



Pedagogická  
fakulta  
Faculty  
of Education

Jihočeská univerzita  
v Českých Budějovicích  
University of South Bohemia  
in České Budějovice

Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích

Pedagogická fakulta

Katedra anglistiky

**Bakalářská práce**

# **Cornwall v literárním díle Daphne du Maurier**

## **Cornwall in the Literary Works of Daphne du Maurier**

Vypracovala: Tereza Blažková

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Alice Sukdolová, Ph.D.

České Budějovice 2022

## Čestné prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že svoji bakalářskou práci na téma Cornwall in the Literary Works of Daphne du Maurier jsem vypracovala samostatně pouze s použitím pramenů a literatury uvedených v seznamu citované literatury.

Prohlašuji, že v souladu s § 47b zákona č. 111/1998 Sb. v platném znění souhlasím se zveřejněním své bakalářské práce, a to v nezkrácené podobě, elektronickou cestou ve veřejně přístupné části databáze STAG provozované Jihočeskou univerzitou v Českých Budějovicích na jejích internetových stránkách, a to se zachováním mého autorského práva k odevzdanému textu této kvalifikační práce. Souhlasím dále s tím, aby toutéž elektronickou cestou byly v souladu s uvedeným ustanovením zákona č. 111/1998 Sb. zveřejněny posudky školitele a oponentů práce i záznam o průběhu a výsledku obhajoby kvalifikační práce. Rovněž souhlasím s porovnáním textu mé kvalifikační práce s databází kvalifikačních prací Theses.cz provozovanou Národním registrem vysokoškolských kvalifikačních prací a systémem na odhalování plagiátů.

V Českých Budějovicích .....

.....

## **Anotace**

Cílem práce je představit anglickou autorku Daphne du Maurier v kontextu gotické literatury a žánru romance v britské próze první poloviny 20. století, a dále se zaměřit na autorčin vztah k regionu, do něhož zasadila děj svých stěžejních románů *Rebecca*, *Jamaica Inn* a *The House on the Strand*. Práce v úvodu charakterizuje gotickou a romantickou literární tradici anglického románu od jejích počátků (Anne Radcliffe, H. Walpole, M. G. Lewis, sestry Bronteovy) a pokusí se zařadit autorku D. du Maurier do literárního kontextu v rámci tradic žánru. Práce vychází z předpokladu, že základní téma a motivická struktura romance a gotické literatury souvisí s prostředím románu, do něhož je děj zasazen, a může být ovlivněn prostředím, které bylo autorce blízké. Práce se v tomto smyslu zaměří na reálný a literární prostor hrabství Cornwall a posoudí míru důležitosti prostředí v rámci dějové struktury vybraných románů autorky.

**Klíčová slova:** Cornwall, gotická a romantická literatura, Daphne du Maurier

## **Abstract**

The goal of this work is to introduce the English author Daphne du Maurier in the context of Gothic and Romantic literature in British prose of the first half of the 20th century, and to describe the author's relationship towards the region where she situated the plots of her significant novels *Rebecca*, *Jamaica Inn* and *The House on the Strand*. In the beginning, the thesis characterizes the Gothic and Romantic literary tradition of the English novels from its earliest stages (Ann Radcliffe, H. Wallpole, M. G. Lewis, the Brontë sisters) and tries to set the author D. du Maurier into the literary context in terms of the genre's traditions. This thesis results from the belief that the main topic and motif structure of the Gothic and Romantic literature relates to the novels' settings where the storyline is situated, and can be influenced by the environment which was close to the author. Therefore, the thesis deals with the real as well as the literary area of the Cornwall county and judges the importance of its area in terms of the storyline of the chosen novels by the author.

**Key words:** Cornwall, Gothic and Romantic literature, Daphne du Maurier

## **Poděkování**

Vřelé poděkování patří paní Alici Sukdolové PhDr. Ph.D. jak za poskytnutí cenných a odborných informací, tak za její rychlé jednání, čas, trpělivost, kterou mi byla ochotna věnovat v rámci vedení mé práce.



# Contents

Introduction .....	4
1 Introduction to Gothic and Romantic literature in England .....	6
1.1 The Literary Period of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century.....	6
1.2 The Literary Context of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century tradition .....	11
2 Daphne du Maurier's life and work.....	14
2.1 Biography.....	14
2.2 Literary works .....	22
3 Cornwall in Daphne du Maurier's literary work .....	26
3.1 Rebecca .....	26
3.2 Jamaica Inn.....	30
3.3 The House on the Strand.....	33
4 Conclusion.....	37
Bibliography .....	38
Primary sources .....	38
Secondary sources .....	38

## Introduction

*„If you took a silk handkerchief, crumpled it up in your hand, and threw it on the table, it might fall somewhat as Cornwall is constituted.” (Mitton, 1915, p. 32)*

Cornwall, a place which can be proud of its beautiful scenery, consisting of marvellous bays which you can watch from highly raised cliffs with their paths luring people to visit all its coasts from point to point. Making its most passionate visitors spent days on traveling and subduing different routes from the mainly used ones, causing a craving sensation inside of them to appear to see more of its variable terrain.

However, in the early stage of Victorian age and its literature, speaking of the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the beauty of Cornwall had not been that appreciated yet. The situation changed just after opening of the Cornwall Railway, which happened in 1859 and thus Cornwall started experiencing more inquisitive visitors. But not only that. In the 1860s, thanks to these conditions, many writers started mentioning Cornwall in their literary works. Many books about its charms started being printed out which eventually attracted even more, thousands of, people among whom there were the most loyal ones coming to Cornwall annually for holidays, claiming “they are unable to find satisfaction anywhere else, the atmosphere of the country has entered into their blood.” (Ibid, p. 19) But there is specifically one author whose work is going to be the subject of the bachelor thesis. The author who not by accident also included the surroundings of Cornwall in her works from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Daphne du Maurier. And like this, with this short introduction, we got to the topic of this bachelor’s thesis, *Cornwall in the Literary Works of Daphne du Maurier*.

Firstly, I would like to briefly mention the history of the Gothic and Romantic literature in England which will explain important background so we could understand Daphne du Maurier’s work. I will concentrate on the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in which these two literary modes came to their power even though it is hard to define it so simply.

Afterwards, I will take a better look at the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well. What is needed to be said is that these two literary modes are often associated with each other, if not often blended into one thanks to the fact they were coinciding. Nevertheless, I will go through the examination of their both features, and I will point out the things I find to be the most important so we could understand these two literary approaches better.

In the second part of my work, I would like to introduce Daphne du Maurier's life and work. From the point when she was born, we will go through what she was like, how her closest people saw her character and what destiny had prepared for her. As a must it is also concentrating on her plentiful writing career which touched many people's lives who, after devouring her books, often became her supporters and admirers, being so fascinated by her stories that it was worth for them to pay Daphne a visit in her private house no matter they did not know if she was present or not. They were patiently waiting if they will be the lucky ones to get an autograph or even so blessed that she will exchange a few words with them. However, the author was not admired by everyone, criticism undoubtedly met her as well. All of the significant moments of the author's literary career will be discussed later.

And as many say, 'save the best for last', I believe it is like that even in the case of this thesis. I will finally get to the treasure and describe how Daphne du Maurier projects the county called Cornwall, a place very close to her heart, in her works, especially through the motifs, symbols and themes present in the selected novels.

# 1 Introduction to Gothic and Romantic literature in England

*The Castle of Otranto*, written by Horace Walpole, published in the year of 1764. The first ever work which was claimed to be ‘a gothic story’. The Work, which started a new phenomenon and was an inspiration for other writers in later few decades. It set a new style of literary writing which became so popular that it successfully remained desired for decades and also set a base for the upcoming Romantic literature which made these two genres coincide and complement each other during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The literary features of the Gothic were however required by readers even after this era. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, what is considered as Gothic started appearing not just in further literary works, but also in films, series, musicals or music videos which made this mode go through many changes as it was developing and appearing in many different ways thanks to new technologies. Nowadays, we can see that Gothic mode set foundations for what we now know as ‘horror’. However, the point of this work is to take closer look at its literary form and to do that, we will go through everything gradually, beginning in the roots.

