebirth in *Idylls of the King* (1859) by Tennyson, which was effectively used in the children’s education to convey the importance of manliness is parodied as the mock-death of Paul: “Paul got into the boat and was rowed away. Sir Alastair, like Sir Bedevere, watched him out of sight” (190). Unlike the masculine narrative that prevailed in the interwar decades, Paul’s characterisation criticised as “[a] totally inert” (Lane 49) and his adventure aim to confirm that the society of the Bright Young People has lost the masculine principle. This fact makes his adventure “extraordinary.”

However, as his “satires are concerned with this fundamental tension between striving to belong and trying to be free” (Reeve-Tucker 168), *Decline and Fall* is a text that reflects ambivalence. On one hand, it satirises the decline of the empire, and delineates the bloom of young men’s culture in a modern world, while on the other hands, it supports the authenticity of the conventional value. As suggested by Martin Green’s statement that Waugh and his writings gradually changed from “anti-Kiplingism, which meant anti-imperialism, anti-militarism” to “something like pro-Kipling” (*English Novel* 106), his satirical gaze on imperialism, the conventional code of manliness and even the father’s
generation, i.e. the generation who participate in the war and sent their sons to the battlefields was quite ambiguous. Waugh, the satirist, according to D. J. Taylor, “was anxious to distance himself from his material, to feign ignorance of his sources, put clear water between the satirist and the things he was supposed to be satirizing” (8). In addition, from the viewpoint of gentlemanliness, Christine Berberich notes Waugh’s double-bind standpoint between “the effeminate dandy aesthetes” and “the idea of power and of being a man of action” (Image 102). While Waugh ironically depicts the death of the conventional manliness in the world of young men, he also notices that they cannot escape from the values of the older generation. From this viewpoint, it must be highlighted that the more he writes the iconoclastic world of the Bright Young People, the more powerfully articulated masculine ideology becomes. Thus, the more significant fact is that, the fathers have been already killed and their voices will always be heard. Waugh’s novels during the period between the wars reflect the symbolical death of the fathers behind the “extraordinary adventures.”

In order to contemplate this problem, it is worthwhile to see the diary which Waugh’s father Arthur wrote. In January 1941, Waugh, serving in the army, visited his father, Arthur. Arthur’s diary described their strained relationship in that meeting. He called his son “very arrogant and dictatorial” and was still infuriated by him a month later. In the letter to Kenneth McMaster, which is quoted by his eldest son Alexander in his memoir, he wrote:

Evelyn, a Captain of the Marines, was in the Dakar fiasco and is now in a secret commando, of which we are allowed to know nothing. He never writes to us but a month ago he had 15 days leave, out of which he allowed us precisely two hours,
when he and his wife came to lunch. From the time they drove away we have not heard a word from either of them. The fact is he is thoroughly ashamed of his parents and does his best to banish them from his conscience. *(Fathers 251-52)*

Arthur’s speculative depiction of Evelyn’s sense of shame and his desire to exclude his father from his mind reveals that their hostile relationship is linked with the matter of “conscience.” From Alec, Evelyn’s brother, we can also catch a glimpse of Evelyn’s fundamental fear: “[Evelyn] was very like his father, and his father’s own emotionalism put him on his guard. He must have often thought: ‘I could become like this; I mustn’t let myself become like this’” *(Alexander, Fathers and Sons 252).* By means of these descriptions, it can be seen that he had been struggling to remove the last internal vestiges of his father\(^*\). His dilemma suggests that his father existed not only in the external world but also within his internal one. In other words, Waugh’s fear was that his father became an internal, psychic presence that ideologically called him to be like his father. This could be called the internalisation of the father. Such a psychic relationship with his father is crystallised in *Decline and Fall.*

These biographical discourses do not belong to Waugh, but his father and his brother; thus, we cannot unconditionally accept them as facts. However, these statements provide a good opportunity to reconsider Waugh’s writings on the psychic relationship between fathers and sons because his demonstration of the generational conflict is not merely based on his hatred of the older people. Therefore, it is crucial to analyse Waugh’s literary works from the perspective of his conflicting emotions about the older generations and examine his way of representing the psychic lives of his contemporaries in his novels. Instead of his
satirical gaze directed outwards towards society, his reflexive inward gaze towards his psychic landscape must be considered. Through the examination of this problem, it can be said that dead fathers symbolically haunt Waugh’s novels. In other words, the dead fathers are idealised, which is internalised as the masculine norm in young men’s minds. In these circumstances, as Friedrich Nietzsche calls this internalisation of power “conscience” (42), the requirement to be a Man becomes internalised as his central obligation. As Judith Butler stated, the relation between the ideology and the subject is fundamentally based on the formation of conscience accompanied by the internalisation of power, and on the reflexivity on subjection. In Waugh’s novels, from the viewpoint of masculine subjectivity, the voice of the dead father functions as the conscience, which hails and interpellates individuals as subjects. Hence, Waugh called into question the formation of conscience: Through the illumination of the generational conflict, Waugh presented the problem of whether the younger generation would realise the internalised voice of the conscience or not. This is an existential problem because without noticing the formation of conscience, one cannot look closely into one’s own subjectivity, especially into the unnamed masculine subjectivity. Thus, from an objective standpoint, Waugh took up the subject of “turning back upon oneself or even a turning on oneself” (Butler 3) to reveal the situation how men were ideologically and unconsciously repressed by the normative code of masculinity.

Waugh’s demonstration of an unconquerable obsession with masculine subjectivity in his novels has a close relation to the internalised father figure, that is to say, the masculine ideology requires him to be a Man: while he delineates the younger generation’s powerful desire to be free from the normative code, he, simultaneously and self-consciously observes the influence of masculine ideology upon them, which compulsorily restricts their desire
and requires them to behave subconsciously as normal men. In this context, it is significant to pay attention to Waugh’s delineations of both hatred and affection towards ideological masculinity in his satirical novels. However, it is also important to note that he self-consciously depicted his ambivalent attitude in his works. While he searched for a way to escape from his father, he was at the same time aware of his paradoxical desire to establish his identification with the internal voice of his father. His ambivalent attitude toward the generational conflict enables him to adopt an objective standpoint between the older and younger generations, which provided him with the opportunity to realise the formation of his male subjectivity to reflect in his works that depict an ideal man.

3.

During the Roaring Twenties, Paul is described as a typical Edwardian who abstains from drinking too much and smoking cigarettes, and is fond of reading *Forsyte Saga* (1922) by John Galsworthy before going to bed. He is, at the beginning of the novel, an outsider to the world of the Bright Young People. However, this does not mean that his identity is rigidly fixed. There is a destructive schism deep within him. When he is expelled from Oxford University because of being falsely accused of the indecent behaviour, Paul suddenly utters the swearword: “God damn and blast them all to hell” (12). He feels, all of a sudden, embarrassed because he had expected that he would be the last person to say such a curse word. At a glance, Waugh may be intending to highlight Paul’s lack of subjectivity in this scene; however the words that Paul uses are highly controversial. Interestingly, this phrase including the word “blast” reminds us of the inter-textual relation to Vorticism, the short-lived avant-garde movement in London, and its quarterly journal, *Blast*, published by
Lewis. First, it is possible to consider that Paul’s surname “Pennyfeather,” as David Bradshaw indicates, comes from Rev. Pennyfeather, whom Lewis blasted in issue one of *Blast*, and again the following year in issue two (201). Second, there is something ambiguous and rather humorous about Paul’s swearing, “God damn and blast them all to hell,” as if the typically Edwardian Paul desires unconsciously to “blast” himself with a word that is inappropriate for him. He feels embarrassed because he unexpectedly rejects his whole existence in the Roaring Twenties. Just as Lewis harshly attacks on the traditionalism of the Victorian and the Edwardian eras, Paul’s swearing challenges to the normative code in which he has been brought up. However, he must immediately pay the penalty for his outrageous behaviour.

Just before his “extraordinary” expedition into the chaotic 1920s, Paul meets with his guardian to ask about the possibility of an allowance. Through the guardian, Paul indirectly hears the voice of his absent father:

‘Sent down for indecent behaviour, eh?’ said Paul Pennyfeather’s guardian. ‘Well, thank God your poor father has been spared this disgrace. That’s all I can say.’ . . . ‘Well,’ [the guardian] resumed, ‘you know the terms of your father’s will. He left the sum of five thousand pounds, the interest of which was to be devoted to your education and the sum to be absolutely yours on your twenty-first birthday. . . . I do not think that I should be fulfilling the trust which your poor father placed in me if, in the present circumstances, I continued any allowance. . . .’ (15)

To obtain “the trust” of his father and enjoy its benefits, Paul must be subject to his father’s
moral standards of good and bad. As Kelly Boyd’s analysis shows, “[inter-war] heroes had to learn to be obedient, to compromise and to submit to the greater knowledge of their elders and their community” (145). While he seems to have no subjectivity in his “extraordinary adventures,” there surely exists a moral code in Paul’s mind, which punishes his unmanly deed. From the viewpoint of the male subjectivity, this is a crucial moment in this novel because without an allowance he will lose the opportunity to be an independent man in the society. Figuratively speaking, the scene represents castration by his father, to who has rejected the paternal role. This scene is critical because the young man’s castrated self finally arrives at his mock death in a jail.

While he is imprisoned on the false charge of soliciting the service of a prostitute, Paul cannot help but feel relieved no longer to have a place in any social order and the world of the Bright Young People. He is now completely free:

The next four weeks of solitary confinement were among the happiest of Paul’s life. The physical comforts were certainly meagre, but at the Ritz Paul had learned to appreciate the inadequacy of purely physical comfort. It was so exhilarating, he found, never to have to make any decision on any subject, to be wholly relieved from the smallest consideration of time, meals or clothes, to have no anxiety ever about what kind of impression he was making; in fact, to be free. (157-58)

Paul seems to escape from the moral standards that regulate social life. At a glance, he seems to have an opportunity to forget the voice of his father in exchange for giving up his social life. However, as the novel progresses and towards the climax, his happy days in the
prison are found to reflexively turn back on himself.

Paul’s inability to fulfil the expectations of his father and his unfortunate confinement remind us of Otto Kreisler in Tarr (1918) by Lewis\textsuperscript{11}. In Tarr, which had a significant influence on Decline and Fall, we can see the deferred Oedipal relationship between a father and a son\textsuperscript{12}. Kreisler, the poor German painter who from the beginning is haunted by the death instinct, finally commits suicide because of the murder of his double-like character Soltyk, who embodies the misdirected desire of incoherent human beings. The relationship between Kreisler and his abominable father is quite complicated, because the father married his son’s lover, and now Kreisler manages to live in Paris on a small remittance from his father. Although such a character may feel compelled to make a mess of the bourgeois bohemian society to take revenge on the woman whom he loves and on his rival in love, he does not know what he really wants to destroy. His enemy is “a more terrible, abstract, antagonist” (139). It might be his father who becomes the internalised voice in his mind. Kreisler wants to destroy that voice to make a “clamour for universal recognition that life and the beloved self were still there” (230). Through a duel with his double-like character, Soltyk, Kreisler attempts to validate his masculinity; however, when it comes down to it, he becomes “quite passive” (233). Despite his sexual assault on Bertha, he is certainly described as a castrated man, and unfortunately he does not know how to stand face to face with his inner father figure.

After the murder of his double, Soltyk, Kreisler voluntarily gives himself up to the police in a town near his home country. Interestingly, like Paul, he gradually comes to feel ease and even satisfaction in his cell and recollects the good old days with his lover:
On the other hand, [Kreisler] became quite used to his cell: his mind was sick and this room had a clinical severity. It had all the severity of a place in which an operation might suitably be performed. He became fond of it. He lay upon his bed: he turned over the shell of many empty and depressing hours he had lived: in all these listless concave shapes he took a particular pleasure. ‘Good times’ were avoided: days spent with his present stepmother, before his father knew her, gave him a particularly numbing and nondescript feeling. (250)

For him, this police station seems to be “female,” and he can live here as a “liebhaberei”(250) of the building in his delusional romance. Finally he commits suicide in his cell. He had ceased to look back at his agony in his past life and to reflexively gaze onto his inwardness. He escaped into the past romance with his ex-lover that was founded on the obliteration of his father and this enabled him to ignore the repression imposed by his father and his very existence. However this just means that he has given up on living. As described in Tarr, he chooses to live like art: “Deadness is the first condition for art: the second is absence of soul, in the human and sentimental sense” (265). In this context, the characterisation of Kreisler demonstrates the agony to live a male subjectivity. There may be no solution, but a delusion can take one’s eyes off of one’s subjectivity. Compared with Waugh who depicts Bright Young People’s adventures to search for “an absolute,” as Alice Reeve-Tucker and Nathan Waddell mention, Lewis does not offer “any means of escape from, human contingency” (171).

Unlike Kreisler, Paul in the prison gradually becomes dissatisfied because he begins to believe that only he is treated unfairly. He hears an internal voice and notices the
existence of an internalised code. In this scene it is clear that the normative code of manliness is not outside but inside him:

\[\ldots\ \text{[Paul] felt a flush about his knees as Boy Scout honour whispered that Margot had got him into a row and ought jolly well to own up and face the music. As he sat over his postbags he had wrestled with this argument without achieving any satisfactory result except a growing conviction that there was something radically inapplicable about this whole code of ready-made honour that is the still small voice, trained to command, of the Englishman all the world over. (174)}\]

This passage clearly reveals that he has internalised his father. Instead of independently contemplating his situation, Paul manages to obey the internal voice, which reflects the conventional masculine norm. Through self-sacrifice, he has to behave chivalrously to save his doubtful fiancée. The voice of the dead father is embodied as a conscience that reverberates throughout Waugh’s novels. The father’s voice strictly prohibits Waugh’s protagonists from rejecting the normative code. It might be argued that Waugh intentionally delineated the internalisation of the father in his works. It is apparent that his aim in doing so was objectively to show the psychic mechanism driving young men who were exposed to the voices of their dead fathers. From this viewpoint, it can be said that the prison described by Waugh in the novel becomes a psychic one in which the prisoner is surrounded by the normative code of manliness.

Given Waugh’s intentional delineation of the voice of the dead father as an ideology, it may be helpful to refer to Louis Althusser’s concept of the relation between ideology and
subject. According to his theory of subjectivity, “the ideological State apparatuses” (16) do not always work by violence; rather, they function through the formation of the conscience. Thus, the internalisation of the voice of power makes individuals the subject, and simultaneously, an internalised ideology constructs the conscience in the mind of the subject. In this way, individuals are “always-already subjects” (50). Thus, considering Waugh’s obsession with the dead father that is represented as the masculine ideology, it is necessary to delve into Waugh’s description of the psychic landscape of his protagonists.

After being released from prison through the camouflage of his death, Paul returns to Oxford University. In his college life, he keeps the Bright Young People at a distance, and studies to take holy orders. Several years later, Peter, whom Paul once taught at a public school in Wales, stops by his room during the raucous party of the Bright Young People, which was the cause of Paul’s dishonorable withdrawal from the university at the beginning of the story. It is apparent that Waugh consciously establishes the plot of *Decline and Fall* as a circular construction; however, Paul is not what he used to be. He is psychically restrained by the ideology of manliness, and considers that it is quite right to suppress the ascetic Ebionites (199) by seeing the wretched state of Peter. Using the metaphor of the Ebionites, a group that suppressed on account of its unorthodox beliefs and religious practices, Paul criticises the Bright Young People for their rebellious attitudes towards masculine ideology. He can now say to his former student, “You drink too much, Peter” (199). At the very end of the story, he assumes paternal authority and imposes a penalty on the young man. However, at the same time, it means that he retreats from the modern world. As Otto Friedrich Silenus, an oracle-like character ironically calls him “static” (194), Paul is the outsider of the “dynamic” (194) world of the Roaring Twenties. Frederick J. Stopp
describes him as “a visitor and no denizen” (68), and Paul finally stalks out of the modern world. In this context, “static” means the same as “authentic” which denounces the deviation of others. Paul achieves identification with the father; however, as Paul symbolically shuts out the clamor of the Bright Young People by turning out the light of his room, there is no place for him to live in this world. He easily accepts the normative code instead of turning back upon his subjectivity and finally becomes a “shadow” in the psychic prison of Manliness.

4.

By taking this stance, Waugh’s reflexive gaze on the young men’s subjectivity is finally confirmed. His satirical descriptions in Decline and Fall call on young men to notice the psychic prison that is under siege by the internal voice of fathers, and to realise how their male subjectivity is established. Unlike women’s subjugated subjectivity, it is rather difficult to clarify that for men because the ideology of masculinity has been religiously and even uncritically recognised as spontaneous in patriarchal society. Peter Middleton asserts that “[the] problem facing men when they try to reflect upon themselves, without self-deception, is that they use the same intellectual methods that once justified men’s power” (7). Thus, “[man] cannot blame the difficulty on masculinity itself. Masculinity still cannot be named and in that sense the inward male gaze is a vacant one” (10). Such an inviolable code does not give men permission to look closely into themselves and deviate freely from normative expectations. Men naturally accept their roles and behave according to what society demands. Because the voice of power is internalised in the minds of men, they are convinced that in behaving like a Man, they are acting spontaneously.
This is the first step towards providing relief to men who have been defined as outsiders to the world of Manliness: this was the thematic core of *Decline and Fall*. It is here that one finds a characteristic feature of Waugh’s satirical novels. This analysis provides a reconsideration of not only the works of Waugh but also those of other novelists who tried to realise their male subjectivity during the 1930s because Waugh’s generation searched for an alternative male subjectivity instead of the authoritarian masculinity.
Chapter Three: “Just You Look at Yourselves”: Relativisation of the Authentic Image of Masculinity in *Vile Bodies*

1.

Through the analysis of Waugh’s profound insight into the internalised normative code of manliness in the mentality of the young male protagonist in *Decline and Fall*, this chapter closely examines Evelyn Waugh’s heightened satirical depiction of the function of ideological manliness in order to unravel his aim to relativise it in his second novel, *Vile Bodies*. Similar to the previous novel, *Vile Bodies*—originally titled as “Bright Young People”—is the story about the extraordinary adventure of Adam Fenwick-Symes, who becomes panic-stricken in the unconventional world of the Bright Young People. However, unlike Paul Pennyfeather, who is an outsider to young men’s world throughout *Decline and Fall*, Waugh associates Adam as one of the younger generation in their society in the novel, highlighting the psychic mechanism of young men’s world from the inside that reveals the discrepancy between their desire for alternative sexualities and the impossibility of their escape from the normative code. From this perspective, it is necessary to emphasise that while Waugh depicts a male outsider with a fragile identity in young men’s world in *Decline and Fall*, his satirical attack is directed on the lives of the Bright Young People itself in *Vile Bodies*. With such a new perspective of young men’s world, *Vile Bodies* garnered much more attention than the previous novel did.

