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**CONSTRUCTIONS OF POWER:
FEMINIST SUB-TEXTS IN THE
NOVELS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË
AND DAPHNE DU MAURIER**

**A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the
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ABSTRACT

This exploration of the novels of Charlotte Brontë and Daphne du Maurier reveals a number of similarities in each author's investigations of feminist concerns. Centring upon a discussion of cultural values in the texts of both authors, this thesis suggests that nineteenth and twentieth century female writers use similar literary devices to incorporate feminist sub-texts beneath the surface of outwardly conventional romantic novels.

Certain significant themes and images appear in both Brontë's and du Maurier's works: the burned stately home, the Gothic atmosphere, the characterisation of an abused and abusive first-person male narrator, and marginalised female characters who are drawn towards a more empowered yet also culturally marginalised male protector/punisher-figure. In du Maurier's work in particular, these themes and images are recreated throughout successive novels in an apparently compulsive manner, suggesting a vital psychological working-through of material to which the author holds an attitude of ambivalence.

My discussion gives extra weight to du Maurier, not only because the volume and time-span of her work exceeds that of Brontë (twelve of her seventeen novels are here discussed in depth and the remaining five briefly placed in context) but also because limited academic interest has hitherto been shown in du Maurier's works (with the possible exception of *Rebecca*), as opposed to the existing wealth of Brontë scholarship. It is my belief that du Maurier's work as a whole is of interest to academic study for its inherent psychological realism, contemporary concern with gender-related topics, and strong sense of literary inheritance; this thesis initiates an exploration of these issues.

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Jacqui Beets

DEDICATION

**This thesis is dedicated to the memory of
the late M.L.E. Harper, whose artistic
appreciation and generously-shared
library of books and music fostered my
early interest in the Humanities, and who
would undoubtedly be delighted to know
of the completion of this project.**

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INTRODUCTION

Critics have observed that Charlotte Brontë's fiction exists on two levels, "the one conscious capitulation to convention, the other dissent concealed by overt orthodoxy" (Foster 79). This thesis suggests that a similar tension exists within the novels of Daphne du Maurier, and the following exploration of both authors' novels reveals their similarities in handling "dissenting" feminist material--material assigned a sub-textual position in an outwardly orthodox text.

Du Maurier was quick to acknowledge the debt she owed to early readings of the Brontës' novels, particularly *Jane Eyre* (Cook 132, 202). As has been observed,

many people have regarded Daphne's books as being rather "Brontëfied" in their construction, with their use of landscape alongside character descriptions. Certainly Daphne was fascinated throughout her career with this half-Irish, half-Cornish family. . .there is a parallel in that they, as she did, merged personal experiences and imagination, and became closely associated with a particular area. (Shallcross 42)

These personal experiences include the frustrations of living as a female in a patriarchally-dominated world. Both Brontë and du Maurier were overshadowed by possessive intellectual and artistic fathers who sheltered their daughters from prospective suitors and an independent life (a domineering role continued after Gerald du Maurier's death on the part of du Maurier's husband, Tommy Browning). Brontë and du Maurier escaped their restricted existences through the creation of early adolescent fantasy worlds and later adult fiction; both, however, suffered from ambivalent personal responses to the culturally-unsanctioned female resentment expressed in their work. Brontë's Angrian fantasy realm became an "infernal" paradise filled with "evil wandering thoughts", about which she expressed moral uncertainty (*The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë* 66) and although du Maurier's private imaginary world may have been an "escape from the pressure of her luxurious and closely

watched everyday life" (Shallcross 26-7), the turmoil of creating a fantasy-life in which her so-called "No.2" or secret self had free reign drove her near to psychological collapse (Forster 416).

Cultural values and expectations continued to impinge upon both writers throughout their careers: prevented by Browning's health from working on her biography of Branwell Brontë, du Maurier identified closely with her literary predecessor Brontë's similar predicament at Haworth:

I have been in constant attendance on my husband. . . I feel rather like Charlotte Brontë when nursing the Rev. Brontë and finding it difficult to get on with *Villette*. (letter to J Alex Symington, quoted in Forster 308)

Much of du Maurier's soul-searching in later life centred upon the moral and social dilemma of women's ability to reconcile career and family in a cultural atmosphere which discouraged personal female fulfilment (Cook 243).

The two authors, although separated by almost a century in time and inhabiting diverse geographic locales (Brontë Yorkshire and Brussels, du Maurier Cornwall, London, Paris and Alexandria), respond to feminist concerns in a strikingly similar manner. They write in popular romance-novel and historical-novel genres, creating works which reveal, beneath an orthodox surface-text of a heroine's fulfilment through love and/or marriage, symbols, themes and images which create a sub-text subtly undermining their novels' "romantic" happy endings.

It is notable that du Maurier consciously deviates from the romance-novel or historical-novel genre in certain works, particularly her early novels *I'll Never Be Young Again* and *The Progress of Julius* and later works such as *Mary Anne* and *Rule Britannia*; these non-romantic, often *Bildungsroman*-like, fictions make interesting study as part of the canon of twentieth-century feminist works. Of her more conventionally-oriented novels, du Maurier denied that any but *Frenchman's Creek* were "romances"; *Rebecca*, she stated firmly, was intended as "a study in

jealousy and murder, not romantic at all" (Shallcross 83), although publicists, reviewers and the reading public have persistently argued otherwise. Recent critical studies have observed that the enduring success of novels like *Rebecca* may lie in their ability to be read in more ways than one; with an unnamed heroine able to be cast as either a conventional submissive wife or the subversive double of rebellious Rebecca, female readers are free to identify with either version of female behaviour (Rance 87, 97).

The following discussion outlines several areas in which feminist rage and resentment underpin the "orthodox" texts of du Maurier's and Brontë's fiction. Through the creation of a Gothic atmosphere and the symbol (in du Maurier's case, obsessively reproduced) of a burned stately home, bastion of patrimonial privilege and power; through the depiction of a male first-person narrator who embodies the oppressed status of the female author but who compulsively punishes his text's female, rather than male, characters; and through the creation of female characters who are drawn towards masculine rebel-figures symbolising a more powerful--and punishing--version of their own culturally-repressed individualism, Brontë and du Maurier reveal a legacy of feminine resentment which continues unbroken from the 1840s throughout the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 1
THORNFIELD REVISITED:
BURNING IMAGES IN FEMINIST FICTION

The Young du Maurier and the Stately Home

→ A vivid and recurring image in Daphne du Maurier's work is that of the mansion or manor house, imposing in its many-winged grandeur, frequently haunted, and just as frequently ending its days as a burned-out shell. Du Maurier uses this emblem of aristocratic solidity, which has psychological significance in her personal life, as a metaphor of entrapment to explore the position of women, both of her own era and of preceding generations.

Sojourns in real manor houses were highlights of du Maurier's childhood. Although the du Mauriers were only pseudo-aristocratic (their bourgeois French ancestors, the Bussons, tacked the "du Maurier" appendage to their name after living at an estate farmhouse named le Maurier), they lived in a genteel manner, and Gerald du Maurier arranged lavish holidays for his family in English country residences, complete with an entourage of servants and nursemaids.

A memorable visit was made, in 1913, to Slyfield Manor, Stoke d'Abernon. While six-year-old du Maurier enjoyed life on the mansion's country estate, she recalls bedtime there as an ordeal, a terrifying passage along gloomy hallways and creaking staircases lined with grim-faced ancestral portraits. Half-heard facts about Slyfield haunted her childish imagination: the site was mentioned in Domesday (and "Domesday had an ominous sound"); Elizabeth I had slept there and perhaps her spirit haunted the place still, for "[w]here had they all gone, the people who lived at Slyfield once? And where was I then? Who was I now?" she wondered (*Growing Pains* 26-27).

In 1916 the du Maurier family moved into Cannon Hall in Hampstead, an imposing Georgian mansion. Cannon Hall paled into insignificance, however, beside another Tudor manor house visited the

following year: Milton, near Peterborough. Milton made a profound impression on ten-year-old du Maurier, who later wrote: "never before had I glimpsed anything so beautiful, so proud. . . .[I] was filled with a feeling of great and instant happiness almost of recognition, and of love" (43). The upper-class atmosphere of Milton was reflected in microcosm in the breakfasts served in its dining-room, where the du Maurier children were waited on by a butler wielding a bewildering array of silver salvers. This performance is immortalised twenty years later in du Maurier's *Rebecca*, where its abundance and wastage kindles anxiety in the heroine's middle-class conscience:

How impressed I was, I remember well; impressed and a little over-awed by the magnificence of the breakfast offered to us. . . .It seemed strange to me that Maxim, who in Italy and France, had eaten a *croissant* and fruit only, and drunk a cup of coffee, should sit down to this breakfast at home, enough for a dozen people, day after day probably, year after year, seeing nothing ridiculous about it, nothing wasteful. . . .Were there menials, I wondered, whom I should never know, never see, waiting behind kitchen doors for the gift of our breakfast? Or was it all thrown away, shovelled into dustpans? I would never know, of course, I would never dare to ask. (*Rebecca* 95-6)

Later in the novel, after she has assumed the persona of lady of the manor, the heroine casts aside her bourgeois thrift and reprimands the staff for serving leftovers (Light 19). These parallel passages afford a glimpse of the ambivalent attitude towards class-related issues--a celebration of wealth and elegance, side by side with a desire for social revolution--reflected throughout du Maurier's work.

There was a second visit to Milton the following year, reinforcing the mansion's image in du Maurier's imagination. More important, however, is Gerald du Maurier's response to the concept of the British stately home. Although he appears not to have visited Milton with his wife and daughters,

[w]hen D [Gerald] heard of the plan he smote his knee with his fist and exclaimed, "It's one of the finest houses in

England. You'll never forget it."
 "Better than Slyfield?" I asked.
 "Slyfield?" His laugh was contemptuous.
 (*Growing Pains* 42)

Strongly influenced by the opinions of her domineering father, the image of the manor house indeed became something du Maurier would never forget. Her obedient memory expanded, throughout her novels, into a working through of responses towards the stately home, simultaneously a symbol of ease and plenty and of patriarchal and economic domination.

In the late 1920s du Maurier discovered and fell in love with the sixteenth century Cornish manor seat, Menabilly. Much has been written about her furtive trespassing in the Menabilly grounds, and her gaining entry to the neglected house through an unfastened window, some fourteen years before she was actually granted a lease on the property. Of all the manor houses stored in du Maurier's unconscious, Menabilly--her home for twenty-five years--undoubtedly exercised the strongest pull on her imagination, as from both the architecture and legends surrounding the house spring the germs of her most successful novels. Impressions of each mansion (Slyfield, Cannon Hall, Milton and Menabilly) seem to have amalgamated, however, to form the composite manor house which appears in du Maurier's novels: *Rebecca's* Manderley, the Ashley estate of *My Cousin Rachel*, Clonmere in *Hungry Hill*, and Menabilly itself, in the historical novel *The King's General*.

Of deeper significance than the simple appearance and reappearance of the stately home in its various (dis)guises is the dramatic finale du Maurier accords to this obsessively-reproduced house. Each mansion (or a part thereof) ends its days in ruins, burned or sacked and looted. This scenario is foreshadowed in a work Daphne read and loved, and to which she openly admitted her debt: Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (Cook 202).

Manor House Enclosure in *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca*

Gilbert and Gubar argue that *Jane Eyre* is essentially "a story of enclosure and escape, a distinctively female *Bildungsroman*" (Gilbert and Gubar 339). Thornfield represents Rochester's sexual and economic domination over females, notably Jane and his wife Bertha; the third storey where Bertha is imprisoned and where Jane paces back and forth in mental agitation becomes an allegory for Jane's repressed existence (347). Consequently, when Thornfield is burned down, Jane is psychologically liberated, a fact foreshadowed by her premonitory dream of being freed from her child-burden (representing lack of selfhood) once she falls from the mansion's ruined walls. Gilbert and Gubar suggest this dream is a vision of wish-fulfilment on Jane's part, and is "acted out by Bertha. . . as if she were an agent of Jane's desire as well as her own" (360).

Many similarities can be noted between this reading of *Jane Eyre* and a feminist/psychoanalytical reading of *Rebecca* (although, as will be seen, du Maurier reinterprets Brontë's material from a 1930s perspective). Like Rochester, Maxim de Winter hides the guilty secret of his first wife in his stately home, not imprisoned on the third storey but in its west wing, where Mrs Danvers keeps Rebecca's rooms in perfect readiness, as if expecting her return, and in the beach cottage, site of Rebecca's adulterous orgies and murder.

The novel's nameless heroine (hereinafter referred to as "I", the convention followed in David Selznick's filmscript of *Rebecca*) is thus haunted by the presence of Rebecca de Winter, just as Jane Eyre is stalked by Bertha Mason. Although (unlike Bertha) Rebecca is dead, her influence is suffused throughout the mansion--in the sexually-symbolic china Cupid on the morning-room desk (which gauche "I" breaks, and like a guilty child fears to report the damage); in the accustomed positioning of flower-vases in the library; in the handwriting on the fly-leaf of Maxim's poetry book; in the memories preserved by Maxim's

grandmother of "dear Rebecca". Rebecca's potentially threatening presence is condensed into the metaphor of azalea-perfume, which leaves a violent "stab. . .in the air" (*Rebecca* 150), exuding from Rebecca's clothing when her wardrobe doors are opened and from the handkerchief "I" finds in her mackintosh pocket. Continuing the perfume-metaphor, Maxim attempts "to put a stopper on [his] memories" of Rebecca, but "sometimes the scent is too strong for the bottle" (48). Even the azalea-scented Happy Valley where Maxim and "I" experience brief moments of Edenic togetherness becomes tarnished by Rebecca's lingering presence; the Happy Valley experience is immediately and jarringly followed by "I"'s trespassing inside the forbidden cottage and her resulting argument with Maxim.

There is a second sense in which Rebecca is still alive at Manderley. Physical descriptions of her (tall, thin, boyish, dark) are uncannily similar to those of the sinister Mrs Danvers. Although Danvers would have "I" believe Rebecca's spirit supernaturally haunts Manderley (204) it is in the actions of Danvers herself that real danger to "I" is apparent; a series of sinister encounters culminates in her encouraging "I" to kill herself by jumping from a window. This, a twentieth century Gothic reinterpretation of Bertha Mason's attempt to murder Jane Eyre, points to Danvers as an alter ego or *doppelgänger* of Rebecca, the resentful first wife. However, as will be discussed, du Maurier's characterisation probes significantly deeper than this surface reading.

It is important to note that Rebecca herself is a double figure, presenting to society an outward face of the dutiful good wife--the "[b]reeding, brains and beauty" Maxim's grandmother instructed him to marry (320)--while another, revolutionary, side of her psyche is allowed free rein only in private parties with disreputable friends at her beach cottage or her London flat. This wild, libertine second self appears more masculine than feminine: Maxim's coy pronouncement, "[s]he was not even normal" (320), indicates that Rebecca was androgynous, gravitating towards lesbianism, bisexuality or transvestism. (It is interesting that

Rebecca's sexual misdemeanours are never detailed specifically, and thus "[i]n the manner typical of the [Gothic] genre, the reader is led to imagine the worst thing s/he is capable of"--Garson 55.)

In this light du Maurier's personal letters of the 1940s and '50s are of interest, for in these she rationalises guilt and fear over her own lesbian proclivities by believing herself to be a kind of "half-breed", attracted to both sexes. As biographer Margaret Forster observes:

[i]n many ways, she reflected the sexual judgements of her era. During the twenties and thirties, when she was growing up, women who were lesbians were thought of as women who should have been born men. If two women were in a lesbian relationship there was always speculation from outsiders as to "who plays the man". (Forster 418)

In other novels du Maurier expresses her sexual ambivalence by adopting first-person male narrators. In *Rebecca*, however, she begins to experiment with masculine attributes and freedoms in the character of a sexually aggressive female.

On a more universally feminist level it can be suggested that Rebecca's wild nature, like Bertha Mason's madness, is a reaction to the repressed status she endures under the patriarchal system. Known to the world as the wife of Maxim de Winter, mistress of Manderley, hostess of famous balls and dispenser of good to the estate's tenants, Rebecca struggles to assert her own identity. This inner turmoil is revealed in her signature, seemingly confident and bold, yet a "curious, slanting hand", its forceful downstroke creating a blob of ink which "marred the white page opposite" (*Rebecca* 41). The "slanting" nature of this writing may suggest deviance, and its violent marring effect, sadism--the type of aberrant behaviour hinted at in Maxim's embarrassed references to Rebecca's sexual practices (320), and suggested by her cruelty to animals and to the idiot Ben.

Rebecca's defiant marriage-speech to Maxim makes clear both her bitterness at her position in the patriarchal system and her refusal to be brought under male control:

"I'll look after your precious Manderley for you, make it the most famous show-place in all the country, if you like. And people will visit us, and envy us, and talk about us; they'll say we are the luckiest, happiest, handsomest couple in all England. What a leg-pull, Max. . . what a God-damn triumph!" (321-322)

From the moment of her marriage Rebecca works to subvert and undermine the established order; for instance she undercuts her public Lady Bountiful image by privately threatening Ben with the asylum, or worse (183). She likewise refuses to play second fiddle to her husband as her cultural and economic superior; he knows--as does the county--that "the Manderley that people talk about and photograph and paint, it's all due to her, to Rebecca" (324). It has been suggested that while the financial circumstances of the first de Winter marriage are unclear, "a distinct possibility exists that much of the wealth is Rebecca's" (Massé 181, footnote). This is humiliating knowledge, but Maxim forces himself to live with it, just as he forces himself to live with the bargain of marital pretence he makes with Rebecca in Monte Carlo. However Rebecca's boast that she is pregnant to another man, thus instigating permanent pollution of Maxim's patrimonial line, incites him to unhesitating murder. This is Rebecca's trump card: carrying not a foetus but a cancerous tumour, a quick death rather than months of suffering is exactly what she wants. Rebecca's flagrant sexuality sins "against the whole fabric of the social order"--family, class, property and her husband (Light 15)--and her cancer and malformed uterus can be read as symbolic punishment and justification of Maxim's murder. Yet in the same moment Rebecca pays for her "crimes", she triumphs in psychological superiority over her executioner.

Allan Lloyd Smith points out how the "haunting" phantom of Rebecca and the dark secrets associated with her indicate a wider network of culturally unspeakable acts (Smith 305); Manderley represents in microcosm the England of the 1930s, its aristocratic heritage threatened by revolutionary subversion from its oppressed fractions (females and

lower classes). In this broader sense, Rebecca's deviant, reactionary behaviour takes on a universal significance with which all oppressed females can identify (and this necessarily includes "I").

The text indicates that Rebecca may have enjoyed a lesbian relationship with Mrs Danvers; du Maurier agreed that this was possible (Shallcross 63). Rebecca certainly discusses with Danvers intimate details of her erotic conquests, which results in close sexual identification between the two. The housekeeper recalls that

"[I]ove-making was a game with her, only a game. She told me so. She did it because it made her laugh. . .I've known her come back and sit upstairs on her bed and rock with laughter at the lot of you." . . .Mrs Danvers began to cry. (*Rebecca* 400-01)

The sexual freedom (traditionally a male aristocratic privilege) which Rebecca shares with Danvers serves to carve out a metaphorical and literal space (Manderley's west wing) for meaningful female existence (Bromley 171). This phallic sexuality challenges and usurps male values (Light 13).

The above-quoted passage from *Rebecca* demonstrates how "Danny" (her nickname is significantly masculine) assimilates Rebecca's emotional extremes, laughing and crying at Rebecca's memory while cold and severe at all other times. Danvers can be read as the living incarnation of Rebecca's assertive (therefore masculine, abnormal) second self; a "mad ghostly presence" (Nollen 45). Like crazy Bertha Mason, androgynous Mrs Danvers paces the mansion's upper storey, where she experiences a fit of frenzy before encouraging "I" to jump to her death: "[s]he did not hear me, she went on raving like a madwoman, a fanatic, her long fingers twisting and tearing the black stuff of her dress" (*Rebecca* 287). Danvers is also closely associated with Rebecca's cousin Favell, and there is some indication that she carries on the sexual relationship which Rebecca enjoyed with Favell (Kelly 60). (We note that Danvers entertains Favell alone in the west wing when she thinks the house deserted.) Favell too can be read as a masculine extension of

Rebecca: as her male relative, his characterisation (debauched, irrational and vulgar) indicates a subversion of those genteel upper-class values around which Maxim's world revolves.

If Rebecca's *doppelgänger* is Danvers, "I", in contrast, gravitates towards Danvers's "ideologically positive balance", the estate agent Frank Crawley (Bromley 170). Instead of empowering "I", however, "terribly correct" Crawley (*Rebecca* 229) acts to keep her in her place. He emphasises the importance of "I"'s (female) modesty, facilitates her domestic role as hostess by handing tea-cups and steering social chit-chat in polite, safe directions, and refuses to allow her any business occupation in the office, not even licking stamps for the ball invitations. Middle-class Crawley does mediate "I"'s and Maxim's relationship (Bromley 170), but his "self-effacing values" are not necessarily as "close to those of the heroine" as they may at first seem.

Unlike excitingly-named Rebecca, nameless "I" appears on the surface to have no anti-establishment, "masculine" second personality. She is a classic Cinderella-figure, rescued from her governess-like role as companion to vulgar Mrs Van Hopper and transported to a life of luxury at Maxim's family seat. Du Maurier herself was powerfully influenced, if not intimidated, by a father who imposed upon his family an upper-class lifestyle he could barely afford; his enthusiasm over the elegance of Milton has already been noted. Du Maurier's experiences resurface here--with some interesting ironic distancing--in the character of *Rebecca's* heroine. "I" mourns her dead father, the "lovely and unusual person" who exercised economic and emotional control over herself and her mother (*Rebecca* 30-1), and she unconsciously sees Maxim as an ideal substitute to fill the father-figure void in her life.

It is noteworthy that Maxim's manor house and the economic stability it represents comprise the lion's share of his attractiveness to her. While "I"'s petit-bourgeois family is not affluent enough to stay at a Milton or a Slyfield Manor, in an episode reminiscent of du Maurier's own childhood memories, "I" purchases a postcard representation of

Manderley while holidaying in the west of England, which makes a profound impression upon her: "[i]t was. . . crudely done of course and highly coloured, but even those faults could not destroy the symmetry of the building, the wide stone steps before the terrace, the green lawns stretching to the sea" (29). As an adult bride-to-be, "I"'s fantasies run less on Maxim's personal charms than on being lady of this manor: "I am going to be Mrs de Winter. I am going to live at Manderley. Manderley will belong to me" (67).

Unsophisticated "I" does harbour doubts about fitting into upper-crust society; indeed, Maxim's proposal shocks her middle-class sensibilities: it is "as though the King asked one" (65). Yet her modestly-phrased "'I don't belong to your sort of world'" (64) is easily and immediately countered by Maxim, the domineering male: "'What do you know of Manderley? I'm the person to judge that, whether you would belong there or not'" (64). As the novel progresses it becomes clear that "I" cannot successfully run Manderley--not because she is totally incapable of assuming upper-class attitudes, however, but because of her lack of individual self-worth. "I" is tortured by her inadequacy in comparison to capable Rebecca, whom she believes Maxim to have idolised and who, as a member of the upper-class, seems "more mature, more adult, both socially and sexually" than "I" (Light 10). Overawed by Manderley's formality, "I" is unable to assert authority over the staff, even down to minor matters such as selecting a vase for cut flowers or an appropriate sauce to accompany luncheon. Her dreams of being an adulated Lady Bountiful crumble beneath the realisation that she has merely traded one form of servitude (oppression under the vaguely masculine bully Van Hopper) for a claustrophobic existence in Maxim's mansion.

Just as Rebecca had to conform to male expectations of wifely demeanour, "I" is now instructed on dress and behaviour by Maxim. He married "I" for her youthful innocence and is determined to keep her that way, as is clearly demonstrated by his suggestion of Alice in Wonderland

as a suitable ball-costume for her (Kelly 58-9). When "I" wears a copy of Rebecca's Caroline de Winter gown, a period costume suggesting a raffish lifestyle suited to Rebecca's libertine tastes, Maxim punishes her by physical and emotional rejection. We have noted that his paternalistic attitude is fuelled by "I"'s own desire for a caretaker father-figure in her life--a desire implanted by cultural conditioning which posits women as morally inferior to men:

"When you were a little girl, were you ever forbidden to read certain books, and did your father put those books under lock and key?" . . . "A husband is not so very different from a father after all. There is a certain type of knowledge I prefer you not to have." (*Rebecca* 238)

There are overtones here of du Maurier's difficult relationship with her own father, who kept a "stable" of actress-mistresses but who possessively curtailed his daughters' sexual knowledge and experience (*Gerald* 279). Clear similarities exist between the names "Maxim de Winter" and "Gerald du Maurier". Smith points out both the cultural and the symbolic overtones of Maxim's name, "a name with connotations of an ancient and foreign lineage, both Latin and French, and aristocratic in an ersatz way. It also means the maximum or worst of winter, a cryptonym of coldness, desolation, and ultimately death" (Smith 304). (Though Rebecca's name undoubtedly echoes that of glamorous socialite Jan *Ricardo*, the real-life sexual rival whose discovered letters inspired du Maurier's novel, Smith also makes the intriguing suggestion that her name "includes the suggestion of a revenant: *Rebecca*, who comes again, who *beckons* again"--Smith 304. In respect of her reappearance throughout the text and her political influence on "I", this is certainly the case.)

Just as "I" has been culturally-conditioned to invite Maxim's oppression, so she also invites domination by the phallic-seeming Rebecca/Danvers (Rebecca is connected with the phallic image of the snake throughout the novel). The scene where "I" burns the book page containing Rebecca's signature explores this idea. While Maxim breaks

the news of their engagement to Mrs Van Hopper, "I" battles the "demon" of her unconscious, a Satan who tortures her with thoughts about fascinating, mysterious Rebecca. "'Go on,' whispered the demon, 'open the title-page, that's what you want to do, isn't it? Open the title-page'" (*Rebecca* 70). This temptation is rationalised by her superego as a "thought forbidden, prompted by demons"; however it also sounds suspiciously similar to the voice of Danvers, when she finds "I" in Rebecca's bedroom:

"Why did you tell me the shutter was open?" she said. "I closed it before I left the room. You opened it yourself, didn't you, now? You wanted to see the room. Why have you never asked me to show it to you before? I was ready to show it to you every day. . . . Here is her nightdress inside the case. You've been touching it, haven't you? . . . Feel it, hold it," she said, "how soft and light it is, isn't it?" (198)

"I"'s "forbidden" thoughts are connected with Rebecca's unrestrained sexuality, symbolised by her bedroom and nightdress. Even more revealing are speeches following "I"'s second intrusion into Rebecca's bedroom, when Danvers encourages her to end her life:

"Why don't you jump? It wouldn't hurt, not to break your neck. It's a quick, kind way. It's not like drowning. Why don't you try it?' . . . 'Go on," whispered Mrs Danvers. "Go on, don't be afraid." (290-1)

I suggest that, like the fictitious "demon", sinister Mrs Danvers is here a convenient evil mouthpiece for "I"'s own repressed or neurotic consciousness. The window scene is less a murder scenario than a personal death-wish, in which Danvers iterates "I"'s fears and desires:

The only reality was the window-sill beneath my hands and the grip of Mrs Danvers on my left arm. If I jumped I should not see the stones rise up to meet me, the fog would hide them from me. The pain would be sharp and sudden as she said. The fall would break my neck. It would not be slow, like drowning. It would soon be over. And Maxim

did not love me. Maxim wanted to be alone again, with Rebecca. (291)

"I" has three choices: to obliterate herself and allow deviant Rebecca's memory free rein; to reject or repress the text's dark secrets; to explore Rebecca's world and enter into it. In the page-burning episode she attempts the second option, and ironically creates an incendiary image which anticipates the novel's conclusion (Kelly 55). "I" may attribute the burning of the fly-leaf to the uninvited promptings of a "demon", but the act is a subconscious symbolic murder of envied Rebecca. "I" cuts the page from the book, looking over her shoulder "like a criminal" (*Rebecca* 70), then tears it to pieces; the fragments still seem alive, and can be obliterated only by burning to ash. Rebecca's symbolic monogram, however, is not destroyed, for it reappears throughout the text--at Rebecca's writing-desk; embroidered on her nightdress case and handkerchief; and in "I"'s dream. Such formal repetition indicates Freud's definition of the uncanny, a definition Smith develops to include the wider cultural sphere: "influences *outside* an individual's ["I"'s] lived experience [which] determine psychic development" (Smith 302, 294).

"I" gains pleasure from burning Rebecca's signifying initial (despite the fact that, as Rebecca functions in the text as the spirit of Everywoman, such destruction can only be partial). I suggest that two destructive impulses are at war within "I" in this episode: "I" wants to obliterate Rebecca, her rival; she also desires, in a broader sense, to obliterate her own inadequacy, an inadequacy fostered by male-dominated cultural and social pressures. Rebecca, as signified by her monogram, refuses to die, just as her murdered body refuses to stay in its sea-crypt, and "I" is eventually induced by her "'transgenerational haunting'" (Smith 291) into unconscious (and unadmitted) identification with her. The resentment thus produced is turned into a desire to obliterate the forces of female oppression.

From a feminist point of view, neither the murder of Rebecca nor the suicide of "I" is satisfactory, especially after "I" has recognised

Rebecca as "a positive alternative to herself" (Light 10). The appropriate target for destruction is *Manderley*, symbol of masculine oppression of both aggressive and intimidated women.

"I" notes with satisfaction that the flame of her page-burning has "a lovely light", and immediately experiences a sense of purgation, cleanliness and confidence which she likens to the start of a new year. This cathartic pleasure gained from destruction is reflected in the burning of *Manderley*, after "I" has begun unconsciously to identify with Rebecca and assimilate her need for power and escape. "I", driving with Maxim back from London, sees in the sky what she takes to be the light of a new day, "the first red streaks of sunrise"; it is only when she realises that *Manderley* is on fire that this apparently welcoming, cleansing dawn takes on the more sinister aspect of "a splash of blood" (*Rebecca* 446).

Du Maurier purposely leaves us unsure of how the fire starts. While it is tempting to guess that Danvers commits arson after Favell's telephone call from London, this scenario becomes questionable if we accept Frith's account that Danvers quitted the house early that afternoon--several hours before the blaze begins. Less important than by what physical agent *Manderley* is destroyed is the fact that the fire, as a symbol of destructive rage and passion, satisfies the wishes of both "I" and Rebecca--that of the former unconsciously longed for, that of the latter consciously expressed. This image is re-echoed in du Maurier's *The Glass-Blowers* (1963), a novel recounting her Busson ancestors' fortunes during the French Revolution:

Numbers of [revolutionaries] were flinging things out of the windows into the street below, not to bear off as trophies, but for destruction. They had a fire burning before the building, and were feeding it with tables, chairs and rugs. (*The Glass-Blowers* 239-40)

This archetypal spirit of revolution, demonstrated by disenfranchised classes burning aristocratic possessions for pure pleasure of destruction, finds its way into the mansion-burning scenarios of both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca*. The suggestion that Maxim's burned home is a necessary

sacrifice which enables him to become a renewed member of the "adaptive landed gentry" (Bromley 168, 175), represents only a partial reading of *Rebecca*. (In contrast to Bromley's argument, Maxim's dreary post-Manderley existence does not suggest he has experienced any kind of healthful renewal or "natural" authority by assimilating the values of "I"'s class.) Du Maurier's text is concerned with exploring the idea of female rage, which has persisted--together with underclass resentment--throughout history into the twentieth century. The inflammatory nature of this rage is expressed in Manderley's destruction.

"I"'s resentment against the patriarchal system stems as much from what she is not (the envied, feared revolutionary Rebecca) as from what she is. Du Maurier was frank about the real-life "study in jealousy" (Forster 137) which contributed to *Rebecca*, arising from her discovery of letters in a bold hand from Browning's former fiancée (Cook 134). Jan Ricardo exhibited the social skills du Maurier simultaneously despised and desired--a scenario similar to "I"'s fascination with Rebecca and Jane Eyre's envy of Blanche Ingram. Like the social butterfly Ginevra Fanshawe in Brontë's *Villette*, Rebecca represents everything the novel's plain heroine cannot be and therefore fears and scorns to become.

In *Villette*, Lucy Snowe pretends to be Ginevra for brief moments: for instance, when picking up the *billet-doux* intended for her (*Villette* 177), and when dressed in a pink gown for an evening's entertainment with Dr John (284). *Rebecca* takes such self-displacement further. "I" "becomes" Rebecca's alter-ego firstly by copying her dress, the Caroline de Winter costume. We note, however, that "I" draws the line at purchasing sets of Rebecca-like lingerie, offering as an excuse her characteristic middle-class horror at needless extravagance (*Rebecca* 161). Such intimate apparel may in fact bring her *too* close to Rebecca's aggressive eroticism, which sexually-repressed "I" is unable to emulate. The ball-costume is for one night only and belongs to the realm of fancy-dress and make-believe, thus incorporating a useful distance between fantasy and reality.