## 1.1 The Literary Period of the 18<sup>th</sup> century

The era of the so-called *Enlightenment*. Lasting from 17<sup>th</sup> century until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The period of time which brought new industrial, political, thus even literary ideas to not only England. Society started viewing itself as ‘modern’ because feudalism was replaced by commercial liberalism. People reassessed their moral values and society started craving freedom and education. There was also an extensive deflection from religion because of unattested dogmas and not least, people started having interest in reading. This century is known for coming up with novels not just thanks to the readers who were bored of the “old literature” but also publishers who were simply looking for novelty just like their customers. And we can say that Gothic genre is a reaction to all of this, representing and showing people’s concerns coming from the current happenings.

This newly coming genre, in the second half of the eighteenth century, was firstly associated with rather negative adjectives such as terroristic, vicious and violent. The reason was the feudal past in medieval ages, during which Goths invaded the Roman Empire in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Goths from those chivalry ages were seen as barbarous because they were shamelessly destroying contemporary libraries and works of Roman creators, not respecting their property at all. This is an important information because mystical stories from this medieval past were often used and chosen as a theme of the first Gothic books whose authors were trying to imitate them, if not even show them in a better light, with added elements from the present. Just like Horace Walpole did it with *The Castle of Otranto*, binding the past with what was present for him which was undeniably a new way of expressing. As I mentioned earlier, at first, people saw it as something untactful and not just writers, but also readers, who were seeking for this kind of literary, were called as ‘those with bad taste’, supporting something which is going against the natural graduation of improvement and modernization.

Explaining it further, authors who were considered as gothic tried to use an opposite style of writing from what was seen during the preceding Neoclassical, also called Augustan, Age. Referring to Horace Walpole again, he accused the literary works of those times to be too probable and he said that the real pleasure from reading begins when you use imagination. There was a belief that the uncivilized past should help the modern society to learn from the previous generation’s mistakes while the uncivilized past here stands for the years of Feudalism. Because of the rational-thinking wave coming with *The Enlightenment*, Gothic authors started purposely going against the set norms and in their literary works they began to work with uncommon motifs like the unknown, mystery and the supernatural, fantastical creatures. Everything that symbolized something going beyond human senses and which awakes some type of pleasant fear in people’s bodies. As Joseph Addison, an English politician and writer, claimed “a pleasing kind of Horrour in the Mind of the Reader” (Richetti, 2005, p. 683) was a thing they went for. Literary background settings were places like ancient castles, crypts, abandoned graveyards, old houses or cryptic laboratories which carried some untold secrets from the past, therefore something uncanny, mysterious and thus scary

because the reader does not know what to expect from it. We can clearly see that authors were trying to “attack” people’s emotions and sensations which appear as they read through the stories rather than aiming for what is rationally explainable.

*“Warton and Hurd suggested that the Gothic age, precisely because of its relative barbarity, was especially conducive to the free play of imagination and that what the modern era had gained in civility it had lost in poetic inspiration.” (Hogle, 2002, p. 27)*

Surely, it was not only Walpole’s *Otranto* being one of the first attempts of manifesting against the Neoclassical limitations. Men like William Collins, Edward Young and Thomas Gray were also fighting with their works against the established mode even before 1760s, however never that successfully. In 1777, a specialist for romance, Clara Reeve, decided to publish a book called *The Champion of Virtue* which followed the Gothic path initiated by Walpole and because people were craving novelty, she smartly used the situation and got them what they wanted. Her story also included slight terror which she accomplished by adding some fighting scenes, yet her way of writing had its own uniqueness and was accepted by people way better. In this book “she reduces the supernatural element, expands the description of everyday actions and events, and develops the emotional bonds among the different characters in relationships of friendship, patronage, and family piety” (Ibid, p. 33) which was a successful move to catch people’s attention and fulfil their likings.

What is known as the biggest ‘boom’ was the time between the year of 1790 and 1800 when the number of books being printed out was increasing rapidly. Gothic fiction was constantly developing and changing, and it was gaining popularity in the sphere of readers. Here we have names like Anne Radcliffe and Matthew Gregory Lewis appearing, supposedly two of the most remarkable and revolutionary Gothic authors of the 1790s. Both of them with different writing styles which fall within the two subcategories of Gothic literature as Radcliffe described herself, so-called horror and

terror Gothic. While Lewis was secretive about the explanation behind the supernatural happenings in his stories, which we see as the terror side of Gothic, Radcliffe worked with the horror one, revealing that behind the supernatural and uncanny there are explainable principles. Terror affects the mind of reader in the meaning of imagination, whereas horror works with something which materializes into an actual physical being. “When Radcliffe’s heroines fear physical injury or rape, they react with horror; when the inciting objects is immaterial, such as the suggestion of preternatural agency or the ghostly presence of the divine in nature, they experience uplifting terror.” (Punter, 2015, p. 93)

Not talking about literature again for a moment, when we look at the 1790s’s situation in England in some detail, there was the French Revolution going on which affected the whole state. This war between France, which was under the lead of Napoleon, and England brought a revolutionary wave of industrialization which made people reasonably react just as all new-coming circumstances and this reaction was embodied as the rise of Romanticism, standing negatively against the civilization and changes which the industrializing brought. To describe how Romanticism displayed in new literary works - authors who were including the contemporary situation in their writings often portrayed it in much worse way from what the reality was like, exaggerating and emphasizing all the negatives coming with the times was number one feature of Romantic works. In Romantic fictions we can also sense how authors perceived and highlighted the purpose of nature rather than the benefits of innovation. They praised its ability to give people the possibility to use imagination and go beyond what is existing, the reality. The biggest enemy for them was, as said, modernization which they observed as something equal to the term ‘dehumanization’, evolutionary step which destroys human’s nature with which people were born to this world. Naturally, as a protest against this status of society, they wanted to bring all the feelings of pure unspoilt human back. Wanting to reach the goal of making their readers feel real emotions while reading their fictions, they started using effective stimuli as well as playing with psychology of the reader. Heroes of Romanticism were often put into at first sight maybe common situations but those had their unrevealed secrets which were

brought on the surface gradually. These at first normal looking situations then happened to be more or less extraordinary ones, sometimes seen as ‘taboos’, which made the hero go through a lot of emotional changes, therefore, at the best, even the reader. Using the feeling of a grief, of a threat, of a terror or other not so pleasant sensations to get under the reader’s skin, a lot of the times adding the description of the literary settings, including weather, which often was the main ‘mood setter’. Concentrating solely on the individuality of the character and his own experience.

As we can see from what I have introduced here, these two genres, Gothic and Romantic, have many features in common like aiming for human’s emotions, playing with mysterious or unexplored things and places, as well as going against the “pleasant” normalized standards. The reason of this inevitable similarity is most likely their coinciding which often makes it hard for people to distinguish these two modes from one another. But this is not just a contemporary issue. Especially back in those times when these two genres were just appearing it was hard even for specialized critics to set some boundaries between them and give a specific line which would say ‘this is still Gothic, while this is rather Romantic’. As time went by and several expertise were told about this problematic, it was clear that looking at these two genres as separate units was useless. Eventually these two were perceived as something rather complementary to each other and by following the chronological order, the Gothic genre was marked as a base for younger Romanticism. Therefore, Romanticism could be seen as a subcategory of the Gothic. Going with the description even deeper, the Gothic was later in fact described as more of a hybrid aesthetic which crosses the literary works of many different modes - not only Romanticism.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Gothic novels with romantic features were gaining popularity especially among female readers. It was because these novels often narrated a story of a heroine, who was by the way dealing with a dominant male figure, to whom these women could relate to. This feeling of understanding the books provided was strong enough to make the women feel comfort while reading as they could portrait their own self into the heroin. However, this fact was just adding to why some critics were against this genre so much. Women in this age were seen as inferior and submissive in society



therefore the fact that Gothic genre had mainly female audience was making people see it in a negative perspective. Also, critics labelled Gothic works as “a waste of time” since the “main” issue of the stories were women seeking for male protagonists’ affection. This problem standing next to the already mentioned one (that Gothic genre disparaged contemporary Neoclassical social and moral standards) was unfortunately pressuring the writers, as well as readers, who did not want to be seen in a bad light and so at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century this genre started backing away.