Adam, who has “nothing particularly remarkable about his appearance” (10) and is deprived of his autobiography by a censor when he returns from Paris as if his tragic end is predicted, is similar to Paul in his lack of subjectivity. George McCartney, for instance,
emphasises that these protagonists are “stubbornly superficial,” and they do not reveal “their psychological interiors” (*Waugh* 76). A. Clement also makes a shrewd comment on Adam’s lack of consideration of “the meaning of existence” and “the meaning of inwardness” based on “essential things of life,” and, because of it, he argues, Adam sinks into “alienation and loss of identity” in the raucous world of the Bright Young People (50).

Although critics have discussed Waugh’s satirical portrayal of the unruly Bright Young People, who were heavily influenced by avant-garde movements such as Futurism and Vorticism and the attack on Britain’s conventional value system during the inter-war era, they have never paid sufficient attention to the two decisive moments that lead us to focus on Waugh’s representation of the ideology of normative “manliness” in this novel.

Firstly, the words that Mrs Ape, the strange American evangelist, utters—“*Just you look at yourselves*” (84)—at a raucous party of the Bright Young People, are revealing. Mrs Ape’s remark, inappropriate to the occasion, creates an awkward moment among the guests in a frivolous party because they cannot help feeling seriously insecure about their subjectivities. However, they regain their festive, merry feelings straight away and continue clinging to their superficial lives. This scene reveals the paradox within their psyches because although they are convinced that they reject the normative code, their identities are based unconsciously on their internalisation of the ideology of the establishment.

Secondly, the moment when the declaration of war is reported to Adam in the final chapter entitled “*Happy Ending*” (186), is important. When he spends a happy Christmas with his ex-fiancée and her family, having assumed the false name of his rival in love, Adam hears the news of the declaration of the World War. Unlike Paul in *Decline and Fall* who has the opportunity of contriving his mock funeral and “happy ending” to escape from
his hardships and live in Oxford again, Adam cannot flee from the destructive situation, and he finally proceeds to the battlefront without any ambitions or aims. At the battlefront, despite his wretched state, Adam is ironically heralded as the manly hero who could be awarded the Victoria Cross on the home front.

Curiously enough, these two episodes have never been thoroughly discussed because neither of them directly leads us to any conclusions respectively. Lady Circumference’s remark—“What a damned impudent woman” (85)—drowns out the effect of Mrs Ape’s enlightening words. Furthermore, the ironical representation of Adam, who has lost everything in his life and joins the battlefield without any intention or purpose in the final chapter of the book, has been regarded merely as Waugh’s dark humour.

However, in order to re-evaluate the relevance of the very strong presence of Mrs Ape and the meaning of Waugh’s representation of the expected battlefield, this chapter pays attention to the fact that Waugh depicts the voice of the normative code of manliness that encircles the unruly world of the Bright Young People in *Vile Bodies*. In contrast to the uncritical acceptance of the heroic masculinity in this era, Waugh’s ironical depiction of Adam, the parody of the soldier-hero, relativises the authentic image of masculinity during the inter-war decades, in that the process of constructing masculine ideology is self-reflexively described in the novel.

2.

During the inter-war period, the Bright Young People, modelled after Oscar Wilde, challenged the authoritative code of manliness represented by their fathers’ generation and searched for an alternative identity beyond the rigid dichotomies of heterosexuality.
Strongly influenced by the avant-garde movement, writing invitation cards in imitation of the style of *Blast*, they attempted to destroy the traditional value system. In *Vile Bodies*, symbolic disobedience is crystallised in the characterisation of Miss Runcible, one of the notorious representatives of the Bright Young People. She makes a rumpus in the Prime Minister’s official residence, and this incident is broadcasted as the scandal of the Brown administration. This ridiculous event eventually causes the fall of his regime and briefly indicates that the unruly existence of the Bright Young People symbolises the resistance to their fathers’ generation. It is common knowledge that, reflecting on his alienation from his father, Waugh was deeply concerned about the generational gap between his generation and his father’s, which was brought about by the aftermath of the Great War. In order to claim the validity of their existence, the younger generation needed to kill their fathers symbolically. As Modris Eksteins notes:

“[In] the quest for a new fluency and harmony was involved a profound rebellion against an older generation, against the fathers who had led their sons to slaughter. The cult of youth came to first bloom in the twenties. Literature, film, advertising, and even the politics of the era were dominated by this youth worship. Patricide and the act of moral reclamation that the murder of the father entailed fascinated the new literary generation” (259-60).

Against the conventional value system of the older generation, including normative heterosexism, Waugh intentionally describes the Bright Young People as sexually deviated; thus, their behaviours are quite eccentric for normative sex codes. They appear as
effeminate men and manly women whom the society has to exclude to preserve the ideal image of man. The Bright Young People attempt to free themselves from obedience to conventional norms. In Waugh’s novels, there are many sexually deviated young people who cast scorn upon the conventional concept of manliness. For instance, in *Decline and Fall*, Grimes, who has a secret relationship with a boy, must act as a representative comic caricature of the soldier-hero. To earn the respect of students in the public school, he lies that he heroically lost his leg on a battlefield. (In truth, a train ran over him while he was drunk). In *Vile Bodies*, Miles, a deviated young man who also has a secret relationship with a race car driver, has a self-referential family name, “Malpractice” (128)\(^{14}\). These queer characters clearly reveal Waugh’s intention to deconstruct the ideology of manliness.

Moreover, his targets of satire encompass both male and female characteristics. In contrast to effeminate male characters, some of his female figures have manly qualities. The outstanding example of this in Waugh’s novels is Mrs Rattery in *A Handful of Dust*. Waugh portrays this American woman as an aviator and highlights her masculinity through the comparison with the protagonist, Tony Last, who can do nothing in the face of the death of his son and the absence of his wife. Waugh, with his misogynistic prejudice, often uses masculine women to reveal the instability of male identity. In *Vile Bodies*, Mrs Panrast, wearing manly clothes like American women, is mistaken for a man because of her queer behaviour and her seduction of the girl Chastity. Since her deviant sexuality can hardly be understood under the strong ideology of heterosexism, her non-feminine appearance and deed make her misunderstood as a man:

‘Ooh,’ said Chastity. ‘*Ooh, ow, ooh, ow. Please*, beasts, swine, cads . . .
please . . . ooh . . . well, if you must know, I thought [Mrs Panrast] was a man.’

‘Thought she was a man, Chastity? That doesn’t sound right to me.’

‘Well, she looks like a man and – and she goes on like a man. . . .’ (79)

When the girl repeatedly asserts that Mrs Panrast looks not like a sexual pervert but like a man, it is the traditional image of a man and the normative code of heterosexism that are relativised. Although Waugh’s portrayal of a deviated female character reveals his prejudice against lesbians, it also illuminates the promiscuous atmosphere of the Bright Young People against the rigid classification of sex roles in a patriarchal society through the portrayals of “mutable” sexuality. Martin Stannard’s notable description of “Havelock Ellis and dog-eared copies of Ulysses (smuggled from Paris) passed from hand to hand” clearly revealed that the rigid dichotomy of sex is at the verge of being deconstructed in their world (178). However, the influence of contemporary sexologists on the Bright Young People has received little attention so far. For instance, it has hardly been noted that in Decline and Fall, Peter Beste-Chetwynde, one of the Bright Young People, considers Ellis’ book “his favourite book” (119). This portrayal, however, confirms the existence of Ellis’ widespread influence on the young men’s world. Furthermore, Nancy Mitford’s Highland Fling (1931) shows the effeminate protagonist Albert Gates influenced by Otto Weininger, which demonstrates that his work, Sex and Character (1903), was deeply influential at the time (19). Both sexologists insist that sex is “mutable,” and “there exist all sorts of intermediate conditions between male and female”:

We may not know exactly what sex is; but we do know that it is mutable, with the
possibility of one sex being changed into the other sex, that its frontiers are often uncertain, and that there are many stages between a complete male and a complete female. (Ellis 194)\textsuperscript{15}

At the present time, this view of sexology seems highly controversial because their radical explanations of mutable sexuality can hardly be separated from gender prejudices. However, as the backdrop for the younger generation’s works, it is necessary to note that there surely exists the necessity for the radical reconsideration of an existing idea of sexuality and gender. Waugh intentionally described the Bright Young People as sexually deviant; thus, their behaviours are quite eccentric for normative sex codes. They try to free themselves from obedience to conventional norms. In this transitional period for both sexuality and gender, Waugh intentionally connects the deconstructed sexual dichotomy in young men’s world with the rejection of the patriarchal narrative and its norm. Waugh noticed that young men’s ardent desire during the time was to forget the existence of the powerful code urging them to be men. Even considering his prejudice against the sexual minority and his problematic misogyny, Waugh’s delineation of young men’s resistance to the normative code insightfully foregrounds the shared sense of mistrust in the normative gender role among the younger generation during the inter-war period. In order to repress such an idiosyncratic attitude of the Bright Young People, the _Evening Mail_ in _Vile Bodies_ has to emphasise the relevance of both “purity” and “sobriety” (64) in public and private spheres and denounce young men’s horrendous behaviours against the normative code in both places, because the disturbance of the normative gender role is inextricably linked with the decline of the British Empire.
However, it is quite important to emphasise that in *Vile Bodies*, Waugh not only describes the existence of the younger generation that seeks alternative ways of living through the relativisation of the traditional gender code but also carefully depicts the voice of the normative code. Chapter Eight in *Vile Bodies*, in which the Bright Young People’s party on an airship is described in parallel with a magnificent party of the father’s generation, is noteworthy in this context. In contrast to the portrayal of young men, who feel like vomiting on the unstable airship, Waugh clearly delineates the stability of aristocrats wearing first-class clothes and officers wearing medals on their chests in “Anchorage House”—“anchorage” for the tradition or “the age anchored”—where the solemn atmosphere of the eighteenth century still remains. They are part of the generation that represents the value system of the British imperialism and that sent their sons to the deathly battlefields of the Great War. In this magnificent party, Mr Outrage, the Prime Minster, as his name symbolically implies, criticises the values of the Bright Young People harshly: “They had a chance after the war that no generation has ever had. There was a whole civilization to be saved and remade – and all they seem to do is to play the fool.” (111) For him, the Bright Young People have a responsibility to reconstruct the British society after the unprecedentedly devastating tragedy of the First World War. Given the sense of “brokenness” of the concept of manliness, which was brought by the wounded soldiers during and after the Great War and the masculine anxiety among the male society, Mr Outrage must stress on the recovery of Edwardian patriarchy based on the conventional idea of manliness in his hope of reviving the European civilisation. He is the symbolical character who embodies the “outrage” of the older generation over the dissolute lives of the younger generation, especially the Bright Young People.
Interestingly, *Vile Bodies* reiterates the traumatic scars of the First World War through the depiction of the dissipated way of living of the younger generation. Against the bloom of the youth worship during the decade, Waugh reiteratively stipulates the working of ideology in the description of the world around young men. It is embodied as voices from the *ancien régime*. For instance, it is at “Armistice Day” (55) that Adam, the economically unstable protagonist, visits his fiancée Nina Blount’s house to announce their engagement and, rather significantly for him, borrow money from her father. At the lunchtime, he also hears the news that two servants in the house were killed in action. Around Adam’s life, Waugh delineates the aftermath of that war in detail. The most relevant example appears in the representation of Shepherd’s Hotel (where Adam resides), which is full of the relics of traditional masculinity. It is “a happy reminder” of “the splendours of the Edwardian era” (30):

Lottie’s parlour, in which most of the life of Shepheard’s centres, contains a comprehensive collection of signed photographs. Most of the male members of the royal families of Europe are represented (except the ex-Emperor of Germany, who has not been reinstated, although there was a district return of sentiment towards him on the occasion of his second marriage). There are photographs of young men on horses riding in steeplechases, of elderly men leading in the winners of ‘classic’ races, of horses alone and of young men alone, dressed in tight, white collars or in the uniform of the Brigade of Guards. There are caricatures by ‘Spy’, and photographs cut from illustrated papers, many of them with brief obituary notices, ‘killed in action’. There are photographs of yachts in
full sail and of elderly men in yachting caps; there are some funny pictures of the earliest kind of motor car. There are very few writers or painters and no actors, for Lottie is true to the sound old snobbery of pound sterling and strawberry leaves.

(31)

In the promiscuous world of the Bright Young People, the landscape they live and see remains as the conventional atmosphere. In the hotel, there are numerous materials that reinforce the authenticity of the patriarchy, the empire and conventional masculinity. Such materials, which praise the kings, soldiers and sportsmen for their masculine power, silently hail individuals who appreciate them to be conventional men. Artists who are regarded as effeminate are completely excluded from such a hotel¹⁶. In this novel, Waugh richly portrays the raucous world of the Bright Young People, highlighting the hidden influence of the Edwardian masculine ideology that encompasses the society of young men in the fallen soldiers and the absent fathers. Such a masculine ideology stringently requires Adam to be an “always-already subjects.”

From the historical perspective, as the Bright Young People could not establish the alternative value system through the rejection of the deep-rooted tradition, their deviation from the normative code never succeeds in Vile Bodies. In the end, Miss Runcible dies of a car accident, Miles has to escape from his own country and Archie Schwert is arrested on suspicion of being a spy during war time. Their failures are caused by their own unawareness of their oppression by the older generation’s conventional value system.

3.
However, the endangered condition of the Bright Young People is not simply brought by strife between the two generations. If it were such a superficial discord, they would have been able to escape from the normative code. The problem is that the normative code is not outside them but inside their mental landscape. Considering this point, it is worthwhile to focus on the scene at a raucous party of the Bright Young People held by Lady Metroland, in which Waugh depicts the certain existence of the internalised code in the Bright Young People’s mind. In the party, Mrs Ape (her name makes a mockery of human beings), who is represented as a dubious evangelist, gives a speech as follows:

‘Brothers and Sisters,’ [Mrs Ape] said in a hoarse, stirring voice. Then she paused and allowed her eyes, renowned throughout three continents for their magnetism, to travel among the gilded chairs. (It was one of her favourite openings.) ‘Just you look at yourselves,’ she said. (84)

Her words inevitably make all of the guests uncomfortable. All of a sudden, their hidden thoughts, which have been recognised as empty by previous critics, come to light. Through the reflexive words of Mrs Ape, a mood of self-reproach moves rapidly over the gathering. Mrs Ape’s remark creates an awkward moment among the guests because they cannot help feeling anxious about their subjectivities, which they have ignored so far:

Magically, self-doubt began to spread in the audience. Mrs Panrast stirred uncomfortably; had that silly little girl been talking, she wondered. . . .

There were a thousand things in Lady Throbbing’s past . . . Every heart
found something to bemoan. (84–85)

Unlike *Decline and Fall*, this scene in *Vile Bodies* harshly reveals the unstable subjectivity of not only the protagonist but also of the Bright Young People as a community. According to the insightful assertion of R. Neill Johnson, the guests must feel a sense of “shame,” and face “the possibility that they are not who they thought they were” under the gaze of Mrs Ape (10). For the first time, they realise their “emptiness” (10) through their internal struggle with their identities. However, it should be emphasised that, through the words of Mrs Ape, Waugh’s satirical gaze focuses on the idle attitude of those who have refused to turn the reflexive gaze on themselves—on their own “emptiness.” If they can feel a sense of “shame,” they must, a priori, be “always-already subjects” who have already had the psychological landscape to feel “shame.” In other words, Waugh’s satire is not about their lack of subjectivity but their refusal to reflexively gaze into their subjectivity.

Paradoxically, the “awkward moment” vanishes as soon as they hear the “the organ voice of England” and “the hunting-cry of the ancien régime”:

> But suddenly on that silence vibrant with self-accusation broke the organ voice of England, the hunting-cry of the *ancien régime*. Lady Circumference gave a resounding snort of disapproval:

> ‘What a damned impudent woman,’ she said.

Adam and Nina and Miss Runcible began to giggle, and Margot Metroland for the first time in her many parties was glad to realize that the guest of the evening was going to be a failure. It had been an awkward moment. (85)
The need for the Bright Young People to continue clinging to their superficial lives must be an acquired defect arising from the conventional code internalised in their minds. In this scene, Waugh reveals the paradox within their psyches, because their identities are based unconsciously on their internalised ideology of the Establishment even though they are seemingly convinced that they have rejected the normative code. While they thoroughly ignore the normative code of traditional England in establishing their alternative subjectivities, the only way to preserve their sanity is to rely on the voice of good old values. As long as they reject conventional norms, they cannot maintain their existence. It makes their subjectivities “bogus.” Thus, Mrs Ape’s speech becomes a harsh criticism from the older generation of the Bright Young People’s void of escapism. The words “Just you look at yourselves,” act as the voice of the conscience, urging young men to focus the reflexive gaze on themselves. It is the only way for them to escape the sense of being “bogus.” However, the Bright Young People lose the chance to ponder the formation of their subjectivities because of their rejection of the conventional value system.

Through his satirical depiction of young men’s rejection of masculine ideology and disregard for the process of establishing their subjectivities, Waugh emphasises the necessity of opportunities for “self-accusation.” His attitude on this matter can be recognised as what Butler calls a “reflexive turn of the subject” (115); he notices that it is the only way to discover an alternative subjectivity. If they fail to do this, the existence of the Bright Young People becomes invalid, and their lives come to be “bogus.”

