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Resurrection, Renaissance, Rebirth:
Religion, Psychology and Politics in the Life and Works of
Daphne du Maurier

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at the life and works of Daphne du Maurier in the context of the inter-related ideas of religion, psychology and politics. Throughout, I use a methodology based on the concept of the palimpsest. But I also use theory provided by Jung, Plato and Nietzsche – all of which were known to du Maurier to a greater or lesser degree. Other theory is used occasionally, but only as it suggests itself in the context under consideration. The ideas of ‘Resurrection, Renaissance and Rebirth’ give the thesis a structure and a theme. The interaction of Christianity and Paganism is also examined.

Section One, ‘Introduction – Resurrecting Texts/Lives’, introduces the idea of the palimpsest. In reality, this is a twice-written document frequently containing a Christian text which is written over a Pagan one, with the Pagan text resurrecting itself over time. In theory, the palimpsest is a textual space where disparate texts collide and collude in an involuted manner. Section Two, ‘Life and Text – Renaissance Inspired Men’, looks at two men who drew their inspiration from the Renaissance as either age or idea - the socialist Victor Gollancz and the conservative Frank Buchman - and to what degree du Maurier interacted with both the people and their conceptual framework. Section Three, ‘Life into Text – Renaissance Men’, concerns itself with du Maurier’s biographies of two Renaissance brothers, Anthony and Francis Bacon, and how their lives have been read, gnostically, by herself and others, notably The Francis Bacon Society and Nietzsche. Section Four, ‘Spectralised Lives in Text - Rebirthing’, examines how the foregoing discussion plays itself out in two of du Maurier’s novels, *Jamaica Inn* (1936) and *The Flight of the Falcon* (1965). The chapter on *Jamaica Inn* looks at Celtic Revivalism and how the Celtic gods spectralise the characters of the novel leading to a rebirthing experience for the protagonist Mary Yellan – implicit in this is the concept of the Renaissance-as-idea. The chapter on *The Flight of the Falcon* shows how the Renaissance-as-age daimonises characters of the twentieth-century. The palimpsest as either a document or a theoretical perspective weaves itself in and out of all my chapters.

Section Five, ‘Concluding Remarks’, leads to two related conclusions, firstly that du Maurier has been spectralised by the Renaissance, and secondly that du Maurier’s life and works, taken together, can be read as an involuted palimpsest.

KEYWORDS

Daphne du Maurier, palimpsest, Renaissance, Plato, Jung, Nietzsche, syncretism, esoteric, spectralised.

RESURRECTION, RENAISSANCE, REBIRTH: RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICS IN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF DAPHNE DU MAURIER

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

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I am grateful to the organisers of the annual Daphne du Maurier Festival in Fowey, Cornwall, which I have attended for the four years of my study. This has enabled the following activities:

- Kits Browning (Daphne du Maurier’s son) showed me round Ferryside (Fowey, Cornwall), and allowed me to see the room where du Maurier wrote *The Loving Spirit*.
- Annual Trip to Bookends of Fowey, which sells du Maurier books and memorabilia. Ann and David Willmore - who own Bookends and Bookends Too - have always been lovely to chat to about du Maurier topics.
- I have met many du Maurier enthusiasts; special mention goes to Sam, a kindly gentleman whose surname escapes me, and Amber Larner.

I am also pleased to have attended the Daphne du Maurier Centenary Conference (2007) – organised by Professor Helen Taylor and her colleagues at Exeter University - where I met many of the published du Maurier critics.

I owe thanks to Loughborough University for the bursary which financed the first three years of my study. I also owe thanks to the Arthur Quiller Couch Memorial Fund for awarding me a travel grant which paid for one of my visits to the Du Maurier Family Archives at Exeter University - an award which was made following their reading of my chapter on *Jamaica Inn*. My parents have also been more than generous with their financial assistance, supply of food parcels, and emotional support.

The years of my doctorate were the two best and then the two worst years of my life. I am thankful for the former and will emerge from the latter into a totally different life. This has been my own liminal phase.

DECLARATION

Part of my chapter on Victor Gollancz, specifically that pertaining to the poem ‘Apostasis’, was published in abridged form in the following work to commemorate the Daphne du Maurier Centenary – Helen Taylor (ed.), *The Daphne du Maurier Companion* (London: Virago, 2007). It appears as the chapter entitled ‘Christianity Versus Paganism: Daphne du Maurier’s Divided Mind’, pp. 122-32.

An abridged version of my chapter on *The Flight of the Falcon* was delivered as a paper on the following occasions (in slightly different form each time), the paper being entitled ‘Greece as inscape - textual and metatextual imagery in Daphne du Maurier’s *The Flight of the Falcon* (1965)’:

- Leicester University (4 way link seminar between De Montfort University, Leicester University, Loughborough University and Nottingham Trent University) - 24th November 2004.
- Daphne du Maurier Centenary Conference – held as part of the Daphne du Maurier Festival of Arts and Literature (Fowey, Cornwall), 11th May 2007.

As part of my M.A. in Modern and Contemporary Writing (Loughborough University, 2000-3), I carried out a literature search on Daphne du Maurier scholarship up to the year two thousand. This work was duly written up as an essay for one of the assessments for the Research Methods module. In the Introduction to the present work, I have re-used the research for that essay but I have written it up in a completely re-worded and abridged manner, and then added information pertaining to work carried out since the year two thousand.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION – RESURRECTING TEXTS/LIVES

INTRODUCTION – RESURRECTING TEXTS/LIVES

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

ITEMS ON DU MAURIER'S MANTELPIECE IN 1956 – AN APPRAISAL

- 1) A remarkably repulsive china cow with purple udders which was bequeathed to her, unwittingly, by her beloved friend, actress Gertrude Lawrence.
- 2) A greatly bemedalled photograph of her husband.
- 3) A photograph of the head of Demeter, the Greek goddess of agriculture and family life. Unframed.
- 4) A photograph of Botticelli's Annunciation. Unframed and mildewed.
- 5) Four photographs of actor and producer Sir Gerald du Maurier's aunts. Unframed and mildewed.
- 6) The Dialogues of Plato, the Greek philosopher.
- 7) A crucifix which belonged to her father. Although he was not religious, he kissed it every night.
- 8) A hard, shrivelled object that was once a tangerine.
- 9) A very delicate and sensitive portrait of her grandfather, novelist and caricaturist, George du Maurier.
- 10) Four volumes of the works of Jung, the philosopher.
- 11) A small empty jar that once held the famous honey of Hymettus, the ancient Greek hills near Athens.
- 12) An elementary Greek grammar, purloined from her son Kit.
- 13) A sketch of the scandalous great-great-grandmother, Mary Anne Clarke. Unframed, mildewed, curling at the edges and fly-blown.
- 14) A casual sketch by George du Maurier of a lady in a crinoline.¹

This seemingly eclectic list of items was recorded by Beverley Nichols in *The Ladies Home Journal* as being the contents of Daphne du Maurier's mantelpiece in 1956. Nichols, somewhat apologetically, writes "[t]hat this is not a mantelpiece which matches the du Maurier legend" and that his inclusion of its contents in his article "may have suggested that the mistress of Menabilly is of a faintly slovenly disposition".² Nonetheless, he argues that this list, "properly interpreted," demonstrates du Maurier's main obsession – "a striving for roots".³ In his book, *Daphne du Maurier*, Richard Kelly re-publishes the list of items and then expands on Nichols's brief interpretation:

¹ This list is recorded in Beverley Nichols, 'Daphne du Maurier', *Ladies Home Journal* 73, November 1956, pp. 28-9. It is also re-published in Richard Kelly, *Daphne du Maurier* (New York: Twayne, 1987), p. 25. I have recorded this as it appears in Beverley Nichols – including the mistake in Daphne du Maurier's son's nickname (which should be Kits, short for Christian). The version re-published in Kelly differs occasionally from the original.

² Ibid., pp. 28, 29.

³ Ibid., p. 29.

There, crowded on the mantelpiece, are the symbols of du Maurier's world: the all-important family tree dating back to Mary Anne Clarke, the striving for roots, both through her own history and through the history of Menabilly itself, the psychologist, Carl Jung, whose works helped her to understand the roots of human behaviour through his concept of the collective unconscious, and the philosopher, Plato, whose writings helped shape her thinking about the nature of reason and love.⁴

But the list of items on du Maurier's mantelpiece can perhaps bear even closer interpretation than either Nichols or Kelly have cared to pursue. Du Maurier's choice of items betrays a certain syncretism in its juxtaposition of seemingly diverse spiritual elements, where I take syncretism to mean, in accordance with the Oxford English Dictionary, the "[a]tttempted union or reconciliation of diverse or opposite tenets or practices, esp. in philosophy or religion."⁵ Her preoccupation with 'all things Greek' is immediately evident, as can be seen from her inclusion of the head of Demeter, *The Dialogues of Plato*, the jar of honey from Hymettus and the elementary Greek Grammar. It is as if, for du Maurier, in the words of James Hillman, "'Greece' persists as an inscape" or, in other words, Greece has become one of her mental landscapes.⁶ Hillman clarifies this Greek mental landscape thus:

We return to Greece in order to rediscover the archetypes of our mind and of our culture. Fantasy returns there to become archetypal. By stepping back into the mythic, into what is nonfactual and nonhistorical, the psyche can reimagine its factual, historical predicaments from another vantage point. Greece becomes the multiple magnifying mirror in which the psyche can recognize its persons and processes in configurations which are larger than life but which bear on the life of our secondary personalities.⁷

In the 1950s, when Nichols wrote the article about the mantelpiece at Menabilly, du Maurier had been busily absorbing herself in matters of a Greek nature. She was fascinated by the legends surrounding her namesake Daphne in Greek mythology, and saw archetypal relevance in them concerning her own life and relationship to her family, as a letter to Maureen Baker-Munton in 1957 bears witness.⁸ In this letter, she also admits to an "urge to go to Greece" and "consult the Delphi oracle."⁹ This longing was finally enabled by her friend Clara Vyvyan, their trip being recorded in Vyvyan's book *Temples and Flowers: A Journey to Greece*.¹⁰ In this book, Vyvyan transcribes part of a letter from du Maurier, written in response to her invitation requesting du Maurier's presence on her planned expedition:

⁴ Kelly, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

⁵ J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary: Vol. XVII Su-Thrivingly* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 475.

⁶ James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper Row, 1977), p. 30. Hillman is an archetypal psychologist, whose work is based on a combination of Jungian theory with Renaissance Neoplatonism.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁸ This letter is reproduced in full in the Appendix to Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), pp. 420-425. I do not propose to go into detail about this here as I will return to this later in my thesis.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 422, 423.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 422, 423. C.C. Vyvyan, *Temples and Flowers: A Journey to Greece* (London: Peter Owen Ltd., 1955).

This is very extraordinary. For the past ten days or more I have been haunted by a longing for Greece, so much so that I sent to the London Library and am surrounded by books about the gods, and a fascinating treatise on psychology and mythology, how the two are intermixed, and fundamental in our unconscious[.]¹¹

Du Maurier's reply to Vyvyan's letter can, in part, be seen as echoing Hillman's view that the idea of Greece and its gods and goddesses can indeed become an intrinsic part of a psychological engagement with the world. One of the goddesses that evidently preoccupied du Maurier was Demeter, the patroness of agriculture and family life, the latter being archetypally relevant to her intense interest in researching family history – both her own and that of others. Demeter is the chthonic goddess whose daughter Persephone – also known as Kore – is abducted and raped by Hades, the god of the underworld.¹² Demeter eventually strikes a bargain with Hades that Persephone should be allowed to return to the upper world for two thirds of the year but spend one third of the year as his bride in the realm of the dead. This myth accounts for the cyclical nature of the seasons and the agricultural year, but it also accounts for the idea of psychological transformation central to the Greek Eleusinian mystery cults of which Plato would have been an initiate. Both aspects of the myth are related via their death and rebirth implications; as Hillman writes, Persephone is continually “opened to the perspective of death,” and thus it is as if “we must go through a death experience in order to let go of our clutch on life,” such experiences being “the central necessity for psychic change”.¹³ It could be said, therefore, that “Persephone mythically represents this movement of soul (*anima*) from defense against Hades to love for him”.¹⁴ It is in the concept of the *anima* that we find one of the keys to Jungian psychology, and also its main differentiator from Freudian psychology, as Hillman writes:

Freud governed more by the monotheistic paternal and the masculine, Jung by the polytheistic feminine and the *anima* (soul-image). In Freudian fantasy the heroic ego, like Oedipus, develops through slaying the father; in Jungian fantasy the heroic ego battles for deliverance from the mother [...] In old age Freud wrote on Moses; Jung's late work lauds Mary and Sophia.¹⁵

The fact that du Maurier's mantelpiece should include both a picture of the head of Demeter, the Greek mother goddess, and also of Botticelli's Annunciation, where it is announced to Mary that she will be the mother of Christ, is a strong indicator of her preoccupation with the Jungian notion of the feminine and the matriarchal. That these two images of the spiritual mother figure, from diverse religious sources, Greek myth and Christianity, should both appear on her mantelpiece is also evidence of the syncretic and

¹¹ Daphne du Maurier, recorded in Vyvyan, *ibid.*, p. 14.

¹² See Hillman, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209 for an explanation of the psychological relevance of the Hades-Persephone myth.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

palimpsestuous nature of du Maurier's interest in matters of a psycho-religious nature. The Renaissance period – the time of Botticelli and also the archetypal period of death and rebirth in the Western imagination – was in itself a time of “blending of polytheistic and monotheistic styles”, as Hillman clarifies:

Even for medieval Christianity “the pagan gods were as truly existent as the Trinity or the Virgin Mary.” They were of course generally evil because pagan. But a characteristic virtue of Renaissance thought was that an interplay could go on between images from different myths without theological considerations, and that the psychological significance of polytheistic images could stand forth without blame for their “paganism.” This attitude is profoundly psychological because it allows the diverse perspectives of myths and their figures to see through one another.¹⁶

It is this latter notion of ‘diverse perspectives’ which ‘see through one another’ that characterises my thinking on the ‘syncretic’ and the ‘palimpsestuous’, as will become more clear as my thesis progresses. Many of Botticelli's paintings have been read in the light of the Neoplatonism of the Medici family who were responsible for commissioning his work.¹⁷ The Medici family had been introduced to the Neoplatonic mode of thought by Marsilio Ficino, “the greatest representative in fifteenth-century Florence of this philosophy” which was based on “reformulations of Plato and Plotinus, Proclus, and other Neoplatonist writers in Greek”.¹⁸ It is thus a way of thinking which in itself is ‘syncretic’ and ‘palimpsestuous’ composed as it is from a diversity of perspectives and reworkings of those perspectives. Hillman suggests that philosophies that worked in an ‘imaginal’ way - that is, based on images - such as Neoplatonism, but also Gnosticism, alchemy, Rosicrucianism and Swedenborg, “could not enter the main current of our tradition and were forced instead into the occult or even the heretical”.¹⁹ Jungian psychology can also be aligned with this ‘imaginal’ method of proceeding due to his work on archetypal images and the collective unconscious. Jung's collected works make frequent reference to the other ‘imaginal’ philosophies mentioned by Hillman, cited above, and correspondingly he too has been denied a place in the mainstream of intellectual thought. It is interesting to note that in Botticelli's time it was those people in a position of power – the Medicis - who were the adherents of such ‘underground’, heterodoxical philosophies as Neoplatonism, but in a sense it was its very secrecy which set it apart as a form of privileged knowledge only accessible to the few. Many of the works commissioned by the

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 171. The text in quotation marks is taken from G.G. Coulton. Hillman gives the citation as G.G. Coulton, *Medieval Faith and Symbolism* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1958), p. 251.

¹⁷ See Bruno Santi, ‘Sandro Botticelli and the Neo-Platonism of the Medici’, in Alessandro Angelini, et al., *Eight Italian Masters: Piero della Francesca, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, Caravaggio, and Canaletto* (New York: Riverside Book Co., 2001), pp. 97-131.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 107. Hillman, op. cit., p. 200.

¹⁹ Hillman, ibid., p. 11. Much of Jungian thought was premised on alchemy. Jung also refers frequently to Renaissance thought, Gnosticism, Rosicrucianism and Swedenborg.

Medicis were of a Christian nature, and thus they managed to maintain an outward public orthodoxy of respectful Christian worship, but this always masked their Neoplatonism. Similarly, if we view the items on du Maurier's mantelpiece in their entirety we see items pertaining to 'imaginal' philosophies palimpsested by those of a Christian nature such as the picture of the Annunciation – linked to Christ's birth, and Gerald du Maurier's crucifix – linked to Christ's death and resurrection. Yet, if we consider both these 'Christian' items carefully, we now see that former is already punctuated by Neoplatonic heterodoxy, and the latter is marked by a none-too-perfect apostasy since Gerald appears to have paid ongoing respect to something in which he is reputed not to have believed. Du Maurier's mantelpiece thus tells a complex, interwoven story of psycho-religious and political concerns, spanning centuries of Western philosophical thought, and forms the inspiration for the thesis which is to follow. The works I will assess in this study have been chosen to demonstrate du Maurier's engagement with both Christian and pagan philosophies, but more specifically to examine her life and work in a network of sometimes conflicting Renaissance associations. These associations will include the time period, the ideas of rebirth and resurrection emanating from it, and some of the people in du Maurier's sphere – real or imaginary – who have been inspired, or perhaps even spectralised, by it.

HISTORICAL MOMENT

Du Maurier's eclectic interests can be read through a perspective of the negotiation between Christianity and paganism that had been taking place throughout the nineteenth century and was still ongoing in the twentieth century. Her key concerns can be seen as inspired by the particular historical moment into which she was born, and which Ronald Hutton charts in his encyclopaedic history of modern pagan witchcraft, *The Triumph of the Moon*.²⁰ In trying to understand the history behind the Gardnerian pagan witchcraft of the late twentieth century, Hutton adopts the following stance:

the central argument of the book is that far from being an unusually exotic and bizarre response to specific problems of the late twentieth century, it represented a distillation of certain notions and needs which had been developing in Western Europe, and in England in particular, since the eighteenth. If it is the child of any single phenomenon, then it is the belated offspring of the Romantic Movement.²¹

In his work, Hutton assesses the four 'languages' that had arisen over the course of the nineteenth century that could be used to represent paganism. One of the views which had gathered momentum during this

²⁰ Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. viii.

period was that the ‘old religions’ were “a stain upon the underside of civilization, [...] a force which might arise vampire-like from the past to subvert modern humans, should the power of reason and of education falter.”²² This pejorative view of a Druidic, pagan, countryside religion can be read alongside the idea of paganism which derived from “the familiar, beloved, and respected world of ancient Greece and Rome” - this was deemed responsible for Europe’s “magnificent art, literature and philosophy” and was thought “deficient to Christianity only in its ethics and in its lesser component of divine revelation”.²³ Hutton notes the intense “infatuation of the Victorian British with the classical pagan world,” but shows how they simultaneously struggled to “preserve amid all this a pre-eminent place for Christian revelation”.²⁴ Hutton’s first two ‘languages’ were “traditional and conservative”, having “deep roots in the past” and appealing to “widespread instincts and prejudices.”²⁵

Conversely, his final two ‘languages’ “posed a self-conscious challenge to prevailing religious and cultural norms”. The first of these:

depended on the notion that there had once existed a single great world spiritual system, based upon divine revelation, of which the main religions practised by civilized humanity during historical times all contained traces. This automatically denied the claim of Christianity to any special relationship with divinity or any moral pre-eminence, reducing it to a parity with ancient Greek and Egyptian paganism and the principal spiritual traditions of the Orient; indeed in some respects those other faiths could be compared favourably with that of Christ. Such a language owed its ultimate origin to the project first clearly enunciated by Ficino and succeeding philosophers of the Renaissance, of recovering all that could be known of the wisdom of the European and Near Eastern past in order to create the best possible future.²⁶

In the late nineteenth century this idea was given considerable impetus by the Russian born Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who founded the Theosophical Society in 1875. Her society was dedicated to “the fusion of world knowledge of the supernatural and divine”.²⁷ Theosophy encouraged people to explore alternatives to both “traditional Christianity” and to “the new science in syncretic faiths and heterodox reinterpretations of Christ’s teachings.”²⁸ The final ‘language’ that was used to characterise paganism between 1800 and 1940, as referred to by Hutton, was also one which esteemed the culture of classical Greece and Rome, but it was a ‘language’ which did not struggle with constraints in its admiration. The religions of the classical world were seen as “joyous, liberationist, and life-affirming traditions,

²² Ibid., p. 11.

²³ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 12, 13.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 17.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

profoundly and valuably connected with both the natural world and with human spirit [sic] creativity.”²⁹ Hutton argues that this ‘language’ had its origin in German Romanticism, itself a fusion of “admiration for ancient Greece, nostalgia for a vanished past, and desire for an organic unity between people, culture and nature.”³⁰ This, the language of Goethe and Schiller, reached England in the early nineteenth century and was taken up by many of the English Romantic poets but with “varying degrees of enthusiasm”.³¹ It was revived by Swinburne in the late nineteenth century “in conscious imitation of Shelley”.³² The late nineteenth century incarnation of paganism stressed the need for humans to reconnect with their animal qualities.³³ It was an ideal of fulfilled humanity which was closer to nature as opposed to the “arid asceticism of Christianity”.³⁴ Hutton stresses that the four languages of paganism which he has identified as characteristic of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were *just* languages as opposed to “fully formed and mutually exclusive ideological positions”; as such they were frequently used in combination with each other by various individuals and movements during this time, du Maurier herself being no exception.³⁵

A key element in the history of the new paganism was its finding of a goddess and ways in which to characterise her. In the ancient pagan world goddesses, as Hutton points out, were most commonly “patronesses of cities, justice, war, handicrafts, and home fire, agriculture, love and learning”, that is they stood for “aspects of civilization and human activity much more often than for those of the natural world”; the different goddesses were also thought to be separate personalities.³⁶ Hutton provides an example of one of the anomalies in this ancient view which yet became the principal one for the twentieth century:

In only one text from near the end of the pagan period, the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, was the writer’s favourite female deity declared to be the embodiment of all other goddesses (or at least of the most important) and identified with the moon and with the whole of nature. It was, however, that highly atypical image from Apuleius which became the predominant concept of a goddess in the modern world.³⁷

This revolution in taste, it is said, began with the cultural changes surrounding the Romantic movement which led to the exaltation of the natural and irrational, supposedly feminine characteristics which had

²⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 21.

³¹ Ibid., p. 22.

³² Ibid., p. 25.

³³ Ibid., p. 28.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

previously been disparaged.³⁸ In the period between 1800 and 1940 the most commonly mentioned goddesses in English letters were Venus (love), Diana (chastity, hunting), Proserpine (changing seasons, the dead) and Demeter (harvest), but there is a subtle change in the emphasis of their qualities from that of their traditional, classical manifestations:

Venus now appears not merely as patroness of love but related to the woodland or the sea. Diana is no longer primarily a symbol of chastity or of hunting, but of the moon, the greenwood and wild animals. Furthermore, when a goddess is made the major figure in a poem, instead of the subject of an incidental reference, the supremacy of Venus is overturned. Diana now leads, or else a generalized female deity of moonlight or the natural world, most commonly called 'Mother Earth' or 'Mother Nature'.³⁹

By 1880, the idea of the goddess was as a composite figure who was creatrix, redeemer and in some cases destroyer; it was in this form that she achieved her hold over the Western imagination for several decades.⁴⁰ This was, in part, due to the ongoing work of the historians, archaeologists and anthropologists of the period, who all helped turn the idea of ancient "spirituality into a mirror of Christianity, but one which emphasized opposite qualities: female instead of male, earth instead of sky, nature instead of civilization".⁴¹ One of the key works arising out of this long period of gestation concerning the goddess figure was Robert Graves's *The White Goddess* (1948). Hutton writes that Graves's key argument is that the goddess is a "counter-cultural deity" who stood for "values and associations opposed to those dominant in the European cultural world for most of recorded history and especially to those most closely bound up with modernity."⁴² Hutton summarises the idea of the goddess figure in this historical context thus:

she had become one of the principal cultural images of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She and the modern age had taken shape together, in polar opposition to each other, and truly she needed no tangible monuments as she existed so firmly in the hearts and minds of poets, novelists, polemicists and scholars alike; the natural world itself had become her shrine.⁴³

In this sense, she had also become fixed in the mind of du Maurier herself.

Of particular relevance to the du Maurier family history is Hutton's idea that modern paganism adopted its structure of secret societies, confidentiality, claims to ancient wisdom and initiation ceremonies from that of freemasonry, which took definite shape in Scotland in the late sixteenth century

³⁸ Ibid., p. 33.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 35, 36. The work of Carl Jung should also be considered in this context, particularly his emphasis on the 'Mother archetype' (1954) and his writings on 'The Psychological Aspects of the Kore' (1951). See Carl Jung, *CW9 Part 1: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969).

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 39-40.

⁴² Ibid., p. 42.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 42.

and then grew and developed over successive centuries, spreading across the whole of Europe.⁴⁴ Indeed, it became a widespread myth that the French Revolution was the responsibility of an international conspiracy of Freemasons who were seeking “to destroy the traditional social, political, and religious order.”⁴⁵ Du Maurier makes use of this ‘myth’ in her biographical novel *The Glass Blowers* (1963) which revolves round her eighteenth century French Masonic ancestors and their involvement in the French Revolution. Her interest in Freemasonry, probably inspired by the familial connection, can be found in her other biographies, such as those concerning The Bacon Brothers and Branwell Brontë. Freemasonry produced a pseudo-history for itself which was gradually embellished over the centuries as more was learned about ancient cultures. But as Hutton points out, this eclectic, syncretic process was “rarely depicted as one of discovery; rather each new generation of Masons was instructed in the latest version of the package as if it were inherited complete through an oral tradition.”⁴⁶ Hutton claims that Masonic societies provided members with “safe spaces” within which to “operate more or less independently of the surrounding public culture”, and that this feeling was enhanced if “the space was believed to have existed from ancient days, surviving all the stresses of intervening ages.”⁴⁷ He also stresses that modern pagan witchcraft is a major perpetuator of the characteristics of the Masonic tradition, but with one key exception; it overturns the gender orientation of this syncretic patriarchy.⁴⁸

It can be seen from the above discussion that modern pagan witchcraft drew on diverse sources in its attempts to find a language, a goddess, and a structure. Such matters formed part of the ‘zeitgeist’ of du Maurier’s time and she put much effort into studying them. Their conflicting and eclectic tendencies found their way into her thinking and then into her work, clashing frequently with ideas about Christianity which had been rejected previously by her paternal line.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 52-53.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 71.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 65.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 65.

METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

THE PALIMPSEST – RESURRECTING TEXTS

‘Prologue to *Castle Dor*’

Being men, we belong to earth: belonging to earth, like Archimedes we must stand somewhere: and wherever we stand to play at astronomers, it is a condition that we cannot be aware of what hovers at our feet. [...]

Day broke slowly – closing a shutter on space to open another on time. For the rampart overlooks on the one hand a bay of the sea, on the other a river ford deep-set in a vale. From a nook of the bay, centuries ago, a *soi-disant* [sic] Caesar pushed out with his ships to win Rome. In a field sloping northward from the ramp, the guns and foot of a Parliament Army capitulated to King Charles on his last campaign of the West. The king had his coach anchored under the lee of a hedge yonder, and slept in it on the night before the surrender. Across the ford below regiments have stormed and shouted.

But these memories lifted themselves with the valley mists, to dissolve and trail away over woodland, arable, pasture; and he knew that it was not for any secret of theirs he had been listening, nor yet for any lowly tale decipherable of quarrel, ancient feud, litigation, which had parcelled the fields at his feet or twisted the parish roads. All England is a *palimpsest* of such, scored over with writ of hate and love, begettings of children beneath the hazels, betrayals, appeals, curses, concealed travails. But this was different somehow. It had no dimension, small or great. In a way it had escaped dimensions, to be universal; and yet just here – here, waiting....⁴⁹

The theoretical underpinning of my thesis on the life and work of Daphne du Maurier takes its cue from the novel *Castle Dor*, a work which was begun by Arthur Quiller-Couch and completed after his death by du Maurier at the request of Quiller-Couch’s daughter Foy. Quiller-Couch writes in the ‘Prologue’ to this novel that “[a]ll England is a palimpsest”, “scored over with writ of hate and love.”⁵⁰ The novel then proceeds to play out Quiller-Couch’s idea of the palimpsest, which is already hinted at in the ‘Prologue’. For Quiller-Couch the very landscape of England is a document on which is written the texts of countless previous lives. Although Quiller-Couch acknowledges that lives separated by time are invisible to each other, there is a yet a hint in his writing that one story is waiting to cast its influence over the present as defined by the novel; it is as though one text lying seemingly dormant could bleed through the time barrier and interact with another. *Castle Dor* is Quiller-Couch’s imaginative portrayal of how the Cornish legend of Tristan and Iseult takes command of the lives of both Amyot Trestane, a Breton onion-seller, and the beautiful newlywed Linnet Lewarne. As Quiller-Couch writes, Linnet has the “strange sensation of something breaking out of the past to connect itself with something immediately to come,” and that past something is the story of Tristan and Iseult, which “would never so flower again, yet be unable to forget or desist from the effort to throw up secondary shoots.”⁵¹ Texts thus contaminate other texts in this

⁴⁹ Arthur Quiller-Couch and Daphne du Maurier, *Castle Dor* (London: J. M. Dent, 1962), pp. 3-5.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5. Emphasis added to draw your attention to the use of the word palimpsest.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 47.

novel and this is partly reflected in the actual history of the novel's twice-authored construction.⁵²

Quiller-Couch's dormant text is resurrected in du Maurier's present and lies alongside her own text to create one living novel rather than an unseen, uncompleted work. But du Maurier's text also interrupts that of Quiller-Couch's since she adds a little of her own imagination to passages earlier on in the novel.⁵³ It could therefore be said that *Castle Dor* is, in itself, a palimpsestic text which contains and elaborates on the idea of life, landscape, myth and history all taken together as constructing its own version of the palimpsest.

The Oxford English Dictionary definition of the word palimpsest is "[a] parchment or other writing-material written upon twice, the original writing having been erased or rubbed out to make place for the second[.]"⁵⁴ The word is derived from the Greek words *palin* meaning again and *psēstos* meaning scraped. The dictionary definition accords well with Quiller-Couch's idea of a material (in his case landscape) which has been written on more than once by several authors (lives), and that subsequent writings serve to obscure what has gone before. What is missing from the dictionary definition is the idea of the subsequent *resurrection* of previous texts. Josephine McDonagh records in her article 'Writings on the Mind' that:

[d]evelopments in chemistry at the turn of the century enabled the recovery of the former inscriptions. Careful removal of the upper layers of writing brought about the discovery of one, two or possibly more layers of writing beneath. During this period numerous palimpsests were discovered and many rare, ancient texts, formerly considered lost, were excavated from the forgotten depths of these manuscripts.⁵⁵

McDonagh points to Cardinal Angelo Mai (1782-1854), an Italian scholar, as being the "best known and most prolific textual excavator" of the period.⁵⁶ His position as custodian of the Ambrosian library in Milan facilitated his access to the manuscripts on which he made his discoveries, the most famous of these being Cicero's *De Republica*. Since, by definition, a palimpsest contains more than one text, the work of the palimpsest editor is, to some extent, "compromised by the competing values of the

⁵² Although it is actually possible to say that this novel is multi-authored rather than twice-authored since the legend of Tristan and Iseult is a pre-existing narrative that has been written and re-written over the centuries.

⁵³ As a point of interest, I quote the relevant footnote in Margaret Forster's biography of Daphne du Maurier concerning the completion of the novel: "Daphne took over the narrative in Chapter XVII of *Castle Dor*, though she also added some extra dialogue earlier. It was published by Dent in 1962 with a preface by Foy Quiller-Couch." Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), p. 439.

⁵⁴ J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, *The Oxford English Dictionary Vol XI: Ow-Poisant* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 95.

⁵⁵ Josephine McDonagh, 'Writings on the Mind: Thomas de Quincey and the Importance of the Palimpsest in Nineteenth Century Thought', *Prose Studies*, Vol.10, No.2, September 1987, p. 210.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

palimpsest's different layers".⁵⁷ However, the task of the palimpsest editor was deemed to be that of finding the "original text," or the one first laid down, as McDonagh writes:

The original layer attains its privileged status not for an intrinsic literary value, nor primarily as the relic of an ancient culture, but rather because "[it] had been lost."⁵⁸

It is, as she explains, a quest for "the origin of contemporary culture".⁵⁹ This concentration on origins and original texts marks a traditional approach to textual studies, which tries to find "a fixed product" rather than looking at the more "fluid process of creation and transmission".⁶⁰ This section of the introduction is structured to show how the associations surrounding the word palimpsest developed over time from its basis as a fixed, concrete noun in the nineteenth century to a fluid, theoretical construct in the twentieth century.

It is interesting to speculate on the reason for the existence of palimpsests. According to de Quincey's autobiographical writing *Suspiria de Profundis* (1845) there are two main reasons why they came into being, one being economic and the other being cultural.⁶¹ On the economic level, it is suggested that in the early days of recording information, printed or written, there was a "want of a cheap material for receiving such impressions" and "out of that original scarcity affecting all materials proper for durable books, which continued up to times comparatively modern, grew the opening for palimpsests".⁶² In the Middle Ages, therefore, the "monkish chemists" learned how to "discharge the writing from the roll, and thus to make it available for a new succession of thoughts," but their task was not carried out "so radically as to prevent us, their posterity, from *undoing* it."⁶³ On the cultural level, it is suggested that there was a spiritual reason for overwriting, in that "some bigoted yet perhaps holy monk has washed away (as he persuades himself) the heathen's tragedy, replacing it with a monastic legend".⁶⁴ So although the Church, as one custodian of culture, may arguably have tried to destroy a pagan heritage, it has nonetheless inadvertently transmitted it, since the palimpsest form is ironically the

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 211.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 211. This quotation is given with the punctuation as it appears in Josephine McDonagh's article. The text in quotation marks is taken from a lecture delivered in 1867 by the literary historian C. W. Russell, and according to McDonagh's footnote is recorded in 'Palimpsest Literature and its Editor, Cardinal Angelo Mai', *Afternoon Lectures on Literature and Art* (London, 1867).

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 211.

⁶⁰ George Bornstein, 'Introduction', in George Bornstein and Ralph Williams, *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 4.

⁶¹ Thomas de Quincey, 'The Palimpsest' in *Suspiria de Profundis*, in *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). *Suspiria de Profundis* (1845) was written as a sequel to the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*.

⁶² Ibid., p. 140.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 141.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 142.

way in which many pagan manuscripts have survived the centuries. The fact that, over the course of time, the pagan text seeps back through the Christian text, somewhat like the return of the repressed, lends a paradoxical quality to the usual Christian connotations of the term resurrection, which I employed earlier in connection with the palimpsest. That a palimpsest can be seen as a single document which yet contains both pagan and Christian texts, so that the one, in effect, taints the other, is particularly germane to my treatment of du Maurier's interest in religious matters, both pagan and Christian, as will be explained more fully as the thesis progresses.

THE PALIMPEST IN THEORY

So far I have discussed the palimpsest as a concrete noun or, to be more precise, what McDonagh in 'Writings on the Mind' might call "a literal agent of history".⁶⁵ However, my treatment of it thus far already hints at the word's figurative implications and how these might be used as models in other circumstances. Quiller-Couch's novel *Castle Dor*, for example, gestures at the palimpsest as a metaphor for history and its potential for impacting on the present. It is likely, considering his academic literary career at Cambridge University, that Quiller-Couch was familiar with Thomas de Quincey's writing on the palimpsest, particularly since he refers to de Quincey in his work *On the Art of Writing* (1916).⁶⁶ For de Quincey the palimpsest becomes a model for the human mind, as he records in *Suspiria de Profundis*:

What else than a natural and mighty palimpsest is the human brain? Such a palimpsest is my brain; such a palimpsest, O reader! is yours. Everlasting layers of ideas, images, feelings, have fallen upon your brain softly as light. Each succession has seemed to bury all that went before. And yet in reality not one has been extinguished.⁶⁷

Both McDonagh's survey of the palimpsest in nineteenth century thought, and Sarah Dillon's recent Ph.D. thesis, entitled *A Critical History of the Palimpsest in Modern Literature and Theory*, draw attention to de Quincey's reading of the palimpsest and its importance "as the first figurative usage of the palimpsest as a psychological model".⁶⁸ Dillon explains, with the aid of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's psychoanalytic theories concerning the fantasy of incorporation and the mourning process, how

⁶⁵ McDonagh, 'Writings on the Mind', op. cit., p. 208.

⁶⁶ Arthur Quiller-Couch, 'On the difference between verse and prose', *On the Art of Writing*, <<http://www.bartelby.net/190/3.html>> [accessed 24 July 2006]. The relevant quotation is "So it is with poetry and prose. They are different realms, but between them lies a debatable land which a De Quincey or a Whitman or a Paul Fort or a Marinetti may attempt."