The second way "I" becomes Rebecca is by entering into a Danvers-like state of imaginary oneness with her. Filled with guilt-ridden fascination over Rebecca's adultery with Favell, "I" goes through the motions of a fantasy scenario featuring herself as Rebecca. Eventually she realises that "I had so identified myself with Rebecca that my own dull self did not exist, had never come to Manderley" (236). Maxim, watching, is appalled at the performance:

"What the devil are you thinking about? . . . Do you know you were going through the most extraordinary antics instead of eating your fish? . . . I don't want you to look like you did just now. You had a twist to your mouth and a flash of knowledge in your eyes. Not the right sort of knowledge." (236-8)

Afraid of history repeating itself, Maxim seeks to curb his second wife's imaginative curiosity about his first, in a similar way to Rochester's dismissal of Jane Eyre's sighting of Bertha Mason (Nollen 44).

Immediately after her premonitory vision of a ruined Manderley "I" becomes Rebecca one more time, through the unconscious/neurotic medium of a dream. She imagines herself writing with Rebecca's distinctive hand and seeing Rebecca's face displace her own in the looking-glass (*Rebecca* 445). The Rebecca/"I" has long snake-like hair, which Maxim twists into a noose and places around his neck. This can be read as "I"'s wish-fulfilment of a repressed desire to kill Maxim, her father-like punisher. Far from expressing "no longing to have or be what she is not" (Massé 166), "I" clearly unconsciously desires to achieve Rebecca-like control and punishment of her oppressor, Maxim.

In her prototype notes for *Rebecca*, du Maurier intended the character of Maxim (originally called Henry) to be maimed and crippled in a car crash at the novel's close (*The Rebecca Notebook* 39-40). Like Brontë's hand-less and eye-less Rochester, Maxim would then presumably be less authoritarian and more manageable, able to enter into a relationship of greater equality with "I". (However we note that this plot device, even though it empowers Jane Eyre with equality, at the same

time places her in the role of caregiver, with its accompanying restrictions. Such an ambiguous, less than satisfying, relationship is reflected in that of "I" and Henry in the cancelled epilogue to *Rebecca*.) That du Maurier chose to alter this originally-proposed ending speaks eloquently for her verisimilitude to real-life experience of marriage.

Unlike Rebecca, wealthy playgirl of the Roaring Twenties, quietly-raised "I" has no second, wild, life offering free rein to a repressed self. She also lacks the wit and the gall to attempt a Rebecca-like subversion of the old order from within. Ill at ease in every room of Manderley, "I" snatches only moments of liberty outdoors, for instance when Maxim travels to London and she is free to dress in old clothes and ramble in the woods. Manderley's suffocating atmosphere extends even to Maxim, who is also more liberated when outdoors or on holiday. In Monte Carlo he values "I"'s own qualities, disregarding her schoolgirl clothes and manner, but back at Manderley this relaxed mood lasts only for the first evening, when the de Winters rebel against the standards of aristocratic convention by neglecting to dress for dinner and by spreading out their snapshots on the table. After this, cultural expectations of upper-class behaviour take over. Maxim begins to regret not outfitting "I" with more elegant attire before bringing her to Manderley (*Rebecca* 77); her expressed belief that Maxim does not notice what she wears surprises his sister. "'Oh, well, he must have changed then,'" Beatrice comments, unconvinced (119).

Maxim takes up his accustomed routine of estate life, going away to his office each morning and abandoning "I" to the mercies of impersonal servants and intimidating callers. While Maxim's work occupies him and frees him from Manderley's four walls, "I" has no fulfilling occupation, apart from her "nice little talent" for sketching--a tame hobby compared to Rebecca's thrill-seeking pastimes of riding and sailing (149). Even the returning of social calls, which ostensibly takes "I" to the outside world, merely furthers "I"'s sense of inadequacy by resulting in return invitations and a revival of the Manderley Ball, which

imprison "I" even more fully.

It is interesting to note how "I"'s sense of entrapment by Manderley is turned, in an abrupt *volte-face*, into a pseudo-empowerment when she realises Maxim never loved Rebecca. "I" then steps into the role of confident wife, exercising authority over the servants, especially her enemy Danvers ("I am Mrs de Winter now, you know. And if I choose to send a message by Robert I shall do so"--342). However this very act of assuming the Mrs de Winter title and persona creates further irony. "I" hopes that as Mrs de Winter "she will *be* somebody. . .she will exist because she will be reflected back from the eyes of others" (Massé 156). However "I"'s assumption of authority is not a long-awaited vindication of selfhood, but a side-stepping into society's prescribed female role. By fully taking Rebecca's public place at last, as domestically-oriented wife, "I" becomes firmly embedded in the suffocating pattern of Manderley life. It is clear that if "I" is ever to achieve a full and healthy self-identity, Manderley and what it stands for must go.

While Jane Eyre's wish-fulfilment dream takes place long before the burning of Thornfield, the initial corresponding dream experience of *Rebecca's* heroine occurs about the time Manderley is set ablaze: "[t]he car went on. I shut my eyes. . .The owls hooted. The moon was shining in the windows of Manderley. There were nettles in the garden, ten foot, twenty foot high" (444).

Jane Eyre's dream-vision is of a completely destroyed Thornfield, as follows:

I dreamt. . .that Thornfield Hall was a dreary ruin, the retreat of bats and owls. I thought that of all the stately front nothing remained but a shell-like wall, very high and very fragile-looking. I wandered, on a moonlight night, through the grass-grown enclosure within: here I stumbled over a marble hearth, and there over a fallen fragment of cornice. (*Jane Eyre* 310)

While strikingly similar images appear in the extended dream-sequence

monologue which opens *Rebecca*, in this case "I"'s dream is re-experienced, like a haunting, years after the novel's action closes, and--significantly--the destruction of Manderley is not total:

Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. . . .No smoke came from the chimney, and the little lattice windows gaped forlorn. . . .The drive was a ribbon now, a thread of its former self, with gravel surface gone, and choked with grass and moss. . . .There was Manderley, our Manderley, secretive and silent as it had always been, the grey stone shining in the moonlight of my dream, the mullioned windows reflecting the green lawns and the terrace. (*Rebecca* 5-6)

The scene's Gothic beauty masks its lingering sinister psychological implications. Fire may have temporarily cleansed Manderley, but the social structures which imprison women remain; even as an empty shell Manderley retains "the perfect symmetry" of its walls and situation (6).

Through "I"'s dream experience, du Maurier lays heavy emphasis on nature encroaching upon the house once the outward trappings of civilisation are removed from it:

I saw that the garden had obeyed the jungle law, even as the woods had done. The rhododendrons stood fifty feet high, twisted and entwined with bracken, and they had entered into alien marriage with a host of nameless shrubs, poor, bastard things that clung about their roots as though conscious of their spurious origin. A lilac had mated with a copper beech, and to bind them yet more closely to one another the malevolent ivy. . . .had thrown her tendrils about the pair and made them prisoners. . . .There was another plant too, some half-breed from the woods, whose seed had been scattered long ago. . . .and now, marching in unison with the ivy, thrust its ugly form like a giant rhubarb towards the soft grass where the daffodils had blown.

Nettles were everywhere, the van-guard of the army. They choked the terrace, they sprawled about the paths, they leant, vulgar and lanky, against the very windows of the house. (6-7)

I have quoted this passage at some length as I believe it calls for careful analysis. To begin, we should note that as Maxim's bride, "I"'s first

impression of Manderley is not of the house proper but of its long driveway, twisting in a foreboding serpent-like manner and overgrown with scarlet rhododendrons. These shrubs, described with images containing vivid violent and erotic connotations, represent a condensation of attractive, feared Rebecca in "I"'s imagination. Rebecca is sensual and tall; the rhododendrons are

blood-red, reaching far above our heads. . .slaughterous red, luscious and fantastic. . . .monsters, rearing to the sky, massed like a battalion, too beautiful I thought, too powerful. (79-80)

Now, in "I"'s recurrent dream, Manderley itself may be deserted, but the Rebecca-rhododendrons appear more possessive than ever, standing "fifty feet high, twisted and entwined", indicating "an 'over-natural' and therefore deviant female sexuality" (Light 12). "I" and Maxim may have escaped from Manderley and its stifling social realm, but the image of Rebecca--as the exuberant second self "I" wishes she could become--continues to haunt her.

These rhododendrons have "entered into alien marriage with a host of nameless shrubs", symbolic of Rebecca's many nameless lovers, while the rhubarb-like "half-breed from the woods" reminds the reader of her "black-sheep" cousin/lover Favell. As chosen mate for Rebecca (presumably a woman of "breeding"), Favell's vulgarity alludes to loss of class in dynastic marriages, suggesting authorial ambivalence about the value of patrimony. That strangling "malevolent ivy" can be read as a metaphor for murderous Danvers, with whom even now Favell still marches in unison (this image of marching feet also suggests a military or communistic take-over of commandeered territory; we note that Rebecca's "slaughterous" rhododendrons were "massed like a battalion"). Neither Favell nor Danvers are brought to justice at the novel's close; presumably they retain the potential to create misery at some future date should the de Winters return to Cornwall and attempt to reverse their displacement from patrimony.

In an interesting sociological parallel, *The Guardian Women's* Page of 1937 reflects contemporary unease amongst the landed classes in the inter-war years as to adverse effects on their lifestyle arising from shifts in demography of country areas, and personal and social advantages of factory or office work over domestic service. This, combined with the more universal unease concerning traditional resentment of the working classes, resulted in a shortage of domestic staff for large houses. Socialist Margaret Cole writes that "[e]mployers are beginning to be really worried" by "[t]he problem of domestic service" (Stott 57-8); she visualises the eventual demise of live-in domestic help altogether in favour of a "rationalisation" of labour by outside organisations such as laundry and window-cleaning services. These contemporary issues are reflected in *Rebecca* in the opposed characters of Danvers and Clarice. Clarice, the young girl brought in to maid "I", is the only member of the household with whom "I" feels at ease: "thank heaven, [she] had never been in service before and had no alarming standards" (*Rebecca* 161). Clarice's family on the estate even see "I" as "'one of ourselves'", a view "I" regards as a compliment but which Maxim takes as "'a direct insult'" (170).

Conversely, class-conscious Maxim fears to lose snobbish Danvers, as although cooks are changed "'periodically'", Manderley is still "'the only place left in England where one can get decent cooking'" because "'Mrs Danvers has all the recipes, she tells them what to do'" (115-6). Despite the unhealthy influence and knowledge Danvers has over him, Maxim is compelled to keep her on, because she maintains the standards to which he is accustomed and it is unlikely she could be replaced:

"If she really makes herself a nuisance we'll get rid of her. But she's efficient, you know. . . I dare say she's a bit of a bully to the staff. She doesn't dare bully me though. I'd have given her the sack long ago if she had tried." (92)

What Maxim could have done "long ago" he can clearly do no longer in

the changing pre-World War II climate; by the text's close Danvers has indeed dared to bully and challenge him. As Favell and Danvers both function as Rebecca's alter-ego, in their continued existence the underclass madwoman in the mansion lives on.

Through the use of distinctively feminine literary devices such as dream, fantasy, and symbolism, du Maurier makes her point in a subtle but profound manner. Manderley (the first three letters of the name are significant) and the patriarchal society are not wholly destroyed, and consequently neither is the "mad" Rebecca-figure who struggles for liberty within the repressed female psyche. "I" outwardly rejoices in Rebecca's murder (which presumably indicates Maxim's true love for her own, more modest, qualities) and tells herself that after coming through this ordeal by fire their marital problems will be no more: "[t]he house was a sepulchre, our fear and suffering lay buried in the ruins. There would be no resurrection" (8). However her confident claim, "[w]e have paid for freedom" (9), has a hollow ring. The de Winters' exile in a succession of dull European hotel rooms is hardly "freedom", particularly for "I". She must be as watchful and attentive to Maxim's moods as she was at Manderley, continually pandering to his every whim in order to avoid unpleasant memories. This scenario repeats the cycle of husband-abuse suggested by the novel's "marital Gothic" genre (where the husband-character, repeating the role of the heroine's oppressive father, becomes an "avatar of horror who strips voice, movement, property and identity itself from [her]"--Massé 12). Thus the resentment which fuelled Rebecca's flagrant excesses continues to smoulder in her successor.

Part of "I"'s ambivalence towards Manderley springs, as I mentioned earlier, from deep-seated feelings of guilt at a marriage which crosses social boundaries. It may be she, who as interloper, is symbolised in that opening dream sequence as the intruder-nettles which "leant, vulgar and lanky, against the very windows of the house". We are given a sketchy physical description of "I", but much is made of her "lanky" hair (*Rebecca* 45) and unsophisticated--common or vulgar--manner of

dressing and applying cosmetics. The nettles now "lay with crumpled heads and listless stems" after being broken by the aggressive rhubarb plant. "I" has seen what happens to wives who assert their identity against the patriarchy (Maxim killed Rebecca in the beach cottage, the garden of which is now overgrown and "choked with nettles"--181), and thus "I"'s rebellious desires are for the most part crushed and submerged. Note, however, that she relishes reading articles about English country estates and livestock, which Maxim cannot stand because they remind him forcibly of the world he has lost. These become "I"'s "secret indulgence. . .that will not be denied" (11), a germ of the spirit that motivated Rebecca's escapades. We note that "I" unconsciously identified with Rebecca early in her marriage by expressing a preference for the sea, that "restless and disturbing" element (Light 11) associated with Rebecca, which dominates the west wing suite but is hidden from "I"'s east wing bedroom. In "I", as Rebecca's successor, the female existence of subterfuge and snatched fulfilment burns on.

There is also a hint of authorial ambivalence in the images which choke the aftermath of Manderley. Du Maurier's imagery of nature-gone-wild underscores a fear that once patrimony is removed, chaos may result. Though oppressive, the patriarchal way represented order and thus a species of security for the men and women trapped within its structures. We note that "I" anticipated and enjoyed as much as feared the extravagant rituals of Manderley life (high tea with its array of buttered crumpets and silver teapots; formal meals; the costume ball), and in her rootless European hotel existence pines for the ordered "British" routine which has gone.

Du Maurier's nightmare depiction of Manderley's garden includes prevalent socio-economic and military metaphors which reinforce the notion that personal imprisonment may continue even in the midst of partial dismantling of social and economic constraints. That "malevolent ivy" turns the (presumably economically) mis-"mated" lilac and beech into "prisoners", while those "bastard" shrubs of "spurious

origin. . . marching in unison with the ivy" could suggest the soldiery of some foreign military dictatorship, perhaps the mingled European Communism/Fascism of the 1930s feared by British upper and middle classes.

Perhaps significant in this context is a play titled *An Englishman's Home*, written by du Maurier's uncle Guy and staged by her father Gerald in 1909, which had a profound effect upon the British public and upon du Maurier herself. She writes, in 1934, that its story (a prophecy of World War I, in which a British civilian dies defending his home and womenfolk from an invading enemy force)

is ageless, the lessons it tried to teach are still unlearnt; and nationally, for all the succeeding war in Europe, the situation is still the same. There are Mr Browns all over England like Guy's Mr Brown. . . suddenly, without warning, even as it might happen today and in our time, the country is invaded. Mr Brown is awakened from his apathy too late, too ruinously late; his home crashes about his ears, and he and his family are killed. (*Gerald* 120)

Torn between the conflicting impulses of desiring personal freedom from patriarchal structures and fearing the destruction of the same, in *Rebecca* du Maurier presents an example of a people's authority rising from the ashes of social collapse as a form of mis-government, an ideal promising freedom but in reality a thing to be loathed and feared. Perhaps, the author suggests, the time is not yet right for patrimony to disappear altogether and females and the lower classes to take over; the result may be an anarchic nightmare world of mutant growth, the weeds and wild nettles of unsuitable government.

It is interesting to note here the personal ambivalence about a woman's place in society which du Maurier expressed in middle age:

I think one has to choose, you know. Either to create after one's own fashion, or be a woman and breed. The two don't go together and never will. Maybe there should be a rule against women who work marrying. They can't have it both ways. (letter to Ellen Doubleday, 22 February 1950, quoted in Forster 251)

Du Maurier felt "that in being so career-minded she had somehow gone *against* nature and reaped the consequences" (Forster 251). The mutant, unattractive "nature" of *Rebecca's* dream-sequence includes an image of onanistic wastefulness in that "half-breed from the woods, whose seed had been scattered", and du Maurier's view of herself as a sexual "half-breed" has been noted. *Rebecca* thus affords a glimpse into the younger du Maurier's own unconscious fears about female sexuality and power.

The novel does hint at an evolutionary-like process which will one day effect social change of its own accord. For instance, a holiday-maker from Kerrith represents to "I" the progressive desires of those outside Maxim's narrow sphere:

"My husband says all these big estates will be chopped up in time and bungalows built. . . I wouldn't mind a nice little bungalow up here facing the sea." (*Rebecca* 303)

This raises the disturbing (for Maxim) possibility that in time "Manderley would become the possession of the day-tripper, that despised breed, a product of the new democratic state" (Smith 305). With her middle-class sensibilities, "I" identifies with the attitude of the day-tripper and her family. Far from appearing shocked at the suggestion of vulgar bungalows encroaching on once-private coves, her response ("I wished I could lose my own identity and join them") reveals a guilty conscience at marrying into an economic system which creates class resentment. However instead of joining the holidayers, she realises that she "must go back alone through the woods to Manderley and wait for Maxim. And I did not know what we should say to one another. . ." (*Rebecca* 303-4). "I"'s unequal marriage has isolated her, making her a virtual outsider to both upper and lower classes.

The novel's ending is clearly less than idyllic. Far from the suggestion that "I" eventually manages to infantilise Maxim, gaining "just enough knowledge to reverse and replicate the very structures of sex and class that have oppressed her" (Massé 149), the novel's end returns "I" to the status-less companion existence she holds at its opening, with moody

Maxim taking the place of querulous Van Hopper. (Massé in fact suggests that whereas the female commoner Van Hopper represents unjust authority, "Maxim promises the restoration of rightful authority" of masculinity, class and wealth--Massé 151. Maxim's beating and ousting of Van Hopper, however, while seeming to promise protection to "I", merely promotes her, in turn, to a position within the beating cycle.) *Rebecca's* heroine is characterised by a predilection for day-dream and wishful thinking (she imagines herself the mother of a brood of children, for instance, and adored by the tenants on the estate, neither of which occurs), so the reader is unlikely to take seriously her final attempts at self-comfort, such as "[t]he devil does not ride us any more" (*Rebecca* 9). As has been seen, in *Rebecca* the devil-figure operates as an extension of "I"'s repressed id, which is not wholly conquered. A more believable, because sinister, note appears in her monologue shortly afterwards: "Mrs Danvers. I wonder what she is doing now. She and Favell" (13). The devil of oppression is temporarily out of sight, but not wholly out of mind.

If it is true, as Gilbert and Gubar indicate, that *Jane Eyre* is in theme and genre *Rebecca's* aunt (Gilbert and Gubar 337), then we see the niece inheriting the aunt's familial cycle of abuse--a theme explored in several of du Maurier's novels, particularly *The Scapegoat* and *Jamaica Inn*. In the closures of her novels, Brontë hints that marriage is not the full answer to selfhood for women, as in the society of the 1840s a truly equal marriage could rarely, if ever, be achieved (369-70). In *Rebecca*, du Maurier shows clearly that the same dilemma exists for women in the 1920s and '30s.

Despite the fact that he murdered his first wife, Maxim de Winter is no monster. (If he were, the novel's final chapters would lack suspense; instead, the ideal reader desperately hopes that "I"'s Byronic hero will get off scot-free.) Maxim is egotistical, but no more so than Rochester, whom Jane loves and admires *because* he has "an original, a vigorous, an expanded mind" (*Jane Eyre* 281). Maxim merely seeks the

ordinary human goals of personal and marital contentment; unfortunately, the cultural expectations of his social and economic position have so shaped him that he extends conformity to these ideals--with a corresponding risk of madness and imprisonment (Nollen 46)--to any woman who would presume to share his life.

In this way *Rebecca* explores in detail the dilemma for female self-identity in civilised western society, the repressive traditions of which are exposed through the symbol of Manderley.

The Haunted House of Hungry Hill

Hungry Hill (1943) is a minor du Maurier novel, an historical (more properly factio-fictional) saga of the Anglo-Irish Brodrick family between 1820-1920. The story was inspired by the family history of Henry "Christopher" Puxley, with whom du Maurier stayed during World War II and with whom she had an affair. When the novel appeared, critics slammed it as "too long, too shapeless, and too ridiculous" (Forster 175) and it appears to have been largely ignored in the canon of du Maurier's work. Of significant interest, however, is *Hungry Hill's* recurrent image of Clonmere, the manor house or "castle" home of the Brodrick family at Doonhaven in Ireland.

Built as a sixteenth-century English-style castle, Clonmere represents British upper class colonial values of a less than beneficent kind. The novel opens with "Copper John" Brodrick planning to enhance his inherited manor by building

additions to the house, making it stronger still, with bigger windows, other towers, not for his own sake, but for Henry's, and for Henry's children, and in days to come this castle of Clonmere would be a landmark far and wide, and people travelling the road from Mundy to Doonhaven would stop below Hungry Hill and point westward across the water, saying, "There is Clonmere, the home of the Brodricks." And beside it would be the tall chimneys of the mines. (*Hungry Hill* 34)

Clear disapproval of such amassing of capitalist power is voiced by his son, Greyhound John: "[m]ines upon Hungry Hill, he thought, noise and machinery to drive away the wild birds and the rabbits and the hares, and a crowd of wretched devils working underground day after day. . . cursing the master" (16). Copper John enacts symbolic rape upon the land, which is, significantly, referred to in the feminine ("the hidden wealth of Hungry Hill would be revealed at last, her strength harnessed, her treasure given to the world, and her silence disturbed in the name of progress"--11). The name Hungry Hill itself suggests not only underclass resentment but also feminine resentment, hunger being a recurrent motif by which female authors (including the Brontës) have suggested male sexual and economic repression of women (Gilbert and Gubar 275, 373).

Significantly, then, it is a female, the young and imaginative Jane Brodrick, who sees most clearly the mine's destructive potential. She visualises a hell-like scenario of

a great stream of copper running down the side of Hungry Hill, the colour of blood, and a crowd of miners dabbling in it like little black devils, with her father seated upon a throne like God in the midst of them. (*Hungry Hill* 17)

Copper John is here presented as the archetypal authority figure, the pre-eminent God/Satan of Jane's unconscious. A lord of the manor with none of Maxim de Winter's subtleties in his characterisation, Copper John proclaims the mine will help Ireland, "so poor and so long neglected, [to] take her rightful place amongst the rich nations of the world" (11). The text demonstrates, however, how such wealth is achieved over the backs of the poor, and thereby built on a flimsy foundation of selfish greed; it is the interloping Brodricks who grow rich, not the dispossessed Donovans of Doonhaven.

The novel emphasises the "natural", land-based values of the Irish working class, as opposed to the "civilised" British upper class and their architectural import, Clonmere. Hungry Hill is the site of legends concerning retributive pixies and fairies, and the Brodricks' demise can be read as stemming from the curse Morty Donovan calls down on them,

as much as from realistic labour unrest and ongoing political tensions. The final and most dramatic "fulfilment" of Donovan's curse is the torching and sacking of Clonmere.

The manor, which functions as a metaphor for the moral and monetary welfare of generations of the ruling class, falls into disrepair after new heir Wild Johnnie Brodrick sinks into immorality in the company of his Donovan companions (representatives of the lower classes who desire Clonmere's fall). From childhood, Wild Johnnie rebelliously desires to undermine the patriarchal authority of his grandfather Copper John, whom he sees as an "ogre, one of the giants in fairy-stories who lived in a fortress" (134). Johnnie is powerless to change the old order, however, and Clonmere indeed becomes his physical fortress-prison, compounded by psychological shackling to his pseudo-escape tactics: alcoholism and dissolute living. Johnnie's fall is rationalised as indicative of his mother's wild (common or uncivilised) blood, as the family physician Armstrong observes:

"...the boy is not enough of a Brodrick, and rather too much of a Flower. When I think of what goes on at Castle Andriff, I find myself shaking my head over the future of Clonmere." (122)

Fanny-Rosa Flower's name is part of the novel's symbolic patterning: flowers (which can be delicate or wild) suggest the feminine; they cannot be successfully grafted onto an architectural fusion of phallic "rod" and unyielding "brick", indicated by the patrimonial name "Brodrick". Wild Johnnie (his nickname is pertinent) is therefore a species of wildflower or mutant natural growth, which will die of its own accord and be weeded out to make way for successive generations of restorative "order".

Indeed, Johnnie's brother Henry (regarded by all as a true Brodrick, a reincarnation of Copper John) swiftly recreates order within Clonmere by assuming the mantle of domineering Victorian patriarch, his harsh control tempered only by his wife Katherine's Christian influence. Henry's overly-emphatic protestations of love for Katherine mask his

underlying fear of losing control over both her and Clonmere; although Katherine is outwardly docile, Henry "confines" her to her culturally-ordained place through repeated childbearing. When a final pregnancy (which Armstrong warns him against) threatens Katherine's life, Henry attempts to assuage his murderous guilt by designing an extravagant addition to Clonmere, a facade "'like a real fairy-tale castle'" with "'little turrets and towers'" (226-7) and a special boudoir for his invalid wife.

These renovations are described with imagery which becomes increasingly sinister as Katherine's pregnancy progresses. In an initial portent of gloom, Clonmere's rooms are darkened because "the new block jutted forward, taking all the sun that came" (227). Then, paralleling their mother's threatened physical and psychological status, Henry's daughters court danger by playing amongst the workers: Molly perches "at the top of a high ladder, in imminent danger of breaking her neck" (227), and Kitty, "covered in earth", crawls through the grave-like "depths of the new cellars" (228). Only young Hal escapes from the oppressive atmosphere of the mansion by running outdoors and painting pictures. Noteworthy here is the manner in which only the male child has the ability (or even the desire) to quit the dangerous patriarchal mansion. Molly and Kitty, having followed their mother's example and internalised the typical Victorian ideology of a woman's place, appear to gravitate naturally towards attic- or tomb-like prisons. Here they innocently recreate scenarios of female entrapment: Molly ascends to Bertha Mason's position of the monstrous madwoman in the attic, reckless of danger and propriety, while as the silent, buried nun, Kitty echoes the spectre of Brontë's *Villette*. Hal alone creates liberty for himself, both physically (in the garden) and psychologically (through Romantic art), thus demonstrating the essential male prerogative "to talk back to other men by generating alternative fictions of his own"--a prerogative denied to the Victorian female (Gilbert and Gubar 12).

During the tense final hours of Katherine's labour Henry inspects the building work:

The place seemed ghostly, grey, and the wide staircase leading to the gallery yawned like a gulf. . . .The room struck very cold, and air blew in, dank and chill. . . .The children had been playing there. One of them had left a skipping-rope trailing from the top of the stairs. . . .There were shadows everywhere, and the caps and overalls of the workmen, hanging just inside an open door, were like the dangling bodies of men. (*Hungry Hill* 231-2)

This Gothic imagery of ghosts and gloom, a perilous chasm, the dank chill of the tomb, a hangman's rope and suspended corpses (reminiscent of the forbidden room in Bluebeard's castle where the Count's murdered wives dangle from hooks) culminates in Katherine's death.

Of particular significance amongst Henry's alterations to Clonmere is the iron balcony attached to Katherine's boudoir, which he desperately exacts her promise to use:

"You are going to like it, aren't you?. . .The whole thing has been planned for you, you know that, don't you?. . . .When I want you I shall come and stand below, and throw stones up at the window." (229)

By restricting his wife to her chamber, Henry (a collector of Italian Renaissance art, in particular Madonnas with faces like Katherine's) enacts a drama of patriarchal control, with Katherine cast as a passive Juliet smiling from her balcony. Unlike Rebecca, Katherine is characterised as a dutiful wife, the epitome of the Victorian angel in the house, quietly resigned to pregnancy, suffering and death, and pathetically glad of the distracting house renovations because they will avert Henry's mind from her decline. The text, however, hints that Katherine's patient acceptance is as much a facade as Clonmere's extensions, an instance of the pious Victorian woman's customary repressed self-denial. Earlier, Katherine loves and rejects the culturally-unacceptable Wild Johnnie, and twelve years later his death still haunts her:

"I cried just now because I remembered Johnnie, and how lost and unhappy he was. I might have done so much more for him than I did." (225)

Henry's jealousy of Johnnie, the subversive element threatening the family, contributes to his obsessive need to control Katherine, and can be read as instrumental in his keeping her pregnant (in other words, fragile and manageable). Later he confesses his guilt at this: "'I killed her. . . . This last baby should never have been born. I knew it'" (234).

Katherine's repressed desire for Johnnie and his subverting of the established order is expressed subtly through her own taste in art: "moderns". Traditionalist Henry plans to display his Botticellis and Filippo Lippis on the staircase, but tells Katherine that "'if you fancy them, you shall have your moderns in your boudoir'" (229). Thus under the patriarchal regime Katherine is commanded to keep her nonconformist desires to herself, repressed and locked within the chamber of her mind.

When the adult Hal returns to abandoned Clonmere, he senses a ghostly presence in the half-finished wing:

In the little boudoir above the barred front door Hal struggled with the windows to the balcony. They were rusted and damp, and would not open. . . . "It's queer," said Hal, "but as a rule you hear of the haunting of old buildings, never new. And yet I feel this wing is full of ghosts." (274)

This phantom is not that of murdered Katherine, but of murderous Henry, "'the ghost of my father still alive, hiding here in the shadows'" (274). The spectre of patrimony and its institutions walks on.

In an ironic touch, of the two objects which survive after Clonmere is fired and looted by Irish nationalists in 1920 one is the iron balcony, which John-Henry, the new and now dispossessed heir, discovers, "twisted, but unbroken. . . . [clinging] precariously from the blackened walls like a fairy thing, the windows bare behind it, and the walls of the boudoir gone for ever" (326). Like *Manderley*, Clonmere is a shell--though we note that it too "from a little distance. . . appeared untouched. The chimneys stood, and all the windows. . . the foundations of every room remained" (326). Its metaphor of female entrapment also remains, as a now twentieth century emblem clinging--if precariously--to

the walls of a patriarchal hegemony.

The second object John-Henry finds amid the rubble of Clonmere is the portrait of Jane Brodrick, "untouched and quite unharmed". When this eighteenth-birthday portrait is painted, her sister declares it "'a most excellent likeness, [but] Willie Armstrong says it does not do her justice'" (79). Here again Doctor Armstrong (who, like Doctor Kenneth in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, is a type of moral voice reappearing periodically throughout the narrative) is right; the painting represents an attempt by the male-dominated Victorian portrait painting school to reduce the essence of a gifted woman to a "simpering" object in a virginal cream gown (79).

Jane's intellectual powers are not appreciated by her father and brothers; even Greyhound John is disconcerted when she displays an understanding of human relationships inappropriate to that expected of a Victorian lady. (Jane is not shocked by risqué Elizabethan poetry, for instance, and she suggests to John an expeditious manner of marrying Fanny-Rosa.) Thus John determines to keep Jane innocent and pure, and his desire and fear for her extend to jealousy of her suitor, Dick Fox: "there was a flickering jealousy in John's heart that his pet Jane. . . should look kindly upon any man but himself" (80). Fox's death pleases John, and Jane's death fulfils his desire completely; he rationalises it as "a conclusion perhaps more fitting than the many long years of spinsterhood there might have been" (116).

All that remains of Jane after the patriarchy has disposed of her threateningly assertive presence is the portrait, which symbolises a double female enclosure: this male representation of Jane (as being innocent and controllable) hangs on Clonmere's drawing-room wall, for succeeding generations of Brodrick heirs to own and to view. As a metaphor of object and possession it withstands the flames of revolution.

In *Hungry Hill* du Maurier uses the image of the burned mansion to imply a partial breaking down of the established patriarchal and aristocratic economic system. The last heir, John-Henry (based on

Christopher Puxley, whose own Irish ancestral home, Dunboy Castle, was ruined by fire in 1920--Forster 156), is a likeable humanist who approves the nationalistic movement and is philosophical about the destruction of his family seat. He even gives Clonmere's one remaining building, the stables, to Eugene Donovan, brother of the man who betrayed him. Yet even though the old ways *appear* to have disappeared, the mansion's symbols of female entrapment remain, and John-Henry's view of them is oddly ambivalent:

These were what he valued most, for no known reason, the iron balcony and the portrait of aunt Jane. With a strange impartiality the fire had spared them both. (*Hungry Hill* 326)

John-Henry *can* be read as a type of "new male", considerate of and sensitive to the needs and desires of women; he can equally readily be seen as a potential perpetuator of the crimes of his fathers and uncles, "valuing" those objects which repress female liberty. As in *Rebecca* (the action of which begins in the 1920s, just after Clonmere is destroyed) the haunted house of patriarchal repression still stands.