In order to consider the reason behind the lives of the Bright Young People being “bogus,” it is highly important to focus on the near-omniscient character in Vile
Bodies—Father Rothschild—who instructively explains the inner contradiction of the Bright Young People:

‘Don’t you think,’ said Father Rothschild gently, ‘that perhaps it is all in some way historical? I don’t think people ever want to lose their faith either in religion or anything else. I know very few young people, but it seems to me that they are all possessed with an almost fatal hunger for permanence. I think all these divorces show that. People aren’t content just to muddle along nowadays . . . And this word “bogus” they all use . . .’ (111)

Unlike Mr Outrage, Father Rothschild is a unique and ambivalent character because, as one of the older generation, he can offer counsel to the prime minister on political subjects but also has a proper understanding of the Bright Young People’s dilemma. His critical but sympathetic explanation of young men’s paradoxical desires for a sense of permanence without having to belong to the conventional value system (which is to be acquired through marriage) accurately represents the gist of the novels of the inter-war decade. He reveals the contradiction in young men who, refusing the traditional value system of the previous generation, unconsciously desire a sense of stability. Although a sense of “permanence” can be acquired by a feeling of belonging with history and the previous generation’s values, they resolutely reject the past and choose to live only in the present moment as a way of establishing an alternative subjectivity. Many divorces could have resulted from this existential contradiction, as the Bright Young People spare little thought about the meanings of marriages.
Adam proposes to Nina at the party on the airship. For him, the most significant aspect about being married is to “go on—for quite a long time” (104), and it allows him to identify himself in a historical era. However, for his fiancée, it only means the change of their conditions: “it’s a bore not being married” (103). Their attitudes towards marriage are contrary from the beginning. Astonishingly, they had not even seen one another’s face before this, since they begin to know each other only through their correspondence at the beginning of the novel. Nina decided to marry him simply because she misunderstood that he had black hair.

However, this disconnect is not limited to Nina. For example, Adam does not have any interest in the circumstances in which Nina was raised (60). Understanding the responsibility of marriage is out of reach for both of them. As Father Rothschild notes, divorces verifies young men’s lack of responsibility as heads of a families and makes it impossible for them to have a sense of continuity. This inconsistency brings them their sense of having “bogus” and fragile subjectivities. Their escapism from the normative code thus voids their existence itself. For Waugh, such a way of living is ultimately nonsense. Through his characterisation of Father Rothschild, Waugh reveals the existential contradiction of young men who unconsciously rely on the older generation for their subjectivities while simultaneously rejecting the conventional value system.

Waugh emphasises the need of opportunities for “self-accusation” through his satirical depiction of young men’s rejection of masculine ideology and disregard for the process of the establishing their subjectivities, Waugh emphasised the necessity of opportunities for “self-accusation.” He notices that “self-accusation” is the only way to deconstruct the rigid image of masculinity and discover an alternative subjectivity. If they
fail to do this, the queer existence of the Bright Young People becomes invalid, and their lives come to be “bogus.” Along these lines, Waugh satirically depicts the melancholic state of young men after becoming sober:

Darkness fell during the drive back. It took an hour to reach the town. Adam and Miles and Archie Schwert did not talk much. The effects of their drinks had now entered on that secondary stage, vividly described in temperance hand-books, when the momentary illusion of well-being and exhilaration gives place to melancholy, indigestion and moral decay. Adam tried to concentrate his thoughts upon his sudden wealth, but they seemed unable to adhere to this high pinnacle, and as often as he impelled them up, slithered back helplessly to his present physical discomfort. (149)

This symbolical scene examines the “bogus” lives of the Bright Young People who ignore the voice of the normative code. They are searching for the cause of their feelings of disappointment. However, the young men are overwhelmed by the mood of “melancholy, indigestion and moral decay.” They cannot understand the reason for their excessive drinking and the melancholy they experience on becoming sober. By drinking heavily, they have missed the opportunity to reflect upon themselves. Their extravagant world is based on such a lack of introspection.

As a result, the Party held for Mrs Ape brings big changes in Adam’s life. Simon Balcairn, the Daily Express gossip columnist known as “Mr Chatterbox” who invents stories about the absurd lives of the Bright Young People, concocts a story about Mrs Ape’s
speech being highly religious. Because of this story, he is ostracised from the society and finally commits suicide. Adam takes over his work and the mantle of “Mr Chatterbox.” He quickly creates many fictitious characters such as “Captain Angus Stuart-Kerr” (95), the outstanding hunter and dancer, and “Imogen Quest” (96), his greatest invention. Despite their fictional existences, they begin to have a great influence on the society, and everybody comes to admire them. “Imogen Quest,” in particular shows “signs of a marked personality” (96) and becomes “the final goal” (97) to those who attempt to rise in the world. While Adam’s version of “Mr Chatterbox” depicts unrealistic characters as the ideal person, the public believes that they are real, and they desire to become such ideal characters. This satirical description of Adam’s constant desire to build reality through fiction underlines the fact that it cannot help actualise the process of constructing and fictionalising the norm and the authority.

4.

Waugh’s descriptions of the younger generation’s internal contradictions lead us to consider his insight on the psychic processes of the internalisation of the normative code that creates subjectivity under the masculine ideology. He wrote explicitly and implicitly on the influence of the normative gender, which is pervasive in the world of the Bright Young People. The influence sometimes appears in the material objects and at other times as imperceptible, intangible things because it works as an ideology. Thus, the internalisation of the voice of power makes individuals the subject; simultaneously, internalised ideology constructs the conscience in the mind of the subject. For instance, such interpellation surfaces as reproachful mutterings. In the grumblings among the old generation, young men
are unfavourably compared with the masculine old and denounced for their “effeminacy.”

Such comparisons become a normative discourse and infiltrate their lives during the inter-war period. The conversation between Fanny Throbbing and Kitty Blackwater, Miles’s mother and her sister, exemplifies this widespread discourse. They deprecate Mile’s queerness employing the French word “tapette”\(^1\). The word euphemistically represents their sadness that Miles does not carry himself like an English gentleman:

‘My dear, [Miles] looks terribly tapette.’

‘Darling, I know. It is a great grief to me. Only I try not to think about it too much – he had so little chance with poor Throbbing what he was.’

‘The sins of the fathers, Fanny . . .’ (23)

Through this conversation, Waugh reveals the psychic relation between the absence of the masculine fathers and the young men’s “effeminacy.” The acquisition of young men’s masculine subjectivity is influenced by the internalised existence of the fathers ordering them to be men. From the speakers’ perspective, being queer is always wrong. The reproachful phrase, “the sins of fathers,” implies that fathers have a responsibility to raise their sons with masculine qualities and at the same time convicts sons’ queerness as the sin from an authoritative standpoint. This is a recurring discourse in Waugh’s novels. There are judgmental voices of older generations harshly condemning younger generations when they appear to behave “abnormally.” This voice becomes an ideology that internally exerts pressure on the protagonists to become men. This is also echoed in *Black Mischief*: 

---
\(^1\) Tapette is a French term used to describe a person who is considered to be too effeminate or feminine.
Mr Seal was a puzzle to [the old gentleman]. He never could forget Mr Seal’s father. He had been a member of the club. Such a different gentleman. So spick and span, never without silk hat and an orchid in his buttonhole. Chief Conservative Whip for twenty-five years. Who would have thought of him having a son like Mr Seal? . . . full of the comfort that glows in the hearts of old men when they contemplate the misfortunes of their contemporaries. (69)

Through the old gentleman’s judgemental gaze on Basil in this description, it is obvious that the criteria for right and wrong are determined by the father. The old gentleman self-righteously acknowledges the authority of the older generation; it is always the father who tells the young man that he is wrong, and not manly. Thus, Waugh visualises the authoritative voice of the older generations that embodies the ideological discipline of good and bad, or “masculine” and “effeminate.”

Adam is also haunted by the absense of his father. Although the mistress of the Shepherd’s Hotel, Lottie, does not know his father, she compares Adam to his father whenever possible: “Just like your poor father” (64). The absurdity of this has been regarded as illustrative of Waugh’s humour, demonstrating the easy misunderstanding of people’s personalities; however, such repetitive comparisons with the absent father indicates that sons are non-entities by themselves. The only description of Adam is through his relation to his dead father: the “only son of the late Professor Oliver Fenwick-Symes” (74). It is suggestive that a protagonist without any description of his origins and identity is named “Adam”—an allusion to the progenitor of the human race in the Bible19.

Frederick L. Beaty, from the perspective of a social satire, recognises Adam’s end on
the battlefield as Waugh’s “disillusionment with the society of his day” (66). In addition, considering the divorce in the author’s real life, Robert R. Garnett asserts that the melancholy of *Vile Bodies* as a black comedy is deeply compared with previous novel (74). However, the inevitability of the ending on a battlefield has never been paid sufficient attention in the historical context of the inter-war period. Considering the existence of the conventional value system behind young men’s raucous ways of living, Adam’s aimless enlistment in the army is evidence that it is impossible for them to completely escape from the conventional regulation and, rather importantly, discloses their inner discrepancy on a massive scale.

Parting from the unconventional world of the Bright Young People, Adam, who is given a masculine name from the beginning, goes to the battlefield in an unconscious attempt to fulfill of the codes of “manliness.” In order to fully appreciate the meaning of this ending, it is essential to focus on the letter from Adam’s ex-fiancée Nina:

> Dearest Adam — I wonder how you are. It is difficult to know what is happening quite because the papers say such odd things. Van has got a divine job making up all the war news and he invented a lovely story about you the other day how you’d saved hundreds of people’s lives and there’s what they call a popular agitation saying why haven’t you got the V.C. so probably you will have by now isn’t it amusing. (186)

In this letter, it is obvious that, in a manner similar to Adam, Van became “Mr Chatterbox” after him and concocted the heroics of Adam, for which he should be awarded Victorian
Cross. The image of the hero constructed by “Mr Chatterbox” remains the stereotypical officer institutionalised in the militarisation of British imperialism from the end of nineteenth century to the First World War; a period when battles were regarded as trials for innumerable men to prove their “manliness.” Although Adam feels a sense of meaninglessness on the battlefield, his exploits are fabricated, and he becomes part of the fiction that he once wrote. It is a parody of the hero image that ideologically supports the validity of patriarchy and the concept of manliness in Western culture before the First World War depicted by Waugh at the end of *Vile Bodies*. Through the repeated demonstration of “Mr Chatterbox’s” “realisation of the fiction,” Waugh’s satirical relativisation of the conventional image of manliness and reflexivity on the male subjectivity is actualised in the final chapter.

Mrs Ape’s episode shows the importance of gazing reflexively at the self, and the ending, when Adam becomes the virtual image of “manliness” on the battlefield, reveals the fact that such a conventional image of man is not essential but is constructed by the ideological functions of the normative code. The Bright Young People, portrayed by Waugh do not have a foothold on their existence in a society that orders men to follow the manliness of the soldier-hero. It is ultimately important to pay attention to the fact that throughout *Vile Bodies*, Waugh emphasises the centrality of the concept of manliness in the young men’s society. He succeeds because he maintains a certain constant distance from both the old and the young generations. In his satirical novels, Waugh acknowledges the masculine ideology influencing the young men and creating their conscience and reflexively ponders on his own subjectivity. In other words, it is Waugh’s attempt to bring unnamed masculinity of the time to light. His satire makes visualising the subconscious fear of young
men possible. This attitude enables him to place the reflexive gaze on himself. It is apparent that young men’s refusal to contemplate their internal problem is the essential focus of Waugh’s satirical novels of the 1930s. He repeatedly tells us, “Just you look at yourselves.”

Waugh’s analysis of masculine ideology relativises the blind enthusiasm for “manliness” lauded in the inter war decades. The introspective gaze into the male subjectivity in *Vile Bodies* is extremely important in analysis of male characters drawn in the 1930s. As I described previously, manliness began to be discussed as a gender only in the 1970s. Until then, manliness belonged to an invisible domain. Therefore, the act of gazing reflexively into the male subjectivity is quite relevant to deconstructing the validity of normative gender ideology. Before Elisabeth Badinter, parodying the words of de Beauvoir, observed that “One is not born a man, one becomes a man” (26) in 1992, Waugh made great advances in exploring the objectification of the process of becoming a man. Thus, *Vile Bodies*, published in 1930, should be regarded as an extremely important watershed work in history from the perspective of male gender.
Chapter Four: Funeral Rites for an Explorer: The End of Imperial Masculinity in *A Handful of Dust*

1.

Previously, critics debated whether *A Handful of Dust*, published in 1934, represents Waugh’s grief regarding the imminent end of the Empire and his nostalgia for good old-fashioned Englishness or a satirical caricature of the past value system through the ironical depiction of Tony Last’s tragedy. However, in either case, one thing is certain: Waugh, as a humorist and satirist, never shows his feelings directly. As David Gervais instructively emphasises: “Waugh’s great contribution to English writing was to see that England—long the preserve of the wistful and the elegiac—could also be comic” (159), Waugh keeps a comic distance from his objects in his writing to assess their validity.

Accordingly, when we try to understand the theme of *A Handful of Dust*, we have to be much more careful than with other novelists’ work about the complicated relation between what is written on the surface and what is implied. Unfortunately regarded as a conservative, Waugh’s humorous and satirical portrayals of people in modern British society sometimes make critics unmindful of considering his comprehensive themes and historicising the novel according to the context of the 1930s, which Waugh subtly depicts behind the tragic death of Tony. That is the reason his delineations of social issues have been neglected in previous criticism. Behind the story of the decline and fall of Tony’s patriarchal world, we have to consider what kind of cultural dynamism in the interwar period significantly affected individual life. In the case of *A Handful of Dust*, it is the Great Depression that had a particularly baleful influence on Tony’s life, but critics have never paid sufficient attention
to this. To examine the cause of the destruction of Tony’s excessively conventional life in *A Handful of Dust*, we should examine how the Great Depression cast a dark shadow over British society, and particularly the individual male character, like Tony, in an imperialistic patriarchy must be looked into\(^\text{20}\).

*A Handful of Dust* originates from Waugh’s short story “The Man Who Liked Dickens,” published in 1933. This short story only briefly explains why Paul Henty, the protagonist of the short story, should desire to explore the colonial country after his wife’s unfaithfulness with a horse guard and focuses mainly on Henty’s confinement in Mr McMaster’s hut in the Amazon. In *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh uniquely characterises Tony as a father, unlike his other celibate protagonists, and heavily expands the process of Tony’s loss of the patriarchal role in his family circle and his death as “an explorer.” To reconsider *A Handful of Dust* from the perspective of male gender in the context of the 1930s, it is significant to focus on these decisive alterations from the short story: a man who steals the protagonist’s wife is changed from a soldier to an “effeminate” man, and a scene is added wherein a monument is built to praise Tony’s manly quality. Taking these two remarkable alterations into consideration, it is apparent that Tony Last’s fatal motivation to explore the unreal city in British Guiana is highlighted as firmly connected with his loss of masculine identity.

Tony follows the patriarchal code in Hetton Abbey, which is full of the atmosphere of excessively traditional Englishness. However, after the death of his son, John Andrew, and after the adultery of his wife, Brenda, with “effeminate” John Beaver comes out, Tony reluctantly accepts the proposal of divorce, wherein he is accused of being at fault. However, an absurdly huge amount is demanded for divorce settlement, resulting in the crucial
moment of Tony’s loss of Hetton Abbey, the place where he tries to play the role of patriarch. Subsequently, he throws it all away and decides to go to British Guiana as an “explorer” in search of an unreal city. Given the fact that the image of the explorer had become one of the ideal images of masculinity under the dominance of English Empire, Tony’s realisation of gradually becoming an explorer aboard the ship to the colonial, savage country cannot be understood separately from the concept of masculinity, which ideologically maintained the doctrine of English imperialism and was endangered after the global financial crisis of the 1930s. Through the exploration of British Guiana, he eagerly tries to regain his male identity as a patriarch.

From the historical and cultural perspective of the 1930s, given the distinctive aspect of late modernism, Jed Esty emphasises the relevance of focusing on “the anthropological turn” as the cultural transition from expanding “imperial universalism” to shrinking “national particularism” occurring in the literary field to reimagine the national culture during Britain’s interwar period (7). His insightful discussion strongly urges us to pay attention to the prevailing contracted image of the English Empire and its possible shift of direction, namely, to gaze inside the British literature of that time from an outside perspective. Unlike the late modernists of the 1930s, who became interested in British national and regional culture during this transitional period, writers from Waugh’s generation, in Esty’s regard, “remain committed to the existential integrity of the individual subject in the fallen world”:

The writers and intellectuals featured in this study generally take imperial decline to imply some form of national revival. By contrast, most of the writers typically
associated with the ebb of British power—Graham Greene, Malcolm Lowry, Evelyn Waugh, George Orwell, Philip Larkin, even, to some extent, W. H. Auden and the critic F. R. Leavis—take imperial decline to imply national decline. (215)

In his argument, the thematic core of Waugh’s satirical novels, especially *A Handful of Dust*, comes to “England’s reduced estate and the dead ends of literary humanism” in a retrospective way (215–21).

Esty’s discussion of *A Handful of Dust* focuses on sociocultural features, but pays little attention to the transitional phase for gender binary during that period; however, given Tony’s downfall as a patriarch and his ardent desire for regaining his manliness, we must consider the consequential relation between the diminishing image of imperial Britain and the threatened male subjectivity of the novel, that is, the anxiety of “the existential integrity of the individual subject” of men. From the perspective of male gender, the theme of unstable manliness in Waugh’s novels cannot be separated from the context of the shrinking image of Britain after the Great Depression.

Chapter four provides insight into the distinctive relation between the tragedy of the individual male protagonist and the historical context of the interwar period; additionally, the chapter focuses on the following three significant aspects. Firstly, the masculine norm still has a strong influence in London and also in Tony’s life at Hetton Abbey. Secondly, despite his wish to preserve his English life at his estate, it is almost destroyed in the aftermath of the Great Depression, which eventually results in the end of the Empire and the attempt of the bloc economy. Interestingly, this historical event is embodied in the existence of John Beaver. Thirdly, these two aspects of the novel finally lead us to recognise Tony’s
death as an explorer in the colonial country as symbolical funeral rites for manliness.

From this point of view, while the theme of Waugh’s previous novels was to depict the functions of ideological manliness internalised in the psychical landscape inhabited by the male protagonists, in *A Handful of Dust*, he clearly aims to delineate the decisive relation between the diminishing image of manliness and the decline of the Empire from the perspective of the interwar period’s sociopolitical features in order to disclose the violent nature of the authoritative patriarchal code of manliness. In doing so, Waugh focuses particularly on sociopolitical events, such as the Great Depression, to actualise the instability of male subjectivity in relation to the historical context of the 1930s. This is demonstrated unobtrusively as the backdrop of the portrayal of Tony Last’s old-fashioned life and death.

2.