⁶⁷ de Quincey, 'The Palimpsest', op. cit., p. 144.

⁶⁸ McDonagh, 'Writings on the Mind', op. cit., p. 223. See also Sarah Dillon, 'The Palimpsest: Thomas de Quincey's Fantasy of Resurrection', in *A Critical History of the Palimpsest in Modern Literature and Theory*, PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 2004, p. 56. A position paper stemming from this thesis subsequently appeared as follows: Sarah Dillon, 'Reinscribing De Quincey's palimpsest: the significance of the palimpsest in contemporary literary and cultural studies', *Textual Practice*, 19(3), 2005, pp. 243-63. Dillon notes in the position paper that this quotation from

de Quincey's model of the palimpsest can be viewed as a resurrective fantasy, and also how this theory took shape in his thinking following the death of his sister Elizabeth.⁶⁹ Of particular interest to my own thesis is the way that de Quincey implicates a Christian idea of resurrection with more esoteric, and potentially heretical, religious agency. He is concerned that the 'resurrection' involved in reading palimpsests may become tainted by its possible association with the "modern conjurations of science".⁷⁰ Thus, he frets that the scientific perpetrator may be viewed in the same light as "Hermes Trismegistus", or even "a witch as potent as Erichtho of Lucan", as he writes:

Our good old forefathers would have been aghast at our sorceries; and, if they speculated on the propriety of burning Dr Faustus, *us* they would have burned by acclamation. Trial there would have been none; and they could no otherwise have satisfied their horror of the brazen profligacy marking our modern magic, than by ploughing up the houses of all who had been parties to it, and sowing the ground with salt.⁷¹

In this way, the literal and figurative operations of the palimpsest become so interwoven that a psychological model becomes associated with a set of religious concerns. De Quincey is especially concerned that the more esoteric religions should not impact on his theories and therefore seeks to sanctify the idea of the palimpsest of the human brain by suggesting that it is a "heaven-created" thing, which allows him to resurrect his dead sister at will.⁷² In a similar way, psychological and religious concerns become interwoven in the works of Daphne du Maurier, possibly as a result of her interest in the more mystical psychology of Carl Jung. It should be noted, however, that in Dillon's critical history of the palimpsest she is careful to point out that Abraham and Torok's theory of cryptic incorporation disturbs usual psychoanalytic interpretations, as she writes:

The idea of cryptic incorporation provides a way of understanding the structure of the palimpsest (of the mind) that is not dictated by the usual topography of Freudian psychoanalysis.⁷³

She goes on to explain that this model of the palimpsest is not a depth model like Freud's model of the Unconscious, but "[r]ather, the impressions made on the palimpsest (of the mind) live on as cryptic incorporations on its surface".⁷⁴ She then goes on to cite from Jacques Derrida's foreword to Abraham and Torok's *The Wolf Man's Magic Word* in support of her argument concerning the palimpsest's

the *Oxford English Dictionary* is potentially misleading and that earlier figurative uses can be found – see p. 243 and the footnote on p. 260. However, what she does say is that "his inauguration of the concept of the palimpsest marks the beginning of a consistent process of metaphorization of palimpsests from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day." See p. 243.

⁶⁹ In her analysis Dillon uses ideas from Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, 'Introjection – Incorporation *Mourning* or *Melancholia*' in Serge Lebovici and Daniel Widlocher, *Psychoanalysis in France* (New York: International Universities Press, 1980).

⁷⁰ de Quincey, 'The Palimpsest', op. cit., p. 143.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 141, 143.

⁷² Ibid., p. 144.

⁷³ Dillon, 'The Palimpsest', op. cit., p. 69.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 169.

similarity to the crypt; “it is a kind of “false unconscious,” an “artificial” unconscious lodged like a prosthesis, a graft in the heart of an organ, within the *divided self*.”⁷⁵ The idea of the ‘divided self’ is one that will recur throughout this thesis, although my use of the phrase stems from R.D. Laing’s *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (1959), a work of which du Maurier was aware.⁷⁶ Dillon further stresses that the palimpsest as a structure of cryptic incorporation leads to a conception of the “spectralisation of the self” which has “more in common figuratively with Freud’s second topography, in which the mind is haunted by the ghostly figures of the Id, the Ego and the Superego.”⁷⁷ For Dillon, the idea of haunting “is not abstractly linguistic in nature, but physically textual”, and thus the mind becomes a “textual structure actively haunted by its encrypted traces”.⁷⁸ At this point it is perhaps fair to note that Dillon’s conception of the palimpsest is poststructural and heavily features the work of Derrida in its construction, although it is by no means solely reliant on him. She thus notes that a consideration of Derrida’s *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (1994), leads onto an acknowledgment that the “spectral structure of the self is also inevitably involved with a spectralisation of temporality”.⁷⁹ She thus suggests that the palimpsest represents what Derrida describes as the “*non contemporaneity with itself of the living present*”.⁸⁰ Dillon concludes from this that:

The ‘present’ of the palimpsest is only constituted in and by the ‘presence’ of texts from the ‘past’, as well as remaining open to further inscription by texts of the ‘future’. The presence of texts from the past, present (and possibly the future) in the palimpsest does not elide temporality (as McDonagh argues) but evidences the spectrality of any ‘present’ moment which always already contains within it ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’ moments.⁸¹

In a sense, therefore, Quiller-Couch and du Maurier’s *Castle Dor* can be seen as a novel about the spectralisation of both the self and temporality, with the lead characters becoming texts which are constituted in the present by the presence of lives (texts) from the past. Such characters are never fully present to themselves and, correspondingly, texts can never fully coincide with themselves either. Many of du Maurier’s novels also involve spectralised characters and this may, in part, account for her eventual

⁷⁵ Jacques Derrida, ‘Foreword’, in Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Wolf Man’s Magic Word* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. xiii.

⁷⁶ R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965). This work was first published in 1959. There is a note in du Maurier’s handwriting which cites this book and which is contained with the typescript of her work *The Infernal World of Branwell Bronte* (her own study of sanity and madness) – this is contained within the Du Maurier Family archives at Exeter University.

⁷⁷ Dillon, ‘The Palimpsest’, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 76.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 76.

⁸⁰ Jacques Derrida, in ibid., p. 76. Dillon gives the citation as Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. xix.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 76-77.

willingness to complete Quiller-Couch's unfinished novel. In particular my chapter on *The Flight of the Falcon* (1965) will show how du Maurier intended her lead characters to be influenced by events from the Renaissance history of the city, but then goes further to highlight how the novel is, unintentionally perhaps, influenced by a Greek mythological mindset.

Further consideration of de Quincey's work on the palimpsest, leads Dillon to draw attention to his neologism 'involute'; as she notes that he writes:

often I have been struck with the important truth – that far more of our deepest thoughts and feelings pass to us through perplexed combinations of *concrete* objects, pass to us as *involute*s (if I may coin that word) in compound experiences incapable of being disentangled[.]⁸²

Since the brain stands in for the concept of the palimpsest, Dillon concludes that the palimpsest itself is an "involute phenomenon" where "otherwise unrelated texts are involved and entangled, interrupting and inhabiting each other".⁸³ Similarly, my own thesis could be viewed as an 'involute phenomenon' since it utilises theories from the past with which du Maurier would be familiar – specifically those of Carl Jung and Plato – and entangles them with more modern theoretical propositions concerning the poststructuralist concept of the palimpsest. Alongside Plato and Jung, I also use elements of Nietzschean thought as this philosopher is mentioned by name in one of the novels I discuss (*The Flight of the Falcon*), but also because Jung refers to him repeatedly – due to his ability to think in terms beyond Christianity - and he would therefore be known at second-hand by du Maurier. Some of the ideas of Plato and Jung can be seen to parallel each other as in, for example, the complementary notions of Platonic 'Forms' and Jungian 'archetypes'. Both 'Forms' and 'archetypes' exist in a realm beyond that of everyday, mortal experience and are not knowable in themselves, but only through the partial insights gained through the mediation of 'daimonic images', or what Jung would term 'archetypal images'. These 'daimonic' or 'archetypal' images function in a spectral way, haunting the imagination of the mortal concerned, much like Dillon's palimpsestuous conception of the Freudian 'Id, Ego, and Superego' formations. They can therefore be viewed as mythic, textual constructions which inhabit the palimpsest of the mind. To return to the idea of 'involute' as stressed by Dillon, my thesis is also an 'involute phenomenon' from the point of view of its engagement with the three seemingly separate strands of psychology, religion and politics. What started out as a study of the 'daimon' – in the Greek sense of an intermediate 'liminal entity' which mediates between two realms, such as the human and the spiritual or

⁸² De Quincey, *Suspiria de Profundis*, op. cit., p. 104. Dillon draws attention to this quotation. See Dillon, 'Introduction: The Palimpsest, Genealogy, History', in *A Critical History of the Palimpsest*, op. cit., p. 3.

⁸³ Dillon, *ibid.*, p. 3.

the conscious and the unconscious – progressed inexorably to encompass the realm of the political as I engaged with more of du Maurier’s life and work. To give an example, in my study of *Jamaica Inn*, I found that du Maurier’s attraction to mysterious Celtic forces led eventually to an involvement with Cornish nationalism. Also, many of the concepts involved in the daimonic psychology and religion with which I am concerned have inevitably been used for political ends; a case in point is Plato’s notion of ‘the Forms’ which becomes an esoteric form of knowledge that can only be comprehended by a select few who, as a result, are then thought capable of ruling the dormant masses.⁸⁴ In this way, my ‘daimonic’ project – which began as psychological and spiritual - became completely interwoven with political considerations, so that the whole, in de Quincey’s terminology, is a ‘perplexed combination’ of the three.

Another way in which my thesis could be seen as an ‘involuted’ palimpsest refers back to one of the theories surrounding their production, which involves the church writing their own authorised texts in the spaces of outmoded pagan ones. Thus, it could be said that my thesis entangles academically unfashionable essentialism - as pertains in Jungian psychology and paganism - with more canonical poststructuralist concerns. That these two seemingly irreconcilable view points are taken together in my discussion can be seen as constituting an involuted palimpsest, if we consider the palimpsest in the way that Dillon conceives it, which is as “a space in which two or more texts, often different and incongruous, co-exist in a state of both collision and collusion”.⁸⁵ My thesis is thus a textual space where incongruous theories interact, some of them occasionally becoming dominant, with others occasionally falling dormant, waiting to be resurrected later.

Dillon later goes on to reject the adjective palimpsestic in favour of yet another neologism - ‘palimpsestuous’ – which she notes was first used in English by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky to translate Gérard Genette’s description of “a new type of reading” suggested by Philippe Lejeune.⁸⁶ As Genette writes:

The hypertext invites us to engage in a relational reading, the flavour of which, however perverse, may well be condensed in an adjective recently coined by Philippe Lejeune: a *palimpsestuous* reading.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ In a similar vein, John Carey sees the modern art of the early twentieth century as a form of esoteric knowledge which excluded the masses – “it is the essential function of modern art to divide the public into two classes – those who can understand it and those who cannot.” See John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 17. Carey adds “Though it usually purports to be progressive, the avant-garde is consequently always reactionary,” p. 18.

⁸⁵ Dillon, ‘Palimpsestuousness: On Poetry and Metaphor’, in *A Critical History of the Palimpsest*, op. cit., p. 104. It strikes me that this definition has a certain liminal quality.

⁸⁶ Dillon, ‘Introduction’, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸⁷ Gérard Genette, in *ibid.*, p. 4. Dillon gives the citation as Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p. 399.

The adjective palimpsestic is defined in *The Oxford English Dictionary* as “that is, or that makes, a palimpsest” and refers to palimpsests as concrete nouns, whereas the adjective palimpsestuous has a more theoretical flavour denoting “the complex (textual) relationality embodied in the palimpsest”.⁸⁸ The similarity of sound between palimpsestuous and incestuous is not entirely accidental and thus the word palimpsestuous is in itself palimpsestuous as Dillon explains:

For palimpsestuous relationality, ‘palimpsestuousness’, treads the line of the problematic of incest – the intimacy that is branded as illegitimate since it is between those that are *too closely related*. The utmost intimacy is only legitimate, and, one might suggest – recalling the biological basis for the taboo on incest – productive, between those terms that retain some amount of estrangement from one another. [...] ‘palimpsestuous’ is thus both intimate with, and at the same time, estranged from, its intimates, including ‘involved’, ‘incestuous’, ‘encrypted’, ‘hymenic’ and ‘queer’. Moreover its relationship with such terms is defined by the structure of relationality that it, and those terms, are in fact attempting to describe.⁸⁹

Palimpsestuous reading is thus not about resurrecting the underlying script – a structural reading – but is instead a more inventive process of tracing the incestuous texts, and “creating relations where there may, or should be, none”.⁹⁰ Many times in her work, du Maurier invites her readership to perform a ‘palimpsestic’ reading of the text in question, and sometimes even of individual aspects of the text - such as the works of art she invents in *The Flight of the Falcon*. My concern in this thesis is, however, to move beyond du Maurier’s own ‘palimpsestic’ expectations to a ‘palimpsestuous’ reading of her life and work, to spot where other voices speak through her text, and to recognise, as Dillon suggests, “the interrelationality of myth and history”, which stems from “figuring history as palimpsest”.⁹¹ Again, my reading of *The Flight of the Falcon* not only highlights the intended palimpsestic qualities of the work, but draws attention to its palimpsestuous qualities by demonstrating how the voices of Greek mythology – in which du Maurier professed an interest – unwittingly speak through this novel of history and myth.

In *A Critical History of the Palimpsest in Modern Literature and Theory*, Dillon goes on to discuss palimpsestuousness in the joint context of D.H. Lawrence’s poetry and gradually refined definitions of metaphor.⁹² Dillon is particularly interested in one of the poems that appeared in Lawrence’s early college notebook entitled ‘Evening of a Week-day’, and which was published with

⁸⁸ *The Oxford English Dictionary: Vol XI*, op. cit., p. 95. Dillon, ‘Introduction’, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸⁹ Dillon, ‘Introduction’, op. cit., p. 7.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 16. Her argument stems from Daniel Cooper Alarcón, ‘The Aztec Palimpsest: Toward a New Understanding of Aztlán, Cultural Identity and History’, *Aztlán*, 19:2 (1988-90). Alarcón’s work is written in connection with postcolonialism – his construction of the palimpsest in this context means that the dominant voice is prevented from totally silencing the others.

⁹² Dillon, ‘Palimpsestuousness: On Poetry and Metaphor’, op. cit.

revisions as ‘Palimpsest of Twilight’ in *New Poems* (1918), and then as ‘Twilight’ in *Collected Poems* (1928).⁹³ The traditional understanding of metaphor – from the Greek, meaning literally to carry over – relies upon:

an operation of similarity and difference whereby one object, phenomenon or concept is spoken of *as* another. This process illuminates some essential quality (or qualities) of that object, but at the same time each part of the metaphor retains its separate identity.⁹⁴

Dillon refines the notion of metaphor by referring to the Heideggerian concept of ‘belonging together’, in which the two parts of the metaphor are “both borne away and held toward each other”, such that they are “intimate but not fused”.⁹⁵ Using, such theories, she analyses what can be learned from Lawrence’s association of palimpsest and twilight. She notes that ‘twi’ refers to the idea of ‘twiformed’ - or ‘having a double form’ - where the two parts in question may be incongruous, which is precisely the situation obtaining in a palimpsest.⁹⁶ Alternatively, the idea of a palimpsest draws attention to twilight as a time when day and night “interpenetrate each other, where the one shows in and through the other”.⁹⁷ Viewing the palimpsest and twilight in this ‘twiformed’ way shows how they become metaphors for each other, and also that finally they “offer themselves as metaphors of metaphor”.⁹⁸ But Dillon goes on to show that the whole notion of Heideggerian metaphor is problematic, citing Genette again in support of her argument:

How, in fact, can we say that metaphor, that is to say, a displacement, a transfer of sensations from one object to another, can lead us to the essence of this object? How can we admit that the “profound truth” of a thing, that particular, “distinct” truth sought by Proust, can be revealed in a figure that brings out its properties only by transposing them, that is to say, by making them strange?...and how can a description based on the “relationship” between two objects avoid destroying the essence of each?⁹⁹

For Dillon, ‘palimpsestuous metaphoricality’ signals the catachresis – perversion - of metaphor.¹⁰⁰

It is perhaps apt to ask at this point whether the catachresis of metaphor can be applied critically to Dillon’s own theoretical construction of the palimpsest. Her poststructural account of the palimpsest is one which denies the possibility of depth. As she has explained, the palaeographic palimpsest provides a starting point for thinking about the palimpsest in theory, yet it is an object which lends itself to ideas of

⁹³ Ibid., p. 90.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 99.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 102.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 103-4.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 104.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 104. Again, as there is something ‘liminal’ about twilight, this suggests a certain liminality about the concepts of palimpsest and metaphor.

⁹⁹ Gérard Genette, in *ibid.*, p. 109. Dillon gives the citation as Gérard Genette, ‘Proust Palimpsest’, in *Figures of Literary Discourse* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982), p. 208.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

layering, and hence of finding successively lower levels until one reaches an ultimate foundation (text).¹⁰¹ In poststructuralising the idea of the palimpsest, an involuted, surface model is produced instead, which paradoxically attempts to reject all traces of its own origins in a depth model. Yet when Dillon refers to the textual history of Lawrence's poetry, for example, she describes it as a process of "erasures, superimpositions, and further erasures".¹⁰² Dillon's use of the word superimposition, where 'super' means 'above' or 'on top of', serves to re-invoke the idea of depth. Elsewhere in her thesis, Dillon specifically refers to "palimpsestuous words, ideas and expressions" which "saturate [H.D.'s] text", and gives these as "understrata", "things 'overlapping'", "things behind things", "over-layers", etc.¹⁰³ However, these are palimpsestic rather than palimpsestuous metaphors, since they invoke the depth associated with the palaeographic model, yet Dillon uses them to demonstrate the "palimpsestuous fabric of the text" under discussion.¹⁰⁴ As part of her analysis of H.D.'s work Dillon also refers to "Raymonde's repression of her anger" and that "layers of her past have survived precisely because of her burial of them"; both parts of this metaphor refer to a Freudian depth model which she has been at pains previously to criticise. In this way, it could be said that Dillon inadvertently (and purposefully?) 'perverts' her own metaphor, allowing traces of depth to infect the carefully wrought theorising of surface. This can perhaps be seen as ironic on two counts; firstly because 'palimpsestuous metaphoricity' signals the very catachresis of metaphor and hence excuses such verbal contradictions in any case, and secondly because any thesis is concerned to find an approach to a subject which provides depth as opposed to superficiality (a word for indicating the surface which automatically implies the depths that the surface is covering, again through its use of the prefix 'super'). In my own thesis, I will utilise both the depth and the surface meanings that are implied by the palaeographic and poststructural readings of the palimpsest, and which are figured in the "perceptual shift from the 'palimpsestic' to the 'palimpsestuous'".¹⁰⁵ Incidentally, chapter five of Dillon's thesis, 'Palimpsesting: Reading, Writing and Detective Fiction', explores this perceptual shift through references to palimpsests in both classical detective fiction (Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez' (1904)) and palimpsestuous detective fiction (Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* - 1980). To read the former is to read structurally since the text is written in such a way that there is an *underlying* 'truth' which can be found, i.e. there is a solution to the mystery. To read the latter means to

¹⁰¹ Dillon's chapter two provides a brief history of palaeography – 'Palimpsests: A Brief History from Antiquity to the Present'. Palaeography is the study of ancient manuscripts.

¹⁰² Dillon, 'Palimpsestuousness: On Poetry and Metaphor', op. cit., p. 95.

¹⁰³ Dillon, 'Queering the Palimpsest: H.D.', op. cit., p. 202.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 202.

¹⁰⁵ Dillon, 'Palimpsesting: Reading, Writing and Detective Fiction', op. cit., p. 121.

respond to the text as something which is woven. Dillon notes that Derrida – in ‘Living On: Borderlines’ - refers to the text as “a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself”.¹⁰⁶ She also observes that Barthes’ name for the reading of such a text is “hyphology” – where hyphos refers to fabric, veil or the spider’s web. This does not mean to say that the text is a veil behind which the ‘truth’ is hidden, but rather that attention should be paid to the interlacing of its codes.¹⁰⁷

Dillon’s conclusion to the *Critical History of the Palimpsest* - ‘Queering the Palimpsest: H.D.’ - examines “the palimpsestuous coupling of queer and the palimpsest”.¹⁰⁸ Her approach operates in the context of a consideration of two of the stories in H.D.’s volume *Palimpsest* (1926), these being ‘Murex’ and ‘Secret Name’. Dillon writes of these two pieces that:

‘Murex’ is a story about the palimpsestuous relationship between life and writing that seduces the reader into biographical reading at the same time as warning her of the reductive risk of any such approach. In the light of this, my reading of ‘Secret Name’ does not perform a biographical reading of the text. Rather, it negotiates the relationship between life and writing by focusing on how the text plays out of its protagonist’s palimpsestuous queer identity, which might itself then offer a reinscription of H.D.’s ‘bisexuality’.¹⁰⁹

Similarly, my own thesis attempts to negotiate, in a palimpsestuous way, the relationship between du Maurier’s life and her writing, and also between her life and the lives of other people with whom she came into contact. In this latter context can be included my chapter on du Maurier’s engagement with the ideas of Frank Buchman’s Moral Re-armament movement, my chapter on du Maurier’s relationship and correspondence with her publisher Victor Gollancz, and also her involvement with the Francis Bacon Society and its members which resulted from her work on the biographies of the Bacon brothers. Biographical details of the people (and organisations) concerned will thus be offered in order to read these various lives as interlaced texts, and also in order to examine how much the lives, organisations and ideas come together and how much they are held apart on the palimpsest which is du Maurier’s life and literary career. In the context of Dillon’s discussion of the work of H.D. it should also be remembered that du Maurier was herself intensely attracted to women as well as men, and that her construction of the ‘boy’ within – what she termed the ‘boy-in-the-box’ - contributed to her awareness of her ‘divided self’.¹¹⁰ The ‘boy’ she felt she was had long ago been named Eric Avon; he had “no psychological depths, but just

¹⁰⁶ Jacques Derrida, in *ibid.*, p. 155. Dillon gives the citation as Jacques Derrida, ‘Living On’, in Harold Bloom et al., *Deconstruction and Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1999), p. 84.

¹⁰⁷ Roland Barthes, in *ibid.*, pp. 155-156. Dillon gives the citation as Roland Barthes, ‘Theory of the Text’, in Robert Young (ed.), *Untying the Text* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 39.

¹⁰⁸ Dillon, ‘Queering the Palimpsest: H.D.’, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹¹⁰ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik discuss du Maurier’s gender anxiety in *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998). See p. 8 for the reference to the ‘boy-in-the-box’ trope.

“shone at everything.”¹¹¹ Later in life, her divided gender was expressed in terms used by Jung; as

Forster writes of du Maurier:

what she identified with most closely in Jung was his explanation that each person has dual aspects within him- or herself, their No. 1 and No. 2 self. She wrote to the seventeen-year-old Flavia that she had always been able to feel within herself two quite separate personalities – ‘When I get madly boyish No. 2 is in charge, and then, after a bit, the situation is reversed.’ The point was that, as Jung directed, one had to make friends with No. 2 and say ‘now don’t get carried away ... No. 2 can come to the surface and be helpful’. She explained that when she was writing she felt all No. 2 – ‘he certainly has a lot to do with my writing’ – but when she was not, No. 2 caused trouble. The kind of trouble was outlined as ‘...one makes up one’s mind what one thinks of another person and takes no notice of their real character but treats them how one imagines they are, and then one pretends to be the sort of person that one thinks they would like one to be, so the whole thing is one ghastly sort of dressing-up[.]’¹¹²

What du Maurier is referring to here is Jung’s concept of ‘the shadow’ which contains all that one wishes to repress of one’s own character.¹¹³ Evidently, du Maurier’s shadow contained attributes which she perceived as male, and in some sense tricksterish. One thread of my thesis thus concerns du Maurier’s involvement with men, (secret) male societies, ‘lost boys’, male alter egos, male ‘philosopher king’ types and so on; indeed each one of my chapters will highlight some aspect of du Maurier’s inextricable, interwoven, ambivalent, palimpsestuous relationship with the male world.¹¹⁴ But my thesis also includes du Maurier’s attraction to the idea of the mother goddess and feminine earth deities so that female inscriptions also interlace themselves with male concerns. In this way, my thesis, like Dillon’s ‘queered palimpsest’:

is a queer structure in which are intertwined multiple and varying inscriptions, in this instance, both male and female. Where the traditional understanding of the palimpsest figures the uncovering practice of feminist reading, the involuted palimpsest provides a figure for the more radical idea of ‘queer reading’. Moreover, emphasising the palimpsest’s significance as *textual* figure circumvents the problematic autobiographical ‘phallacy’ of feminist criticism. For it is not the gender of the author which determines a queer reading, but the palimpsestuous queerness of texts themselves, be they cultural or literary. Palimpsestuous queer reading, then, does not uncover ‘hidden’ or ‘repressed’ narratives. Rather, it traces in the fabric of literary and cultural palimpsests the interlocking narratives of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’, ‘heterosexuality’ and ‘homosexuality’ that characterise gender and sexual identity, writing and culture.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Daphne du Maurier, *Myself When Young: The Shaping of a Writer* (London: Pan, 1977), p. 51.

¹¹² Forster, op. cit., pp. 276-7.

¹¹³ See Carl Jung, *CW. Vol. 9, Part I: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 20.

¹¹⁴ The ‘lost boys’ is a reference to the children in J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*. J.M. Barrie became the guardian of du Maurier’s cousins – the Llewellyn-Davies boys – after their parents died tragically young. J.M. Barrie became known to du Maurier as Uncle Jim. The trope of the ‘lost boys’ is one that endlessly and palimpsestuously reappears in du Maurier’s work.

¹¹⁵ Dillon, ‘Queering the Palimpsest: H.D.’, op. cit., p. 195.

***INTERPRETATION AND OVERINTERPRETATION –
UMBERTO ECO AND CHRISTINE BROOKE-ROSE***

In this section I propose to outline a debate concerning textual meaning as detailed in the multi-authored work *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*.¹¹⁶ The work is so structured that in the first three chapters Umberto Eco lays out his own arguments on the matter and in the next three chapters Richard Rorty, Jonathan Culler and Christine Brooke-Rose provide their differing responses. My particular interest lies in the contemporary theoretical light which Umberto Eco sheds on hermetic philosophies and also in Christine Brooke-Rose's reply concerning palimpsest history. In this way I hope to interlace the two strands of thought – both the palimpsest in theory and the ideas surrounding esoteric, hermetic forms of knowledge – which I have discussed in this introduction, and with which my thesis is concerned. The crux of Eco's argument in the first chapter is summarised by Stefan Collini in his introduction thus:

the first lecture recounts the long history in Western thought of ideas of 'secret' meanings, encoded in language in ways which escape the attention of all but the initiated few. The thrust of this account is to make contemporary theory seem to be a replay of long familiar moves, almost a further stage in the tortuous history of Hermeticism and Gnosticism, in which the more esoteric a form of knowledge can be shown to be the more greatly it is prized, and in which each peeled layer or decoded secret turns out to be but the antechamber to a yet more cunningly concealed truth. A common psychological element in these traditions of interpretation lies in the attitude of suspicion or disdain towards apparent meaning, its very accessibility and seeming concordance with common sense fatally damning its status in the eyes of the Followers of the Veil.¹¹⁷

Noting such language usage as 'peeled layer' and 'apparent meaning' (implying that there is a deeper, hidden meaning behind the surface one), Collini's summary can be seen to give Eco's arguments a decidedly palimpsestic feel. In the first chapter, Eco explains that he is revisiting "the archaic roots of the contemporary debate on meaning (or the plurality of meanings, or the absence of any transcendental meaning) of a text", and that by so doing he will demonstrate that the "most so-called 'post-modern' thought will look very pre-antique".¹¹⁸ Eco seeks to isolate the two basic interpretive attitudes of the ancients by looking firstly at "the Latin obsession with spatial limits" and causality.¹¹⁹ Boundaries were important because without them there was no *civitas*.¹²⁰ Boundaries needed to be known precisely so that territories could be defended, as Eco writes "the force of the empire is in knowing on which borderline,

¹¹⁶ Stefan Collini (ed.), *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

¹¹⁷ Collini, 'Introduction: Interpretation terminable and interminable', in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹¹⁸ Umberto Eco, 'Interpretation and History', *ibid.*, p. 25.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

between which *limen* or threshold, the defensive line should be set up”.¹²¹ In this context, bridges were extremely important since they spanned the moat delineating city boundaries. They were thus deemed sacrilegious and so had to be built under ritual control - Eco gives the example of Julius Caesar committing sacrilege by crossing the Rubicon; sacrilege once committed cannot be reversed.¹²² Eco then goes on to demonstrate the second interpretive position of the ancients by discussing the Greek attraction to the Eleusinian mysteries and the idea of infinity. The Greeks construct the idea of “continuous metamorphosis, symbolized by Hermes”; such a “god knows no spatial limits” and the “causal chains wind back on themselves”.¹²³ The god Hermes - and the corresponding idea of hermetic imagery - is a key component of Hermetic philosophies. Incidentally, in *Now or Neverland: Peter Pan and the Myth of Eternal Youth*, Ann Yeoman’s Jungian-based “psychological perspective on a cultural icon,”¹²⁴ she suggests that one of Peter Pan’s main mythological ancestors is the character Hermes/Mercury/Mercurius, and that her reasons for invoking this god are firstly to be guided by him in her own interpretation of *Peter Pan* and secondly to show how Barrie’s story can be rendered “hermetically”.¹²⁵ Likewise, the character of Hermes will flit in and out of my own thesis in either a palimpsestic or palimpsestuous manner, sometimes overtly by direct reference and sometimes covertly through his character traits. Ann Yeoman describes Hermes as:

A beautiful youth with magical, golden, winged sandals and the power to cross “the usual boundaries and limits” between the divine and human realms, between the unconscious and consciousness. Such a deceptively simple picture is belied by Greek and Roman mythology which point to the irreducible contrarities that characterize this god who is the prototypical shapeshifter. The way of being whose image is Hermes is consequently audacious, innocent, cunning, wise, chthonic, phallic, magical, dark, light, shameless, delightful, provocative, protecting.¹²⁶

Hermes is thus a threshold or liminal character and can mediate between the various opposing realms as a result of his equivocal, divided nature. Traditionally, Hermes is the inventor of language, as befits a mediator, but his dual nature points to the propensity of language both to communicate with clarity and

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 27.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 27-28.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 29.

¹²⁴ Ann Yeoman, *Now or Neverland: Peter Pan and the Myth of Eternal Youth, A Psychological Perspective on a Cultural Icon* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1998). I have cited the subtitle to the work. The eternal youth (*puer aeternus*) is one of Carl Jung’s archetypes, as is the old man (*senex*). In Jungian theory, these two archetypes are perpetually at war with each other. This can be seen to find its equivalence in *Peter Pan* if we see Captain Hook - Peter’s perennial enemy - as the *senex* character. See pp. 15-29 for Yeoman’s explanation of how the intricacies of this set of archetypes play themselves out in Barrie’s work.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 36.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 36.

also to deceive and confuse.¹²⁷ In consideration of the latter, he therefore becomes the archetypal trickster character.¹²⁸ In addition, Yeoman also explains, via Karl Kerényi, that:

his birth is invariably associated with the original Goddess in one of her many forms and so with what Goethe describes as the Eternal Feminine (a state approached, we must not forget, by way of the Realm of Mothers). Seen in this light, Hermes may be understood as “the first evocation of the purely masculine principle through the feminine”.¹²⁹

Yeoman’s description of Hermes in the last sentence has a palimpsestuous feel to it, in that it accords with the ideas raised by Dillon concerning interlocking narratives of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ that I mentioned earlier. Yeoman further remarks that Hermes’ “connection to the feminine is emphasised in his relation to his sister Aphrodite”, and that their incestuous love produced the first androgynous being – Hermaphrodite.¹³⁰ For the purposes of my thesis, Hermes can thus be seen in two ways; his twifomed nature lends itself to a palimpsestuous surface model, but he is also palimpsestic since in mediating between the conscious and unconscious he conforms to a depth model of the palimpsest.

Returning to Eco’s argument, Hermetism in the second century is described in the following terms:

Second-century Hermetism [...] is looking for a truth it does not know, and all it possesses is books. Therefore, it imagines or hopes that each book will contain a spark of truth and that they will serve to confirm each other.¹³¹

This attempted reconciliation of various viewpoints is what Eco terms the “syncretistic dimension”.¹³² The idea of syncretism is important in my conception of du Maurier’s religious and psychological concerns since it is my contention that she sought to devise her beliefs from many and varied sources, rather than simply adopting a rigid stance from any one supposedly authoritative text. Eco suggests that there were so many books and contradictions for the ancients that it was necessary to look for “a revelation beyond human utterances” which would still “have to speak of an as yet unknown god and of a still-secret truth”.¹³³ This knowledge was thought to be possessed by barbarian priests – i.e. those who spoke incomprehensible tongues – such as the Druids or wise men from the East.¹³⁴ Of the nature of the secret knowledge in question, Eco’s explanation runs thus:

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 38.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 38.

¹²⁹ Karl Kerényi, in *ibid.*, p. 38. Yeoman gives the citation as Karl Kerényi, *Hermes: Guide of Souls* (Zurich: Spring Publications, 1976), p. 62. Karl Kerényi is one of the instigators of modern studies in Greek mythology, he was also a friend of Carl Jung.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 39.

¹³¹ Eco, ‘Interpretation and History’, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹³² Ibid., p. 30.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 30.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 31.

Neo-platonist Christian thought will try to explain that we cannot define God in clear-cut terms on account of the inadequacy of our language. Hermetic thought states that our language, the more ambiguous and multivalent it is, and the more it uses symbols and metaphors, the more it is particularly appropriate for naming a Oneness in which the coincidence of opposites occurs. [...]

As a consequence, interpretation is indefinite. The attempt to look for a final, unattainable meaning leads to the acceptance of a never-ending drift or slide of meaning.¹³⁵

As Eco confirms, “every time a secret has been discovered, it will refer to another secret in a progressive movement”, thus the “ultimate secret of Hermetic initiation is that everything is secret”, and hence the “Hermetic secret must be an empty one”.¹³⁶ Eco’s line of thought is designed to show that Hermetic thought’s continuous slippage of meaning is not dissimilar to “postmodern concepts of criticism”.¹³⁷ Hermetic thought was reborn in a complex way during the Renaissance with the reworking of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and “went on to feed a large portion of modern culture, ranging from magic to science”.¹³⁸ Eco notes that Hermetic knowledge influenced such notables as Copernicus, Kepler, Newton and – significantly for my thesis – Francis Bacon. Bacon’s position in du Maurier’s own life and thought will be discussed in a later chapter.

The next stage in Eco’s argument in ‘Interpretation and History’ is to outline what is meant by Gnosis. Eco suggests that second century man became aware of his role in a world where the truth was forever slipping away and that the feeling of neurosis this generated led to the idea that the world is the result of a mistake; the cultural expression of this psychological state being central to Gnosticism.¹³⁹ Gnosis itself can be defined as a form of intuitive knowledge received directly from a celestial intermediary, rather than being purely opinion (doxa) based.¹⁴⁰ The key to Gnosticism is that:

divinity itself, being obscure and unknowable, already contains the germ of evil and an androgyny which makes it contradictory from the very start, since it is not identical to itself. Its subordinate executor, the Demiurge, gives life to an erroneous, instable world, into which a portion of divinity itself falls as if into a prison or exile.¹⁴¹

The Gnostic himself is thus also an exile in this world and comes to regard his body as a tomb. Yet paradoxically he “feels himself invested with a superhuman power” through the action of celestial revelation.¹⁴² As Eco notes, “Gnostic man becomes an *Übermensch*,” so that unlike Christianity,

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 34.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 34.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 35. Victor Gollancz was interested in gnosis rather than doxa, see my chapter on du Maurier’s correspondence with Gollancz. Gnosis is thus a form of daimonic knowledge since it needs an intermediary.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 36.