Burning Love: House-Fire in *The Loving Spirit*

The Loving Spirit, du Maurier's first novel, combines a fictional romantic saga with historical research based on letters and records of the Cornish Slade family. Metamorphosed into a saga of the boat-building Coombes of Plyn, the novel contains as its penultimate scene a striking image of a burning mansion. This is, I believe, a prototype scenario in which the author makes an early experiment with her most obsessively-reproduced symbol. As will be shown, the burning of Marine Terrace is a more ambiguous image than the burning of Manderley and Clonmere, and for that reason of equal if not greater interest.

To begin with, Marine Terrace differs architecturally from the razed mansion, being not a stately hall but a house (albeit a grand one for

its fishing-village locale). This difference points to a development in du Maurier's symbolism: in her later works it is the upper-crust of society--the aristocracy as a body--who represent repression, not only of females, but of all oppressed classes. In this first novel, however, a lone avuncular figure, whose self-created wealth has proved destructive to a cohesive family structure, is presented as the target of a culturally-acceptable feminine anger.

The Loving Spirit's final book concentrates on the character of Jennifer Coombe, who in 1925 leaves her mother's middle-class London boarding-house to return to her father's relatives at Plyn. To these relations, whom she has never met, nineteen-year-old Jennifer appears as a reincarnation of her great-grandmother, the strange and wild Janet Coombe. Most struck by the resemblance is Great-Uncle Philip, a bachelor who by various means (including ruining members of his own family) has amassed a fortune and risen into the upper-middle-class. What he sees--and fears--in Jennifer is the law-defying Romantic "loving" spirit she has inherited from Janet and Joseph Coombe (Jennifer's grandfather), a subversive element threatening the genteel order Philip has created for himself.

Like Rebecca, Jennifer is a rebellious modern woman of the Twenties, a personality which surprised even her creator. Du Maurier made the interesting comment, in a diary entry of 1930, that Jennifer was turning out "a hard-headed young woman, quite different from how I had intended her. This must surely mean I had no control over my characters" (*Growing Pains* 158). Jennifer shocks her Victorian mother and grandmother by going about London alone, taking a variety of jobs, and refusing to be a submissive homebody or a commodity on the marriage market. Awake to the necessity of feminine subterfuge in a male-run world, she nevertheless despises girls who act out male stereotypes of women: "'[t]hey're rather fools I think, at least they all were at school. Always giggling and whispering. I like people who either do a thing openly or keep quiet about it'" (*The Loving Spirit* 287).

Grandmamma, who provides comic relief by half-hearing and misunderstanding conversations, misinterprets Jennifer's comment about women taking jobs ("they're all doing it") in terms which reflect her own repressed sexual desires. "'Doing it? Doing what? I never heard of such a thing! What a wicked, immoral statement. Can't they wait until they are married, good gracious. . .'" (291). This comedy thinly veils a darker subtext. Jennifer is not sexually active, as Grandmamma fears, but her rebellion is nonetheless sexual because it challenges dominant male-instituted laws and traditions. She determines to ruin the uncle who through scurrilous business transactions has achieved a position of power:

Jennifer was filled with anger and loathing for this old man who had brought such ruin and misery to her family.

"I'd like to make him suffer now," she said. "I'd like to bring fear to him as he has done to others." (310)

Unlike the modest "I" of *Rebecca* who can only passively observe and desire, Jennifer's wishes are expressed in action. Having "'been brought up as a lady'" (293) and received a useless education in consequence, Jennifer takes it upon herself to uncover the forbidden knowledge about her origins. Before leaving London she rejects the "feminine" investments of a fur coat and volumes of Walter Scott that her mother and grandmother urge her to buy, and instead spends her money on typing and shorthand lessons, business skills which enable her to infiltrate Uncle Philip's office and Marine Terrace home.

While the avuncular "'awful old house in [a] dreary terrace'" (316) is not the family patriarchal mansion--the Coombes hitherto lived in the naturally- (and thus more femininely-) named Ivy House--it stands for similar values, because it represents Jennifer's financial and social powerlessness. Uncle Philip is by this time a weary, crumbling old man and his mansion ("a grey and gloomy house") reflects his physical and moral decay; Jennifer finds him in a "barely furnished room" with an ominously smoking fireplace (316). When Philip, fearing eternal

punishment for his sins against the family, offers to adopt Jennifer as an atonement, she refuses to become his daughter but follows up on the opportunity to become his companion and systematically ruin him. She begins by extravagantly refurbishing the house:

Jennifer knew that every penny she threw aside hurt this old man, and she continued, recklessly, laughing. . . . This was the subtle revenge of which she had spoken. . . (329)

Like Rebecca, she takes on the outward role of smiling Lady Bountiful and donates huge sums of money to charities: within eighteen months she has disposed of a quarter of Philip's fortune.

Yet while she enjoys subverting Philip's wealth and power, Jennifer experiences a concomitant submerged terror: "'[a] fear of being afraid. . . Sometimes I wake up in the night and feel there's nothing before me--but nothing--nothing--emptiness and mist. And I walk about laughing all day pretending I don't care and really just longing to be safe'" (333). As in the dream which opens *Rebecca*, it is possible to read Jennifer's half-waking neurotic state as an unconscious fear that the destruction of patrimony will result in a threatening, mist-obscured world.

Speaking with the voice of male authority, Jennifer's cousin and lover John Coombe paternally reassures her that such fears result from childhood neglect and that she will "grow out" of them. Jennifer's relationship with John suggests authorial ambivalence regarding the moral rightness of female rebellion. Philip is a villain and thus deserves to be ousted by whatever hand (male or female) is nearest, but in this early novel du Maurier seems unable to condone a complete subverting of male authority by her strongly feminist heroine. In what has been justifiably criticised as the novel's weak point (Kelly 32-33), when Jennifer is with John her independent resolve melts under a conventional need for romantic reassurance ("'It's nice knowing you, John. You're safe'"--*The Loving Spirit* 334). Moreover, John is not only Jennifer's emotional saviour, but her physical saviour from the fire, and (having single-handedly restored the family boat-building business) her financial saviour

as well.

Marine Terrace is set alight by Philip himself, who, maddened by the shades of approaching death and determined Jennifer will inherit nothing, sells his business and commits suicide in the house amid piles of burning banknotes. Like Mrs Danvers, in his self-created Hell he becomes "a weird triumphant figure" (339), but unlike her he cannot be seen entirely as the demonic agent of Jennifer's unconscious anger. While Jennifer does indeed desire the destruction of Marine Terrace and what it stands for, the fire is nevertheless a genuine threat to her. John, sensing a premonition of "'danger in that gloomy blasted house'" (341), insists Jennifer not return to Marine Terrace but go home with him instead. In true feminist spirit she rejects his attempts to control her. Authorial ambivalence is evident in du Maurier's depiction of this scene:

She had refused to go back with him when she wanted to more than anything in the world. Just for the sake of a senseless flickering spirit of independence, a cold sprite within her mind. . .who suggested surrender as weakness and loss of freedom. Knowing it to be false yet she had persisted in listening to this cold voice, and now she was all alone (341-2)

The author's unease at Jennifer's rebellion against the sexual domination implicit in love is plain, and her heroine is promptly punished with a fire symbolic of her own "senseless flickering spirit of independence" and potential murder within the flaming mansion. The blinding mist of Jennifer's unconscious becomes physical smoke cutting her off from the door, and driving her further and further back inside the patrimonial house until she achieves a violent, almost climactic, oneness with it:

She clung to the banisters, sick and giddy, dragging herself away from the fire below, knowing dimly that there was no escape, no means of safety. Part of the landing beneath her crashed, and she saw the floor sink into itself and crumble away.

There were no walls left to the study now; it had vanished, gaping, blackened, and charred--and her uncle was gone.

A cloud seemed to come upon Jennifer, seizing her

throat, blinding her eyes, and she was falling, falling, part of the roaring flames and the crumbling stones. (345)

By this fire, which appears to herald the end of male upper-class authority, Jennifer is paradoxically sucked back into the patrimonial order once and for all: hero John snatches her from the blazing staircase, and the novel ends with her enacting a traditional domestic romance of happy wife- and motherhood.

John's rescue *can* perhaps be argued as an instance of maternal, rather than patriarchal, succour for Jennifer, because it is partly prompted by Janet Coombe's extrasensory Romantic spirit (imparted through her ship's figurehead). However under closer examination this is not a wholly satisfactory reading. If Jennifer has inherited Janet's rebellious active nature, John appears to have inherited the spiritual, premonition-seeing side of Janet's character. Consequently John supplies this more "feminine" quality which Jennifer lacks (or perhaps has lost by going against nature and challenging male authority). Obviously John is not himself feminine or emasculated; he controls Jennifer by returning to her what culture prescribes. The fire, a traditional symbol of passion (note the emphasised *coldness* of Jennifer's independence), represents Jennifer's forced acknowledgement of her desire for John and, by extension, his domination.

The "romantic" happy-marriage ending pleased critics and readers when the novel was released, not least Grenadier Guards Officer Tommy "Boy" Browning, who determined to meet the author and who consequently married her. However beneath this conventionally pleasant ending lies a stratum of unease. As if foreshadowing her own less-than-perfect marriage (itself ironically brought about through this novel) du Maurier suggests that when women are compelled to respond to passion in a culturally-acceptable manner (marriage) they are sucked into a lifetime of control. At the same time she suggests that female efforts to undermine the established male order are too daring--even unnatural--and will be punished with death.

Janet Coombe's marriage to her cousin Thomas Coombe in Book One of the novel likewise results in conflicting emotions. While it fulfils Janet's need for love, it simultaneously shackles her desire to sail the seas in masculine freedom. This freedom is allowed expression only through the production of a sailor son, Joseph, onto whom Janet projects her untamed spirit. After Joseph is born Janet finds the strength to endure domestic bondage, declaring that "nothing in the whole world mattered but this, that he for whom she had been waiting had come at last" (51). Jennifer is Janet's true daughter when, a century later, she indulges in similar self-justification of her socially-prescribed role:

"...people can say whatever they damn well please about work, ambition, art, and beauty--all the funny little things that go to make up life--but nothing, nothing matters in the whole wide world but you and I loving one another, and Bill kicking his legs in the sun in the garden below." (350)

In *The Loving Spirit* Daphne du Maurier argues that while women ostensibly have greater social freedom in the 1920s than in the 1830s, no corresponding change has revolutionised the unequal power balance in marriage. The novel's ending thus remains open to interpretation; all that is certain is that the image of its blazing house reflects du Maurier's own conflicting responses to female liberty.

The Gothic Revisited: Images of Enclosure and Escape in *The King's General*

The burning of an edifice representing patriarchal ideology is continued in du Maurier's 1946 ficto-historical novel *The King's General*, the action of which centres on the occupants of Menabilly during the British Civil War. In this novel, as in *Rebecca*, du Maurier draws on a Brontë-like Gothic symbolism to reveal the tormented psyche of her heroine.

For obvious reasons, Menabilly itself is not razed (the house stands as an historical fact, and du Maurier wrote *The King's General*

within its walls). Instead, the image of the stately home is here displaced onto its summer-house, a building of symbolically masculine (phallic) shape, reminiscent of a traditional medieval fortress "fashioned like a tower with long leaded windows, commanding a fine view of the sea and the Gribben Head" (*The King's General* 68). After Honor Harris has helped her lover Richard Grenville and his son Dick escape from Menabilly through a secret underground passageway emerging inside this summer-house, she watches fire break out in their wake:

I saw a little spurt of flame rise above the trees in the thistle park. The wind was westerly, blowing the smoke away. . . .

Now, I said to myself, it will burn steadily till morning, and when daylight comes they will say poachers have lit a bonfire in the night that spread, unwittingly, catching the summer-house alight, and someone from the estate must go, cap in hand, with apologies for carelessness, to Jonathan Rashleigh in his house at Fowey. (358)

More than an outdoor pleasure retreat, Menabilly's summer-house has strong symbolic value. It functions in the novel as an edifice associated with patriarchal wealth and power, the "sanctum" where manorial master Jonathan Rashleigh stores his legal and financial documents and from whence he can spot enemies approaching by sea or road. When Honor trespasses inside it, using a stolen key, her anxiety is betrayed by furtive body language similar to that of "I" in *Rebecca's* fly-leaf-burning scene:

The volume marked *Wills* was nearest to me and surprisingly tempting to my hand. I looked over my shoulder. . . I reached out my hand and took the volume. . . It really is most iniquitous, I told myself, that I should be prying thus into matters that concern me not at all, but I read on. . . I caught a glimpse of [a] shadow passing the window, and with a hurried guilty movement I shut the volume and put it back upon the shelf. (84-85)

Among self-righteous Jonathan's papers Honor discovers a court case "of a highly scandalous nature" involving his father, of which she is

disappointed to learn Rashleigh Senior was acquitted. Here patriarchal wealth is shown to manipulate and circumvent the justice system, a theme which the novel examines in greater detail in the career of its Byronic anti-hero Richard Grenville. In the summer-house Honor also uncovers legal proof of the existence of legendary lunatic Uncle John and finds the trapdoor leading to Menabilly's underground passage.

Like a typical Gothic novel heroine, Honor is fascinated by the passage and the airless closet adjoining it. Built into the buttress against the room next her bedchamber, this cell in times past housed pirate treasure and maniacal Uncle John (its claustrophobic proportions rendering him manageable in his rages). Honor imagines the mysterious crimson-cloaked figure she glimpses at midnight to be Uncle John's ghost; it is in fact Jonathan Rashleigh, now using the room as a storehouse for Royalist silver awaiting minting. Thus, as in Jane Austen's Gothic parody *Northanger Abbey*, the heroine's morbid curiosity is deflated by rational explanation. However to Honor's mind her brother-in-law's new use of the chamber is equally repellent as the old:

the picture that his words conjured turned me sick. I saw the wretched, shivering maniac choking for air in the dark room beneath the buttress, with the four walls closing in upon him. And now this same room stacked with silver plate like a treasure house in a fairy tale.

Jonathan must have seen my change of face, for he looked kindly at me and rose from his chair.

"I know," he said, "it is not a pretty story." (113)

Jonathan may not grasp the connection, but both economic control and confinement of family members who exhibit undesirable traits are patriarchal prerogatives, open to abuse and misuse. Moreover, fairy tale treasure houses are customary domains of the giant, the wicked king or the earth-dwelling gnome, archetypal male oppressor figures (this, significantly, is the way Johnnie and Jane imagine Copper John Brodrick in *Hungry Hill*). Honor, who in her doubly-imprisoned condition as a paralysed and disenfranchised female can be read as an allegory of oppressed Everywoman, is awake to the inhumane domination implicit in

Menabilly's secret room. She identifies strongly with Uncle John, wondering whether his reported death from smallpox is a lie, and if he is still alive at Menabilly "in some horrid state of preservation, blind and dumb--living in animal fashion in a lair beneath the buttress" (107). The imprisoned lunatic does indeed live at Menabilly, not as a ghost, but "horribly preserved" in the rage and rebellion of the novel's two female protagonists, Honor and Gartred (whose character will be examined in due course).

Paralysis prevents Honor from enacting even the passive conventional role of wife and mother (as do her sisters Cecilia and Bridget), and her pent-up energies struggle for expression. Forced to live as a dependant on the charity of one or other of her male relatives, Honor has no social or financial identity of her own. In her culture a disabled woman is viewed as a freak and an intelligent or politically-astute one as unnatural; Honor thus becomes a double anomaly, a thing to be silenced and hidden. Her entry into dinner-table conversation with her brothers is greeted firstly with surprise and secondly with exclusion. She understands military strategy perfectly, knowing better than Richard when his battle plans are misguided (she experiences premonitions of disaster before both the attempted bribery at Plymouth and the effort to secure an independent Cornwall, for example) but because she is a woman her advice is ignored. The most she can do is to quietly subvert the oppressive economic system of arranged marriages by playing matchmaker amongst her nieces and nephews, and to hide young Dick (and later Richard) in Menabilly's secret chamber.

When Honor and Gartred play at piquet while Parliamentary troops loot Menabilly in search of the treasure storeroom, Honor calmly allows the house to be ransacked around her ears. This passive defiance is not only a way of protecting Dick's hiding-place, it is also a stand against male violence and economic values. These dual aspects of patriarchal control are linked in the character of Lord Robartes, who mindlessly wrecks Menabilly out of spite for riches he cannot have.

Being compelled to conceal Richard's son leads to complex emotional turmoil for Honor. Dick is the child of her lover and the child she has never had, and thus she loves him and shelters him for his own preservation. Yet the reader senses something other than affection in her cold response to the imprisoned boy's anguish. Honor, weak from starvation, examines Dick's features, and sees that

[h]is eyes looked larger than ever in his pale face, and his black curls were lank and lustreless. It seemed to me that in his hunger he grew more like his mother, and sometimes, looking down on him, I would fancy she had stepped into his place and it was Mary Howard I fed and sheltered from the enemy, who licked the bone with little pointed teeth and tore at the strips of flesh with small carnivorous paws. (171)

In this half-conscious state Honor focuses on Dick's feminine and animal-like qualities until he becomes a virtual reproduction of his vixenish mother. A woman in Honor's position could readily gain pleasure, conscious or otherwise, from imprisoning the living image of a woman she envies (and who is, according to Dick, "[m]ore beautiful than you"--123). When Honor is finally taken into the "black hole" herself she is smitten with guilt at putting the boy through this torture: "[w]as it because of this that his eyes accused me now? God forgive me, but I thought to save his life" (353).

Imprisoning Dick is also a way of punishing Richard, the domineering male who treats Honor less as a partner than a chattel, a mistress who cannot be unfaithful by virtue of her immobility. Honor is physically attracted to Richard but morally repulsed by his cruelty (demonstrated, for example, in his merciless execution of rebel soldiers). When Richard's adored illegitimate son Joe is killed, Honor points out that this may be cosmic retribution for his crimes ("[i]t was the irony of the devil, or Almighty God"--206). Richard is unrepentant, and therefore Honor may unconsciously see in Dick her own opportunity for justice. The boy's very dissimilarity to his macho father and half-brother--Richard terms his artistic son "womanish" (294)--makes the displacement even

more convincing: sensitive Dick is the only male over whom Honor has any form of power.

By extension, Dick's death in the unopenable cell can also be read on several levels. Suicide is a straightforward option: consumed with guilt at betraying a father he could not please and whom he consequently hates, in a final pathetic effort to win recognition from Richard Dick punishes himself by choosing the death he fears most--suffocation.

Richard's actions, however, point to murder. The passage where Dick confesses his betrayal is mysteriously veiled, as after Richard disowns Dick ("there will be no other Richard in that book. . .the King's general died without a son") Honor and Gartred leave the room. Thus "neither she nor I nor any man or woman, alive or dead, will ever know what was said" by Richard in response to Dick's question: "'What must I do? . . .Will you do it for me, or must I kill myself?'" (334). The possibility is presented that Richard murders his son physically, as he has slowly murdered him emotionally over the past eighteen years. When Richard burns the summer-house he is not merely covering his own and Dick's tracks, but knowingly cutting off the escape route and imprisoning his son in a living grave. This is foreshadowed in the episode where Richard burns his "wanted" poster:

Richard placed it to the flame, and the paper caught and burnt, wisping to nothing in his hands, then fell and scattered.

"You see?" said Richard to his son. "Life is like that. A flicker and a spark, and then it's over. No trace remains."

It seemed to me that Dick looked at his father as a dumb dog gazes at his master. Tell me, said his eyes, what you are asking me to do? (354)

We note from this that if Richard does commit murder, dog-like Dick is a willing victim.

A third possibility exists, which is that Dick's murder, like his imprisoning, fulfils Honor's repressed desire to hurt Richard (and by extension men in general). It is also, in a sense, for Dick's good; after

all, if Dick is dead he cannot become another perpetrator of the oppressive system. We note that Honor gives Dick the idea of burying himself alive when she urges him to hide once more in the disused chamber. Dick fears that the exit-rope will have frayed, and Honor answers that this does not matter since he will not be re-entering Menabilly:

Dick went on staring at me, and there came into his eyes a strange new look I had not seen before. Why did he stare at me thus, or was it not me he stared at but some other, some ghost of a dead past that tapped him on the shoulder?
 "Yes," he said slowly, "if it must be done, this is the moment." (338)

Although it is Jonathan Rashleigh who originally suggests burning the summer-house, Honor conveys the idea to Richard. Her own attempt, with Matty, to light a fire alerting the fugitives in the chamber is a poor, smoky affair; powerful Richard must act by proxy to do a proper job: "I'll do your destruction for you," he said. "Watch from your chamber in the eastern wing, and you will see the Rashleigh summer-house make its last bow to Cornwall, and the Grenvilles also" (357). When questioned the following morning, Honor smoothly shifts blame for the charred summer-house onto rebel leader Colonel Bennett. Only later is she tormented by nightmares of personal guilt:

I . . . wake in the night to the sound of a boy's voice calling my name in terror, to a boy's hands beating against the walls, and there in the pitch-black night before me, vivid, terrible, and accusing, is the ghost of Richard's son. (8)

Honor may not physically kill Dick, but a murder-wish against the male-dominated system is present, if repressed, in her psyche. Thus the atmosphere of Gothic horror which is built up as Dick and Richard prepare to leave Menabilly has a valid psychological function. After Matty leaves a letter inside the summer-house trapdoor she tells Honor that "[t]he place smelt of the tomb" (350); the rope on its rusty hinge strikes "a note of horror, like a summons from a grave" and Richard

emerges from the secret chamber with "the features of a corpse new-risen from his grave" (352). I suggest that in this episode it is not ghosts and ghouls which terrify Honor, but her own fears and desires. Honor, like Gartred, wishes to destroy the male system which has oppressed her.

Vicious Gartred, the Becky Sharp-like manipulator of men and their money, functions as an extension of Honor's desires much in the same way as Rebecca does for "I". However Kelly's suggestion that a similar contrast exists between a beautiful, aggressive and sexual woman and a plain, passive, chaste one (Kelly, 82) is misleading. Honor is as good-looking as Gartred--after Robin slashes Gartred's face, more so--and saucy and meddlesome; only as passive and chaste, in fact, as confinement to a wheelchair forces her to be. In fact, the reader senses that if Honor were not a cripple she would be a *femme fatale* every inch as successful as Gartred.

For instance, when staying in her brother Jo's house Honor takes pleasure in living openly as Richard's mistress, enjoying roast duck with him in her bedroom just as Gartred shares roast beef, burgundy and sexual favours with Lord Robartes in her bedchamber at Menabilly. Like the starved innocents at Menabilly (of which Honor was one), the morally upright Radford relatives sit downstairs in disapproving "gloomy silence" (201). Honor feels "a glow of wicked satisfaction" in defying her relations' moral sensibilities and besmirching the reputation of their house, behaviour which can hardly be seen as passive or chaste. Later, Honor plays upon her courtesan-like reputation to gain an audience with the young Prince of Wales:

We ate and drank, and all the while he talked he stared,
and I wondered if his boy's imagination was running riot
on the thought of his notorious and rebellious general
making love to me, a cripple. (274)

By watching her sister-in-law Gartred, Honor has learned from childhood that the only way for women in her society to gain power over men is through immoral acts of deceit and prostitution. Despite her immobility Honor needs her share of this limited power, and thus her maid Matty

must also function as her double, becoming Honor's "long ears" to glean gossip, and bestowing sexual favours on enemy officials in order to further Honor's plans.

There is a second sense in which Gartred acts as the agent of Honor's repressed desires. Gartred causes Honor's crippling by purposely not telling her "which way the chasm". This accident scene, which provides the major instance of Gartred's function in the novel, can also be read as an elaborate projection of Honor's own psyche. Her love for amoral scapegrace Richard Grenville challenges prescribed social boundaries (Honor's parents want her to marry wealthy wimp Edward Champernowne) and Richard, while exciting, is in any case too domineering and manipulative for Honor's psychological good. At their first meeting he leads the naive eighteen-year-old into drunkenness and moral disgrace, and by the end of the novel she has sunk to a degraded class of woman, a camp follower of Richard's regiment. Honor's chestnut mare is thus a significantly symbolic wedding gift from Richard, the horse being a traditional emblem of passion. This mare appropriately "[has] the mastery" over Honor, gallops out of control, and propels her headlong into the chasm which symbolises her destructive love for Richard (50).

After this, Honor's crippled state gives her a way out of marriage to Richard, an excuse to retain "the lovely freedom that there was between us" (208-9). Even this supposed freedom is tragically self-delusive, as bound by passion to Richard still, Honor finds little true liberty in an existence of waiting until the King's general visits or sends for her.

If we now return to those Gothic elements of the secret chamber, the tunnel and the burned summer-house, we can see that young Dick, imprisoned by Honor in the dark cell, can be read as a parallel of Honor imprisoned through self-destructive passion for Richard. The occasion of burning the summer-house marks the final parting for Honor and Richard; Dick's death and Honor's emotional freedom thus march hand in hand.

When Jonathan Rashleigh is imprisoned for debts against Parliament, Honor revisits the summer-house, now disused and with nature already encroaching upon it.

I saw a rat once creep from his corner and stare at me a moment with beady, unwinking eyes. A great black spider spun a web from a broken pane of glass in the east window, while ivy, spreading from the ground, thrust a tendril to the sill. A few years more, I thought, and nature would take toll of all. The stones of the summer-house would crumble, the nettles force themselves through the floor, and no one would remember the flagstone with the ring upon it, nor the flight of steps and the earthy, mouldering tunnel.

Well, it had served its purpose. Those days would not return. (290)

"Those days" do, of course, return, and with them the destruction of the symbolic summer-house. Jonathan's suggestion to burn it down also contains natural imagery: "'Timber burns fiercely in dry weather,' he said to me, 'and rubble makes a pile, and the nettles and the thistles grow apace in midsummer. There will be no need to clear those nettles in my lifetime, nor in John's either'" (348). This vision of nettles and ivy smothering the rubble of a patriarchal edifice is strikingly similar to the opening dream-sequence of *Rebecca*. Women are symbolically associated with ivy, depicted as sharing its subtle yet strongly invasive qualities. Again we glimpse the heroine's--and the author's--private fears in this image of nature (particularly female nature) run wild; a thing of chaos, not order, replacing the structure which has gone.

Gartred attempts to beat men at their own power-games of immorality and greed. Her failure is advertised by the scar which slashes her face, ruining her only weapon--her beauty--for ever. Honor's attempt to subvert the patriarchal order results in a neurotic guilt which fluctuates between sentiment and nightmare, and an existence of lonely suffering as she awaits death. Patrimony remains; the women who would presume to change the old order are rendered powerless.

The King's General, written after fourteen years of marriage to "a

general, but I trust, a more discreet one" (as Tommy Browning is described in the novel's dedication), offers an even more pessimistic view of the unequal power balance in marriage than do du Maurier's earlier novels. Judith Cook, despite her misreading of Honor's crippled condition as an asexual state and extrapolating from this the presumption that Browning had extramarital affairs while du Maurier did not (an assumption disproved by Forster), nevertheless offers a telling insight with the following statement: "[f]or whatever reason *The King's General* is the only one of Daphne's books that Tommy disliked" (Cook 184).

In *The King's General* the manor-house of Menabilly is drawn true-to-life, down to the skeleton in Cavalier's clothing discovered in its buttress chamber during alterations carried out in 1824. Du Maurier extensively researched the Civil War period, and based the novel's characters (with the possible exception of Dick and Joe Grenville) on real individuals. Yet from the realm of Gothic fantasy she selected those elements which contribute most strongly to the book's melodrama and striking imagery--Honor Harris's crippling, Dick Grenville's death, and the burned summer-house, symbolic repository of patriarchal legal and financial power. Du Maurier frankly stated that Honor was an extension of her own psyche, "her own persona in the past" (Cook 183); she, like Honor, felt haunted by the dead Cavalier in Menabilly's secret chamber.

Dogged Nobility *versus* the Venomous Vixen: How *My Cousin Rachel* Undermines Patrimony

One other du Maurier novel examines the challenging of established patriarchal structures represented in the image of a mansion. *My Cousin Rachel* (1951) is written as a Victorian novel and explores the social conditions facing women of the Brontës' era--conditions which had not significantly altered by the time du Maurier wrote in the mid-twentieth century. Like the manipulative Mary Anne Clarke of du Maurier's 1954

facto-historical *Mary Anne*, Rachel seeks to beat her male oppressors at their own game. Mary Anne attacks the politicians who use "her as a tool to further their plans" (*Mary Anne* 290) through the British justice system, London newspapers and Grub Street pamphleteering; Rachel defends her minimalised status as a woman and a foreigner by undermining the stately home and authoritative position of a lord of the manor.

The Cornish manor house central to this novel (again based on Menabilly, with the owner's name subtly changed from factual Rashleigh to fictitious Ashley) is not burned; through Rachel's actions, however, it is undermined both physically and ideologically.

Rachel is a complex character, subtly combining the passivity of the ingénue with the cunning of the witch. For the purposes of this chapter I will focus on her anger against patrimony, anger which, although justified, must remain concealed to accord with cultural convention. Rachel is the widow of Ambrose Ashley, who, suspicious of her motives and her extravagant spending, left no will in her favour. Had he lived, Ambrose would have been legally and morally obligated to bring his Italian bride back to Cornwall, gift her with his family jewels and money, and make her the lady of his manor. Rachel therefore merely claims her social and legal rights when she descends upon the new heir, Ambrose's nephew Philip.

While acknowledging that Rachel is (at least at first) a burden on his lifestyle and pocket, Philip nevertheless refuses to allow her to earn her own living by teaching the Italian language: "'[f]or Mrs Ambrose Ashley to give lessons in Italian is shameful; it reflects upon the husband who neglected to make provision for her in his will. And I, Philip Ashley, his heir, won't permit it'" (*My Cousin Rachel* 145). Philip maintains his masculine pride by self-righteously fobbing off Rachel with an allowance and attempting to assert his authority as lord of the manor. With all the bluster of a typical Victorian patriarch he tries to curtail her speech, freedom of movement, and ability to make personal decisions.

Although social convention compels Rachel to appear submissive, she rapidly sizes up Philip's limitations.

"And another thing you can be quiet about is this nonsense of visiting everybody," I said, "staying at the vicarage, staying at Pelyn. What is wrong with this house, and with my company? . . . I am the master here, and it has to do with me."

"Then I must do as I am bid," she answered; "that is part of a woman's training too."

I glanced at her suspiciously to see if she was laughing, but she was looking at her work and I could not see her eyes. (128)

Later, romantically besotted with Rachel, Philip grants her the Ashley jewels and wealth in the hope she will marry him. Rachel's refusal is a calculated decision based on financial and social necessity, including her need for independent movement to travel to Italy. With feminine insight, Louise Kendall attempts to explain this to Philip: "'[a] wife. . . cannot send her husband's money from the country, nor return to the place where she belongs'" (288).

Rachel ruins Philip by the only means available to her as a woman: the power of her sexuality. Like Jennifer in *The Loving Spirit*, she has a partly maternal hold over Philip. (The recurrence of this male name in both novels is also interesting, and can be read as an instance of the obsessive repetition which bespeaks the therapeutic psychological value of the Gothic novel--Massé 14. Du Maurier recycles a number of names, including Dick, John, Henry and Rachel, throughout her work.) Just as Philip Coombe sees in Jennifer a reincarnation of his powerful and feared mother Janet, Philip Ashley idealises Rachel as a Madonna-figure, the loving mother he has never known. The mother-fantasies Rachel inspires in him while they sit together in church are mingled with erotic longings:

looking at my cousin Rachel, I wondered about my mother. . . what it had felt like as a child, being held in my mother's arms. Had she touched my hair and kissed my cheek, and then, smiling, put me back into the cradle? (*My Cousin Rachel* 117)

Philip's constant association of Rachel with eating or drinking and his "rising excitement" (180) when the luncheon bell announces his first daily glimpse of her, represents his stasis at the oral stage of psychological development, which is intertwined with the motif of poisoning running throughout the book. Rachel's desirable yet dangerous sexuality is concentrated in the tisana she brews; just as Rachel's presence ideologically pollutes Philip's upper-class environment, this exotic sensory delectation is a possible medium of physical poison. Philip has already demonstrated, in his initial reaction to the River Arno, an unconscious thirst to take in harmful substances. The polluted Florentine river, beside which he vows to repay Rachel for Ambrose's death, is described as

a slow-moving turgid stream, brown like the river bed
beneath it, oozing and sucking its way under the arches of
the bridge. . . yet to my imagination, fevered almost with
fatigue and thirst, it was something to be tasted,
swallowed, poured down the throat as one might pour a
draught of poison. (30-31)

This passage foreshadows how Philip's infantile desire for oral gratification will be conveniently filled by his cousin's venomous nurture. Because of her presence, coupled with the exotic European dishes she introduces to Philip's kitchen, "the mere process of eating and drinking [becomes], in a sense, a new adventure" for him (184).