In a similar vein to Waugh’s previous novels, *A Handful of Dust* depicts the existence of masculine ideology connected with the First World War. Waugh, who repeatedly demonstrated the voice of the normative code of manliness through his literally career, stresses the relevance of the influence of masculine ideology on the male characters in this novel as well. This is clearly evident in the scene at the London club, Brat’s, of which Tony is a member. At this club, manly quality has the most worth for the older generation that experienced the battlefields of the Great War, even if it is getting an empty formality:

> The air of antiquity pervading Brat’s, derived from its elegant Georgian façade and finely panelled rooms, was entirely spurious, for it was a club of recent origin,
founded in the burst of bonhomie immediately after the war. It was intended for young men, to be a place where they could straddle across the fire and be jolly in the card room without incurring scowls from older members. But now these founders were themselves passing into middle age; they were heavier, balder and redder in the face than when they had been demobilized, but their joviality persisted and it was their turn now to embarrass their successors, deploiring their lack of manly and gentlemanly qualities. (11)

The club is generally represented as the space of men, but here for two generations of “these founders” and “their successors,” manliness means a concept that is deep-rooted in the battlefields of World War I. Through the word “demobilized,” it is obvious that the founders of this club are of the generation that experienced the battlefields of World War I. But now their generation are growing old and grieve over the “lack of manly and gentlemanly qualities” in Tony’s generation that have never experienced the War. In the following passages, Tony’s friend, Jock Grant-Menzies, visits Brat’s Club:

Jock Grant-Menzies came upstairs. The men at the bar greeted his saying, ‘Hullo, Jock old boy, what are you drinking?’ or, more simply, ‘Well, old boy?’ He was too young to have fought in the war but these men thought he was all right; they liked him far more than they did Beaver, who, they thought, ought never to have got into the club at all. (11)

By their severe eyes, Jock is judged “all right” in spite of the undeniable fact that he is too
young to have fought. In this passage, we can see Waugh’s reiterative theme about how the normative masculine code represses the younger generation that has not experienced the battlefields of World War I, which is similar to what other protagonists experience in his previous works. The judgement for Jock surely demonstrates the prevailing ideology of manliness. And this ideology does not only exist in London, but also at Tony’s Hetton Abbey.

Hetton Abbey, which was reconstructed in the Gothic style in 1864, during the Gothic Revival, seems to preserve traditional values. Rooms in Hetton Abbey are symbolically named after the Knights of the Round Table, in order to preserve the atmosphere of the pre-war era and excessively evoke masculine imperialism, which clearly shows the influence of the Gothic Revival. This influence is also evident in Tony’s personality. While his wife Brenda regards him with contempt as “feudal” (41), he tries to rule his family as a patriarch in a manner similar to King Arthur, who highly valued discipline at the Round Table. In this house, Tony acts as patriarch and gives his son John Andrew an education about being a gentleman:

‘Be quiet. And secondly because you were using a word which people of your age and class do not use. Poor people use certain expressions which gentlemen do not. You are a gentleman. When you grow up all this house and lots of other things besides will belong to you. You must learn to speak like someone who is going to have these things and to be considerate to people less fortunate than you, particularly women. Do you understand?’ (25)
Gentlemanly education made a major contribution towards the reinforcement of ideological masculinity in the pre-war world. Especially at public schools, like Eton and Rugby, students received an education to become a real man through the image of Galahad, who could see the Holy Grail as a result of his stern integrity. Needless to say, education is one of the most significant apparatuses for reinforcing the validity of ideology. Tony, who is class-conscious, teaches his son to understand their imperative obligation as gentlemen.

Furthermore, the sociocultural requirement to be a man at Hetton Abbey is not only represented in the education of John Andrew, but also in the daily life of Tony himself. He unconsciously and aimlessly follows the masculine code that this period required:

Although they were both in good health and of unexceptional figure, Tony and Brenda were on a diet. It gave an interest to their meals and saved them from the two uncivilized extremes of which solitary diners are in danger—absorbing gluttony or an irregular régime of scrambled eggs and raw beef sandwiches. Under their present system they denied themselves the combination of protein and starch at the same meal. They had a printed catalogue telling them which foods contained protein and which starch. Most normal dishes seemed to be compact of both, so that it was fun for Tony and Brenda to choose the menu. Usually it ended by their declaring some food ‘joker.’ (26)

In the period from World War I to the eve of World War II, the concept of “the physical fitness” (Zweiniger-Bargielowska, “Culture” 241) prevailed, which obtruded upon men the value of having a body suitable for the military services. Because of such an ideological
requirement, people could not ignore the relevance of diet. Tony and Brenda also grapple with it. This plot does not have any links with other lines of the story and therefore it seems slightly superfluous. No previous criticism focused on it from the perspective of manliness at that time, though this scene highlights that the ideological influence of “the physical fitness” reached Hetton Abbey and also Tony’s life. There is certainly no seriousness in the attempt of Tony and Brenda to reduce their weight, but their humorous diet to avoid “uncivilized” great intemperance and to have a suitable meal for civilised life verifies how powerfully the discipline of “the physical fitness” dominated daily life in every corner of England. Even if it seems quite comical, Waugh depicts the dominance of ideological manliness at Hetton Abbey through the education of John Andrew and Tony’s feudal life. It is curious that Tony’s patriarchal life, which unconsciously follows the concept of manliness, paradoxically discloses its impossibility.

3.

In order to examine the theme of *A Handful of Dust* from its historical context of the interwar period, it is necessary to focus on the sense of destruction that filled Hetton Abbey, and in particular Tony’s room. His room is called “Morgan le Fay” and, as such, symbolically discloses the paradox that Tony subconsciously bears from the beginning. Given the fact that Brenda’s room is named “Guinevere,” who is carried away by a love affair with Lancelot, it is quite important to note that Tony does not spend his time in the room named “Arthur.” Morgan le Fay is the uterine sister of Arthur and intends to destroy the Arthurian reign. Therefore, through the names of Hetton Abbey’s rooms, Waugh clearly indicates that Tony is unsuitable for the patriarchal role of his family circle.
In spite of playing the superficial role of patriarch, Tony unconsciously reveals his infantile disposition. Calvin Lane’s suggestion that Tony does not escape from an adolescent preoccupation with the chivalrous mediaeval past instructively indicates his immature nature (70). His life in the nursery, where he is fulfilled with “tender memory” (18), symbolically clarifies his childish aspect. The relationship between the childish father and his son is strangely distorted because of Tony’s contradictory mannerisms. John seems to regard Ben, a lifeguard, as a father more than he does Tony. For example, after Tony and John quarrel, “Tony and John were friends again” (86); this description suggests that they sense themselves as equals in a domestic hierarchy, in contrast to the principles of patriarchy. Although Hetton Abbey is seemingly represented as the manly estate, through the motif of mediaeval chivalry, Tony’s life as a father is quite remote from the conventional patriarchal value system. In this context, the remark of his aunt, Frances, about the estate is quite important. She calls it “an orphanage” designed by one pupil of Mr Pecksniff, a character in Dickens’ *Martin Chuzzlewit* (17). Frances sees through Tony’s ambiguous nature as a patriarch. Her statement of Hetton Abbey as orphanage discloses his childish aspect against his ardent desire to be a paterfamilias and symbolical father figure. Thus, Tony’s inner discrepancy is symbolically crystallised in the portrayal of the crumbling ceiling of his room. Rather interestingly, Waugh also connects Tony’s “bogus” life with the socio-economic problems of the interwar decade, which Tony does not realise.

In this context, it is highly relevant to consider the reason why the ceiling of Tony’s room at Hetton Abbey is symbolically in disrepair:

The ceiling of Morgan le Fay was not in perfect repair. In order to make an
appearance of coffered wood, moulded slats had been nailed in a chequer across the plaster. They were painted in chevrons of blue and gold. The squares between were decorated alternately with Tudor roses and fleurs-de-lis. But damp had penetrated into one corner, leaving a large patch where the gilt had tarnished and colour flaked away; in another place the wooden laths had become warped and separated from the plaster. (18)

Tony’s patriarchal world is based on his viewpoint of “English life,” which is maintained by the traditional class-consciousness and nobles oblige such as “One has a duty towards one’s employees, and towards the place” (21). However, Waugh intentionally delineates that Tony’s “English life” had a somewhat eerie quality through the demonstration of the broken ceiling. The citation symbolically demonstrates the existence of something uncanny about Tony’s patriarchal life in English society. Richard Wasson regards the representation of Hetton Abbey as a reflection of “the errors of the Victorian imagination”: It satirically embodies not the spirit of chivalry but its failure (137). The crumbling ceiling of Tony’s nursery symbolically signifies the expected fiasco that results from his desire to live by the principles of imperialistic masculinity. Jeffrey Heath’s regard of Tony’s chivalrous manner as “bogus behaviour” crucially reveals the vanity of his patriarchal life (107).

To analyse the uncanny aspects of Tony’s life, it is necessary to focus on the quotation below. This passage is casually inserted into the scene of a happy Christmas, which highlights Waugh’s consciousness of the historical and economic context of the interwar era. An economic disruption surely underlies Tony’s “English life”:  

103
Christmas was on a Friday that year, so the party was a long one, from Thursday until Monday. (62)

While the author did not elucidate the period of the narrative, an examination of the years from this period in which Christmas was on a Friday revealed that the story started in 1931 and ended in 1932. The reason for clarifying the period of the narrative is to actualise the influence of the economic depression behind Tony’s life. The quotation below clearly reveals Waugh’s interest in the sociopolitical aspects of the interwar period:

All over England people were waking up, queasy and despondent. Tony lay for ten minutes very happily planning the renovation of his ceiling. (19)

This passage is critical for understanding Waugh’s attitude towards the world of the 1930s. He clearly portrays the existence of two classes, one that can take breakfast happily in bed, and the other that have to go to work with sullen faces. This citation is consequential because, through the depiction of despondent class of people who live on wages obtained from labour, Waugh intentionally creates the effects of the Depression in the 1930s as the backdrop for the happy “feudal” life of the protagonist. Waugh has been regarded as a snob from the viewpoint of class-consciousness; however, in this passage Waugh draws attention to the existence of people of lower classes than his who suffer from their economic misfortune, in contrast to the portrayal of Tony’s innocence. On the one hand, Tony urges his son to be kind to the lower classes as a gentleman; on the other hand, he does not care much about them himself. He spends his life as if there was no financial disruption in the
world.

From a historical perspective, it is necessary to emphasise two significant events during the time of the story. The first is the foundation of the National Government by James Ramsay MacDonald in 1931, intended to break through the slump. Waugh intentionally created Allan, Brenda’s brother-in-law and a Conservative, who lives in a district where many supporters of the Labour Party reside:

[Brenda] usually spent the day with her younger sister Marjorie, who was married to the prospective Conservative candidate for a South London constituency of strong Labour sympathies. (40)

This reflects his ironic view of the Conservative Party’s inferiority under the Labour government. Through this description, Waugh implies the existence of the government’s national unity as background for Tony’s life.

The second important historical event was the Ottawa Agreements from 1932, which established a preferential tariff. It was regarded as the forerunner of the bloc economy. In the novel, Waugh illuminates the event as seen through Jock in Parliament:

*To ask the Minister of Agriculture whether in view of the dumping in this country of Japanese pork pies, the right honourable member is prepared to consider a modification of the eight-and-a-half-score basic pig from two and a half inches of thickness round the belly as originally specified, to two inches.* (178)
Jock debates the pig scheme with the Minister of Agriculture in Parliament. His argument on the issue addresses the protection of national products from the way Japanese products were being dumped. These scenes lead us to contemplate Waugh’s intention to depict England not as a leading country of imperialism, but rather as a shrinking island confronting the menace of developing foreign countries because of the long economic slump. Events related to the bloc economy, countermeasures against the Great Depression, can be considered as turning points in the transition from “imperial universalism” to “national particularism.” Through implications about the political and economic changes in *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh presents the shrinking image of the empire that underlies Tony’s patriarchal life. Thus, the shrinking image of British imperialism, which was deeply rooted in the Great Depression, has a powerful influence on Tony’s dying fall in the novel. In these circumstances, Brenda’s lie for repeatedly meeting with John Beaver in secret by saying that she had to study economics in London becomes persuasive. Since Tony does not care about the economic hardship of English society, he does not doubt the validity of his wife’s reason to go to London. His ignorance about such social matters eventually leads to the destruction of his life.

Given that Waugh clearly depicts economic hardship as background for Tony’s life, it must be emphasised that “effeminate” John Beaver, who destroys Tony’s happy feudal life, is portrayed as an evil consequence of the Great Depression. The entrance of John Beaver eventually breaks the seemingly patriarchal space. He spends his hand-to-mouth life in a matriarchal house with only six pounds a week and economically depends on his Mammonist mother. Despite graduating from Oxford, he lost his job at an advertising agency because of the Great Depression, and his engagement was broken off as a
consequence of his lack of money. In conformity with the historical fact that the image of the breadwinner was in decline after the Depression, John is portrayed as a man who decisively loses the conventional gender role as the supporter of a household. As his handwriting is described as “a large, school-girlish hand with wide spaces between the lines” (63) he is obviously portrayed as “effeminate,” deviating from the conventional masculine code of a patriarch. From the very nature of things, Beaver is recognised as a man who “ought never to have got into the club” (11).

In contrast to her “effeminate” son, his mother, Mrs Beaver, is represented as the one who holds power. In their house, traditional masculinity is blatantly ignored:

Beaver had a dark little sitting room (on the ground floor, behind the dining room) and his own telephone. The elderly parlourmaid looked after his clothes. She also dusted, polished and maintained in symmetrical order on his dressing table and on the top of his chest of drawers, the collection of sombre and bulky objects that had stood in his father’s dressing room; indestructible presents for his wedding and twenty-first birthday, ivory, brass bound, covered in pigskin, crested and gold mounted, suggestive of expensive Edwardian masculinity—racing flasks and hunting flasks, cigar cases, tobacco jars, jockeys, elaborate meerschaum pipes, button hooks and hat brushed. (7-8)

While Mrs Beaver, the Mammonist, praises women workers for their masculine qualities: the “girls were becoming quite deft, [Mrs Beaver] noticed with pleasure, particularly the shorter one who was handling the crates like a man” (10), the “sombre and bulky” relics of
John’s dead father that symbolise “Edwardian masculinity” are elaborately decorated by his parlourmaid in John Beaver’s dark little sitting room but these have no influence on the son and his way of living. These are just the relics of his father neither more nor less. This satirical description reveals Waugh’s emphasis on the death of conventional masculinity after the Depression. It is segregated from the past. Through his ironic view, Waugh discloses the absence of the conventional value system in 1930s London.

Interestingly, from the beginning of Waugh’s literary career, his dark recognition of the collapse of patriarchy in British society has been represented by the absence of fathers. Waugh did not or could not write father figures in his novels. In *Decline and Fall*, Paul’s parents died in a colony, a reflection of the decline of the Empire. In *Vile Bodies* and *Black Mischief*, Adam and Basil’s fathers are already dead, causing both to lose the foundations of their masculine identities and economic well-being. Such circumstances drive them to “extraordinary” and absurd adventures, at first in Bright Young People’s world in British Society and later, in the colonial countries. Behind the delineation of John Beaver’s loss of manly qualities, there is an anxiety about the conventional concept of manliness. This seducer embodies the wounded masculine image that resulted from the Great Depression. Through the “effeminate” characterisation of Beaver, Waugh foregrounds an error of manliness during the interwar period. Ironically, when Beaver visits Hetton Abbey, he is offered the room named “Galahad,” who is the symbol of ideal manliness praised in children’s education at public schools. The “effeminate” Galahad, who has been brought into existence by the Great Depression, thoroughly destroys the problematic Arthurian reign at Hetton Abbey.

Tony unconsciously becomes a creature of habit at the seemingly masculine Hetton
Abbey. Even his affection for Brenda becomes merely one of the rules: “He had got into a habit of loving and trusting Brenda” (126). His chivalrous patriarchal world comes to an end after Brenda’s infidelity and the death of his son:

His mind had suddenly become clearer on many points that had puzzled him. A whole Gothic world had come to grief . . . there was now no armour glittering through the forest glades, no embroidered feet on the green sward; the cream and dappled unicorns had fled . . . (153)

The destruction of his sort of utopian chivalric world through these reasons forces Tony to search for a dreamlike city in the jungles of colonial Guiana. As backdrop for the story of Tony Last, whom Waugh, for the first time, portrays as a father, his description of England connotes the definite correlation between the end of patriarchy and that of imperialism in the 1930s.

4.

Before writing *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh had already grappled with the relation between the British Empire and its colonial countries. An example is the whimsical journey of Basil Seal, the protagonist in *Black Mischief*. He escapes from the society of the Bright Young People and travels to fictitious Azania in Africa in order to gratify his aspiration to witness history. Although Basil wishes to see the progress of history, he witnesses the process of historical deterioration in Azania. This journey gradually turns into an expedition that symbolically traces the devastation of the value system of Western culture. In *Black*
“Mischief,” the world that Waugh depicts has dramatically changed. Unlike Paul and Adam, the protagonists from preceding novels, Basil Seal in *Black Mischief* has the power to act. Basil escapes from a boring life in London with the intention of seeing the progress of “History” in Azania. Azania is ruled by King Seth, who venerates Western civilisation and who is now facing a revolution against his monarchy. Basil seeks to acquire the vitality of life abroad and is therefore considered to be an outsider to the world of the Bright Young People. Jeffrey Heath characterises him as a “worldling” and categorises him as one of the Bright Young People (98), but his will to actively witness “History” is definitely different from the Bright Young People, who only feel a deep weariness for life in London. However, after escaping from the boredom of London, it is a caricatured Western civilisation that Basil witnesses in Azania civilisation. King Seth refers to himself and his country as “Progress and the New Age” and recreated Azania in imitation of Western civilisation. Although he accomplishes his wish, his governance is so dogmatic that nobody endorses his idea. Consequently, he is lonely and faced with revolution. Despite the fact that Seth advocates “Progress,” his country ironically rushes towards “Barbarism,” which Seth manages to reject. The “History” that Basil wishes to witness in this novel indicates the process of deterioration that opposes the progress of civilisation. He witnesses the ominous reflection of Western society in barbarous Azania.