“Gnosticism is not a religion for slaves but one for masters”.¹⁴³ Here it is easy to see the origins of Nietzsche’s ‘Superman’ theories and the reasons behind his rejection of Christianity. Jung, also, was inspired by the Gnostic problem and recast it in terms of the “rediscovery of the original ego”.¹⁴⁴ Eco argues that the Gnostic position lends itself to a view of power tied to making others believe that one is a member of a select group which is in possession of a privileged, political secret, with the result that the Gnostic element can thus be “identified in every condemnation of mass society by the aristocracy”.¹⁴⁵ It is this Gnostic view of power – whereby secrets are granted to an elite few who then scorn the sleeping many – that informs the political aspect of my thesis, although my use of it will be mediated not just via Gnosticism itself but also through Plato’s writings, Nietzschean theory and Jungian psychology. I will also refer to the work of John Carey, whose book *The Intellectuals and the Masses* exposes the literary intelligentsia’s reaction to the masses during the period 1880-1939, and goes on ultimately and self-consciously to imply that much of modern (literary) theory is a form of secret knowledge designed to exclude the many.¹⁴⁶ In a sense, du Maurier saw her own writing as containing hidden meanings that uninformed critics, and much of the mass readership she generated, had failed to observe. She came to believe that her novels were thus palimpsests, whose secrets would be revealed to the few who were able to scratch away the surface layer and expose the real import of the text hidden beneath. Du Maurier’s approach here is evidently palimpsestic rather than palimpsestuous since she implies a depth model similar to the palaeographic palimpsest rather than a poststructural surface model of text. Her view of her own works as palimpsestic, secret-laden texts finds expression particularly in *The Flight of the Falcon* as I reveal in the chapter devoted to that novel. Her attraction to the esoteric groups described by Eco and their secret, power-bestowing knowledge provides a vantage point from which to view du Maurier’s disdain of mass society. She herself had developed a secret vocabulary which contained words to describe the aspects of the ‘herd’ mentality she disparaged. For example, the word ‘honky’ means the opposite to royal and ‘Witherspoons’ means dull, conventional types.¹⁴⁷ In *Jamaica Inn* particularly we can observe how the seemingly conventional Christian – the Reverend Francis Davey – conceals the esoteric, pagan aspect of his character which despises his non-aware flock. It is arguable that this character is a form of

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 38, 37.

¹⁴⁶ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992). Op. cit.

¹⁴⁷ Du Maurier’s secret vocabulary is listed in the Glossary at the beginning of Oriel Malet (ed.), *Daphne du Maurier: Letters from Menabilly* (London: Orion, 1994). ‘Herd’ is a Nietzschean word to describe mass society.

du Maurier wish-fulfilment in that he symbolically expresses aspects of her 'divided self' in male elite disguise, where that self is divided palimpsestuously, both on a spiritual and gendered level.

Following on from his explication of Hermeticism and Gnosticism, Eco lists the main points of similarity between these approaches and contemporary approaches to the text, which I will quote and/or summarise below:

1. "A text is an open-ended universe where the interpreter can discover infinite interconnections".
2. "Language is unable to grasp a unique and pre-existing meaning". It can only speak of the "coincidence of the opposites".
3. "Language mirrors the inadequacy of our thought" and our incapacity to find any "transcendental meaning".
4. Any text is "a miscarried universe" written by a "muddle-headed Demiurge". The attempt is to say "that's that" but the result is "infinite deferrals" where "'that' is not 'that'".
5. Any reader of a text can become an "*Übermensch*" who realises that "the author did not know what he or she was really saying because language spoke in his or her place".
6. The reader must suspect that "every line of [a text] conceals another secret meaning". "[T]exts can say everything except what their author wanted them to mean".
7. "The Real Reader is the one who understands that the secret of a text is its emptiness".¹⁴⁸

Eco acknowledges that he has "made a caricature out of the most radical reader-oriented theories of interpretation" in his quest to demonstrate the antiquity of modern theory.¹⁴⁹ My exposition of Eco's ideas is thus an attempt to show how esoteric premises yet underpin many of our current rational, non-essentialist theories. Although it could be said, paradoxically, that Eco's argument attempts to find the origin of non-essentialism.

In the second chapter of *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* – entitled 'Overinterpreting Texts' – Eco looks at the idea of "Hermetic semiosis", a method of "paranoiac" reading which he feels:

goes too far precisely in the practices of suspicious interpretation [...] First of all, an excess of wonder leads to overestimating the importance of coincidences which are explainable in other ways. The Hermeticism of the Renaissance was looking for 'signatures', that is, visible clues revealing occult relationships.¹⁵⁰

Eco gives as an example of Renaissance Hermetic thinking the fact that since the bulbs of the orchis had a striking resemblance to testicles they must have "magical properties with regard to the reproductive apparatus".¹⁵¹ However, Bacon – who I will discuss in a later chapter – realised that although their form was similar their function was not, and thus the analogy does not hold since a magic relationship must be

¹⁴⁸ The full list is given in Eco, 'Interpretation and History', op. cit., pp. 39-40.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁵⁰ Eco, 'Overinterpreting Texts', in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, op. cit., see pp. 48-50.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 50.

of a functional type.¹⁵² Eco goes on to suggest that the same overinterpretation occurs with respect to ‘sacred’ texts which have become important in either the secular or religious world, as he relates:

It happened in the medieval world to Virgil: it happened in France to Rabelais: it happened to Shakespeare (under the banner of the ‘Bacon-Shakespeare controversy’ a legion of secret-hunters have sacked the texts of the Bard word by word, letter by letter, to find anagrams, acrostics, and other secret messages through which Francis Bacon might have made it clear that he was the true author of the 1623 Folio)[.]¹⁵³

Du Maurier’s involvement in the ‘Bacon-Shakespeare controversy’, both through her biographical writing and her membership of the Francis Bacon Society, forms the subject matter of the chapter I mentioned concerning Bacon. The members of the Francis Bacon Society were as keen to detect the secret messages of Bacon in Shakespeare’s Folio as the ‘Followers of the Veil’ were with regards to the work of Dante. In his chapter on ‘Overinterpreting Texts’, Eco goes on to relate the main concerns of this group of Dante followers, who were active from the second half of the nineteenth century, and who included Gabriel Rossetti, Eugène Aroux, Giovanni Pascoli, and René Guenon.¹⁵⁴ Eco states that according to them, Dante’s work contains “symbols and liturgical practices typical of the Masonic and Rosicrucian traditions.”¹⁵⁵ Rossetti, in particular, “sets out with the conviction that Dante was a Freemason, Templar, and member of the Fraternity of the Rosy Cross”.¹⁵⁶ However, Dante was born in 1265 and Eco points out that there are documents which provide evidence for the rise of Rosicrucian ideas at the beginning of the seventeenth century and the appearance of the first Freemasonry lodges at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁵⁷ There are also documents which show how various of these new lodges and societies chose symbols to demonstrate their Rosicrucian lineage.¹⁵⁸ Eco explains how Rossetti assumes that a Masonic-Rosicrucian symbol would be a rose with a cross inside and a pelican beneath it, and that he sets out to prove that this symbol can be found in Dante’s work.¹⁵⁹ If however, Rossetti were to find such a symbol this could just be a result of the Masons drawing their symbology from Dante, or that both Dante and the Masons had a common source.¹⁶⁰ Rossetti does indeed find the cross, the rose and the pelican, but Eco suggests that this is entirely explainable by reference to the imagery to be found in the Christian tradition,

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 53. That the modern world is still obsessed with overinterpreting ‘sacred’ texts, the idea of secret societies and elucidating what it is that makes them secret, breaking secret codes, and (interestingly from the point of view of my work on du Maurier) the idea of the ‘sacred feminine’ can be seen in the furore surrounding Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* (novel and film). Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (London: Corgi, 2004). *The Da Vinci Code*, Ron Howard (Dir.), Columbia Pictures, 2006.

¹⁵⁴ Eco, *ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

the framework within which Dante was writing.¹⁶¹ I cite Eco's explication of Rossetti's activities as an example by which to compare the 'Hermetic semiosis' of du Maurier and other members of the Francis Bacon Society. I must add, though, that their seemingly excessive, reader-centric approach to finding evidence to support their own hypotheses does not necessarily detract from the possibility that such evidence is there by authorial intention. Eco does affirm that Dante himself said, somewhat palimpsestically, that:

his poetry conveyed a non-literal sense, to be detected 'sotto il velame delli versi strani', beyond and beneath the literal sense. But not only did Dante explicitly assert this; he also furnished the keys for finding out non-literal senses.¹⁶²

My own intention in writing about du Maurier and the Francis Bacon Society is not to prove or deny their hypothesis that Bacon wrote the works of Shakespeare and left evidence in the Folio to that effect, but to lay bare the machinations of their 'Hermetic semiosis' and to show du Maurier's part in this palimpsestic method of reading Bacon's personality, life and work.¹⁶³ In a sense I am reading the intention of the reader – in this case du Maurier and the Francis Bacon Society – regarding Bacon as a 'text' and the Folio as a 'text,' and looking at what they found "by virtue of their own systems of expectations".¹⁶⁴ My reading of du Maurier's reading of Bacon will then go on to highlight his involuted nature – Christian-cum-Mason – and thus his palimpsestuous import in du Maurier's own thinking. Other examples of du Maurier as a reader will occur at various points in my text, but notably in my chapter on her

correspondence with Victor Gollancz, where I look at the evidence for the reading matter she perused at that particular point in her life.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 57-8.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁶³ This instance of 'hermetic semiosis' appears palimpsestic, but if we refer back to Eco's list of other hermetic approaches there are ways in which hermetic semiosis is also palimpsestuous.

¹⁶⁴ Eco, 'Overinterpreting Texts', op. cit., p. 64.

¹⁶⁵ Concerning du Maurier as 'reader', I wrote to the London Library to ask about her borrower records. The answer I received from Alison Sproston, Deputy Librarian (09/12/2004), runs thus:

Dear Ms Heeley

Thank you for your email. I regret that we have no borrower records for the period during which Daphne Du Maurier was a member of the Library. She joined on November 13th 1952 and her

In chapter three of *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* – entitled ‘Between Author and Text’ – Eco examines whether we can still be concerned with “the empirical author of a text”.¹⁶⁶ Part of Eco’s analysis is to look at ideas surrounding the ‘Model Author’ and the ‘Liminal Author’, the latter being particularly germane to my interest in the concept of the daimonic intermediary. Eco sees the ‘Model Author’ in terms of a “textual strategy”. As an example of where the ‘Model Author’ comes into play Eco cites the work carried out by Lorenzo Valla who demonstrated that the *Constitutum Constantini* was a forgery.¹⁶⁷ Valla showed that “the use of certain linguistic expressions was implausible at the beginning of the fourth century” and thus the ‘Model Author’ “could not have been a Roman writer of that period”.¹⁶⁸ Following on from this example, Eco provides a definition of the ‘Liminal Author’ as given to him by Mauro Ferraresi, one of his students:

between the empirical author and the Model Author (which is nothing else than an explicit textual strategy) there is a third, rather ghostly, figure that he christened Liminal Author, or the Author on the Threshold – the threshold between the intention of a given human being and the linguistic intention displayed by a textual strategy.¹⁶⁹

Eco presents Hartman’s analysis of some lines of the ‘Lucy’ poems by Wordsworth - whereby Hartman suggests that the words which are present suggest words which are absent - to assist in his explication of the ‘Liminal Author’. If a reader could be seduced into thinking that such relationships are present then it is entirely possible that Wordsworth himself “was unconsciously seduced by these possible echo effects”.¹⁷⁰ But as Eco clarifies:

I, the reader, do not attribute an explicit intention to Mr Wordsworth; I only suspect that on the threshold situation where Mr Wordsworth was no longer an empirical person and not yet a mere text, he obliged the words (or the words obliged him) to set up a possible series of associations.¹⁷¹

It could be said, therefore, that what Hartman has found in the ‘Lucy’ poems is one of a number of possible ‘liminal Wordsworths’. In a sense this informs my method of looking at du Maurier, as my aim is not necessarily to find the empirical author but to look at the ‘liminal du Mauriers’ which arise suggestively and palimpsestuously as “ghostly image[s]” from a cross-fertilisation of all the ‘texts’ under

sponsor, who at that time had to be an existing member of the Library (not so today!) was a Mr D. Pepys Whiteley. She resigned her membership in 1985.
I'm so sorry I can't help with your main enquiry. Apart from a few borrowing ledgers from the very early years of the Library (1840s-50s) records of who borrowed what have not been kept.
Good luck with your research.
Alison Sproston

Derek Pepys Whiteley helped du Maurier with her research.

¹⁶⁶ Eco, ‘Between Author and Text’, in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, op. cit., p. 67.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

consideration, such ‘texts’ including du Maurier’s published and unpublished work, her letters, archival material, the biographies written about her, the persons living or dead with whom she interacted, and the fictional characters she generated.¹⁷² At the level of the ‘palimpsestic’, the idea of the ‘Liminal Author’ as a “ghostly image” resonates strongly with the idea of suppressed liminal texts that re-appear over the course of time betwixt and between other more official texts on a palimpsest. My conception of the ‘Liminal Author’ as a phenomenon arising from a combination of ‘texts’ similarly works well at the level of the ‘palimpsestuous’ since the latter is also chiefly concerned with considerations of ‘complex (textual) relationality’.

Christine Brooke-Rose’s essay – entitled ‘Palimpsest History’ – is posited as the third response to Eco’s three opening essays in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*. Oddly, it is not really a response at all since it does not refer to Eco’s line of discussion in the opening chapters of this work, but instead to “the nature and purposes served by the genre to which Eco’s own fictions belong, and which she calls ‘palimpsest history’”, as Collini affirms in his ‘Introduction’.¹⁷³ Collini further explains that Brooke-Rose is a novelist and critic who challenges “any tendency to return to unilinear Realism as the norm or standard”, hence her interest in ‘magic realism’, which is in fact the concept that her phrase ‘palimpsest history’ is designed to re-classify. Brooke-Rose’s essay concerns itself with the notion of “history as itself a fiction”, focussing primarily on the work of Salman Rushdie but also including in its theoretical sweep such works as *A Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) by Gabriel Garcia Márquez, *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973) by Thomas Pynchon, *The Public Burning* (1977) by Robert Coover and *Foucault’s Pendulum* by Umberto Eco.¹⁷⁴ Her theoretical approach distinguishes between five different types of ‘palimpsest history’ as follows:

1. “the realistic historical novel[.]”
2. “the totally imagined story, set in a historical period, in which magic unaccountably intervenes[.]”
3. “the totally imagined story, set in a historical period, without magic but with so much time-dislocating philosophical, theological and literary allusion and implication that the effect is magical[.]”
4. “the zany reconstruction of a more familiar because closer period or event, with apparent magic which is, however, motivated through hallucination[.]”

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 70.

¹⁷³ Collini, ‘Introduction: Interpretation Terminable and Interminable’, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁷⁴ The dates are as Brooke-Rose gives them in the footnotes, apart from *Foucault’s Pendulum* (published in Great Britain in 1989).

5. “the palimpsest history of a nation and creed, in which magic may or may not be involved but seems almost irrelevant – or shall we say almost natural – compared to the posterousness of mankind as realistically described[.]”¹⁷⁵

Brooke-Rose makes the comment that “[l]ike the historian, these authors work very hard on their facts”, thus the novels in question are often “large” and “packed with specialized knowledge”.¹⁷⁶ In many cases the specialised knowledge is of a philosophical or theological nature, so not only do these authors present us with ‘palimpsest history’ but also “palimpsest religion”.¹⁷⁷ If ‘palimpsest history’ is an imaginative re-writing of history based on some recognisable historical period, then ‘palimpsest religion’ is a similarly creative re-appraisal of religious texts and creeds. However, writers of ‘palimpsest religion’ – as in the case of Rushdie and *The Satanic Verses* – lay themselves open to charges of heresy, even if they are only interpreting available evidence. As Brooke-Rose points out, “there is not a single passage in *The Satanic Verses* that cannot find echo in the Qur’an and qur’anic traditions and Islamic history”.¹⁷⁸ But totalitarian and indeed theocratic governments reserve for themselves the task of writing palimpsest history and religion, and “only *their* palimpsest is regarded as acceptable”.¹⁷⁹

DAPHNE DU MAURIER IN THEORY

My experience with Daphne du Maurier has always been the same. I devour her, leave her, and vaguely decide that she has satisfied some immature neurotic need in me that I no longer have. Then some years later I read her again and I fall back into her world. As I write this, she is dead, pigeonholed, and dismissed. I, however, am now an English professor in my fifties with the confidence to affirm that from 1955 to the present, I’ve read Daphne du Maurier, not because I need a childish escape, but because she’s a complex, powerful, unique writer, so unorthodox that no critical tradition, from formalism to feminism can digest her.¹⁸⁰

Thus writes Nina Auerbach - looking back from the vantage point of the year 2000 - in her full length study entitled *Daphne du Maurier: The Haunted Heiress*. Auerbach neatly portrays and – in spite of herself – betrays the angst-ridden way that du Maurier has permeated her own critical imagination and correspondingly that of the cultural Zeitgeist of the twentieth century. In the janus-faced year 2000, Auerbach is keen to assert her confidence in reading du Maurier, yet the paragraph in which this so-called confidence appears is fraught with words such as ‘immature’, ‘neurotic’, and ‘childish’. Co-incidentally, the year 2000 was when I did my first literature search of the critical attention paid to du Maurier’s work,

¹⁷⁵ Christine Brooke-Rose, ‘Palimpsest History’, in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 131.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁸⁰ Nina Auerbach, *Daphne du Maurier: Haunted Heiress* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 9-10.

so I had the same body of twentieth century research to look back on as Auerbach.¹⁸¹ Returning to review the state of knowledge in 2006, I was keen to discover whether Auerbach's allegedly unalloyed confidence in du Maurier had been perpetuated in the work of twenty-first century academics or whether there was still an ongoing tinge of critical neurosis.

During the 1980s those female critics who looked at the work of du Maurier seemed to do so within the self-conscious confines of female readership of 'women's genres', such critical attention as was paid seeming to arise from the perceived "antagonisms between feminism and Marxism".¹⁸² The wildly popular novel *Rebecca* (1938) came under a fair degree of critical scrutiny, partly because it had indeed been so successful in capturing the imagination of a huge cross-section of the female readership. In particular, Alison Light's article 'Returning to Manderley – Romance Fiction, Female Sexuality and Class' (1984) signals, by its very title, the uneasy preoccupation with the 'romance fiction' tag that was to haunt the female critics and perplex du Maurier for so long. Martyn Shallcross reports du Maurier as saying "*Rebecca* isn't romantic [...] It is a study in jealousy and murder, not romantic at all."¹⁸³ In Light's defence, however, she does attempt to reclaim the position of *Rebecca* by demonstrating how the readership of the novel would be drawn in by the notion that it "functions as a protest against, as well as a restatement of, oppression".¹⁸⁴ In 'The Gentry, Bourgeois Hegemony and Popular Fiction' (1981) Roger Bromley, one of the few male writers exploring du Maurier's fiction during the 1980s, and one who had evidently noted that female critics were exploring the 'romance fiction' label, is drawn into refuting the idea that *Rebecca* is merely a novel which provides escapism for its readership by constructing it – along Gramscian lines – as a response to the crisis in hegemony of the 1930s.¹⁸⁵ With the 1990s comes the publication of Harriet Hawkins's *Classics and Trash: Traditions and Taboos in High Literature and Popular Modern Genres* (1990), and whilst it is not primarily a work about du Maurier the binary opposition in its title certainly highlights another neurotic anxiety inherent in the critical attention paid to her work, and that is whether anything with popular appeal can have literary worth.¹⁸⁶ Hawkins' work

¹⁸¹ This section of my introduction contains research that I carried out for my M.A. on the state of du Maurier studies in 2000. The research was not published. I draw attention to it here as I mention it in my Declaration.

¹⁸² See Janet Harbord, in 'Between Identification and Desire: Rereading *Rebecca*', in *Feminist Review*, No.53, Summer 1996, pp. 95-107. The quotation comes from p. 97.

¹⁸³ Martyn Shallcross, *The Private World of Daphne du Maurier* (London: Robson Books, 1991), p. 83.

¹⁸⁴ Alison Light, 'Returning to Manderley – Romance Fiction, Female Sexuality and Class', in *Feminist Review*, No.16, April 1984, pp. 7-25. The quotation is from p. 23.

¹⁸⁵ Roger Bromley, 'The Gentry, Bourgeois Hegemony and Popular Fiction', *Literature and History*, Vol.7:2, Autumn 1981, pp. 166-183. As will be noted the word 'popular' is a key concern.

¹⁸⁶ Harriet Hawkins, 'Identities and Identifications – Binary Oppositions: Split Personalities and Wicked Women', in *Classics and Trash: Traditions and Taboos in High Literature and Popular Modern Genres* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990).

also continues, to some degree, the work on reader positions and class analyses of the 1980s by proposing that readers may actually aspire to be like the talented, courageous Rebecca, although they may feel more like the insipid, anonymous heroine, and as a result of this apportioning out of traits there is no straightforward identification with one bourgeois heroine in the novel. In *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (1991), Alison Light's class analysis of du Maurier's life and career turns to her theme of 'pastness', suggesting that it is steeped in a kind of romantic Toryism, but the preoccupation with why du Maurier's novels are being consumed and by whom seems no longer to be a pressing concern.¹⁸⁷

In the late 1980s there were already signs appearing of alternative directions that du Maurier criticism could take. For example, Tania Modleski, in *The Women Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory* (1988), looks beyond the heterosexual romance in the foreground of *Rebecca* to the female desire for other women that appears as a problematised subtext in both du Maurier's novel and Hitchcock's film.¹⁸⁸ Interest in du Maurier's work from the angle of same sex desire was accelerated by two separate phenomena. Firstly, her death in 1989 sparked off several biographies, notably by Martyn Shallcross, Judith Cook, and Margaret Forster, with the latter commenting particularly on du Maurier's ambiguous sexuality. Such works helped to generate the "cult-of-personality' criticism" - noted by Alan Kent in *The Literature of Cornwall: Continuity, Identity, Difference 1000-2000* (2000) - which has been instrumental in the "growing myth regarding her lifestyle, sexuality, politics and how her texts are intrinsically related to these."¹⁸⁹ The second phenomenon which accelerated the output of criticism concerning same sex desire in du Maurier's work was the growth in Queer Theory in the early 1990s. Articles exemplifying this approach would include Mary Wings' essay 'Rebecca Redux: Tears on a Lesbian Pillow' (1994) which notes the huge sexual tension between the female characters in *Rebecca*, and also Janet Harbord's 'Between Identification and Desire: Rereading *Rebecca*' (1996) which suggests

¹⁸⁷ Alison Light, 'Daphne du Maurier's romance with the past', in *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991).

¹⁸⁸ Tania Modleski, 'Woman and the Labyrinth - *Rebecca*', in *The Women Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory* (New York: Methuen, 1988).

¹⁸⁹ Alan Kent, *The Literature of Cornwall: Continuity, Identity, Difference 1000-2000* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 2000), p. 178.

Martyn Shallcross, *The Private World of Daphne du Maurier* (London: Robson Books, 1991).

Judith Cook, *Daphne: A Portrait of Daphne du Maurier* (London: Transworld Publishers, 1991).

Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993).

Kent points to the further influence of:

Oriel Malet (ed.), *Daphne du Maurier: Letters from Menabilly* (London: Orion, 1993).

Flavia Leng, *Daphne du Maurier: A Daughter's Memoir* (London: Mainstream Publishing, 1994).

I count myself as taking part in Kent's so-called "cult-of-personality' criticism".

that the novel plays out the “taboo of same sex desire”.¹⁹⁰ These essays complicate the heterosexual ‘romance fiction’ label so often (mis)applied to du Maurier’s work.

The critical works alluded to so far have been mainly concerned with exploring notions of personal identity and the corresponding negotiations of the self with the prevailing hegemony. This approach includes not only the characters in the novels, but also du Maurier, her readership, and the critics themselves. Other critics, however, have paid attention to du Maurier’s passion for place, especially Cornwall, locating their interest in identity at the national level. In ‘The passionate periphery: Cornwall and romantic fiction’ (1995), Ella Westland points out that the influence of Burkean theories of the sublime can be seen in the way romantic historical novels set in Cornwall convey a sense of powerful passions set against rugged coastlines and stormy seas.¹⁹¹ However, Westland’s article still betrays a preoccupation with the idea of romantic fiction even if, as she suggests, du Maurier’s novels are not expressions of “passionate fulfilment but of desire and longing,” and thus “wander off over the boundaries” of the genre.¹⁹² Philip Dodd also sees something of a challenge to the old order in du Maurier’s Cornish novels as he expounds in ‘Gender and Cornwall: Charles Kingsley to Daphne du Maurier’.¹⁹³ For Dodd, Kingsley’s Cornwall was a forward-looking, manly, protestant nation, whereas du Maurier begins the task of feminising the region by showing how the sea, with all its previous proud, masculine associations is nothing but a site of “terror, murder and criminality”.¹⁹⁴ Thus Westland and Dodd, in their separate comparative studies, both point to ways in which du Maurier begins to modernise the Cornish fiction genre.

Critical attention in the 1990s also began to be paid to du Maurier’s work in the light of the Gothic and its sub-genre Horror, with a few critics looking at the similarities between her work and that of some of her antecedents. The particular reliance of *Rebecca* on *Jane Eyre* has been pointed out by many critics. Birgitta Berglund, however, in ‘Mrs Radcliffe and *Rebecca*’ (1996), makes a case for positioning du Maurier’s novel in an ongoing Radcliffean tradition, in view of the similarities she sees

¹⁹⁰ Mary Wings, ‘Rebecca Redux: Tears on a Lesbian Pillow’, in Liz Gibbs (ed.), *Daring to Dissent: Lesbian Culture from Margin to Mainstream* (London: Cassell, 1994).

Janet Harbord, ‘Between Identification and Desire: Rereading *Rebecca*’, *Feminist Review*, No.53 Summer 1996, pp.95-107. The quotation comes from p.97. Janet Harbord notes the following influential texts in connection with Queer Theory arising at the beginning of the 1990s:

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

¹⁹¹ Ella Westland, ‘The passionate periphery: Cornwall and romantic fiction’, in Ian Bell (ed.), *Peripheral Visions: Images of Nationhood in Contemporary British Fiction* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995).

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 168, 164.

¹⁹³ Philip Dodd, ‘Gender and Cornwall: Charles Kingsley to Daphne du Maurier’, in K.D.M Snell (ed.), *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

between *Rebecca* and Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.¹⁹⁵ Alternatively, Allan Lloyd Smith sees comparisons between Charles Dickens and du Maurier in his article 'The Phantoms of *Drood* and *Rebecca*: The Uncanny Reencountered through Abraham and Torok's 'Cryptonomy'' (1992).¹⁹⁶ Some critics, however, have moved their focus away from *Rebecca* and delved into other works from du Maurier's Gothic-cum-Horror output, becoming particularly interested in her short stories. Gina Wisker's article 'Don't Look Now! The compulsions and revelations of Daphne du Maurier's horror writing' (1999) investigates psychological and body horror in such stories as 'The Birds' and 'Don't Look Now', showing "how readers'/viewers' terrors and fears are dramatised, explored, and, unusually for the genre, only very rarely laid to rest".¹⁹⁷ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, in 'Deaths in Venice: Daphne du Maurier's 'Don't Look Now'' (1999), conceptualise body horror a step further by suggesting that the figure of the female dwarf in 'Don't Look Now' is a site for du Maurier's anxieties surrounding the horror of the aging process.¹⁹⁸ Horner and Zlosnik were also the first critics to produce a full-length text on du Maurier's work as a writer in the Gothic genre, this being *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (1998).¹⁹⁹ This work acknowledges its debt to Light's *Forever England*, particularly her problematising of masculinity and femininity in the inter-war period, without fully agreeing with her conservative theorising. It also acknowledges Margaret Forster's biography and its coverage of du Maurier's relationships with women such as Ellen Doubleday and Gertrude Lawrence, without fully agreeing with every aspect of the way she reads du Maurier's life. Using her fiction, her autobiographical writings and her letters, which they view as "quasi-fictions", Horner and Zlosnik investigate du Maurier's writing self and how her Gothic writing is "inflected by both personal and broader cultural values and anxieties".²⁰⁰ Their stated method of using all du Maurier's written output as fictional texts to be studied is something which has affected my own approach to du Maurier's work.

The full length text which has perhaps had the biggest impact on my assessment of du Maurier's life and work is Nina Auerbach's *Daphne du Maurier: Haunted Heiress* (2000), which brings me neatly

¹⁹⁵ Birgitta Berglund, 'Mrs Radcliffe and *Rebecca*', in *Studia Neophilologica*, No.68, 1996, pp. 73-81.

¹⁹⁶ Allan Lloyd Smith, 'The Phantoms of *Drood* and *Rebecca*: The Uncanny Reencountered through Abraham and Torok's 'Cryptonomy'', in *Poetics Today*, 13:2, Summer 1992, pp. 285-308.

¹⁹⁷ Gina Wisker, 'Don't Look Now! The compulsions and revelations of Daphne du Maurier's horror writing', in *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol.8, No.1, 1999, pp. 19-33. The quotation is from p. 19.

¹⁹⁸ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, in 'Deaths in Venice: Daphne du Maurier's 'Don't Look Now'', in Glennis Byron and David Punter (eds.), *Spectral Readings: Towards a Gothic Geography* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999).

¹⁹⁹ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998).

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 2.

to the cusp of twenty-first century criticism.²⁰¹ Auerbach examines du Maurier's world from the point of view of the men in her life and in her male-centred novels, and thus extends Light's work which assesses the impact of her immediate male ancestors - the actor Gerald and the novelist-cum-cartoonist George du Maurier. In using a male-orientated lens, Auerbach attempts to retrieve du Maurier from the "feminine ghetto" in which critics seem to have placed her, and which seems to have occurred as a by-product of continued discussion of the novel *Rebecca*.²⁰² At the same time, Auerbach demonstrates how a vanished (Victorian) class and time informs her writing and indeed "haunts the fringes of our own age".²⁰³ My own discussion examines the impact of several prominent men on du Maurier's life, as well as her depiction of influential, philosopher-king resembling males in various works of fiction and biography, and in the process it suggests, palimpsestuously, that within the psychologies of these powerful men there yet lurks the 'lost boy' they would prefer to keep hidden. As Auerbach writes, du Maurier's father Gerald could have been the model for her way of thinking about the "boy within the man":

For Daphne, he [Gerald] achieved artistry only in the plays of Barrie, whose nostalgia for perpetual boyhood captured her father's heart. Gerald played fathers, but he lived *Peter Pan*, and the boyish Gerald was the man of his age.²⁰⁴

Perhaps du Maurier could respond to such men partly because of her own acknowledged boy within the woman, the alter ego she created in her youth known as Eric Avon, and partly because she was, as Forster points out, the daughter who was "most like Gerald himself and could imagine herself as the boy he had been".²⁰⁵

The early years of the twenty first century are marked by important centenaries in the extended du Maurier world, and knowledge of this has sparked off much attention in various fields of endeavour. Firstly, 2004 witnessed the centenary of the first production of the play of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. This was celebrated by the appearance in December 2003 of a film version of *Peter Pan* written and directed by P.J. Hogan, and then by the 2004 film about Barrie's involvement with du Maurier's 'lost boy' cousins entitled *Finding Neverland*, which was directed by Marc Forster.²⁰⁶ Several television documentaries

²⁰¹ Nina Auerbach, *Daphne du Maurier: Haunted Heiress* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). This, and the full length work of Horner and Zlosnik, were preceded in the 1980s by another full length text in the Twayne's English Authors Series by Richard Kelly. See Richard Kelly, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Prentice Hall, 1987). This is a survey of all du Maurier's literary output, from many different angles, including the influence of her father, romantic fiction, gothic romance, the historical and psychological roots of her identity, the supernatural and the macabre, and her contribution to popular culture.

²⁰² Auerbach, *ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, see blurb on the inside of the back cover.

²⁰⁴ Auerbach, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

²⁰⁵ The reference to the alter ego Eric Avon can be found in Daphne du Maurier, *Myself When Young*, *op. cit.*, p. 51. The second quotation is from Margaret Forster, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

²⁰⁶ *Peter Pan*, P.J. Hogan (dir.), Universal Pictures, 2003. *Finding Neverland*, Marc Forster (dir.), Miramax, 2004.

about Barrie and the Peter Pan phenomenon were also aired over this period. Secondly, 2007 sees the centenary of du Maurier's birth, and in advance of this the Irish playwright Frank McGuinness produced a new theatrical version of *Rebecca* starring Nigel Havers which toured the country during the spring and autumn of 2005.²⁰⁷ Since 2003 Virago have been preparing for the centenary by re-publishing all of du Maurier's key works, complete with new critical introductions, so that they can be consumed by a new generation of readers. Virago also published a new book of critical work in May 2007, specifically for the centenary month, containing new contributions from various critics in the field of du Maurier studies, and which is entitled *The Daphne du Maurier Companion*.²⁰⁸ May 2007 also witnessed the Daphne du Maurier Centenary academic conference, which took place during the first two days of the Daphne du Maurier Festival of Arts and Literature, held in Fowey, Cornwall.²⁰⁹

With the knowledge of all this activity in mind I undertook a literature survey of critical work published in the year 2000 and beyond. In 2002 Sheila Hodges, du Maurier's editor at Gollancz for nearly forty years, published an article entitled 'Editing Daphne du Maurier,' this being a personal account of du Maurier's work from close hand experience.²¹⁰ The article is valuable for its historical record of a long working relationship and the insight it gives into both the genesis of various works and also du Maurier's complex personality. Two more articles on *Rebecca* subsequently appeared in 2003; these being "'A Little Strain with Servants': Gender, Modernity and Domesticity in Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* and Celia Fremlin's *The Seven Chars of Chelsea*' by Judy Giles, and 'Dangerous Borders: Daphne du Maurier's

²⁰⁷ I travelled to Norwich in the spring of 2005 to see this play. Unfortunately, I was disappointed by the production as it failed to live up to my expectations of luring menace. However, the production was phenomenally successful - which was why it ran into a second season - probably owing to the huge fan club of Havers. One thing that did interest me about the production was that the Irish McGuinness gave the famously nameless narrator a Gaelic name. Also, as the online Telegraph Arts section said "the second Mrs de Winter is much pluckier" and has an "Anglo-Irish backstory that plays on Cornwall's Celtic roots. Surely that's sacrilegious?" McGuinness is reported as replying "Sacrilege is liberation. And I thought that du Maurier would be lenient to my Catholic ways". See Arts.Telegraph, 'Still haunted by the ghost of Rebecca', <www.arts.telegraph.co.uk/arts/.../btreb22.xml&secureRefresh=true&_requestid=438> [accessed 06 February 2005]. In a sense, McGuinness may have been right if we consider firstly du Maurier's self-confessed apostasy (see my chapter on Gollancz), where apostasy is in itself a form of sacrilege, and secondly her revisionist tendencies (*Rebecca* is already a revisionist text). Du Maurier was indeed fascinated by Catholicism at some point, a fascination arising out of her ongoing respect for, and criticism of, Christianity.

²⁰⁸ Helen Taylor (ed.), *The Daphne du Maurier Companion* (London: Virago, 2007). I submitted a piece for this about 2 poems ('Apostasy' and 'Remembrance Day') that I found as part of my work on the Gollancz archives (Warwick University) and the du Maurier archives (Exeter University). The poems are published alongside my article, which is an abridged section of my chapter on Gollancz, and is entitled 'Christianity versus Paganism: Daphne du Maurier's Divided Mind'.

²⁰⁹ I presented my paper 'Greece as Inscape: Textual and Metatextual Imagery in Daphne du Maurier's *The Flight of the Falcon*' at this conference. This paper is an abridged version of my chapter on the novel.

²¹⁰ Sheila Hodges, 'Editing Daphne du Maurier', *Women's History Review*, Vol.11, No.2, 2002.

Rebecca: shaking the foundations of the romance of privilege, partying and place’ by Gina Wisker.²¹¹ Interestingly, the three articles I mention have either been published in a journal which relates to gender – *Journal of Gender Studies* and *Women’s History Review* – or have gender in the title. Giles’ article looks at the ways in which “the imaginary landscapes of private and domestic life offer different versions of the tensions of modernity than those produced by male-authored narratives”, and Wisker’s article shows how du Maurier intended to use the conventionally conservative romance genre to “represent an unease at the configurations of power and gendered relations of the time”.²¹² These last two articles operate in a paradigm of criticism established in the twentieth century, which looks at female gender in the novel *Rebecca*, rather than breaking new critical ground or looking at other works in the du Maurier repertoire.

In the year 2000, operating within a different paradigm established in the twentieth century – that of the notion of place – Alan Kent published a literary survey entitled *The Literature of Cornwall: Continuity, Identity, Difference 1000-2000*.²¹³ Kent discusses du Maurier’s work alongside that of other writers on Cornwall within his chapter on ‘‘Lyonnesse’ meets ‘A Cornish School’?: English Literary Margins and Celtic Revivalism, 1890-1940.’ It is this chapter which inspired me to look at the novel *Jamaica Inn* from the perspective of Celtic Revivalism - whereby the primitive Celtic Other is contrasted with a civilised Christianity - and also to examine the view of Cornwall which sees it as the “unconscious” of Britain “whose fountain of energy should not be ignored by the smug centre”.²¹⁴ My exploration of *Jamaica Inn* (1936), however, reveals just one aspect of du Maurier’s psychological-cum-religious sensibility, where a dark, unknowable, esoteric paganism and a light, dogmatic, exoteric Christianity are yet palimpsestuously implicated in her seemingly divided mind; the rest of my thesis will furnish further evidence of disparate yet linked esoteric and exoteric phenomena. Thus I will show that du Maurier’s interests in this regard are not solely a Cornish-Celtic phenomenon.