## **1.2 The Literary Context of the 19<sup>th</sup> century tradition**

It was especially the time around the 1820s when the disappearing of the Gothic genre had its peak. More and more attacks on this mode were appearing and the genre was now associated not only with female readers, who in fact very oppositely craved more publications of this genre, and disrespecting moral standards but also with sexual morbidity which displayed it at very low level, speaking of literary writing in general. Critics argued that works of literature should keep and spread generic purity, as well as aesthetic unity, and that Gothic works were speaking against very important cultural hierarchy. Some writers, in order to prevent their audience from associating their books with this negative opinion, started writing defensive texts or changed the way of their writing style. For example, Lord Byron could be mentioned as an author of Gothic lyrics and verse romances which later transformed more into traditional and serious stories with highly elevated tone like his *Hints from Horace* from 1811. The situation continued like this for some more years until the 30s, particularly the year 1837, also called as the “Gothic cusp”, when Princess Victoria became the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and with whom the Victorian reign started. Undoubtedly, this change brought a new controversy among the society – the question of the new monarch’s gender. This topic inevitably reflected in Gothic literary mode in many different forms depending on the authors’ views. Generally speaking, if we focus on the books’ heroines in the Victorian era, these women living in their own world are trying to break free from negative social critique which corresponds with contemporary issue of the Queen Victoria. The thing which differs is usually the liberation of the heroin.

Either she breaks free from her tragic fate, just like what Ann Radcliffe preferred and used in her stories, or she stays imprisoned in it just like the Queen herself.

Ann Radcliff was not however the only female author who published similar stories. She influenced not only her audience by her unique style but also her future successor in Gothic literary scene Jane Austen whose novel from 1813 with the title *Pride and Prejudice* is still considered as one of the great romance masterpieces of the Gothic times. Labelling a work as a romance does not only mean that it belongs to the Romanticism (or Gothic since we now know that these two genres were interconnected) as a literary era. A romance is the sort of story which describes the heroines' feelings from love relationships which she progressively experiences as the story flows no matter whether they are happy or upsetting. It comes with all the hardships as well and that is what makes the romantic stories so captivating.

There are of course more female writers to be added to the list like for example three of the Brontë sisters, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, who are also well-known for works just as good. Charlotte Brontë, as the oldest of the sisters who must have taken the responsibility of her younger siblings, can boast of her novel *Jane Eyre* from 1847 where she included her tragic memories of her tough childhood after the death of their mother and their other two older sisters, as well as her later gain of confidence which appeared after she was sent to a new school where she only relied on herself to be employed as a governess in her adulthood. In this example it is perfectly noticeable, thanks to the used literary devices, in which direction was the Gothic mode of female writers developing at the moment. She centred the main setting of the novel in a fictional place called Thornfield, a mystical mansion with many empty rooms because of how huge it was, where the main heroin Jane founds her first love which hides painful secrets behind. Only at the very ending of the story, after heart-breaking realizations, there is a happy reunion of the two lovers which brings the needed satisfaction to the audience. Charlotte's younger sister, Emily Brontë, is the most known for her book which carries the title *Wuthering Heights* and which also became one of the leading books of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Gothic in England. It is a romantic novel which was by the way also presented to public in 1847, where Emily emphasizes the beauty of

their home area in Yorkshire, especially the Haworth moors, from where she was eventually forced to move out in order to fulfil her life duties in Brussels.

Slowly, as the Gothic genre started crashing the boundaries of what was right and what was wrong (originally because of the sexuality and gender issues), the Gothic literature became connected with the fact that as an author, you were able to freely express even certain taboo topics while still maintaining the very basic features as including supernatural events, science, haunted places and most importantly the general feeling of fear and terror which started to attract readers no matter the critics argued that its irrelevant. This is what the Gothic entered even the 20<sup>th</sup> century with and remained suppressed until the 1970s when women finally started having bigger rights with the feminist movement. In 1976, a woman called Ellen Moers published a very important work called *Literary Women* where she denies Horace Walpole as the founder of the Gothic style of writing and emphasizes four main female authors – Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelley with her work *Frankenstein* from 1818, Emily Brontë and Christina Rossetti as an author of Gothic poems. She claims that this genre belongs to female writers since it was them who continued and persisted the most during the waves of criticism and labelled this mode as the “Female Gothic”. This is exactly the period of time of when one of the authors on the scene was also Daphne du Maurier whom this work is dedicated to and this brief analysis of the historical background of the Gothic literature now allows us to understand her style of writing a little more.

## **2 Daphne du Maurier's life and work**

### **2.1 Biography**

13th May 1907. The day Daphne du Maurier was born to the wealthy upper-class family of Muriel Beaumont and Gerald du Maurier living in Hampstead. Cannon Hall specifically. Her mother Muriel was quite a successful actress who for the sake of her children and generally family left her stage career. However, from how hearty this seems to be of her, she really hated this decision and so as she decided after, "the upbringing of Daphne and her other two sisters, older Angela and younger Jeanne, was given to hands of series nurses and governesses, some of whom Daphne remembered as rather fearsome." (Shallcross, 1991, p. 34)

All of the three daughters of the du Maurier family had some special talent which represented some kind of fulfilment in their lives. Angela shortly appeared on theatre's stage as an actress just as her mother, then became a writer. Jeanne got a talent for painting which she inherited from their grandfather and Daphne, as we already probably expect, got the talent of storytelling and writing as well. It could maybe seem like, thanks to these similar interests of the sisters, they were similar as well. But whoever knew the sisters, even in younger age, could tell that Daphne, a mature, intelligent and quiet child, was a complete opposite of theatrical Angela and always charmingly smiling Jeanne. On her own, in older age, she even admitted that not once she wished to be born as a boy.

Since her childhood, Daphne, as said, was a quieter person who appreciated the time which could be spent alone, especially when she could skim through books from which she gained a lot of knowledge as she started with reading in an early age. She despised social events, being surrounded by people was unquestionably tiring for her and if she could make a choice, she would always rather either have the companion of older therefore more mature people, than people in the same age group as her, or she would choose to be around her closest friends. This characteristic of an unsociable

person stayed with her through her whole life, appearing as “a recluse – someone very few people knew or saw.” (Shallcross, 1991, p. 15).

No matter how luxurious and privileged the style of her living was thanks to her parents, which could seem as, and even was, a great benefit and for a lot of people from further perspective even the reason for her to be absolutely happy and satisfied with her lifestyle, even she could point out some shortages which were bothering her. One of them was the lack of space and freedom of behaviour. Like if she was constantly too controlled. However, because she didn't want to do bad and was an obedient girl just like her other two sisters, she tried to get on well with her parents who were unfortunately rather repressing her talent for writing which later had to affect her and get somehow on the surface. She began to escape to her mind where she was creating her own world. Daydreaming was what she was genuinely enjoying. And even though her parents were doing everything in her favour, even the set rules which she needed to follow were there, in her parents' eyes, just for her own good, she had struggles with self-doubt and insecurity because of lack of parental support in what she truthfully enjoyed. As for family members, she spent a lot of her childhood time especially around her father, Gerald du Maurier, who was a publicly known figure, which he was very aware of. This life position was probably the reason of his need to teach his three daughters strictly and well enough how to behave in a particular situation, what to say and oppositely what not to save his persona and the whole family from unnecessary rumours and criticism.