The adventure of Waugh’s protagonists in the colonial countries superficially resembles the real exploration of artists of his generation and contemporary adventure novels. During the interwar period, Waugh wrote several travel books and employed forms of the adventure narrative in his novels, as did other novelists. Valentine Cunningham called the 1930s “escapist interludes” (377); a huge number of intellectuals went abroad and
described their extraordinary experiences in travel books to express discontent with the present state of affairs in England. As Paul Fussell noted, the impulse of the younger generation “to flee will be the stronger when the father (or mother) is one who closes pubs, regulates sexual behaviour, devises the British Christmas (a strong propellant of Osbert Sitwell to Italy), contrives that the sun shall seldom be seen and finds nothing wrong with the class system and the greedy capitalism sustaining it. An insistent leitmotif of writing between the wars, for both successful and would-be escapees, is I Hate It Here” (Abroad 16). Such arguments indicate that there was a shared anxiety about living under the conventional regulations of the older generation and that younger people feared that there were no chances to escape from the ideological repression in interwar England. Dissatisfaction drove them to go abroad for opportunities to be filled with a sense of fulfilment. Because the unstable condition of the Empire in the 1930s dissolved the boundary between “home” and “abroad,” “what was going on at home had its repercussions abroad, while some of the conditions in foreign places seemed eerily mirrored in England’s own state of affairs” (Schweizer 105). The younger generation’s political theme that revealed the worldwide destruction of political systems and economies caused by the conflict between socialism and fascism was intended, as a matter of fact, to harshly criticise their own country’s stagnation in which they found it difficult to live. Given this perspective, it is necessary to examine novelists’ representations of Britain and the colonial countries regarding the dynamism of the visible and invisible interrelation between them. In these circumstances, Waugh’s novels humorously represent the savageness of the colonial countries and in doing so, at the same time, they fiercely criticise the conventional values of Western civilisation.
Tony’s adventures in the colony seem to be quite natural. However, his expedition to satisfy his curiosity in order to escape from the life in England at first gradually develops a symbolical meaning, as if following the trend of contemporary adventure narratives. The initial purpose of the trip to unconsciously explore the city changes in his mind into the invention of an ideal Hetton Abbey:

He had a clear picture of [City] in his mind. It was Gothic in character, all vanes and pinnacles, gargoyles, battlements, groining and tracery, pavilions and terraces, a transfigured Hetton, pennons and banners floating on the sweet breeze, everything luminous and translucent. (164)

Richard Wasson suggests that the purpose of Tony’s trip is to seek “Camelot” (137); Tony desires not only to reconstruct an ideal Hetton Abbey but also to redeem his position as patriarch. As such, his adventure in Guiana changes into a psychical expedition for restoring the masculinity that he once lost in England.

Despite the betrayal of his wife, Tony feels that to go abroad is “the conduct expected of a husband” (160) in such circumstances, and he leaves for British Guiana with Dr Messinger. Tony feels a sense of incongruity in thinking that he is an “explorer”: “It did not come easily to him to realize that he was an explorer” (159) and his trip does not have deeper meaning at first. However, when the sea voyage begins, his desire to search for the unreal city gradually lessens and he starts to be attracted to the thought of being an explorer. Tony even imagines his trip to be like the great explorations that men accomplished throughout the history of mankind. He explains the value of his trip to Thérèse de Vitré as
Tony told her about the expedition; of the Peruvian emigrants in the middle ages and their long caravan working through the mountains and forests, llamas packed with works of intricate craftsmanship; of the continual rumours percolating to the coast and luring adventures up into the forests; of the route they would take up the rivers, then cutting through the bush along Indian trails and across untraveled country; of the stream they might strike higher up and how, Dr Messinger said, they would make woodskin canoes and take to the water again; how finally they would arrive under the walls of the city like the Vikings at Byzantium. ‘But of course’, he added, ‘there may be nothing in it. It ought to be an interesting journey in any case.’

‘How I wish I was a man’, said Thérèse de Vitré. (167)

The purpose of Tony’s trip compared to the Vikings who finally reached Byzantium draws this reaction from Thérèse: “How I wish I was a man.” In this moment, Tony’s aim for his trip, which began as an escape from reality, is shifted to an imperialistic adventure in order to restore traditional “manliness.” Neglecting his inner discrepancy as patriarch, Tony blindly follows the code of “manliness,” which plays quite a significant role under the dominance of imperialism.

Then it is necessary to verify that Tony’s travel to colonial Guiana finally becomes a voyage to confirm the death of the concept of manliness, after the accidents. The febrile disease and sudden death of Dr Messinger leave him alone in the jungle. He is assailed by
hallucinations during a fever, in which a phantasmal city appears before him. When he comes to his senses, he notices that his dreamlike Hetton changed into the hut belonging to Todd, an appalling Dickens maniac. Jeffrey Heath suggests a distorted conjunction between Hetton Abbey and Todd’s hut; the hut has an ironic resemblance to the ideal Hetton Abbey (115). In this hut, Tony is fed by Todd like a baby when he suffers from fever. The ominous resemblance between these houses spontaneously evokes the similarity between Tony and Todd, in that they are both landlords. Todd cherishes his own order and establishes a patriarchal relationship with natives, while Tony wishes for Hetton Abbey. Ian Ker observes that the organised recitation ironically recalls Tony as a patriarch, since Tony is involuntarily demoted in the patriarchal order by Todd in the hut (172). Thus, the allotment of roles that Tony compelled Brenda and John to play in his house is now imposed upon him by Todd, who compels him to recite Dickens’ novels, just as a father was expected to do in a Victorian middle-class home. Ironically, Tony is given the position of father in Todd’s hut:

At the end of the first day the old man said, ‘You read beautifully, with a far better accent than the black man. And you explain better. It is almost as though my father were here again’. (215)

Tony’s position in his family circle reminds us of Waugh’s father, Arthur, who was fond of reciting Dickens’ novels to his family. The resemblance between Arthur’s role in the Waugh household and Tony’s position in Todd’s hut foregrounds Waugh’s satirical view of patriarchy. Since the name of the dictator “Todd” is symbolically associated with
“Tod,” the German word for “death,” he can be regarded as a symbol of the decline of the preceding era’s masculine power. Therefore, through Tony’s characteristic as the mirror image of the English patriarch, the death of manliness is finally accomplished in *A Handful of Dust*.

Along with the death of patriarchy, the plot foregrounds the end of the Empire. Imperialistic narratives in Guyana no longer existed during the 1930s. In his travel book, *Ninety-Two Days*, which is the origin of Tony’s adventure, Waugh ironically stated, “since there were no hairbreadth escapes, no romances, no discoveries, it seems presumptuous to suppose that I shall interest anyone” (*Waugh Abroad* 378), and so Tony’s travel merely traces the doom of the Empire. As Ian Baucom insists, “the very traditionalist turn to these *lieux de memoire* is both that which flickeringly invests them with an identity-reforming magic and that which eventually guarantees their disenchantment, their reappearance as historical artefacts that testify to the disappearance of tradition and memory” (22). Waugh’s satirical view of Tony’s life represents the death of traditional masculinity.

5.

Taking Tony’s death under house arrest in the jungle forced by the ominous father-like old man, Todd, into consideration, his adventure to figuratively recover his father role as patriarch does not foreground the positive value of the conventional manliness; instead it emphasises its negative value. In other words, although Waugh seemingly attempts to delineate his nostalgia for the lost value of patriarchy through the old-fashioned Hetton Abbey, in this novel he instead discloses the aspects of manliness as sickness unto death. The novel’s ending, wherein the cuckolded man, hoping to restore his
manliness as patriarch, dies under the name of an explorer, reveals the dark function of the ideology of manliness, which orders men to follow the principle, forces them to behave like a man and eventually kills them.

Considering Waugh’s representation of male gender in *A Handful of Dust*, it is highly relevant to focus on the symbolical monument engraving “ANTHONY LAST OF HETTON EXPLORER” (227) in the last chapter, which mourns Tony’s death. At the end of the novel, after Tony’s death is made known, Mrs Beaver, who is the cause of Tony’s tragedy, recommends that the poor relatives who inherited Hetton Abbey build this symbolical, manly monument. This ironical ending, represented by the tombstone of the explorer, who unconsciously followed the discipline of manliness, clearly indicates that the novel serves to foreground the deathly function of masculine ideology’s imposition on men. Although the monument seems to praise the conventional value of manliness in imperialism, it actually highlights the end of imperial manliness during the decade between the two World Wars. In *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh described the end of patriarchy from cultural, political, economic and even psychological viewpoints through the ironical representation of the excessively traditional Hetton Abbey. In this context, figuratively speaking, Waugh performs the funeral rites for imperial manliness in this novel.
Chapter Five: “Contra Mundum” Again: The Anti-MasculineNarration of Brideshead Revisited

1.

The thematic core of Brideshead Revisited: The Sacred and Profane Memories of Captain Charles Ryder has been repeatedly examined from the perspective of Evelyn Waugh’s Catholicism. In a letter dated 7 January 1945 to Nancy Mitford, Waugh clearly states that the book was not about Captain Charles Ryder’s life but about “God” (Letters 196). Furthermore, he revised this novel in 1960, concisely describing the theme of Brideshead Revisited in the preface as “the operation of divine grace on a group of diverse but closely connected characters” (7). Given the writer’s direct comment upon the theme of the novel and his dramatic improvement of the scene of Lord Marchmain’s conversion on his deathbed in the 1960 revision, previous criticisms have repetitively asserted that it is a novel about Charles Ryder’s pilgrimage from “the ephemeral joys of his profane world” to “the sacred love of God” (Clement 121). From such a perspective, Charles in “exile” can be understood as a protagonist who is searching for “the feeling of unity and transcendence” (Crabbe 106) with the help of God. However, if this novel were written in a linear narrative structure to portray Charles’ path to faith, it would seem rather dramatic and persuasive to finish the story at the moment when Charles prays to the God at the side of Lord Marchmain’s deathbed. Why, then, does Charles, after witnessing Marchmain’s revelation, still complain of his difficult life on the battlefield of the Second World War? Preceding religious interpretations have not been in a position to reply to that question so far.

In contrast to such readings, ever since David Leon Higdon’s groundbreaking 1994
essay, “Gay Sebastian and Cheerful Charles: Homoeroticism in Waugh’s ‘Brideshead Revisited’” has particularly directed the attention of critics to the unnamed male relationship between Charles and Sebastian Flyte. Insisting on the slightly paradoxical conclusion that their relationship is homosocial (that Charles is attracted to Sebastian homoerotically and that their relationship is sexually inert but must be homosexual [83]), Higdon warns us not to simplify Waugh’s representation of sexuality through the hetero/homo binary (87). In addition, Tison Pugh points out that in Eton or Oxford, sexual relationships between students “often took place in the form of intense romantic friendships,” and such relationships “do not necessarily define the boys as homosexuals” from the viewpoint of the identity politics of the current discourse (68). In order to emphasise the ambiguity of Charles and Sebastian’s sexualities from this perspective, Pugh argues that Waugh attempts to illuminate “the haziness of his characters’ sexualities, not to define them in rigid categories” (71) through the depiction of their relationship.

However, these criticisms from the perspective of gender studies and queer theory have not paid sufficient attention to Charles’ anxiety in relation to the historical context during the inter-war period. It has often been noted that throughout his novels, Waugh has depicted extravagant Bright Young People searching for alternative sexualities through their resistance to their fathers who sent their sons to the battlefields of the First World War. Yet, his strong interest in the influence of the masculine ideology on young men’s culture, which serves to verify the validity of the British Empire, and in the unnamed male gender has not been properly addressed. Therefore, it is important to note that Ryder, the narrator, who has grown up in the young men’s culture of the post-war era, looks back on his past from the perspective of manliness at that time.
Moreover, it is impossible to separate the religious aspects of *Brideshead Revisited* from the ideology of manliness. Charles’ cousin, Jasper, for instance, advises Charles not to become acquainted with “Boar’s Hill” (28). Given the fact that alcoholic Sebastian is later urged to visit Boar’s Hill, which is a place firmly connected with Roman Catholicism, to have some tea with seminary students, Jasper’s advice implies that Charles should stay away from Roman Catholics. In the following exchanges, however, he also condemns Anglo-Catholicism as a school of “sodomites” without any reasonable evidence. Finally, he scornfully jumps to the conclusion that every religious group is “nothing but harm” (28). Interestingly, his critical attack on religion is firstly directed at a general image of Catholicism, and he considers them to be sexually abnormal. His prejudice seems to be based on the prevailing image of non-Anglican religions at that time. According to Lucy Delap, during the inter-war decade, the Anglican Church praised the concept of “muscular Christianity,” which is based on the combination of Christian virtues and physical strength, while it disdainfully regarded Catholic men as “effeminate” and non-conformists as “unlettered” in order to ensure their sturdiness, cultivation and stableness (123-24).

In the two most relevant scenes, which are indispensable for the interpretation of the work as a whole, Waugh highlights the problem of “manliness” in the years between wars. The first scene, which appears in the prologue of *Brideshead Revisited*, depicts Captain Ryder feeling disillusioned about the Second World War, and the invalidity of the authoritative “manliness” during the wartime is evident. The other scene is when Sebastian’s mother, Lady Marchmain, fatally interferes in the relationship between Charles and Sebastian and forcefully destroys their bond. Ryder demands an answer to the cause of Sebastian’s decline—not regarding the difference of faith between his mother and him but
out of his hatred of the masculine ideology during the inter-war period that is praised by his mother.

Given these facts, it is absolutely necessary to reconsider *Brideshead Revisited* from the angle of the authoritative masculine ideology that was established in the Victorian era, carried forward to the Edwardian era and questioned during the First World War. In order to do so, two points must be discussed. One is the relation between Charles Ryder and conventional masculinity and the other is the complicated narrative structure of this novel. Despite Ryder’s retrospective narration, which mainly focuses on the difficulty of negotiating masculinity in the period after the Great War through the delineation of the ambiguous relationship between Charles and Sebastian, this issue has never been sufficiently scrutinised. Therefore, this chapter delves carefully into *Brideshead Revisited*, which is often examined independently from Waugh’s other novels, from the perspective of his consistent interest in the male gender from the very beginning of his literary career. Ryder’s self-critical narration clearly delineates the influential workings of masculine ideology at that time and discloses his past deception in his friendship with Sebastian. This point of view contributes to our understanding of his retrospective and self-reproachful narration as anti-masculine and sceptical of the validity of authoritative masculinity.

2.

Captain Ryder voluntarily enlists in “the Special Reserve” (302)\(^{25}\), and Lord Marchmain, who is expected to be his father-in-law, scornfully recommends him to be “an official artist” (302) to spare him from going to “the line” (302) with the army. Lord Marchmain, who had experienced the First World War, disdains Charles’ unsuitability to
war. In his own words, Charles feels “waspiness” (302) but enlists into military service without changing his mind. He is driven by the ominous sense of being “too young to fight,” which is prevalent among the young men of his society, and feels the strong necessity to prove his manliness to the generation before him, many of whom were killed in the war:

We went to a number of night clubs. In two years Mulcaster seemed to have attained his simple ambition of being known and liked in such places. At the last of them he and I were kindled by a great flame of patriotism.

‘You and I,’ he said, ‘were too young to fight in the war. Other chaps fought, millions of them dead. Not us. We’ ll show them. We’ ll show the dead chaps we can fight, too.’

‘That’s why I’m here,’ I said. ‘Come from overseas, rallying to old country in hour of need.’ (198)

The men of the younger generation who were not of the age to serve in an army during the First World War share the anxiety of being “Too young to fight.” In 1926, when a general strike breaks out in Britain, Charles is studying paintings in Paris. Carried away with righteous indignation and patriotism, he determines to return to his country with his friends. Their desire to prove that they could behave as men as the older generation did drive their passion. In a different light, their fears of being regarded as “effeminate” make them return home. However, since they do not possess any political consciousness, their righteous indignation vanishes without their active involvement in the strike. It is during the Second World War that such a desire is actualised.
After the outbreak of the Second World War, Captain Ryder strives to gather “a company of strong and hopeful men” (10). In the army, however, he witnesses the physical and mental strength of his subordinates gradually deplete as a result of their monotonous duties and their unannounced, unpredictable relocations. They share an anxiety about “losing face with their new mistresses” (10), and on the street, they come to hide themselves from their officers. Wondering about the value of an officer and a man in such circumstances one morning, Captain Ryder loses his sense of belonging to the army and observes, “Here love had died between me and the army” (9).

Interestingly, Ryder, the narrator, compares the loss of his sense of bond with the army to the collapse of a marriage. He recognises his disappointment about the army as being similar to that about his married life—“the domestic tragedy” (12) in which he once played the role of husband. Comparing his disappointment with the army to bond with the army to “the whole drab compass of marital disillusion” (12), he observes his indifference to his position as a captain and to the heroic virtues displayed on the battlefields—akin to “the chill bonds of law and duty and custom” (12) that remain after the expectations of marital life vanish. In Ryder’s rhetoric, the existence of the normative ideology of manliness, which glorifies machoism during war and the manly breadwinner in a family, is foregrounded through the comparison between the army and marriage. These passages reveal that Captain Ryder doubly fails to conform to the manliness required in an army and a family circle.

After the First World War, the beautified image of the ideal man—the intrepid soldiers with great physical strength—was questioned in young men’s culture because of the miserable memories of the war and the wounded soldiers who returned from battlefields
However, in the prevailing atmosphere of the expectation for the next World War, especially with the rise of Fascism, the ideology of manliness was revived again. In Western societies, during the period from the fin de siècle, when the concept of “homosexual” first appeared in the fields of pathology, to the Second World War, there was urgency in the institutionalisation of masculinity. As R. W. Connell points out, although complexities appeared between the rapidly institutionalised heterosexism and individual emotions during this period, heterosexism became “a required connotation of manliness” (611). She demonstrates that this finally led to the execution of Röhm and the purge of Sturmabteilung through the powerful homophobia propagated by Hitler’s regime (611). The fear of “abnormality” based on such homophobia, manliness and heterosexism inevitably became intertwined and complimentarily reinforced one another.

As in Germany during the inter-war period, men’s sexual desire in the British society, although not articulated in the homo/hetero binary of current discourse, were harshly punished if they appeared to deviate from “normalcy” (Houlbrook, “Man” 152). It was urgently required that men remove “effeminacy” from their mental landscape and follow the normative code of manliness. Since the bodies of anonymous soldiers symbolically verified the validity of authoritative masculinity in those days (Houlbrook, “Soldier” 380), men had to acquire “physical fitness” for military service, and the concept of “the fit male body” became “normative” (Zweiniger-Bargielowsla, “Culture” 241-45). In such circumstances, it is also in this period that the fear to be deviated from the normative code of manliness has prevailed. The fear of deviating from the normative code of manliness prevailed, and men had to oppress their inner “effeminacy” by submitting to heterosexism and show their physical fitness to fight. However, a fatal paradox remained. As Connell asserts, repressing
the individual “emotional life” (611), the norm required men to make only their bodies fit for military service and reject individual personalities or their private emotions that were deemed unnecessary for military actions.