Writing at the cusp of the twenty-first century, Kent also takes the opportunity in *The Literature of Cornwall* to comment on the state of du Maurier criticism as he saw it at the time:

²¹¹ Judy Giles, ‘‘A Little Strain with Servants’’: Gender, Modernity and Domesticity in Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca* and Celia Fremlin’s *The Seven Chars of Chelsea*’, in *Literature and History*, Special Issue – Revisiting the 1930s, Vol.12, No.2, Autumn 2003.

Gina Wisker, ‘Dangerous Borders: Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca*: shaking the foundations of the romance of privilege, partying and place’, in *Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol.12, No.2, 2003.

²¹² Giles, *ibid.*, p. 37. Wisker, *ibid.*, p. 83.

²¹³ Kent, *op. cit.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 171. The quotation Kent is citing is from Simon Tresize ‘‘Off Wessex”, or a Place in the Mind’, in Melissa Hardie (ed.), *A Mere Interlude* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1992), p. 35.

some critics are beginning to ask more difficult questions of du Maurier's work, paralleled by a move away from her reductive 'popular' position towards being seen as a central writer in the extended canon of English Literature.²¹⁵

Kent's comments refer specifically to those critics who have examined du Maurier's work in a Cornish context, notably Light in 'Daphne du Maurier's romance with the past', Helen Hughes in 'A Silent, Desolate Country': Images of Cornwall in Daphne du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn*' and Harold Birks in 'Jamaica Inn: The Creation of Meanings on a Tourist Site'.²¹⁶ However, Kent's view could be taken to refer to the field of du Maurier criticism as a whole and the way that it was beginning to move in the approach to a new millennium. So, given my own review of the field since the time of Kent's book, some work of the twenty first century may certainly operate within twentieth century paradigms, but the questions that are being asked hopefully extend, challenge or complicate some of that century's original conclusions and operate in a realm that is no longer self-conscious about its consumption of du Maurier's work. Activities provoked by du Maurier centenaries are certainly inspiring fresh critical impetus and may yet instigate completely new theoretical approaches to du Maurier's under-theorised work. I end this section where I began, with a quotation about du Maurier from Auerbach's *The Haunted Heiress*, which hails her as the ultimate twentieth century 'revenant':

like Rebecca, who prophetically named her boat *Je Reviens*, Daphne du Maurier seems never to end. She can only return, and for me, at least, she always has. Bringing her back brings me back to times in my life when I read her obsessively and didn't, until now, understand her protean fascination. Bringing her back is also the right tribute to a woman who appreciated ghosts, who faced down memories, and who is now kept alive in the ghostly medium of movies.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 178.

²¹⁶ Kent is referring to Alison Light's, 'Daphne du Maurier's romance with the past', *Forever England*, op. cit., pp. 156-207. The remaining articles can be found in Ella Westland, *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1997), pp. 68-76 and pp. 137-142.

²¹⁷ Auerbach, op. cit., p. 159.

SECTION 2

LIFE AND TEXT – RENAISSANCE INSPIRED MEN

PART 1 FRANK BUCHMAN'S MORAL RE-ARMAMENT MOVEMENT : *COME WIND, COME WEATHER (1940)*

[T]his is the aim of Moral Re-Armament – moral and spiritual revival that leads into a spiritual revolution and a social and economic renaissance.¹
(Peter Howard)

[O]n our lips will ring the old battle hymn of John Bunyan, who three hundred years ago saw this England torn and divided in a bloody civil war.

“Who would true valour see
Let him come hither,
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather...”

Three centuries have passed since then, and now in 1940 England may once again become the scene of strife and bitter suffering. Those men and women who listen to the Voice within will “Constant be” like the Puritans of old, and linking hands, one with another, will form a chain of steel around this island that no enemy without can ever break.²
(Daphne du Maurier)

Heinemann are bringing out this sixpenny booklet sometime on ‘morale’ the material of which was supplied by my despised Groupy friends, and which I have re-written for them.³
(Daphne du Maurier in a letter to her sister Angela du Maurier)

INTRODUCTION

In *The Long Weekend* (1940), which discusses the social history of Great Britain between the two world wars, Graves and Hodge assert that the “only notable revival of simple Christianity in the period was known as the ‘Oxford Group’ movement”.⁴ This movement also came to be known as Moral Re-Armament (MRA) and had for its figurehead an American minister of religion named Frank Buchman. Although Buchman had started out on his religious ministry in America in the early years of the twentieth century, his activities came to prominence in Britain during the twenties and thirties, when they began to attract newspaper attention. Graves and Hodge note that the *Daily Express* “published a series of articles by young men on the revival of religious feeling”, one of these being by H.W. (‘Bunny’) Austin, the tennis champion.⁵ Bunny Austin, as Forster observes, was an old friend of du Maurier, and it was he who introduced her to the movement, culminating in the publishing of *Come Wind, Come Weather*, a work which was designed not only to promote and demonstrate Buchman’s cause to the general population of

¹ Peter Howard, *That Man Frank Buchman* (London: Blandford Press, 1946), p. 45.

² Daphne du Maurier, *Come Wind, Come Weather* (London: Heinemann, 1941). All further references to this work will be given in the text thus CWp.x. Although the work was first published in 1940, my copy is a November 1941 reprint.

³ Daphne du Maurier, quoted in Angela du Maurier, *It’s Only the Sister: An Autobiography* (Cornwall: Truran Books Ltd, 2003), p. 216.

⁴ Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, *The Long Weekend: A Social History of Great Britain 1918-1939* (London: Cardinal, 1991), p. 204.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

Great Britain, but also to impact positively on the morale of those on the ‘home front’.⁶ *Come Wind, Come Weather* is a book of short stories, the material for which – as du Maurier acknowledges at the beginning - was collated from “newspapers in many parts of the country” and first appeared in “article form”.⁷ The stories themselves are moral tales highlighting the supposed power of MRA to change individual lives and hence, by extrapolation, countries for the better, the reasoning being that a war cannot be won on an international level if it cannot be won first at the domestic level. What follows in this chapter is designed to assess how far du Maurier interacted with the edifice known as the Moral Re-Armament movement and how much she held herself apart from it. This approach, commensurate with my introduction, views du Maurier’s life and writing, and the lives and writings of the people with whom she came into contact, as a palimpsest of interwoven narratives, which derive fresh meaning from being palimpsestuously interlaced with each other. My approach is to assume that Moral Re-Armament is a little known phenomenon, therefore I will begin by setting it in its historical and political context and then move on to talk about some aspects of the life and work of Frank Buchman so that his activities and rhetoric are understood in advance. This will allow my discussion of du Maurier’s trajectory through the movement, and her written work to aid its cause, to be viewed in their necessary perspective. Unlike my chapter on du Maurier’s correspondence with Victor Gollancz, I have chosen to present this as one whole section rather than interspersing historical, political and biographical details throughout the chapter. Although it may seem non-palimpsestuous to hold all these details apart from those of du Maurier, it reflects the fact that du Maurier engaged with Buchman’s movement rather than the man himself, whereas Gollancz was a personal friend of du Maurier.

⁶ Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), p. 142.

⁷ Du Maurier, in the ‘Acknowledgments’, *Come Wind, Come Weather*, op. cit.

**MORAL RE-ARMAMENT IN CONTEXT:
“THE SURVIVAL OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION” - “CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVES AND
THE TOTALITARIAN CHALLENGE”**

In June 1940, Winston Churchill declared that “The Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization.”⁸ Here, Churchill was making convenient use of the available spiritual rhetoric of the time, but as Keith Robbins records, “[s]uch dogmatic language, however, came from an undogmatic mind”, and did not necessarily “express a personal conviction.”⁹ Churchill’s use of the term ‘Christian Civilization’ emanates from the wider idea that democratic governments at that time needed to “prevent the hordes of paganism and barbarism from destroying what is left of civilized Europe.”¹⁰ Thus the battle between democracy and totalitarianism was frequently recast as a spiritual war between the upholders of Christianity in Europe and the new pagan forces of despotism.¹¹ The spiritual battle was thus a conservative one, aimed at preserving a rather loosely defined idea of “Christendom.”¹² This rather straightforward seeming battle between good and evil was, however, complicated by other factors, such as Arnold Toynbee’s work *Christianity and Civilisation* (1941) which suggested that “we” “had been living, for a number of generations on spiritual capital, clinging to Christian practice without possessing the Christian belief.”¹³ There were other writers, such as Sir Edward Cadogan in *The Times*, who also picked up on this paradox of “fighting for a faith to which most of us appear to be completely indifferent.”¹⁴ The Bishop of St Albans noted, in response to this thread in *The Times*, that both Stalin and Hitler ensured that “the faith” was properly taught.¹⁵ A.R. Vidler even dared to mention, in his editorial in the October 1939 issue of *Theology*, that “[t]he devilry of Hitlerism” does not “automatically transfer us into angels of light or prophets of the Lord” and drew attention to the

⁸ Winston Churchill, in Keith Robbins, ‘Britain, 1940 and ‘Christian Civilization’’, in *History, Religion and Identity in Modern Britain* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1993), p. 195. Robbins gives the citation as Robert Rhodes James (ed.), *W.S. Churchill: Complete Speeches, 1897-1963* (New York, 1974), p. 6238. I record the citation as given. The first half of my subheading is taken from this quotation. The second half of my subheading is taken from the title of the following article: Philip Williamson, ‘Christian Conservatives and the Totalitarian Challenge, 1933-40’, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 115, No. 462 (Jun., 2000), pp. 607-642, <www.jstor.org> [accessed 19 June 2007].

⁹ Robbins, *ibid.*, p. 195.

¹⁰ Philip Kerr, in Robbins, *ibid.*, p. 198. Philip Kerr was Marquis of Lothian and British Ambassador to the United States prior to Halifax. Robbins gives the citation as *The American Speeches of Lord Lothian, July 1939 to December 1940* (London, 1941), p. 10.

¹¹ Robbins, *ibid.*, p. 208.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹³ A.J. Toynbee, in *ibid.*, p. 200. Robbins gives the citation as A.J. Toynbee, *Christianity and Civilisation* (London, 1941), pp. 22-27.

¹⁴ Edward Cadogan, in *ibid.*, p. 201. Robbins gives the citation as Sir Edward Cadogan in *The Times*, 20 February 1940.

¹⁵ The Bishop of St. Albans, in *ibid.*, p. 201. Robbins gives the citation as The Bishop of St. Albans in *The Times*, 21 February 1940.

shortcomings of French policy following the Peace of Versailles.¹⁶ The idea of ‘Christian Civilisation’ in the late 1930s and early 1940s was thus one around which accreted various arguments and counter-arguments in both political and religious circles. The popular resonance of this notion was, however, duly noted and thus exploited for maximum political potential by the Conservative government, being frequently used to “inspire the British nation and the self-governing Dominions to renewed determination” and also to “strengthen a moral appeal for assistance from the United States.”¹⁷

Phillip Williamson points to a further example of the manifestation of “Christian Conservative anxiety and faith” at this time, this being the rise to prominence of the Oxford Group, or MRA as it came to be known. Williamson notes particularly that the “public figures who from the mid-1930s became involved with or interested in Buchman’s Christian evangelist movement, the Oxford Group, were remarkable in their number and eminence.”¹⁸ Indeed, in June 1939, as Williamson records, “236 MPs of all parties signed a message of support for Buchman’s campaign in the United States.”¹⁹ The message ran thus:

There is urgent need to acknowledge the sovereign authority of God in home and nation, to establish that liberty which rests upon the Christian responsibility to all one’s fellow men, and to build a national life based on unselfishness, unity and faith.²⁰

Here, in summary, we have the key campaign idea of Buchman’s movement: the foundation of personal unselfishness on which can be built a unified national life. Williamson reports that Lord Salisbury was one of the most active supporters of the Oxford Group and in October 1936 he organised a weekend meeting at Hatfield House so that Buchman could explain his teachings to a group of prominent political figures.²¹ The fact that such men were interested in the Oxford Group is remarkable given its unorthodox nature, and for Williamson this indicates that “a spiritual crisis had been reached.”²² Williamson gives the main criticisms that were frequently levelled at the Oxford Movement: its enigmatic American figurehead, its uncertain relationship to the churches, its lack of theology and institutionalized authority, its practice of public confession, its emotional style, the assumed familiarity with God of its members, its embarrassing earnestness, naivety and self-satisfaction, its importuning and flattery of themselves and

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 203. Robbins quotes from Vidler. He gives the citation as A.R. Vidler, *Scenes from a Clerical Life* (London, 1977), pp. 114-15.

¹⁷ Williamson, op. cit., p. 608.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 619.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 619-20.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 620. Williamson gives the citation as the *Congressional Record*, June 1939, copy in House of Lords Record Office, J.C.C. Davidson Papers 263.

²¹ Ibid., p. 620.

²² Ibid., p. 620.

other public figures, and its use of the names of such figures for its own purposes.²³ In spite of such criticisms, Christian Conservatives saw in the Oxford Group a potential remedy for many of the world's problems; Williamson notes that what made the movement attractive, politically speaking, was that:

[i]t placed great emphasis upon individuals and personal relationships rather than the state as the source of improvement in communities and nations. In reaching across denominational, social and industrial divisions, it appeared to promote social harmony and promise that 'violent antagonism in politics' would be 'softened or swept away'.²⁴

Two further reasons are given for the attraction of the movement to politicians:

[f]irst, that that the group seemed a vigorous force against the materialism, immorality and irreligion which these politicians believed to be at the root of totalitarianism, nazi, fascist and communist. Second, with its reputed large numbers of supporters in continental European countries and influence among their statesmen and royalty, it appeared to have potential as an international movement[.]²⁵

In short, it seemed to offer all the makings of a universal "Christian Front", a phrase which headed a letter signed by Salisbury, Mackail, Brown and Davidson and which appeared in *The Times* on 7th August 1937.²⁶ It was not long after this that Buchman himself adopted his broader ideological-cum-political purpose, and renamed his movement from the Oxford Group to Moral Rearmament in May 1938, echoing the idea that it was not just policy that would save the west from crumbling, but spiritual leadership.²⁷ To put the situation in the terms used by Baldwin when broadcasting across North America in April 1939, "the British people were undergoing not only a 'material rearmament' but also a 'spiritual rearmament', preparing 'the defences of body and soul'."²⁸

The original name by which Buchman's movement had become widely known – The Oxford Group – denotes its association with Oxford University, where Buchman had made one of his British bases. His long association with university religion began in America when he took up the post of YMCA Secretary at Pennsylvania State College in January 1909; as Lean points out, "[t]he YMCAs dominated the religious life of most American college campuses in the years before the 1914-18 war".²⁹ Buchman organised many religious campaigns, which were not solely restricted to campus, consisting of mass meetings addressed by well-known speakers, followed by personal interviews with

²³ Ibid., pp. 620-21.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 621.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 621.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 621-2. Williamson gives the citation as the Salisbury, Mackail, Brown and Davidson letter, 'The Christian Front', *The Times*, 7 Aug. 1937.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 622.

²⁸ Earl Baldwin, in *ibid.*, p. 623. Williamson gives the citation as Earl Baldwin, *An Interpreter of England* (London, 1939), p. 106: lectures delivered at the University of Toronto, but also broadcast across Canada and the USA.

²⁹ Garth Lean, *Frank Buchman: A Life* (London: Fount Paperbacks, 1985), p. 33. Much of the information on Buchman's life and work that I include in the next section is taken from this extensive biography. Although Lean was

members of the audience who had been affected by what they had heard. College religious leaders from across America came to campus to inspect his methods and these were later applied in many other universities and colleges, such as Yale, Illinois State, Williams and Cornell.³⁰ Lean makes it clear that his message was not one based on emotion or the threat of hell-fire. In a sense the medium itself was the message, for Lean believes that Buchman was a master raconteur who told vivid stories of changed lives, and although this worked on a very personal level he also encouraged the students to have a global perspective.³¹

Buchman aimed to affect political situations through exerting an influence on political leaders. One of his first global targets was the political situation in China in 1917. China, at this time, had fallen into an anarchic state; the Manchu dynasty had been overthrown by a revolution in 1912 and this was followed by a succession of flimsy regimes. As Lean comments:

It was, indeed, a bold programme. Buchman and his colleagues were planning to reform a vast country. Their principal target was its political leadership; and their principal co-workers were to be not other missionaries but influential Chinese. It was the first of Buchman's efforts to implement his conviction that a country, no less than a person, could become God-directed.³²

Buchman's politically-minded religious campaigns left him open to criticism. He was frequently accused of over-simplifying the issues at stake, in this and other political situations, through his assertion that highly volatile situations could be changed through transforming the lives of individuals; many people believed that one simply could not 'personalise' a vast problem in this way. Additionally, his fellow Christian missionaries in China did not consider that it was part of the missionary remit to get embroiled in political turmoil. Buchman had a meeting with Sun Yat-Sen in 1918, who had led the new republic after the Manchu dynasty, but who had in turn been swept away. Buchman still had high hopes for Sun as a leader, but told him that China's problem lay in its moral weaknesses, which he summarised as corruption, concubines and opium.³³ Buchman also pointed out Sun's own moral shortcomings which it was claimed were contributing to his political weakness; Lean claims that Sun eventually responded positively to Buchman's suggestions. Unfortunately for Buchman, he fell foul of the conference

a supporter of Buchman's cause, in his biography he attempts to give a balanced view by highlighting all the criticisms levelled at Buchman over the course of his career. In a strange co-incidence Buchman used to wear beaver hats at this time (see Lean, p.34). In the biographies of the Bacon brothers (see later in this thesis), du Maurier makes much of the fact that Francis and Anthony used to wear beaver hats. The beaver hat was presented at initiation by the Master of the Lodge. I am not inferring however, that Buchman wore his for the same reason.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 39.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 43, 44.

³² Ibid., p. 50.

³³ Ibid., p. 57.

organisers whilst planning for the summer conferences in China, which he was to lead, and was asked to discontinue his work in this country.

If Buchman was not entirely successful in China, then it could at least be said that his message was beginning to crystallise at this time. His wish was to enthrone Christ in every aspect of personal and political life, and his strategy for this undertaking was:

To mobilise students from as many countries as possible in order to build up 'the new world leadership' for carrying out an epochal change during 'this decisive hour of world history'. His primary aim was not so much to enlist large numbers, but 'to get the ablest, strongest men, those who in any walk of life would be leaders'³⁴

A top down rather than bottom up approach is in evidence here, i.e. one that is aimed at producing a select male leadership rather than appealing directly to society as a whole. In the 1920s Buchman began to visit both Cambridge and Oxford Universities in England. His method of working became that of the 'house-party' whereby people could get together in a relaxed atmosphere for several days. The house-party had the purpose of a religious retreat where people could take important decisions about their lives.³⁵ In 1924, Buchman assembled a team of students who would be willing to share his work with him. He took this apostolic group on a world tour as an apprenticeship, telling them to expect to be away for at least two years. Young men who had been students at Oxford, Cambridge and Princeton were selected to go with him. The tour took in the horrors of German post-war hyperinflation, a woman who had known the young Adolf Hitler, a trip to Italy to see the Greek Royal family, an address to the students of Robert College in Constantinople, and meetings with Gandhi and Nehru in India, amongst many other things.

Interest in Buchman's work at Oxford University grew rapidly in the late twenties. Meetings became so huge that eventually, in 1928, Buchman's friends had to hire the ballroom of the Randolph, Oxford's largest hotel.³⁶ The *Daily Express* ran an unfavourable report on the occasion by Tom Driberg, in due course to be chairman of the Labour Party, and who later wrote under the pseudonym William Hickey. His headline ran "Revival Scenes at Oxford. Undergraduates' Strange New Sect. Prayer Meetings in a Lounge."³⁷ Driberg's report was sensationalist and played liberally with the facts, but his attack did provoke a certain amount of support for MRA in other newspapers. Driberg maintained an anti-MRA campaign for a substantial period of time, investigating fully its origins, funding and methods; his

³⁴ Ibid., p. 82.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 95.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 134.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 135.

findings were subsequently published as *The Mystery of Moral Re-Armament* (1964).³⁸ Later that year six Oxford men went to South Africa, making a considerable impression wherever they went, so much so that the newspapers that reported on them, deciding that they needed a simple phrase to describe them, picked up on the label “the Oxford Group”.³⁹

In February 1931 Buchman went to Peru, even though he had been advised against such a trip on the grounds that there was an impending left-wing revolution. His experiences of the attempted revolution lived with him and helped shape his thoughts on Communism. He admired “the boldness and initiative of its advocates while disagreeing with their ideology”.⁴⁰ The then Prince of Wales was also visiting South America at the time of Buchman’s visit. Buchman was in Buenos Aires when the Prince opened the British Industrial Exhibition, and as Lean records:

All the talk among industrialists was of the Depression and Communism. Some said Communism was the cause of the Depression, others that the Depression caused Communism. This did not satisfy him, and he moved to the view that materialism, particularly in the upper classes, had ‘prepared the soil for Communism’. ‘Communism is the most organised and effective leadership abroad today,’ he noted later in the tour. ‘Vital Christianity is the only cure.’⁴¹

This tour made him believe that “half-hearted Christianity and the ‘moral Bolshevism’ of the privileged classes were taking the world into an age of conflict”.⁴² At this time he also began to think that “This is the age of the ordinary man. Develop him.”⁴³ In a sense, this tactic confounds the critics who said that he was only interested in the rich and influential, as he did also decide to reach out to the masses. At Oxford University in the early thirties, two groups stood out clearly due to their radical commitment to a cause; those who followed the ideas of Frank Buchman and those who joined the Communist-based October Club founded in 1932. The latter only served to confirm Buchman in his belief that intellectuals were suffering from ‘moral Bolshevism’, since the October Club seemed to be demanding a new social order based on the questioning of previously held moral beliefs.⁴⁴ A year after the founding of the October Club, there arose a controversy over the use of the phrase the ‘Oxford Group’, which found its way into the pages of *The Times*. The phrase was eventually given up in favour of ‘Moral Re-Armament,’ which more clearly designated its purpose of combating what Buchman saw as the moral relativism of his day.⁴⁵

³⁸ Tom Driberg, *The Mystery of Moral Re-Armament: A Study of Frank Buchman and His Movement* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1964).

³⁹ Lean, op. cit., p. 138.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 147.

⁴² Ibid., p. 148.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 148.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 155.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 186.

Towards the end of 1932 and running into 1933, Buchman took a party of people to Canada, amongst these being Frau Moni von Cramon from Germany, who had been lady-in-waiting to the last Kaiserin. During the trip Hitler rose to power in Germany and von Cramon decided that she must return home for the sake of her children, since she was hated by both the National Socialists and the Communists for her link with the Kaiser.⁴⁶ She arrived back in Silesia to find that she was to be arrested for possessing anti-Nazi propaganda and was taken to see Himmler, who questioned her about her links with Buchman's work. In response to her profession of faith he told her about his own beliefs:

'I believe in God, too. I believe in miracles,' remarked Himmler seriously. 'I'm Party Member Number Two. We were seven men who had faith that this National Socialism ideology would win. Now we are the government. Isn't that a miracle?'⁴⁷

Himmler let her go but said that they would talk of such matters again. Buchman had been trying to assess the German situation for a number of years, and from 1920 his visits to Germany had been almost annual. He had noticed the country's gradual slide into demoralisation and chaos and Hitler's slow gathering of strength. Lean comments that Hitler had :

promised the people 'order, work and bread'. At first he did not present his ideas as a crude ideology of blood and race, but as a set of beliefs which would restore the German nation and which did not conflict with Christianity.⁴⁸

Buchman first attempted to meet Hitler in 1932, but an interview was refused, as was a later attempt in 1933. He made these moves in the firm belief that it was possible for Hitler to undergo a change of character and motivation. Lean admits that Buchman's attempts to approach Hitler may in retrospect seem "indiscreet or naïve".⁴⁹ Failing to meet Hitler personally, Buchman set about trying to influence the German Lutheran Church leaders instead. Buchman's work began to attract the attention of the authorities in Germany. House-party gatherings in Stuttgart in January 1934 were infiltrated by the Gestapo, and there were rumours that the Gestapo would take action against them for being part of an international spy network.⁵⁰ Buchman also made use of von Cramon's connections to meet with Himmler, even though he realised he would be accused of being pro-Nazi for doing so. By 1936 criticisms of Buchman were beginning to appear in Nazi publications – for example the *Berlingske Aftenavis* wrote :

the Oxford Group together with the Jews, the Freemasons, the Pope and the League of Nations constitutes a supernatural power which wants to kill the German spirit.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 196.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 204.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 206.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 208.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 214.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 237. The citation is given as *Berlingske Aftenavis*, 25 February 1936.

Back in America, Buchman gave an interview on the German situation for the *New York World-Telegram*. What appeared in the paper read like a eulogy on Fascist dictatorships and their potential for remaking the world at the same time as defeating Communism.⁵² This is how Buchman's enemies wished to portray the work he was doing on the world political stage. Even in the face of such opposition, Buchman would not totally denounce Hitler, but wished to maintain that "[a] God-controlled dictator could change the position in a country overnight".⁵³

The Oxford Group began to catch the attention of certain national labour leaders, who held meetings to talk about it on several occasions. In 1938, Buchman attended one hosted by several mayors and used it as a platform to officially launch his ideas on Moral Re-Armament, his message being that "The crisis is fundamentally a moral one. The nations must re-arm morally."⁵⁴ Buchman wanted spiritual revival, revolution and renaissance, insisting that peoples and nations must be reborn.⁵⁵ This 'renaissance', 'rebirth' and 'revolution' rhetoric is re-iterated in Peter Howard's book *That Man Frank Buchman*; as Howard writes, "this is the aim of Moral Re-Armament – moral and spiritual revival that leads into a spiritual revolution and a social and economic renaissance."⁵⁶ Trades union leaders began to unite behind Buchman's cause, seeing in it a way to resolve workforce disputes in peaceful ways which did not involve strike action.

War finally broke out when Buchman was in America, and it was seven years before he was to return to Britain. Many Britons decided to continue their work with Buchman in America rather than enter the war effort by joining up at home, feeling that American influence in the war would be decisive. Bunny Austin was amongst those who decided to join Buchman in America, and even though he and several others were granted exit permits by the authorities they were denounced for their actions by sections of the British Press for many years.⁵⁷ MRA members were initially excused from conscription through a clause in the Conscription Act "granting occupational deferment to 'lay evangelists'".⁵⁸ Ernest Bevin, who succeeded Ernest Brown as Minister of Labour, did not possess Brown's faith in spirituality being essential to the war effort, and wished to ensure that MRA members would be forced into service. When this became known there was a public outcry amongst the clergy, who were supported by civic,

⁵² Ibid., p. 239.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 240.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 263

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 266.

⁵⁶ Howard, op. cit., p. 45. I have included this as one of the epigraphs at the beginning of this chapter. Howard was Buchman's successor.

⁵⁷ Lean, op. cit., p. 291.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 300.

industrial and trade union leaders. However, Bevin's decision to call up MRA members in Britain was upheld.

In presenting this survey of the life, work and times of Frank Buchman I have of necessity been selective. My intention has been to show the range of work he undertook, the global scale on which he operated, some of his methods and rhetorical positions, and the perpetual controversy that surrounded all of his work. An intelligence analysis for the Selective Service Administration will serve to summarise the contradictory views that Buchman's work called forth – the report noted that:

Moral Re-Armament drew the fire of Nazis and Communists, of the extreme right and extreme left in politics, of aggressive atheists and narrow ecclesiastics. It had been charged by radicals with being militaristic and by warmongers with being pacifistic. Certain elements in labour denounced it as anti-union: certain elements in management as pro-union.

In Britain, the report went on, MRA was accused by some of being a brilliantly clever front for Fascism: in Germany and Japan of being a super-intelligent arm of the British and American Secret Service. One day a section of the press would announce that MRA was defunct: and the next that it numbered nearly the entire membership of the British Cabinet at the time of Munich, and was responsible for engineering Hitler's attack upon Russia.

'Nothing', concluded this analysis, 'but a potentially vast moral and spiritual reformation of global proportions could possibly be honoured by antagonisms so venomous and contradictory in character, and so world-wide in scope.'⁵⁹

I am also including this quotation concerning the contradictory responses that Frank Buchman and his work invoked to highlight a similarity between Buchman's life and du Maurier's fiction, specifically *The Flight of the Falcon*. Aldo Donati's rhetorical methods in this novel draw the same conflicting responses from the various student factions he addresses. This and other similarities that I will mention later in this chapter concerning Buchman's work and *The Flight of the Falcon* could lead to this novel being read as du Maurier's belated comment on her experience of Buchman and his Moral Re-Armament movement.

DU MAURIER'S TRAJECTORY THROUGH MRA

Come Wind, Come Weather stands out, according to Judith Cook, like "an aberration" amongst du Maurier's literary works.⁶⁰ It is perhaps the only work that can be distinguished for its note of moral certainty and also for its lack of ambiguity, religious or otherwise. As a 'divided self' du Maurier tended to concern herself with division, duality and the uncertain nature of the human condition. *Jamaica Inn*, for example, published only four years previously, is an involuted vision of clashing religious attitudes, tending if anything to shy away from Christian dogma which, although influential on du Maurier, is too

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 317.

⁶⁰ Judith Cook, 'War and the Oxford Group', *Daphne: A Portrait of Daphne du Maurier* (London: Bantam Press, 1991), p. 160.

stark and clearly delineated, and to celebrate instead those aspects of the human soul that are only dimly discernible and can never be fully known. Works subsequent to *Come Wind, Come Weather* return to exploring these themes of ambivalence, mystery and secrecy. Du Maurier's work for Moral Re-Armament would seem to mark an uncharacteristic involvement with an exoteric phenomenon in a life marked by its interest in more esoteric concerns and how these can be thought to clash with orthodoxy. It also marks an initial public foray into an arena at once religious and political.

The timing of du Maurier's interest in Moral Re-Armament is probably the key to understanding its nature. Forster demonstrates in her biography of du Maurier that she had come from a protected background, shielded from the harsher realities of life.⁶¹ In the late 1930s, however, it was impossible to ignore the fact that the life of the privileged and non-privileged alike was under threat from a major war, and thus du Maurier came to realise, according to Forster, that "[e]verything was at risk, everything she had could disappear in a flash".⁶² Forster goes on to note that "[s]lowly, because she had never shown much interest in politics, Daphne began to pick up from Tommy [her husband] what was happening".⁶³ I refer to these statements of Forster's in particular because they confirm my view that du Maurier's grasp on politics up to this point was not fully rationalised but very much at the level of Alison Light's softer and more emotional sounding "psychology and motivation", as opposed to her more practical sounding "Romantic Toryism" – as explained in her work *Forever England*.⁶⁴ The coming of the Second World War finally shifted du Maurier's emotional conservatism into practical religious-cum-political action. It is difficult to characterise du Maurier's religious beliefs with any precision up to the point where she became involved in Moral Re-Armament, and this is possibly because they were not fully resolved at this time (if ever), but nevertheless Forster attempts to describe some of what she may have been thinking about:

Daphne struggled to convince herself, tried hard to develop her own philosophy by taking a bit from the Greeks, a bit from the Bible, and by mixing legend with superstition, which is what she ended up doing, but only confused herself.⁶⁵

The faith of Tommy, which she could not share, appeared to be more traditionally Christian in character; according to Forster, "He believed in God and the triumph of Good over Evil [...] He would go into

⁶¹ Forster, op. cit., p. 140. The chronology for du Maurier's association with MRA that I write about in this section is taken from Forster's biography.

⁶² Ibid., p. 141.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 141.

⁶⁴ See Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 16, 156.

⁶⁵ Forster, op. cit., p. 142.

battle, as he had done before, trusting in the Lord.”⁶⁶ Tommy’s faith thus operated at the grand transcendent level, whereas du Maurier appeared to be searching for something with a more individualist quality. Forster writes that “[f]ar more to her liking was that the individual must change and put faith in himself.”⁶⁷ Bunny Austin’s description of the aims of Moral Re-Armament echoed her frame of mind:

Bunny Austin explained to her that the ‘Oxford Group’, as it was first known (later becoming the Moral Re-Armament Movement, or MRA) was trying to start a moral revolution by starting one in each individual. He told her he himself was convinced Buchman’s ideas represented the best chance of stopping the outbreak of war and that he was going to devote himself wholeheartedly to the movement.⁶⁸

The theory was that if everyone changed at the individual level, then the hostilities that had been growing between man and man, faction and faction, nation and nation would be averted; as Howard writes “When men change, nations change.”⁶⁹ Du Maurier thus became interested in MRA, which although transcendent like Tommy’s faith it yet espoused the necessary quality of individualism she preferred. In spite of the movement’s revolutionary rhetoric, its aim was essentially conservative, and this chimed in with her mood of wishing to preserve an endangered way of life. The very fact that MRA dressed its conservatism in the language of revolution may also have appealed to du Maurier’s inwardly rebellious but outwardly conservative self. She did not, however, enter into any official association at this stage, preferring to keep her interest on a more personal level. Unfortunately, she found it especially hard in 1938 to put MRA’s ideas into practice in her daily life, finding herself cheerless, easily irritated, judgmental and intolerant. Forster portrays du Maurier’s possible thoughts at this time: “If she was so feeble that she could not survive children’s colds, husband’s chills and heavy traffic, how, she wondered, was she going to survive war?”⁷⁰

Bunny Austin visited her in November of 1938 and found her “more receptive than ever to MRA beliefs”.⁷¹ She agreed to sign his letter to *The Times* that explained the cause of MRA as “our nation’s destiny”, which meant:

casting out fear, hate, pride and self-seeking which divide man from man, and form the root causes of war. It demands that we first admit our own faults before trying to remedy the faults of others.⁷²

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 142. Tommy, when du Maurier met him, was Major Frederick Arthur Montague Browning. ‘Tommy’ was a family nickname. He was also known as ‘Boy’ to his regiment. Tommy was to serve in both world wars.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 142. Forster uses the word ‘himself’ in spite of du Maurier being the person referred to.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 142.

⁶⁹ Howard, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

⁷⁰ Forster, op. cit., p. 143.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 144.

⁷² Ibid., p. 144.

Forster points out that this is what du Maurier had been attempting, but failing, to do.⁷³ In January 1939 she accompanied Austin to an MRA conference at Eastbourne and became inspired to do something to help the cause.⁷⁴ A public occasion soon presented itself to her. The American Literary Societies decided to award her a prize for *Rebecca* and she used the opportunity to speak to them as a platform to campaign for MRA.⁷⁵ She urged her listeners to:

try to do for the twentieth century what our ancestors did in the sixteenth, when they worked for that glorious Renaissance... If we writers faithfully dedicate ourselves ... to giving ... the real sincerity and honesty and truth that we feel in our hearts ... there will be ... a new spirit ... and the false values of the early twentieth century will be forgotten.⁷⁶

Here it is evident that du Maurier has fully imbibed the language of the MRA campaigns since she is using the rhetoric of rebirth and renaissance that is a major part of their message.⁷⁷ Frank Buchman had himself referred to the idea of ‘renaissance’ and the actual era of the Renaissance in a speech at a meeting held in Oslo City Hall in March 1935:

I believe that a third stage is coming in Norway – renaissance.
Turn your minds back to the things which followed the re-awakening at the close of the Middle Ages. That can happen again in Norway today.⁷⁸

Following on from du Maurier’s speech, Garth Lean - Bunny Austin’s fellow MRA member, Oxford graduate, and the author of the biography of Buchman - came to talk to her about some true stories of individuals who had also been affected by the principles of MRA. The idea was to turn these stories into articles that could be placed in regional newspapers across the country.⁷⁹ With Lean’s help the first of these stories was published in the *Edinburgh Evening News* in March 1940, entitled ‘A Mother and her Faith, comforting words by Daphne du Maurier,’ and this was followed by publication of other comforting words in many more provincial newspapers.⁸⁰ Lean then suggested that these stories should be gathered together and made into a booklet, resulting in the publication of *Come Wind, Come Weather* by Heinemann. This in itself was a strange move since du Maurier had moved from Heinemann to Gollancz after the publication of *The Progress of Julius* in 1933. Forster explains that du Maurier wrote to Gollancz explaining that she did not feel it was his “line of country”, although Gollancz replied to say that

⁷³ Ibid., p. 144.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 144.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 147.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 147. The ellipses and quote marks are in Forster’s text. In this speech of du Maurier’s we can see another similarity with *The Flight of the Falcon*, where the twentieth century is compared back to the Renaissance.

⁷⁷ See, for example, the epigram which begins this chapter.

⁷⁸ Frank Buchman, *Remaking the World: The Speeches of Frank N. D. Buchman* (London: Blandford Press, 1958), p. 6.

⁷⁹ Forster, op. cit., p. 147.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 149.