We can say that Daphne was definitely told many lessons about life by her parents already in her younger age, she was about twelve years of age when she was approached as “grown up”, but it was after all her own experience which formed her character. Just thanks to that she started realizing who she truly was and how she felt about different things notwithstanding other people's opinions. One of such experience was her love life. But unluckily even there she felt excessive interest and investigative concerns from her father who discouraged not just one man from dating her even in her older age when she was ready to get married. She described his personality as adorable and attractive to the point when he earned the nickname of ‘a menace’, someone who's

being 'a threat' because of his charms which he used to lure different women to initiate non-binding love affairs which supposedly helped him destress.

At the age of thirteen or fourteen, it is not quite certain, a governess called Miss Waddell, also called Tod, was the one who took care of Daphne and was responsible for her home education at that time. It is not a coincidence that this age was also the time when Daphne started writing her first short but still private stories. It was because of the 'good' Miss Waddell, as Daphne herself called her, who encouraged her to continue in what she likes doing and to not give up on her hobby just because it was not her parents' goal. Home schooling was over for her when she was about to turn 18 and was sent for studies to a French school in Paris where she learnt further life lessons of how to live independently, which she utilised right when she returned to England. Living in Hampstead was not what would longer fulfil her needs and as she wanted to focus on her writing career, she described the house to be disruptive. One of the reasons was probably the connections she had to this place with her father. All the memories and experiences, knowing how living in this house affected her, this all was something she wanted to avoid and on top of it, she mostly wanted to prove herself that she is able to live freed from her past and from her father's fame, which involuntarily influenced her as well. She wanted to create her own path in life. Thinking of all the traveling with her parents, since money was not a problem in this family, back in the days she was a child, she remembered a place where she felt nothing but happiness and thus decided to move there, to the magical Cornwall. She settled down in Ferryside, a house which looked like a need-a-reconstruction Swiss-styled cottage but perfect in Daphne's eyes, in a south-eastern port town called Fowey, because she figured this would be the perfect place for a retreat. Harbour beneath the house, the possibility to go sailing, hire a car to drive around the hills, this was what Daphne sought for. A freedom. Muriel, her mother, adored the idea of helping with renovation of this Swiss cottage so much that she successfully negotiated with the previous owners of the house which was followed by Daphne's father's next step. He made an investment and soon, the cottage became the property of Mauriers. He made it possible for Daphne to stay there. But what to him seemed like a great idea at the beginning, turned into his nightmare later.

Daphne, living now without less of parental control, even though she still was in a close contact with her family members who were following her to the Fowey time to time, wrote a letter one day that she is going to get married. This was a great shock especially for her father who, without any exaggeration, burst into tears after finding out. Since it was his wish that neither of his daughters, his favourite Daphne nor her two sisters, should ever marry in order to keep this close family bond, none of her two sisters had actually married anyone. Daphne was the first one to do that. She was going to marry a man whom she saw for the first time in the harbour below the Ferryside as he was sailing around with his white motorboat. His name was Frederick Arthur Montague Browning, 'Tommy' for Daphne, and he served as Grenadier Guard, who got rewarded with the Distinguished Service Order, DSO in abbreviation, award for taking a command of three different companies while their main officers were seriously wounded in World War I, from where he made it to an army officer post and was known as a strict disciplinarian. Despite her father's disappointment, the marriage occurred on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1932, starting on a boat with an unusual name Yggdrasil, meaning 'the tree of life' in Norse mythology, which sailed towards the Fowey's church and later continued down the Helford River towards Frenchman's Creek. It was a beautiful day for Daphne which she liked to recollect no matter the fact her father Gerald refused to perform the rite of giving the bride to her husband. It was her cousin, Geoffrey du Maurier, who ended up doing that.

Whenever Daphne could, she preferred to stay in Fowey. Many places as well as many of her experiences there inspired her to write literary works and include plenty of things from her own life to the stories. Wherever else Daphne went, out of Cornwall, she felt that her heart is longing for going back and she could not stop thinking of that place. It followed her everywhere.

Just after marrying "Tommy", Daphne started realizing what his personality is truly like. Slowly, she began noticing his interest in other women as she, one day, found love letters from his former fiancée in one of his drawers. This was a great reason for her insecurities to rise but despite his unloyal behavior, they ended up having three children together. Tessa, being the oldest daughter, Flavia and Christian, the youngest

one. When Christian was still not in their lives, in 1937, the year when Flavia was born, Daphne, who gave her children to a nanny, went with her husband back to London because he had there a work to do as a commanding officer. She felt homesick for Cornwall and during many evenings she terribly missed writing as she had to accompany her husband to army drinking parties which was not her cup of tea whatsoever. Living besides him made Daphne question her own self in some aspects, even when it came to her sexuality. Earlier, in 1920s, when she and her family went to spend holidays in France, Paris to be exact, Daphne met a girl friend thanks to whom she got aware of homosexuality as she was presenting her sexuality very openly. Together, they did not have any affair going on, it was more like the trustworthy relationship which Daphne really missed in her life since her mother was not someone she could share her personal secrets with. Nonetheless, on Daphne's way back home, which was still London at that time, disturbing news popped up. This girl, whom Daphne befriended, hang herself in her apartment. It was very unexpected, no real explanation stood behind her act, but it was, in Daphne's opinion, the homosexuality which caused it. Not in the sense that homosexuality would be something bad in her eyes, she always claimed that homosexual relationships are not something she would ever diasprove. More likely, it was the society and mean people who had a problem with her being different and not be ashamed of it. Their pressure and the blame the girl felt because of them was simply too much. The question now might be, why did then Daphne stay with her husband when she felt homosexual tendencies? Daphne simply answers that she would find a homosexual relationship rather as a feeble substitute for her married life. Regardless the fact she felt jealous and inferior in their relationship, it was still something which was worth to maintain.

It was a few years during which Daphne stayed away from her beloved Cornwall. She continued writing and back to Cornwall, in 1943, she came already famous. It was her novel *Rebecca*, which blew up after it was published in 1938, and ever since then, Daphne's life has never been the same. One day, Daphne received a call from her sister Angela who informed her about a sale happening in the house of Menabilly which was one of the Cornwall's houses Daphne visited as a young girl and



fell in love with. It was an ancestral home of Rashleigh family, who were notable merchants of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Devon and Cornwall. It was also one of the houses Daphne took an inspiration from for the already mentioned novel therefore it had a strong meaning for her deep in her heart. It would be a dream of Daphne to buy the whole house rather than just things from its inside but since there was the World War II going on, she was questioning if there is even some future waiting for her. Thus, she let her dream of owning Menabilly die. However, not for long. It still lingered in her mind and did not let her sleep calmly at night and so, Daphne decided to revisit that place again after fifteen years. Seeing the house losing its charm in decay, she decided to contact her lawyer and asked him to get in touch with the owner of the house. She wanted to take care of that place and bring it back to life which, to her surprise, was enabled to her. The owner allowed her to rent the place and no matter Daphne's husband was now away due to his work overseas, she decided on her own. She accepted the offer. When he came back from Tunis, he was very unsure of his wife's quick decision. He would have preferred to stay permanently somewhere closer to London. Nevertheless, once he arrived at the fully renewed place with elegant decorations chosen by Daphne, he had to admit that she made an incredible choice. This was finally the place Daphne could call a proper home with everything she needed. Most importantly, she had the space there for writing. Local people, just like Tommy, got slowly used to seeing this famous female writer wearing, for some eccentric, style of clothing consisting of men's trousers as well as men's caps and she stayed in peace in this house for twenty-six years.

By 1943, we already know that Daphne had three children – Tessa, Flavia and little Christian – “and in her own words became both their mother and their father.” (Shallcross, 1991, p. 121) Living still in Menabilly, she provided even better care for her offspring when she hired the same governess who was taking care of Daphne when she was a child, Miss Waddell. Sometimes even Daphne's mother after getting widowed paid them a visit and was a great grandmother to them as they were growing older. At those times, her husband was heavily occupied by his military work, and it was matter of months when Daphne and Tommy had not seen each other whatsoever.