Rachel senses and promptly follows up on her maternal and sexual advantage (as does Jennifer) by coaxing her Philip into an extravagant refurbishment of his ancestral mansion and its grounds. The disastrous consequences of these renovations are foreshadowed in the death of Philip's retriever dog Don, killed by a falling roof-slate. Rachel's tearful response to this accident charms Philip; her sobs, however, are a mask for (possibly unconscious) destructive motives: "'Don was your possession. . . your very own. You grew up together. I can't bear to see him die'" (218). Rachel clearly can "bear" such sights, as she is repeatedly associated with the death or destruction of things dear to Philip, of which Ambrose (whom she possibly poisoned), Don, and

Philip's own near-death illness or poisoning are the more prominent examples. Her financial bargaining drives a wedge between Philip and his guardian Nick Kendall, her sexual power over Philip creates friction with his childhood playmate Louise, and the negative atmosphere Rachel creates also ultimately threatens the established system of Ashley estate life itself.

Before Rachel's arrival Philip has adequately managed the estate by upholding ideals of mutual respect and responsibility between the classes; by the end of the novel, however, his rapport with the workers crumbles beneath Rachel's all-consuming presence. Emotionally drained by her, Philip ignores the tenants who petition his help and eventually ceases even to care for the land, his birthright:

I tried to lose my energies, as of old, in the running of the place, in the common tasks of day by day; but it no longer meant the same to me. What if the Barton acres were all dried through lack of rain? I could not greatly care. And if our stock won prizes at the Show, and so were the champions of the county, was this glory? Last year, it might have been. But now, what an empty triumph.

I could see myself losing favour in the eyes of all who looked upon me as their master. (311)

Rachel's gifts to Philip of a gold *chain* and cravat *pin* are significant symbols of the double stranglehold to which she subjects the young man, whose heart is ensnared even as his fortune is covertly siphoned into the coffers of Rachel's lawyer (and possibly lover), Rainaldi.

The Victorian patriarchal ideology which regards females as being too foolish to be allowed the governance of money thus receives its come-uppance in Rachel's vendetta of financial revenge. Eventually, however, her career of deceit and rebellion must end; like Rebecca, she is murdered for her attempts to undermine patrimony. In an effort to assert his dominance, Philip tries to throttle Rachel in order to terrify her into marrying him. He is overcome by guilt and fear at once, acknowledging that such violence is "monstrous" (281)--not because he thinks it is morally wrong, but because of the punishment society will exact for it.

Since boyhood Philip has been haunted by the gibbet at Four Turnings, from which he saw the corpse of a wife-murderer swing. Thus, both desiring and fearing to kill what he loves, Philip is forced to dispose of Rachel in an indirect, almost unconscious manner. His spontaneous warning--"have a care" (of the unfinished bridge over the sunken garden)--emerges subtly altered: "'Have a care,' I said slowly, 'of walking beneath the sun'" (343). Thus Rachel breaks her neck in the sunken garden she herself designed and into which she poured Philip's money. Her punishment is to die within a structure symbolising her own rebellion.

Rachel's death completes a symbolic circle introduced by the emblematic floating dog's corpse, a metaphor for Ambrose (compare, for instance, Ambrose's depiction of himself at the villa Sangalletti as being restless "like a dog before a thunderstorm"--26) and/or Philip. Philip focuses upon the dog's carcass as he wages his vendetta against Rachel (51). The novel indicates that look-alike Philip is Ambrose's double, his reincarnated ghost or phantom (5-6); thus by absorbing Ambrose's misogynist philosophies, Philip fulfils the older Ashley's murder-wish against Rachel which was curtailed by his death. (After Philip tries to strangle Rachel he glances in the mirror and sees that "[s]urely it was Ambrose who stood there, with the sweat upon his forehead, the face drained of all colour"--281.) Undeniable further identification of Ambrose/Philip with the dead dog image occurs during Philip's half-conscious delirium while ill with fever (or possible poisoning):

Suddenly she [Rachel] pointed at the water and Ambrose went past us, under the bridge, his hands folded on his breast. He floated away down the river out of sight, and slowly, majestically, his paws raised stiff and straight, went the body of the dead dog after him. (298)

The symbolically phallic appearance of the dog suggests not a majestic masculine power, but masculinity made powerless, killed by its own erotic desires. The domesticated Ashley pet dogs are clearly no match for sophisticated Rachel, who is symbolised as a wily wild vixen (compare

the stealthy swish of her skirts, 183, for example, with the rustle of the fox in the undergrowth beneath the mansion's windows, 259). In this context the death of Don (who of all the dogs is the most won over by Rachel) is a clear threat to Philip.

Rachel's murder, with Philip's two remaining pet dogs standing over her as sentinels or witnesses, thus makes a vivid close to this cycle of canine imagery:

Near to the stones and mortar and the stack of timber above the sunken garden the two dogs were standing. One of them, the younger, came towards me. The other stayed where he was, close to the heap of mortar. . . . Part of the bridge still remained and hung suspended, grotesque and horrible, like a swinging ladder. The rest had fallen to the depths below. . . . where she lay amongst the timber and the stones. (348)

These two dogs (younger and elder) represent Philip and Ambrose, as well as the two halves of Philip's own psyche: the lover, who by virtue of his youth and passion must be innocent of implication in Rachel's murder, and the older, suspicious, woman-hater who watches eagerly for the moment of her death.

Unlike Rebecca, who makes Maxim fulfil her own desire for a quick, painless end, Rachel has no corresponding suicide-wish, and while Rachel's efforts to destroy the Ashleys succeed in part, total ruination of the patriarchal mansion and the order it symbolises (as in the destruction of Manderley) does not occur. Thus in her mature works du Maurier takes an increasingly pessimistic view of the ability of females to successfully overturn ingrained patriarchal structures. The ending of *My Cousin Rachel* suggests that such a desire is a misguided and ultimately self-destructive fantasy. However, the wish to destroy patrimony nevertheless remains as a crucial theme in this novel--a fundamental female desire which, although possibly hopeless, cannot be denied literary expression.

Feminist Subtexts: the Razing and Reconstructing of Patriarchal Structures

In du Maurier's novels we see reproduced over and over again the melodramatic image of the destroyed or burning mansion, an image implanted in du Maurier's unconscious by a work she loved from childhood, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. As this twentieth century Thornfield is compulsively revisited and repeatedly razed, we glimpse ambivalent female responses to male domination, love and marriage. No ending in du Maurier's novels is as tidily romantic as that of *Jane Eyre*. As Brontë acknowledged in the endings of her other novels (particularly *Villette*), true equality in marriage is a myth. The destruction of patrimony, while devoutly to be desired by du Maurier's novels' heroines, can as yet be seen only as the psychological outpouring of feminine resentment, waywardness and rebellion, states of mind which themselves reflect contemporary anxiety about a woman's place in society. The manor house, reinforced as important by Gerald du Maurier in his daughter's consciousness and later symbolising her own experience of married life, here stands as a phoenix perpetually rising from its own ashes, a powerful image of gender and economic inequality.

CHAPTER 2
DIVIDED SELVES:
MALE NARRATORS IN DU MAURIER AND BRONTË

The Woman Novelist and her Adolescent Hero

Nineteenth-century female authors working within the constraints of a male-dominated literary tradition customarily adopted masculine pseudonyms or (as in the case of the Brontë sisters) pen-names of unspecified gender. Such anonymity was a way for female authors to ensure their work was received without discrimination; and in this way, too, the nineteenth century woman was free to write as a first-person *male* narrator.

Thus screened by pen-names, "Currer", "Ellis" and "Acton Bell" each composed part of her literary output in a male voice. Lockwood, sometime narrator of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, and Gilbert Markham, whose narrative frames Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, are qualified by their callow and foppish antics, and both characters exemplify a typically Victorian ideology which simultaneously idealises and denigrates women. (We note Markham's haste to accuse Helen Graham of immoral behaviour with Frederick Lawrence, and Lockwood's callous snubbing of the young lady who innocently responds to his romantic overtures.) Read as creations of a female pen, Lockwood and Markham are studies in male incompetence, the irony of which is enhanced by each character remaining largely unaware of his emotional limitations. These one-eyed points of view are in each case offset by the voice of a female narrator (Nelly Dean and Helen Graham), whose accounts provide a refreshing counterbalance.

In contrast, the first-person narrator of Charlotte Brontë's *The Professor* is treated with greater sensitivity by his author than are Lockwood or Markham. William Crimsworth's adventures (as motherless orphan, outcast from England, rejected lover and struggling teacher) reflect the author's own sufferings. Thus if *Jane Eyre* is the archetypal

nineteenth-century female *Bildungsroman*, *The Professor* can be seen as a "pseudo-masculine *Bildungsroman*" (Gilbert and Gubar 315), a vehicle by which Brontë can explore her own experiences through the eyes of a male, the (presumably) privileged Other.

Gilbert and Gubar point out that although some critics have seen Brontë's use of a male narrator as a mistake or demerit in *The Professor*, pretending to be male in fact offers the woman writer certain advantages. She "can see herself as the crucial and powerful Other sees her. . .[and] gain male power, not only to punish her own forbidden fantasies but also to act them out" (316-7). For example, the talent for craftiness and deceit which Brontë both abhorred and envied in her real-life rival Madame Héger is critically examined in the character of Zoraïde Reuter as seen through the eyes of Crimsworth (323).

An important point about *The Professor* is that William Crimsworth is himself the victim of patriarchal oppression. The novel is filled with controlling patriarchal villains: William's brother Edward, the selfish, bullying industrialist; the purse-controlling uncles who seek to manacle William's intellect and heart with a dog-collar and a wedding-ring; duplicitous Monsieur Pelet, whose property and money win him the faithless Zoraïde; and rich, manipulative, powerful Hunsden. As Gilbert and Gubar note, Crimsworth's reaction to the patriarch-enforced enclosures which surround him is a desire to rebel and escape (320)--a desire which, as has been seen, is present (if repressed) in the female psyche.

Daphne du Maurier, writing ninety to one-hundred-and-ten years after Brontë, uses the device of first-person male narrators for similar psychological purposes. The action of five of her novels is seen through "male" eyes, while another novel (*The Parasites*, composed in the narrative form of first-person plural, "we/us") includes a male as one of its three joint narrators.

For both du Maurier and Brontë the ability to cast the self into a male voice began in childhood, with the literary fantasy worlds each

author created. The "infernal world" of secret play devised by the Brontë children (of which du Maurier writes in her biography of Branwell Brontë) was initially peopled by personae appended to male toy soldiers: Charles Arthur Florian Wellesley (Charlotte's chosen hero), E.W. Parry (Emily's), J. Ross (Anne's), and Branwell's favourite, Sneaky (later to develop into Alexander Percy, protagonist of the Angrian adventures). Wellesley, who eventually metamorphosed into the brooding Rochester of *Jane Eyre*, was, in du Maurier's opinion, Charlotte's "own Byronic self", realised after reading Moore's *Life of Byron* (*The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë* 40).

Du Maurier, too, created in adolescence a Byronic self, a sports-minded youth named Eric Avon. Numerous adventures for Eric and his chums David and Dick Dampier were enacted by herself and her sisters Angela and Jeanne in a play which continued until 1922, when Eric would logically have turned eighteen and ceased to be a schoolboy. Du Maurier claims that this "alter ego" Eric Avon surfaced in her five male narrators; however she immediately counters this assertion with the more honest admission that

[n]one of these characters resembled the popular schoolboy hero, Eric Avon; instead, their personalities can be said to be undeveloped, inadequate. . . . I would identify with my series of inadequate narrators, plunge into their escapades with relish and excitement, then banish them from memory until the next one emerged! (*Growing Pains* 59-60)

This accords with the pattern followed by Charlotte Brontë. William Crimsworth, her only first-person male narrator, is also significantly less than Byronic. Just as dashing Arthur Wellesley developed into the heroes of Charlotte's third-person novels (Rochester, Robert Moore and Paul Emanuel), Eric Avon resurfaced not as naive Philip Ashley or confused Dick Young but as Maxim de Winter, Richard Grenville or Jem Merlyn--any or all of du Maurier's powerful, charismatic heroes. Only the oppressed male narrator can speak with sincerity as the "I" of a female psyche and pen; confident male heroes may be admired and their power envied, but because they too strongly

represent the privileged and oppressive Other, the female author is more comfortable if they are kept at a remove.

I'll Never Be Young Again: Fascination with Paternal Power

In her second novel, *I'll Never Be Young Again* (1932), du Maurier combines both types of male character, the sensitive (fe)male narrator and the charismatic he-man (s)he admires. The narrator, "Dick", (he refuses to reveal or acknowledge his full patrimonial name) is as oppressed as William Crimsworth by patriarchal figures more powerful than himself. The most prominent of these is his famous father, a poet with a T.S. Eliot-like genius for expressing the feelings of the British nation. Unfortunately he cannot extend his emotional sensitivity to his family; his wife has been reduced to mechanistic existence by years of functioning as her husband's secretarial adjunct, and Dick grows up, isolated in the stately family home, amid an atmosphere of emotional deprivation.

Dick attempts to gain paternal recognition by demonstrating an inherited writing talent; his repressed rage, however, erupts into the content of his texts, creating pornographic poetry which produces disgust rather than admiration. More than a desire to shock his father, Dick's poems reflect his unconscious fear of being less gifted than he--while Dick desperately wants his father to pronounce his poetry good, should it *not* be good prurient themes provide a convenient peg upon which to hang parental disapproval. (Biographical material may have contributed to this facet of Dick's characterisation: it is notable that du Maurier's early published stories were pronounced "shocking" by her conservative family and friends--Cook 98-9.) Unfavourable reception of Dick's poems furnishes his excuse to run away to London, where picaresque Jake introduces him to a daredevil sailor's life. As Jake is the physically-oriented father Dick has always desired, his rescue of Dick from suicide is a symbolic offer of new life or rebirth, and in this sense Jake can be

read as not only a surrogate father but a God-like saviour-figure. Dick certainly worships him as such: he follows Jake's lead with the zeal of the new convert, hangs on his every word, and is happy only in his presence. Dick wants to capture the moments when he is alone with Jake and nature, as if life is perfect then:

"I want to go on feeling like I do now. . . . We ought to build a hut, Jake, and live up here. . . . There'd be a reason for being alive." (*I'll Never Be Young Again* 52-3)

Unfortunately for Dick, Jake is significantly less than perfect. He has served a prison sentence for manslaughter, a deed presumably committed in a just cause (he killed a man for ruining a woman's life). Jake's subsequent speeches, however, hint at darker motives. He made his living by prize-fighting, the type of macho profession Dick might find admirable, but which in reality consists of men controlling one another through physical violence. Moreover, the crime Jake punishes his rival for is casual sex, and Jake appears uncomfortable, if not confused, about heterosexual relations *per se*. Jake verbally warns Dick against selfish lust but never actually shows him the *right* way to treat a woman--for Jake, it is as if females do not exist. His protective, exclusive relationship with Dick borders on the homosexual; his disapproval of Dick's brief affair with an American tourist on the steamboat in Norway is markedly cold. As Forster observes, there is "more than a hint" that at times like this Dick and Jake "are each a half of the same man" (Forster 79-80). In the Norwegian fjord episode Dick becomes the id of his own psyche, acting out the libertine, sensually-fulfilled life he has always desired, while Jake, as a sexually repressed and morally oppressive patriarch-figure, is Dick's controlling superego. It is significant that Jake handles the finances for the pair, another function of the dominating patriarch. Seeing moralistic Jake dole out the cash to pay for his casual fling increases Dick's guilt (93).

Jake and Dick's father also can be read as two halves of a single parent, one physical, the other intellectual (it is significant that an

emotionally-functional model remains absent from this fusion). This is made clear by Dick's day-dream, where in his imagination the two meld into one man:

And I saw Jake walk through the open window, and touch my father on the shoulder, and they smiled as though they had known each other for a long while, and their faces seemed suddenly incredibly alike--merging finally into one.

"You know," said Jake, the Jake in my picture, "you know that Dick writes too," and my father nodded (*I'll Never Be Young Again* 131-2)

Desperate for paternal approval, Dick seeks to emulate Jake as he has attempted to emulate his writer-father, and unconsciously absorbs the prize-fighter's ideologies, including his ambivalent attitude towards sex. Jake is a flawed saviour, as although he represents the model of rugged masculinity a healthy father-figure *might* offer, this is an essentially uncourageous masculinity which fears to tie itself down in romantic or sexual relationships or to burden itself with mature responsibility. Thus after his initial experience of sex in Norway, Dick is filled with a Jake-induced self-loathing, an "inexpiable degradation" (91). After Jake is drowned Dick again becomes symbolically fatherless, and returns to casting his biological father as the scapegoat responsible for his inner turmoil:

it was my father who was to blame. He was responsible for this moment, this business of me dejected, helpless. . . It was heredity, environment, upbringing, misunderstanding, all these clashing against each other making me what I was. It was his fault; it had nothing to do with my will or my desires. (159)

This fixation with heredity results in the resurrection of Dick's literary endeavours. He begins to write plays and prose, believing that "[s]omewhere dwelt the shadow of my father, the father who had reached his own fulfilment, but would not believe in that of his son. The desire to prove him false was interlinked with my ambition, and I could not sever them" (218). Later, struggling to write and pay his way in Paris, Dick

contacts his father, ostensibly hoping for a few kind words. The reply, a humiliating financial hand-out, reinforces Dick's hatred and anger against both himself and his father.

Dick unconsciously sets about ruining the childlike music student Hesta's life, thus repeating the mistake Jake specifically warned him against. The cycle of patriarchal oppression is compulsively re-enacted, with Dick becoming abuser in his turn of the only type of individual who could logically be subordinate to him: a young orphan female. This follows the customary pattern of the psychoanalytic model Freud terms the "beating fantasy", where the only prize for being beaten is that one may later have an opportunity to beat others--though unfortunately not the same individuals who instigated the abuse (Massé 141). Dick controls his woman through sex, as did the man Jake killed (and we wonder if Jake was not attempting to kill something in himself by this murder, the lustful facet of his psyche which he feared or was ashamed of). After seducing Hesta, apparently against her will, and installing her in his apartment, Dick expects her to pander to his every wish. Hesta is denied a life, career, or future of her own. Unlike Dick, whose determination to write springs more from repressed anger than from natural genius, Hesta's piano-playing *has* shown the germs of artistic excellence. When she is on the verge of being handpicked for the Music Professor's concert of *crème de la crème* pupils, Dick compels her to give up the piano and become a piece of decorative erotica, an essential item to furnish his apartment. This would be less reprehensible if he gave her something in return: love, or friendship, or the support to achieve a career, or marriage and the babies she desires, or preferably all of these. But he ridicules the idea of marriage as loss of independence, part of the conventional social system they (in reality he) is trying to escape. In essence, Dick sees Hesta as a doll without the same needs or desires as himself. He even wishes that she really were the prostitute of his fantasies so that he could treat her "'anyhow, and just walk out, not caring'" (*I'll Never Be Young Again* 215).

When Hesta, who has been denied personal artistic fulfilment, wants an intellectual relationship, Dick is annoyed; he needs mental space to devote himself to *his* art, writing: "she would try to wander into my mind, to share that with me, to be part of this as well. . . I did not see why she wanted this thing of words; that was not the way I felt" (213). Just as Dick's childhood house revolved around his father's art and temperament, Dick's moods now become all-important and Hesta is expected to accommodate each one. He complains that he doesn't care to look at a dull face (220), never considering that she may have had disappointing news (at this point Hesta has been rejected as the Professor's pupil for lack of practice, an event equally if not more upsetting than Dick's mental vagaries).

Because he treats her as his subordinate, Dick cannot accept or even listen to constructive criticism from Hesta, who has enough artistic nous to suspect the play he shows her falls far short of its model, Oscar Wilde (208). Hesta's craving for emotional recognition mirrors the youthful longings Dick himself expressed towards his father: "I wondered why he should have given me his body, and kept from me his mind. I wished that he could have left some message for me, some word to show me he had understood" (280). Dick is not capable of connecting his own experience with Hesta's.

Dick has unconsciously absorbed the chauvinistic, Victorian ideology held to by both his father and Jake that classifies women as either innocent angels or sexually-liberated whores. Thus when he becomes too busy for sex, he is appalled that Hesta should express desire for it. Such an admission from a woman is "'beastly. . .unattractive. It's all right for me to want you, but not for you--at least, never to say. It's terrible. . .'" he stammers, shocked (225). When she counters that she *was* sexually innocent until he initiated her, he responds that she nevertheless ought to be more inherently moralistic because of her gender: "[s]omehow it was all right for me to talk down marriage, but it looked wrong coming from her" (215). So much for Dick's claim to have

escaped society's stifling mores.

It cannot be overlooked that these unsavoury comments are put into the mouth of a male character by a woman author *writing in first-person narratorial mode*. The resulting highly personal voice which condemns women's rights at the same time as it empowers female authorship can perhaps be seen as a weak point in the novel; it certainly makes uncomfortable reading. For du Maurier-as-Dick to be oppressed by patrimony is one thing, but for the abused to be an adept abuser of her own kind is another. Margaret Forster provides a step towards understanding with this comment:

She [du Maurier] wrote in the first person as a man, a bold step to free herself to write about her own experience: if the "I" were masculine, then it would not automatically be suspected that this character voiced her own opinions and feelings. But he did. . . Dick, the young narrator, is far more Daphne than is Hesta. . . Dick's pronouncements about sex match very closely Daphne's own to Tod [du Maurier's former governess] in her letters and, though Hesta shares some of Daphne's own reactions to Carol [Reed], it is Dick who commands the attention (Forster 79)

At the time of writing *I'll Never Be Young Again*, du Maurier was involved with young actor Carol Reed; du Maurier later wrote that the character of Dick was partly inspired by the image of "[a] boy like Carol leaving home and running away to sea. Or was the boy myself? A mixture of both, perhaps. How strange!" (*Growing Pains* 135). Although Reed nagged du Maurier to marry him, she felt compelled to maintain her independence in order to write, a situation which led to the breakup of the relationship. This somewhat non-traditional (for the 1920s) battle of the sexes is re-explored in *I'll Never Be Young Again*, disguised by the more conventional gender model of the text.

Another factor which should be borne in mind is the author's overriding artistic and moral need to temporarily suspend primary identification with her male narrator in order to portray social injustice committed against Hesta, and, by extension, all women. As Forster points

out, the novel deals with the theme of sex, a brave topic for its time. Although du Maurier suspected *I'll Never Be Young Again* would shock the public, "she was defiant, feeling she had tried to write honestly about something that mattered, something not written about openly, and this justified perhaps upsetting some people" (Forster 81).

In any case, Dick is fittingly punished for his moral and emotional ineptitude. At an emotionally crucial moment he leaves Hesta to convey his manuscript to his father's publisher in London, only to be told that it is unprintable rubbish. After his father's death has destroyed any hope of reconciliation he returns to Hesta, emotionally shattered and admitting that he does love and need her after all, only to discover she has deserted him and become mistress to the oily Julio (the first in a succession of well-off foreigners ^{to} with whom she will prostitute herself). Too late, Dick realises how well Hesta has absorbed his lessons about female use and worth.

When Dick returns to England, still seeking the elusive father-figure who will give direction to his life, he falls under the influence of the publisher, Ernest Grey, who talks him out of writing and establishes him in a respectable city bank. The year is 1930: the Roaring Twenties are gone forever, as is Dick's youth, his adventures at sea and his Paris love affair. He tells himself he has grown out of youthful restlessness, and laughs over his old manuscript and photograph of Hesta. In reality, however, he has evaded the potentially frightening process of self-understanding by adopting the persona of his third surrogate father, Grey. Assimilation of Grey's decent, middle-class, middle-aged lifestyle only serves to anaesthetise Dick's wounds, and is a tame substitute for the true emotional maturity he seeks. At the novel's end Dick is still oppressed by patrimony, more so now that he has been successfully assimilated into its system--a system from which he has failed to escape.

Crimsworth's Crimes: Charlotte Brontë's Oppressive Male Narrator

Dick is not unique in his role as a female author's male "I" who persecutes women. William Crimsworth does it, too, although more subtly. William is similar to Dick in that his search for familial love runs parallel to his search for fulfilling work. Becoming a teacher provides his opportunity to meet Frances Henri. As his student, Frances is his subordinate, a fact which she herself emphasises by constantly referring to William as her "master", even after marrying him.

Like Hesta, Frances is an orphan, and like her she desires an intellectual career instead of the despised domestic lace-mending by which she earns her living. While William does not prevent Frances from teaching (and even ostensibly acknowledges and encourages her need for creative fulfilment) she is nevertheless compelled to develop a schizophrenic personality to survive after marriage (Gilbert and Gubar 331). She switches from being William's daytime equal--"a stately and elegant woman, bearing much. . .calculated dignity in her serious mien" (*The Professor* 199)--to a night-time domestic angel, the submissive goddess of male fantasy:

At six o'clock p.m. my daily labours ceased. I then came home, for my home was my heaven. Ever at that hour, as I entered our private sitting-room, the lady directress vanished from before my eyes, and Frances Henri, my own little lace-mender, was magically restored to my arms.
(200)

In the privacy of his sitting-room William restores Frances to a subservient "female" role (symbolised by the hated lace-mending) and infantilises her, punishing her "for her wilfulness" (speaking French instead of English) and "dosing" her with poetry by Wordsworth, whom she dislikes (201). Yet Frances, like Hesta at the outset, is an easily-led victim, and in ten years' time, when the Crimsworths have saved enough money to retire to England, she takes up the socially-prescribed role of wife and mother with hardly a backward glance at the career she has left behind. Only the image of Lucia, Hunsden's onetime mistress who broke

her social chains and soared free of him, offers a final chance for Frances (and Brontë) to fantasise about escape (Gilbert and Gubar 333).

Crimsworth also dismisses the other female characters in the novel in a stereotypical way: his sister-in-law is shallow, brainless and soulless (*The Professor* 7); the teenaged hoydens of the Pensionnat Reuter are "mentally depraved" (76); beautiful but two-faced Zoraïde is "a snare" (88). Unpleasant as these depictions may be, Gilbert and Gubar reveal how Brontë's female characters here exhibit unattractive traits as a necessary device, a means of non-submission while seeming to submit to male authority. Thus Brontë/Crimsworth's negative view of women implies the social reality that a female "is like this because it is her task in a patriarchal society to be such a creature" (Gilbert and Gubar 322).

Male Cloning and the Depraved Woman: *My Cousin Rachel*

In a similar manner, du Maurier also uses a male first-person voice to explore responses to a woman society stereotypes as rebellious or "mentally depraved". This device is most clearly seen in the complex characterisations of *My Cousin Rachel*, where, as has been shown, the title character challenges patriarchy by attacking its own structures of mansion, marriage and money. In this chapter I wish to focus more fully on the character of the narrator, Philip Ashley (who subtly undermines as well as maintains the patriarchal structures he inherits) and the chameleon-like Rachel, as she is seen through Philip's eyes.

Philip, like Dick and Crimsworth, is enmeshed in a patrilineal social code from which he cannot escape. From infancy he has been dominated by the controlling patriarch-figure of his cousin Ambrose, who to the orphan boy takes on the role not only of father but of God--"god of all creation, certainly god of my own narrow world" (*My Cousin Rachel* 2). As the epitome of manliness, Ambrose is associated with phallic symbols such as his walking stick, which Philip as new heir later carries

about on his own rounds of the estate, and the granite tombstone-like slab he sets up over his favourite lookout, where Philip symbolically buries his last letter. These phallic objects are connected to patriarchal power over land, and are therefore of importance to Philip as emblems of the passed baton of patrimony--an inheritance Philip fears to be unworthy of. Just as the religious neophyte strives to enter heavenly kingdoms by adhering to a divinely-ordained code of conduct, Philip must prove himself worthy of ruling his earthly mansion by aspiring to Ambrose's model of masculinity. This situation is summed up in Philip's admission that "the whole object of my life was to resemble him [Ambrose]" (2).

Philip has been groomed from his earliest years to one day take over the Ashley mansion, money and ancestral acres. Yet under more normal circumstances he would not have inherited vast sums at all, being the child of a second son; Ambrose's father was the inheriting elder brother, and had Ambrose had a son of his own, Philip would have been bypassed. There are hints throughout the novel that Philip unconsciously (through fear or perhaps moral distaste) rejects the economic and social gender-based roles thus unnaturally, as it were, assigned to him. His repressed fears are particularly appropriate aspects of characterisation by a woman author, being herself one of the disenfranchised of Philip's world; they also suggest a more general alienation from the "English heritage" tradition suffused throughout the contemporary society in which du Maurier lived.

Raising an orphan cousin as his heir is a fortuitous circumstance for Ambrose, who as an avowed woman-hater is relieved not to have to "do his duty" by marrying and creating future recipients of the patriarchal baton. (Ambrose's frequently-emphasised fastidiousness and passion for flower-gardening hint at repressed homosexual leanings.) Aspects of social "duty" other than begetting sons *are* pleasant and important to Ambrose, however, not least the proper management and conscientious guardianship of his ancestral estate. He drums the importance of this responsibility into his young ward early on, telling him

"Once your schooldays are behind you. . .I'll bring you home here for good, and train you myself."

"Train me for what?" I asked.

"Well, you're my heir, aren't you? That's a profession in itself." (10)

By the time he reaches his twenties Philip has, in effect, been willingly moulded into a clone-like copy of Ambrose, a more faithful image than even a son might have been, as in Philip's case there is no mother on the scene to meddle with his upbringing. The only woman who attempts to interfere in the male-dominated Ashley home--a nurse who smacks Philip with a hairbrush--is immediately sacked, and Ambrose employs only menservants henceforth. Philip is therefore raised in a monastic environment, worshipping his god of narrow-minded masculinity amid a "tribe" of brother devotees "controlled by old Seecombe, who had been my uncle's steward" (9): a peculiarly homosocial household even by Victorian standards.

Ambrose thus indulges in a form of asexual reproduction, a nineteenth century answer to modern genetic cloning. Philip grows up to look, speak and think like Ambrose, copying the older man's mannerisms and absorbing his philosophies, including mistrust of females. This ideology stunts Philip's social and emotional growth. He cannot even recognise, let alone respond to, Louise Kendall's romantic feelings, nor can he extend a beneficent welcome to Ambrose's widow, the woman he suspects has emotionally if not physically murdered his cousin.

At first Philip blames not Rachel but himself for Ambrose's death, because he was not with Ambrose in Italy at the time of his mysterious and hasty conversion to matrimony--an event Philip's discouraging presence might perhaps have prevented. Initially Ambrose does not want Philip to accompany his travels because, as he says, "'We can't both be away for months at a time. It's a responsibility, you know, being a landowner'" (12). Philip, however, remains aware that "if I had pressed the matter he would have let me go with him. But I said nothing" (14). This silence is a direct challenge to Ambrose's doubt-filled warning:

"[t]ake care of things. . .don't fail me'" (13). Such implied faithlessness pricks pride, for Philip is desperately anxious to prove himself a good and faithful servant who can indeed care for his god's estate and be accounted worthy to inherit all things. The desire for inheritance is also a (necessarily repressed) murder-wish, an unconscious re-enactment of the Oedipal killing of Laius. By its very nature patrimonial legacy, which is secured only on the death of its incumbents, creates conscious or unconscious resentment in the younger generation. Adherence to patriarchal duty thus indirectly causes Ambrose's death and Philip's subsequent emotional turmoil, and is one of a number of instances in which patrimony is to blame for causing Philip distress. These instances develop into a powerful psychological stranglehold, a suffocating social force of which Philip unconsciously longs to be free.

His desire for liberty is hinted at in his early egalitarian leanings. As young "Master Ashley" Philip cheerfully helps with the estate's agricultural work, mucking in with the harvesters as an equal. Ambrose's death, however, suddenly thrusts him into the upper-middle class, where, addressed with much forelock-tugging and curtsying as "Mr Philip" and "sir", he must enact a new role as economic superior:

A year ago I would have rolled up my sleeves like the rest of the hinds, and seized a fork, but something stayed me now, a realisation that they would not think it fit. (55)

Indeed the "hinds", schooled in the proper social forms of their world, now wait respectfully until their former fellow-worker has quitted the field before they resume harvesting. Philip's new position thus results in a species of isolation, a class detachment forced upon him by his new wealth and public function as lord of the manor. His response is one of ambivalence and insecurity: the unaccustomed formality of the servants is "unexpected, yet strangely warming to the heart"; a tour of his mansion and lands fills him with "a queer feeling of happiness that I had not thought ever to possess with Ambrose dead" (53). Yet he wonders "what [the lower classes'] manner would have been to me if, after all, I had not

inherited the property. Would the deference be there? The respect? The loyalty? . . . How many people were there, I wondered, who liked me and served me for myself alone?" (71).

This anxiety, defensiveness, and fear of resentment from the lower orders (and later from Rachel) are significant, and suggest a questioning attitude to the function and value of the upper class even by those who benefit from its system. It should not be forgotten that the pseudo-aristocratic du Mauriers enjoyed a privileged lifestyle which for Daphne continued into marriage: as the wife of a distinguished war hero she was recast not as one of the masses but as Lady Frederick Browning, a rank with accompanying social responsibilities for which she had little inclination. (Evidence of this is demonstrated throughout du Maurier's private letters; for example, her comment to Foy Quiller-Couch that the snobs with whom she was compelled to socialise were "the sort of people one would gladly see guillotined"--Forster 109.) This information adds interest to the battle image with which Philip compares his legacy: even as he indulges in a moment of selfish gloating over money he "need never share. . . with anyone living" (*My Cousin Rachel* 56) his concomitant military analogy--"I felt as a soldier might feel on being given command of a battalion"--bespeaks unease. Battles can be won or lost; the command of a battalion is no easy task. And as a potential enemy, twice-widowed Rachel is widely experienced in the strategic gaining of social and financial advantage. Despite his new-found authority, Philip's childlike naivety concerning the world makes him vulnerable, and this, too, can be laid at the feet of a patriarchal system that keeps a twenty-four year old adult under the moral, legal and financial jurisdiction of guardians. Cultural systems are here shown to produce both Oedipal resentment and potential victimhood in the succeeding generation.