“anything of hers was his line of country”.⁸¹ Oddly, in the light of the latter’s reply, Cook writes of Victor Gollancz that “he would have been just about the last man on earth to offer MRA a platform.”⁸² I can only presume that Cook made this assumption on the basis of the evident antithesis between Gollancz’s Left Book Club, with its Communist affiliations, and Buchman’s avowed anti-Communist stance. *Come Wind, Come Weather*’s first edition of 340,000 copies was published in August 1940 and sold out by October. A new and revised edition of 250,000 copies was published in November 1940, followed by reprints in July and November of 1941 of 40,000 copies each. It thus proved to be a very successful volume in terms of sales, if not in terms of literary merit; as Forster writes of the stories in this volume:

Daphne had been unable to work any magic; the stories were competently written, but they did not seem as impressive as they had done as newspaper articles, though her introduction was everything for which a believer in MRA could hope.⁸³

In a sense, therefore, *Come Wind, Come Weather* is already a twice-written work, operating similarly to *Castle Dor* in that it was inspired by previously known stories which were authored and then re-authored.

In spite of her work for MRA, or perhaps indeed because of it, she began to consider herself a fake, feeling “she had a ghastly cheek to suggest anything to anybody”.⁸⁴ Some of her dissatisfaction with herself found its way into her letters to Lean. Forster notes that:

There was, about all her letters to Garth, a pious tone, most unlike the tone of any of her other letters, and it was obvious she was telling him what she thought he wanted to hear. Just as, in the company of different people, she automatically adapted her outward behaviour to suit them, so in her letters she adapted her style and sentiments. But, nevertheless, she was genuinely a little ashamed of herself.⁸⁵

This is one of a number of examples of du Maurier’s tricksterish, Hermetic personality. Whilst being pious to Lean, she yet writes to Angela du Maurier of her “despised Groupy friends”.⁸⁶ Although this is ambiguously written – in the sense that it is not possible to tell whether it is du Maurier or others who are doing the despising – the tone is clearly derisory. A similar case will be seen in my chapter on the biographies of the Bacon brothers where she seems to fully agree with the ideas in the letters from members of The Francis Bacon Society, and yet disparages them in letters to other people. On the 10th March 1941, she performed one of her last tasks for MRA, travelling to London to make a broadcast to America about MRA from an underground shelter.⁸⁷ After she had finished writing *Frenchman’s Creek* in

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 151.

⁸² Cook, op. cit., p. 158.

⁸³ Forster, op. cit., p. 150.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p.151.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 158.

⁸⁶ Daphne du Maurier, in Angela du Maurier, op. cit., p. 217.

⁸⁷ Forster, op. cit., pp. 160-161.

the July of that year, Garth Lean began to suggest that she write some more stories for the MRA cause, but she seemed to be having doubts about writing anything else to suit MRA purposes:

Novelists who try to do moral uplift always go astray, it's not their forte [...] but I still think people like myself may be capable of creating good and interesting stories about the human character without becoming sort of Winston Churchills.⁸⁸

Letters to Lean continued but no new work for MRA was forthcoming. In 1945 a group of MRA members were due to go to America and Lean came to say goodbye to them with du Maurier. He sensed that day that there was something she wanted to say but did not voice. Forster puts du Maurier's sentiments into words:

she was no longer committed to MRA principles, no longer believed the world revolution could begin with each individual starting a revolution within him or herself. 'Don't put me on a pedestal,' she had already written to him, 'my feet are made of clay.' Now, though she never formally disassociated herself from MRA, and remained a friend to Garth and Bunny, she was disillusioned.⁸⁹

Although she did not write anything quite so major or public after *Come Wind, Come Weather* I have discovered that she did write, or at least put her name to, a review of Peter Howard's MRA book entitled *Ideas Have Legs* which was published in 1945. The review itself appears on the back cover of Howard's book *That Man Frank Buchman* dated June 1946, and is as follows:

I suspect the author of having written it with the express intention of keeping people like myself awake at night. Its philosophy is a challenge to exponents of the Right and Left in the post-war world. It is at once direct and dynamic.⁹⁰

Du Maurier never liked to let anyone down, or be the cause of ill will, so perhaps she felt that this review, a lesser production than a full blown-book, might prevent her having to say no outright to doing any further major work for MRA.

COME WIND, COME WEATHER

There is little critical attention given to *Come Wind, Come Weather* and its place amongst the works of du Maurier. In the main, it is the biographers who tackle this subject. I have already referred to the fact that Cook considered the whole episode to be "an aberration in her life".⁹¹ Cook goes on to imply that the publication was something du Maurier wished to forget when she writes that:

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.163.

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 195-6.

⁹⁰ Daphne du Maurier, in Howard, op. cit., back cover.

⁹¹ Cook, op. cit., p. 160

She never mentioned *Come Wind, Come Weather*, when discussing her work, and it is not listed with her other titles in any of the current editions of her books, fiction or non-fiction.⁹²

Similarly, when Forster writes of *Come Wind, Come Weather* she wants it to be clear “how unsuccessful the results were in literary terms”.⁹³ The stories may have been true but they were “trite”, and “even more banal were Daphne’s introductory paragraphs”.⁹⁴ Forster goes on to say that du Maurier’s tone is “sanctimonious” even though “[t]here was no doubting Daphne’s absolute sincerity and she saw no element of humbug in what she wrote”.⁹⁵ It is very difficult to disagree with these opinions on *Come Wind, Come Weather* in an increasingly secular world benefiting from all the advantages of hindsight.

DISCUSSION OF THE INTRODUCTION AND EPILOGUE

[...] how great is the gulf between the twentieth century and, for example, the sixteenth.

It is difficult to imagine Drake and Raleigh and Sir Philip Sidney talking about “Safety First”. [...] Life to them was an Adventure and a Hazard, not a business of stocks and shares and going one better than the Joneses who live next door. They lived and loved and fought and died, they had faith in the destiny of their country, and they had faith in God. (CWpp.9-10)

Everyone fighting a modern war tends to think of it in terms of the last one he [sic] knows anything about. [...] The act of fighting a war becomes something like an unwitting act of conservative memory.⁹⁶

In her work for MRA, du Maurier’s rallying approach is to refer back to previous dangerous historical situations, and the necessary public spirit that must be roused to overcome them. As I have mentioned previously, when speaking to the American Literary Societies she makes the explicit appeal to other writers to work for a spiritual renewal such as that of the Renaissance in the sixteenth century.⁹⁷ In the introduction to *Come Wind, Come Weather* du Maurier refers back to “the selfless gallantry” (CWp.10) of such famous sixteenth century characters as Drake, Raleigh and Sidney (CWp.9). In making these appeals to the past she is, in effect, attempting to draw on some kind of assumed, cultural memory. It is as though de Quincey’s model of the palimpsest of the human brain has acquired a collective, historical dimension and the events of the past lie ‘buried’ in it but not ‘wholly extinguished’. Like the spirit of de Quincey’s

⁹² Ibid., p. 160.

⁹³ Forster, op. cit., p. 149.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 149.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 149, 150.

⁹⁶ Paul Fussell, in Victoria Stewart, *Narratives of Memory: British Writing of the 1940s* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 32. Stewart gives the citation as Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 314.

⁹⁷ I would mention *The Flight of the Falcon* again in this regard since the background for events in its twentieth century timeframe is drawn from events in its Renaissance timeframe.

sister Elizabeth, the spirit of bravery and faith associated with Drake, Raleigh and Sidney is not departed, but merely dormant, only waiting to be called from its long, Lazarus-like sleep; as du Maurier writes:

I believe that the old English spirit is not dead. It still lurks in the hearts and minds of every man and woman in this island, but centuries of soft living and thinking only in the first person singular have made the spirit a shadow of its former self, and the door which hides it is not always easy to unlock. The present danger has come upon us as a challenge.
(CWp.10)⁹⁸

Here du Maurier is making a direct appeal to the general public's supposedly dormant spiritual values, which need to be re-awakened because there is another war on. It is as though there is an archetypal reservoir of spirit that can be continually drawn on in times of national crisis. Today's citizens are to be spectralised, or indeed palimpsested, by the lives and texts of the past. MRA's, and thus du Maurier's, attempts to 'revolutionise' individuals and nations on a spiritual level are palimpsestically and conservatively dressed in Renaissance garb; MRA may have been a new movement for a new world situation but some of its message was partially recycled from previous epochs, although as is the case with the palimpsest, old rhetoric in new situations frequently acquires fresh meaning.⁹⁹

Neither du Maurier's idea of a collective memory and its use in connection with discussions of the war, nor the corresponding MRA rhetoric from which such language was drawn, were in any way original, but very much a product of the times, as can be seen from a consideration of Victoria Stewart's work *Narratives of Memory – British Writing of the 1940s*.¹⁰⁰ In connection with collective memory in particular, Stewart draws attention to Renate Lachmann's suggestion that "there is no erasure in cultural memory; what is forgotten can be culturally reactivated and can take on its own (or a different) semiotic value."¹⁰¹ Du Maurier harks back to a 'golden era' of militaristic, Protestant expansion, but applies it in a period when, rhetorically speaking, 'Christian Civilisation' was supposedly in need of defence from the neo-Paganism of totalitarian regimes, which in themselves were also militaristic and expansive. Stewart's theory as to why the Second World War should produce responses that relied on cultural memory turns on the fact that "only with historical perspective will a complete vision of the war be realized", and thus "writers turned to comparisons with earlier conflicts, particularly in the first years of the war" as a way of

⁹⁸ Again, see *The Flight of the Falcon* for the way in which events of the Renaissance past and the idea of Lazarus awaking from his 'sleep' coalesce in du Maurier's fiction.

⁹⁹ Du Maurier's other Renaissance men – the Bacon Brothers – are also palimpsestically dressed. The traditional exotic Christian façade they present to the public conceals more esoteric Masonic leanings. They also spectralise their own lives with the aid of Greek mythology.

¹⁰⁰ Stewart, op. cit.

¹⁰¹ Renate Lachmann, in Stewart, *ibid.*, p. 3. Stewart gives the citation as Lachmann, Renate. *Memory and Literature: Intertextuality in Russian Modernism*. Trans. Roy Sellars and Anthony Wall. 1990. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997. This is as it appears.

“providing a new perspective on events that [were] still ongoing”.¹⁰² These ‘earlier conflicts’ were seen as part of the nation’s collective past and thus as “reference points that the reader might be presumed to share”; in this sense “[b]oth individual and collective remembrance could be used to ratify a particular vision of the present and immediate future.”¹⁰³ As Stewart notes, “such analogies as these have particular ideological sources and effects”, which in the case of du Maurier and MRA concerned the wealth of associations which could be drawn from a ‘Renaissance’ view of the world. The idea of rebirth and its connection with the call to reawaken the national spirit I have already mentioned. Another commonly held cliché of Renaissance values is the idea of “the perfectability [sic] of man.”¹⁰⁴ Pico della Mirandola elaborated, in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486), that man could either degenerate into the lower forms of life, deemed brutish or be reborn into the higher forms which are divine.¹⁰⁵ According to Robbins, the language of perfectibility had already found its way into 1930s Christian conservative rhetoric as his reference to Lionel Curtis bears witness:

In [Curtis’s] view, Our Lord ‘was trying to convince the world that men can grow to perfection, but only in so far as they mould their relations one to another on the principle that each man owes an infinite duty to God, and therefore to all his fellows’. He wanted to discover the means of passing from the national to the international state. Here was a role for religion. He felt that once the Protestant churches came to regard the creation of a world commonwealth as an ‘all-important’ aspect of their work ‘an international commonwealth in the English-speaking world would come into being in a few generations’. The outbreak of war neither served to modify his convictions in these matters nor to discipline his prose. The history of civilization was now seen as a war between freedom and despotism.¹⁰⁶

The language of Curtis concerning how religion and the perfectibility of man can assist in helping society pass from the national to the international state is very much in keeping with the rhetoric of MRA whose sequence of logic runs that “God-controlled personalities make God-controlled nationalities” and if “[nationalism] can unite a country [...] [s]upernationalism can unite a world”; hence “God-controlled supernationalism is the only sure foundation for world peace.”¹⁰⁷ It is easy to see why the politicians of the day were interested in utilising the rhetoric of a movement such as MRA; it promised a panacea for very little governmental intervention, since all the action was down to the individual and their moral and spiritual self-improvement, which by some impenetrable process led inexorably to the required international outcome.

¹⁰² Stewart, *ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ C.F. Black, et al., *Chronicles of the Renaissance* (London: Angus Books, 2003), p. 17.

¹⁰⁵ Pico della Mirandola, in *ibid.*, p. 17. Nor further citation is given.

¹⁰⁶ Lionel Curtis, in Robbins, *op. cit.*, p. 199. Robbins gives the citation as Lionel Curtis, *Civitas Dei. The Commonwealth of God* (London, 1938), pp. 288, 822-24, 953.

¹⁰⁷ Buchman, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25 and 18.

If we look at the idea of ‘perfected’ Renaissance man that is presented in du Maurier’s introduction to *Come Wind, Come Weather* we find one that is selflessly gallant and for whom life, and particularly battle, is an ‘Adventure and a Hazard’. Her romantic attitude to such men is similar to those of her contemporaries who instead drew their shared cultural reference point from the First World War. Stewart notes that G.D. Sheffield has argued that “[t]he First World War exercised a terrible fascination for men who had not been old enough to serve in [it].”¹⁰⁸ Many such men, in spite of the poetical works emanating from the poets of that war, had come to see the conflict as impossibly romantic; as Stewart cites:

But Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, Remarque and Barbusse, had not convinced us that war is dull and dispiriting: still less could they have persuaded us that our own war might disillusion us. In fact it seems to me now that our picture of war was as falsely romantic, in its different way, as anything which had stirred the minds of Edwardian boys, brought up on Henty and the heroics of minor imperial campaigns. [...] [W]e felt less pity than envy of a generation that had experienced so much. Even in our Anti-War campaigns of the early thirties we were half in love with the horrors which we cried out against, and, as a boy, I can remember murmuring the name ‘*Passchendaele*’ in an ecstasy of excitement and regret.¹⁰⁹

Du Maurier, brought up similarly on boys’ adventure stories, and also unable to take part in active service, appears to see war in the same ecstatic, regretful terms; it is an ‘Adventure’ requiring masculine heroics and the “old fundamental values” of “truth, honesty, [and] selflessness” (CWp.10), and yet she is forced to acknowledge, with not a little remorse, that “[w]e cannot all be soldiers[,] [w]e cannot all keep watch upon the seas, or fight to freedom in the sky” (CWp.11). As Stewart points out, in terms used by Christopher Isherwood, war meant:

The Test. The Test of your courage, of your maturity, of your sexual prowess: ‘Are you really a Man?’ Subconsciously, I believe, I longed to be subjected to this test; but I also dreaded failure.¹¹⁰

Isherwood’s sentiments are obviously complicated for du Maurier by her doubled view of her own gender. Perhaps she wondered instead what it would be like if her male alter ego, Eric Avon, were to be subjected to such a rite of passage, and inwardly railed against being disallowed the experience by virtue

¹⁰⁸ G. D. Sheffield, in Stewart, op. cit., p. 23. Stewart gives the citation as G. D. Sheffield, ‘The Shadow of the Somme: The Influence of the First World War on British Soldiers’ Preceptions and Behaviour in the Second World War’. *Time to Kill: The Soldiers’ Experience of War in the West 1939-1945*. ed. Paul Addison and Angus Calder. London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 30.

¹⁰⁹ Philip Toynbee, in Stewart, op. cit., pp. 22-23. Stewart gives the citation as Philip Toynbee, *Friends Apart: A Memoir of Esmond Romilly and Jasper Ridley in the Thirties*. 1954. 2nd ed. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1980, p. 91.

¹¹⁰ Christopher Isherwood, in *ibid*, p. 23. Stewart gives the citation as Christopher Isherwood, *Lions in the Shadows: An Education in the Twenties*. 1938. London: Methuen, 1985, p. 46.

of her gender? I will have occasion to return to du Maurier's bitter-sweet romanticising of the male aspects of war in my chapter on du Maurier's correspondence with Victor Gollancz.

It is interesting to look at du Maurier's target audience in the paragraph which attempts to resurrect the spirit of the dormant past since although she refers to the whole 'island' only the 'English' spirit is invoked, and then she speaks only of those who are used to 'soft living,' conveniently forgetting the hardships faced by the majority of the British working classes in the thirties. Perhaps we can detect some English middle class guilt lurking behind this seemingly universal appeal to the spirit of Britain's general populace? In a very telling phrase, du Maurier nonetheless attempts to establish herself as being at one with her readership by saying, "I have tried to show how ordinary men and women, like you and me, have faced up to the challenge of war" (CWp.12). In a rather disingenuous way she thus attempts to elide and negate all social distinctions between herself and her presumed readership. Allan Eister, in *Drawing-Room Conversion* (1950), suggests that the Moral Re-Armament movement was not above impersonating its target audience, rich or poor, in order to achieve its ends. For example, Eister notes that representatives of the movement often used "street slang and old clothes where necessary" to emulate the poor, and elsewhere he writes:

As a movement there does seem to have been enough emphasis upon adopting the appearances and mannerisms of the wealthy [...] Where people of other classes were prominently featured, as they sometimes were on programs of the Oxford Group, the purpose seems to have been to impress listeners with the fact that Group participants were above and beyond the bitterness of class-conscious proletarian resentments.¹¹¹

So not only do MRA workers borrow their 'clothes' from the past they also borrow them from their target audience as well. In line with these attempts to either impersonate or homogenise the classes du Maurier is thus making her appeal to man in general, and in the process is stressing the need to face up to what must therefore be a commonly held truth. It is possible to criticise this endeavour to hide her own background in an attempt to find a well meaning but potentially false public ideal in the terms used by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). Marx and Engels suggest that such a method is based on representing:

not true requirements, but the requirements of Truth; not the interests of the proletariat, but the interests of Human Nature, of Man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality, who exists only in the misty realm of philosophical fantasy.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Allan Eister, *Drawing-Room Conversion: A Sociological Account of the Oxford Group Movement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1950), pp. 22, 92.

¹¹² Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 111. Translated by Samuel Moore.

Whatever the real ‘truth’ of the origins of the current war, she appeals instead to the more philosophical idea of an ultimate and supposedly commonly held Human Truth. For example, du Maurier asks her readers, “Is it too late to root out the germ of selfishness from human nature and to cultivate the seed of generosity instead?” (CWp.11). She thus converts a war founded ultimately on problems of post World War One national and international economics into a problem of personal greed. In this way it becomes a problem that operates on an individual spiritual level and, self evidently, this can only have an individual spiritual cure. In her introduction to *Come Wind, Come Weather* du Maurier refers back to yet another dangerous time period - in this case Britain’s Civil War - when an individual, internal psychic disturbance could be said to result in a public, external division. As I show later in my chapter on *Golden Lads* and *The Winding Stair*, the Civil War can be read in terms of the spiritual civil war operating within the mind of every citizen breaking out at a national level. In other words many ‘divided selves’ lead to a ‘divided country’. Du Maurier uses the idea of ‘division’ in this previous national situation to emphasise to her readership precisely what is at stake in these uncertain times by recalling an “England torn and divided” (CWp.14) undergoing “strife and bitter suffering” (CWp.14). Perhaps this recognition of internal division, which she herself had struggled with, helps to explain du Maurier’s interest in MRA, a movement that was in part founded on the rhetoric of personal division, and which professed to offer the only remedy.

She may also have been interested in the movement because it was built on the personality of one man, Frank Buchman, who preferred to remain outside the auspices of traditional organised religion, operating instead by way of university intellectuals, who at this time, for the most part, would have been male.¹¹³ This would give the movement the aura of an esoteric male elite, in spite of its exoteric activities, headed up by a character resembling Plato’s mystical ‘philosopher king’, or Nietzsche’s conception of the ‘Urbemensch’. Lean draws attention to the idea of Buchman as a mystic in his biography *Frank Buchman – A Life*, citing Harold Begbie’s comment that “he is of the house and lineage of all true mystics from Plotinus to Tolstoy”.¹¹⁴ Eister – in his work *Drawing-Room Conversion* - also provides evidence that Buchman has been seen in a Nietzschean way when he cites Walter Clark’s view of Buchman’s

¹¹³ Aldo Donati, in *The Flight of the Falcon*, wages his brand of spiritual war by addressing the various student factions of the University of Ruffano.

¹¹⁴ Harold Begbie, in Lean, op. cit., p. 170. Lean gives the citation as Harold Begbie, *Life Changers* (Mills and Boon, 1923), p. 16.

personality as being conditioned by “his will to power over people”.¹¹⁵ The virile manliness of the organisation is re-inforced in a quotation Eister has drawn from the *Seattle Daily Times*:

Moral Rearmament partakes not at all of supine and flaccid pacifism. It is a virile manifestation; literally an aggressive movement toward the objective of peace among men.¹¹⁶

MRA does not work for peace from a position of emasculated, emaciated weakness but, oxymoronicly, from a position of masculine sexual aggression. Buchman’s deliberate policy of appealing to the world’s rich and/or powerful people also betrays a certain Nietzschean *Übermensch*-type attitude, even if the movement itself would not put it in quite those terms. An interest in male elites and charismatic leaders can be shown to recur in many of du Maurier’s literary works, for example Aldo Donati’s group of ‘lost boys’ and their ‘truth’ mission in *The Flight of the Falcon*, and also freemasonry in *The Infernal World of Branwell Bronte*, *Golden Lads*, *The Winding Stair* and *The Glass Blowers*.¹¹⁷

What I have been discussing in the preceding paragraph can essentially be reduced to three main ideas, all of which can be shown to have their counterpart in Plato’s *The Republic* – Platonism, of course, being yet another key element of Renaissance thinking. Firstly, du Maurier is circulating material with the intent of having a widespread effect, not in terms of real truth but in terms of a universal, noble Truth, which is not dissimilar to Plato’s idea of the ‘Noble lie’. Plato considers that there are “necessary lies” which must be propagated, in order that people can be persuaded “to care for the city and each other”.¹¹⁸ To this end a “fable” of society must be generated and instilled, which will at one and the same time acquire the status of “tradition” whilst always appearing to have been one.¹¹⁹ Continual recourse to this ‘fable’ of society can therefore be made in times of external danger to maintain discipline and morale, and to ensure that each person plays the role allotted to him. Secondly, to compare the soul of a general populace – such as a city or nation etc. - and its attributes to the idea of an individual soul or psyche and its corresponding attributes is also a Platonic idea. According to Plato’s fable of society, each person will be assigned to one of three classes in society and will be taught to feel that this is the natural way of

¹¹⁵ Eister, op. cit., p. 107. ‘Will to power’ is a characteristic Nietzschean idea. See Friedrich Nietzsche, ‘Of Self - Overcoming’, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (London: Penguin Group, 1969), pp. 136-9. This was written between 1883-1885. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale.

¹¹⁶ Eister, *ibid.*, p. 58.

¹¹⁷ At one particular meeting organised by Aldo Donati nearly all those invited are male, with only a few token women present.

¹¹⁸ Plato, *The Republic*, in *Great Dialogues of Plato* (New York: New American Library, 1956), pp. 214, 215. Translated by W.H.D. Rouse.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

things; correspondingly, the soul itself is like the city in that three classes also hold it together.¹²⁰ Thirdly, to propagate ‘Noble lies’ with the intent of having an effect on the individual psyche and hence the general psyche is to act in the manner of Plato’s philosopher king, who alone is deemed worthy of mediating “the ever same and unchangeable”.¹²¹ The philosopher king has the best access to the spiritual world of ‘Forms’, which contains the blueprint for everything that exists, both concepts and objects.

The role of spiritual mediator for lofty Truths, or indeed ‘noble lies’, came to weigh heavily on du Maurier, and she was reduced to confessing to Lean – as mentioned earlier - that “my feet are made of clay”. She thus began to feel that she was not a valid mediator, or perhaps even that she was an ‘invalid’ one. This has a certain parallel in du Maurier’s novel of the Civil War and its impact on Cornwall - *The King’s General* (1946). I refer to this novel particularly since the conflict it discusses is one to which she has assigned the status of a cultural memory in the context of *Come Wind, Come Weather*. In this novel, based on some true events concerning Cornwall’s role in the Civil War but fictionalised, the narrator – Honor Harris – is crippled in a riding accident towards the beginning of the novel. For the rest of the novel this narrator, or “mediator” as Honor terms herself, is thus literally an ‘invalid’.¹²² In another sense, however, this device can be read metaphorically as du Maurier’s comment on the crippled nature of all mediation.¹²³ It may be that Honor Harris’s narrative function in this later novel about the Civil War somehow reflects du Maurier’s own feelings on the role she herself played as moral story-teller in World War Two. *The King’s General* is in itself a tale of national conflict exacerbated by a spiritual problem as du Maurier, through Honor, relates:

The whole business made me sick at heart, and this whipping up of tempers between neighbours who for generations had lived at peace seemed a policy of the devil.¹²⁴

This is corroborated by Temperance Sawle – her very surname being a crippling of the word soul – who suggested that they were living in a period where the “Anti-Christ was come into the world”.¹²⁵ In *The King’s General*, the country has been crippled spiritually as Honor has been crippled physically; Honor is thus the visible, tangible sign of an invisible, intangible issue. *Come Wind, Come Weather* can thus be read, in her own terms, as du Maurier’s maimed intervention in a war conducted at a spiritual level. The weapons with which to fight this war are thus “the weapons of the spirit” (CWp.10), i.e. the “old

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp. 215, 241.

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 281.

¹²² Daphne du Maurier, *The King’s General* (London: Heron Books, no date), p. 42.

¹²³ Mediation, it should be remembered is the function of a daimon; in this sense, all narrators are daimons. Du Maurier is thus God’s daimon in mediating *Come Wind, Come Weather*.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 55. In the narrative du Maurier writes “what the Sparkes possessed in flame, the Sawles made up in soul”, thus showing how she wishes the surname of these characters to be read. Ibid., p. 55.

fundamental values, truth, honesty, [and] selflessness” (CWp.10). These will prevail where “[t]anks and aeroplanes, guns and ships have failed” (CWp.10).

Du Maurier’s war is therefore, in the main, a ‘civil war’ fought on the ‘home front’, her stories being designed mostly to combat actual and potential division and incivility at home rather than an international war played out on an actual battlefield. Stewart points out that the ‘home front’ was seen as a new type of battlefield in any case where the people, according to J.B. Priestley, were not “really civilians any longer but a mixed lot of soldiers – [...] milkmen and postmen soldiers, house-wife and mother soldiers [...]”¹²⁶ Correspondingly, Stewart uses the work of Wilfred Bion to expand on this idea of the ‘militaristic’ civilian role in wartime, as she writes:

Bion [...] argues that if individuals have a sense of playing a role in the conflict, and can grasp the reasons for it, they are more likely to be in some measure prepared for the shocks to come. This leads him to advocate a blurring of the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, recommending the establishment, for civilians, of ‘some modification of the disciplinary framework that exists in the fighting service’ (Bion 186). He therefore provides a psychological justification for the mobilisation of civilians that characterised the Second World War and can be summed up in the concept of the ‘Home Front’.¹²⁷

In this sense, Buchman’s Moral Rearmament movement provides its own version of a disciplinary framework for arming civilians psychologically to face an uncertain wartime future. In the ‘Epilogue’ to *Come Wind, Come Weather*, du Maurier’s civilians, like Priestley’s, have become “warriors” and the happiest of these is the one who is “fully disciplined, ready and alert for what may come, and whose trained ear receives and understands an order as swiftly as his commander gives it” (CWp.88). In the sense intended by MRA the commander referred to in this instance obviously means God. Du Maurier explains that at the outset of any military career the “raw recruit” may not understand some of the seeming banalities of his rigorous training, such as the mornings spent “not in fighting foes, but in cleaning his equipment”, yet in the face of enemy fire he will find that “spit and polish” have “proved the foundation of his training” (CWp.88). Likewise, for civilian soldiers:

The cleaning up of our lives, our thoughts and of our wishes can be the foundation of our training too; selflessness, honesty and love our proud tradition. The soldier receives his orders of the day in silence, he notes them down, then acts upon them. We can do the same, planning our day methodically and carefully under our commander’s direction, testing the thoughts that come by his standards, and acting upon those which we know to be his wishes. (CWp.89)

¹²⁶ J.B Priestley, in Stewart, op. cit., p. 33. Stewart gives the citation as J.B Priestley, *Postscripts*. London: Heinemann, 1940, p. 68.

¹²⁷ Wilfred Bion, in *ibid*, p.50. Stewart gives the citation as Wilfred Bion. ‘The “War of Nerves”: Civilian Reaction. Morale and Prophylaxis’. *The Neuroses in War*. ed. Emanuel Miller. London: Macmillan, 1940. pp.180-200.

Such training will prepare the civilian soldiers for any “moments of trial” that life on the home front delivers, for the battle in this arena has its own hardships, as du Maurier writes “[w]e have to follow the common round of day-by-day”, involving “[w]orry, anxiety, [...] [d]ifficulties in business, difficulties at home” and finally “[i]t seems at times easier to face a hundred bombers than one irritable relative!” (CWp.12).¹²⁸ The war at home requires the same kind of idealised romantic bravery possessed by the adventuring soldiers, even if it is not signalled by the same military associations :

Yet in our sphere, too, there are deeds of gallantry to be done. There will be no bugle-call, no beating of the drum, no banners to unfurl. The fight is not spectacular. It is a silent struggle between self and Spirit, and the voice of the Spirit is the voice of God. (CWp.12)

Winning this fight will mean that the world remains “a place of supreme adventure for free men and free women” (CWp.89); here du Maurier is evidently opening out the Renaissance spirit of adventure to those of the female sex and, by extension, herself.

Du Maurier’s true stories become demonstrations of how to wage the “inner battle” (CWp.12) with a ‘divided self’. Although the term ‘divided self’ is used as the title of a work by R.D. Laing – as I will mention elsewhere - its use is pre-empted by the Moral Re-Armament movement who saw personal conviction of sin in terms of feelings of “guilt and shame, “divided self,” bad conscience, and a whole complex of related responses”.¹²⁹ This demonstrates the Group’s readiness to borrow the terms of psychoanalysis in its diagnosis of spiritual problems. If the problems of the ‘divided self’ can be cured, peace can be maintained amongst the nation’s citizens on the home front, allowing the powers that be to concentrate on the war with the nation’s external enemies, as du Maurier writes in the ‘Epilogue’ to *Come Wind, Come Weather*:

Two thousand years ago the peoples of the world were told, “A house divided against itself will not stand.” The undying truth of this saying has been proved in full and unhappy measure in our world today. A nation is not a tangible thing, not a building of bricks and mortar that will crash to ruins at a first strong blow. It is an echo of the past, and a whisper from the future, the whole bound together with the lives, the hopes and the endeavours of many millions of men and women. (CWp.84)

A nation is thus a palimpsestuous phenomenon.

DISCUSSION OF THE STORIES

¹²⁸ Temperance Sawle is the irritable relative to be faced in *The King’s General*.

¹²⁹ Eister, op. cit., p. 23.

Up to this point I have discussed the ideas raised by the material in du Maurier's 'Introduction' and 'Epilogue' in *Come Wind, Come Weather*, and how they are of a piece with both Moral Rearmament thinking in particular and conservative considerations concerning the defence of 'Christian Civilisation'. I will now give some indication of the stories, their subject matter and the Moral Re-Armament language that du Maurier had been taught to use. The volume itself contains an introduction, ten stories, and an epilogue. The titles of the ten stories are as follows: 'The Admiralty Regrets', 'George and Jimmy', 'Over the Ration Books', 'A Nation's Strength', 'A Miner's Tale', 'Physician, Heal Thyself', 'Spitfire Megan', 'London, 1940?', 'Mrs Hill and the Soldiers', and 'In a London Air-Raid Shelter'. Eight of these stories are British, but two of them concern Europe, specifically Finland and Latvia. The European ones are included to show that the problems faced at home are universally applicable and also that personal issues have a national and international effect. 'The Admiralty Regrets' is the story of a mother whose calm faith triumphs over the potential death of her son when it is reported that his ship has been torpedoed. Her faith is vindicated when a second report states that the entire crew was picked up safely by another ship. 'George and Jimmy' relates how a woman uses MRA strategies to turn her warring, destructive evacuees into what the back cover of the volume terms "useful citizens". 'Over the Ration Books' concerns the issues faced by the small trader in wartime and how one man persuades his fellow traders to co-operate honestly rather than compete unfairly. 'A Nation's Strength' shows how the deep divide in Finland - which had resulted in Civil War in 1918 and left bitter memories in the minds of its people - was overcome by a woman working against division and bringing political opponents together in a spirit of reconciliation. 'A Miner's Tale' talks of conflict in industry and how one unhappy mineworker regained his peace of mind and helped to settle industrial disputes. 'Physician Heal Thyself' illustrates how a prominent Harley Street surgeon came to understand that although his work might fix damaged bodies, it did nothing to cure unhappiness; this realisation therefore led to a beneficial change in his working practices. 'Spitfire Megan' relates the story of the woman who decided to evacuate the rest of her family to the home of her mother-in-law in Wales. The woman later had to swallow her own pride when she was forced to intervene in the ensuing family frictions. 'London, 1940?' draws a parallel between the fate of a wealthy family in Petrograd - deprived of their lands and forced to relocate to Latvia as a result of the revolution in 1917 - and what may happen to complacent wealthy Londoners in 1940. The family from Petrograd eventually found the faith to accept their reduced circumstances. 'Mrs Hill and the Soldiers' is the story of how the lady in question adopted a company of soldiers when they were billeted on her

hometown and gave them the spiritual strength to face their wartime situations. Finally, 'In a London Air-raid Shelter' reveals how a cleaner found faith and then went on to prevent wholesale panic in an air-raid shelter during a particularly fierce bombing campaign.

The "true stories" - as the back cover terms them - in *Come Wind, Come Weather* are attempts to show how MRA principles can cure divided minds, and hence divided families and nations. This concept of 'truth' deserves examining. Truth in MRA terms means its conviction of its own success in helping to bring about recognisable change in people and hence events. Correspondingly, its particular version of the truth means that its intervention in such situations is *always* successful; the movement never admits to failure or even to partial success. An additional feature of MRA truth is that there are no other factors involved in the so-called success. A typical example is provided by Peter Howard in *That Man Frank Buchman* when he summarises the effect of Frank Buchman's time in Norway:

First, a new moral climate in politics and industry was created.
Second, a united church front.
Third, the birth of a faith in the heart of an entire people adequate to arm them against totalitarian creeds even when an enemy had occupied their territory.
That is the measure of the achievement of Frank Buchman and his men in Norway which history already has recorded.¹³⁰

Interestingly, in this miraculous unification of the entirety of politics, industry, the church and the people in Norway, there is no actual mention of the intervention of God; it is all down to the activities of Frank Buchman and members of MRA. MRA's claims to tell the 'truth' have been examined by its detractors, most notably Tom Driberg in *The Mystery of Moral Re-Armament*. Driberg himself claims:

Through my own political affiliations – through, for instance, the Socialist International – I have many contacts in countries in which MRA has operated. In almost every case, when I have enquired about MRA activities, I have been assured, by Social Democrats of unimpeachable integrity, that the claims are false or greatly exaggerated.¹³¹

Ironically, the very phrase 'unimpeachable integrity' in itself hints at a possible exaggeration on Driberg's part, however one would still have to suspect that MRA did indeed misrepresent itself either by deliberate omission of its failures or by over optimism about its actual effect on situations. As du Maurier triumphantly exclaims at the very end of 'Over the Ration Books', in typical MRA fashion, using capital letters and an exclamation mark, "the darn thing WORKS!" (CWp.32). Eister notes in *Drawing Room Conversion*, that "It works!" was one of the phrases most frequently heard in the testimonials and

¹³⁰ Howard, op. cit., p. 23.

¹³¹ Driberg, op. cit., p. 126.

endorsements of the Group program and practices.”¹³² Although du Maurier’s use of the word “WORKS!” re-iterates MRA’s public show of confidence about its own effect on people and nations, echoed in all its advertising campaigns, in her hands the over-emphasis on the word simultaneously gives the impression of an attempt to suppress personal doubts about MRA’s efficacy.

Driberg cites MRA’s reporting of its own interventions in London’s dockland disputes as an example of the way it supposedly misrepresents the facts. As Driberg notes, Jack Manning, one of the most active men in the docks at the time, was persuaded, along with several others, to take on board MRA principles. He later boasted that the adoption of MRA principles had meant that since the Beaverbrae strike of 1949 “there has never been a dock strike in London, and Communists have had to shift their efforts to other docks”.¹³³ However, John Herbert reported in the *Daily Telegraph* that there had been at least three major London dock strikes since the Beaverbrae strike, and elsewhere Arthur Deakin – General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers’ Union – described Manning’s boast as “absolute nonsense”.¹³⁴ Driberg also refers to the opinion of Philip Leon, who had written *The Philosophy of Courage*, an apology for the work of MRA. In spite of being a supporter of the group, Leon accepted some of Herbert’s criticism of it in the following way:

The weakest point in the movement is undoubtedly the habit...of constantly looking for and, often prematurely, advertising results.