Firstly, thanks to this fact she had time to produce new stories. Secondly, it was her worries for her husband fighting at war which were causing her the anxiety which she later put into the stories and that is why her descriptive style of feelings is so believable – she was taking it from her own experience. People of course noticed this situation and rumours starting to spread that their marriage is not working and partly they were right. Being apart for so long from each other was causing their mutual attraction to fade away. Despite this fact, Daphne did not have any other relationship with men during this time. She had only several close bonds with women, like Gertrude Lawrence or Gladys Cooper, for which more and more people started judging her sexual orientation as they kept seeing her dressing so manly. In 1948, Tommy resigned from army and as highly positioned person he invited the Prince and the Queen to enjoy the surroundings of the Fowey, as well as the other members of the Royal Family, who were great fans of Daphne's novels, like the Prince Philip and Lord Mountbatten who time to time stayed with the married couple in Menabilly. No matter the financial prosperity of Daphne, she made sure to retain her modest style of living. Most of the times she refused invitation to different kinds of parties for which she would need to dress up or even do her makeup which she despised unlike her mother Lady du Maurier, and her closest friends knew that they should not take it as an impolite act. It was simply her nature to devote her free time and generally life to writing. However, one time it was inevitable for Daphne to refuse leaving Menabilly and that was when her novel *Rebecca* got accused of plagiarism and she had to defend herself in the United States. Her defence was based on her "skeleton outline" for the novel which was the way she worked – first of all she had an idea which she thought about for many weeks and months before she even wrote some lines on a paper, then she created the rough skeleton of the story and only after she started writing the stories more precisely. The defence ended up in Daphne's success, but this experience stayed in her for forever probably also because of the fact that she had to stay away from her beloved building this long - she herself stated that it was strange to her how deep love she held for a building.

The next chapter of her life Daphne sacrificed to not only writing but also taking part in important conversations and meetings speaking of film adaptations of her works.

She also published a play *September Tide*, whose opening was at Aldwych Theatre in 1948, even though she was not as big of a fan of theatre as her parents were. Many people, including her dear friend Gertrude Lawrence who had her own part as an actress in the play, considered it as a success but what mattered the most to Daphne was the admiration of the contemporary critics. During the 50s, Daphne distanced herself from the cinema and theatre scene because of the homesickness she felt when she needed to work out of her Menabilly, mostly in London. Only when her husband convinced her that it is absolutely necessary, she accompanied him in the Buckingham Palace where he had his duties due to his connections with the Royal Family. Besides that, Daphne gave what she could to produce new works just as always.

In 1969, when Daphne started getting visibly old as her hair started turning grey quite early, eventually even white, the Rashleighs made a request to move back to their Menabilly house and Daphne was forced to move out since she had no right to stand against their wish even though it made her really upset. With her husband she therefore began searching for another house where they could spend the rest of their lives together with one main requirement that it had to be situated in Cornwall of course. Without any hardships they successfully found one almost six hundred years old house called Kilmarth which appealed especially to Tommy who in the end unfortunately was not able to move in since he died before they could do so. Thus, Daphne moved there alone in her fifty-eight years of age remembering how sudden her husband's death was even though it could have been predictable due to Tommy's not so good health caused by drinking excessive amount of alcohol. Widowed, even without her beloved Menabilly, she was not taking the loneliness that well. Despite the fact she was used to him being alone due to his army duties, knowing that he would never come back again caused her a lot of pain inside. Nevertheless, from the end of 60s she had a company of Ester Rowe who lived in a small cottage right next to Kilmarth and who was looking after Daphne as she naturally started having troubles coming with her age. This however did not discourage her from writing more works. Besides that, the life of older Daphne consisted of supporting and spending time with her children but also spending time alone with her dogs, walking them around the Cornish countryside, especially the

beach. Even during this time many people were still trying to approach her, but it was Ester Rowe who always protected Daphne's peace and sent these people away. Daphne valued her privacy but still, she dedicated some time of her days to respond to letters written by her fans. Actually, she really enjoyed doing so and was happy to please the people who made the effort to compliment her work with a response.

Daphne remained an energetic person until she became ill. She wrote her final novel and was still participating in the film scene when she kept an eye on how the film adaptations of her works are being made. Many invitations were raised so she would visit different places as a famous writer to appear in interviews but as almost always, she refused many of them. She started losing weight and even though she still hoped to write yet another novel, in autumn 1981 her health became really weak as she was diagnosed with minor breakdown of her nervous system. Though, she did not want to admit it to herself and even during this time she still had the courage to for example drive a car. The deterioration of her health was however unavoidable, and its progress was developing fast. She started losing her memory as well as the ability to speak properly and despite the fact her close friends and family tried to make her life a little longer, it was the night of 19<sup>th</sup> April 1989 when she died in her sleep surrounded by framed pictures with Tommy and her great friend Gertrude Lawrence hanging on the walls of her room.

## **2.2 Literary works**

Daphne du Maurier is an author of many novels, plays, short stories, whose concept was slightly different from the author's usual style of novels, and other works which either provide further explanation of her previous literary works or describe her family, her home or her herself. She thought about her writing career very seriously and devoted her life to it. There was always the strong never-dying ambition in her to write as convincing and high-quality literary works as possible to deliver a true experience to the readers. She had a high-ambition nature and she never thought of herself as a great writer no matter her success. "Success" did not mean for her only the satisfaction of the

“normal” audience but mainly the satisfaction of critics who usually labelled her works as romantic – which, as explained in the previous chapters, meant nothing positive.

Starting off with the literary genre she preferred and was the most well known for. Novels. *The Loving Spirit* is the name of her first ever novel published in 1931 which clearly indicated what path will the author follow when it comes to the style of writing and its themes. She chose to focus on romantic fiction which she displayed in mainly historical novels which, as she said, are “perhaps one of the most difficult to write: the author is limited by the need to adhere to particular patterns, defined by history, which demand a certain degree of accuracy.” (Shallcross, 1991, p. 55) Overall, this means that an author of a historical novel must be well informed and educated of the atmosphere of the age he or she decided to write about. Even her first novel was already set in Cornwall and in the plot, Daphne mirrored her own desire for freedom and love, as well as the desire to be born rather as a man. This novel was followed by only a year younger one called *I’ll Never Be Young Again* and then again only one later she published another one with the title *The Progress of Julius*. When it comes to writing, Daphne was a very productive person and it seems like she never had a shortage of ideas. The list of her novels would be very long if it was necessary to mention every single one but there are only few which definitely must be highlighted. One of them being her probably most favorite novel *Rebecca* from 1938, which followed Daphne’s *Jamaica Inn* from 1936. Both of these works are described in details later on in this work but it is important to mention that Daphne was an author of the Gothic genre and she always managed to master its presence in her literary works therefore even in these two books. Many of her stories were also based on a love story just like the historical novel *Mary Anne* from 1954 or *Castle Dor* published in 1961 which was a novel based on the story of Tristan and Isolda. Coming to the end of the list, without mentioning all her novels of course, her last ever novel from 1972 possesses the title *Rule Britannia!* which was taken from a british national song but there was one even more important work preceding this very last one. Its name is *The House on the Strand* and this book will be analyzed in this thesis in the ending part as well.

Besides giving her attention to novels, as mentioned, the writer focused also on publishing short tales, but their concept was slightly different than in most of her usual works. To present more details I must get briefly back again to Daphne's childhood. A fact she never really shared with many people, since a lot of them would probably look at her with doubtful eyes, was her psychic "sixth sense" ability. Since her young age, she experienced unexplainable moments beginning with the simplest ones, like knowing, truly *knowing*, that she would be a writer or predicting many things before they even happened, through the moments which made her terrified. In spite of that, she wanted to get to know more about her abilities thanks to which she became well informed and thus confident in this field and this knowledge she further used not only in some of her novels but mostly in her short tales which were built on these macabre supernatural themes.