Philip's attitude to money shifts from selfish hoarding to unstinting generosity as he undergoes conversion from hatred of women (here worshipping Ambrose as god) to adoration of Madonna-like Rachel. This is due only in part to Rachel's personal charms and subtle beggar-

womanish wheedling, however. I suggest that a side of Philip's own psyche rejects the role of domineering land- and money-owner, perhaps in unconscious response to the inescapable control Ambrose and Ambrose's restrictive lifestyle have exercised over him. With her refreshingly exotic "Otherness", Rachel makes a fascinating vehicle by which Philip can escape the stifling conventional regime; at the same time she also represents a convenient scapegoat-figure upon which he can heap the blame for his guilt- and fear-ridden desires.

At first, not wanting to admit that a woman could manipulate him, Philip puts his granting Rachel an allowance down to egalitarian fairness, something Ambrose should and presumably would have done anyway. With the vehemence of callow youth he declares money a vulgar subject, and is impatient at the caution with which Nick Kendall draws up the documents:

How hard and cold-blooded was the legal mind. Scratching away there with his pen at sums and figures, reckoning up shillings and pence, how much the estate could afford. Lord! how I hated money. (137)

Philip's sudden generosity to Rachel stems from his flippant comment, lightly made and instantly regretted, that if widows needed money they remarried or sold their rings--such resorts being apparently less shameful than the giving of Italian lessons proposed by Rachel. Rachel's calmly-stated preference for teaching Italian to doing either of these, or to leading the narrow Victorian lady's life Philip has just described to her (130), fills him with both horror and guilt. He is made suddenly aware that the patriarchal system he now represents is the agent of Rachel's social and financial marginalisation.

Granting a widow's settlement is thus insufficient to appease Philip's conscience over his role as male oppressor. He goes on to make Rachel a Christmas present of the precious Ashley pearl collar (jewels which also would have been hers by right as Ambrose's wife), ignoring certain technical facts which make the gift invalid: he is still three months

short of legal majority--and his resentment at this situation is manifest--and neither is Rachel his bride. He chooses to see his godfather's repossession of the pearls as moral injustice, despite the rational reasons Kendall offers; Rachel's notoriety for "unbridled extravagance" in Italy has been noised abroad, and in any case the collar might attract unpleasant gossip from older tenants familiar with the "family superstition" classifying it as a bridal adornment (201, 203).

As Philip's godfather and guardian, Nick Kendall embodies the combined roles of dominating parent, financial controller and spiritual or moral disciplinarian. Kendall and Ambrose function like character doubles, representing complementary facets of the patrimonial institution. Although Philip had respected these facets of authority in his beloved Ambrose (repressing annoyance at being "deputised for many months and years in second place"--56), he now takes the opportunity to revolt against them in the person of Kendall. Philip delights in doing things he knows Kendall would disapprove of: spending extravagantly on his house; removing the Ashley jewels from the bank; signing over his inheritance to Rachel. His comment on this occasion sums up his attitude of schoolboyish rebellion:

I wondered if my godfather would have an attack of apoplexy when he heard the news. I did not care. I wished him no ill, once I was rid of his jurisdiction, but for all that I had turned the tables on him to perfection. (228)

The catalyst for such table-turning is, of course, Rachel; as a female she is an archetypal scapegoat-figure. Philip not only heaps upon Rachel the jewels and money he is relieved to be rid of (naively trusting that she will become his wife and share them with him anyway), but, as has been shown, he also gives her free rein to extravagantly remodel his mansion and its grounds.

At the same time he experiences anxiety over possible "betrayal" of those values of thrift and masculine austerity Ambrose has ingrained in him (213). *My Cousin Rachel* clearly portrays avarice as an undesirable

trait: Rainaldi (yet another facet of patrimonial institutions) estimates the price of everything he sets eyes on, and the novel hints that this snake-like character may in fact be the arch-patriarch manipulating Rachel and thus the true recipient of the Ashley wealth (331). Yet even though Rainaldi is detestable, the novel's more respectable financiers--Kendall, the banker Couch and the attorney Trewin--see Philip as an over-generous fool. Whether or not the reader agrees with this opinion, Philip's trifling attitude towards his wealth does run parallel to personal harm he invites against himself.

Falling in love with Rachel opens a new world to Philip, an exciting yet dangerous realm of sex, intrigue and death suggested by the Jacobean revenge-tragedy genre into which the novel slides during episodes characterising Rachel: two sample instances include the sinister cloistered atmosphere of the villa Sangalletti and the hard, menacing, "new brilliance" Rachel exhibits when conversing in Italian with Rainaldi (234). In this novel du Maurier offers a treatment of patrimonial mechanisms of a less specifically British kind, literary antecedents of which include Webster's play *The Duchess of Malfi* and Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book* (du Maurier's familiarity with Browning's poetry in particular is well-documented--cf. *Growing Pains* 56). Philip's danger (and that of the patriarchal system) is thus conveyed structurally, through the Italianate *Romeo and Juliet*-like balcony scenes where Philip woos his comtessa. On one occasion Rachel tosses a crocus from her window, which in a conflation of erotic and violent imagery strikes Philip a blow to the cheek (*My Cousin Rachel* 133). On another occasion the mad midnight swim Philip indulges in (on his birthday, the ironically appropriate All Fools' Day) before climbing through Rachel's boudoir window and showering her with jewels lays the groundwork for an attack of life-threatening meningitis. This night with Rachel is Philip's Carnival of Fools; he reigns for a few hours as a king who can grant unto (in his case, more than) the half of his kingdom to his unveiled Salome as a birthday wish. There is an evident sexual/financial theme present here,

as Philip's "penetration" into Rachel's bedroom is followed by his being "unmanned" or deprived of patrimonial inheritance. The next day, when Rachel has the deed granting her the Ashley fortune, Philip is no longer powerful King Herod but instead resembles Salome's victim, John the Baptist. Rainaldi has already patronisingly compared Philip to del Sarto's portrait of the beheaded saint--"much the same arrogance and innocence so charmingly blended" (239)--and indeed, when Philip arises from his life-threatening fever (or poisoning, the reader is never sure which) his reflected face looks "for all the world like an apostle" (302). This Philip is no Christian apostle, nor is he any longer a disciple of Ambrose, god of masculine superiority (since his troubles arise from conflicts within patriarchy itself), but now a worshipper at the shrine of Rachel, converted like Ambrose before him (107) into renouncing all he has in order to enter Paradise:

I tried to think what else I had to give. She had the property, the money, and the jewels. She had my mind, my body, and my heart. There was only my name, and that she bore already. Nothing remained. Unless it should be fear. (280)

The dangers facing Philip are more serious than loss of manly stiff-upper-lip through declaring romantic passion, or even death by poisoning (valid though this threat is). *My Cousin Rachel* suggests that by relinquishing control of the trappings of patrimony--fortune, jewels, mansion and land--Philip risks losing his sense of identity altogether. The resulting social annihilation bodes ill not only for him personally but for the established British order he represents. The text presents Philip's fortune as being steadily drained into Italian bank accounts by Rachel and Rainaldi; leached, as it were, into unsuitable foreign soil. Moreover, his obsessive infatuation with Rachel ("neither for [Ambrose], nor for me, could there ever be another woman, or another wife"--289) prevents him from carrying out his matrimonial duty, that social imperative which accompanies his patrimony. The county expects him to continue the Ashley line, and Louise Kendall is the obvious choice of bride: a sensible

girl of respectable Cornish stock, who loves Philip into the bargain. Marriage to Louise, however, would thrust Philip even more firmly into Kendall's world and keep him under Kendall's thumb. Like Rachel in microcosm, Louise also inspires dual feelings in Philip: she is both the understanding, warmhearted friend he needs and a possessor of her father's analytical legal outlook, a mindset Philip detests. Throughout the novel Philip denies romantic feelings for Louise and is anxious to silence gossip about any potential engagement to her. Nevertheless, beneath a veil of more general terminology he mourns her loss:

Had I been another man. . .with a deft tongue and a shrewd head for business, the past year would have been no more than another twelve months come and gone. I should be settling down to a brisk contented future. To marriage, possibly, and to a young family.

But I was none of these things. . . (5)

The novel suggests a systematic association of money and jewels with semen (seed); through Rachel both have been cast away into barren soil, the stony ground of socially unsanctioned acquisition. (This onanistic image echoes the scattered seed contributing to Manderley's ruin in *Rebecca*.) While Kendall does save Philip from utter financial ruin by inserting into Rachel's ownership deed clauses safeguarding the mansion and lands, and while Rachel's death--or murder--at Philip's hand seems to finally curtail his threatened collapse, Rachel's emotional power nevertheless endures, preventing Philip from re-establishing the patrimonial cycle through a family of his own. The reader suspects that after Louise realises he has deliberately sent Rachel to her death ("apprehension came upon her, conviction too"--348), she would be less than the intelligent woman she is portrayed as if she married him. This circumstance favours Philip's conflicting fears and desires for the auto-destruction of the patriarchy; while in the end he cannot bring himself to abnegate his Ambrose-ordained position of authority and responsibility, he *can* ensure he does not perpetuate these repressive structures by creating another Philip Ashley.

There is a second reason why Philip might wish to leave no copy of himself. Those hereditary brain tumours, resulting in unpredictable, violent behaviour, from which Uncle Philip and (possibly) Ambrose Ashley died point to an inherent degeneration and decay of the upper classes. Tenant Sam Bate likens this malaise to the tuberculosis that consumes generations of his own working class family: "'How about Mr Ambrose and his father, the old gentleman your uncle? Brain sickness did for the pair of them. There's no going agin the ways of nature'" (210). (It is pertinent to note here, in passing, that Rachel's own compulsion to overspend is also--at least in Ambrose's opinion--a congenital psychiatric disorder inherited not from her Italian mother but from her spendthrift father Alexander Coryn, scion of the Cornish gentry--166.) Thus while Philip's bout of brain fever *may* be the result of a midnight swim and a soaking ride, it could also be the natural legacy of disease; certainly his paranoid behaviour at the novel's close ("[t]he whole household were in league against me, in a conspiracy of silence"--315) hints at psychological impairment. This blighting malady symbolises the rotten patriarchal system which is Philip's birthright, centring on a canker which may be temporarily hidden, but which will in time emerge as a fatal destroyer.

The text of *My Cousin Rachel* presents continuation of the aristocratic system as undesirable, both in its character Philip's ambivalent attitude to perpetuating his line and in its overall theme of a legacy of upper-class malaise. Here the character of a weak, failed heir (like Dick Grenville in *The King's General*) reflects inherent corruption within the structure of inheritance and patriarchy, a corruption expressed through the psychologically unhealthy image of self-burial. Emotionally-deprived Dick ends his life by physical immurement, knowing that a terrifying death will occur within hours; Philip's chosen immurement bespeaks a more excruciating if less horrifying form of suicide--social and psychological suffocation within the boundaries of his mansion and acreage.

Philip's ambivalence over the importance of maintaining

established structures--an ambivalence that, as has been shown, is shared by the novel's author--is also reflected in the portrayal of the eponymous character. Rachel's personality expresses by turns all the well-worn literary stereotypes attributed to females as she fluctuates between the roles of innocent angel, alluring sex-goddess, money-grubbing *femme fatale* and murderous witch. She is revealed to the reader only through the eyes of Philip, who as a male is likely to portray women in stereotypical fashion; yet it should not be forgotten that Philip is himself the narratorial voice of a *female* author, who admitted that "in the writing of the novel I turned myself. . .completely into Philip" (letter to Ellen Doubleday, 3 July 1951, quoted in Forster 261). Philip is thus a very personal creation (a fact I shall elaborate upon shortly), and in this way *My Cousin Rachel* returns to the authorial predicament of *I'll Never Be Young Again*: by granting a chauvinistic voice to the already-privileged male Other the female author *seems* to wage an attack against her own gender.

Du Maurier's ultimate target, however, remains the patriarchy, and her attack is waged subtly, almost on the patriarchy's own terms. The author never allows the reader to be sure if Rachel is all that Philip suspects or imagines her to be, for instance. Sufficient evidence is provided of Philip's misogynistic mindset to make the reader doubt whether he or his guru Ambrose could appraise any woman's character and actions in a clear-sighted manner. Such men, to whom females are objects of both personal desire and fear, find the bipolar stereotypes of angel or sorceress conveniently applicable. Thus Rachel is presented through Philip's eyes as a "double" character, each side of this "doubleness" being essentially a single dimension. She is Philip's half-Cornish cousin (distantly-removed) by birth, and his half-Italian cousin by marriage, thus making her simultaneously a respectable citizen of Philip's world--even, perhaps, a suitable wife for him--and a threatening alien from "outlandish parts" (113) intruding into his family. We have seen how her personality alters for the worse, in Philip's opinion, when its

Italian side is uppermost. Rachel is both the "woman of impulse and emotion. . .unpredictable and strange" (284-5) who returns Philip's love in the privacy of her boudoir and the cold, calculating businesswoman of the public sphere who ruins him. Even her romantic interest in him must ultimately be attributed to one of two contradictory impulses: ingenuous, spontaneous affection, or experienced, manipulative seduction. The reader can never be sure which prevails, although some genuine, if repressed, emotion *is* hinted at when Rachel tells Philip,

"In a little while everything will seem to you just the same as it was before I came." . . . "Do you really believe that?" I said to her.

She did not answer at once. . . "I must believe it," she said, "or I would have no peace of mind." (309)

As outlined in the previous chapter, social and financial necessity forces Rachel to smother any deep feelings for Philip, her economic oppressor.

Does Rachel go further, attempting to murder the males who control her? At the novel's close Philip believes so, yet he is heavily influenced by Ambrose's last letters which express paranoid fears for his life, such as "'[a]re they trying to poison me?'" (328) and "'[s]he has done for me at last, Rachel my torment'" (29). Ambrose believes Rachel to be unbalanced in mind following a miscarriage which did her "irreparable harm" (214) and triggered neurotic behaviour. Ambrose's suspicions of and ignorance concerning women have by now been well established, however. It is in fact possible that the loss of that heir Ambrose desired yet feared to produce triggered in *him* some form of "irreparable [psychological] harm": we note that at about this time Ambrose begins to exhibit the irrational behaviour to which his doctors link the onset of hereditary brain disease.

Ambrose's belief that Rachel is poisoning him is in keeping with the paranoid suspicions of a sick mind; there are, moreover, significant holes in a poisoning theory. "'Herb-lore is very ancient. I learnt it from my mother,'" Rachel informs Louise (340); a *venefica* with such inbred expertise, and whose crime hinges upon financial expectations, would be

unlikely to let her husband die *before* he has signed a will in her favour. Similarly, Rachel would be unlikely to spend weeks nursing Philip back to health with herbal serum (300) only to dispatch him with double-strength, specially-brewed tisana shortly afterwards. The laburnum tree at the villa Sangalletti and the packet of seeds Philip finds in her desk *may* reveal nothing more sinister than an interest in plant propagation; after all, Rachel's list of horticultural methods contains no suspicious information about poisons. It is only misogynistic Philip who terms her herbal knowledge "witchcraft" (155); to the estate's poor tenants Rachel is the beneficent wise woman, healer of warts and illnesses and alleviator of childbirth pain.

Unable to decide whether his idol is goddess or demon, Philip is forced for his own sanity to presume Rachel pulled between opposing facets of her own psyche:

Something other than blind emotion directed her actions after all. Perhaps she was two persons, torn in two, first one having sway and then the other. I did not know. (331)

The reader is likewise encouraged to posit two opposed forms of impulse in Rachel: a retentive love and a murder-wish, each operating in alternation. The episode of the Christmas Eve party demonstrates the subtlety with which du Maurier presents both possible readings of Rachel. When Philip ushers his cousin into the loft filled with guests from every home in the county,

Rachel paused a moment on the threshold; I think she had not expected such a sea of faces. Then she saw the Christmas tree at the far end, and gave a cry of pleasure. The pause was broken, and a murmur of sympathy and gladness at her surprise arose from everyone. (194)

Rachel's delight in the Christmas tree can be read as spontaneous childlike enthusiasm, *or* a calculated effect designed to charm Philip and the assembled tenants. That perfectly-timed and stage-managed pause seems to argue for the latter reading. . .but we cannot be sure; neither

can we be sure whether Rachel's gift-giving to each party guest springs from generous impulse or a desire to establish herself within the aristocratic echelon (which she will presumably then undermine with ruinous expense).

As mentioned above, du Maurier freely admitted that her identification with Philip was so total she herself did not know what to make of Rachel; she stated: "I was beguiled, and she could have poisoned the entire world and I would not have minded" (Forster 261). Gilbert and Gubar comment pertinently on such attitudes when they note that

the continual use of male models inevitably involves the female artist in a dangerous form of psychological self-denial. . . .such self-denial may become even more self-destructive when the female author finds herself creating works of fiction that subordinate other women by perpetuating a morality that sanctifies or vilifies all women into submission. (Gilbert and Gubar 69)

Du Maurier's complete immersion in her masculine point of view, and ambiguous characterisation of a Becky Sharp-like, potentially-monstrous Rachel who is killed for having the presumption to rise against the ruling patriarchy, draws this novel uncomfortably close to such a self-destructive gender morality.

There are, however, literary models of conspiring Italian grandes dames with which du Maurier was familiar and upon which she may have unconsciously drawn: at the age of nineteen she became fascinated by an account of Renaissance grandees Cesare and Lucrezia Borgia, consequently applying their incestuous power struggles to her own family relationships (*Growing Pains* 91).

Recent biographical evidence also sheds light on psychological pressures which contributed to the form and characterisation of *My Cousin Rachel*. Forster, permitted access to du Maurier's private letters and papers, reveals the author's simultaneous love affairs in the 1940s with Ellen Doubleday, wife of her U S publisher Nelson Doubleday, and actress Gertrude Lawrence, a one-time flame of Gerald du Maurier.

Rachel's "double" character is thus an amalgam of both these individuals: ladylike Ellen, to whom the idea of any same-sex relationship except friendship was unthinkable, and liberated Gertrude, who, having performed the stage-role of Stella (a character heavily based on Ellen) in du Maurier's play *September Tide*, went on to physically act out Ellen-centred bisexual fantasies with the author in private. This potentially guilt-ridden infatuation was worked through in writing *My Cousin Rachel*, where total identification with her male narrator became a socially acceptable means for the outwardly respectable du Maurier to express taboo desires, as well as a method of articulating more general impulses present in mid-twentieth century middle-class British females.

In a letter to a mutual friend, du Maurier attempted to define her creation of complex Rachel--possibly innocent, possibly dangerous, but certainly threatening:

here [in the relationship between Philip and Ambrose] I was identifying myself with my boyish love for my father, and my boyish affection for old Nelson Doubleday, and suddenly was overwhelmed with an obsessional passion for the last of Daddy's actress loves--Gertrude--and the wife of Nelson, Ellen. They merged to make the single figure of Rachel, and I did not know if this figure was killing me or not, or if it had killed my father and Nelson. The symbol behind the living woman can either be the Healer, or the Destroyer. In the book I killed both, and Philip Ashley was left to his solitude in his Mena. (letter to Maureen Baker-Munton, 4 July 1957, quoted in Forster 421-422)

If Ambrose represents the controlling, powerful, patriarch-figures of Nelson Doubleday and Gerald du Maurier, then he has to be put to death so that the author, as Philip, can take over his possessions--including, of course, his bride. However a painful legacy of guilt and fear accompanies such possession, and escape from this "turmoil of psychological politics" (above-quoted letter 420) can ultimately be achieved only by murdering the double-natured character who has inspired it.

As Gilbert and Gubar also comment, "by projecting their rebellious impulses not into their heroines but into mad or monstrous

women (who are suitably punished in the course of the novel or poem) female authors dramatise their own self-division, their desire both to accept the strictures of patriarchal society and to reject them" (Gilbert and Gubar 78). *My Cousin Rachel* has no true heroine (unless Philip can be read as one); Rachel, however, clearly is its anti-heroine or "author's double" (78). As if du Maurier anticipated reader ambivalence to herself as creator of such a work, she puts into Philip's mouth the following comment: "I could not believe it possible that a girl I knew and trusted [Louise Kendall] could have so damnable a mind, and speak--that was the greatest hell--with so much logic and plain common sense, to tear apart another woman like herself" (*My Cousin Rachel* 286). Here du Maurier uses this novel's rational, sensible, female-figure, Louise, to pass judgement on the subversive female, Rachel. Of course, Louise is also known to the reader only through Philip's eyes and her summing-up of Rachel as calculating and avaricious *could* be merely Philip's selective presentation of her statements; it could also logically spring from jealousy of Rachel's hold over Philip. Louise may also be reacting here against the Rachel-like facets of her own psyche. Like Rachel, Louise too attempts to step beyond the prescribed submissive female role by telling Philip a few home truths for his own good, and she is punished not by physical murder but by emotional and intellectual rejection: "I turned away. She was younger than myself, a girl, and she could not understand. No one could ever understand, save Ambrose, who was dead," Philip sulks (286).

Forster points out that in du Maurier's early works (those written around the period of *I'll Never Be Young Again*) women are portrayed as mere passive victims of male aggression; in her later works, however, "women were often in control and making men suffer. Women had become quite vicious creatures, perfectly capable of tricking, and even killing, men as they had been tricked and killed in the early stories" (Forster 260). Although Forster refers to short stories here, her perceptions are equally applicable to the female characters of du Maurier's novels.

Witchdoctor and Chief: Patrimony in *The House on the Strand*

Rachel follows on from Rebecca as a subtle amalgam of the threatening and the alluring. Both figures contribute to the female characters in du Maurier's last novel narrated by a male, *The House on the Strand* (1969). Here the dual aspect of the male gaze is personified in Joanna Champernowne and Isolda Carminowe, the women Dick Young sees in his drug-induced time-travel. Although these women actually lived, Dick's one-dimensional impression of them as respectively nasty and nice springs from his own fears and desires. The medieval women have archetypal physical characteristics: aggressive, immoral Joanna is auburn-haired with "prominent" brown eyes (*The House on the Strand* 37); virtuous Isolda is blonde and fragile.

Such images reflect Dick's attempts to create a world of black and white morals, a male-ordained fantasy realm he projects onto his wife Vita by attributing to her alternate good and bad feminine impulses. When he is not praising Vita's figure (thus making her the desired Other), he caricatures her as the stereotypical nagging wife, a physical and emotional "dead weight" (133) upon him (thus casting her as the murderous, feared Other). These conflicting viewpoints reveal male ambivalence about female sexuality: Dick makes love to Vita by imagining she is desirable Isolda but is immediately afterwards "revolted" (227) by her imperfections (one glimpse of her wearing cold-cream and a bath-turban and he feels the urge to vomit). Later Dick mentally merges Vita with the husband-killer Joanna and attempts to throttle her.

Therefore, while he may claim to deplore medieval marginalisation of women, Dick himself expresses internalised antifeminist attitudes, attitudes which had by no means disappeared by the 1960s. He snubs Vita with put-downs such as "'[h]usbands loathe wives who understand them. It makes for monotony'" (130), while at the same time painfully aware he is no match for Vita's emotional aggression. In

fact, Dick habitually avoids marital conflict by retreating to such strategies as "to applaud everything, or, when occasion demanded silence, to stay mute" (110). Thus Dick's desire to dominate Vita parallels his sense of male inferiority; it also reflects ambivalence towards the patriarchal structures of British society.

The text of *The House on the Strand* presents these structures as damaging, not only to women but also to men. Dick hopes that by gaining Kilmarth (the "house" of the novel's title) and a concomitant position in society he will achieve life-enhancing power. The opposite, however, proves true, and possession of Kilmarth leads Dick to his death. It is notable that du Maurier herself disliked participating in aristocratic country house parties and expressed a clear "preference for ordinary people rather than grand ones" (Forster 109, 38). Conversely, admiration (fuelled by her father) for the elegant grandeur of Slyfield and Milton made a huge impression on her youthful psyche. Therefore du Maurier's presentation of Kilmarth as fascinating but ultimately destructive for Dick may (perhaps unconsciously) reflect her fluctuating personal response to British upper class privileges.

Patriarchal authority involves learned or imitated behaviour as well as inherited land and wealth, and hitherto Dick has experienced none of these. Like his namesake in *I'll Never Be Young Again*, he seeks a healthy father-figure: his biological father is dead and he has little respect for his domineering mother's second husband, the condescendingly-named "Dobsie". Dick has repeated the inept stepfather cycle in his own marriage to Vita, a strong-minded American widow with young sons. Thus he longs to free himself from female domination, and his repressed desire for patriarchal rights and privileges erupts when Vita urges him to settle their family in the USA. Rootless and lacking in identity, Dick has resigned a publishing position which brought him neither wealth nor success, and is now under pressure to enter his brother-in-law's New York firm, a move which will presumably subsume his independence entirely. He wants to reject the idea but has no

patrilineal family ties or hereditary rights of land ownership to keep him in Britain, and no innate authority to assert his will.

. . . it seemed to me that I was not sure of anything any more. Neither of myself, nor of Magnus, nor of Vita, nor of my own immediate world, for who was to say where I belonged. . . ? (81)

Thus unsure of who he is or what to do, Dick feels drawn to three men who appear to embody the specifically British fatherly control he wants in his own life: Magnus Lane, Dr Powell and Roger Kylmerth.

Magnus has everything Dick desires. He moves confidently within a solidly-rooted world founded upon inherited money and a Cornish country-house, Kilmarth (the real-life dower house to Menabilly, which du Maurier moved into after Browning's death). Magnus has intellectual genius, a successful career, the ability to dominate people and events, and has now discovered a means of partially controlling the seemingly-uncontrollable concept of time. His name, meaning "great one" and resembling the biblical Magus or Wise Man, archetypal possessor of esoteric knowledge, suggests that he has wizard-like ability. His collection of walking sticks (inherited from his father, the appropriately-titled Commander Lane) are phallic symbols indicative of patriarchal control. (It is interesting to note that du Maurier's father, whom she describes as "the god and the flame of his little household of women", also possessed a rack of twelve walking sticks, from which collection one would be selected to accompany each stroll--*Gerald* 224-5, 263.) As possessor of both physical and magical power, Magnus combines the two principal leadership functions of traditional communities, the tribal chief and the witchdoctor. It is significant that when Dick hears he is Magnus's beneficiary he hopes he has been left the symbolic walking-sticks; better than that, his legacy is Kilmarth itself, the house which connotes the patrilineal stability Dick desires and which is stocked with chemical potions that allow him to escape his repressed life.

Even before Magnus's death makes him its owner, having the free

run of Kilmarth and access to its laboratory allows Dick to pretend he has Magnus's power (with the added safeguard that Magnus himself can still be blamed for any mishaps). Yet while the offer of this holiday home is a temptation too great to turn down, it has "strings attached" (*The House on the Strand* 24)--drug addiction, with its accompanying physical and psychological perils. Dick's awareness that Magnus's magic has a malevolent aspect is revealed in his joking references to the professor as an "alchemist" and his laboratory as "Bluebeard's chamber". In the Bluebeard tale, a heroine-bride, left alone in the patriarchal mansion while her husband is away, faces execution for indulging her curiosity about a locked, forbidden chamber. What she sees inside the room--corpses of Bluebeard's murdered wives, dangling from hooks--bears a similarity to the display of pickled body-organs and rusty meat-hooks in Kilmarth's locked basement. The bride's guilt at entering this forbidden realm is revealed through the bloodstained key she retains, and Dick's bloodshot eye fulfils a similar "branding" purpose in *The House on the Strand*. In both cases the metaphor of blood indicates a gruesome death in store for the incautious hero/ine: for the bride, beheading; for Dick, hallucinogen-induced neurological failure.

If Bluebeard suggests the wife-murdering tribal chief, the image of the alchemist reflects a supernatural, witchdoctorish light upon Magnus's scientific genius. Dick admits he is charmed into acting as "guinea-pig" for bio-physical research by the "spell of [Magnus's] personality" (26). After falling under this spell Dick participates in his guru's magic rites, as is metaphorically indicated by his cynical comment: "[h]e called the tune, and I danced" (24). (Ritualistic music and dance are, of course, methods employed by primitive communities to enter or influence the spirit-world.)

Magnus repays Dick's compliance with manipulation and oppression, addressing him in patronising terms ranging from "dear boy" to "damn fool", and repeatedly emphasising Dick's limited intelligence. Like Ambrose, Magnus has homosexual tendencies; we are told of his

fastidiousness (48) and his penchant for sensual pleasures like bath oil and nude sunbathing (21, 25), and are given hints of a deviant sex-life (48, 145). Although Dick does not participate in homosexual activities with Magnus, the dynamics of their relationship do follow those of abusive love affairs, where a stronger partner fascinates and controls a weaker one. Magnus's presence has a drug-like effect upon Dick, being at first intensely stimulating, then abruptly disappearing and leaving an "inevitable sense of depletion" (51-2). This foreshadows the poisonous chemical cocktail to which Dick becomes addicted, and for which he pays with his life. Thus Dick follows here the behavioural model of the underdog who is most comfortable when controlled or even abused by stronger individuals.

The unhealthy nature of Magnus's psychological hold creates trouble in Dick's marriage. Vita's jealousy of Magnus is explicitly sexual, as is revealed by her speech (complete with Freudian slip) when Dick returns at 2.00 a.m. from visiting the man she terms "your Professor":

[s]he told me. . . that Magnus sapped me, and that when I returned to her I looked like a *pricked* balloon. (52; italics mine)

A row follows, in which Vita vents her anger at Dick's emasculated condition by beating the sofa-cushions, while Dick sits passively, "looking aggrieved" (52). Both Magnus and Vita are domineering partners who unman or feminise Dick and both therefore can be seen as contributing to Dick's overwhelming, if repressed, desire for liberation. For Dick, internalising the power structures of British patriarchal hegemony is presented by the text as potentially emancipating, a means of mastering Vita and equalling Magnus.

We note that Dick begins to take control over his own life once he has supplanted Magnus at Kilmarth and for the first time experiences security based on property ownership. Kilmarth is doubly important as it is the site of Dick's addictive time-trips and it is where he chose to spend his university holidays. At that time Dick's infatuation with Magnus

extended to Commander and Mrs Lane, who became Dick's surrogate parents: "I laughed at them and loved them, and when they died within twelve months of one another I was almost more distressed than Magnus was himself" (28). Dick confesses his neglect of his own mother, disparaging her unceasing chatter and admitting he has not visited her for a year (83). Thus from his late teens he has rejected his insecure middle class background and pretended that the privileged structures Magnus enjoyed were his also.

Although Dick envies Magnus's power, he simultaneously resents being the object of the abuses such power permits. Dick may not verbalise his fears of Magnus destroying his marriage or killing him with experimental drugs, but he is nevertheless aware that Magnus manipulates him. His attempts to alter the power balance between them, such as withholding information during telephone calls, do not succeed. Thus combined jealousy and resentment is accompanied by a repressed murder-wish similar to that of an heir towards a patriarchal incumbent, as Dick longs to obtain Magnus's powerful lifestyle for himself. Although he may deplore feudal leader Oliver Carminowe, who kills Otto Bodrugan to gain his lands, castle, woods and parks, Dick too becomes a "bloody murderer" (177) in his desire to take over Magnus's possessions.

This desire is fulfilled in Magnus's disappearance, which becomes a pseudo-murder scenario. Dick's delay in informing the police that Magnus is missing implicates him as a suspect, as is emphasised by his guilt-feelings when at the police-station: "I felt inadequate, guilty. . . my story, as I told it to the sergeant, sounded shamefaced, somehow, irresponsible" (183). Magnus's death represents a form of poetic justice for Dick, a species of triumph of the underdog. As a man who moves confidently within patriarchal systems Magnus displays an aggressive stiff-upper-lip approach to life, while Dick has hitherto exhibited the more "feminine" traits of sensitivity and instinct. As Dick says,

[he] was scientific, unemotional, it did not really concern him who was broken in the process so long as what he was attempting to prove was proved successfully; whereas I

was already caught up in the mesh of history: the people who to him were puppets of a bygone age were alive for me. (90)

Magnus's roughshod attitude is therefore repaid in kind when he is hit by an unseen train while on a time-trip; Dick narrowly avoids the same fate by relying on his intuition. Characteristically, even in this situation Dick refuses to see Magnus as anything less than heroic: "[i]f instinct had warned him otherwise he had disregarded it, unlike myself, and therefore showed the greater courage" (226). Magnus's actions reflect not courage, but the insensitive power-drive of the male oppressor, an attitude Dick now strives to emulate.