Waugh precisely realises the unstable position of male subjectivity repressed by the masculine ideology under the Second World War. In *Put Out More Flags* (1942), he suggests that the war deprives men of their individuality. In this war, men cannot be individuals and are dealt with mechanically as the collective “men”:

‘. . . But this war seems to take the responsibility off our hands. There’s room for everyone in war time, every *man*. It’s always been Basil’s *individuality* that’s been wrong. You’ve said that often, Jo. In war time individuality doesn’t matter any more. There are just *men*, aren’t there?’ (23)

Basil, the protagonist in *Black Mischief*, travels to an imaginary country in Azania, Africa, to search for adventures. Although his craving to witness something new in that country is absurd, he can be considered a unique character among Waugh’s satirical novels, in that he actively does what he wants to do. Moreover, in *Work Suspended* (1942), Basil is again able to search for “a series of irregular adventures” (191). However, his active performances do not work during the Second World War, when men are not allowed to be active individuals under the thoroughly institutionalised organisation of the military. According to the instructive study of Corinna Peniston-Bird that focuses on the male body in the Second World War, it is necessary to force individual bodies into a pattern based on “the needs of the armed forces and labour market, and by sex, age, and physical fitness” in order to
accomplish military services effectively. In this context, the value of human bodies is reduced to “the social (collective) body of the nation at war” (33). Compared with the heroic image of soldiers during the First World War, they paradoxically become a self-effacing mass in the war. The value of the male body is assessed by its fitness to the requirements and the discipline of the army. In Brideshead Revisited, the Second World War as the battlefield where individual manliness, once a requirement of masculine ideology, paradoxically becomes its malfunction.27

Without being able to establish his own identity in military duties or marriage, Captain Ryder begins to feel old age and apathetic towards others as he is doubly removed from the normative concept of manliness guaranteed by military duties and marriage. An insightful study by Pia Livia Hekanaho clearly describes that the tragedy of Charles Ryder in Brideshead Revisited is caused not by “the carnal delight,” which Catholicism forbids, but by his “eager adjustment to heterosexuality” (14). Ryder, the narrator, intentionally links Captain Ryder’s spiritual crisis, which is brought about by his subordination to heterosexism, with the problematic code of manliness during the inter-war years in the prologue of this novel.

Interestingly, Hooper is the only person Captain Ryder sympathises with. From the beginning, Hooper is portrayed as the man who does not have any romantic illusions about the army or the war. Since he is such a young man, Hooper has never been given the historical education about patriotism and is free from the discourse of praise for the conventional image of manliness that is found, for instance, in “Henry’s speech on St Crispin’s day” or “the epitaph at Thermopylae” (15).28 His anti-military characteristics naturally drive his regimental commander to anger; the malicious ceremony of his
haircutting is then held in front of comrades of the same regiment. Taking the situation very seriously, Captain Ryder comes to have “a feeling which almost amounted to affection for him” (13). His faint feelings towards Hooper can be considered to be his individual emotion that has not been institutionalised by military requirements. Following this incident, Captain Ryder comes to regard Hooper as a symbol of “Young England” (15) and considers whether the contemporary society is “plausible” (15) through Hooper’s point of view. Thus, the personal feelings emphasised through the relationship between Captain Ryder and Hooper identify institutionalised heterosexism and authoritative manliness as negative elements. The relationship between them in the prologue functions as the forerunner of the relationship between Charles and Sebastian in Ryder’s retrospection, and it urges us to read the latter relationship from the perspective of the normative manliness under the influential ideology of heterosexism.

3.

Charles Ryder’s mother, who had been belonging to Red Cross in the First World War, died in Serbia, and since then, his father, Ned, rejected his son and shut himself from Charles. Growing in these family circumstances, 19-year-old Charles meets Sebastian who loves his nursery and always carries his teddy bear at Oxford. It is fatally attractive for Charles, who symbolically has no parent to reconstruct his lost “happy childhood” (45). David Rothstein asserts that Charles craves to “be in” the Marchmain (321), trying to restore his childhood in Brideshead. Robert Murray Davis precisely regards it as a “postnatal womb” (“Imagined Space” 25) for Charles, whereas the fascinating nursery with Sebastian is the pre-oedipal space before entering the male society. While there is no
mother figure they can identify with, it is appropriate to recognise this nursery as a space where there is, likewise, no father who punishes his children’s “effeminacy”\textsuperscript{29}.

Nanny Hawkins teasingly calls Charles and Sebastian “a pair of children” (78), and Lord Marchmain’s lover, Cara names their relationship a “romantic friendship,” saying, “It is a kind of love that comes to children before they know its meaning. In England it comes when you are almost men; I think I like that. It is better to have that kind of love for another boy than for a girl. . . .” (98). Both Nanny Hawkins and Cara consider the relationship between these two to be transient—one that will naturally shift to a “normal” relationship once they become adults. From their perspectives, the nursery of Charles and Sebastian’s intimate friendship is regarded as a necessary arrangement to enter into an “adult” heterosexual society. In other words, their expectation is based on their conviction that Charles and Sebastian’s relationship will not become deviated from “normalcy.” Thus, if they want to live in “normal” society, they have to be a man.

It is noteworthy that even if Charles’ sexuality is undecidable, he moves away from the arcadia-like nursery with Sebastian after a while and participates in the masculine society following a normative ideology. As his sexual desire shifts from Sebastian to his sister Julia, his relationship with others moves from the ambiguous intimate bonds of children to heterosexual intimacy with women. Therefore, unless the psychological relationship between Charles’ male subjectivity and the gender ideology is clarified, it is impossible to understand the difficult situation of Captain Ryder in the Second World War and Ryder’s intention to recount his memory of his fragile bond with Sebastian.

In order to examine Charles’ male subjectivity, it is highly important to focus on his fear of his own “effeminacy” and his psychological relationship with his father. His
arcadia-like children’s room is threatened by Lady Marchmain, whom Sebastian calls “femme fatale” (206). Although the intimate relationship between Charles and Sebastian is constructed upon the exclusion of women as “the intruders” (23) and the conventional manliness, Lady Marchmain undermines the principles of masculinity and interferes with it. She gives Charles a memoir about her brother Ned’s heroics during the Great War and suggests that Charles and Sebastian should emulate him:

‘I should like you to have a copy. May I give you one? They were three splendid men; Ned was the best of them. He was the last to be killed, and when the telegram came, as I knew it would come, I thought: “Now it’s my son’s turn to do what Ned can never do now.” I was alone then. He was just going to ETON. If you read Ned’s book you’ll understand.’ (132-33)

Sebastian, who feels repugnance at his mother’s glorification of war soldiers, comes to experience “phobia” when he sees “pub-crawling hearties” (105). Since Ryder explains Sebastian’s “phobia” through the comparison to something “which sometimes comes over men in uniform against their own service” (105), it is clear that he attempts to link Captain Ryder’s difficult situation in the Second World War with Sebastian’s in those days. Captain Ryder, who is insecure about his manliness under the institutionalised expectations of the army, and Sebastian, who is threatened by the normative code of manliness imposed on him by his mother, share the fear of their “effeminacy.” It is also worth remembering that the despair that led to Sebastian’s car accident is due to Charles and Sebastian being called “fairies” (111) by girls in a London club. Like Sebastian, Charles feels uneasiness when
Julia enters in his symbolical childhood with Sebastian, and after she leaves, he feels “liberation” and “peace” (76). In each case, the mental tranquility they experience within a sexually ambiguous relationship is disturbed by the normative codes of heterosexism and manliness because these norms inevitably brand their relationship as something abnormal.

Lady Marchmain planned to destroy their children’s room with her brother’s memoir and urge them to participate in the heterosexual society, which requires all men to be manly. As Sebastian regards her intention to give Charles her memoir as “the test” (136) for Charles, she also imposes the expectations of manliness not only on Sebastian but also on Charles. In this context, it is highly important to pay attention to Charles’ fragile male identity which is not established by the internalisation of masculine code but by the exclusion of femininity:

"I closed the door behind me, shutting out the bondieuserie, the low ceiling, the chintz, the lambskin bindings, the views of Florence, the bowls of hyacinth and potpourri, the petit-point, the intimate feminine, modern world, and was back under the coved and coffered roof, the columns and entablature of the central hall, in the august, masculine atmosphere of a better age. (133)"

In this scene, Charles begins to feel hatred towards the atmosphere of Lady Marchmain’s “the intimate feminine, modern world” and craves the “masculine atmosphere.” His feelings are ambiguous: on the one hand, he is attracted to the existence of Lady Marchmain and on the other, he has to remove himself from her feminine affection. Because he lost his own mother, the “intimate” and “feminine” atmosphere of his pseudo-mother’s room drives him
to crave identification with a mother in the pre-oedipal period. However, at the same time he feels a strong necessity to exclude it from his relationship with Sebastian. In order to preserve their nursery as a peaceful world they must remove sexual consciousness. In other words, their intimate relationship impractically requires them to get rid of femininity and, at the same time, the normative code of manliness. However, in rejecting identification with the mother, Charles unconsciously desires something “masculine.”

Julia Kristeva’s concept of “abjection” is apt when considering the relation between Charles’ male subjectivity and the ideology of manliness. Kristeva connects the “abject,” which has to be rejected, to something feminine or to the “mother” (13). Through the theory of abjection, Jerrold E. Hogle argues that for men to successfully “make sense” of their existence in accordance with the social law, “the feminine” has to be removed (193). In other words, a man must deny the existence of “femininity-in-maleness” (Hogle 173), which threatens the domain of “manliness” inasmuch as a man is expected to agree to the power and the authority that give him his subjectivity. Thus, it is “the father” that supports the struggle with femininity and fosters the establishment of male subjectivity (Kristeva 13).

However, from this perspective, the problem for Charles is that he has already lost his father, who should have been the one to symbolically lead his son into the male society. Unlike Waugh’s other protagonists, Ryder has a father, but his father only serves to highlight his symbolical absence in Brideshead Revisited. Although his father, Ned, ironically has the same name as Sebastian’s heroic uncle, Charles recognises him as a failed man:

My father in his youth sat for All Souls and, in a year of hot competition, failed;
other successes and honours came his way later, but that early failure impressed itself on him, and through him on me, so that I came up with an ill-considered sense that there lay the proper and natural goal of the life of reason. I, too, should doubtless have failed, but, having failed, I might perhaps have slipped into a less august academic life elsewhere. It is conceivable, but not, I believe, likely, for the hot spring of anarchy rose from depths where was no solid earth, and burst into the sunlight—a rainbow in its cooling vapours—with a power the rocks could not repress. (45)

This impression of his father casts a dark shadow over Charles’ psychical landscape. He has been anxious since his youth that he would also fail in life. Such an unstable relationship between the father and the son is described as a source of significant emotional turmoil. From a Freudian psychoanalytic perspective, Ryder’s figurative explanation of his dilemma uses “the hot spring of anarchy” as a metaphor of desire that can spout out from “depths” of his unconsciousness because superego-like “the rocks” to repress it are absent. However, he also mentions that there is “no solid earth” which should control desires between the id and the superego to adjust unconscious desires in the real world. As Michael Roper analyses, the advancement of psychology during the post-war era provided the middle classes in British society with an opportunity to have “a means of reflexively assessing the codes of ‘manliness’” (345). In this period, manliness had begun to be considered not as the problem of man’s appearance or behaviour, but as the problem of the psychic landscape. Regardless of whether Waugh was familiar with Freudian psychoanalysis, it is relevant to emphasise the fact that when Ryder delineates his dilemma with his father in his adolescence, the
narrator consciously links his fragile male subjectivity and the symbolical absence of his father within his mental landscape. Given his usage of the Freudian metaphor of spring, it is certain that Ryder realises the impossibility of establishing his subjectivity without superego.

However, his father’s failure is not the only cause for Charles to feel anxious about his male subjectivity. Ned appears in a grotesquely caricaturised style of pre-war manliness. He is like a ghost of the heroes killed in the battlefields of the First World War. He wears “a chivalric badge of battle, a small red rose in his button-hole” (69) and has a dinner called “battlefield” (65) with Charles. In this scene, it is obvious that the mental conflict between the father and the son is linked to the battles of the First World War. The more Charles suffers, the bigger his father’s “territory for manoeuvre” becomes, and the son is psychologically cemented in his “bridgehead” (70). When his father, who has already abandoned his role as a father once before, instigates the verbal warfare while behaving heroically, Charles cannot recognise whether or not his “war aims” are “purely punitive” (70). For Charles, his father is a man who has resigned his role as the superego/normative code. He cannot hold the ideal father image that should be internalised in his mind. The son mentally abandoned by the father cannot assume the father as a model for establishing his identity as a man (Corneau 13). Therefore, Charles’ desire for the culturally prevailing manliness is intensified. In this way, attracted by an image of “the manliness” that is floating without reality and having failed to internalise his father as the superego/normative, Charles Ryder finally drifts to the battlefields of the Second World War, where his admiration for manliness is smashed. Why, then, does he turn back to his past in despair?
In 1939—the year of the outbreak of the Second World War II—Waugh was writing a novel that was later published as *Work Suspended*. Unlike his previous novels, he constructed this novel from the first person narrative. He kept on writing until he enlisted in the British Navy in December of that year. Although he gave up finishing the novel the following year, he felt a great sense of satisfaction from his discovery of a new style of writing a novel that places John Plant in the narrator’s position and deeply focuses on human psychology (*Letters* 132). This work, consisting of two chapters, moves through John’s recollection of his father, a painter who was killed in a car accident; his love affair with Lucy Simmonds, the wife of his friend; and his strange friendship with Arthur Atwater, who ran his father over. Interestingly, although his love affair with Lucy is given a greater importance in the story, after Lucy has a baby, their romance suddenly vanishes. On the contrary, the relationship between John and Arthur becomes an important issue. It reminds us of Waugh’s misogyny, and it gives us the impression that for him, heterosexual relationships and marriage are of secondary importance, and his interest is primarily in the bonds between men. However, despite Waugh being frequently regarded as conservative, his portrayal of male bonds is not reinforced by the exclusion of women to ensure the establishment of hegemonic masculinity. On the contrary, it serves to threaten the male dominance.

The picture of John’s dead father figuratively illustrates the relationship between John and Arthur. John’s father drew war pictures, which were popular in those days, and left behind an unfinished picture, which alludes to the title of the novel, (“work suspended”):
He died with his 1939 picture still unfinished. I saw its early stage on my last visit to him; it was to have been called ‘Again?’ and represented a one-armed veteran of the First World War meditating over a German helmet. My father had given the man a grizzled beard and was revelling in it. That was the last time I saw him.

(117)

The subject of this picture is clear and accurate. It focuses on the problem of reconciling feelings for the dead soldier, who was also an enemy, through its portrayal of a maimed veteran cherishing the memory of a deceased German soldier in the First World War. The figure of the agonised one-armed veteran upsets the eidolon of the authoritative “manliness.” At the same time, the title of this picture—“once again?”—clearly reveals his anti-war stance regarding the Second World War. In this way, John’s father’s picture of continues questioning the First World War and the legitimacy of the gender ideology of “manliness.”

The theme of this picture is reflected on John’s life, and it is reiterated in his reconciliation with Arthur, who killed his father. At the beginning, John shuns Arthur but given the miserable condition of the poor man, finally suggests that they live together: “Why don’t you come and live with me. I’ve got a house in the country, plenty of room. Stay as long as you like. Die there.” (188) It is possible to read his homoerotic desire in these words; however, the story is abruptly broken off. Only the implication that Arthur instead goes to a battle in the Second World War is present in the postscript, and their relationship is left unfinished. Just as John’s father’s picture is symbolically incomplete, the relationship between John and Arthur, which holds the possibility of deviating from the normative code, is never told: “Our story, like my novel, remained unfinished – a heap of
neglected foolscap at the back of a drawer.” (191)

Waugh’s experiment with first person narrative in *Work Suspended* is continued in *Brideshead Revisited*. The two works are similar, not only for their narrative unity, but also for their focus on the relation between the normative gender ideology and male characters. However, because the former was written at the beginning of the Second World War, and the writing of the latter began in the last years of the war, they differ in one significant respect: John can still believe that Arthur “holds sway over a large area of Germany” (191) because the concept of romantic “manliness” did not yet die out in *Work Suspended*. In contrast with the unfinished novel, the battlefields are filled with boring duties in *Brideshead Revisited*. Captain Ryder no longer has any chivalric illusions that most of soldiers depended on to justify their fighting in the First World War. Instead, Captain Ryder recollects his memories with Sebastian through the first person narrative (unlike the third person narrators in Waugh’s other novels) in a symbolic protest against the ideology of manliness.

The thematic continuity of these two works clearly reveals Waugh’s strong interest in the male bond, which deviated from the sense of “normal” in those unstable times. However, *Brideshead Revisited* has a more complicated narrative structure than *Work Suspended*, and in order to consider Waugh’s representation of male subjectivity in the latter, it is quite important to focus on how its narrative structure is related to its theme. Although protagonists are objectively portrayed by the omniscient narrators in Waugh’s previous novels, Ryder subjectively describes his past as a narrator in *Brideshead Revisited*. This novel comprises three periods, which constructs a multi-layered narrative: the “recollected past” from his time at Oxford to the eve of the Second World War, the “recollecting past” of
Captain Ryder in the prologue and epilogue during the war and, finally, the “narrator’s present” explained as follows, “My theme is memory, that winged host that soared about me one grey morning of war-time” (215). Because of this subjective, multi-layered narrative, the narrator of this novel has often been regarded as “unreliable” (Beaty 147, Knowles 194). Compared with the simple first person narration of Work Suspended, it must be stressed that such a construction of the narration emphasises the greater relevance of Captain Ryder’s decision to recollect his past than Charles’ “recollected past.”

Given this perspective, it is worthwhile to examine the most significant scene in the novel, in Chapter Five of Part One, in which the destruction of Charles and Sebastian’s bond is delineated. Sebastian, addicted to the alcohol he uses to escape from his mother’s repression, heads to Charles’ house in London. Charles, who is visiting Brideshead, goes after Sebastian, and they meet at his house. At the time, their relationship had already been driven into a corner by Lady Marchmain, who intends to use Charles to spy on drunken Sebastian. Sebastian is already apprehensive about the imminent end of their relationship and believes that Charles will unconsciously take his mother’s side. In Charles’ house, they drink together even though it is prohibited by his mother:

Then I reached Paddington and, returning home, found Sebastian there, and the sense of tragedy vanished, for he was gay and free as when I first met him.