The concept of short stories, whose plot must evolve rapidly, really fascinated her. Her influence was Katherine Mansfield, New-Zealand writer of short stories and poems living in England during the World War I period, whose short literary works Daphne read when she was at the beginning of her writing. One of her most famous short stories, probably thanks to its film adaptation by Alfred Hitchcock, is the one called *The Birds* from 1952 for which Daphne's own experience was an inspiration, just how she liked to do it. In fact, there are two real stories hiding behind it. One of them is her afternoon walk with her dog on a beach where the seabirds were resting along the coast around Menabilly. She was used to the presence of seagulls and was not scared of them whatsoever. Usually, there was no reason why she should be. However, this time was a little different. While reaching the lake behind the beach, two seagulls suddenly flew at her and her dog, trying to peck them which eventually forced Daphne to run under the nearby trees to protect herself. The second one is based on her memory, since she witnessed this incident herself, of seagulls behaving in a very similar way just with someone else. In this case the main victim was a farmer who was ploughing a field and was attacked just like Daphne was. Seeing this was for Daphne frightening, therefore memorable, enough to use it for one of her short stories. However, this story was definitely not the most sinister out of them all. There is this story called *Don't Look*

*Now* from 1971 which captures supernatural events happening in Venice which led to a violent death. The inspiration for this short story came from Daphne's trip to Italy where the news of someone going around and murdering were spreading which did not let Daphne calm and she used it in her advantage. Even this and some other short stories of Daphne were made into a film adaptation and almost every time there was someone else standing in the position of a director, this time it was sir Nicolas Roeg. All of the short stories Daphne wrote were eventually published in six different literary collections with their own titles such as *The Birds and Other Stories* or *Not After Midnight*.

Last but not least, she put her talent even into writing plays, as already mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. In total, she came up with three different stories out of which one was an adaptation of her own story *Rebecca*. It carries the same name and was a great copy of what Daphne firstly put into a book version. Five years later, in 1945, Daphne came up with another one titled *The Years Between* whose story emphasizes the consequences of The World War II which were enormous in background of a love story. Again, Daphne's skills to describe and deliver a certain mood made the play "catchy" and emotional not only for the people who came to watch the stage performance for the first time at the Manchester Opera House. Her last play *September Tide* came out three years later and there Daphne again portrays her own life experience which she does not make clear to the audience as it is about a passionate love between the main protagonist and his mother-in-law. Even for these plays Daphne was met with success but it did not convince her enough to continue in writing them. She was not fond of the theater and happily got back to writing what she felt the most confident in.

### 3 Cornwall in Daphne du Maurier's literary work

As I described in the previous part of Daphne du Maurier's life, Cornwall was a very significant and influential place for the development of her works. There, she felt like her private life could finally be secure enough from all the previous life drama she had been going through since her childhood, which was not really the kind of childhood a child would deserve, and she could finally focus on her writing career professionally. Cornwall, thanks to its placement, its own language and customs, feels more like a country on its own than just a part of England. Furthermore, there is a river Tamar serving as a natural border between this county and its neighbouring country Devon, thus it even emphasizes this freeing spirit Cornwall provides to its inhabitants and Daphne was able to finally call some place a home.

#### 3.1 Rebecca

*"Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading to the drive, and for a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me. There was a padlock and a chain upon the gate."* (du Maurier, 1971, p. 1)

Fictional place created by Daphne just for the purposes of this book. Manderley. Rather than calling Manderley 'a house', it would be more precise to call it 'an estate'. Why? It is not just a simple building standing on its own. Manderley is a whole complex starting with a gateway which is followed by a path leading right to the entrance of the house surrounded by woods which hid it from the public audience, and which later lead to seashore as well as to the cliffs which Cornwall is so well known for.

In the beginning of the previous paragraph, I mentioned that Manderley is a fictional place which we would naturally understand as if it does not exist. However, the truth is somewhere between. If we take a better look at the author's life, we find out that she took an inspiration for this place from two real houses. One of them is an ancestral



home of the Fitzwilliam family, family known for being a part of the Peerage of Ireland for centuries, called Milton. Although she visited it only twice as a child, the place impressed her enough to stay in her memory forever. The second one is a place which has been already mentioned. Daphne's favourite Menabilly. From this place Daphne mostly used the settings of where Menabilly was situated. Including one of the two small cottages which was used in the book as a beach house standing on the shore of Polridmouth Bay where the biggest tragedy of the novel happened as I will describe in this work later. It could be said that in *Rebecca* these two places were fused together – large Milton house with the beautiful surroundings of Menabilly.

Nevertheless, it was not only the houses Daphne took inspiration from. In 1917, there was this housekeeper in Milton house who took care of the place. “Tall, dark, brooding and very commanding” (Shallcross, 1991, p. 75) Miss Parker who resembles one of the main characters of the book, Miss Danvers – a housekeeper of Manderley, so much that it would be questionable if Daphne did not admit that these two women, no matter that one of them is fanciful, have some connection.

Sticking to the topic of the main characters for some more time, it is also important to briefly introduce the plot of the story. This part, dedicated to this amazing Gothic novel from 1938, would not be complete without mentioning Maxim de Winter, the owner of Manderley and the man who the main protagonist falls in love with. Widowed gentleman in his forties whose wife was the one and only woman whose name was used for the book's title. Rebecca. Surprisingly enough, the book carries a name of a dead woman who does not appear in the book physically at all. However, here is where the gothic feature comes on a stage – Rebecca's spirit is haunting Manderley which is very frustrating for the main protagonist, Maxim's new fiancée. Even the fact that all the staff around the area cannot forget how mesmerizing that woman was, thinking that she died accidentally because of wild sea when she sailed with her boat one night, is adding considerable amount of uneasiness to the whole story. The already mentioned nameless main protagonist is trying her best to fit in and get on well with Maxim's relatives, but it never feels like she had done enough. She feels like she can never be as good as Rebecca was. She feels alone, unloved, as if no one has

understanding for her and as if she could not fulfil the anticipation of others. It could also be because of how cold her Maxim appears, never really opening his heart to her no matter he chose her as her new wife. One thing is blocking him from doing that. The truth of Rebecca's death. It was not merciless waves which killed her, it was Maxim himself. The only man who knew the real face of Rebecca which was far away from everyone's false idea. He could not stand her and her mind games anymore and so one night, because of her provocative self, he shot a bullet to her body, making sure this murder will look like nothing else but accident. All the years he was pretending grief as everyone expected him to be mourning for his "ideal" wife. This ending of the story definitely disconcerted many readers. And there was a good reason why. Last pages of the book were dedicated to the fear of our main protagonist and Maxim of people finding out the truth. As we should know, with lies people do not get far. Neither did Maxim and Manderley. Luckily enough, Maxim's crime stayed hidden in front of the public's knowledge. No matter there were people who wished this tragic truth could reach public exposure, there was not enough evidence for proving the trial wrong. And because the need for revenge does not let some people sleep, while our two main characters were out of the house, Manderley was set on fire. Referring now back to the quotation from the book I used as introduction to this chapter – those are the first sentences which meet us after we open *Rebecca*. There is the wish of coming back to Manderley which, because of the fire, exists no more. This all gave the book such unforgettable mysterious and anxious feeling that remained under reader's skin long after finishing the book.