It should be noted that Magnus, for his part, has his own unconscious murder-wish against Dick, who is a threat, poised to take over Kilmarth (even though Dick may be unaware of this fact). We see Magnus's repressed feelings towards Dick in his treatment of the laboratory monkey who, like Dick, tests the time-travel hallucinogen. The monkey dies, not from side-effects or an overdose, but because Magnus "killed him on purpose" (89) to dissect his brain cells. Dick, trapped inside the emotional cages of Kilmarth, drug-dependence, and Magnus's psychological hold, is merely a superior version of the laboratory monkey, a living equivalent of the pickled brains and embryos in Kilmarth's cellar and a male counterpart to Bluebeard's threatened bride. Magnus's brusque assurance that "[y]our brain's different. . . You can take a lot more punishment yet" (89) is unscientific and untrue: like the unfortunate test animal, Dick is doomed by Magnus's murderous intentions. Thus *The House on the Strand* presents possession of Kilmarth and what it stands for as dangerous to men, especially to those who, like Dick, desire to break into the established patriarchal system from "outside". Like the drugs in its laboratory, Kilmarth *can* symbolise life or rootedness for aimless Dick, yet it is also the instrument of his death.

Owning Kilmarth gives Dick an enjoyable sense of power, drawing him ever more firmly into Magnus's ideologies: he believes that

"the link between us would never be broken because the home that had been his was mine" (212). Thus at Kilmarth Dick's retiring personality changes to the authoritarian manner of the domineering patriarch.

Possession of esoteric knowledge hidden from Vita (the drug-trips) confers upon him a form of male superiority, and this phallic power is demonstrated in the aggressive way he now drives his car. After one time-trip he experiences "a tremendous sense of elation, and. . . must have broken the speed-limit several times driving home" (49). Later, driving Vita to church:

I shot up the lane to Tywardreath elated, the very fact that she knew nothing of the truth filling me with a ridiculous sense of delight, like hoodwinking my mother in the past. It was a basic instinct fundamental to all males. The boys possessed it too, which was the reason I backed them up in those petty crimes of which Vita disapproved. . . (117)

Eventually Dick and Vita come to loggerheads, not over their personal marital problems but over the future of the patriarchal stronghold, Kilmarth. Knowing that Magnus has not left Dick the money to maintain Kilmarth, Vita measures the house up for subdivision into modern apartments, an idea which incenses Dick. By the time du Maurier wrote *The House on the Strand* the post-World War II fashion for turning grand houses into profit-making apartments or bungalows had attracted public outcry; in 1960 Betty Jerman, a former *Guardian* staff member, writes of semi-detached houses "designed by a speculative builder" being "squeezed in like sardines" across garden frontages of large London houses (Stott 81). Du Maurier's short story "Split Second" also explores this theme in detail: when standards-conscious Mrs Ellis is transported in time from 1932 to 1952 she is appalled to discover her "solid. . . unspoilt" Hampstead home has become a dingy lodging-house for social riff-raff, including a pornographic photographer and an out-of-work actress (*"The Rendezvous" and other stories* 191). Mrs Ellis is emotionally devastated by the social, as well as spatial, chaos into which she is thrown, after discovering that Hampstead is no longer inhabited by agreeable people

("n'est plus habité par des gens convenables"--Codaccioni 239).

(Hampstead was, significantly, the chosen domicile of both George and Gerald du Maurier, and in her 1934 biography of her father, du Maurier already bemoans the future development threatening this semi-rural suburb--*Gerald* 182.) Appalled at the possibility of such a fate for Kilmarth, Dick attempts to lay down the law to Vita:

I planted myself before the fireplace, the traditional spot sacrosanct from time immemorial to the master of the house, and said, "Get this straight. This is my house, and what I do with it is my affair. I don't want suggestions from you. . . I intend to live here, and if you don't care to live here with me you must make your own arrangements."
(*The House on the Strand* 237)

Despite his newly-acquired authority, however, Dick is still never himself free from patriarchal control. Magnus's drugs exert an ever-present pull, and after Magnus's death his character-double in the form of Dr Powell sustains his position of authority in the text. Another successful intellectual, Powell (whose name is an echo of "power") imposes control over Dick with his own drugs, and his rational psychoanalytic approach neatly pigeonholes Dick as a lapsed Catholic with a fear of monks, stepfathers and widows who remarry. (Du Maurier was fascinated by psychoanalytic theory, which she studied throughout her life--see, for example, *Growing Pains* 91 and *Forster* 299. Powell's psychoanalytic interpretation of Dick's dilemma, however, is presented here as amateurish and partial; this is an interesting example of reflexivity in the text, as the novel refers in an ironic manner to its own techniques.) Unlike Magnus, Powell *is* prepared to obey his instincts, albeit in an experimental and dangerous manner. Although his hunches that Dick is on drugs and that he will return secretly to Kilmarth are both proved right, Powell's instinctive delay in seeking professional support (so that he can observe Dick's actions) is another, subtle, form of murder.

Dick needs help from a more professional source than Powell's hobby-psychiatry. Even in hallucinatory time-trips Dick cannot free

himself from his innate sense of inferiority; his primary identification is not with Isolda's heroic lover, the aristocrat Otto Bodrugan, but with middle-class steward Roger Kylmerth. Identifying with Roger is one way for Dick to sidestep his own time-related misery. The time-travel theme explored in "Split Second" is another parallel which links this story of changing social values with *The House on the Strand*. Unhappy in the present and fearful of the future, Dick comforts himself by following the past life of this man, who like himself is middle-class but who, as befits the first builder on the Kilmarth house-site, "always takes charge" (*The House on the Strand* 24) on time-trips. As Dick immerses himself in the medieval world he mirrors Roger's actions unconsciously, for instance by disposing of Magnus's potions in a parallel of Roger's destroying the poisoning evidence (197-8) and copying Roger's spy behaviour by listening to Vita's telephone calls.

Dick's attempt on Vita's life is a reconstruction of Roger's killing of Isolda. Roger does this not (as he claims) as a form of benevolent euthanasia, but as revenge against Isolda, who despises his complicity in Henry Champernoune's murder and refuses to love him. Furthermore, as Roger has advanced himself in Joanna Champernoune's household by assisting in Henry's demise, his about-face to side with Isolda ruins his career ambitions. Thus Roger (consciously or unconsciously) blames Isolda for his ruin and murders her. Here again a du Maurier text presents men murdering women who are uncontrollable or unattainable, or who obstruct male ambition (as Vita threatens to undermine Dick's plans).

The foundations of Roger's home underlie Kilmarth, and in this way the text presents Roger's initial "construction" as the building block of the house Magnus and Dick will inherit. With his desire for power, Roger's ideology foreshadows that of the patriarchal hegemony (or ideological construction) that Magnus and Dick inherit as well. Unlike the clear-cut morality present in Dick's black and white/dark and fair fantasy-women, Roger represents those grey areas of the human (male) psyche

that Dick cannot compartmentalise and control. Roger is simultaneously a sensitive, if compromised, man *and* a villain who by cunning and aggression intimidates weaker characters (such as the novice monk he terrorises) to amass power. These ethically impure actions create the historically-based "stability" Dick grafts onto, and thus Kilmarth's virtues are presented as dubious and destructive.

This sub-text to the novel is foreshadowed in Roger's initial glance towards Dick, which he interprets thus: "[i]t was a challenge. 'Follow if you dare!'--compelling, strange" (13). Levering his way into upper-class structures *is* a "challenge" for Dick, for it involves the anxiety of abandoning his middle-class values and daring to take over "strange" surroundings. Dick gains Kilmarth not through socially-accepted channels, such as patrimonial inheritance or accumulating capital through hard work, but in a sycophantic manner, by imitating Magnus's and Roger's abusive lifestyles.

The text of *The House on the Strand* demonstrates how men who enter into a corrupt system will themselves become corrupt and damage others in their turn. Dick, using his usurped authority, further threatens his shaky marriage by duping, controlling and abusing Vita. This occurs partly because Vita's Americanness distances her from the orderly British society in which Dick has immersed himself. He likens her arrival with her sons at Kilmarth to an invasion threatening his new-found stability, a "take-over of something I had shared, as it were, in secret, not only with Magnus and his dead parents in the immediate past, but with Roger Kylmerth six hundred years ago" (107-8). "Take-over" is a term borrowed from the world of commerce, and we note that Dick has specifically rejected the commercial sphere by resigning from his publishing job:

[n]o more hopping into the underground. . .the familiar office window, the inevitable routine, discussions about publicity, jackets, new authors, old authors. All finished, through my resignation. Nothing to get up for. But Vita wanted it to start all over again on her side of the Atlantic. (83)

By taking up residence at Kilmarth Dick believes he has moved from a threatening world of commercial bourgeois vulgarity (symbolised here by Vita's business concerns) to the secure, leisured lifestyle of the British ruling class. Moreover, foreign "take-overs" of scenic Cornish retreats provoked genuine fear in du Maurier's circle in the late 1960s; her 1972 novel *Rule Britannia* explores Cornish resistance of a US military invasion. The miseries of the Vietnam War, Edward Heath's attempts to link the UK with the European Community, and the formation of the Cornish Nationalist Party, Mebyon Kernow (Sons of Cornwall), may all have contributed to these anti-American sentiments (Cook 270), although a more genuine threat to the Cornish lay not in a fantasy-scenario of invading US Marines but in real-life rapacious foreign investors and entrepreneurs, the materialistic barbarian power (Kelly 117) of a newer culture.

Du Maurier's character Vita represents more than a popular fear of the British lifestyle becoming contaminated by vulgar Americanism, however. To Dick, the real threat lies in the Otherness or foreignness of Vita's female identity, an identity which can no longer be tolerated in his patriarchal ideology and so must be removed. His murder attempt having failed, the only way for Dick to eliminate Vita's control and escape her proposed exodus from Britain is to desert her at the airport and sneak back to Kilmarth for "my last trip, my final fling" (*The House on the Strand* 275). Ironically, this *will* be his last; the paralysis and death induced by Magnus's chemical brew parallels the way Dick has killed the sensitive or feminine side of his personality by embracing patriarchal structures. Following on from the other symbolic names in this novel, Vita's name (meaning "life") demonstrates the danger of the patriarchy, to Dick and to all men. By rejecting females as threatening obstructions to male power and by entering into the doubtful freedoms of patriarchal control Dick succeeds in murdering his own "better half"--the intuitive side of his psyche which Vita symbolises.

From Mansion to Castle: Constructions of Power in *The Scapegoat*

Similarities exist between Dick Young and the narrator of du Maurier's *The Scapegoat* (1957), the middle-class bachelor John. An isolated Englishman who lectures in French history, John has always desired to be an active participant in others' lives, gaining not academic but firsthand knowledge of what it means to "be a Frenchman. . .one of them" (*The Scapegoat* 4). Like Dick, John is allowed to fulfil his desires by temporarily stepping into the patriarchal power structures (the house and family) of another man, that of his aristocratic French look-alike, Jean.

Jean de Gué has inherited the title of comte, but his carrying out of the functions expected of a *seigneur* (organising the annual *grande chasse*, for instance), are mere theatrical displays of an attenuated power. Jean's true power is negligible, for it is devoid of genuine trust, loyalty and respect from his family and the community's lower orders--qualities which a feudal lord, by adequately fulfilling his protective function, should inspire. By swapping places with John Jean seeks to escape the embarrassment of his limited ability to help the people of St Gilles. He also seeks to escape an array of decadent aristocratic vices which threaten to control *him*--vices presumably indicative of the twentieth century landed class as a whole.

The de Gué family business (a *verrerie*) is unprofitable due to Jean's laziness and dubious business ethics, which combine to create abnegation of managerial responsibility; the weakling personality of Jean's brother Paul is equally unsuited to the role of company co-director. Jean's failure as manager reflects ironically on the fact that he had successful former manager Maurice Duval killed during World War II, less because of Duval's political leanings than because of his popularity with the workers. Duval, a commoner, usurped the rank of authority which Jean thought should be his and Paul's by patrilineal right; Duval was also poised to marry Blanche and thus gain a double hold on the de Gué property.

Oddly, it is only Jean's and Paul's generation which brands Duval an interloper and denies him the right to govern; the former Comte de Gué approved of handing control back to the people. As Blanche says, "'From the first you [Jean] were against Maurice. . .envious because Papa thought so much of him, even though you took no interest in the *verrierie* yourself and hardly ever went near it. Then later, when Papa gave him control and made him master, you began to hate him'" (320-1). Blanche's words here suggest that the elder Comte has indirectly done Duval a disservice by elevating him above his working-class peers. A Marxist interpretation of Duval's death in the glass-filled well might go so far as to suggest that by his shift from the factory floor into the middle-management arena working-class Duval has become alienated from the products of his labour, to the extent that glass is an element in his "execution". This image of broken glass and death (recreated in Marie-Noel's sleepwalking episode) serves to reinforce the shattered and destructive nature of St Gilles's community as John finds it, echoing T.S. Eliot's 1925 poem *The Hollow Men*:

Our dried voices. . . .
Are quiet and meaningless
As. . . rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar
(*The Hollow Men* ll.5-10)

Duval's "outsider-governor" position is recreated in the text by John, who identifies strongly with the *verrierie* workers and whose first allies are the servants Gaston and Julie. To John, the working-class sphere is more valid than that of the château; he believes it is not the Comtes de Gué who lend St Gilles stability, but rather men like Duval, whose solid working-class ethics embody "virtues of permanence" (*The Scapegoat* 187).

However, parallel with these egalitarian sympathies John feels a responsibility "to preserve Jean de Gué from degradation" (110); the protective, feudal function Jean represents must not be shamed or permitted to collapse. As John says, "I did not want a handful of

workmen, and a peasant woman, and her maimed relative to despise their employer, [even though Jean] would not know if they did, and would not care" (113). The comtesse articulates this cynical detachment which John struggles against in his search to restore a power-balance between the classes:

[h]er attitude troubled me. I felt disenchanted. Julie, who had seemed so honest and so loyal, was now shown as grasping, and the comtesse, a moment ago laughing and generous, was suddenly heartless, lacking perception. The wave of sympathy which I felt for both, instinctive, sincere, was somehow dulled. . . (125)

These shifting attitudes are similar to those experienced by Philip towards Rachel in *My Cousin Rachel*, and indicate the narrator's--and author's--recognition of the uncertainties present in human relationships which cross or challenge class boundaries.

Jean, the cut-throat "id" figure of the split-personality John/Jean duo, also cynically slashes John's sentimentalism with his own version of Duval's history: "[h]e was a climber, like all his kind. Edged his way in with my father, with an eye to the future. Blanche was his greatest card, and I stopped him playing it'" (347). As John has no answer to this dilemma, the best he can do is to try to equalise the power-balance at St Gilles.

Unfortunately in this environment John is an alien in nationality, class and even blood-group (265). Like Dick Young, usurping power-structures that he has neither created nor permitted to disintegrate, he is consumed by guilt and contrition for Jean's failures as benevolent overlord. Throughout the text Jean operates as the embodiment of John's desires, the "host with the most" that John desires to be; thus John feels personally responsible for Jean's lapses and excesses, and attempts to repair the damage. Despite his good intentions, however, John cannot successfully replace Duval as the people's champion in the de Gué household. His attempts at reconciliation are largely failures. From the disastrous family gift-giving (traditional prerogative of lord of the manor)

through to endangering the *verrierie* by signing an unprofitable contract and his cumulative faux pas at the annual hunt, John's actions merely thrust Jean's patriarchal failures more clearly into public notice.

The neglected château of St Gilles is another instance of du Maurier's use of architecture to symbolise a corrupt patrimony. In passages evocative of the *Sleeping Beauty* fairy tale, the château is described as neglected and crumbling: "isolated. . .like a dead world lost in vapour" (229). Its guttering is choked with debris and no rain flows from the ornamental gargoyles' mouths, while the moat, which also should run with life- and health-giving water, is strikingly reminiscent of those burned manor-house sites in *Rebecca* and *The King's General*, "now gone to grass and nettles" (33), overgrown with "ivy and. . .weeds" (249). This image of dried-up springs (of water, life and human compassion), evocative of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, underpins the novel's structure.

Because Jean feels threatened by the women in his life, and because his method of gaining power is to remove those (like Duval) who get in his way, he ensures that his female relatives are imprisoned like objects within St Gilles; he complains to John, "'My one trouble is that I have too many possessions. Human ones'" (20). To thus continue the fairy tale analogy, in chambers within the château's towers sleep twentieth century equivalents of enchanted *Sleeping Beauty* or imprisoned *Rapunzel*--Jean's mother, sister Blanche, daughter Marie-Noel, sister-in-law Renée and wife Françoise--all symbolically asleep to any life outside the existence to which a male-dominated system has consigned them. The comtesse and Blanche are particularly stifled, as each has talents which should be employed in doing the tasks Jean has failed at. The comtesse longs to run the château (and proves she can, by taking over from injured John at the hunt and marshalling the household in military fashion for Françoise's funeral), while Blanche's skills as designer and manager could make the *verrierie* profitable.

Moreover, to augment their physical isolation, each de Gué female

also endures psychological bondage reinforcing her lack of physical liberty. The comtesse is addicted to morphine, and it is Jean who keeps her well-supplied with these incapacitating drugs. Blanche's repressed anger and sexual desire have been sublimated into a bloodthirsty form of religious fanaticism, and ten-year-old Marie-Noel is already well-schooled in her aunt's dubious theology, with its regime of masochistic self-punishment. Françoise is relegated by unwanted pregnancies to a depressed, idle existence; Renée, with whom Jean has begun an affair, has a shallow and predatory personality. As John observes, "'[s]he hasn't enough to do. . . None of you women have enough to do'" (171).

Jean's mistress Béla, while not living within the château itself, can nevertheless be included in this catalogue of heroines imprisoned by de Gué's ideology. The architecture of her eighteenth century house (John must enter it via a bridge, a balcony and a long window) is distinctly tower-like, while her name, that of "successive Hungarian kings" (153), and her golden-haired good looks categorise her firmly as a fairy tale princess. Her occupation as a dealer in rare ornaments also connects her to romantic antiquity. John believes that Béla's love for Jean is in itself imprisoning: "I could not be sure, when a woman loves a man, how true is her judgement. To see no evil could be the one blindness" (360).

The only way for an imprisoned fairy tale heroine to gain active control over her situation is by egress from her tower-window, an escape usually accomplished with help from the archetypal handsome prince. Rapunzel's royal deliverer supplies her with materials to fashion a rope-ladder; Sleeping Beauty's good fairy commissions a passing prince to climb through the castle window and wake her godchild. In *The Scapegoat* du Maurier plays upon this literary convention to explore twentieth century female psychological struggle, casting John as the liberating (Pauper-)Prince. In his efforts to ameliorate Jean's mistakes John does much climbing in and leaning through windows. . .when visiting Béla, when entering the *verrière* master's house, and when interacting with the family at the château.

The child Marie-Noel first appears to John at her turret-window, threatening escape from her imprisonment by suicide: "'I swear to you,' [she] said, 'that if you don't come to me by the time I count a hundred, I shall throw myself out'" (63). John snatches her away from the ledge, but Marie-Noel nevertheless unconsciously fulfils her suicide threat by climbing down the *verrière's* waterless well during a sleepwalking episode--a symbolic act of death, as the well represents Duval's grave.

Jean's wife Françoise literally fulfils Marie-Noel's threat in a parallel "suicide", toppling from her window into the castle's waterless moat. (Kelly identifies this as the novel's turning-point, following which "John is suddenly overcome by a sense of responsibility for all of the misery that has befallen this family"--Kelly 99.) Françoise's death may be either a suicide attempt or an endeavour to retrieve her miniature of Jean. If so, her desire is singularly pathetic, as Jean's love for Françoise centres only on the fortune he will inherit if she has a son. Patriarchal structures here stretch imprisonment across three generations: the clause concerning male-only inheritance was added to Françoise's marriage licence by her father, and by it Françoise is forced to resent and reject her only living child, the daughter Marie-Noel.

Marie-Noel in turn is fearful of growing up a female in this society. Her few attempts at unrepressed, unladylike activity end in disaster; while turning cartwheels she breaks Françoise's favourite ornaments and receives a maternal curse:

"Why doesn't your father teach you discipline and manners. . .? You wait until you have a brother, then he'll get the petting and the spoiling and you'll take second place, and a good thing it will be for you and for everybody else." (*The Scapegoat* 139)

Similarly, it is significant that Marie-Noel's sleepwalking escape from the château coincides with Françoise's own escape through death. Julie assigns Marie-Noel's neurotic behaviour (sleepwalking and fascination with "saints and visions") to its proper place with some plain speaking about the girl's fear of impending sexual maturity: "'These things are

never difficult for us [the working classes]. . .but for you people at the château life is full of complications. Sometimes I wonder how you live at all. Nothing is natural'" (253).

Upper class society of the 1950s has clearly altered little since the nineteenth century; the text's presentation of Françoise reveals that in this milieu a woman's worth hinges only upon lineage, wealth, and the ability to produce sons. Françoise clings to the porcelain cat and dog, mementoes of her middle class life; of these gifts from her mother (not her upwardly mobile father) she says, "'At least they're mine. . .They're not part of St Gilles'" (297). Like the "I" of *Rebecca*, Françoise is an outsider in an upper class household. She has no say in the running of the château and cannot even spend her own money until she turns fifty or has a son. Only when Françoise is in her coffin does the comtesse acknowledge a hint of "breeding" in her bourgeois daughter-in-law (333), and the pun present in this accolade renders it double-edged. Like Katherine of *Hungry Hill*, Françoise must endure the physical and psychological risk of unwanted pregnancies, "confinements" that ultimately lead to her death. Françoise's fall may be an accident, but (like "I"'s temptation to jump from Rebecca's west-wing window) it nevertheless fulfils a tacit suicide wish.

John attempts to liberate the de Gué women as well as help the lower classes in the community. Like Rapunzel's Prince Charming, he watches from the grounds as Blanche (whose name echoes that of the banished, enchanted, sleeping Snow White) opens the tower-window of her monastic cell, and he then restores her to society by giving her the glass foundry's "master's house" and a position as head designer. John also throws open the windows of the comtesse's dark, close room to let in light and air, at the same time offering her control over both the household and her morphine-dependency. At this time a rainstorm clears the debris from the gargoyle spouting outside the comtesse's window, an image suggesting cleansing, healing and a renewed life offered to St Gilles.

Although the text of *The Scapegoat* emphasises the degeneracy and decay of the upper classes, this decay is presented as potentially reversible. John's opening of the tower-windows--admitting the light of new vision and the option of egress to St Gilles's prisoners--recalls Chapter 6 of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, wherein Doctor Manette is released after his "long seclusion from direct light and air" in the Bastille's North Tower (*A Tale of Two Cities* 40). Such revolutionary symbolism can however be read as an ironic touch, for in fact John's actions represent not a spirit of outright social rebellion, but an attempted amelioration or reform *within* the ruling class. John does not storm or smash the château's architecture, but rearranges and heals it in an effort to reverse the damaging patriarchal ideologies it has hitherto symbolised. St Gilles's servant class will not be granted positions of power, but will instead be re-governed in a more loving manner than before. The two broken towers on the glass château Marie-Noel finds in the well indicate not a destroyed aristocracy, but a strengthened and responsible one, in which females as well as males can govern the lower orders with diligence and compassion--a move away from a decadent patriarchy towards a matriarchal meritocracy.

In the well episode Marie-Noel's hands become scarred with stigmata-like marks from the broken glass with which she has filled her pockets (*The Scapegoat* 260). The text presents these unconsciously-produced wounds as images of Christ-like martyrdom. To John, who Marie-Noel has seen purposely burn his hand to avoid responsibility and exposure, she writes: "'I am going to pray that all your sins may be visited upon me, who, being young and strong, can bear them better'" (244). Her entering the disused well and rescuing the broken glass objects within it heralds a salvation or healing process for the entire de Gué family, beginning with Blanche, who immediately re-enters the "master's house" which represents her sexual and career fulfilment. John's own wounded hand, although initially inflicted through cowardice, fulfils a similar healing/saving function when he allows the Comtesse to grip it

during her morphine withdrawal:

I felt the pain shoot from my fingers to my elbow. . . I knew that if I took my hand away something would be lost to her, some confidence, some strength, which for the moment was part of her and gave her courage. (282)

This emphasis on shared pain thus corresponds to the *tendresse* and healing John tries to bring St Gilles.

A healthful reverse is also suggested by the metonym of blood transfusion upon which Françoise's recovery hinges. A dried-up, failing social system must be revitalised with fresh blood, personified in humanistic John, who injects a life-saving dose of love and responsibility into the community. Unfortunately, like his incompatible blood group, middle-class John's *tendresse* cannot immediately be successfully grafted onto three hundred years of aristocratic decadence.

As a history lecturer, John is aware that abuses of privilege and power lead to revolution. John's desire to repair what Jean has damaged can be read as an attempt to prove himself morally worthy to take over these structures and gain Jean's inheritance--and power--for himself. It should be noted that John is not characterised as all *tendresse*; he fears that his secret self, the man he might have been, could be a Jean-like individual with "a mocking laugh, a casual heart, a swift-roused temper and a ribald tongue" (6). Once he has changed places with his alter ego Jean these repressed character-faults come to the fore, and the power John enjoys as Comte de Gué rapidly turns to shame (106) as he internalises Jean's lifestyle; "guilt that the sins of Jean de Gué had been increased tenfold by his scapegoat" (133). Even as he rescues St Gilles's working classes and entrapped females John slips into acting out Jean's vices: duplicity, bullying, cowardice, alcoholism, adultery, attempted murder. When Jean returns to reclaim his role as Prince, John is less than willing to resume the non-identity part of Pauper, and greets his alter-ego with a loaded revolver.

While John claims that love for the de Gués, not their money, attaches him to St Gilles, it is not clear whether his motives are totally

unselfish. John's murder-wish and desire to gain Jean's patriarchal privileges, wealth and family relationships for himself echo Jean's own observation:

"...the only motive force in human nature is greed. Insects, animals, men, women, children, we live by greed alone. It is not very pretty, but what of it? The thing to do is to minister to the greed, and to give people what they want. The trouble is, they are never satisfied." (19)

After he is denied his greedy desires, John's response is a dog-in-the-manager attitude of rejecting not merely the good life, but life altogether. After a week as a decadent French count his own sense of failure and latent fascination with Catholicism develop into a Blanche- and Marie-Noel-like obsession with penance, and he departs to the monastery for which he was bound before Jean tempted him into tasting worldly pleasures.

It is true that if Blanche reassumes the "master's house" her fiancée Duval will be symbolically replaced within the community. Similarly, Marie-Noel (who copies her aunt's misdirected religious energies) may imitate Blanche in a healthier manner as a new, benevolent leader. However, in this novel du Maurier relegates happy-ever-after endings to the world of make-believe. The text includes a reflexive reference to its own fairy tale element when John imagines the château blessed by benevolent magic:

I wished that this spirit of early morning did not have to turn to day, to the restless clash of will, of movement, of divided heart and mood, but that all of them, inside the château, might stay suspended, as it were, in time, like the courtiers in "La Belle au bois dormant", shielded from the future by a cobweb barricade. (243)

John ultimately recognises this desire for the idle fancy it is. The unpleasant reality of St Gilles's future is shown in Jean's return, when John hands over his loaded revolver (a phallic, controlling symbol) to the curé, thus relinquishing patriarchal power, and Jean, in contrast, uses his gun to make John obey him. This episode indicates a return to the novel's

opening scenario, with a corrupt aristocracy causing the disintegration of once-benevolent feudal structures which uphold it.

Unlike the previously-discussed du Maurier male narrators, John does not use his position of power to abuse women or the lower classes. Instead, he attempts to help and heal them, although cynical Jean casts doubts on whether he really accomplishes any good or merely makes matters worse. For instance, consigning Renée to wimpish Paul's company on lengthy business trips may destroy their marriage altogether. The Béla/Blanche confusion in the gift-giving episode may also hint at less than innocent intentions: an unconscious incestuous desire on Jean's part, perhaps, re-enacted by his alter-ego John. (Jean had Duval murdered not only to prevent him taking over the *verrerie*, but also to prevent him marrying the sister with whom he is inseparably paired in family snapshots.) On his part, John experiences confusion between the novel's interchangeable fairy tale heroines: Sleeping Beauty (Béla, with whom he sleeps) and the Snow White whom he liberates (Blanche): he suspects that *Blanche* has detected his imposture, but it is *Béla* who in fact does so. Both women bandage John's injured hand, and both are associated with fulfilling his physical needs. The enormous bottle of "Femme" meant for Béla becomes an appropriate erotic gift for Blanche once John has released her from the sexual repression of her monastic chamber. In these subtle ways the text hints at John's potential to become an abuser, whether conscious or unconscious, if allowed to remain in a position of power.

The theory that John is the only one of du Maurier's male narrators to ever really become his own man (Cook 211) is debatable. Presumably Jean, who has in one week destroyed John's life and career in England, will at St Gilles continue his regime of patriarchal destruction, ruining John's new plans and incipient self-worth. However, Jean's reunion with Marie-Noel at the novel's end does hint at genuine, if repressed, affection for the daughter who will be his heir; thus the novel contains a slim ray of hope for a better future.

Forster believes *The Scapegoat* makes interesting study for the psychological exploration it offers: "[t]he whole experience is an exercise in what Daphne would herself have liked to do--to release *her* 'man within', her troublesome No.2. The fact that this released inner self *was* a man helped her to express thoughts and feelings about herself which would otherwise have been impossible" (Forster 286). The image of the *verrierie* is also peculiarly relevant to du Maurier's own family patrimony, as is explored thoroughly in her biographical family-history novels, *The Glass-Blowers* and *The Du Mauriers*. To extend Forster's observation, I suggest that here du Maurier expresses thoughts and feelings not only about herself and her family but about society in general, the upper-class European milieu in which she moved and which she saw as needing revitalisation. For this reason the psychological aspects of *The Scapegoat* became more important to her than the plot, which she allowed publisher Victor Gollancz to alter as he wished.

Accepting the novel's true focus highlights the irrelevancy of Gollancz's reservations about it; he commented that "'[t]he combined Assurance and Marriage Settlement motives don't quite work out'" and "'[c]hild in well unsatisfactory'" (Forster 286). On the contrary, we have seen just how valid the "marriage settlement" and "child in well" episodes are to du Maurier's exploration of female struggle. As with all her novels, du Maurier's purpose in writing *The Scapegoat* was not to churn out a popular thriller or romance (the "mind-dope" contemporary literary critics accused her of producing) but to cogently explore twentieth century cultural turmoil. Male critics labelling du Maurier's romances as "dope" actually reveal their own profound fears of female sexuality (Kelly 77); a similar observation can be applied to those who dismiss as "unsatisfactory" such psychologically-penetrating episodes as Marie-Noel's pseudo-death in the symbolic well.

Du Maurier's Compulsive Re-Constructions

Du Maurier composed two other novels in first-person male narration; these, being of lesser relevance to the discussion, will merely be touched on briefly here.

Armino Fabbio, the narrator of *The Flight of the Falcon* (1965), is controlled and abused by his elder brother, the charismatic Christ- or Lucifer-like Aldo Donati; Fabbio seems, however, reluctant to abuse or control others in his turn. He has internalised a dislike of women and sexuality, in reaction to the behaviour of his "beautiful slut" of a mother (*The Flight of the Falcon* 33), and appears intimidated by rather than aggressive towards the novel's female characters. *The Flight of the Falcon* completes the process du Maurier begins in *My Cousin Rachel* of exploring specifically non-British patriarchal values. The symbolic architectural structure in this case is an Italian Renaissance castle, the ducal palace at Ruffano where Donati tortures Fabbio, and from the turret of which Donati leaps to his death.

Niall Delaney, co-narrator of *The Parasites* (1949), also presumably commits suicide after a lifetime of unsuccessfully trying to control his step-sister Maria. Niall is marginalised and abused not so much by his father, the Bohemian alcoholic Pappy, as by Maria's dominating husband, Charles, an aristocratic ex-army officer. Charles's manor-houses, Coldhammer and Farthings, take on symbolic importance in this novel; economically-named Farthings, in particular, is embossed with Charles's patriarchal stamp in every room (even the drawing room, "by courtesy. . . allowed to be a woman's room", is dominated by Charles's armchair--*The Parasites* 245). Family visits there are tense. Niall, however, expresses a desire for Charles's apparently despised values when facing death in his ramshackle boat: "[s]omeone like Charles would have been invaluable. Men who had fought in wars, who ran estates, who were efficient, would be sure to know how to cope with a leaking boat" (317). Du Maurier stated that Niall and his sisters "were the three people I know myself to have been. . . .the book did not say if

he [Niall] was drowned, and I did not know either. He was not drowned. He came to life again as Philip Ashley in *My Cousin Rachel*" (letter to Maureen Baker-Munton, 4 July 1957, quoted in Forster 421). Du Maurier, as Niall, expresses her personal ambivalence towards the value of aristocratic patriarchy; if its emotionally-sterile control (hinted at in the symbolic name Coldhammer) is to be despised, the orderly security of its world is also to be desired. Niall's end suggests that those loosed from solid patrimonial values float perilously adrift.