At best it is the prophet’s hope ingenuously identifying the future with the present...*At worst it is the propagandist’s ingenious turning of a blind eye on inaccuracies he hopes will help the cause.*¹³⁵

The stories in du Maurier’s *Come Wind, Come Weather* all serve to echo MRA’s policy of ‘advertising results’ and admitting no failure. But in writing these stories for the cause du Maurier had to turn a ‘blind eye’ to her own doubts and fears of inadequacy. This makes me wonder how much creative input du Maurier really had, constrained as she must have been by MRA’s provision of both subject matter and rhetoric. It may be that she just became part of MRA’s plan to use the famous names of the twentieth century to underscore its propaganda campaigns. The cover’s emphasis on du Maurier being the “Author of *Rebecca*” certainly seems to function as a reminder to the readership of *Come Wind, Come Weather* of just how famous du Maurier is, and therefore how worthy of note the contents of the volume must be.¹³⁶

¹³² Eister, op. cit., p. 161.

¹³³ Jack Manning, in Driberg, op. cit., p. 130. No citation given.

¹³⁴ John Herbert, in Driberg, *ibid.*, p. 130. Arthur Deakin, in Driberg, *ibid.*, p. 130. No citations given.

¹³⁵ Philip Leon, in Driberg, *ibid.*, p. 131-2. The ellipses and italics are in Driberg’s version. No citation given.

¹³⁶ The copy I am using is a November 1941 reprint of the New and Revised Edition. The cover is in red and cream (off-white). Daphne du Maurier. Author of *Rebecca* appears in red at the top of the cover.

However, there seems to be an element of unconscious irony at play in using a famed writer of fiction to give emphasis to 'true' stories.

Driberg's uncovering of some of the inaccuracies behind MRA's self advertisement, especially with regards to its intervention in industrial disputes, leads one to suspect the veracity of such a story as 'A Miner's Tale' as it conforms too neatly to the it "WORKS!" rhetoric that MRA confidently espouses. I would like to say 'complacently espouses,' but there seems to be an element of self-indulgent agency involved in their rhetoric that makes it appear to be an active policy. MRA's attempt to 'change' men of potential influence within the labour force so that disputes are solved the MRA way is problematic from a socialist or Marxist perspective. Driberg draws attention to MRA's favourite slogan for industrial disputes - "what is right rather than who is right" - and its concealment of a built-in bias in favour of maintaining the status quo.¹³⁷ The MRA way means that the workers "modify what has seemed to them a just claim" and the employer "treats them a little more benevolently", leading Driberg to conclude that:

[t]here is no radical social critique here, no examination of the possibility that the whole structure of ownership and management in an industry may be unjust and inefficient and may need recasting[.]¹³⁸

The very basis of industrial disputes is overlooked in favour of a bland, all encompassing social harmony that only tends to support the employer's actions rather than the workers' issues. In spite of their claims to having an ideology of revolutionary change, Driberg asserts that MRA's hidden agenda is an "ideology of *no change*".¹³⁹ Their additional underlying agenda appears to be that social conflict can have no beneficial social outcomes, and must therefore be quelled. 'A Miner's Tale' serves to echo the desirability of the unthinking, pallid concord – in the work place and elsewhere - that MRA upholds. In this tale, miserable mine employee George falls under the influence of happy, MRA-inspired Will; as du Maurier writes:

It was difficult for George, working beside the new and cheerful Will day after day, not to succumb, little by little, to his influence. It was not that Will preached, it was not that Will argued, the fact was that the man was happy. And it was this happiness in contrast to his own wretchedness that brought realisation to George in the end. (CWp.43-4)

George then goes on to liaise successfully in a dispute between the mine-workers and management over pay and hours. The workers are persuaded to conform by a slight modification in their pay rate and management is even persuaded to apologise for over-reaction to workers clocking off early through a suggestion that it is a misunderstanding about working hours. In this way the happiness of all is reinstated, although little has actually changed. I thus use the words bland and pallid purposefully in the

¹³⁷ Driberg, op. cit., p. 133.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 133.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 133.

above analysis since, for me, du Maurier's writing in this story conforms to the pale version of Christianity that Nietzsche condemns in *Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ*.¹⁴⁰ My reason for using Nietzsche both here and elsewhere is that his writing forms part of a chain of esoteric thinking identified by Jung that includes the Gnostics, the alchemists and Nietzsche's own *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.¹⁴¹ It is the interaction of esoteric and exoteric thinking that I am concerned with in this thesis. For Nietzsche, the Christian God, himself being pale and weak, attracts the "palest of the pale" or, in other words, "the conceptual albinos".¹⁴² Following a pallid religion such as Christianity only leads to the palest of pale outcomes. Nietzsche's criticism of Christianity as a 'pale' religion will be explored more fully in connection with the spiritually ambiguous albino vicar Francis Davey in *Jamaica Inn*. Du Maurier's 'congregation' – comprising the people in her stories and by implication the readership influenced by these stories – comes to resemble Davey's herd-like parishioners as expressed in the caricature that he produces of them; they resemble thoughtless sheep who gape "with silly vacant solemnity" as if they neither "knew nor cared".¹⁴³ This leads me to find a parallel by association between du Maurier and Davey, in that both of them had pale hair and pale skins and took to wearing the disguise of albino Christianity. Davey's Christian garb, however, palimpsests a predilection for druidic practices, so the question is therefore, what must du Maurier have concealed in spiritual terms, from others and herself, in order to write these stories only a few years after writing so convincingly of the more subtle power of mysterious, dark forces in *Jamaica Inn*? This question will be answered in numerous ways by the chapters which follow this initial examination of du Maurier's interface with a movement based on exoteric teachings, although even so its practice of gaining male University disciples lends it a pseudo-esoteric air.

I have already given an indication that MRA's public face is one of continually asserting that MRA principles work and that once adopted will lead seemingly to automatic changes at the personal,

¹⁴⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ* (London: Penguin, 2003). Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. *Twilight of the Idols* (1889). *The Anti-Christ* (1895).

¹⁴¹ Patrick Harpur, *Daimonic Reality: Understanding Otherworld Encounters* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 298. Harpur also notes that many of the myths of the Western psyche are predominantly Greek and Roman in origin, and this is in part due to the impact of the Renaissance; Nietzsche himself placed great emphasis on Apollo and Dionysus as I will discuss in a later chapter. See Patrick Harpur, *The Philosopher's Secret Fire: A History of the Imagination* (London: Penguin, 2002), pp. 70-71. It could be said therefore that in some sense Nietzsche is palimpsested by the Renaissance, but in a markedly different way to Frank Buchman. My chapter on *The Flight of the Falcon* will show du Maurier's own concern with men that are palimpsested by both the Renaissance and Nietzsche. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (London: Penguin, 1969). 1883-85. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale.

¹⁴² Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, op. cit., p. 140. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale.

¹⁴³ Daphne du Maurier, *Jamaica Inn* (London: Virago, 2007), p. 261. This book was first published in 1936.

national and supernational level. On 6th October 1935 Buchman made a speech at Zurich in which he reiterated such bland and sweeping generalisations, without reference to any practical mechanisms:

A statesman has said that the Oxford Group is supernational. Nationalism can unite a country. Supernationalism can unite a world. God-controlled supernationalism is the only sure foundation for world peace.¹⁴⁴

Here again Buchman uses his preferred technique of underlining the so-called truth of his comments through reference to key famous figures, in this case a statesman whom he does not deem it necessary to name, to impress that his principles are the only possible way forward and that adoption of them will lead inevitably to progress. This progress, however, does not appear to be based on any practical social programme but on everyone listening to God for “Divine guidance”.¹⁴⁵ Eister makes a similar point in *Drawing Room Conversion* when he remarks that “neither Buchman nor any of his followers apparently felt it necessary to give definite content or systematic form to their general social philosophy”.¹⁴⁶ Elsewhere Eister re-iterates that the focus was purely individual and there was “little or no attention focused upon the institutional mechanisms and processes operative in the social order.”¹⁴⁷ By contrast, all the Group’s planning was directed towards their propaganda campaigns and houseparties in various locations across the world. In view of this belief in inexorable progress, with no mention of the necessary social mechanisms to achieve it, how are we then to read du Maurier’s story ‘A Nation’s Strength’? Du Maurier highlights the seemingly irremediable cleft which had existed in Finland between “Left and Right” (CWp.33) and between “the Swedish- and Finnish-speaking sections of the nation” (CWp.33), and states “what a miracle their unity is” (CWp.33) now considering their previous enmity. The main character in the story is Saimi – the granddaughter of a Finnish patriot – who had an experience such as Paul on the “road to Damascus” (CWp.35), and decided to foster a spirit of unity in her country rather than pursue a campaign of women’s rights as she had previously done. By implication, this suggests that MRA was opposed to the idea of campaigning for women’s rights since to them this would evidently foster national *disunity* by challenging or even changing the patriarchal status quo. Du Maurier writes particularly that Saimi’s campaign was leaving women “dissatisfied” (CWp.34) and “resentful” (CWp.34), and implies that her actions are due to having “never got over the fact that she had been born a girl instead of a boy” (CWp.34). There are echoes of du Maurier’s own barely suppressed resentment concerning her female gender creeping into, and palimpsesting, the predominantly MRA rhetoric. It is

¹⁴⁴ Buchman, *Remaking the World*, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁴⁶ Eister, op. cit., p. 162.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

therefore possible to read du Maurier's comments about Saimi in this story in the light of her guilt about her 'divided self'. Saimi is apparently saved from a 'divided self' by her MRA work. She and her husband followed the tactics of MRA by inviting people of influence, such as Ministers and MPs, to their home and challenging them to work for the good of Finland. A leading MP is grilled:

“Are you a patriot?” asked Saimi at length. “Of course,” he answered, his eyes blazing. “How dare you ask me that!” “Well then,” said Saimi, “how many people in parliament would you co-operate with willingly? Can you honestly say that you are helping to build a united Finland?” (CWp.36)

He eventually decides that he too will take part in the spiritual struggle. Saimi then invites this MP and his political opponent to the house and a reconciliation is instantly effected. From then on in this story, progress in Finland takes on the automatic quality that I have written about above:

And the new spirit grew like a grain of mustard seed. It began to show in Parliament, in the Press, in home life and in industry. Land-owners, who had never taken any interest in the poor farming families on their own estates, began to visit them, to improve conditions, to settle grievances. (CWp.37)

The story ends with a letter from Saimi dated March 23rd, 1940, about how her country's wartime experiences were faced without bitterness by the people – the letter is included, I suspect, to give an authentic feel to du Maurier's fictionalisation. The story of 'A Nation's Strength' demonstrates two of the aspects of MRA's 'total' self-confidence that I have written about above: firstly that there really did arise a universal spirit of unity in the country and secondly that this was solely due to the adoption of MRA principles. Du Maurier's story conveniently neglects any other contributory factors in its tale of MRA self-congratulation.

Buchman would say that nothing other than “God-control” could have this effect on a nation, as can be seen when he reviewed the pre-war political situation in Denmark in an Easter address at Ollerup in 1936:

Look what Denmark has done – in one year. The secret is God-control. The only sane people in an insane world are those controlled by God. God-controlled personalities make God-controlled nationalities. This is the aim of the Oxford Group.¹⁴⁸

It is evident from this that Buchman demanded nothing less than a world theocracy requiring a priestly class of chosen men. And it is, in part, this chance to join a priestly class that made the movement so attractive to young, idealistic, university men in such turbulent times. Although it could also be said that such men saw the chance to gain a measure of political power which could then be hidden behind the movement's spiritual mask. Driberg is critical of Buchman's “dreams [...] of a theocracy”, which he sees

¹⁴⁸ Buchman, op. cit., p. 24.

as anti-institutional in its total dismissal of all current manifestations of Church and State alike.¹⁴⁹ He also goes on to reject the idea implicit in Buchman's formulation of the 'God-controlled personality' that there could be any such thing as a "perfect ruler", who obtains perfect guidance from God, as the evidence from history has tended to prove otherwise.¹⁵⁰ In spite of its supposed anti-institutional nature, the Oxford Group becomes yet another institution with its own brand of dogma, and one whose rhetoric seems to be concerned with 'control'.

All du Maurier's MRA stories imply that 'divine guidance' is easy to obtain, always on tap, and that its message is unmistakable. This is in accord with Buchman's philosophy, as stated in March, 1935, at a national demonstration in Kronberg, Denmark:

Any man can pick up divine messages if he will put his receiving set in order. Definite, accurate, adequate information can come from the Mind of God to the minds of men. This is normal prayer.¹⁵¹

For instance, in the tale of the two raucous evacuees 'George and Jimmy', no one is able to handle them until they are finally billeted in the home of a woman who lives by MRA principles. She is able to settle a dispute between the two warring brothers - which started by Jimmy name-calling George and George retaliating by pulling Jimmy's hair - in the following way:

"Now, you two sit quietly," she said, "and let that old stupid anger die away, and when a better feeling comes, let it show where *you* are wrong, and never mind about the other fellow. In this house I don't tell you what to do, nor my husband either. God tells you what to do. That better feeling you'll get in a minute is God." (CWp.24)

This type of guidance seems to rely on a simple good versus bad dichotomy, where what is good is completely self-evident and comes from God, and what is bad is not of God.¹⁵² In the mind of Buchman, complex situations requiring further evaluation than this just do not arise. There never needs to be a debate over exactly what the 'good' course of action would be. World conflicts, it seems, are comparable to the childish disputes of young brothers and can be handled in exactly the same way; as du Maurier implies in the same story, when she causes the woman to say:

"there's a war on, and you've had to leave home because Germany and England are fighting each other. You can't go home till they've stopped. It's bad enough having a war in the world without having it in the house as well. Do you think countries will ever agree if two boys like yourselves can't agree?" (CWp.24)

¹⁴⁹ Driberg, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 22-3.

¹⁵¹ Buchman, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁵² MRA rhetoric never seems to state where 'bad' thoughts come from. There does not seem to be a devil in its version of Christianity.

There is never a 'good' reason for a childhood fight and thus, for Buchman, there is never a 'good' excuse for a world conflict; Buchman does not need to delve into any of the real causes of any of the political situations with which he is confronted, for the answer is plainly a fault in black and white morality. Unfortunately, Buchman's philosophy on 'Guidance' is self-defeating for if the answer is so very self-evident, then there is no real need to listen to God's guidance.

The other examples du Maurier gives in her stories of divine guidance are all, unfortunately, of this simplistic nature. Mrs Brown, in 'The Admiralty Regrets', hears two voices arguing in her mind when she thinks about the danger her boys are in:

One said: "They are going to die. I am going to be unhappy, I have no future, no hope and no faith." The other said: "God loves your sons and can take care of them better than you. It's selfish to give way to fears and grief, when others need you. You can help them to find faith." (CWp.17)

The voice of God and the consequent attitude Mrs Brown takes are all plainly labelled in this passage, as they are in the following passage from 'Over the Ration Books,' when Tom sees an opportunity to make money by charging the legal maximum prices to his customers, even though he is still getting goods at the same wholesale price from the dealers:

"Come on, Tom,' says one little voice inside me, 'there's a chance to make a bit extra.' 'Hold on, Tom,' says another voice, 'you know you don't have to charge the customer more until you have to pay more yourself.' (CWp.31)

It seems self evident that anything requiring more complex guidance from God would be completely open to error, but the errors in judgement that Buchman and the Oxford Group made in the name of Guidance were never admitted, and as an example I refer you back to some of the statements Buchman made about Hitler mentioned earlier in this chapter. Driberg cites the criticisms about Guidance made by the Rt Revd M. J. Browne, in his Catholic Truth Society pamphlet on the movement:

Groupists actually speak of 'listening-in' to the Holy Ghost: whenever they run up against a difficulty they stop for guidance. Such an idea of God is crudely anthropomorphic, derogatory to God's honour, and contrary to natural morality.... Guidance as understood by the Groups encourages all kinds of illusions; it undermines the sense of personal moral responsibility, it leads to fanaticism.¹⁵³

The idea of 'Guidance' being anthropomorphic – however crude – does not seem to be a useful criticism, as no convincing reason is given as to why a god should not adopt what we would see as human characteristics in order to communicate. Instead, this criticism seems to be inspired by sectarian jealousy,

¹⁵³ M.J. Browne, in Driberg, op. cit., p. 193. The ellipses are in Driberg's version. No citation is given other than appears in the text above.

in that we have a Catholic who seems concerned that the Buchmanites may have a preferential ‘hotline’ to God, a fear which is all the more ironic since it is the Catholics who claim that their divinely inspired leader is infallible. What is not credible is that any god would communicate instantly to order, and give automatic responses to either the most mundane or the most complex of questions. It certainly does not seem to have been du Maurier’s own experience as her comments to Lean – recorded in Forster’s biography – demonstrate; “‘I think I must be a rotten receiving set,’ she wrote to Garth, ‘a valve loose or something – all I get is a “wait and see” signal, and it will arrange itself.’”¹⁵⁴ Here it can be seen that du Maurier is questioning her own experience of MRA and divine guidance with the aid of the same mechanical metaphor that Buchman himself had used when he talked of ‘listening-in’; if God is a device set at permanent transmit, then du Maurier can only suggest that her lack of reception is a personal fault. It is also possible to see du Maurier’s comment as a form of politesse, since she may have felt that it was more prudent to criticise herself to a committed person such as Lean than to question the whole basis of the movement and risk causing offence. Evidently, du Maurier did not receive the “power” that she claims – in the ‘Epilogue’ - came to all the people in her stories (CWp.85), however “cynical” and “doubtful” they might be (CWp.85). Ironically, du Maurier’s personal tale is the only story that does not give witness to the supposed power of MRA.

ENDWORD

From the preceding discussion it is evident that *Come Wind, Come Weather* is a twifomed, and hence palimpsested, work. Du Maurier’s rewriting of previously published newspaper articles is an attempt to make real stories seem more ‘true,’ or perhaps more accessible, by fictionalising them. Life is hence turned into reportage and then into fiction. Like the palimpsest, the work is thus double-written historically. But it is also double-written rhetorically; MRA’s language shows clearly in all the stories, but even so occasional glimpses of du Maurier’s irrepressible personality put in an appearance, especially where issues of gender are mentioned, or where MRA states overwhelmingly that their methods ‘WORK’. Du Maurier’s correspondence suggests that she cannot fully imbibe *some* of the rhetoric of MRA and cannot really live by its practices. I use the word ‘some’ advisedly, because it will become evident in my chapter on du Maurier’s correspondence with Victor Gollancz that there are aspects of the rhetoric of MRA that fell onto the palimpsest of du Maurier’s mind only to resurrect themselves later.

¹⁵⁴ Du Maurier, cited in Forster, op. cit., p. 150.

Thus, whilst du Maurier may not have been able to ‘listen-in’ to a transcendent god to receive Divine Guidance, ideas about familial solidarity leading to national solidarity certainly settled, bore fruit and were then used openly in her discussions of the causes Gollancz espoused. Du Maurier may have been attracted to MRA because it was in itself divided on some level that it did not openly admit: its stated aim was to bring peace but its own title was militaristic and its rhetoric was one of revolution but its outcomes were conservative. Perhaps this explains the tricksterish nature that people such as Walter Clark have assigned to the man who started the movement; as Eister records, Buchman’s “personality is open to several interpretations, which explains why he is a schemer to one man, a naïve child to another, and a saint to still another.”¹⁵⁵ Additionally, Buchman’s emphasis on the Renaissance and its associated ideas of cultural resurrection and spiritual rebirth may also have appealed to a woman such as du Maurier who likewise was to appropriate the Renaissance as a period of shared ‘cultural memory’ which, as I will demonstrate, spectralises herself, the people of influence in her life, and the characters she creates. There is thus ‘collision’ and ‘collusion’ in du Maurier’s relationship with MRA and its principles, though the former is perhaps more openly admitted than the latter.

¹⁵⁵ Walter Clark, in Eister, op. cit., p. 107. Eister gives the citation as Walter Clark, ‘The Contribution of the Groups’, *Christian Century*, LI (January 24, 1934), p. 126.

PART 2 AT THE FEET OF VICTOR GOLLANCZ: DU MAURIER AND GOLLANCZ – A *PLATONIC* FRIENDSHIP

“Plato heaven. Do you think I could teach myself Greek, or shall I come and sit at your feet and learn the alphabet?”¹
(du Maurier to Gollancz)

“I should love to teach you Greek, to teach it to you perpetually: provided that, at intervals, you would do other than sit at my feet.”²
(Gollancz to du Maurier)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the interplay of correspondence between du Maurier and Victor Gollancz, her publisher, highlighting their respective attitudes to the political, social, psychological and religious questions that exercised the minds of their time. Like my chapter on du Maurier’s engagement with Frank Buchman’s Moral Re-Armament movement, it is designed to assess how much the lives, organisations and ideas she came into contact with interpenetrate or are held separate on the palimpsest which is du Maurier’s life and literary career. In the words of Dillon, my chapter palimpsestuously “negotiates the relationship between life and writing,” firstly between du Maurier’s own life and her writing, and secondly between herself and that of Gollancz’s life and writing.³ This palimpsest becomes queered if we note the male role that du Maurier assigns to herself in the epigrams which begin this chapter; it is only male followers who would have sat at the feet of the philosopher-king Plato, a role she has obviously assigned to Gollancz. Du Maurier’s strange hetero-cum-homosocial relationship with the male world is further complicated by her rejection of a male Christian god and acceptance of a female earth mother goddess, which, as I intend to show, is in itself a palimpsestuous phenomenon.

My study is based on the letters between du Maurier and Gollancz, which form a subsection of the vast Gollancz archives, currently housed in the Modern Records Centre of Warwick University. Gollancz was du Maurier’s main publisher from 1934 onwards, when she turned to him to publish her biography of her father Gerald du Maurier. Du Maurier’s first three works had been published by Heinemann, but she did not think that they had done enough to promote these books, and now that she was married she was feeling an increased financial burden. Gollancz had already made a name for himself with his innovative and dynamic publicity, and so it would seem that there was no-one better placed to

¹ Du Maurier, Letter to Victor Gollancz dated Aug 24. Victor Gollancz Papers (MSS.157), Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick. MSS.157/3/LI/1/9. Although not stated, the letter is from 1953.

² Victor Gollancz, Letter to du Maurier dated Aug 25, 53. Ibid, MSS.157/3/LI/LWT/1/11.

³ Dillon, ‘Queering the Palimpsest: H.D.’, op. cit., p. 190.

assist her with the “self-advancement” necessary to make her the “breadwinner” she wished to be.⁴ The letters in the Gollancz collection record not only a professional relationship but also a deep and mutually respectful friendship between two talented, thoughtful people. Although du Maurier was published by Gollancz from 1934, and the relationship between them lasted until his death in 1967, I have chosen to concentrate on the 1950s since this is when the bulk of the letters in the collection were written. The 1950s mark du Maurier’s middle years, traditionally a time to re-assess the attitudes imbibed during one’s youth. Thus my intention is to determine how the interaction between the so-called conservatism of du Maurier’s youth – as advanced by Alison Light in *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* - and the religiously influenced socialism of Gollancz may have helped shape some of her views and actions.⁵ The chapter is divided into two sections; part one will look at aspects of du Maurier’s correspondence which could be seen as conservative and betray a political element to her spiritual life, and part two will reverse this process by looking at those parts of her correspondence which could be deemed Conservative and show a spiritual element to the political discussion taking place between herself and Gollancz.

PART ONE

EDUCATING DU MAURIER

Sheila Hodges, du Maurier’s editor at Gollancz, confirms in *Gollancz: The Story of a Publishing House, 1928-1978*, that du Maurier became one of Gollancz’s “dearest friends”.⁶ In an article du Maurier wrote at the time of his death in 1967, she makes reference to the impact that Gollancz had on her life:

If then, as an author, I can no longer send my manuscripts to his desk and await his judgment, I can, as a pupil, remember all that he ever taught me with gratitude and love.⁷

Gollancz was a self-confirmed political and social educator, whose views were always informed by his religious and socialist sense. He had attempted to carry out a campaign of social awareness amongst his pupils during his time as a master of Classics at Repton during the First World War. This ‘political education’ experiment at Repton is detailed in Gollancz’s *More for Timothy* – a book with which du Maurier was keenly familiar – and its democratising aim is described thus:

⁴ Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), pp. 113, 114.

⁵ Gollancz’s religious position was especially complicated. I therefore intend to draw out some of the complexities as the chapter progresses. Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991).

⁶ Sheila Hodges, *Gollancz: The Story of a Publishing House, 1928-1978* (London: Gollancz, 1978), p. 233.

⁷ Du Maurier, cited in Hodges, *ibid.*, p. 233.

The real necessity was, not any sort of dilution, but such a new educational technique as would transform the public schools (while doing a great deal more to them besides) into engines for abolishing the class structure of society altogether, with its division into rich and poor, cultured and uncultured, gentlemen and – whatever you might like to call them.⁸

Gollancz's agenda was imbued with the sense of the Classics as interpreted by the Renaissance scholars, whose whole organisation was a “standing protest against the theocratic and feudal ideas on which medievalism was based”.⁹ The Renaissance scholars taught Greek so that their pupils might transform the world; as Gollancz writes, “Pericles, Plato and Phidias were studied, not merely as masters of an old world, but as models for a new”.¹⁰ Gollancz thus decided to base his teaching methods on an updated version of those used in the Renaissance. Ultimately, Gollancz was fired from his position, not because his experiment failed, but because, in a sense, it worked too well; he carried the pupils of Repton along with him, but paid insufficient attention to the impact this would have on his ‘high Tory’ colleagues. This episode made Gollancz only more determined to pursue a campaign of political education, and a move into publishing seemed the ideal vehicle for furthering his aims. The emphasis of Gollancz's publishing house – founded in 1927 – moved steadily towards books on politics, economics and sociology, and eventually he founded The Left Book Club in 1936 as a response to the rise of Hitler and the threat of Nazism.¹¹ It was into this politically motivated milieu that du Maurier moved when she transferred her allegiance to Gollancz from Heinemann in 1934. Her obituary for Gollancz, quoted above, acknowledges at the same time both his educative role and the fact that she was his willing and grateful pupil for the remainder of his life.

The du Maurier section of the Victor Gollancz archives is thus significant because it charts her engagement with, and sometimes gentle criticism of, religiously influenced socialist views as filtered through the mind of a Renaissance-inspired Classicist. Such a meeting of minds is all the more fascinating given du Maurier's wealthy, late Edwardian era upbringing and the “conservative modernism” this seems to have engendered. “[C]onservative modernism” is a phrase used by Light when referring to such female, middle class authors as du Maurier in her work *Forever England*.¹² Light's conception of

⁸ Victor Gollancz, *More for Timothy: Being the Second Instalment of an Autobiographical Letter to his Grandson* (London: Gollancz, 1953), p. 152. The first volume is Victor Gollancz, *My Dear Timothy: An Autobiographical Letter to his Grandson* (London: Gollancz, 1952). Gollancz had originally envisaged this as a trilogy, but the third volume was never forthcoming, much to du Maurier's disappointment. The third volume was to be called *Last Words for Timothy* (the second volume suggests it was due for publication in 1954).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹¹ See Hodges, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-143.

¹² Light, *op. cit.*, p. 11. Du Maurier was born in 1907. The ‘Edwardian era’ is the reign of Edward VII – 1901 to 1910 – but is sometimes taken to include the period up to the start of the First World War. This period has been seen as the time when the class system was still at its most rigid.

“conservative modernism” is as paradoxical as du Maurier herself, and thus peculiarly appropriate, for it represents the kind of mindset that is “conservative in effect” and yet is in revolt against a Victorian past.¹³ Du Maurier’s own description of her ambivalent mind, and the reason behind it can be found in

The Rebecca Notebook :

Respect for tradition vies in me with a contempt for authority imposed from above, a legacy of French temperament passed on from that nation of individualists.¹⁴

Whilst du Maurier considered herself to be Gollancz’s pupil, her different political stance meant that she did not imbibe his views uncritically, nor did she fail to express her own opinion where this differed from that of Gollancz. This shows that the friendship was one of mutual trust and respect, since so often in her relationships with others du Maurier would hide her own opinion behind a mask of politeness for fear of causing offence.¹⁵ Seen in this light, Gollancz thus appears to be one of the few people with whom she could express some of her real views. This is also slightly odd if we consider it from Gollancz’s angle, since he was renowned for being hypersensitive to any form of criticism. There is a possible explanation for the tenor of their exchanges, both in their mutual accommodation of opposing views, and the almost lover-like nature of their vocabulary, and this is to be found in the words of Ruth Edwards in her biography of Gollancz:

It was the sure knowledge of how happy he was made by words of love and praise that led his close female colleagues to write to him like lovers. No one could accuse him of keeping his needs secret. When du Maurier eventually reciprocated the ‘Darling Daphne’ opening with a ‘Darling Victor’, Hodges wrote to her to report that he was cockahoop over it.¹⁶

This goes a long way towards clarifying the slightly risqué nuances inherent in the communication between du Maurier and Gollancz in the epigraphs which appear at the beginning of this chapter. Du Maurier’s professed wish to sit at Gollancz’s feet as if he were the great philosopher Plato indicates an attitude of both submission and adoration (however much feigned). Gollancz accepts du Maurier’s proposed discipleship with an effusive desire to teach her perpetually providing she also adopts other – unexplained – positions which do not involve being seated at his feet. Oddly, since Plato’s pupils would

¹³ Ibid., p.11.

¹⁴ Daphne du Maurier, ‘This I Believe’, in *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan, 1982), p. 101. This article was first published in George Unwin (ed.), *What I Believe* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966).

¹⁵ This idea of the mask is something which will recur in connection with the men du Maurier writes about - as I explore in later chapters. It is as though du Maurier operates a form of self censorship with regards to the palimpsest of her mind (compare the monks who suppressed narratives on the palaeographic palimpsests), only allowing one of the intertwined narratives to show through whilst hiding other aspects of her nature that she does not want revealed.

¹⁶ Ruth Edwards, *Victor Gollancz: A Biography* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1987), p. 563.

all have been men, there is a strange undercurrent of both hetero- and homo-social bonding about this exchange between two colleagues.

It is clear that du Maurier saw her relationship with Gollancz and his publishing house as in some way enabling her education:

I can't tell you how I loved our evening. I don't [sic] hear your kind of "talk" often enough, chiefly owing to my hermit life in Cornwall so it is my own fault, but I do love listening to you and asking questions and discussing all the things I think about when I am alone.¹⁷

Also, she did not ignore the fact that Gollancz had founded the Left Book Club in the 1930s, but instead had actively tried to embrace it. The exchanges between herself and Gollancz confirm her interest in this political phenomenon; as she writes to Gollancz "I used to read the Left Book Club News, and all the Left Club Books, as you published them".¹⁸ This highlights a positive interest in, if not necessarily an agreement with, the socialist position. But for all this, she was still greedy for more intellectual input. She was full of appreciation for Gollancz's political experiment at Repton and wished that she could have been a pupil at the school. Then she could have "sat at you [sic] feet and got drunk on Plato".¹⁹ Here, she seems to be consciously indulging an ongoing fantasy of being a member of an elite male milieu, which prostrates itself before a master to learn the designated secrets of the group. As a woman, even of the middle classes, she had been forced to realise that her "education ha[d] been neglected."²⁰ The classical education she came to desire, which was open to the male counterparts of her class, had been denied her. Reluctantly, she acknowledged:

Well, anyway, I can't [sic] turn back the clock and become a schoolboy at your feet at Repton, but I can be Pupil Number One of the Gollancz School for Straying Novelists, correspondance [sic] class, diplomas given[.]²¹

Evidently, like the disciples of Aldo Donati in *The Flight of the Falcon*, du Maurier wanted to play the role of a 'lost boy' who is suddenly found and put back on the path to personal fulfilment. It is tempting to draw a further parallel between Gollancz's own political experiments and this later novel, since Aldo Donati was also engaged in a Renaissance-inspired consciousness-raising experiment within the confines of an academic establishment. In both cases, the establishment in question had an uneasy relationship with those who had been thus stirred. A subtle change in outlook, however, can be detected between du Maurier's professed attitude in the Gollancz phase and that in the novel; whilst she seemed happy to be

¹⁷ Du Maurier, in a letter dated Feb 21. Gollancz Papers, op cit, MSS.157/3/1/DM/6. Although the year is not stated, the letter is contained in a sequence of letters from 1955.

¹⁸ Du Maurier, in a letter dated May 18. Ibid, MSS.157/3/LI/MFT/1/47.i. This letter is from 1953.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

the prostrate female – albeit in schoolboy guise – for Gollancz, *The Flight of the Falcon* is continually haunted negatively by the image of a female in such a submissive position, implying a reconsideration of the passive female role. In *The Flight of the Falcon* the woman in question is found murdered and lying in a prone position outside a church, suggesting that she has been rejected by an institution which should theoretically have given her pastoral care. In the case of Gollancz though, it could just be that, like several other women of his acquaintance, du Maurier thought it politic to massage his ego by offering him such images of her own prostration, hence perhaps the reason for signing off her letter, “And now no more, but so much love, from your pupil and disciple, Daphne”.²² Even if this submission was partly faked, there would still seem to be an element of willing acquiescence in her collusion with Gollancz’s ego, since such role-playing with him allowed her to indulge her own long held fantasies. Perhaps, when she moved to the Gollancz publishing house in 1934 for the publication of *Gerald*, she saw in the firm’s founder a vibrant new father-figure to replace the real, and much larger than life, father she had so recently lost.

There was, however, nothing faked about du Maurier’s hunger for a political, religious and psychological education. The correspondence between Gollancz and du Maurier highlights the vast reading programme that she continually set for herself, with much of it being provided out of his firm’s own book list. As well as her devouring of the social and political output of the Left Book Club, she often badgered Gollancz to send her other books; as she writes on May 14th, 1955, “I’ve a passionate interest always in medical or psychological matters, so if you have anything in that way, do send it to me”.²³ One of her regrets was that Gollancz did not publish her “loved Jung”,²⁴ but there were many other items on his list to atone for this. A perusal of the numerous books referred to by du Maurier will serve to give an indication of her preoccupations at this time. Gollancz sent her two works by Krishnamurti – namely, *Education and the Significance of Life* (1953) and *The First and Last Freedom* (1954).²⁵ Krishnamurti was a twentieth century philosopher who sought authentic religious knowledge but rejected the idea that any belief system could be crystallised into creeds by the representatives of sects; hence religious experience belongs purely to the individual and is not something that can be imposed from without. This

²² Ibid.

²³ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated May 14, 1955. Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/1/DM/7.

²⁴ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated January 27th. Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/1/DM/3. This letter is from 1955.

²⁵ Krishnamurti is purported to have written *At the Feet of the Masters* – a classic text for anyone interested in the Theosophists. This is not to say that Krishnamurti was a Theosophist but only that he studied their belief system. I mention this work because of its co-incidence with the title of my chapter. The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky.

resonates strongly with du Maurier's rejection of religious authority, and her own method of seeking a more personal belief not conditioned by any orthodoxy; this is something I will elaborate on in the next section of this chapter. That du Maurier was interested in esoteric religious concerns rather than the exoteric utterances of the orthodox churches is perhaps highlighted by the fact that she confesses to having read Maurice Nicoll's *The New Man* (1951) which, amongst other things, reinterprets the relationship between Christ and Judas by suggesting "that they were equally participants in an inevitable drama".²⁶ Nicoll was a pupil of G.I. Gurdjieff, whose teaching can best be described as a syncretic combination of Sufism, Theosophy and esoteric Christianity. Du Maurier had confessed to reading about Gurdjieff in a letter to Gollancz in 1952, although she was more than a little critical:

Just read rather a depressing book about that Russian mystic Gurdjieff called "In Search of the Miraculous" – and his answer to living is to stand for hours saying "Ego...Ego...Ego..." and to listen to the sound in your chest, also to practice dervish dances. When we die, unless very high of intellect, we feed the moon, which is responsible [sic] for all wars, anger, and fatalities anyway! I'm damned if I'm going to feed the moon."²⁷

Although she read avidly, it is evident that she also judged her reading matter keenly, so whilst she may have appreciated the play of ideas in the works there was a limit to what she felt she could accept. The book on Gurdjieff, with its references to the external agency of a devouring moon, was obviously something that only served to ignite the rebellious streak in her nature. *In Search of the Miraculous* (1947) was written by P.D. Ouspensky, who also wrote *Tertium Organum* (1912), a book supposed to be a sequel to Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* (1620). I mention this to draw attention to du Maurier's circular interests; her involvement in the field of Francis Bacon studies will be discussed in a later chapter.