‘Cordelia sent you her special love.’

‘Did you have a “little talk” with mummy?’

‘Yes.’

‘Have you gone over to her side?’
The day before I would have said: ‘There aren’t two sides’; that day I said, ‘No, I’m with you, “Sebastian contra mundum”.’ (135)

In a gloomy foreboding, they drink to reaffirm their friendship, saying “contra mundum.” As Sebastian’s words—“Have you gone over to her side?”—clearly shows, Sebastian will inevitably look upon his mother as an enemy of their intimate relationship that is a refuge from the normative ideology of heterosexism. He wants to get rid of the world that represses his “deviated” sexuality and he sensitively grasps that Charles will leave the symbolic nursery of their intimate relationship and enter into the heterosexual society. Therefore, his question to Charles represents his ardent desire to preserve their ambiguous relationship from the compulsory code of heterosexism, even if their relationship has never developed into the homosexuality. Charles just replies: “No, I’m with you, ‘Sebastian contra mundum.’”

However, against Sebastian’s sincere hope to certify the stability of their bond, this scene tragically reveals the gap in perception between them. With his use of the subjunctive mood—“The day before I would have said”—Ryder recollects this scene with critical commentary, observing that there was something deceitful behind his words, “contra mundum.” At the time, there would not have been any intent to lie; however, Charles does not reflect on the future of their relationship as carefully as Sebastian does. Unlike Sebastian, he is not necessarily hostile towards heterosexism. Accordingly, without complete sympathy with Sebastian, all he can do is to show his affection for him under the pretense of their friendship. Ironically, the words, “contra mundum” become the paradoxical symbol that reveals the mental distance between them. Before long, Sebastian
drifts to Morocco in search of another bond, and Charles gets married to Celia, the sister of Mulcaster, and later falls in love with Julia, Sebastian’s sister. Without turning back on his own fragile male subjectivity influenced unconsciously by authoritative masculine ideology, Charles moves from the romantic friendship with Sebastian to the heterosexual relationship with Julia without deep introspection. His lack of a reflexive gaze into his male subjectivity finally leads him to a wretched state on the battlefields of the Second World War.

When he happens to visit Brideshead on duty, Captain Ryder feels “the phantoms” (21) that have haunted his mind in recent years vanish. His revisit makes him forget his hardships as an officer and reminds him of his first visit to Brideshead with Sebastian. The narrator figuratively calls Captain Ryder’s predicament a “dungeon” (22)—the psychic prison of heterosexism that once restrained Sebastian and now him—and “the phantoms” are the image of manliness he has unconsciously followed. However, the memories of the past with Sebastian echoed from the vaults of the prison, makes Captain Ryder “cheerful” (331). In response to Hooper’s question about Brideshead, Captain Ryder answers, “It belongs to friends of mine” (330), unconsciously echoing Sebastian, who, when asked a similar question, replied: “It is where my family live,” instead of “It is my home” (330). Captain Ryder cannot help equating his hardship on the battlefield with Sebastian’s miserable state in his memory, and when he stands in front of the estate that symbolises heterosexism once again, he calls himself “homeless, childless middle-aged, loveless” (330) in self-mockery. In this moment, he realises for the first time that he too has deviated from the normative code of heterosexism. He has a hallucination of “a small red flame” in “the fierce little human tragedy” burning in the old stones of Brideshead, which nobody, including the builders and the actors who played roles in the tragedy, has noticed:
“Something quite remote from anything the builders intended” (331). He also feels that this “small red flame” is lit again for “other soldiers” (331) who, like him, are now struggling in a completely different battlefield with private bonds or emotions, which cannot be restricted by the institutionalised code. This flame, once extinguished by the norm of heterosexism, is a metaphor of the lost “love” for Captain Ryder. After the recollection of his past friendship with Sebastian, the theme of the lost “love” in the prologue returns in the epilogue, and its restoration is suggested. Furthermore, the rebirth of love symbolises the redemption of not only Captain Ryder but also of the soldiers in the war. Through the eyes of Captain Ryder, the narrator emphasises his gaze onto the male subjectivity itself and his sympathy with those who are repressed by the authoritative code of manliness.

In this self-reproachful narration that reveals Ryder’s reflexive gaze into and sympathy with suffering male subjectivity, we can see the depth of male relationships suggested by the unfinished picture of John’s father in *Work Suspended*. It is the story about the unstable formation of male subjectivity in the inter-war period that Ryder, the narrator, recounts. Through his recollection of his own fragile establishment of subjectivity, Ryder describes the psychic relationship between male subjectivity and the normative gender ideology, questioning the validity of the norm. He reconstructs and analyses his past, which allows him to strongly deny institutionalised heterosexism, and self-reproachfully demonstrates the decisive moment in the breakdown of his friendship with Sebastian, who could not escape from the heavy pressure of his mother’s beliefs and finally became a fatal alcoholic with much to regret. Then, like the one-armed old veteran mourning the dead in John’s father’s unfinished picture in *Work Suspended*, he recollects his broken bond with Sebastian, which should have been upheld with the words “contra mundum.” For readers,
this declaration appears for the first time, for Ryder, it is the second time he thinks about these words. This time, his self-reproach and sympathy with the repressed male subjectivity surely emerge in this reflection of the words. Such a self-reproachful narration that recognises the value of personal emotions on the battlefields of the Second World War leads us to notice the existence of men who are repressed by the authoritative masculine ideology, and it challenges the authoritative gender ideology that he once followed. In this way, his narration can be understood as “anti-masculine.” Through his reflexive narration, Ryder can once again say “contra mundum” and find a way to resist the normative code, even if it is only possible by repeatedly looking back on his past.
Conclusion: Searching for an Alternative Father Figure

Given Evelyn Waugh’s real life and his works, it seems that the problem of “manliness” fundamentally originated in the problematic relationship between Waugh and his father, Arthur. Evelyn was born on 28 October 1903 at West Hampstead, London, the younger son of Arthur Waugh, managing director of Chapman and Hall, and his quiet, conscientious wife, Catherine Charlotte. In contrast to Evelyn, his brother, Alexander, five and a half years his senior, who later published The Loom of Youth, was vigorously athletic. Evelyn, at first shy, never felt close to his brother or to his father, preferring his mother’s company. In these circumstances, he developed a deep distrust of a father figure. As we have seen in the previous chapters, his ambiguous feeling to his father, which alienated him from the normative code of “manliness,” is actualised as his disbelief in the concept of “manliness,” represented by the absence of fathers in his novels. Then, the relationship with his father is an important aspect of his life to understand the thematic core of his novels.

This problem can also be seen in his unfinished autobiography, A Little Learning, published in 1964, in which he reminisces about his origins and family structure. In this autobiography, Waugh in his later years tries to put himself into his personal history and his family genealogy. At the beginning, he nostalgically refers to the feature of memory, which is fading away from him. Then, he felt the necessity of “the Time Machine,” which would take him to somewhere precious to identify his “origins and experience”:

I longed for the loan of the Time Machine . . . What a waste of this magical vehicle to take it prying into the future, as had the hero of the book! The future,
dreariest of prospects! Were I in the saddle I should set the engine Slow Astern.
To hover gently back through centuries (not more than thirty of them) would be
the most exquisite pleasure of which I can conceive. Even in my own brief life
I feel the need of some such device as a failing memory alienates me daily
further from my origins and experience. (1)

He, who kept on writing stories about the male characters who deviated from the normative
code of “manliness,” longed for such memories for his twilight years, which allowed him to
seize his “origins and experience.” His reflexive recollection of his past seems to denote his
desire to reconcile himself with his past. This attitude is rather similar to that of Charles
Ryder in Brideshead Revisited, who desires to re-narrate the lost friendship with Sebastian
Flyte. This passage becomes his declaration of the importance of his lifetime lasting from
the origin of his existence. While looking back at his private memories, he wishes to
construct his personal narrative in his family line. As he begins his autobiography with the
chapter “Heredity,” he recognised his family tree as “the source of character” (2). This
notion instructively suggests the significance of his genealogy. The narration of his inner
experience indicates his subjective inclusion of himself in his family line. From the source
of his existence to his state in the present, he tries to recognise a sense of lasting time that
will validate his present. He narrated the causes and effects of his existence in order to
affirm the instability of his male identity. From this perspective, his unfinished
autobiography can be regarded as his inner quest to reconstruct his identity. And as its
kernel, there is his father.

After the chapter “Heredity,” he retraced his lifetime with his selected memories.
Like Ryder, inserting his subjective voice, he thought back to the past from his birth to his attempt of suicide. Among his selected memories, his narrative of his father, Arthur, is the most memorable and important because, in this autobiography, he seems to reconcile with his father who died about twenty years ago. In his youth, on the one hand his father seemed to be an “intruder” (63), who obstructed his sweet identification with his mother, behaving like, in Freudian language, a superego; on the other hand his father looked “decrepit” (63) compared with his manly uncles who were a soldier and also a sailor. Such a contradictory figure of his father—or more broadly, of his father’s generation—casts a dark shadow over him and his whole works. As Charles Ryder does in Brideshead Revisited, Waugh had been struggling with the problem of how to establish a proper relationship with his father.

Although he long detested his father and avoided father figures in his inter-war novels, astonishingly, his affectionate attitude toward his father is revealed in A Little Learning. Now he was able to judge his father calmly:

> There were times when I was inclined to regard his achievement as somewhat humdrum. Now I know that the gratitude I owe him for the warm stability he created, which I only dimly apprehended, can best be measured by those less fortunate than myself. (79)

Through the reflexive re-narration of his personal history, he can now accept the existence of his father and express his appreciation for him. Growing up in an unstable age, Waugh had consistently portrayed male characters losing father figures and struggling from the instability of their male identity. Waugh and his characters managed to resolve their male
predicament consciously or not, even if they were finally driven to tragic endings. After his experiences in the Second World War, he finally ended up overcoming the dilemma of wanting to be a man but not like his father. Then, what brought him to this standpoint? The answer is revealed in his last trilogy of novels, *Sword of Honour* (1965).

Compared with the protagonists in preceding novels, the main characters in the post-war novels are more mature and down-to-earth. Charles Ryder in *Brideshead Revisited*, and Guy Crouchback in *Sword of Honour* are decisively different from the other characters, who lose the opportunity to gaze reflexively on their male subjectivities and unconsciously follow masculine ideology in vain. Considering the chronology of Waugh’s literary life, there seems to be little doubt that the Second World War is the turning point of his literary theme. In the post-war novels, Waugh came to portray his view of the world more seriously. For instance, compared with his early novels, Robert Murray Davis suggests that *Brideshead Revisited* becomes “more realistic in method” (*Past 6*). Davis draws attention to the realistic description of the social circumstances in those days and the practical designation of characters and places in the novel. However, this would not be the only reason that readers would notice the more realistic tone in this novel. His novels before the Second World War demonstrate the closed narrative in a sense, as Greenblatt pays attention to the circular images in them. Yet, in the novels focusing on the Second World War, Waugh presents a future-oriented viewpoint.

The wretchedness of the Second World War showed him the infertility of devoting himself to the idea of a hero and to the normative code of “manliness,” and led him to draw attention to the importance of an alternative way of living as a kind of father figure. At thirty-six Waugh was the oldest recruit in the marine infantry brigade (RM1), a crack
battalion skilled in the techniques of amphibious landing and sabotage. In January 1940, he already felt alienated from RM1’s raucous mess life. Waugh seemed no closer to the fighting he craved than in September 1939. Christopher Sykes recollected Waugh’s disappointment at British army after experiencing the dreadful battlefield of Crete:

He said that he had never seen anything so degrading as the cowardice that infected the spirit of the army. He declared that Crete had been surrendered without need; that both the officers and men were hypnotized into defeatism by the continuous dive-bombing which with a little courage one could stand up to; that the fighting spirit of the British armed services was so meagre that we had not the slightest hope of defeating the Germans; that he had taken part in a military disgrace, a fact that he would remember with shame for the rest of his life” (215).

There was no longer the army, which he had expected to be heroic. This experience of military disorganisation seriously damaged the crusading spirit with which Waugh had entered the war. It made him depict the instability of the heroic image of “manliness.” Interestingly, in the endings of Brideshead Revisited and Sword of Honour, the protagonists, who bear the scepticism toward authoritative “manliness,” try to establish their identities without following the socially required image of a man. Therefore, in conclusion, I will briefly discuss Waugh’s alternative way of portraying the male protagonist in Sword of Honour in order to contribute to the future study of Evelyn Waugh and his works.

Given this thematic alteration, it is worthwhile to draw attention to a shift of Guy’s consciousness of his male identity in Sword of Honour. He initially sees himself as a hero of
the crusaders in order to render his unstable existence significant, as Tony futilely tries to do in *A Handful of Dust*; however, he finally realises the importance of living in the personal domain as an indispensable person for those who need his help. In comparison with Tony, Guy Crouchback is depicted more realistically in confronting death. Although they have a similar custom of churchgoing in order to imitate the Christian way of life, Guy is given a more complicated characterisation. Considering Alan Munton’s suggestion that Guy is a protagonist who suffers from “emptiness” (75), his instability is foregrounded more explicitly than that of Tony.

As his masculine hero image, Waugh settles on Sir Roger of Waybroke, Knight, an Englishman, and the hero of the crusaders, who “sailed from Genoa and was shipwrecked on this coast” (5). For an elucidation of this matter, it is important to pay attention to a fear that Guy bears. When he confronts death, he contemplates his older brother Ivo, who slipped out of his house and went into the woods in order to starve to death. The inexplicable death of his brother “seemed to Guy a horrible caricature of his own life” (9). His realisation of his life as a caricatured brother drives him to seek for another model in order to turn his head away from his brother’s death, because his brother’s death inevitably takes hold of him. This incomprehensible death symbolises the inexplicability of life. In short Guy suffers from a feeling that life is empty, a feeling that originated in his brother’s death.

Due to a death wish, Guy cannot settle his life. His precarious life without any sympathy for the people of Santa Dulcina demonstrates social incompatibility. Moreover, while he is in the army, the scene in which he is not able to make a toast to the health of the king denotes that he never precisely recognises his aim to enrol in a group. The only thing
he can do is to accept the figure of Sir Roger as an archetype of significance in the military life. He tries to overcome the repetition of his brother’s death through focusing on a hero of the crusaders.

The first thing Guy has to do in the Second World War is to construct a new life. As Sebastian D. G. Knowles suggests his participation in the war is regression to “both a fantasy world and a childhood world” (212), so the military life might offer him a chance to regenerate. Christine Berberich also mentions that Waugh often relates his childhood play with the action of the army (“All” 52). In this novel, it is a general idea among soldiers that the military life can provide them with a sense of rebirth to start “a new unknown life”:

“‘When the brigade would form . . .’ It was the immediate end of all their present activity, awaited like a birth; the start of a new unknown life” (34). In this mood, it seems possible to him to conceal the brother’s mysterious death by establishing “a new unknown life.” For Guy, the establishment of a new life is connected with emulating Sir Roger’s legendary way of living. It was not rare in the Second World War to devote one’s existence to heroism. In war, one’s existence is incorporated into a multitude, and one’s personality neglected. As they are compared to ants, all soldiers can notice on a battlefield is that they are in proper places performing proper functions (144). Under such circumstances, in order to establish their existence, they have to adhere to heroism. Ian Kilbannock, Guy’s comrade in the army, refers to the necessity of a hero: “We want heroes of the People, to or for the people, by, with and from the People” (309). As we saw in the examination of Brideshead Revisited, this assertion is the spiritual resistance of men to establishing one’s existence against mechanised military discipline in the Second World War.

Heroism brings a change in the way of Guy who thinks about death. It encourages
him to shift his notion of death from a negative view to the heroic image of Sir Roger. While meaninglessly dispatched by an order to go from one battlefield to another, Guy indulges in a delusion that he is killed “sweetly and decorously” in action (248). In his illusion, warfare would still be heroic:

The days passed. Ever prone to despond, Guy became sure that his brief adventure was over. He had pistol. Perhaps, finally, he would get a shot at an invading Storm Trooper and die unrecognized, but sweetly and decorously. (248)

In Crete his delusion of a heroic death reaches its climax when he discovers a dead body. He comes to see a sacred image in the corpse of a soldier. Comparing it with a sculptured “Deposition” (406), he regards the value of the corpse as sacred as that of Sir Roger. Heroism directs him to convert his image of death to something sacred. Identifying the figures of a hero or Christ in the dead body, he conceptually changes the inexplicable death of his brother into the consecrated image of self-sacrifice. To see heroism in death, Guy finds the way to fill his empty life. It seems to him to be the final method to establish his male identity on the battlefield.

However, confronted with overwhelming violence on the battlefield in Crete, his dubious heroism is completely dispirited. Churches are blasphemously exploited by spies, and Ivor Claire, one of the comrades-in-arms, who talks with Guy about honour, furtively decamps, leaving his troop behind. Actual battlefields are full of cruelty. And he finally meets a calamity. The great massacre by an air raid deprives him of words. He comes to be silent, as his brother was, in despair (427). His silence is a response to the absurdity of life,
which seems beyond human understanding. He is unable to realise the meaning of this
disaster and has to close his lips. In this situation, all he can do is to consider the
inexplicability of life as such, and this recognition is beyond speech. Eventually his futile
approach of following the heroic image of man does not allow him to escape from the
influence of the death of his brother. In modern warfare, the mediaeval hero is changed into
an emasculated relic. Guy’s approach to establish his male identity by emulating the hero
turns out a failure at last. Similar to the emasculated chivalrous spirit of Tony Last in A
Handful of Dust, heroism, which Guy eagerly devotes himself to on the battlefield, is not in
conformity with the circumstances of the modern warfare. These idealised heroic images
are part of the value system of the bygone age and are beyond one’s ability in the Second
World War. There is no place for a mediaeval hero to live in the present. In face of an
inevitable strike from high above, what is the hero able to do? To be silent would be the
only thing that he can do.

It is even more disingenuous of him to emulate the mediaeval hero in order to
establish his identity on the modern battlefield. In Yugoslavia the leader of Jewish refugees,
Mme Knyi exposes his deceptive attitude to modern warfare:

‘Is there any place that is free from evil? It is too simple to say that
only the Nazis wanted war. These communists wanted it too. It was the
only way in which they could come to power. Many of my people wanted
it, to be revenged on the Germans, to hasten to war, a death wish,
everywhere. Even good men thought their private honour would be
satisfied by war. They could assert their manhood by killing and being
killed. They would accept hardships in recompense for having been selfish and lazy. Danger justified privilege. I knew Italians – not very many perhaps – who felt this. Were there none in England?’