It is notable how often du Maurier, strongly influenced by her artistic father and grandfather (George du Maurier, a successful *Punch* cartoonist and novelist), returns to the stability and order of her own family history in her texts. Charlotte Brontë, too, sets her work in the past, embellished with autobiographical details; she combines childhood memories with parental childhood memories to create "that double reach of individual memory which frames the historical limits of retrospective Victorian novels" and which also interacts with "the larger context of cultural crisis and discontinuity" of the writer's own era (Gilmour 58, 60). A believer in inherited memory as well as inherited talent (*Enchanted Cornwall* 184), du Maurier affirms the value of her inheritance throughout novels such as *The Glass-Blowers*, *The Du Mauriers*, and *Mary Anne*. Even the Paris recorded in *I'll Never Be Young Again* and *The Progress of Julius* is less her own impression than an attempt to recreate the city as her grandfather knew it (*Growing Pains* 81, 114). Although *Mary Anne* can be read as a novel espousing the values of a working-class matriarchy, rather than an aristocratic patriarchy, it is in *The Du Mauriers* that the author, debunking the family myth of noble ancestry, makes a telling comment:

it was simple honest bourgeois blood that made the best stock in the long run, giving to its descendants a capacity for work and achievement and straight thinking, whereas the other [noble blood] turned to water and produced the idler, the shirker, the weaver of sterile dreams. (*The Du Mauriers* 42).

Du Maurier compulsively recreates in her texts the figure of a

narrator oppressed by a patrimony--whether aristocratic or bourgeois--which he simultaneously fears and desires. Fear is, however, the predominant factor: in her novels written in male first-person narration, du Maurier reflects a corrupt patriarchal system, an oppressive legacy from earlier eras (such as Victorian and medieval times) whose ideologies underpin twentieth century cultural systems. Oppression is shown to be a facet of patrimony handed down in the manner of mansions, money, family businesses, and, in the case of the young novelist Dick, artistic talent, from one heir to the next.

This, with its concurrent symbolism of crumbling grand houses, can be compared to similar themes in contemporary works by modernist writers: Ian Forster's *Howard's End* and *Brideshead Revisited* by Evelyn Waugh are two examples, as is the reference to broken castle towers in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. This influential early twentieth century poem abounds in allusions to dismantled patriarchal structures throughout Europe ("Falling towers/Jerusalem Athens Alexandria/Vienna London"; "*Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie*"--*The Waste Land* ll.373-375; 429). It also focuses upon images of dried up springs of life and love, similar to images found in *The Scapegoat*:

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? . . .

. . .

A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter. . .

(*The Waste Land* ll.19-23)

. . . voices singing out of empty cisterns and exhausted wells.

(*The Waste Land* l.384)

Like Eliot, Forster and Waugh, du Maurier presents the twentieth century patriarchal legacy as unhealthy and uncertain. The mansions of Kilmarth and St Gilles appear solid, but are in reality crumbling and crying out for repair, if not demolition.

The unmaintained mansion in *The Scapegoat* is presented as

salvageable; here the ruling class is shown to have a noble, if unfulfilled, purpose, a potential for benevolence which might be realised once females and lower classes take over governmental roles abdicated by the world's degenerate patriarchs. This hopeful glimpse of a brave new world contrasts with the anxiety and anarchy suggested in the scenarios ending *The Loving Spirit*, *Rebecca* and *The King's General*. The 1959 novel *The Scapegoat* can thus be read as a more optimistic reworking of the *Rebecca* material. (It is notable that the lower classes in *The Scapegoat*--Gaston and Julie, for example--make a benign and kindly contrast to the threatening, intrusive Danvers and Favell of *Rebecca*.) By the 1960s, however, du Maurier again reverts to her stance of the 1930s and '40s, portraying patriarchal structures as damaging to both women (*Rebecca*, "I" and Vita) and men (Maxim, Magnus and Dick Young).

If one chooses to reject such oppressive systems the only remaining option is to stand outside society altogether. These outsider figures, who stud du Maurier's work with individually-created standards, will be examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

"DEVIANT INDIVIDUALISM": "OUTSIDER" FIGURES IN BRONTË'S AND DU MAURIER'S FICTION

***Shirley*: Cultural Repression of the Individual**

In his study of the Brontës' novels, Terry Eagleton draws attention to the social, geographic, intellectual and ideological isolation experienced by the Brontë sisters, commenting that

[a]t certain points in their fiction, indeed, that loneliness becomes type and image of the isolation of all men in an individualist society. (Eagleton 8)

Throughout the Brontës' work runs the recurrent image of the lone "outsider" figure, an individual who rejects, rebels against or is outcast from the cultural norms of his or her day. The most well-known of these characters is Emily Brontë's Heathcliff; Eagleton points out, however, that Charlotte's novels also contain "[a]t the centre. . . a figure who either lacks or deliberately cuts the bonds of kinship" (26). At the crux of her work lies what Eagleton terms her protagonists' "deviant individualism", reflection of which can be recognised and expression of which can be realised only in another, "higher" character to whom s/he is attracted. As well as embodying the protagonist's rebellious desires, this higher or "superior" (frequently male) character also "confronts [the protagonist's] wary conservatism" through meting out punishment and protection, taking pleasure "in the energising enmity which this generates" (75).

Charlotte Brontë's third novel *Shirley* demonstrates this model clearly. Its four central characters all embody to greater or lesser degrees forms of individualism considered "deviant" by Victorian standards. The orphaned status of Caroline Helstone and Shirley Keeldar denies them entrance to conventional family structures. Caroline's social and financial disadvantages firmly marginalise her, while Shirley's ambiguous social position is uniquely isolating. Despite experiencing certain male privileges--wealth, an ancestral mansion, intellectual and political ability,

and even a male name--Shirley is confined "to a kind of male mimicry" (Gilbert and Gubar 382), and treated with condescension by male tenants. (Joe Scott, on hearing that Shirley reads newspapers, presumes "'you'll read the marriages, probably, Miss, and the murders, and the accidents, and sich like'"--*Shirley* 321.)

In their desire to escape from oppressive female roles Caroline and Shirley are drawn towards the "superior" outsider-figures of the half-French Moore brothers. (Eagleton makes the valid point that Caroline is initially attracted to the "higher" character of Shirley, who shares Robert's radical function but with whom a marriage-union is unacceptable. My focus here, however, is on male/female relationships, and as Gilbert and Gubar point out, Shirley duplicates Caroline's female immobility by being herself enmeshed in social roles--Gilbert and Gubar 383.)

Tutor Louis is a status-less intellectual confined "to a small, still corner of the real world" (*Shirley* 485). Robert is a lonely Byronic hero, whose pride, foreign blood and economic position (as an unpopular manufacturer burdened by inherited debt) set him outside the cultural norms of the novel's Yorkshire setting. Despite these marked disadvantages, however, the Moores experience more freedoms than do Caroline or Shirley. Society accords them certain privileges in accordance with their gender: satisfying work, intellectual fulfilment, mobility (their surname, suggesting expansive uncultivated nature, is interesting in this connection) and--for Robert, in any case--economic power. Although the Moores are Romantic *émigrés* with distinguished pedigrees (Eagleton 55), Caroline is drawn to Robert's male privileges as much as to his good looks and exotic otherness:

she would wish nature had made her a boy instead of a girl, that she might ask Robert to let her be his clerk, and sit with him in the counting-house, instead of sitting with Hortense in the parlour. (104)

Tortured by Hortense's initiation into the feminine duties from which she

longs to escape (Gilbert and Gubar 376), Caroline is sustained by Robert's presence; when deprived of his attentions she sinks into physical and emotional decline. Unconsciously she is aware that she can achieve health and wholeness only by experiencing the freedoms Robert represents through marriage (the culturally-acceptable manner for men and women to merge their lives). After the marriage, however, Caroline takes little part in public life: "Mrs Robert" is remembered not for her deeds but for her submissive silence (*Shirley* 599).

Louis Moore also masters strong-willed Shirley. Although the Moore brothers are Shirley's economic and social inferiors (she materially contributes to the salvation of Robert's mill), Louis is accorded intellectual, moral and cultural superiority over Shirley by virtue of his gender, while his role of teacher makes him her spiritual superior (Eagleton 60). Louis's emphasis on individual liberty and self-worth attracts Shirley, as its challenge to small-minded social hypocrisy embodies her own rebellious desires. However, as Eagleton's model suggests, Louis is also a punisher-figure; his rhetoric of self-empowerment is drawn from cultural and theological models of archetypal male controlling-figures and subtly confirms his privileged masculine gender. While asserting his basic human right to enjoy nature, Louis's comparison of himself to "any monarch" (*Shirley* 432)--rather than, for instance, any citizen--falls short of true egalitarianism. (We note that he shares his name with generations of despotic French kings.) The kingdom in question is Shirley's Fieldhead estate, and Louis styles himself here as its owner--as by law he will be if Shirley marries him.

"With animals I feel I am Adam's son; the heir of him to whom dominion was given over 'every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' Your dog likes and follows me. . .the pigeons from your dove-cot flutter at my feet; your mare in the stable knows me as well as it knows you, and obeys me better." (433)

This carefully-worded speech suggests that Shirley's privileged position is temporary, limited, even unnatural. The misogynistic views of *Shirley's*

society are summed up in Joe Scott's belief that "women is to take their husbands' opinion, both in politics and religion: it's wholesomest for them" (323). Louis possesses a culturally- and theologically-sanctioned right for obedience from the lower orders of creation; the dog and mare naturally obey him, and so, he hints, should their mistress. The power-struggle between Louis and Shirley is "a pronounced dialectic of power and submissiveness. . .strongly sado-masochistic" (Eagleton 57), particularly on Shirley's part. To achieve culturally-approved control over herself (including her possessions and her emotions) she must deny self-autonomy and submit to Louis. In his presentation as a controlling punisher-figure Louis represents a continuation of the construction of William Crimsworth, as well as an anticipation of *Villette's* Paul Emanuel.

At its close, *Shirley's* text purports to present Caroline made physically and emotionally whole by becoming "Mrs Robert" and Shirley fully accepted into the community as "Mrs Louis". As has been noted, however, this presentation of marriage is not empowering but "subservient"; the novel challenges the assumption that marriage is a woman's highest fulfilment (Foster 78, 93). After entering into presumed wedded wholeness Caroline's presence in the text gives place to the new mill. As a married woman Shirley forgoes her inherited privileges of land and business-ownership (half her income is derived from the mill) and she is described thus by the narrator's housekeeper:

"Mrs Louis was the grandest, she always wore such handsome dresses. . .she had a real happy, glad, good-natured look; but she had een that pierced a body through. . ." (*Shirley* 599)

This decorative Lady Bountiful's influence lies in moral optimism rather than the wielding of financial or political power (roles now assumed by the Moores). Shirley's economic governance now centres on her person and garments, areas to which a scopophilic male-dominated hegemony restricts feminine interest. She is not broken-spirited, however (Foster 101): despite an outwardly content demeanour, those piercing eyes create

an assertive, if not aggressive, image.

The housekeeper goes on to recall the disappearance of "fairish" creatures from Fieldhead Hollow; this image of magically-powered female sprites is an appropriate one on which to end a novel dealing with feminist concerns. If Shirley has gained social acceptance by subsuming her personal autonomy in marriage, she (and Fieldhead) have in consequence lost the magic of female power--power which can be either benevolent *or* deviant. This passage seems to echo Brontë's characterisation of Jane Eyre as elf-like; Jane's refusal to comply with Rochester's traditional courtship demands earns her a string of demeaning epithets: "'provoking puppet', 'malicious elf', 'sprite', 'changeling' &c" (*Jane Eyre* 302). Jane's non-submission to male domination is presented as other-worldly or unnatural, foreshadowing Louis Moore's argument about "natural" sexual submission. While *Jane Eyre* ends with the return of Jane as an invisible "fairy" to her subdued and chastened "brownie", Rochester, marking the beginning of a marriage of equals (463), in *Shirley*'s more pessimistic portrayal of marriage, the deviant individualism of "fairish" creatures must be eradicated from the text before culturally-acceptable marriage takes place.

Shirley's final paragraphs present Fieldhead as taken over by a male-dominated industrial patriarchy, a vision of a "mercantile, postlapsarian England" (Gilbert and Gubar 398) which strongly undermines the novel's "happy" ending. In *Shirley* the institution of marriage is presented as paradoxical: while the text's female characters can and do choose to avoid wedlock with unsuitable partners (the fatuous curates or tyrannous Helstone, for example), they are drawn towards marriage with "suitable" partners (the Moores) as a perceived sharing of that partner's superior status. This anticipated power and freedom, however, is subsumed under culturally-imposed forfeiture of individual female liberty.

The Dynamics of Deviance in *Villette*

Brontë's *Villette* is also structured around power-dynamics between its socially-repressed protagonist, Lucy Snowe, and the "Romantic-radical" outsider-figure of Monsieur Paul Emanuel (Eagleton 74). In Paul, Lucy recognises and is drawn to the rebellious facet and marginalised status of her own personality; as Paul declares, "'we are alike--there is affinity. . .you were born under my star'" (*Villette* 457). Lucy stands outside *Villette*'s setting as an orphan *déclassée*, and an Englishwoman and Protestant in a Roman Catholic country. Paul, the "superior" outsider, is marginalised by his ambivalent social/professional status and outspoken, tempestuous nature. Paul comes "of a strain neither French nor Labassecourien" (425)--Spanish blood that makes him, like Lucy, a foreigner in the Rue Fossette (407). Paul is a spiritual product of the Counter-Reformation, just as Lucy is of the Reformation; early priestly tutelage has moulded him into a species of lay Jesuit and this, combined with his revolutionary political beliefs (396-7), reinforces his presentation as a kindred outsider with Lucy.

As Lucy's teacher Paul enjoys spiritual superiority over her, which he employs both to nurture and to punish her. Lucy does realise repressed intellectual abilities under Paul's tutelage, yet at the same time as he encourages her talents he imprisons her, shutting her in the stifling attic to learn his play and tormenting her with arduous academic exercises. Thus while Lucy's love for Paul liberates her physically and psychologically from the Pensionnat Beck it also brings her emotional imprisonment. Like Miss Marchmont, Lucy will eventually live out her days in nun-like spinsterhood, mourning a dead lover--a return to the socially-invisible situation she occupies in the novel's opening chapter. The reader must ask, however, whether Lucy might not be happier as an independent spinster-teacher than subdued under Paul's patriarchal dominance: those three years Paul is absent in the colonies are, paradoxically, the happiest years of Lucy's life (593).

Jamaica Inn: Arguing for Female Individualism

Daphne du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn* reveals a similarly ambiguous ending and a comparable treatment of "deviant individualism" to that found in Brontë's works. Both *Jamaica Inn* and *Shirley* are historical novels set around the same period: editors Andrew and Judith Hook confirm that Brontë centred preparatory research for *Shirley* on the years 1811-1812 (*Shirley* 19), while du Maurier writes in 1935 of *Jamaica Inn* "as it might have been over a hundred and twenty years ago" (Author's Note, *Jamaica Inn*). Thus these two novels, separated by ninety years, are roughly contemporary in the cultural ideology they purport to represent.

Mary Yellan shares with Caroline, Shirley and Lucy the non-identity of the nineteenth century female orphan; like Lucy, she is forced to earn her own living, a situation offering potential independence and empowerment. Her choices, however, are restricted by society's moral codes. In promising her dying mother to go to relatives rather than independently farm the land, Mary acquiesces in a cultural view which regards women as incapable of self-governance.

Mrs Yellan seeks to save Mary from the marginalisation she herself has experienced as a social "outsider", a widow: "'I don't want you to struggle as I have done. It's a breaking of the body and of the spirit'" (9). She adds, "'A girl can't live alone, Mary, without she goes queer in the head, or comes to evil'" (10). For Mary's moral edification Mrs Yellan recounts local legends of "'poor Sue, who walked the churchyard at midnight with the full moon, and called upon the lover she had never had'" and a sixteen-year-old who "'ran away to Falmouth and went with the sailors'" (10). This village folklore reflects in microcosm the mindset of a patriarchal culture which suggests that women free from the governance of father, husband, brother or uncle not only cannot provide for themselves physically, but are incapable of withstanding emotional and sexual deviance. Thus they are classed as threatening

outsiders, a moral danger to themselves and to society.

In endeavouring to escape her marginalised status Mary is drawn to two men who, as outsider-figures themselves, embody the independence denied to her: the horse-thief Jem Merlyn and the Vicar of Altarnun, Francis Davey. Between Mary and each of these two diametrically juxtaposed suitors exists an uneasy power-dialectic of submission and control.

In the manner of Brontë's heroes, Jem interests Mary by his combination of physical attractiveness and independence; his freedom ("riding away with a song on his lips. . .choosing his own road"--70) is contrasted with her imprisonment at Jamaica Inn. Jem travels at will, lives on the margins of the law and survives by his wits. In his bold yet ultimately harmless duping of the Bassats (the novel's conservative upper-class bastions of law and morals) he is an attractive anti-establishment figure. Moreover, Jem's position as the youngest Merlyn brother, a skirt-clinging "pet" (103), characterises him as more sensitive and less vicious than the irredeemable murderer Joss.

Jem is, however, similar enough in appearance and manner to his brother to make Mary fear her desire for him. She compares his hands with Joss's and discovers that

[t]hese attracted her; the others repelled her. She realized for the first time that aversion and attraction ran side by side. . .The thought was an unpleasant one, and she shrank from it. Supposing this had been Joss beside her, ten, twenty years ago?. . .She knew now why she hated her uncle. (126)

Mrs Yellan's peasant beliefs, which Mary has absorbed, include the opinion that "'[t]here's no going against bad blood'" (64), and Aunt Patience declares Jem to be the worst of the tainted Merlyn brothers born under the shadow of the "devil's hand", Kilmar Tor. Parochial Mary expresses doubt whether any land as different from her beloved Helford as the Bodmin moor can breed decent people: "[t]heir minds would be twisted. . .their thoughts evil, dwelling as they must amidst marshland

and granite, harsh heather and crumbling stone" (15). Cultural conditioning thus forms the basis of Mary's distrust; Jem's filthy person and dwelling, moreover, are in direct antithesis to the cleanliness and order with which she surrounds herself. Yet it is Jem's very otherness which promises Mary escape from a life of adherence to the cultural mores which categorise and imprison her.

Richard Kelly believes that Mary is sexually attracted primarily to Joss rather than Jem, suggesting that

[t]he excuse Mary offers in the novel for remaining at Jamaica Inn is that she must help her Aunt Patience, but a more cogent psychological reason is that she possesses a masochistic as well as a rebellious strain. Lacking a father, she seeks both domination and love and finds the former in Joss and the latter in Jem. (Kelly 52)

Basing his argument on a psychoanalytic study of du Maurier's relationship with her father, Kelly states that in this novel a "demon-lover father" figure is bifurcated into Joss, whom the heroine (presumably the author disguised) can battle, and Jem, to whom she can express erotic feelings and need for security (48). In this context Harry the pedlar, who attempts to rape Mary, could be seen as a stand-in for Joss. Joss does style himself upon archetypal controlling patriarch figures in his drunken guises of God Almighty and the devil incarnate: a master of manipulation with glory, power and booty to distribute (*Jamaica Inn* 167, 181-4). Moreover, Mary's secretive, guilty behaviour after Joss touches her can be read as repression of taboo (incestuous) desires:

for some reason for ever unexplained, thrust away from her later and forgotten, side by side with the little old sins of childhood and those dreams never acknowledged to the sturdy day, she put her fingers to her lips as he had done, and let them stray thence to her cheek and back again.
And she began to cry, softly and secretly (187-8)

The cultural freedoms the Merlyn way of life represents also strongly attract Mary, as they attracted Patience before her. Joss's kiss mixes horror and desire because it reminds Mary of Jem, whose values

she desires, but whom she must reject for fear he will make her a carbon copy of her aunt--a once-fastidious woman now blinded and broken by Joss Merlyn's freedom-promising charm. (Mrs Yellan remembers that "'when [Patience] married. . .she wrote a pack of giddy nonsense you'd expect a girl to write, and not a woman over thirty'"--10). To Mary, Patience is a more realistic lesson than her mother's moralistic folklore: Patience's married (patriarchally-protected and thus presumably virtuous) life reveals that romance fulfilled does not equate with emotional health, nor does freedom sought mean freedom gained.

Jem informs Mary that Joss's abusive behaviour is a patriarchal legacy: "'We Merlyns have never been good to our women. . .I can remember my father beating my mother till she couldn't stand'" (66). Not only males partake in such legacies, however; in the same way that Marie-Noel copies her Aunt Blanche's emotional repression in *The Scapegoat*, *Jamaica Inn* presents a cycle of niece inheriting from aunt a destructive pattern of loving and living. Patience's subservient refusal to face the truth about what she has married unconsciously goads Joss into increasing victimisation against her, and her name (echoing longsuffering Patient Griselda of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*) is ironic in this context. Mary soon realises that

the poor woman existed in a dream. . .seldom uttering.
When she did speak, it was to let forth a torrent of
nonsense about the great man her husband might have been
had not ill luck constantly followed him. (60)

Thus the broken body and spirit that Mrs Yellan warned would result from deviant female isolation is here created by power-struggles within "protective" family enclosures. By her unhealthy encouragement of family violence Patience exhibits the classic "battered woman syndrome", becoming the threat to herself and to society that cultural conditioning assigns to *lone* females; in her terrorised acceptance of Joss's crimes "Patience was a murderer too" (121), guilty, through silent complicity, of piracy and homicide.

Joss threatens to do to his niece what he has done to his wife, with the pleasant promise: "'I'll break that mind of yours if you let it go astray, and I'll break your body too'" (44). Mary too enters into a destructive cycle of silence and compliant behaviour, sharing Patience's reserve, protecting Joss (and Jem, whom at this point she scarcely knows) from Squire Bassat's law-enforcement, and concealing her suspicion that Jem is the murderer of Joss and Patience:

Jem was safe from her, and he would ride away. . .while she dragged through the years, sullen and bitter, the strain of silence marking her, coming in the end to ridicule as a soured spinster who had been kissed once in her life and could not forget it. (230)

Here Mary enters wilfully into complicity in crime, aware that she will reap its consequences in shattered emotional health.

The text of *Jamaica Inn* demonstrates that it is possible for a woman to wish herself into an escalating cycle of violence. It is not without cause, therefore, that throughout the novel Mary fears and rebels against her femaleness. Like Shirley, she possesses "male" qualities of courage and gallantry (246), and fantasises that as a man she could swiftly end her problems by fighting the smugglers, rescuing Patience and establishing herself as a farmer (49). Her fantasies spring as much from her distaste for the emotional weakness cultural conditioning assigns to females as from her desire for mobility and power:

[s]he wished that women were not the frail things of straw she believed them to be; then she could stay this night with Jem Merlyn and. . .part with a laugh and a shrug of the shoulder in the morning. But she was a woman, and it was impossible. (139)

In this context, Francis Davey seems to present Mary with a non-threatening alternative to the dangerously red-blooded Merlyns. The albino Davey appears to be asexual, "a shadow of a man. . .He had not the male aggression of Jem. . .he was without flesh and blood" (129). Davey also embodies the refined, cultured qualities the Merlyns lack: a

"gentle and sweet" voice (227); the air of "a person of quality" (86); the gentlemanly leisure-pursuit of painting. These, combined with Davey's intellectualism and air of parental authority, make him Mary's true "demon-lover father", offering her a new life of physical, intellectual and spiritual freedom.

For all his culture Davey is also striking and sinister: he has "strange eyes, transparent like glass" and the appearance of "a freak of nature"; he is an "abnormality" (87) with abnormal powers. His paintings are evocative and frightening, tinged with "alien" greenish light (231). These hints of an unknown, supernatural or other-worldly personality appeal to Mary's unconscious desire for liberty from society's cultural mores, as is revealed in her response to Davey's house. The vicarage impresses her as not merely a refuge, but "*strangely* peaceful" (my italics), a fairy tale-like dwelling where

there should be a barrier of thorns. . . a galaxy of flowers growing in profusion, with monstrous blooms untended by human hand. Giant ferns would mass themselves beneath the windows, and white lilies on tall stems. In the tale there would be strands of ivy clustering the walls, barring the entrance, and the house itself would have slept for a thousand years. (88)

This symbolic setting of nature overgrown to supernatural proportions (not dissimilar to the opening of *Rebecca*) reinforces Davey's characterisation as a druidic magician, a product of an ancient, natural--and thus uncivilised--order. (He is repeatedly represented in the text by a bird-of-prey nature-motif.) Such fantastic natural images reappear with a specifically sexual slant in Mary's dream after Davey has abducted her: "he picked her monstrous flowers with purple heads. . . and when she would have thrown them from her they clung about her skirt like tendrils, creeping to her neck, fastening upon her with poisonous, deadly grip" (255).

Davey's sexual power over Mary is thus shown to be more subtle, insidious and malevolent than the straightforward charm of Jem. Although

they bear the name of an ancient magician, the Merlyns' charisma has a rational, biological explanation. Mary is aware of the unromantic nature of human sexuality: "[m]en and women were like the animals on the farm at Helford, she supposed; there was a common law of attraction for all living things" (122). In contrast, Davey's influence is uncommon and unearthly, evocative of a true "Merlin" versed in black arts.

Mary initially equates the Vicar's profession with impotence, believing "[h]e was a priest, and therefore detached from her little world of storm and passion. He could have no knowledge of these things" (147). However, as Shallcross notes, "[t]hroughout each of their encounters there is an uneasy undercurrent of his sexual interest in Mary, though nothing explicit is ever said" (Shallcross 49). Just as Davey's preaching masks his lust for intellectual liberty, wealth and power, so his refined appearance masks a desire for sexual dominance. Davey's respectable exterior hides a radically rebellious psyche, to which Mary unconsciously responds--intellectually, emotionally and sexually. The episode where Davey bids Mary remove her wet clothing in his carriage is enlightening in this context. Although Davey may appear outwardly androgynous (his voice is womanly, his eyes hold "cold indifference", his touch is "cool and impersonal"--*Jamaica Inn* 144-6), Mary is confused rather than reassured by his presence:

she was aware of his proximity as a person. . She remembered that her wet shawl and bodice lay on the floor at her feet, and she was naked under her rough blanket. . . .He was a fellow-creature and a priest of God; but. . .she reached for her clothes and began to draw them on furtively (148-9)

Here Mary's dangerous, guilt-ridden sexual desires for Jem are displaced onto the presumably safe figure of Davey; with both men she experiences sensations of unease and self-consciousness (on first meeting Jem she is "conscious suddenly of her loose hair and rumpled dirty apron"--65). In this episode Davey's androgynous characterisation begins to crumble, and, just as Jem is associated with the symbolically virile profession of

breaking wild ponies, Davey too now wields a phallic symbol--the walking cane with which he confronts Mary:

[h]is lips were narrow and colourless, pressed firm together, and he leant forward with his chin resting on a long ebony cane that he held between his knees. (144)

This cane fills a similar function to Magnus's walking stick in *The House on the Strand*: a condensation of the magician's wand and the patriarch's rod of authority, it is a powerful, controlling sexual symbol.

Jem may nurture Mary, even going so far as to kill her abductor, but he also relegates her to Patience-like servitude: their early meetings are punctuated by commands to fill his glass or cook his dinner. Similarly, in the seeming refuge of Davey's presence Mary is punished (for her curiosity in uncovering Davey's sketches) and she exhibits Patience-like nervous behaviour, "biting her lips and twisting her hands in an emotion she could not control" (150).

Mary's recognition of the impulses behind Davey's disturbing drawings further reveals her unconscious affinity with the Vicar. His distortion of human faces into sheep and wolves is not dissimilar to her own reaction to the company at Jamaica Inn: "the faces of the men loomed shapeless and distorted, all hair and teeth, their mouths much too large for their bodies" (42). Her impressions of Harry the pedlar and the disfigured idiot, in particular, are overdrawn to a height little short of caricature. Thus to Mary Davey is an "emulable image of achievement and an agreeable reflection of. . .her own deviant individualism" (Eagleton 75), even though she may not admit this to herself. Davey tells Mary: "'How you pestered me with your courage and your conscience, and how I admired you for it!'" (*Jamaica Inn* 244); "'You have proved yourself a dangerous opponent, and I prefer you by my side'" (245). To apply Eagleton's theory, their relationship produces "enmity" which is potentially "energising" for them both; such energy, however, is culturally unacceptable and must be curtailed by Davey's death.

Thus Mary is denied the exciting, if frightening, freedom Davey offers (his promises include taking her to Africa and Spain, and like the tutor-figures Paul Emanuel and Louis Moore, he holds the key to intellectual and spiritual knowledge unattainable to a woman of her class and era). She is also persuaded to deny herself the personally-fulfilling but culturally deviant life of the independent woman. Scorning the Bassats' offer of a companion position at North Hill (reiterated in the well-worn formula, "'You are too young to live alone, you know, and I'll tell you to your face you're too pretty'"--261), Mary chooses the life of a lone farmer. Yet even as she decides to return south ("only amongst the woods and streams of her own Helford valley would she know peace and contentment again"--262), Mary is confronted and swayed by Jem, whose ability to uproot his life and journey north into an unknown, harsh climate connotes his superior masculine freedom. Jem commences a rhetoric of liberty and self-empowerment, interspersed with taunts at Mary's culturally-ordained female parochiality: "'[t]he whole country belongs to me. . . You don't understand. You're a woman, and your home is your kingdom. . . .If you were a man I'd ask you to come with me'" (264-5). In this manner Mary is swayed from her own "lower" outsider status towards a "higher" vagabond life with Jem.

On the surface, Jem and Davey are characterised as polarities, like Rochester and St John Rivers in Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Mary's response to Davey (a more aberrant version of Brontë's cold clerical intellectual) echoes Jane's to Rivers:

" . . .you would have killed me then as you will kill me now. I am not coming with you, Mr Davey." (*Jamaica Inn* 245)

"If I were to marry you, you would kill me. You are killing me now." (*Jane Eyre* 438)

In both pairs of polarised male characters (Jem/Davey, Rochester/Rivers) the heroine recognises the Eagleton "superior" character who embodies her rebellious desires, and who simultaneously protects and punishes her. One however (Rivers, Davey) is characterised as more unconventionally

radical and thus more dangerous to the heroine than the other. This potential murderer-figure is removed from the text, killed by his own misdirected zeal (Rivers dies as a missionary in India; Davey is shot trying to escape to pagan lands). The other "superior" character, though less extreme, is nevertheless still dangerous; Rochester is subdued by his physical and mental trials but Jem (though arguably young and sensitive enough to learn better ways) remains a potential abuser, as he himself warns Mary: "'Men are ill companions when the mood takes them, and I, God knows, the worst of them. You'll get a poor exchange for your farm'" (*Jamaica Inn* 266).

In this context Mary's responsibility over Patience's death--"had she not left Jamaica Inn, Aunt Patience might not have died" (224)--takes on increasing importance. Her guilt suggests an unconscious desire to kill an aspect of herself, the female weakness or "battered woman syndrome" Patience represents. Only by exorcising the disturbing presence of Patience's brokenness can Mary enter with impunity into a potentially destructive relationship with Jem. Mary's "murder" of her own passivity to aggression, however, remains only at the wish-fulfilment level; Patience may be dead but her emotional legacy endures. We note that as she joins Jem, Mary again lapses into the inarticulate, handwringing body-language of the victimised woman (266).

Kelly's reading of Mary as "a strong-minded woman who bravely withstands a series of challenges and who is rewarded with marriage and the promise of a full life" (Kelly 50) ignores the psychological reality of *Jamaica Inn*. Forster is more lucid in her view of Mary as "a woman saved. . .but a woman beaten. . .following the dictates of heart and body but not mind"; she terms the novel "a deeply pessimistic view of a woman's life" (Forster 122). *Jamaica Inn* presents women's position in early nineteenth century society as marginalised at every turn. Those women who stand outside society (the widow Yellan, crazy Sue, the prostitute, orphan Mary) as well as those trapped within and abused by its patriarchal structures (Mrs Merlyn, Patience) are emotionally unhealthy

and unfulfilled.

In a larger sense, just as Brontë projects the issues of her own day (Chartism and the role of women, for instance) onto the political and cultural climate of forty years earlier, in *Jamaica Inn* du Maurier also expresses concern with the ideologies and hegemonies of her own era. In her autobiography, du Maurier recounts parental and cultural opposition to her decision to live and write as a single woman in the family's isolated sea-cottage, Ferryside at Fowey. A diary entry from 1928 expresses her longing to be a boy who could run away to sea or "a vagrant on the face of the earth", instead of "a silly sheltered girl in a dress, knowing nothing at all--but Nothing" (*Growing Pains* 135-6). Du Maurier's reaction to society's strictures against female liberty is further explored in her 1941 novel, *Frenchman's Creek*.