‘ἀπόστασις’ – ‘apostasis’

A poem entitled ‘ἀπόστασις’ was found with a letter from du Maurier to Gollancz dated November 23, 1955.²⁸ Gollancz himself was the author of several works, mostly of a political, social and religious nature, and he was in the habit, like all publishers, of sending out advance copies of his works for review and comment. Du Maurier herself thus read some of Gollancz's own works before they were officially

²⁶ See Gollancz's letter to du Maurier dated 5th Dec, 1955, and her reply on the subject dated Dec 7, 55. Gollancz Papers, op. cit., items MSS.157/3/I/DM/16 and MSS.157/3/I/DM/17 respectively. The quotation I have used is Gollancz's summary of one of the arguments in the book.

²⁷ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 7. Gollancz Papers, *ibid.*, MSS.157/3/LI/MDT/3/123.

²⁸ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Nov 23, 1955. Gollancz papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/I/DM/13. The poem ‘Apostasis’ has been published in Helen Taylor (ed.), *The Daphne du Maurier Companion* (London: Virago, 2007). I informed Helen Taylor of this poem and she decided to include it in her book along with a condensed version of my discussion of it from this chapter.

published. The poem mentioned here forms part of du Maurier's response to one of Gollancz's anthologies of quotations. Although it is not stated by name in the letter that accompanies the poem, from the date – November 23 1955 - it seems apparent that the anthology in question is *From Darkness to Light: A Confession of Faith in the Form of an Anthology*.²⁹ Gollancz stated in the 'Foreword' that he intended this work to be "personal – and indeed semi-autobiographical",³⁰ meaning perhaps that it incorporated his own religious interests and highlighted the spiritual journey he had taken in life. *From Darkness to Light* is culled from highly eclectic sources, taking in such authors as Nietzsche, Swedenborg, Blake, Jung, Plato, and Buddha. The path that Gollancz sets himself in his anthology meanders through works of religious orthodoxy such as *The Bible* and *The Hebrew Prayer Book*, as well as through works of mysticism from various cultures, such as the Upanishads, Sufism, Hasidism, and the Apocrypha.³¹ His selection of items for inclusion seems to highlight a personal tension between exotericism and esotericism, and between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and is hence a syncretic approach to religious matters.

Gollancz's new anthology was read with close attention by du Maurier, and subsequently it greatly exercised her mind. This can be seen in du Maurier's explanation behind the inspiration for writing the poem, which draws attention to both Gollancz's paradoxical nature and her personal struggle to come to terms with a similar dilemma:

Your anthology is having the most frightful effect upon me that I can't settle to working out the plot of *The Double* at all, but want to shout and proclaim the reason for living, and loving, and fighting, and dying – I truly am adoring every word of it – and while I agree with everything yet at the same time I become more pagan, an odd paradox which is in your nature too, and in a frenzy yesterday after sawing down a tree I write the enclosed poem[.]³²

The poem itself is a passionate portrayal of the paternal god she resents, combined with an exposition of the maternal goddess she embraces. In an odd sense, however, the two versions of the deity in the poem – the Christian God and the pagan Gaia - are inextricably linked in her imagination since the negative attributes of the one help to define, by way of contrasting opposites, the positive attributes of the other.

When she writes of the Christian God her phrasing is full of words expressing negativity:

²⁹ Victor Gollancz, *From Darkness to Light: A Confession of Faith in the Form of an Anthology* (London: Gollancz, 1956). As the work was published in 1956 du Maurier would have been reading an advance copy. Gollancz had also published *A Year of Grace: Passages Chosen and Arranged to Express a Mood about God and Man* (London: Gollancz, 1950).

³⁰ Ibid., (no page numbers in the 'Foreword').

³¹ The word Upanishad is derived from the Sanskrit upa (near), ni (down), and s(h)ad (to sit), meaning therefore to sit down near. The image is again of the pupil at the master's feet learning the secret teachings.

³² Du Maurier, from a letter dated November 23 1955. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/1/DM/13. 'The Double' refers to the working title of her novel *The Scapegoat*.

I protest, and will not suffer the Cross,
Nor put my hand to the plough, nor bewail the loss
Of the lambs who fled from the fold, and were saved by love,
Redeemed by the Sacred Heart, and the God Above.
Listen, it was not so when the world began,
When Chaos reigned in the night and the first man
Knelt on his bended knees and blest the earth
That gave him birth.³³

What she will “not” accept about the transcendent ‘God Above’ is forthright and clear, and is followed by two equally direct “nor” statements; what she *will* accept about the immanent ‘earth’ goddess is prefaced by the negative statement “it was not so,” which is designed to refute the attributes of the God she will not countenance. The poem thus becomes a twifomed entity with the two belief systems palimpsestuously involuted, since the one cannot be defined without reference to the other. The title of the poem – ‘Apostasis’ – seems to reflect this dual system, and points to the same self-consciousness of the paradox in her nature that is expressed in the letter. ‘Apostasis’ is a state of rebellion from a creed, and thus in using this word du Maurier shows that she remains always mindful of the tradition from which her pagan preference should liberate her. Correspondingly, the more she thinks of the Christian god, the more strongly she feels about Gaia, so that in her love for the goddess she can never forget that she is an apostate, or rebel.

In being an apostate from the traditional Christian religion, du Maurier enacts yet another series of paradoxes. In rejecting a religious tradition, she simultaneously follows a family tradition, that is to say the tradition of apostasis established both her own father (Gerald) and his father (George) before him. A further paradox lies in the fact that, whilst embracing the apostatic views of her paternal ancestry, she oddly rejects a paternal concept of god. George du Maurier, her grandfather, wrote about his rejection of some of the central tenets of Christianity in his novel *Trilby*. The type of god he cannot believe in is one that seems to be a:

self glorifying ogre in human shape, with human passions, and most inhuman hates – who suddenly made us out of nothing, one fine day – just for a freak – and made us so badly that we fell the next – and turned us adrift the day after – damned us from the very beginning[.]³⁴

He goes on to reject other key ideas such as “everlasting torment” for the disobedient, which nobody would care to inflict on “the basest criminal”, and also the idea of “an eternity of bliss” for the good,

³³ Du Maurier, from the poem ‘Apostasis’. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/1/DM/14.i.

³⁴ George du Maurier, *Trilby* (London: Dent, 1978), p. 216.

which would be “so tame” nobody could stand it.³⁵ In her correspondence with Gollancz, du Maurier implies that he – Gollancz - shares some of the non-conventional ideas of her grandfather, her father and herself, when she writes:

I adore your ideas about God, they remind me of Daddy, and I know I share them to a large extent. So monstrous that bigotted [sic] view, rammed down one's throat as a child, and if one is a church-goer as an adult too, that the world was created, or rather Man was created by God, for the very unlaudable purpose of worshipping Him. It makes him such a monster, and the thing that infuriated Daddy was the abject humility expected of man, by the church.³⁶

It would seem apparent that du Maurier was influenced directly by her father, and also indirectly by her grandfather through his novel. Du Maurier's Christian god, like George du Maurier's in *Trilby*, has all the qualities of an egotistical monster. Gollancz, too, was influenced by his own ancestral line, but in an inverse way; whereas the apostasis of du Maurier's paternal line served to confirm her own way of thinking, it was the orthodox Jewishness of Gollancz's paternal line that offended him and actually led to his becoming an apostate.³⁷ Whilst the apostasis of du Maurier and Gollancz is therefore mutual, their respective religious backgrounds are not. Gollancz was actually an apostate from orthodox Judaism; when he rebelled he turned to liberal Judaism and then to Christianity. In du Maurier's apostasis she turned from Christianity to paganism. As I have begun to show, and will become more clear in the discussion that follows, the act of apostasy both for du Maurier and Gollancz was in no way a clean break, since neither of them could ever shed their regard for the tradition they tried to reject.

Du Maurier's rebellion is against the orthodox view that the Christian god is an authoritarian patriarch who makes demands of the people he is said to have created. Her poem makes it plain that she cannot countenance the “paternal pride” inherent in a god who is supposed to behave in this way.³⁸ Not for du Maurier is “the God of the sky” who “watches on high”. Such a god, by implication, is too distant, too cold, and seems divorced from the genuine life of earthly, earthy man. Nor will she “suffer the Cross”, which is associated with atonement for man's collective sin, since she does not believe that any genuine god could condemn man from the very instant of his origin. Hence du Maurier “will not be mocked by fables of Palestine”, or by “martyred saints, and sinners reconciled”, feeling perhaps that the god who condemns man then adds insult to injury by persistently drawing attention to the predicament in

³⁵ Ibid., p. 216.

³⁶ Du Maurier, from a letter to Gollancz dated May 18th (1953). Victor Gollancz Papers op. cit., MSS.157/3/LI/MFT/1/47.i.

³⁷ Gollancz's Jewish upbringing and his thoughts on Jewish orthodoxy can be found in Victor Gollancz, *My Dear Timothy: An Autobiographical Letter to his Grandson* (London: Gollancz, 1952).

³⁸ Du Maurier, from the poem ‘Apostasis’, op.cit.

which He has placed him. A god who is capable of such injustices is not, in du Maurier's view, worthy of subservience and worship. In her essay, 'This I Believe', du Maurier recognises in herself this "contempt for authority imposed from above" even though she knows, paradoxically, that she cannot escape a certain "respect for tradition".³⁹ There is a lingering regard for Christianity, but in an attempt to thwart this continual 'return of the repressed' her denunciation becomes, at the same time, powerful and passionate. In a sense, du Maurier's palimpsest is the inverse of the palaeographic one since it is Christianity which is preserved and transmitted at the same time as it is denied by her pagan interests. This ongoing respect, laced with anger, for what they profess to have left behind is common to both du Maurier and Gollancz. When it suited him, Gollancz was a Christian with the Christian community and a Jew with the Jewish community, and would frequently rail at both groups from within. In her biography of Gollancz, Edwards points out that this paradox had not gone unnoticed in his own time; as she writes. "[s]ince the end of the war he had earned a deliciously paradoxical reputation: the Jew who was 'the best Christian in England'".⁴⁰ Edwards cites Lever's review of Gollancz's *Our Threatened Values* (1946) as further evidence of his provocative tendency to criticise causes from within:

He will persist in urging causes upon their official sponsors. For years he has expounded Christianity to Christians, liberalism to Liberals, and socialism to Socialists. He is so insistently on the side of the angels that his approach makes every cherub wriggle in his seat. And those of the devil's party fare no better.⁴¹

Lever accused Gollancz of an "obsessive syncretism", in that "he was always trying to reconcile everything," so that he could "weave a synthesis that satisfied him".⁴² It is tempting to see du Maurier's attempts to improve her education concerning political and religious matters in a similar light, for she seemed intent on creating her own synthesis by appropriating the best elements of all the creeds that she subjected herself to, whilst not really fully adhering to the dictates of any of them. Du Maurier, in one of her letters to Gollancz, states that she agrees "most passionately with [his] refusal to follow a belief, or a code, or a tradition, because other people have done so."⁴³ A consideration of this syncretistic approach to ideologies leads her to conclude, "I think we are all of us schizos to a very great extent."⁴⁴

³⁹ Daphne du Maurier, 'This I Believe', *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan, 1982), p. 101.

⁴⁰ Edwards, op. cit., p. 455.

⁴¹ J. W. Lever, cited in Edwards, *ibid.*, p. 465. Edwards gives no more information than that this is from an *Humanitas* review by J.W. Lever of Gollancz's *Our Threatened Values*.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 466.

⁴³ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2, 52. Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\LI\MDT\3\117.i

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Thus du Maurier's poem 'Apostasis' should perhaps be read in the light of her self-confessed schizoid nature. Although du Maurier might say that she cannot accept the idea of any ultimate, transcendent god, who sets himself above and beyond the sphere of man, she still cannot refrain from referring to him repeatedly, even if this is to put him in a negative light. Du Maurier's preferred divinity Gaia, unlike the distant Christian God, is always present wherever man himself is to be found, and she freely offers herself as aid "so that all things, crying for succour, should have rest". She is therefore a divinity which gives rather than demands, and is always at work "stanching the rising Flood" of man's need "[w]ith her own blood". Gaia does not expect abject submission or eternal thankfulness for any of her actions from her children because she is not separate from creation; on the contrary, she is an intimate and affectionate part of it:

Her children neither bowing, nor praying apart,
But flinging themselves upon her living heart
To share in creation's joy, creation's power,
Each mortal hour[.]

It is the immanence of the mother goddess which most assuages du Maurier's own spiritual need. Religion must be personal for du Maurier, not remote, and Gaia fulfils this necessary quality through her chthonic nature; she implies that her heart and soul are reserved for the immanent goddess Gaia who represents the Earth and is its essential sustaining spirit. But in all this we should remain mindful of the fact that du Maurier cannot entirely extirpate the Christian God from her spiritual landscape; the very attributes of the daimon she denies somehow give definition to the Gaia she embraces.

There is, however, an even more personal reason why du Maurier might feel so involved with Gaia, and this can be found in the stories surrounding Daphne's namesake in Greek mythology - as du Maurier reveals in a letter to Gollancz dated 31st March 1958, sent just prior to his planned holiday in Greece:

Have a lovely time in Greece, and as you stand in Apollo's temple at Delphi think of the first priestess, Daphne, who was defending it for the Earth-Mother, Gaia, when Apollo seized it. This was the original legend, according to my many researches, and that chat about a pretty nymph is all my eye!⁴⁵

Du Maurier was extremely well read in the legends surrounding Apollo and Daphne, having made a special study of them in the 1950s. The legends had a huge impact on her in this period, as can also be seen from the letter to Maureen Baker-Munton dated July 4th 1957, which forms the appendix to Margaret Forster's biography of du Maurier. The letter to Baker-Munton also gives the two versions of the Daphne

⁴⁵ Du Maurier, in a letter to Gollancz dated 31st March 1958. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/I/DM/21.

and Apollo myth, the one stated explicitly above about Daphne the priestess, but also the one hinted at whereby Daphne the nymph:

was chased by Apollo and to save herself from waxing, called to her father – a river god – to turn her into a tree. Could be my story. Daddy-complex, and don't forget that the tree of life in Norse mythology is Ygdrasil.⁴⁶

Evidently, she was able to see her own life through the lens of such myths, identifying closely with 'Daphne the nymph' in 1957 and then with 'Daphne the priestess' in 1958. It seems clear, therefore, that by the time she came to write her poem 'Apostasis' for Gollancz, du Maurier had styled herself as the latest 'priestess Daphne', guarding over the worship of Gaia. Du Maurier's poem thus becomes a means of defending Gaia and her temple a second time, not from Apollo on this occasion but from what she saw as the ravening clutches of the transcendent god of Christianity.

Published instances of du Maurier's poetry are rare, suggesting perhaps that this genre was rather more of a private, occasional pleasure than one intended for public consumption. The few poems that are publicly available can be found at the end of du Maurier's *The Rebecca Notebook*, and are entitled 'The Writer' (1926), 'Another World' (1947) and 'A Prayer?' (1967).⁴⁷ As many of the themes contained within 'Apostasis' recur in these poems, which are spaced at twenty year intervals in her life, I will examine these works to see how the theme develops over the years. 'The Writer' expresses the young du Maurier's experience of the act of writing. Oddly, at this stage in her life, she seems forced to reject the physical materiality of mother earth – her mountains, oceans, heaths and beaches - in favour of the "quiet" of an "empty room" and "the scratch of a pen".⁴⁸ Her imagination must suffice to supply what her artistic isolation denies her, as can be seen in the following lines:

I am the painter whose blind gaze defiled
Would conjure an ocean, who has never seen the sea break
On the wild shores of Finistère...⁴⁹

In a sense, however, the poem ingeniously demonstrates that her imaginative landscape is just as vivid as the real thing and can readily supply a wealth of inspiring detail, such that a beach is not a beach but the romantically 'wild shores' of some remote seeming location. Paradoxically, therefore, the physically unseen becomes the seen, even if only with the mind's eye. In the second poem - 'Another World' - du

⁴⁶ Du Maurier, in a letter to Maureen Baker-Munton dated July 4th, 1957, in Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), p. 422. Waxing is du Maurier code for making love. Ygdrasil is the name of her husband's boat.

⁴⁷ Daphne du Maurier, *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan, 1981), pp. 155-160. Note that these poems are intriguingly separated by almost exactly 20 years as if they are way markers in her life. They were written when she was approximately 20, 40 and 60. 'Another World' also appears at the end of the chapter 'Things Unknown' in Daphne du Maurier, *Enchanted Cornwall* (London: Pilot Productions, 1989).

⁴⁸ Du Maurier, 'The Writer', in *The Rebecca Notebook*, op. cit., p. 155.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

Maurier's imagination strays further into the realms of the unseen and the unknown in taking for her subject "the other world", or as she terms it "that great world which lives within our own."⁵⁰ We can see from the use of the latter phrase that her formulation of the spiritual realm in 'Another World' is again based on ideas of immanence rather than transcendence; what she is describing is somehow within the everyday world rather than above and beyond it. Like many of du Maurier's literary works, the poem 'Another World' presents the reader with unsettling thoughts and emotions; the 'other world' is not always a cosy place but instead is often fraught with fear and uncertainty. The 'other world' nags away at the brain as the spirit of the moors does to Mary in *Jamaica Inn*, as can be seen in the opening lines of the poem:

Last night the other world came much too near,
And with it fear.
I heard their voices whisper me from sleep,
And could not keep
My mind upon the dream, for still they came,
Calling my name[.]⁵¹

This poem highlights du Maurier's double-mindedness with respect to the spiritual realm, the joyous experience of it in 'Apostasis' being replaced by descriptions of shrillness and discordancy. The same note of ambivalence can be discerned from within the title of the third poem in *The Rebecca Notebook* - 'A Prayer?' - where the question mark registers her spiritual doubts. The poem is circular in that it begins and ends with the same refrain:

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child.⁵²

What is written about Jesus between the two refrains points to a character whose life and effect were anything but meek and mild, as we can see in the following words in the poem:

Falsely listened he who heard
Heaven's kingdom in your word.
This is your message, blessed Lord,
Peace I bring not, but a sword.⁵³

The poem thus expresses the sense of contradiction that du Maurier finds within the Christian religion, and hence the second usage of the 'Gentle Jesus' refrain is bitterly ironic. With regards to other poetry that du Maurier may have written there is a reference within the Gollancz archives to a second poem that she wrote for Gollancz, as du Maurier records:

⁵⁰ Du Maurier, 'Another World', in *The Rebecca Notebook*, op. cit., p. 158.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 158.

⁵² Du Maurier, 'A Prayer?', in *The Rebecca Notebook*, op. cit., p. 160.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 160.

Here is my Easter Morning poem for you and Ruth, I wonder if you will find it as blasphemous as Tommy. It might well be.⁵⁴

Unfortunately, this poem does not appear in the archive itself. What she says about it, however, emphasises her consciousness of the way her poems might be perceived by others, especially orthodox believers such as her husband Tommy. It is evident that du Maurier was not to be prevented from expressing her own opinion by any charges of blasphemy, preferring to think freely rather than suffer the externally imposed constraints laid down by so-called authorities. Man, the Bible and God himself must be consistently challenged.

In 'This I Believe' du Maurier confirms that her mode of independent thinking about her beliefs was inspired by Humbert Wolfe through his verse novel *The Uncelestial City*, published in 1930 by Gollancz.⁵⁵ Like Gollancz, Wolfe was himself an apostate from the Jewish orthodox faith who found solace in Christianity. This rebel nature is possibly the source of Wolfe's attraction for du Maurier. *The Uncelestial City* is a long, poem about the late Justice Crayfish, who in life had been on the Bench for a case against a young poet charged with having published blasphemous verse.⁵⁶ On his death, Crayfish arrives at the gates of the City of the title – Wolfe's version of the 'other world' - and is met by the gatekeeper, who plays the tune of entering on his fiddle and then accompanies Crayfish on his long pilgrimage retracing his life.⁵⁷ The fact that du Maurier remained interested in the work of Wolfe in her fifty-eighth year, thirty years after she first read his verse novel, points to the enduring effect he must have had on her spiritual imagination. Wolfe's poem gave her the freedom to think and write in ways that challenged the orthodox.

A further poetic example of her lateral thinking can be seen in a piece held in the du Maurier Family archives at the University of Exeter, which is entitled 'Remembrance Day' (1946).⁵⁸ In an unexpected reversal of sentiments, du Maurier asks her readers not to "mourn the happy dead" on Remembrance Day but to "mourn the living" instead.⁵⁹ Blissfully unaware, the dead "will continue to

⁵⁴ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated 31st March, 58, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157/3/1/DM/21.

⁵⁵ See du Maurier, 'This I Believe', op. cit., p. 108.

⁵⁶ See Humbert Wolfe, *The Uncelestial City* (London: Gollancz, 1930), p. 129.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁸ Du Maurier, 'Remembrance Day', Du Maurier Papers, Exeter University, EUL MS 207/6/24. The paper on which this poem is printed says "Reprinted from *The Observer* - November 10, 1946." This poem is also re-published in Helen Taylor (ed.), *The Daphne du Maurier Companion*, op. cit.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

sleep / peacefully”, whereas “the living come empty-handed” and have “lost their way”.⁶⁰ Du Maurier is unafraid to invoke the name of Christ in support of her poem’s thesis, as she writes:

Let us no longer mourn the Christ who died
Upon a Cross two thousand years from now
Crying aloud that God has forsaken Him.
There have been so many others who likewise cried.
From Golgotha to Belsen and Dachau.⁶¹

Du Maurier alters our perspective by suggesting as an alternative approach that we should “mourn for the risen Christ” with “the eyes of the living”; in this startling parallel du Maurier suggests that every day the living are the ones that we “mock”, “condemn” and “crucify anew.”⁶² Christ is thus not a singular phenomenon, but one amongst many who have suffered a similar fate. Like him, there are many people now doomed to a death-in-life existence as the result of the horrific actions of their fellow men. Du Maurier’s writing about Christ in this poem yet again highlights her ‘schizoid’ attitude to Christianity, in that she is at one and the same time oddly respectful, yet unaffected by any orthodox stance.

Alternatively, it is possible that du Maurier may see the biblical Christ, both here and elsewhere in her writing, as just a literary figure ripe for exploitation. Knowing the pre-conditioned stereotypes and resonances that such a figure evokes would enable her to manipulate his story for dramatic impact. No doubt she was well aware of the disquieting effect that potentially heretical or blasphemous formulations would have on the orthodox mind. Many well-known works of literature have been subjected quite successfully to du Maurier’s revisionist imagination, and perhaps the Bible was no exception. Du Maurier may have been using Christianity in the same way as Francis Davey in *Jamaica Inn*, regarding it as a mask of conventionality to present to the ‘herd’, yet hoping that there would be those who could see behind this palimpsestic mask into the esoteric depths. In *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, John Carey makes reference to that section of the literary intelligentsia who saw themselves as natural aristocrats, possessing a secret body of knowledge that could be defended against the encroachment of the ‘masses’:

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

In response to the revolt of the masses, intellectuals generated the idea of a natural aristocracy, consisting of intellectuals. On the question of precisely what makes natural aristocrats aristocratic, there was some disagreement. One suggestion was that there was, or ought to be, a secret kind of knowledge which only intellectuals could possess – a ‘body of esoteric doctrine, defended from the herd’, as D.H. Lawrence put it. W.B. Yeats agreed. When he joined the Hermetic Students of the Golden Dawn in 1890, it was part of a widespread revival of occultism, centred on Paris, which answered intellectual craving for a source of distinction and power that the masses could not touch. Yeats also felt that the intellectual aristocrat had natural links with titled people – the old aristocracy of birth [...] ⁶³

Du Maurier’s rejection of orthodoxy, and continual delving into the realms of esoteric thought, can be read similarly as both a flight from the mind of the masses and a siding with the ‘natural aristocrat’.

THE NATURAL ARISTOCRAT AND THE MASSES

In 1952, Gollancz sent du Maurier an advance copy of *My Dear Timothy* for review purposes. Du Maurier’s letter to him about it, dated Sep 2, 52, revels in the “zest for life” his book demonstrates, and which she feels he shares with her grandfather George du Maurier. She goes on to speculate about the origin in his own ancestral line of such a passionate regard for people and things:

I wonder why you love “life” so much, from whom that zest in the blood?
Not your father or your mother obviously. Perhaps much further back, some
one in Poland with acres and acres of land, and serfs who were like children
to him, kneeling – in fact all the things your Socialism would now say was
wrong! ⁶⁴

This time du Maurier’s imagination does not put herself at the feet of a member of the Gollancz family, but instead she sees a nostalgia-tinged gathering of happy, grateful serfs all knelt before him. Du Maurier’s latest fantasy picture is quite telling about her own elevated attitude to the multitude, but she also has the candour to admit that her ideal is not that of the Socialist. Du Maurier’s idealising of the masses into their more romantic, pastoral version - serfs – betrays a concern with ‘rewriting the masses’ which Carey terms “the cult of the peasant”. ⁶⁵ Carey points to William Morris, D.H. Lawrence, E.M. Forster and W.B. Yeats as examples of those similarly engaged on “a quest for an unspoiled mass” or, in other words, a people who were as then “untouched by modern industrial civilisation.” ⁶⁶ Nietzsche endorses a similar view in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, when he relates the conversation Zarathustra

⁶³ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 71.

⁶⁴ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L1\MDT\3\117.i.

⁶⁵ Carey, op. cit., p. 36.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 35-36.

overhears taking place between two kings who are intent on avoiding the ubiquitous mob whilst simultaneously finding “the Higher Man”.⁶⁷ As one of the kings explains :

The peasant is the finest man today; and the peasantry should be master! But ours is the kingdom of the rabble – I no longer let myself be taken in. Rabble, however, means: hotchpotch.⁶⁸

Nietzsche’s kings clarify the distinction to be drawn between the ideal masses, termed peasantry, and the real masses, which are nothing more than rabble. Associated with this rabble are all the ills of mundane modernity, “the stench of shopkeepers, the struggles of ambition, [and] the foul breath.”⁶⁹ Du Maurier’s vision of Gollancz in the centre of a scene of pastoral bliss contains both ‘the Higher Man’ that the kings are seeking, along with his perfect, doting minions. Gollancz, she feels, possesses all the requisite attributes of a benign, feudal lord. By association, this confers on Gollancz a certain ‘noblesse oblige’, i.e. the idea that rank imposes social obligations. Her fantasy of happy, but dependent, serfs, treated with all the care that one would bestow on one’s own children, implies that, for her, Gollancz lives up to the expectations of his position. However, as is usual with du Maurier, there enters a slightly darker, psychological element to this fantasy of Gollancz in her letter, which she attributes to the collective unconscious of his ancestral line, and this is suggested as a possible motivation for his benefaction:

I do think there is a kind of old-time Russian or Polish abundance to you. And probably, you know, the old-time cruelty is there too, but deeply suppressed, which is a sub-conscious reason for your wanting the well-being and happiness of all peoples now[.]⁷⁰

Those acquainted with Gollancz would have said that his hypersensitivity often led to spontaneous outbursts of unreasonable anger and cruelty towards his friends and colleagues. The love-hate paradox in his nature is best summed up by Edwards in her biography thus: “some of those who came in for his more vitriolic and contemptuous attacks must have wondered wistfully why he didn’t try loving his friends more and his enemies less.”⁷¹ In her letter, du Maurier has daringly alluded to this cruel streak in his nature, but flatteringly turned it into his best feature. Gollancz’s reply to du Maurier instantly deflates her feudal vision by informing her that she is wrong about the Jews in Poland and Russia, in that they did not have numerous serfs, but lived in a state of “wretched ghetto poverty”.⁷² Du Maurier’s vision of Gollancz

⁶⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (London: Penguin, 1969), p. 259.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 258. I am grateful to Carey’s book for pointing out this section in Nietzsche’s work. However, I prefer to use different quotations to Carey.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 258-9.

⁷⁰ Daphne du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\LI\MDT\3\117.i. The underlining is in the original.

⁷¹ Ruth Edwards, op. cit., p. 430.

⁷² Victor Gollancz, Letter to du Maurier dated Sep 8 52, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\LI\MDT\3\119.

as a natural aristocrat and its subsequent exposure as a fallacy finds a parallel in du Maurier family history; the extended du Maurier family had come to believe there was nobility in their own ancestral line, but this too had eventually been exposed, as another letter of du Maurier's – dated Oct 26th 55 makes clear:

You will be amused, and rather pleased, to learn that there is no question of having been "noblesse" as Grandpapa of Peter Ibbetson always believed. Honest bourgeois stock, and republican at that, except for the great-great who emigrated, I now think, because Paris was too hot for him and for no other reason!⁷³

The aristocratic deception was perpetrated by the "great-great" in question – who added the 'noblesse' sounding 'du Maurier' onto the Busson family name – and is explained in *The Glass Blowers*, du Maurier's novel about the actions of her French forebears at the time of the French Revolution. Du Maurier is in no way perturbed by the unmasking of this deception, seeing it instead as an occasion for humour and self-mockery.

Part II of Gollancz's book *My Dear Timothy* contains an exposition of Gollancz's Socialist position, which is partly a critique of Socialism as he saw it from the vantage point of 1952.⁷⁴ Du Maurier's response to this section of his book was to affirm that it was indeed "food for the intellect," but unfortunately she recognises "that one is very much inclined not to think, but just to amble and dream through life, at least I am."⁷⁵ Du Maurier's conservatism is very much of the apathetic sort, as she confesses:

to my lazy way, once you embark on the great gestures, the feeding of all the hungry millions of China (an example) surely you must go on beyond that, to ensure that all those hungry millions who become satisfied do not in their turn prey upon the millions, and once all these millions are fed properly, what about their natures, because natures are not necessarily improved by good living [...]⁷⁶

She seems to think it wiser not to start on a project that can never be finished to satisfaction, and the obstacle to human progress is ultimately human nature itself. Her argument for non-intervention thus turns on her assessment of the nature of the "hungry millions". In her opinion, they should be left in the

⁷³ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 26th 55. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\IDM\9. This quotation is somewhat ambiguous. I am presuming that the phrase "too hot for him" does not refer to the climate! Du Maurier seems to be implying that as he was not actually an aristocrat this would not have been a reason for fleeing revolutionary Paris. Personal debt and the threat of prison seem more likely according to the narrative of *The Glass Blowers*. The family tree which includes du Maurier's great-great-grandfather – Mathurin-Robert Busson du Maurier (b.1749) – can be found at the front of Daphne du Maurier, *The Du Mauriers* (London: Heron, no date). This work was first published in 1937.

⁷⁴ Yet another example of Gollancz's tendency to rail against everything from the inside.

⁷⁵ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\LIMDT\3\117.i.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

idealistic perfection of their own poverty; feed them and they will only become an energised rabble. Du Maurier is aware of her own ambivalent response to the nameless many, often feeling warm hearted to “some little unknown old woman at the cash desk, knitting, in a French café,” but then comes the “volte face” when a “swarm of very noisy smelly people come crashing through a field to the woods here.”⁷⁷ It would seem that the unknown masses are acceptable when they are to be found abroad, but not when they are on du Maurier’s own doorstep. Du Maurier can easily romanticise the Europeans so that they become peasantry, but not the English, or indeed the Americans for that matter:

And why, again, are peasants in Europe so much nicer than the more emancipated better-standard-of-living English? Boys and girls, and men and women, in Switzerland, raking hay – the mixture of depth and simplicity in their faces – they have beauty. And switch to a cross-section of our people strap-hanging in the tube, crowded together, so often ill-humored [sic], or rawcus [sic], and the same for Americans too.⁷⁸

Du Maurier’s European peasants, like her Cornish moorsmen of *Jamaica Inn*, seem that much closer to the soil from which they are born. They are still envisaged as a natural phenomenon, whereas the English and the Americans have become a product of rapidly advancing industrialism. As Carey suggests in *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, the ‘intellectuals’ were seeking a peasantry who could be the “representatives of a simple, healthy, organic life.”⁷⁹ Thus, du Maurier respects the old French woman and the Swiss inhabitants because, to her mind, they possess the necessary ‘simplicity’ that she is seeking. Unfortunately, the English and Americans have become divorced from their natural habitat, and consequently do not know how to treat it respectfully when occasionally they are reunited with it. Du Maurier’s disdain for the English and American many appears elsewhere in her work; for example, in *The Flight of the Falcon* Armino Donati says of the English and American tourists, “[t]he English are beef to us, and the Americans barbarians. It may not be complimentary but it’s apt.”⁸⁰ Indeed, in *Rule Britannia*, the overbearing brashness of the Americans becomes the subject of the entire novel.

The remainder of du Maurier’s letter to Gollancz about *My Dear Timothy* concerns itself with a discussion of the relative nature of cruelty, comparing that which occurs at the scale of the individual (personal vendettas) with that operating at the scale of the mass (war). Du Maurier’s imagination is such that cruelty only really has any meaning when it occurs between individuals:

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid. The emphasis on the word peasants is in du Maurier’s original letter.

⁷⁹ Carey, op. cit., p. 36.

⁸⁰ Daphne du Maurier, *The Flight of the Falcon* (London: Virago, 2005), p. 2. This work was first published in 1965.

And about war, you know. I think cruelty between individuals is worse. You, for instance, suddenly becoming beastly to me. Or me to you. [...] I know it sounds Groupy, but surely these things must be prevented first? Then antagonism, that leads to war, would go.⁸¹

This passage, with its reference to ‘Groupy,’ suggests that du Maurier’s connection with Buchman’s Oxford Group movement had left some trace on her mode of thinking, even at a distance of a decade. Du Maurier is concerned with the near and the particular, a sentiment she shares with Buchman’s movement, but which goes at least as far back as the conservatively-minded Edmund Burke. In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* he writes that:

to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind.⁸²

Burke’s vision of the “polity,” like Buchman’s and du Maurier’s, is that of “the image of a relation in blood”, with everything bound together by “the bosom of our family affections.”⁸³ This kind of societal organisation thus possesses the necessary attributes of the organic and the natural. If society fails to operate on the level of love between individuals then it will break down at the mass level. Love will be replaced by greed and fear; as du Maurier stresses, “it all boils down to fear in the end. Fear that someone else will have what the ““I” has not”.⁸⁴ It is possible to read into these words du Maurier’s own fear of the supposed mass mentality that lay beyond her immediate realm, and the potential it had for disturbing the lifestyle she enjoyed.

One way the early twentieth century intellectuals had of keeping the fear at bay is, in the words of Carey, “to deprive the mass of human status”.⁸⁵ In the last section of du Maurier’s letter the mass is deprived of human significance by the very fact of being a mass, although in the process it ironically gains heroic status instead. A mass cannot die in the way that individuals do and, since war is a mass phenomenon, individuals and their suffering can be conveniently overlooked. War viewed in this way means du Maurier can reassuringly tell Gollancz that “the actual thing of “combat” can be stirring”.⁸⁶ Warming to her theme, she writes:

⁸¹ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\IMDT\3\117.i.

⁸² Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: Penguin Group, 1986), p. 135. This work was first published in 1790.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 120.

⁸⁴ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\IMDT\3\117.i

⁸⁵ Carey, op. cit., p. 24.

⁸⁶ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2 52. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\IMDT\3\117.i

the French cadets from St. Cyr who went to meet the Germans in their casquettes, even those taxis that went to battle from Paris, and in our own Battle of Britain pilots (“Bandits ahead, I’m going in now to attack”) somehow these things, even though they mean someone must die, is to me on the Everest plane, the Antarctic plane.. [sic] “I have a rendez-vous with death.”⁸⁷

It is tempting to compare du Maurier’s writing with Peter Pan’s famous phrase, “To die will be an awfully big adventure”.⁸⁸ It is as if war and death only occur at the level of a boy’s adventure story, and never in reality. War is romanticised as a matter of endless heroic acts, unsullied by the shedding of actual human blood. Du Maurier’s sanitisation of war in this letter seems to betray an underlying resentment at being deprived of the opportunity to take part in such an exclusively masculine caper.

COLD, WHITE PEAKS

It is interesting that du Maurier should put her warriors on ‘the Everest plane’, since this in some way echoes Clive Bell’s celebration of the “austere and thrilling raptures of those who have climbed the cold, white peaks of art”.⁸⁹ Mount Everest is just as inaccessible to the many as the pure and lofty peaks of the art appreciated by Clive Bell.⁹⁰ Du Maurier’s men of war are thus elevated to the same artistic plane; they are aesthetic works resembling Bell’s cold, pure art rather than real, warm people. As Carey points out, this “imaginary landscape,” with all its connotations of ‘high’ and ‘low,’ and ‘cold’ and ‘warm,’ was licensed by Nietzsche, whose “forests and mountain peaks, with the intellectual striding through the high, cold air was vital to his meaning.”⁹¹ Nietzsche’s Zarathustra was “a wanderer and a mountain-climber” who did “not like the plains” and could not “sit still for long.”⁹² His mountain climbing made a “Superman” out of him:

You look up when you desire to be exalted. And I look down, because I am exalted.
Who among you can at the same time laugh and be exalted?
He who climbs upon the highest mountains laughs at all tragedies, real or imaginary.⁹³

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan, Peter and Wendy, and Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 84.

⁸⁹ Clive Bell, cited in Carey, op. cit., p. 74. Carey gives the citation as Clive Bell, *Art*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1914, pp. 32-3.