However, it was not only this tragedy which added the right feeling to it. Because the story is situated in Cornwall, the author could use its climatic conditions to her benefit. Compared to the rest of England, Cornwall has the most rains during the three weather seasons out of four. Majority of the winds is coming from the south west, from the Atlantic Ocean which causes it to be wet and moistured. As soon as the air carrying the clouds reaches the cliffs and hills, it breaks and turns into rainfall. On the other hand, other winds, coming from the eastern Euxine Sea, bring mists and fogs to the country which was well used in certain scenes in the book. The one which I consider

as one of the most intense ones is when our main protagonist meets Mrs Danvers, the mysterious housekeeper, in one of many Manderley's rooms. The window there is opened, letting the fog come inside the room and the atmosphere is tense. Why? Mischevously, Mrs Danvers is luring the main protagonist to jump out of the window, persuading her of how she is not wanted in Manderley, how she should have stayed away from Maxim, making her feel worthless.

*“The fog came thicker than before and the terrace was hidden from me. I could not see the flower tubs any more, nor the smooth paved stones. There was nothing but the white mist about me, smelling of sea-weed dank and chill. The only reality was the window-sill beneath my hands and the grip of Mrs Danvers on my left arm. If I jumped I shou'd not see the stones rise up to meet me, the fog would hide them from me.” (du Maurier, 1971, p. 270)*

From this paragraph we can see that the author was not afraid of detailed descriptions which can sometimes lead to making stories rather boring and stagnant. However, The author's style of writing was smooth and attractive enough to make her texts work this way. The sea which surrounded Manderley had its part in the story as well and it was used not only for the purposes of the story's plot progress. All the nature was described very vividly, making you believe you escaped to Manderley from wherever you were reading the story, and by that we could analyse how the author was aiming for the reader's senses. Using not only sight and touch but also smell and hearing. The author made a good decision while situating the story to Cornwall which she knew well. Cornwall has its sunny and warm days, actually its winters are one of the mildests, and just like the story has its positive highlights, the rain and storms, the fog and wind always comes again. Similarly to the uneasy things which haunt you the whole time while reading this story.

## 3.2 Jamaica Inn

The first impulse for writing this historical novel came from a trip Daphne du Maurier took after her marriage in 1930s. She was suggested to visit Bodmin Moor which is a north-eastern part of Cornwall offering exquisite natural beauty. Her company on this trip was Foy, a daughter of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch who was a writer, just like Daphne, as well as Maurier family's close friend. Riding horses, together, they were conquering the countryside's paths but because Daphne was not that skilful rider, exhaustion came and instead of stopping at the goal destination, they stopped at Jamaica Inn to spend their night at some safe warm place. This place was most likely named after one of the most popular alcohol drinks they were selling, which was the Jamaican rum, and just as Daphne and Foy discovered later, it was surrounded by some other places which deserved the attention. Bodmin Moor also included a place called Altarnun where they went to visit a church and where they also met an interesting person who was so kind to educate the women about the Bodmin Moor's legends. Slowly, an idea for a new story started forming in the author's mind and eventually, in 1936 she published a book called just like the inn itself - *Jamaica Inn*.

*"Jamaica's got a bad name," he said; "queer tales get about; you know how it is. But I don't want to make any trouble. Maybe they're not true." (du Maurier, 1976, p. 13)*

This book probably could not hold a more authentic title than the one the author chose for it. If *Rebecca* is a book based on a fictional place, the situation with this story is the exact opposite. The inn was chosen as the centre of the whole plot which manifests the gothic atmosphere as it is noticeable even from this short extract. Right from the beginning of the story where the inn is put on display, we can sense the creepiness from this place which makes us as readers feel the tension of something uncanny coming – one of the main features the Gothic literature delivers. The place is always described as cold, dark and full of hidden secrets and it only gets worse with the

situation the author introduces in the book later on. The main protagonist, Mary Yellan, arrives at Jamaica Inn because it is the place where her last relative, after her mother died, lives. She promised to do so before her mother died. It is her aunt Patience whom Mary slightly remembers from the past but after she just catches a glimpse of her aunt when she welcomes her in the inn, Mary knows that this is not the aunt Patience she once knew. She lost all her sparkle and resembles more of a ghost figure without any joy in her life. A big question mark is standing behind almost everything Mary starts getting to know in this place. And the biggest one is undeniably aunt Patience's husband himself. His name being Joss Merlyn, he is well-known not only as the landlord of Jamaica Inn but also as a local bully who discourages people from stopping by at their place. Since Mary is an intelligent woman, she quickly understands the situation going on and sets a goal for herself – saving her aunt from the hold of this man. But what now can seem like an easy job turns out to be a challenging thing to do. She goes to investigate around the house, and she also tries to get the truth out of Joss himself whom she is not afraid of like her aunt who would do everything for her husband to please him because she does not see him as a threat but rather a poor and vicious man who is taking out his anger on others for which he does not deserve any respect from her yet she is still holding her actions back for the sake of her aunt. She knows that there must be something behind the noise happening around the inn in the middle of the night and she is determined to find out. Later on, Mary gets the chance to meet Joss's brother Jem whose appearance resembles Joss's almost exactly, but his behaviour was in a big contrast with Joss's one. The whole situation changes completely at one point when Mary is kidnapped after being almost raped on her walk home from Jem and dragged with a group of wreckers who are about to destroy a ship at the coastline. She witnesses a great secret as the wreckers are not ashamed to commit murders and that is the point when everything becomes clear to her. She understands that this is what Joss has been part of all the time. Luckily, she is saved by Jem and even in spite of the terror in her body and mind she wants to return to Jamaica Inn to get her aunt to safety. Nevertheless, Jem stops her and advises her to escape to a local vicar living in Altarnun because Mary could end up as the next murdered victim. She listens and does so, but since the vicar is nowhere to be found she has no other choice but to return to the inn

where an unfortunate surprise awaits her after she steps inside. She sees her aunt Patience and uncle Joss murdered by the hands of the vicar who suddenly shows up in front of her eyes as well. Like that, another great secret is revealed – it was the vicar who was in charge of all the terrifying happenings committed by the wreckers, and it was also him who Joss Merlyn had to listen to the whole time. Eventually, despite this horrible experience, Mary's story ends up well when she returns safely to the farm of her family together with Jem, her fiancée.

It was not only the place the author got inspired by for the story. Now that we know the characters, it can be mentioned that the nice person whom she met with Foy in Altarnun on her trip around Bodmin Moor was a man whom she included to the story as the vicious vicar. She argued that it was the man's appearance which gave off rather sinister vibes including his long white hair which convinced Daphne to introduce him in the story as an albino which can seem like a paradox. White colour often represents purity and innocence while Daphne thought about it here in the opposite way. Another inspiration came from a book Daphne was reading at the time of her trip, which was the *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson but undoubtedly nothing inspired her as much as the place itself. It is clear that in *Jamaica Inn* Daphne pictured the atmosphere of the place just as it really was in reality. She described what she really felt like about the inn and that is also why we can sense the authenticity of her descriptive parts in the storyline.

The environment of Cornwall which Daphne chose to include in this novel were especially the moors which are typical for this county as well as for the Gothic genre because of how they evoke the sense of loneliness and helplessness in people's minds due to their wide expansion where anyone can get lost very easily. She made it very clear that Jamaica Inn is a place standing alone in the middle of nowhere and when one wanted to visit the closest public place, he or she would have to walk for a long time. Just like Mary Yellan had to on several occasions. This fact heavily emphasizes the sense of loneliness the main protagonist as well as her aunt must have felt during their stay in the inn. The humid weather as well as the reality that the story covers the wintertime made the atmosphere of the story even colder and darker in its own way as

there was described how the main protagonist couldn't feel her legs while traveling back to Jamaica Inn through the wet moors. Speaking of humidity, Daphne also had to incorporate the wild Cornish seashore to be able to continue with the story about the wreckers' dirty job and just like always she became the master of displaying the place in a very dynamic and believable way. Thanks to the writer's amazing skills, while reading, the readers always obtain the feeling like if they are present at the place with the story's characters, the feeling of authenticity.