‘God forgive me,’ said Guy. ‘I was one of them.’ (655-56)

In her indication, to long for a private honour in a war where everyone is threatened by killing someone or being killed is equal to what the Nazis do. A person, having the desire to establish an identity on a battlefield, is as sinful as the Nazis. In the beginning he recognises battlefield as a place where he can find his aim of life and establishment of his identity by overcoming the fear of death. Against his wish, after confronting the overwhelming violence of modern war, his deceptive attitude is revealed.

After the disastrous experience on the battlefield in Crete, the removal of the heroic illusion brings him to a state of a lonely self. Falling in the air as a practice of parachuting, he discovers the absolute self:

Guy jumped. For a second, as the rush of air hit him, he lost consciousness. Then he came to himself, his senses purged of the noise and smell and throb of the machine. The hazy November sun enveloped him in golden light. His solitude was absolute. (533)

He explores the naked self which is free from the intervention of any kind of ideologies. In this passage, his fundamental shift of mind is clarified. His answer for Mme Knyi in the past tense: “I was one of them” definitely denotes his repentance for his attitude toward the war.
Unlike Tony Last, who persists in following the masculine image to the end, the existence of Guy’s father leads him to a right way of thinking. Unlike other novels, *Sword of Honour* shows that it is the existence of the father that offers a positive perspective to the male protagonist. His father, who died during the war, leaves him a letter whose words Guy ruminates over: “*But quantitative judgements don’t apply. If only one soul was saved that is full compensation for any amount of loss of ‘face’*” (453). It suggests the importance of not being a hero for everyone but being one who can help a person coming into his reach.

Inspired by these words, he makes up his mind to take responsibility for the baby of his unfaithful ex-wife Virginia, who died in an air raid. This deed is actually the fulfilment of his father’s words. Given the ending in which Guy is hardly able to adapt to masculine ideology and decides to live as a pseudo-father for the fatherless child of his ex-wife, *Sword of Honour* shows Waugh’s future-oriented perspective of men who cannot emulate the authoritative discipline of “manliness.”

Guy finally abandons trying to follow the conventional heroic image and searches for a male identity within his reach. Not as a hero, but as an individual free from the domestic value system, he becomes a pseudo-father and manages to help one orphaned child. In this moment, Waugh realises that the concept of father is not rigid, and can be shifted according to situations. Being a father is not necessarily synonymous with being an ideal of “manliness.” In this context, Waugh’s literary career can be regarded as the male adventurer searching for an alternative standpoint to the father figure.

From the viewpoint of masculine subjectivity, Waugh’s career and novels are touchstones to delve closely into the dynamism of the representation of “manliness” after the First World War. On the one hand, there existed a violent craving for a sturdy masculine
image due to a gloomy foreboding of the next war; on the other hand, the anxiety of
masculine subjectivity had permeated the world of the young. This correlation was
metaphorically represented as a battle between fathers and sons in the younger generation’s
literary works. Waugh was among those who represented the generational conflict as part of
their daily lives. Most of these novelists portrayed the young men’s difficulties in living in
England, and their search for alternative ways of living outside the country, that is, the
struggle to find outlets for their repressed desires. Some believed that they could find a
reason to live in Socialism, Marxism or even Fascism in this period; others escaped by
drinking. Waugh as a satirist would call them all “bogus” in his early works. Without
hearing the voice of the internalised conscience and realising how their subjectivities are
ideologically constructed, the writings of these young men hardly have value. These works
end up being either orientalistic or just stylish. Waugh’s standpoint is generally considered
conservative because he did not favour radical change. Instead, Waugh stressed through
satire the necessity of looking back on oneself. Without doing so, protagonists, such as Paul
Penneyfeather, Adam Fenwick-Symes or Tony Last, suffer from dreadful hangovers with
the raucous Bright Young People when festivities end, or their lives end in tragedy.
Whether continuing to desire to be a man or escaping from the normative code, one cannot
acquire anything without realising the present condition of one’s subjectivity. In Waugh’s
works during and after the Second World War, he realistically tackles with the problem of
how to live outside of the ideal image of “manliness.” Resisting the authoritative code, he
focuses on the voice of those who cannot follow the socially required norm. And finally, he
presents an alternative way of living as the fluid image of a father.

If we try to summarise Waugh’s literary career comprehensively, it is regarded as the
inner quest for oneself. In the shift from his realisation of repressed male subjectivity to
suggestion to live as self free from the dominance of repressing “manliness,” we can see the
dynamism in representation of “manliness” after the First World War. Therefore,
considering Waugh’s works from view of masculinity studies, we can see that his novels are
not old-fashioned but quite cutting age. Thus, analysis of Waugh’s interest in male
subjectivity offers a critical insight into the novels and the socio-cultural problems of
gender, which remains until today.
Notes

1 Hynes divides generations in the interwar period into five, like “The Old Men,” “Edwardians,” “The Pre-War Avant-Garde,” “The War Generation,” and “The Post-War Generation” (War, 384-89).

2 In my doctoral dissertation, the following words are used in the discourse of the post-war era as below: “Masculinity,” the ideological requirement that force men to follow the concept of “manliness.” “Manliness,” the conventional value system established through the Victorian and the Edwardian era and reinforces the British imperialism, which praises the sturdiness and the stoicism of an ideal man as a patriarch and a soldier. “Effeminate,” men who have a deviant sexualities from the rigid binary of sexuality and a gender role in the Victorian and the Edwardian era, and who are seemed to threaten the validity of the imperialistic patriarchy.

3 In his book Talk on the Wilde Side: Toward a Genealogy of a Discourse on Male Society, Ed Cohen instructively demonstrates the emergence of the word “homosexual.” After 1892, through Charles Chaddock’s translation of Krafft-Ebing’s Psychopathia Sexualis, the “new characterization of sexual relations between men” (9), as a pathological deviation from the existing conjugal norm, began to permeate in Britain. These new legal, medical and sexological discourses on homosexuality, at the same time, produced “the concurrent emergence of the word ‘heterosexual’” (9). As Michel Foucault, in The History of Sexuality, argues the conversion of the new sexual relation between men from sexual behaviour as sodomite to being as species, it can be said that, to some extent, fin de siècle is the transitional period to define one’s sexuality (43). In these circumstances, Oscar Wilde,
as a dandified figure, made a striking appearance. His performative manners and his shocking confinement as a decadent dramatist, novelist, and also essayist produced an immense sensation in Victorian bourgeois society. As Francesca Cappa clearly writes, “English society during the trials would be in a [sic] hysteria over the crimes of Wilde’s sexualized body” (77).

After Foucault’s groundbreaking assertion about homosexual identity, in the criticisms in 1990s, our interpretation of Oscar Wilde’s writing must be revised, taking into account his problematically sexualised body and same sex desire. A lot of critics, from the viewpoint of homosexual discourse, try to reveal something hidden in his writings, such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), before Queensberry trials in 1895. In opposition to this tendency, Alan Sinfield points out its anachronistic attitude, and he calls upon us to be wary about this problem in *The Wilde Century: Effeminacy, Oscar Wilde and the Queer Moment*. He regards his contemporary criticisms as “retroactive”: “Wilde and his writings look queer because our stereotypical notion of male homosexuality derives from Wilde, and our ideas about him” (vii). It is worthwhile to taking notice to Sinfield’s cautious attitude toward the recognition of Wilde’s sexuality. Because the stereotypical image of Oscar Wilde has been ideologically constructed as a sexualised body through the trials. Critics, such as Cohen pay attention to the tremendous influence of journalism which establishes Wilde’s properties as a sexually dissident in order to reinforce the bourgeois morality of manliness. In the same way, Daniel A. Novak depicts how the photography as a new technology works on the redefinition of Wilde’s body: “[the] dandy therefore is defined by monstrous reproduction and monstrous combination – by photographic reproducibility and photographic composition” (75).
See Paul Fussell, *Great War*. Fussell instructively reveals that “gross dichotomizing is a persisting imaginative habit of modern times” (75).

Discussing the satirical aspects of Waugh’s early novels, Stephen Jay Greenblatt draws attention to the fact that the image of the circle is common in both novels. Greenblatt calls the image of the circle in Waugh’s novels a “demonic spiral leading downward through levels of increasing filth, despair, evil, meaninglessness” (108). The image of the circle is initially represented in *Decline and Fall* as “the big wheel at Luna Park” (193) representing the chaotic world of Bright Young People, and in *Vile Bodies*, as societies in which they madly enjoy themselves. Both images mutually represent the world of Bright Young People. As David Lodge connects Greenblatt’s idea of the circle with “the accelerating collapse of order and meaning which many artists perceived in Western culture and society after the trauma of World War I” (16), the desolation of Western culture by the First World War, the emergence of the Bright Young People and the image of the circle contribute to a multilayered construction of Waugh’s world in the early novels.

Frederick L. Beaty, for instance, emphasised the powerful effect of cinema on Waugh and his appropriation of cinematic method in his writings. His juxtaposition of “both related and unrelated scenes” achieves the effect of highlighting “comparisons, contrasts, and incongruities without ever intruding an authorial comment” (12-13). For an exemplary literary approach to the influential relationship between Waugh and the avant-garde movement, see Brooke Allen and Archie Loss.

For instance, through an analysis of his harsh criticism of Henri Bergson’s idea of Becoming, George McCartney brought to light Waugh’s recognition of “a dehumanising assault on the rational self” (“Being” 142). In another essay, he also asserts that the
protagonists in Waugh’s early works are “stubbornly superficial,” and do not have “their psychological interiors” (Modernist 76).

8 In Crome Yellow (1921), Denis, admiring the image of “a man of action” (2), cannot show his manliness throughout the novel. Or, Walter, in Point Counter Point (1928), who considers that “a man ought, by tradition, to be loved” (15) is valued by his lover, Marjorie because he “had seemed . . . to combine the best points of both sexes” (84). The same can be said of Bernard Marx in Brave New World (1932). He does not have the ideal masculine body and feels a sense of inferiority: “Bernard’s physique was hardly better than the average Gamma. He stood eight centimetres short of the standard Alpha height and was slender in proportion. Contact with members of the lower castes always reminded him painfully of this physical inadequacy” (55).

9 Waugh satirically labeled the Bright Young People as a “crazy and sterile generation,” and concluded that instead of having a perspective of the future, they only possessed “the vaguest hope” (Essays 63). In this article in 1929, Waugh made a clear distinction between himself and the younger generations.

10 This problem is fundamentally originated in a problematic relationship between Waugh and his father, Arthur. He was born on 28 October 1903 at West Hampstead, London, the younger son of Arthur Waugh, managing director of Chapman and Hall, and his quiet, meticulous wife, Catherine Charlotte. His brother, Alexander Waugh (Alec), five and a half years his senior, later published The Loom of Youth, was vigorously athletic. Evelyn, at first shy, never felt close to his brother or to his father, preferring his mother’s company. In his unfinished autobiography, A Little Learning (1964), he reminisces about his ambiguous feeling to his father. In his youth, on the one hand his father is an “intruder”
who obstructs his sweet identification with his mother behaving like, in Freudian language, a superego; on the other hand Arthur looks “decrepit” compared with his manly uncle who was a soldier and a sailor (63). Such contradicted figure of his father — or more broadly father’s generation — casts a dark shadow over him and his whole works. At thirty-six Waugh was the oldest recruit in the marine infantry brigade (RM1), a crack battalion skilled in the techniques of amphibious landing and sabotage. In January 1940 he already felt alienated from RM1’s raucous mess life. Waugh, however, seemed no closer to the fighting he craved than in September 1939. This experience of military disorganisation seriously damaged the crusading spirit with which Waugh had entered the war. It makes him depict consistently the instability of male subjectivity under the problematic relationship between generations.

11 All quotations of Tarr in this dissertation are from the revised version published in 1928.

12 In the first place, here the inter-textual relation between Lewis and Waugh is apparent. It can be seen in the characterisation of Otto Friedrich Silenus, the oracle-like architect who regards human beings as “vile becoming” (113). It is crystal clear that Waugh intentionally uses the image of Lewis to create the characterisation of Silenus who surely would reject the theory of Bergson. Interestingly, although it has never been proposed before, the first names of Frederick Tarr and Otto Kreisler are ominously mingled in the name of Otto Friedrich Silenus. Moreover, his surname, Silenus, surely reminds us of Silenus in Greek mythology, who is mentioned in Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*. Thus, Silenus in *Decline and Fall* is the wicked combination of a caricatured Apollo Tarr and an infertile Dionysus Kreisler.
For an exemplary literary approach, see Brooke Allen and Archie Loss.

In the film *Bright Young Things* directed by Stephen Fry, Miles is represented as homosexual and eventually has to leave England due to his deviant sexuality.

See also, Otto Weininger 7.

In *Highland Fling*, Mitford depicts the shared discourse among the older generation that an artist as an occupation is “doubtful” in comparison with soldiering. Such young men are talked about behind their backs: “‘Ah, yes, he failed for the Army, and was chucked out of the City, so they sent him to the Slade.’” (22)

As Calvin W. Lane acknowledges the nihilistic aspect of frantic dance parties which they hold, and links it with the motif of “the dance of death” (60), while the Bright Young People desire the sense of “permanence”, they dance with death in a fabricated society. The death of Miss Runcible who is a representative of their world is an apparent example of “the dance of death.”

According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word, “tapette” appears for the first time in *Vile Bodies* as an adopted word. This word can be seen in Aldous Huxley’s *Point Counter Point* (1928); however it is used as French. This fact clarifies that among the society of Waugh’s generation, the word “tapette” has already been on everybody’s lips to make a criticism of those who are deviated from the normative code.

In addition to the name, “Adam,” “Fenwick,” as Jeffrey Heath regards, is the composition of “fen” and “wick” (89). Heath does not refer to the specific meaning of this curious name; however, from the perspective of “manliness,” it provokes the ironical image that Adam is a man who throws light on the promiscuous world as the originator of a manly being.
The influence of the Great Depression on the younger generation is already described in *Black Mischief*. When Basil Seal, the protagonist, returns to London, he finds it economically desolated by the Great Depression. The gaudy world of the Bright Young People comes to grief. They do not have the perspective to establish their new lives and futures in chaotic London. The Bright Young People become “serious” without economic stability (231).

Basil’s characteristic is influenced by Peter Rodd, who is one of Waugh’s friends. Waugh regards him as “a man of action” (*A Little Learning* 204).

This contradiction indicates that civilisation is not synonymous with “Progress” in *Black Mischief*. The image of contradiction symbolically converges with the truck, which natives use as a house. This truck causes a disturbance on the main road, which is a significant element for “Progress.” Although machinery designates the symbol of “Progress” in Azania, the original purpose of the truck is abandoned, and in the present, it is reused as a house by natives. This truck represents the reversed process by which barbarism encroaches on civilisation. Given this process, the distinction between civilisation and barbarism becomes blurred, but there is fluidity as well, since primal history is gradually becoming civilised. In contrast, civilisation is gradually being barbarised. This process ironically becomes the “Progress” that King Seth wants to achieve. In short, the historical progress is rewritten as relapsing “History” in Azania.

For instance, in *Evelyn Waugh Newsletter*, Donald Greene, John W. Osborne and John W. Mahon vehemently oppose about whether Charles Ryder has finally converted to Catholicism or not. However, lack of the definite evidences drives these arguments unsolved.
This chapter is based on the revised version published in 1960.

I call the protagonist in “the recollected past” from 1923 “Charles,” the person who is “recollecting the past” on the battlefield “Captain Ryder,” and the narrator “Ryder.”

After the First World War, it was the Bright Young People that attempted to establish their alternative identities through the rejection of their father’s generation that was representative of authoritative masculinity (Eksteins 259-60). Through reading the works of Havelock Ellis, who regards sexuality as “mutable” (Ellis194), they were searching for the alternative identity free from the rigid binary of gender (Berberich, Image 102).

From the biographical perspective, David Wykes suggests the harsh reality which Waugh has experienced in the battlefields of the Second World War: “Waugh represented his enlistment as taking up the chivalrous and heroic cause, and then described how that cause came to grief when the Soviet Union became an alley. This was not a crusade but a brutal struggle for survival. In truth, only one team was fundamentally loutish, though the other had to do some very loutish things. Chivalrous and heroic assumptions permit no compromise, no merely expedient alliances, and do not accept that victory is the only thinkable outcome” (124).

It is worth noting that in the year preceding the publication of Brideshead Revisited, the quite patriotic movie Henry V, directed by Laurence Olivier, was released in 1944.

Brideshead ought to be the home for Charles who could not have the sense of belonging since his adolescence. The adolescence with Sebastian in the nursery should have assured his identity. However as Lane suggests that Brideshead is the closed world to the nonbeliever of Catholicism (92), or as Ann Hitt indicates the symbolical resemblance
between Charles and the fountain which do not correspond with Brideshead (6), Charles’s sense of belonging to the house is a pseudo-identity based on the corrupted nursery of Sebastian.

30 In the letter to Mitford, Waugh depicted his affection for Richard Pares as “my first homosexual love” (Letters 435). Since Harold Acton identifies their relationship as a platonic one, Waugh’s real life might be helpful to understanding the ambiguous relationship between John and Arthur, or Charles and Sebastian. However, given the fact of the author’s marriage and heterosexual love affairs, we have to be wary about defining his male relationships as homosexual (Higdon 81, Pugh 68-69, Christensen 146).


*Bright Young Things*. Dir. Stephen Fry. Icon Home Entertainment, 2007. DVD.


Greene, Donald. “Charles Ryder’s Conversion?” *Evelyn Waugh Newsletter*. Winter


———. “‘The Man with the Powder Puff’ in Interwar London.” *The Historical Journal*


Knowles, Sebastian D. G. *A Purgatorial Flame: Seven British Writers in the Second World


Mangan, J. A. “Social Darwinism and Upper-Class Education in Late Victorian and


Novak, Daniel A. “Sexuality in the Age of Technological Reproducibility: Oscar Wilde,


Rothstein, David. “Brideshead Revisited and the Modern Historicization of Memory.”


Print.


Print.


Zweiniger-Bargielowska, Ina. “Building a British Superman: Physical Culture in