In Search of Neverland: Deviant Individualism in *Frenchman's Creek*

Jean-Benoit Aubéry, the pirate-hero of *Frenchman's Creek*, is a "superior" outsider figure, combining the anti-establishment appeal of Jem with the foreign otherness of the Moores and Paul Emanuel and the cultural refinement of Davey. He outwits the Cornish gentry, keepers of moral and cultural law who are led by fools like Lord Godolphin. Like Jem, Aubéry avoids committing murder or atrocity; he sets Rashleigh's captured sailors adrift instead of executing them, and he steals in Robin Hood fashion, re-distributing wealth from the upper class amongst the Breton poor. Thus Aubéry is essentially harmless, ostracised by society as much for his race as for his lawless profession. These statements from Godolphin and his jail-guard provide an overview of the Helford community's class-straddling xenophobia:

"No lives have been lost as yet, and none of our women have been taken. . .but as this fellow is a Frenchman we all realize that it is only a question of time before something dastardly occurs." (*Frenchman's Creek* 35)

"It's the foreign blood. . . They're all alike, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Spaniards, no matter what they are. Women and drink is all they think about, and when you're not looking it's a stab in the back." (229)

As a fugitive from society Aubéry's life is "'one continual escape'" (37) and this "escape" is both an instinctive self-preservation from the gallows and a conscious desire for psychological liberty from civilisation. His servant William, who functions as Aubéry's stand-in when the pirate himself is off-stage, states: "'He has it that those who live a normal life. . . are forced into habits, into customs, into a rule of life that eventually kills all initiative, all spontaneity. . . because a pirate is a rebel, and an outcast, he escapes from the world'" (59). Piracy is the "deviant" element in Aubéry's self-imposed isolation; his creative individualism is expressed through art. Just as Francis Davey's weird art separates him from the normalcy of the world, so Aubéry's drawings of birds (symbolic free spirits) define his goal to soar above and beyond civilisation.

The novel's culturally-imprisoned heroine, Dona St Columb, is drawn towards Aubéry, who symbolises to her a total and specifically uncivilised escape. The similarities between Dona's and Aubéry's outsider status are revealed in his portrait of her, its countenance disillusioned and bitter. These character flaws are shared by both subject and artist: Aubéry admits his "blemish" is even "more disfiguring" (69) than Dona's, suggesting his superior deviant individualism. As a male he enjoys enhanced freedoms, which Dona seeks to share by merging her life with his.

With her privileged background, Dona represents the opposite end of the cultural spectrum to Mary Yellan; she concurs with Mary, however, in rebelling against society's disapprobation of lone females. Living and travelling on her own, Dona is an outsider and an anomaly in the Helford community, whose respectable gentry see in her a semi-separated woman with a dubious past. They stereotype her with prejudice

similar to that expressed towards the Frenchman:

And this, thought every guest who sat at her table, this is the famous Lady St Columb, of whom, from time to time, we hear so much gossip, so much scandal. . . who has given something of herself, no doubt, to every philanderer at St James's, not to mention His Majesty himself.

So at first the guests were suspicious. . . (173)

London sophisticate Rockingham, similarly steeped in the cultural mores of his day, wastes no time in attributing lewd motives to Dona's (sexually-innocent) intimacy with William.

In contrast to popular belief, Dona's partaking in scandalous escapades masks a genuine, hidden, self that longs to be free, "a strange, phantom Dona, [who] peered at her from a dark mirror and was ashamed" (15). From childhood Dona has desired male freedoms denied her, resenting cultural conditioning that consigns her to domestic play with dolls instead of riding with her father and brothers (116). The novel presents Dona as a type of Everywoman, imprisoned both by her patriarchally-prescribed social roles (as wife to boobyish Sir Harry, mother of his children, and lady of his manor) and by the raffish codes of aberrant behaviour in which she seeks to forget her demoralising existence.

In *Frenchman's Creek* du Maurier again emphasises the imprisoning, dangerous nature of female "confinement". Acting out her cultural function as perpetuator of a new generation of the leisured class threatens Dona's physical and psychological health:

she--starting Henrietta almost immediately--became irritable, fretful, entirely unlike herself, so unaccustomed to ill-health of any kind. The impossibility of riding, of walking, of doing all the things she wished to do, increased her irritation. (67)

The immobilising nature of female duty in patriarchal society and the stifling social expectations of civilised British culture are further explored in the plight of Lady Godolphin, with whom Dona shares an instinctive if ironic sympathy:

The air was stifling inside the house, and because of his lady's condition Lord Godolphin had commanded that the windows should be shut, and the curtains drawn. . . The brightness of midsummer would fatigue her, the soft air might bring a greater pallor to her already languid cheeks. But lying on the sofa. . . exchanging small civilities with her friends, the half darkened room humming with heavy chatter and the warm smell of humanity. . . that could tire nobody. (71)

In this example of misogynistic persecution, Godolphin's wife submits to her dual confinement only to earn disapproval by producing, at the end of a prolonged labour, twin daughters instead of the expected son and heir (which, as Dona sarcastically comforts Godolphin, "'she will give you. . . even if you have ten daughters first'"--216).

Even Aubéry, Dona's vehicle of escape from cultural imprisonment into the more "natural" freedoms of gypsy existence, insists that women's biological function is not something from which they can-- or should--escape; indeed, he presents maternity as women's "primitive" (142) creative power and satisfying achievement, "'greater. . . than the making of a drawing, or the planning of an action'" (65)--these latter endeavours being presumably the prerogatives of men. In light of the above evidence from the text, Aubéry's pseudo-feminist views appear limiting and condescending; the immobilising nature of the nest-building instinct is his very reason for avoiding marriage (a wife and children being freedom-curbing ties).

For a woman of Dona's era, the only alternative to a dissatisfying domestic existence is to ape or adopt the loose lifestyle of the high-society whore. In the shallow London milieu, however, Dona is again victimised by males--Harry the humiliating alcoholic, and Rockingham, who seeks the social distinction of cuckolding his best friend and who consequently goads Dona into excesses of disreputable behaviour. Rockingham attempts to murder Dona for refusing him; here again, as in *Rebecca* and *My Cousin Rachel*, the text presents a man resorting to violence in a final effort to control an unmanageable woman.

On the surface, *Frenchman's Creek* treats its theme of escape as a

straightforward Romantic concept. Desiring to be cleansed from the degrading "civilised" London life, Dona immerses herself in the natural surroundings of her country house; her frolics with her children amid Navron's flora and fauna symbolise her return to innocence, while Navron's hidden creek represents her discovery of "natural" sexual freedoms. (As Kelly suggests, the creek is a yonic image which hints at Dona's sexual liberation even before the pirate arrives--Kelly 75). Here Dona exchanges the masks and patches of civilisation for a prelapsarian unconcern with appearance. Her admission to Aubéry that she has "'no mirror to delay [her]'" (*Frenchman's Creek* 82) is a reversal of that earlier mirror image in which her better self looked out upon falsity, ashamed. The geographical setting of *Frenchman's Creek* is thus similar to that of *Jamaica Inn* in representing a time of pre-civilisation, in this case unfallen as opposed to pagan. Even in the 1990s the Helford River is difficult to find, a particularly "remote and elusive" landscape (Shallcross 86), and seventeenth century Helford is described as

alone in splendour, [with] no buildings to desecrate the rough fields and cliffs. . . There were a few cottages in Helford hamlet, but they made no impression upon the river life itself, which belonged to the birds--curlew and redshank, guillemot and puffin. (7)

This natural bird imagery recurs as a linking motif throughout the novel, with Dona likening herself to a caged linnet longing to fly towards the sun (20), and Aubéry, compulsive sketcher of sea-birds, repeatedly associated with the gull-mascot of his ship *La Mouette*. It is interesting to note in this context that Dona's married name, St Columb, echoes the French "colombe": the image of the dove, a bird with homing instincts, reiterates Aubéry's emphasis on married women's roles.

The novel's presentation of nature and natural imagery is specifically Romantic in flavour. *Frenchman's Creek* is the only one of her books du Maurier was prepared to classify as a "lightish" romance ("'with a big R!'" she emphasised to publisher Gollancz--Forster 162). As importantly, it is also a novel of which she was later dismissive,

deprecating what she termed its "frivolous" nature (Forster 167). We should question, therefore, to what extent "romance" in *Frenchman's Creek* is presented as a positive and believable concept, and whether Dona's romantic "escape" is really the restoration of innocent freedom she claims to seek. Such questioning necessarily challenges the assumptions of popular critics who dismiss du Maurier's work as "dope-literature", escapist pulp-fiction for suburban housewives. (Even Kelly's academically-oriented study concludes that du Maurier is successful only because she "knows how to manipulate female fantasies" and argues that the "shallow and commercial" body of her work is written for "narcotic effect"--Kelly 142). Du Maurier's cynical essay on "Romantic Love" denies the existence of "romance" in literature (*The Rebecca Notebook* 99), thus challenging this labelling of her novels, and I suggest that even in a consciously romantic work like *Frenchman's Creek* lie the seeds of an anti-romantic frustration at the power dynamics of male-female relationships; Dona St Columb is less a malleable heroine transported to bliss by her hero than a woman who learns to survive alone.

Dona's return to Navron, the idyllic landscape where she will presumably find restorative love, is not presented as a thoughtful decision but rather "an impulse blindly obeyed, a sudden boiling up of resentment" against London excesses (*Frenchman's Creek* 14). These reasons echo those Dona gives for marrying Harry (who reads like a modified version of Arthur Huntingdon in Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*). Like Helen Huntingdon, who "'cannot believe there is any harm in [Arthur's] laughing blue eyes'" (*The Tenant* 154), Dona binds herself to this idle alcoholic "on impulse, because of his laugh. . .[and] his blue eyes" (*Frenchman's Creek* 15). Harry's physical attributes momentarily accord with the lively streak in Dona's personality, just as Rockingham's subversive leadership appeals to her rebellious side. Aubéry, though neither a dunderhead like Harry nor a rake like Rockingham, attracts her in a similar manner through his good looks and daredevil charm. Moreover, though Aubéry may nurture and protect Dona, he also

punishes her: we have seen how his misogynistic values consign her to a "primitive" maternal role.

Key factors in Dona's acceptance of Aubéry's lifestyle are "madness" and "frivolity" (*Frenchman's Creek* 55); these, of course, are things she claims to renounce as belonging to her London self. Despite her good intentions, Dona's adventures fill her with "the guilty excitement of a conspirator" (60) and "lovely wickedness" (61), language echoing her London hi-jinks; the Rashleigh capture and de-wigging of Godolphin rouse in her "the old choking sensation of delight she had known months ago" (124). Aubéry's humiliation of the assembled gentry at Navron is also in poor taste, reminiscent of Rockingham's Hampton Court pranks. Thus finding "true love" with Aubéry does not elevate Dona to that state of natural goodness she claims to seek. Her masquerade as a highwayman with Rockingham reads as a mere foreshadowing of her piracy with Aubéry: in both cases she dresses as a male (recreating Rebecca's androgynous liberties) and assimilates the dubious freedoms of a male rebel-leader. The only difference is that the former is an idle jest while the latter is conducted (at least by Aubéry) in earnest.

Consequently the reader wonders whether Dona's piracy, if continued, would prove as dissatisfying and short-lived as her London roistering. Such a scenario is hinted at when the Rashleigh affair turns sour and Dona's hitherto pleasant enchantment becomes "an evil dream from which there could be no waking" (122). The symbolic sea-gull now no longer promises freedom but appears threatening, a hostile sentinel "mocking her" (130). Like the London masquerades, here the escape process has itself become an imprisonment.

To extend the analysis of this dream motif, it is interesting to note that Dona's primary adventure (the Rashleigh capture) takes place while she is presumably delirious with a high fever. Thus her affair with Aubéry can be read as a species of unconscious neurosis--delusion, fantasy, or wish-fulfilment. Aubéry observes that "'Dona St Columb is not Dona the cabin-boy. She is someone who has a life in another world,

and even at this moment she is waking in the bedroom at Navron, with her fever gone, remembering only very faintly the dream she had'" (142).

The pirates of *La Mouette* are dreamlike in their cleanliness and innocence: "[i]t is as if she was holding her affair in Disneyland" (Kelly 75). There is indeed a *Peter Pan* element to the novel. J.M. Barrie's 1904 play had a profound influence on the du Maurier household. Barrie was the much-loved "Uncle Jim" of du Maurier's childhood and the Peter Pan character was apparently inspired by du Maurier's cousin, Peter Llewelyn Davies; Daphne's elder sister Angela played Wendy in one production, while Gerald du Maurier incarnated the dual roles of Mr Darling and Captain Hook. In her biography of her father, du Maurier reveals her own appreciation of the spirit of *Peter Pan*: "Peter Pan never has and never will grow up; he is not Barrie's property any more, but lives in the minds of all the children that will ever be, a personal belonging. . . a necessary part of childhood, familiar, lovable, and gloriously shabby" (*Gerald* 103). *Frenchman's Creek* is a reworking of this adored escapist fantasy, in which du Maurier unconsciously transfers the innocence of Barrie's Lost Boys and little Darlings onto Aubéry and his crew. In their company Dona, as an adult Wendy, seeks a "Neverland" of perpetual freedom (a realm echoed, consciously or otherwise, in the name "Navron"). The sought isle's very title, however, reveals its non-existent nature, and like Wendy, Dona too must grow up and renounce Peter Pan forever.

Dona's own fear of self-duplicity confirms a fantasy-reading of the novel. She worries that Aubéry will think her interest in him "but another brief interlude in a series of escapades. . . that she was nothing but a spoilt whore, listing after new sensations" (*Frenchman's Creek* 90). Indeed her responses to him *are* whore-like ("brazen, shameless"--87) and thus their affair may be not restorative true love but merely another frivolous intrigue. Such disillusionment with forms of escape reflects the author's own depressed psychological state when writing *Frenchman's Creek*. Du Maurier admitted that the hardships of World War II were

"'beyond'" her; "she wanted to escape into another world. But in that other world, she knew before she began that she would be struggling with emotions she felt in this troubled one" (Forster 158). The character of Aubéry is clearly modelled on Christopher Puxley, with whom du Maurier was guiltily infatuated (Forster 158); moreover, du Maurier in later years asserted that the pirate was the man she herself wanted to be (letter to Ellen Doubleday, quoted in Forster 434)--presumably a man with the freedoms of Puxley, who was wealthy, independent, and exempt from active service. When writing *Frenchman's Creek* du Maurier was also struggling to look after three small children. Thus, through the uneasy "dialectic of power and submissiveness" (Eagleton 57) between Dona and the men who surround her, du Maurier expresses her own doubts and fears about a woman's place in a patriarchal society. Kelly observes that she "is working out her own inner debate on the subject, trying to reconcile her longing for the freedom enjoyed by a man with the conviction that marriage and the family are essential both to the fulfilment of a woman and society" (Kelly 75).

At the novel's close both Aubéry and Dona, as disappointed in freedom as in cultural imprisonment, abandon nature for the "'little round stone houses all alike'" of civilisation (238). When analysing Dona's relinquishing of her pirate, critics frequently reiterate Aubéry's emphasis on the maternal instinct: "[t]he conclusion of the novel confirms this biological interpretation of a woman's destiny" (Kelly 76); "her marriage is not really threatened. . . [t]here is never any doubt that Dona will let her pirate go and return to her husband" (Forster 162-3). (Forster does go on to suggest, however, that the virtuous ending may have been incorporated to please friends in the Moral Rearmament movement--163.)

While maternal love for her baby James *does* appear to assuage the "new strange anguish. . . [and] feeling of sorrow, of lost bewilderment" Aubéry creates in Dona (*Frenchman's Creek* 90), this is no all-encompassing maternal instinct but rather an unconsciously-generated sexual dilemma. Dona is not as fond of her daughter Henrietta

(the above-mentioned instigator of her loss of liberty) as she is of James, and we note that Dona's murder of Rockingham is incited by James's (not Henrietta's) cry:

from the direction of the nurseries came the high-pitched frightened scream of a child, woken from his sleep. Then she knew anger at last, and not fear. Then she was resolute, and calm, and cold. . . .she hurled the shield at [Rockingham]. . .the sound of James's cry still ringing in her ears (194-5)

By killing Rockingham Dona exorcises both the part of herself she detests (London licentiousness and decadence) and the type of man she fears her son may grow up to be. Her love for James is both fuelled and tempered by her sexual desires:

She stole away, ashamed of her furtive tenderness for him--so primitive, so despicable, to be moved to folly simply because he was male. He would no doubt grow up to be fat, and gross, and unattractive, making some woman miserable. (28)

James has the potential to become as boorish as Harry, if not as wicked as Rockingham (who is fittingly symbolised by the terrier-dog and the cat, domesticated or "civilised" bird-killers). Before leaving Navron, Dona discovers that her son, in a tantrum, has torn the arm from a stuffed rabbit, foreshadowing the aggressive hunting mentality cultural expectations encourage in men. We note how even idle Harry joins the gentry's bloodlust, desiring to "'be in at the kill'" after running "'the froggie'" to ground (159), and that his plans for his son's education revolve around teaching him hunting skills (199). Aubéry achieves liberty by overcoming his own distaste for blood and entering into the spirit of violence, symbolised in his killing the fish whose suffering Dona cannot watch (87). Dona's reaction to James's infantile aggression, thus placed near the novel's end, demonstrates her inability to accept social freedom on its flawed, masculine, terms: she throws the severed paw into a wardrobe and leaves the room (225), psychologically closing the door on a male-dominated culture she can neither participate in nor change.

In this context, Dona's insistence that she can retain intellectual liberty in marriage to Harry ("they are not of my world now, I have escaped"--149) reads as mere bluster. Her affair with Aubéry, far from being the pinnacle of liberated, innocent love, has merely created further imprisonment for them both. He makes it clear he will never be free of her memory (187); as the inferior outsider character she can scarcely be expected to do more.

Supreme Individual Deviance: *The Progress of Julius*

No account of deviant individualism in du Maurier's works would be complete without reference to Julius Lévy, eponymous hero of *The Progress of Julius* (1933). Julius's foreign blood, ruthless dynamism, lawless practices (including incest and murder) and miserly reclusivity stamp him as a thoroughly deviant outsider-figure. (His characterisation may also be a more complex exploration of the wealthy villain Julio glimpsed in *I'll Never Be Young Again*.) While he lacks the charm of Aubéry, the intellectual fascination of Davey, or the daredevil appeal of Jem, Julius nevertheless maintains the reader's sympathy. As Lisle Bell notes in a contemporary review:

Julius Lévy becomes the monster he is through logical development of the powers which were his heritage from birth--an endowment of emotions which might have made him a great saint instead of a great sinner. ("Portrait of a Volcanic Egotist", *New York Herald Tribune* 27 August 1933, quoted in Kelly 39)

Julius's characterisation is similar to that of Milton's Satan, the dynamic anti-establishment hero of *Paradise Lost*. More than merely demonstrating du Maurier's wide literary inheritance, the novel's references to *Paradise Lost* become particularly relevant when viewed in light of the suggestion that Milton's Satan-figure embodies the exiled, outcast status of the culturally unacceptable female (Gilbert and Gubar 252-55).

Although Julius's Jewishness is made much of (there are overtones of Svengali, the archetypal Jewish devil-figure of George du Maurier's *Trilby*, in his personality), he is depicted less as a racial type than as a man battling prejudice and conflicting cultural impulses within himself. His least agreeable characteristic, ruthless greed, is inherited not from his Jewish father, Père Lévy, but from his French grandfather, the (specifically European- or "white"-named) stall-vender Blançard. Throughout his childhood Julius is torn between a mysterious "celestial city" glimpsed in the Hebrew melodies of Père's flute-playing and Rabbinical synagogue chants, and a desire to absorb Blançard's money-making market ethos. (This scenario is similar to that of *Paradise Lost*: unable to re-enter the celestial city of Heaven, Satan fulfils his need for power by manipulating the earthly marketplace of souls.) Julius's megalomania can thus be read as a form of compulsive forgetting and freedom-seeking, similar to Aubéry's piracy and Jem's thieving.

In a wider, gender-related context, Julius's outsider status, desire for dominance, and contempt for the middle classes (those who ensure his economic success by their own desire to gain "something for nothing"--*Julius* 31, 124) all serve to attract the novel's culturally-oppressed female characters. *The Progress of Julius* lacks a conventional heroine; Julius's mistress, wife and daughter each adopt the role by turns, with daughter Gabriel aspiring most closely to heroine-status in the novel's latter sections. Although--perhaps because--she is not marginalised by society (except in so far as Julius's paternal dominance repels prospective suitors), the dialectic of power and submissiveness between Julius and Gabriel creates a pronounced and complex "energising enmity".

Throughout his history Julius generates personal energy by acts of cruelty towards those he loves. Père's murder of adulterous Mère is incited by young Julius, who has learned to take masochistic pleasure in killing any living thing he cannot possess:

[h]e [Julius] had thrown his cat into the Seine so that nobody else ever in the world would be able to feed her

and stroke her little body. Père had killed Mère for the same reason. (43)

Julius goes on to enact a masochistic power-play with his Algerian mistress, Elsa (and it is noteworthy that his pet name for Elsa is "Mimite", the name of his drowned cat). Julius finds it "an extraordinary sensation to see Elsa cry after she had been smiling. . . power, strange and exciting" (87). For Elsa, Julius represents potential escape from her marginalised and manipulated existence (we are told she was "smuggled over to Alger from Marseilles" as a ten-year-old prostitute--75); in particular, she connects him with an economic freedom she can never attain alone:

[s]ometimes he met her in the mornings at the market, and he would show her how to bargain and where to find the best produce. It flattered him to see the adoration and hero-worship in her eyes. (76)

Elsa follows Julius on board ship to England not only because she loves him, but because his plans echo her own repressed desires for mobility and independence:

"I'm going to England, Elsa; I'm going to make my fortune," he would say. . . She would sit up and shiver, glancing at him with scared eyes. . . "I shall go with you," she said, and struck at him with her nails when he laughed. . . "I'd work like a slave if you took me with you." (86-7)

Julius's schemes both frighten and fascinate Elsa, a similar reaction to that which Davey's deviant plans produce upon Mary. Julius is an archetypal punisher-figure, and adopting his lifestyle results in suffering for Elsa. The London capitalistic grind which energises Julius crushes her; she indeed works like a slave in his cafés, and her consumptive decline, while not outright murder, is undeniably expedited by Julius's withholding of expensive sanatorium treatment from one who is not his wife. Inarticulate Elsa is a dispensable commodity, hindering Julius's economic success; he complains that "[y]ou keep everything back. I shall have to put somebody in place of you. . . . Stupidity's no good to

me. . .I can't afford it'" (122).

Rachel Dreyfus also initially sees in Julius a promise of freedom. Rachel's spinster life is narrowly-defined by Edwardian social mores and the cultural limits of middle-class Jewish society: she shops, walks in the Park, and attends singing lessons, the synagogue, parties and the opera. An independent career forged through her musical talent is seen as unacceptably deviant by her community; her mother comments that "'we thought at one time of having Rachel's voice trained. . .But I don't know--to become a professional singer, rather dreadful, don't you think?'" (157). Up-and-coming businessman Julius is therefore a vicariously energising prospect for unfulfilled Rachel. His risqué dinnertable conversation inspires in her a mixture of emotions: "loathing, confusion, appalled virginity, and interest--yes, interest" (159). Rachel's personality responds to Julius's model of deviance and rebellion, and his outsider status is fascinating to her: "[h]e wasn't English and had few friends, and then living all alone like that. . .he was terribly brilliant and slightly frightening. . .she had always been so very bored with the usual young men and boys" (163-4).

Marriage to Julius, however, does not bring Rachel the freedom she seeks; her only fulfilment lies in his love, which is rapidly displaced by a succession of mistresses and their charismatic daughter, Gabriel. Rachel commits suicide, not because she has discovered she has cancer, but because she realises the incestuous attraction between Julius and Gabriel will marginalise her permanently:

"You may as well know the truth, Julius, about my illness. I've kept it from you up to now because I thought there might be a grain of hope somewhere--I don't mean of my recovering, but of you coming back to me again. Now of course I see that it won't be possible." (247)

Julius, the supreme egotist, is attracted to Gabriel because her dynamism represents his own ego reincarnated. His battle for emotional, physical and sexual control of her is in this way a battle to gain control over deviant aspects of himself. The dialectic of power and

submissiveness between Julius and Gabriel is indeed energising, powerfully developed and sustained throughout the latter half of the novel. Julius's incestuous desires are "a sensation in mind and body that was shameful and unclean" (*Julius* 226); to escape from them Gabriel must beat her father at his own game, and consequently she takes malicious enjoyment in physical and mental cruelty towards him (266-7, 276).

Julius's killing of Gabriel quenches her rebellion against parental control, and is yet another instance of a du Maurier male character disposing of an unattainable female by murder. (In this context *Paradise Lost* again becomes significant: it is notable that the child of the incestuous relationship between Satan and his daughter Sin is Death.) The combined drowning and strangling of Gabriel suggests a fusion of the cat Mimitte's death with Mère's, and as Kelly points out (Kelly 45) the murder is also described as an act of possessive rape:

[h]e was on her before she could move. . . pressing her down into the water beneath him. . . He went on holding her beneath the water, beating her legs with his knees, and he wondered how long it would be before her body sagged under him, and grew limp (*Julius* 281)

During the murder Julius is incited by Gabriel's eyes that "looked like his mother" (281) and his mind flashes back to Père's throttling of Mère. The incest-theme thus continues an Oedipus complex cycle in Julius's life: he feels compelled to eliminate that which he cannot have (mother, daughter), at the same time as he rebels against the forces which have made him what he is.

Gabriel's flute-playing, for instance, reminds Julius forcibly of Père's music; however her melodies conjure up not a celestial city but

another city. . . a sudden swoop and a turn and a plunge into the bowels of the secret earth, heart beating, wings battered and scorched, and this new-discovered city was. . . all mingled in extravagant confusion (225-6)

These images echo the fall of Lucifer from Heaven to Hell, and again the

Paradise Lost analogy serves to emphasise the guilt- and fear-producing nature of Julius's desires. Satan/Julius symbolically battles (and in this novel triumphs over) the good angel Gabriel.

While Satan commits incest with the daughter who springs Athene-like from his own head, Julius comes as close to giving birth to Gabriel as is possible, delivering her in a brutal, exultant fashion:

[Martha Dreyfus saw] Julius standing above, a tall dark figure in the half-light, the lamp shining upon his face, his black hair tumbled over his eyes--and he was holding in his hands something that kicked and cried, and he was laughing. (181)

Thus Julius repeatedly emphasises that he is Gabriel's sole parent: "she would have to grow up into something finished and flawless, something so perfect that Julius Lévy would be able to say with truth: 'I made her--I brought her into the world'" (184). This idea of cloning as an excuse for incest is reiterated in *Paradise Lost*. Sin is aware she pleases her father Satan because

Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
Becams't enamoured
(*Paradise Lost* Book II, 761-67)

So too Julius becomes enamoured when confronted by fifteen-year-old Gabriel, the almost full-grown image of himself: "she was unknown to him though part of him. . . belonging to no one else in heaven and earth, egotistical and supremely self-obsessing" (*Julius* 213). To Julius Gabriel symbolises "a city of reality, of scents and of sounds, and he dwelt in this city holding the key in his hands" (253). (Again, this passage recalls an image in *Paradise Lost*, the "powerful Key" with which Sin opens up the broad way to destruction--*Paradise Lost*, Book II, 774-77.)

Julius's characterisation is therefore extreme, the presentation of an archetypal villain. Yet he is also a hero-figure, a marginalised outsider who achieves success, a citizen of the world in the tradition of Francis Davey, Jean-Benoit Aubéry, the Moore brothers and Hiram Yorke. He is both a man of no country and a cosmopolitan who is at home everywhere

(the London Jewish set knows that "any country could belong to them"--*Julius* 150). Scorned by society for his race and classlessness, Julius manipulates and masters the societies of both western and eastern Europe as revenge. As a deviant individual he stands alone in the canon of du Maurier's work.

Deviant Individualism: a Compulsively-Repeated Construction

The above discussions demonstrate that both Brontë and du Maurier were fascinated by the concept of "deviant" individualism, both male and female. The outsider status which both authors experienced because of their gender and the nature of their lives and work is recreated in an almost obsessive manner throughout the texts of their novels. To paraphrase Eagleton, it can be said of du Maurier as well as of Brontë that the loneliness explored in their novels reflects the image of the isolation of all women in an individualist society (Eagleton 8).

As has been noted, the Gothic novel heroine, "[l]ike the nameless protagonist of du Maurier's *Rebecca*. . . enviously watches the idealized other, whose unfettered existence is so unlike her own, and forlornly hopes that a magical look or word from him will make her 'somebody'" (Massé 93). This "idealized other", invariably male, is chameleon in form: from the Merlyn brothers to Francis Davey, Julius to Aubéry, the Moore brothers to Monsieur Paul Emanuel, female authors writing in both nineteenth and twentieth centuries create a gallery of individualistic characters embodying deviant aspects of their own personalities.

CONCLUSION

This discussion of the work of Charlotte Brontë and Daphne du Maurier reveals a feminist literary inheritance which passed from nineteenth century women authors to their twentieth century granddaughters. Both authors explore their femaleness and contemporary and historical cultural attitudes to it by writing on two levels--a surface level of traditional genres (the romance, historical, Gothic or mystery novel), plots, and characterisations, and a subtextual level of symbols, patterning and (in du Maurier's work in particular) naming, which suffuses a dissenting feminist voice throughout the novel.

In both cases feminist concerns are subtly intertwined with class-resentment or class-ambivalence. Du Maurier's work most clearly demonstrates an ambivalence to the (by the 1930s) threatened lifestyle of the landed fractions. Although she desired to break free of her over-protective, affluent family (a "yearning to escape", as she terms it--*Growing Pains* 62), du Maurier was, due to her upbringing, politically naive:

[h]er affinity with servants, and her preference for ordinary people rather than grand ones, had not led her to learn anything about the social conditions of her time. . . There was no tradition of concern about such matters in the du Maurier household, and if Daphne was going to develop it she would have to do so on her own. (Forster 38)

Du Maurier's writing does explore social concerns, and reflects her own psycho-social dilemma in its varied anthems to a lost life of ease and grandeur and to the unstoppable, almost evolutionary, process of needed social reform. Her experience as a female trapped within patriarchal structures fostered her empathy with the disenfranchised classes; financial and social independence from her parents and husband, achieved through writing at isolated retreats such as the Ferryside cottage and the ill-heated Menabilly summerhouse, brought du Maurier nearer to an appreciation of

a working-class lifestyle. A diary-entry of 1928 comments:

"I'm rapidly coming to the conclusion that freedom is the only thing that matters to me at all. . . Never to have to obey any laws or rules, only certain standards one sets for oneself. I want to revolt, as an individual, against everything that 'ties'." (*Growing Pains* 139)

Both du Maurier and Brontë revolted against and escaped imprisoning cultural values through the creation of imaginative novelistic landscapes and discourses. Throughout their texts, constricting cultural constructions are built into powerful literary shapes (Thornfield, Manderley, Clonmere, Marine Terrace) which are then systematically dismantled. In a related manner, male and female character stereotypes are also constructed and deconstructed: holders of social power like William Crimsworth and Philip Ashley are revealed to be puppets of a patriarchal regime, functioning as both oppressed and oppressor in turn; Gothic heroines like Lucy Snowe and Mary Yellan are revealed to be less fulfilled by a traditional "happy marriage" ending than by a life of single ("deviant") individualism.

A subsidiary purpose of this thesis has been to give academic consideration to a hitherto largely-overlooked body of literary work: du Maurier's minor novels. The following passage gives an indication of prevalent academic attitudes to du Maurier's work.

By the standards of contemporary literary criticism, most of du Maurier's works do not hold up well. Her prose, while straightforward and clear, is not especially interesting. There is little imagery, symbolism, or ambiguity in her writing. Her characters are often undeveloped, and her plots become all-important. Her style is conventional, her sentences unmemorable, and her storylines contrived. Compared with authors like Graham Greene or John Steinbeck she seems shallow and commercial. (Kelly 142)

In contrast to Kelly's damning (and notably sexist) judgement, this thesis demonstrates that du Maurier's prose is indeed replete with imagery, symbolism and ambiguity. Beneath the (questionable) "conventional",

"commercial" and "contrived" portions of her work lies a sub-stratum of female resentment and empowerment--powerful constructions which are doubly legitimised when compared with similar constructions created by her literary antecedent, Brontë.

Du Maurier is quoted as saying, "I would prefer to be a man. If I were, my novels would be more highly thought of" (Shallcross 34). I suggest that had either Brontë (who wrote under an androgynous pseudonym) or du Maurier been a man, ^{her} their work would have been unlikely to contain its double-layered psychological and cultural intricacy. As has been noted of *Rebecca*:

["I"'s] dream points exactly to the act of writing as the moment of danger. For the girl in *Rebecca*, the narrating is both a making safe and opening up of subjectivity, a volatile disclosure. . . Perhaps the whole of the narrative should be seen as a kind of displaced revenge, a revenge which the ordinary middle-class girl dare not acknowledge as her own, and which only feminism would allow her to speak. (Light 20)

The novels of du Maurier and Brontë, discussed in this thesis, are clearly empowering constructions which allow "middle-class girls"--female authors--to dare, to acknowledge, and to speak.

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