*“There could be no stillness where the sea broke upon the rockbound shore. She heard it again now, and continually; a murmur and a sigh as the spent water gave itself to the strand and withdrew reluctantly, and then a pause as the sea gathered itself for a renewal of effort—a momentary fragment in time—and then once more the thunder and the crash of fulfilment, the roar of surf upon shingle and the screaming scatter of stones as they followed the drag of the sea.” (du Maurier, 1976, p. 160)*

Nowadays, because of the fact that Jamaica Inn is a true existing place, the inn is a popular place especially for Daphne's fans. Up to this date, it functions as a usual pub where people can spend their night or have a meal with a good drink while traveling around Bodmin Moor just like the author once did. They also entertain their visitors with a museum consisting of three rooms of exhibits dedicated to Daphne and her work as well as some pieces which cannot be seen anywhere else like the writer's private letters or her old photos which makes this place unique and worth of stopping by.

### **3.3 The House on the Strand**

Last but not least, there is this novel to be introduced, written as one of a few from a male point of view, from 1969 written by Daphne du Maurier, which falls under the Gothic genre just as much as the two previous ones. The 1960s was a period of time known for experimenting with hallucinogens and that caught even Daphne's attention as a person who believed in the importance of unconscious mind. Just like most of the

times, even this novel's plot was situated to a Cornish place which again shows how important the place was for the author. She got inspired by the Kilmarth house which, as mentioned in the previous chapter about the author's life, she bought and moved in after her husband died and was forced to live alone. The previous owner was in fact a scientist who left some of his experiments in form of embryos in jars on the house's shelves and that only intensified Daphne's curiosity about scientific experiments. At those times she often looked back at her past, remembering good old times which she spent in Menabilly with her husband, and the past is also what she worked with in the story. Merging these two topics of science and hallucinogens with the past together, she came up with the main idea for the storyline. Being able to time travel with the help of a drug.

*“You won't be aware of your body coming into contact with inanimate objects. You will walk, stand, sit, brush against them, but will feel nothing. Don't worry. The very fact that you can move without sensation is half the wonder.” (du Maurier, 2003, p. 3)*

Even the plot of this book is based on the real settings since she included the Kilmarth house as the main place of the story where the main protagonist called Dick Young is offered to live by his friend Magnus Lane who is a biophysics professor. Little did he know that he will be used as an experimental object for Magnus' freshly discovered drug. This drug has the ability to take the one who swallows it back in time and that is why Dick suddenly, after gulping the liquid down, appears in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He stays in the same Cornish place only a few centuries earlier. Each time Dick takes the drug and appears in this different reality is called “a trip”. The effect of the drug does not last that long thus, Dick starts taking it more and more without knowing how dangerous it is for his both mental and physical wellbeing. The more he gets involved in the alternative reality as he follows the fates of people living in that time, without touching nor speaking to someone while being invisible, the more he falls for it and does not want to live his real life in the present. The situation gets even worse



when, after following the life of Roger who also lives in Kilmarth – only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century version, he falls in love with Isolda, a young and beautiful woman despite the fact that back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century he is already married to his wife. But being someone who cannot get involved in the flow of the past because it had already happened, he must witness how Isolda is falling in love with a different man which makes it really painful for the protagonist and it also becomes the point of realization that this brings no good to him. Nevertheless, he cannot help himself and all mentally devastated, when he cannot distinguish what is the reality and what is not anymore, he takes the last drug to experience the last ever trip. However, what he did not expect was the fact that this time the drug took him to the day when Isolda laid dead due to the black plague which caused him a great feeling of sadness and loneliness from loss. The story ends when Dick tries to pick up a phone but suddenly his hand becomes numb, causing the phone to fall on the floor and break. No more is explained about what happened next but as Daphne du Maurier herself hinted, the drug's side effects most likely caused death preceded by a total paralysis.

*“The lie of the land had not altered, despite the modern road, but the valley where the tide had swept inward was now marsh. I took the lane to Tywardreath, thinking, with some misgiving, that if I had in fact taken this same route yesterday, under the influence of the drug, I could have been knocked down by a passing car without hearing it.” (du Maurier, 2003, p. 22)*

The title of this book was not chosen randomly. As a big admirer of Cornwall, Daphne knew a lot about this place and always before writing a story based on real-life settings, she made sure to inform herself well about the area. Kilmarth was a house at the top of a hill which belonged into the Tywardreath village, situated on the Cornish south coastline, and it was exactly this village's name which could be translated as “the house on the beach/strand”. Compared to *Rebecca* or *Jamaica Inn*, Cornwall was included in this story a little bit differently. Daphne still put a lot of effort into describing the atmosphere of the characters' surroundings in form of bays, hills and

similar beautiful scenery known for Cornwall but this time there was understandably a big emphasis on the fact that the story deals with the 14<sup>th</sup> century particularly. She needed to make deep research about the kings and ladies who lived in those medieval times as she included them in the story too and she also needed to portrait the exact mood of the six centuries younger society along with their habits and customs like visiting chapels, polite behaviour and kneeling when the bishop appears etc. However, despite how difficult that must have been, Daphne provides smooth explanations and examples which does not allow the readers to feel any confusion at all. This comparison of the past and the present of Kilmarth area also serves as an educational content which readers accept unconsciously while devouring the story which is always a great benefit.

Without any surprise, this book became famous right after its publishing not only because of the author's earlier success. *The House on the Strand* is du Maurier's most famous book, but it definitely belongs to the most requested ones at least when it comes to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The success of this book made a smile appear on Daphne's face but what slightly saddened her was the absence of a film adaptation of this story which she strongly wished for.

## 4 Conclusion

No one could argue that Cornwall was deeply rooted in Daphne du Maurier's heart. The love she possessed for this place was greater than some people could ever hold towards something which is not even alive. But to Daphne, Cornwall was not a soulless place. Oppositely, she believed that without Cornwall she would not have become the person she was and that it was this place which formed not only her but also her work and her later success. As a writer, Daphne du Maurier mastered the conjunction of this place and its atmosphere with the Gothic literary mode which, thanks to the period of time she was born into, happened to be part of. She was not afraid to experiment with elements typical for the Gothic as well as the Romantic genre including the supernatural and psychical side of things which intensified the sense of fear and allowed her to involve the reader's emotions into their reading experience. The audience's interest in her work, but also the interest of many directors to create film adaptations based on Daphne du Maurier's stories, is a clear proof of its significance. After her death, her ashes were spread right at the area of her Kilmarth house which she eventually loved almost as much as she did her Menabilly. Like this, her spirit now remains peacefully in her hometown, in Cornwall, right where it is supposed to.

# **Bibliography**

## **Primary sources**

- du Maurier, Daphne, *Jamaica Inn*, London: Pan Books Ltd., 1976  
du Maurier, Daphne, Rebecca, New York: Avon books, 1971  
du Maurier, Daphne, *The House on the Strand*, Little, Brown and Company, 2003

## **Secondary sources**

- Borlase, William, *The Natural History of Cornwall*, Oxford: Printed for the author by W. Jackson, 1758  
Botting, Fred, *Gothic: The New Critical Idiom*, London: Routledge, 1996  
Hogle, Jerrold E., *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Cambridge: C.U.P., 2002  
Kelly, Richard, *Daphne du Maurier*, Boston: Twayne, 1987  
Kroeber, Karl, *Background to British romantic literature*, 1968  
Mitton, Geraldine Edith, *Cornwall*, London: A. & C. Black, 1915  
Punter, David, *The Literature of Terror*, London: Taylor & Francis, 1996  
Punter, David, *A New Companion to The Gothic*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1999  
Reef, Catherine, *The Brontë sisters: the brief lives of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne*, Boston: Clarion Books, 2012  
Richetti, John, *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660-1780*, Cambridge University Press, 2005  
Shallcross, Martyn, *The Private World of Daphne du Maurier*, St. Martin's Press, 1991  
Wilson, Katharina M. & Schlueter Paul and June, *Women writers of Great Britain and Europe: an encyclopedia*, New York: Garland Pub., 1997