⁹⁰ Obviously, the Antarctic, whilst not being a peak, is just as cold, white and pure, and just as inaccessible to the many.

⁹¹ Carey, *ibid.*, p. 74.

⁹² Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 173.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Du Maurier confesses her own love of mountains in a letter of condolence to Livia Gollancz on the death of her father in 1967; as she writes, “How interesting that you belong to a climbing club. Its [sic] one of the things I would always have liked to have done. Especially mountains.”⁹⁴

In the short story ‘Monte Verita’ (1952) – Mountain of Truth – published a few years before the poem ‘Apostasis’ was written, du Maurier draws attention to the spiritual significance of high ground. The tale charts how a man comes to lose his new wife to a secret, female cult residing on the inaccessible top of the mountain of the title.⁹⁵ Jung was also interested in the symbolic landscape of the mountain, and in his essay ‘The Psychological Aspects of the Kore’ points out that mountains with inaccessible crests symbolise the arduous path to truth as opposed to the usual way of error.⁹⁶ Jung makes a particular link between mountains and the legend of Demeter and Kore – the Earth Mother and her maiden daughter. Although du Maurier is deliberately vague about the belief system that forms the backbone of ‘Monte Verita’, what she does say about it has much in common with the dreams pertaining to Demeter and Kore that Jung provides as instances of the legend’s symbolic force in the unconscious of his patients. For example, in her story, du Maurier has one character say :

I’ve tried to study it, [...] this religion this belief. It’s very ancient, way back before Christianity. There are old books that hint at it. I’ve picked them up from time to time, and I’ve spoken to people, scholars, who have made a study of mysticism and the old rites of ancient Gaul, and the Druids: there’s a strong link between all mountain folk of those times. In every instance that I have read there is this insistence on the power of the moon and the belief that the followers stay young and beautiful [...]⁹⁷

This should be compared with the many dreams in Jung’s essay that relate to the idea of a moon goddess, a phenomenon he firmly associates with the Demeter cult. Whether du Maurier read Jung’s essay is uncertain, but they are evidently drawing on a wealth of similar sources.⁹⁸ For Jung, the frequent appearance of Demeter-related images in dreams demonstrates an archetypal residue of a previously

⁹⁴ Du Maurier, Letter to Livia Gollancz dated Mar 18, 67. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\3\CON\5\78.i.

⁹⁵ ‘Monte Verita’ is a story from the volume Daphne du Maurier, *The Birds and other Stories* (London: Heron, no publication date). The volume was first published in 1952.

⁹⁶ See Carl Jung, ‘The Psychological Aspects of the Kore’, *CW9 Part I: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 1969), p. 193. This essay was written in 1951.

⁹⁷ Du Maurier, ‘Monte Verita’, *The Birds*, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

⁹⁸ As a point of interest, Richard Noll relates that the village of Ascona in Switzerland became a neopagan spiritual centre for Jung and like-minded people. As Noll writes “Ascona, the countercultural mecca with its own circum-ambulated *qa’ba* (Monte Verita) and bearded and long-locked *Naturmenschen* in Tannhäuser-like sandals, became the site of the famous Eranos conferences that Jung so dominated and which started in 1933. Indeed, Carl and Emma Jung annually stayed in a villa on the “Mountain of Truth” (Monte Verita) itself.” See Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement* (London: Fontana, 1996), pp. 107-108. The co-incidence (if it is co-incidence) of the title of du Maurier’s story with a neopagan spiritual centre frequented by Jung is striking. It is therefore difficult to believe that du Maurier was not aware of this centre or Jung’s connection with it.

“matriarchal order of society, where the man is an indispensable but on the whole disturbing factor.”⁹⁹ This matriarchal element would help to explain du Maurier’s ambivalent attitude to the two men in her story, who are left behind in the foothills of Monte Verita – the foothills being the province of lesser mortals - whilst the woman they are following finds her spiritual home on the inaccessible summit.¹⁰⁰ Echoes of du Maurier’s thwarted mountain climbing ambitions and her interest in finding ways of worshipping the Earth Mother seem to find special resonance within this story. She writes particularly that:

I am no great thinker, and never have been. But this I do know, from my old climbing days: that in the mountains we come closest to whatever Being it is that rules our destiny. The great utterances of old were given from the mountain tops: it was always to the hills that the prophets climbed.¹⁰¹

It may seem contrary to draw on the intellectual’s relationship with mountains as defined in Carey’s work - which according to the jacket is a piece of “intellectual-baiting” waging a sustained “assault on the founders of modern culture” - when it is set alongside a quotation from du Maurier which echoes her persistent claim that she was “no great thinker”.¹⁰² In a sense, this self-disparagement may have been a defence mechanism on du Maurier’s part against the critics who failed to see her message when she ventured into what she deemed much deeper (or indeed, loftier!) topics. If du Maurier was not exactly a founder of ‘modern culture’ as such, it is still possible to say that her work has left an indelible mark on ‘popular culture’. To say this, however, is to fall into the ‘high’ versus ‘low’ trap framed by Carey, since the designation ‘popular culture’ is an imposed term that operates by its contrast to the ‘high culture’ defined by the elite few. Du Maurier certainly had an uneasy relationship with the world of the critics, judging herself to be a victim of their use of the word ‘popular’. Her unease often communicates itself, as in, for example, her short story entitled ‘The Rendezvous’ which concerns the change of heart of the main character Robert Scrivener, “a writer of renown and great integrity” who had “spent himself for literature”.¹⁰³ Even the choice of surname for her character, a Latinate way of describing someone who writes, signals her concern about ‘lofty’ writing. Du Maurier’s character had pledged himself “to do battle continually against those philistines who would drag us all to their own level of mediocrity”, particularly where it concerned the nature of the cinema.¹⁰⁴ But he had then found himself unutterably moved by an:

⁹⁹ Jung, ‘The Psychological Aspects of the Kore’, op. cit., p. 203.

¹⁰⁰ Carey cites Bell’s reference to “snug foothills of warm humanity”, see Carey, op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁰¹ Du Maurier, ‘Monte Verita’, op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁰² See jacket quotations on Carey’s *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, op. cit.

¹⁰³ Daphne du Maurier, ‘The Rendezvous’, *The Rendezvous and other Stories*, (London: Pan Books, 1981), pp. 89, 113.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

adaptation of that best-selling novel he had always despised, that unworthy pot-boiler written a year or so ago by the fellow-writer whose wedding he had attended such a short time before.¹⁰⁵

The reputation of her own screen-adapted novels seems to be at stake here, and du Maurier's short story seems designed to brook the criticism of the elite few, challenging them to re-evaluate the worth of what they might normally condemn as mere 'pot-boilers'. In writing a book about the 'intellectuals and the masses', Carey - Professor of English and therefore in a position to apply the labels du Maurier feared - seems to be highlighting his own personal unease about the nature of the critical position and its potentially elitist standpoint. As I have already mentioned, du Maurier once stated, "I think we are all of us schizos to a very great extent."¹⁰⁶ Hence, Carey's book could just be a delicious piece of self-mockery. In spite of, or indeed perhaps because of, its 'schizophrenia', it is still productive to apply some of the points raised in Carey's book as part of an assessment of the life and work of du Maurier.

Carey points out that even the holidays of the elite few were indicative of their desire for the elevated life, mentioning the "cult of mountaineering and alpine holidays" as illustrative examples.¹⁰⁷ In the same bracket can be placed a holiday in Greece taken by du Maurier and her friend Clara Vyvyan in the early 1950s, the details of which are recorded in Vyvyan's book *Temples and Flowers*.¹⁰⁸ The idea for the trip was sparked off by a chance comment overheard by Vyvyan at a "civilised luncheon party" about being able to "ride up Mt. Olympus on a donkey".¹⁰⁹ Vyvyan was a lover of seemingly inaccessible places, as her book on her travels in the Arctic - *The Ladies, the Gwich'in, and the Rat: Travels on the Athabasca, Macekenzie, Rat, Porcupine, and Yukon Rivers in 1926* - would seem to imply. Du Maurier was as entranced by the idea of Greece, its landscape, its mythology and its donkeys as Vyvyan herself, and agreed to accompany her on the trip.¹¹⁰ Vyvyan's book about their time in Greece is a hymn to mountains, the mentality of the wanderer, lonely places, gods and goddesses, escaping the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁰⁶ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Sep 2, 52. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\LIMDT\3\117.i

¹⁰⁷ See Carey, op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁰⁸ Clara Vyvyan, *Temples and Flowers* (London: Peter Owen Ltd., 1955). I include here a pertinent quotation about Clara Vyvyan and her varied travels: "Clara Vyvyan and her companion Gwendolen Dorrien Smith were middle-class Englishwomen with sufficient means to indulge a thirst for freedom and adventure by travelling through some of the most rugged and remote areas of the western Arctic in 1926." Quotation taken from a review of Clara Vyvyan's book *The Ladies, the Gwich'in, and the Rat: Travels on the Athabasca, Macekenzie, Rat, Porcupine, and Yukon Rivers in 1926*. See Sherrill Grace, 'Writing Arctic Journals', *Canadian Literature*, Issue No. #170/171 - Autumn/Winter 2001, <http://www.canlit.ca/archive/archive2001/170_171/cl_170-171.html> [accessed 23 November 2005]. Lady Clara Vyvyan lived at Treloarren in the Helford district of Cornwall (Forster, op. cit., p. 70).

¹⁰⁹ Vyvyan, *Temples and Flowers*, ibid., p. 11.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

ant-like crowds and finding the noble Greek peasantry.¹¹¹ Both Vyvyan and du Maurier shared the same view of their time in the mountains of Greece; as Vyvyan writes:

There is no time in such mountain country save that which lies between dawn and sunset and after one timeless day alone on the mountains, one glimpse of a primitive people living under primitive conditions, we were once again in full possession of our kingdom, conscious of the unexploited beauty in every stone and leaf and clod of earth. [...]
“This is our sort of place,” said Daphne, voicing my thoughts precisely [...]¹¹²

There seems to be an ethnocentric attitude at work in this quotation, in that whilst the autochthonous mountain peoples of Greece are the very ideal of primitive peasantry, conforming exactly to the standard required by Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, it is really Vyvyan and du Maurier who are the true representation of Nietzsche’s kings since it is they who allegedly possess the mountain kingdom itself. Vyvyan and du Maurier are the only ‘conscious’ entities, and it is this consciousness that elevates them above the primitives who are seemingly unable to differentiate themselves from the landscape they inhabit. To be the head of such a kingdom is no hardship, since all is naturally beautiful and harmonious; in the mountainous regions order amongst the perfect peasantry is automatically maintained. In the next section, I will discuss du Maurier’s thoughts on how a disordered society – that is one whose peoples are no longer peasants but rabble – should treat its worst offenders.

PART TWO

This section is designed to highlight du Maurier’s responses to two key political controversies of the day, namely capital punishment and nuclear weapons. The intention is to show that du Maurier did indeed interest herself in practical political issues, and in a way that is Conservative in form and not in the least ‘romantic’ as in Light’s conception of the term in *Forever England*.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Edwards relates, in her biography of Gollancz, that in 1955 there arose “a great deal of cross-party disgust about hanging” as a result of a series of recent pertinent incidents.¹¹³ These incidents are given as follows:

¹¹¹ Ibid., throughout.

¹¹² Ibid., pp. 110-111.

¹¹³ Edwards, op. cit., p. 637.

The execution of the mentally-retarded Derek Bentley for a murder to which he had been mere accomplice had caused widespread protest. Ruth Ellis, mother of a little girl, was hanged for shooting her violent lover. And there was mounting evidence that Timothy Evans's next-door neighbour, Christie, was responsible for the murder for which Evans was executed.¹¹⁴

As Edwards notes, Gollancz had already been contributing to the debate “through the publication of abolitionist propaganda, the signing of letters, and personal eloquence”.¹¹⁵ But these contributions were soon stepped up into a public campaign, headed by Gollancz, and going under the name of ‘The National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment’. Gollancz’s case against capital punishment was based on his own heartfelt ‘commandment’, expressed in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* of the 18 July 55, that “Thou shalt not commit outrageous cruelty against any single human being.”¹¹⁶ For him the case for or against the use of capital punishment as a deterrent to further murders was a total irrelevancy.¹¹⁷ Du Maurier read one of Gollancz’s Capital Punishment pamphlets and then responded to it in a letter to him dated November 14, 1955.¹¹⁸ She begins by saying, disarmingly, that she agrees “with all you say in principle”, particularly about forgiving the perpetrator “seventy times seven”, but then proceeds to criticise him on several points.¹¹⁹ One of the key elements for du Maurier concerning Gollancz’s pamphlet is the absence of a specific alternative to the death sentence; she writes that:

I cannot believe that you mean the even more horrible cruelty of imprisonment for life, prison being what it is today (See your Break Down the Walls [sic]) It seems to me that imprisonment is so much more soul-destroying than the quicker rope [...]¹²⁰

It is interesting that her argument should turn on the idea of ‘soul’ since Gollancz’s own arguments rest on soul-regarding, biblical principles. Evidently, her idea of soul must differ from Gollancz’s at this point, since she is willing to countenance the death sentence in spite of her alleged agreement over Christian forgiveness. The contradiction in her thinking is made apparent if we admit that the death penalty is actually an act of legalised vengeance and not an act of forgiveness. Its original purpose was to re-instate the power of the king over his erring subjects, and was deliberately intended – by its violent nature – to

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 637.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 637.

¹¹⁶ Gollancz, in *ibid.*, p. 638. Citation as in the text.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 638.

¹¹⁸ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, *op. cit.*, MSS.157/3\IDM\12\1.i. Du Maurier’s letter does not give the name of the pamphlet in question. I am currently unable to surmise the name of the pamphlet, and can only therefore report on what du Maurier says about it, along with surveying her own comments.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. “seventy times seven” is a reference to Christ’s pronouncement on forgiveness: “Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times”. The footnote in my edition gives “Or seventy times seven.” Matthew 18. 21-22. My edition is *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984).

¹²⁰ Du Maurier, *ibid.*

demonstrate publicly the atrocity of the original crime to an audience composed of ‘the masses’.¹²¹ The death penalty has nothing to do with improving the ‘soul’ and everything to do with destroying the ‘body’. For du Maurier, a murdering criminal is again just a member of the masses who, being deprived of human status, does not die as others do. So whilst it may be literally true that the rope is indeed “quicker” than a life sentence, it is unfortunately not a quick or painless way to die. Du Maurier’s version of soul errs conservatively on the side of ‘kings,’ whereas Gollancz’s errs socialistically on the side of the people.

Foucault argues, in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, that the modern idea of ‘soul’ is actually a product of the changes in the ways that power has been exercised over those punished, as he writes:

This is the historical reality of this soul, which, unlike the soul represented by Christian theology, is not born in sin and subject to punishment, but is born rather out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint.¹²²

Foucault goes on to argue that the penal system has altered so that judging a crime has changed from the simpler question of “Has the act been established and is it punishable?” to “what level or to what field of reality does it belong? Is it a phantasy, a psychotic reaction, a delusional episode, a perverse action?”¹²³ Foucault’s work attempts to see if there is a “common matrix” or “single process” involved in both the “history of penal law” and the “history of the human sciences,” which would account for why the system now judges the ‘soul’ rather than judging crimes.¹²⁴ Instead of directly punishing the body with physical pain, the penal system has developed a much “‘higher’ aim,” that of punishing or improving the ‘soul’ through an “economy of suspended rights”.¹²⁵ Modern sentencing is thus intended to “correct, reclaim, ‘cure’” the individual concerned.¹²⁶ It is interesting to view the conflicting versions of soul, as represented by Gollancz and du Maurier, in a Foucauldian light. Gollancz’s version of ‘soul’ evidently arises out of considerations drawn from theology. Du Maurier’s version of soul seems to partake in Foucault’s ‘human sciences’ interpretation, in that it can be moulded by the effect of punishment as meted out by the prison system. But she sees the effect of prison only as soul-destroying and in no way soul-enhancing, and thinks it “will continue to be soul-destroying until all prisons are run as places of rehabilitation, and not

¹²¹ See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 49. Published in French in 1975. Published in English in 1977.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 19.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

run by governors or warders”.¹²⁷ Du Maurier feels that prison would be a valid alternative to the death sentence only if places of incarceration were run “by monks”, or some other form of:

corps elite, physically strong, infinitely compassionate, completely incorruptable, [sic] drawn from any denomination, Catholic, Buddhist [sic] what-you-will, but who give themselves to this vocation like Albert Schweitzer [sic] to his Africans. Only by living with men like these would there be a chance for the so-called criminal to come to an understanding of himself.¹²⁸

Here, du Maurier again indulges her Nietzschean ‘Superman’ fantasy of the all-powerful, spiritual male elite, this time transposing it into the prison system, which incidentally only seems to contain men; women do not seem to figure in this particular version of the highest of the high or the lowest of the low.

There is a certain irony in her call for prisons to be run along monastic lines, since, according to Foucault, this is precisely the model that was adopted for them.¹²⁹ Space in prisons is based on the notion of “partitioning,” with everyone allocated to their own particular place according to the “religious method” of the “monastic cell”.¹³⁰ Foucault asserts that:

disciplinary space is always, basically, cellular. Solitude was necessary to both body and soul, according to a certain asceticism: they must, at certain moments at least, confront temptation and perhaps the severity of God alone[.]¹³¹

Du Maurier’s view of the prison system was that whilst it might physically resemble the monastic ideal, it was unable to carry out its intended modern spiritual project, and this was a fault of the calibre of the people involved in its administration. Having reflected on Gollancz’s rejection of the death sentence as a viable punishment, and her own rejection of the prison system as she then saw it, du Maurier pauses to reconsider what she assumes to be Gollancz’s alternative:

we are back to the question, what do we do to our murderers? If I understand you aright, you really would say “Go in peace, and sin no more” and believe that by this forgiveness, the murderer would be healed, and society protected by the very miracle of the healing.¹³²

Du Maurier seems to have faith that the modern soul can be acted on, but not if the prisoner is released immediately back into the community. For du Maurier, spiritual cures require effort over a longer term than Gollancz allows for. If a physical confinement of the body is the only option, then its freedoms must

¹²⁷ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\NDM\12\1.i.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Foucault, op. cit., p. 143.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 143.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 143.

¹³² Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\NDM\12\1.i

be curtailed by the sobering effect of a monastically austere environment. When offenders are finally driven to confront their soul, it must be 'at the feet' of a spiritual elect especially skilled in such matters. She cannot countenance Gollancz's purely theological view that the modern soul can be affected in any immediate way by wholly spiritual means, and certainly not through the words of a mere judge:

I think if Christ himself said "Go and sin no more", even to a [sic] the worst type of killing thug, the thug would be healed, there would be a miracle; but I am not persuaded that if you said so, Justice Goddard (no, not Goddard, but some really good and understanding judge!) I am not persuaded, I repeat that a murderer would be healed. I think the immediate reaction would be "I've got off," and there would be no question of repentance[.]¹³³

Du Maurier contests Gollancz's interpretation of the meaning of Christ's own words and actions, feeling that they were a 'miracle,' and not something belonging to the realm of everyday lived reality. For her, a one off supernatural act was not intended as a model for future human judges to follow; as she confirms when she writes, "I do not believe that Christ would have intended this".¹³⁴ There is a curious rejection and simultaneous affirmation of Christianity in this piece of writing, in that she appears to confirm Christ's historical position as a spiritual leader but rejects any possibility of his miracle-based work being continued similarly in the present. Again, in spite of her previously expressed apostasy from the Christian tradition, du Maurier's lingering respect for it is still manifest, even in the face of some of her denials of its efficacy.

In the rest of du Maurier's letter to Gollancz about capital punishment, she elaborates on her own scheme for curing the modern soul of a murderer, a scheme derived from her belief that Christ would have said to him instead, "Restore the life that thou hast taken away."¹³⁵ Her spiritual therapy is not based on immediacy or spirituality but on pertinent practicality; the criminal must be re-trained and re-conditioned by being daily confronted with a reminder of his own crime. This accords with Foucault's observation that "repentance" became something that was "obtained directly through the mechanics of a training".¹³⁶ In practice, du Maurier suggests that this would mean, for example, that those who "kill thoughtlessly, should train as orderleys [sic] in cancer hospitals" so that they realise how in "being gentle to these people they nurture life instead of destroying it."¹³⁷ She proceeds similarly to list more crimes and their soul-curing antidotes, so that poisoners would "be made to work in laboratories" and learn

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Foucault, op. cit., p. 180.

¹³⁷ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\NDM\12\1.i

“what medicine can do to keep people alive” and rapists would be trained as midwives.¹³⁸ Du Maurier’s approach is thus based on the criminal’s own subjectivity. His ‘training’ depends to a large extent on the crime that he has committed, and hence is purely individual. This mode of thinking aligns itself with Foucault’s idea of the new “domains of analysis” which the modern penal system has carved out, and which he cites as being “psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc.”¹³⁹ As Foucault indicates, such ideas might appear to be in agreement with “all the moral claims of humanism,” but the language is merely euphemistic.¹⁴⁰ To be fair to du Maurier, she does actually help her reader by explaining the euphemism involved; as she writes, “[e]ach murderer, in fact, would be treated (the word is treated, and never punished) in the light of the murder that he or she had committed.”¹⁴¹ We are invited to believe that the prisoner is being set free by such methods, but Foucault explains the error:

The man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself. A ‘soul’ inhabits him and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body.¹⁴²

According to Foucault, du Maurier’s so-called humanism, based on treating the ‘soul’, is merely a different form of power, serving to imprison the criminal in a profoundly new way; the body of the criminal is now incarcerated within the modern soul as defined by the human sciences.

Foucault explains that before the modern soul of the criminal could be treated, the human sciences had first to examine it, and this examination combined “the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment”.¹⁴³ This examination thus inverted the usual “economy of visibility”; in capital punishment it is power that is eminently visible, in the new method of discipline power becomes invisible and the criminal himself is subject to inspection.¹⁴⁴ In this manner, he becomes a “case;” he is given his own individuality, not as a positive gesture, but as a means of controlling and dominating him in a new way.¹⁴⁵ Individuality, in this sense, separates and excludes the criminal from so-called ‘normal’ society. In her letter to Gollancz about capital punishment, du Maurier plainly struggles with the operation of her own ‘normalizing judgment’; she cannot quite decide how to judge criminals

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Foucault, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁴¹ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, *op. cit.*, MSS.1573\NDM\12\1.i

¹⁴² Foucault, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 184.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 191.

with respect to the prevailing 'norm'. She first states that "[w]hen thinking of these different types of murderers I am thinking of them as predominantly sane."¹⁴⁶ But the word "predominantly" already signals her hesitation over her own judgment, and in the very next phrase she adds the bracketed qualification "(No murderer can be quite sane)".¹⁴⁷ Shortly after she decides that Christy – the man who murdered women and hid their bodies inside cupboards - "must surely have been insane".¹⁴⁸ Here the word "surely" seems only to serve as an attempt to persuade herself of a murderer's insanity. Both her judgment of sanity and insanity are thus qualified interpretations of the behaviour of the various criminals she discusses. She moves uneasily in the field of 'human science' as defined by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* but even so manages to find various categories for judgment. She suggests that there is a distinction to be drawn between the "more sensitive type of murderer" and "[t]he brute type"; the former, she argues, would respond more quickly to the "creative", "individual" type of treatment she is proposing, whereas the brute type "might take months and years".¹⁴⁹ Foucault would argue that du Maurier's fondness for categorising the murdering criminal makes her a participant in the "economy of visibility" inherent in the power dynamics of the modern penal system, in that "it is not so much his act as his life that is relevant in characterizing him".¹⁵⁰ In Foucauldian terms, the introduction of the biographical approach turns a criminal into a "*delinquent*," rather than just an offender.¹⁵¹ This "social enemy," who used to be an "adversary of the sovereign", has now been "transformed into a deviant", and as such brings with him "the multiple danger of disorder, crime and madness."¹⁵² Du Maurier's response to Gollancz's letter about the abolition of capital punishment seems tinged with unconscious fears about the nature of the criminal mind, and hence about the societal disorder that might be induced when such 'deviants' are no longer removed from society. She attempts to assuage her own fears with a show of moral humanism, but this is arguably just an attempt to find a new way to re-instate a feeling of power over the forces of disorder.

¹⁴⁶ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated November 14, 1955, Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.1573\NDM\12\1.i

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Foucault, op. cit., p. 251.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 251.

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 299, 300.

THE DEVIL'S REPERTOIRE

Gollancz's book *The Devil's Repertoire: or Nuclear Bombing and the Life of Man* (1958), like his pamphlet on the abolition of capital punishment, is another propagandist piece arising from the outworkings of his "absolutist conscience", as Edwards terms it in her biography.¹⁵³ The book is an attempt to put the spiritual and ethical case for unilateral nuclear disarmament. Gollancz felt that such an act on the part of any one country would act as a beacon for the rest of the world to follow:

I for one believe that if a single nation could find the strength to say "Enough! We have done with it forever", such a new spirit would sweep across the world, and such pressure by the people on their representatives, or on those of them who might not be directly affected, as would compel, first of all a halt in the present destructiveness, then a change of direction, and finally a gradual harnessing of the machine to the true service of mankind.¹⁵⁴

In part two of *The Devil's Repertoire* – entitled 'Spirit and Matter' – Gollancz makes the case for the existence of the spirit and the spiritual, citing the "experience of listening to music" and the act of "loving self-sacrifice" as illustrations of a feeling of connectedness between man and his material environment, and also between man and his fellow man. In part three – 'Spirit and Ethics' – he goes on to say that it is not ethical to acknowledge this feeling of oneness with matter and then choose to abuse it through the use of nuclear weapons:

if one respects matter, if one feels a sort of friendship or fraternity with the phenomena of matter, one cannot make of it a dead instrument of torment and destruction. So to misuse it is the ultimate vulgarity: and by evading our control it will have its revenge.¹⁵⁵

Gollancz felt that the power of the spiritual world was being killed by cynicism, indifference, and above all fear, which he saw as a "denial of the spirit".¹⁵⁶ Correspondingly, he goes on to say in *The Devil's Repertoire* that "[t]he mass, which is spiritless, is encroaching progressively on the individual".¹⁵⁷ His work, therefore, draws a distinction between the unformed, unthinking mass and the power of the individual who can rise up out of it and act in a determined, positive way. In this context it is interesting to examine George Orwell's essay – 'You and the Atomic Bomb' (1945) – in which he coins the phrase

¹⁵³ Edwards, 'The Absolutist Conscience', *Victor Gollancz*, op. cit., p. 637. 'The Absolutist Conscience' is the title of the chapter in which Edwards discusses (amongst other things) Gollancz's campaigns against capital punishment and the nuclear bomb.

¹⁵⁴ Victor Gollancz, *The Devil's Repertoire: or Nuclear Bombing and the Life of Man* (London: Gollancz, 1958), p. 135.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

“the cold war” as part of his analysis of the role of weaponry at both an individual and nation state level.¹⁵⁸ Orwell argues that:

It is a commonplace that the history of civilisation is largely the history of weapons. In particular, the connection between the discovery of gunpowder and the overthrow of feudalism by the bourgeoisie has been pointed out over and over again. And though I have no doubt exceptions can be brought forward, I think the following rule would be found generally true: that ages in which the dominant weapon is expensive or difficult to make will tend to be ages of despotism, whereas when the dominant weapon is cheap and simple, the common people have a chance.¹⁵⁹

For Orwell, therefore, cheap weapons are “inherently democratic weapons”, and expensive weapons simply make “the strong stronger.”¹⁶⁰ Orwell’s essay predicts that as a result of the introduction of nuclear weapons, which are difficult and expensive to manufacture, power in the world will become concentrated in the hands of “two or three monstrous super-states, each possessed of a weapon by which millions of people can be wiped out in a few seconds, dividing the world between them”.¹⁶¹ Power will thus become concentrated in the hands of the few at the expense of the faceless many. Read alongside Orwell’s prophecy, Gollancz’s position on unilateral nuclear disarmament in *The Devil’s Repertoire* appears to be impossibly idealistic. And, indeed, as Edwards notes in her biography, most of his reviewers felt that he “had lost touch with reality”.¹⁶²

Du Maurier’s own response to Gollancz’s *The Devil’s Repertoire* appears in a letter to Gollancz dated October 19th, 1958. She opens the debate by saying that she can empathise with the suffering of those people who now have radiation sickness as a result of nuclear weapons testing, by bringing the idea within the “family circle.”¹⁶³ To this end she imagines that the suffering of her beloved pet dog before she had it put to sleep, and also her mother’s “lingering pathetic illness”, were induced by “some bomb sent out by ourselves”.¹⁶⁴ Again, she is resorting to Burke’s idea of the ‘polity’ based on ‘family affections,’ sparked off by a pertinent reference in *The Devil’s Repertoire*; as Gollancz writes:

¹⁵⁸ George Orwell, ‘You and the Atomic Bomb’, <http://orwell.ru/library/articles/ABomb/english/e_abomb.html> [accessed 09 December 2005]

“This George Orwell piece was originally published by the *Tribune* on October 19, 1945 within two months after atomic bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan”. Gollancz published the works of Orwell.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Edwards, op. cit., p. 659.

¹⁶³ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 19th, 58. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\DR\2\34.i

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

I was discussing the other day, with a lady of intelligence and sensibility whom I greatly love and admire, the possible effect of contemporary bomb-tests on those yet unborn: and I was startled when she told me that this meant nothing at all to her – that even the fate of her grandchildren meant nothing at all to her – and that what concerned her exclusively was our release from the horrors of bombing, nuclear or otherwise, now. I cannot believe that such a restricted concern is concordant with human dignity and potentialities.¹⁶⁵

Referring to this passage, du Maurier replies “I recognise myself on page 84 with humility.”¹⁶⁶ She qualifies this remark by pointing out that the fate of her grandchildren does indeed concern her, that is those within her immediate family circle, but not her hypothetical descendants. Her humility is thus caused by recognising that she shares a similar “restricted concern”; her familial affection can only encompass the real people of her family and not those descendants that she will never know. However, she does confess that in actuality “there is no Time [and] [o]ne should be concerned with all,” an admission perhaps that her ‘polity’ of familial affection cannot stretch as far as Gollancz would idealistically demand.¹⁶⁷

Du Maurier recognises in her letter that nuclear weapons, as Orwell predicted, have led to a situation of brinkmanship and posturing between major nation states; as she writes, “I agree so [sic] too about the awful working-up of hatreds between nations that goes on in propaganda form in the world press almost continuously”.¹⁶⁸ Here she seems to be writing in response to Gollancz’s point that such an endless manipulation of public opinion is part of “the unimaginative habit of personalising nations or countries and thereby depersonalising men”.¹⁶⁹ Gollancz suggests that the names of countries have become “convenient pieces of shorthand” for what are really individuals and the territories in which they live.¹⁷⁰ Du Maurier says that she realises “how foolish it is always to pitch into Russia as being the obvious enemy”, but then seems to fall into the same ‘depersonalisation’ trap - that Gollancz has carefully endeavoured to describe - through her blanket condemnation of any “nation who turns totalitarian”.¹⁷¹ Du Maurier confirms what she thinks of totalitarian occupation, which she sees as a potential result of Gollancz’s unilateral nuclear disarmament campaign, when she writes:

¹⁶⁵ Gollancz, *The Devil’s Repertoire*, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

¹⁶⁶ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 19th, 58. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\DR\2\34.i

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Gollancz, *The Devil’s Repertoire*, op. cit., p. 155.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 155, 156.

¹⁷¹ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 19th, 58. Victor Gollancz Papers, op. cit., MSS.157\3\L\DR\2\34.i

What appals me, and must appal you, about totalitarian occupation (I dont [sic] necessarily mean Russian, any nation who turns totalitarian could come [sic] like this, perhaps some combination of French even, or the Americans?) is that indoctrination of their values, and indeed at pistol point.¹⁷²

Here, individuals have been depersonalised back into Russians, French or Americans and as such have “values” which can only be seen as inferior. Indeed, it would be impossible, according to du Maurier’s thinking that any totalitarian nation could have any values worth adopting. Du Maurier’s totalitarian nation operates at the same level as her perception of the Christian god; it is something which, by virtue of its apparent authoritarian nature, must automatically be rebelled against. She tries to fight her instantaneous revulsion and prejudice by saying that “I agree in Russia itself the upbringing, etc, is probably very good, good education, etc,” but she cannot refrain from thinking that occupation would instantaneously mean the end of her own culture; her vision is of family members being brought up without access to (specifically) Western European music and literature. For example, she imagines “Timothy not loving Beethoven and Bach, and Marie-Therese never having read Shelley”.¹⁷³

Her visualization of “the horrors of totalitarian occupation” causes her to exclaim against what Gollancz has to say on “pages 137-142” – which is a section designed to examine what life in an occupied territory would mean in reality. Although his “anarchist” nature would find it “horrible,” he feels he must give reasons for hope.¹⁷⁴ According to Gollancz, laying the country open to potential occupation, through unilateral nuclear disarmament is to choose “*life*”:

Under a Soviet occupation there would be *life*: a nuclear war would mean death: and the man who chooses death rather than life is a blasphemer, not if you prefer, against God, but against his own proper nature.¹⁷⁵

For Gollancz, “life goes on, love goes on, sea and country and rivers are still there, children play about,” and hence there are always grounds for optimism, for the human spirit will always “put up a fight for its free creativity.”¹⁷⁶ His socialism means that he believes in the power of the individual to influence its totalitarian captors. Du Maurier is “shocked” by this section, feeling that - in spite of his attempt at a balanced argument - he is suggesting that “[a]fter all, it wouldn’t be too bad.”¹⁷⁷ She can agree with this only if occupation was “rather like war-time conditions, queuing for food, nothing without permits, perhaps behind barbed wires, this could be endured”, but she feels that indoctrination is “utterly ghastly.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid. Timothy was Gollancz’s grandson. Marie-Therese was du Maurier’s grand-daughter.

¹⁷⁴ Gollancz, *The Devil’s Repertoire*, op. cit., p. 138.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 139, 140.

¹⁷⁷ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 19th, 58, op. cit.

Worse than the two-headed or leukemia [sic] bogie”.¹⁷⁸ Interestingly, the section that causes du Maurier to feel so utterly ‘shocked’ was designed specifically by Gollancz to argue against all those doom merchants who say that “[b]etter for the whole world to be destroyed than live under Russian domination,” so in a sense he had already pre-empted du Maurier’s reaction.¹⁷⁹ Du Maurier cannot find any cause for consolation in Gollancz’s idea of the human spirit emerging victorious since she has no faith in the individual. The individual is just a ‘mass man’ with a herd mentality and thus no weapons of persuasion at his disposal; for her, a totalitarian nation is divided into two categories of human beings “the chaps at the top dictating even now and the herd following”.¹⁸⁰ Therefore she draws the conclusion that “[t]he picture you attempt to show is, I am sure, unreal – the idea that once conquered and occupied we could, by our winning ways, somehow influence our conquerors.”¹⁸¹ It would seem that the ruling body of a totalitarian nation, in spite of its ‘Superman’ pretensions, is one male elite of which she firmly disapproves.

From the viewpoint of du Maurier’s ‘conservative apathy’, Gollancz’s project will not provide any solution to the issue of nuclear warfare:

I don’t believe any great anti-H bomb crusade will bring about the answer. Someone will invent a J Ray. Piercing us all from one end of the globe to t’other. H bombs then will be old hat. If you and I set out tomorrow hand-in-hand and offered ourselves as sacrifices to H bomb radiation tests – to be on show, in fact, to the world, and let the tests kill us slowly over the next few years – would it put an end to further inventions? That it seems to me, would be the only logical follow-up of your book. Frankly, I’m too cowardly and too skeptical [sic] to try.¹⁸²

Du Maurier’s own answer to the problem is perhaps even more idealistic than Gollancz’s, and seems to revert back to the ideas of the Oxford Group. For her, the answer to the world’s fear of war and occupation is “[l]ove.”¹⁸³ And yet to make a huge sacrifice, on either an individual or national level, such as she feels Gollancz demands, is not a valid option, as she maintains “Christ did not expect his disciples and followers to be crucified on Calvary with him. He went it alone. There must be a meaning here that one has not yet understood”.¹⁸⁴ She does not, therefore, have a practical method to suggest how love should be shown “to greatest effect”.¹⁸⁵ So, in spite of her confessing to liking “parts II and III the best” - Gollancz’s spiritual passages in *The Devil’s Repertoire* concerning the self-sacrifice that stems from love

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Gollancz, *The Devil’s Repertoire*, op. cit., p. 137.

¹⁸⁰ Du Maurier, Letter to Gollancz dated Oct 19th, 58, op. cit.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

of one's fellow man - she is not prepared for herself or her country to put this into practice.¹⁸⁶ Here, as elsewhere, she paradoxically invokes the actions of Christ only as an example *not* to be followed; du Maurier's Christ is only to be followed by not following. In an interchange which is recorded in *Life.After.Theory*, a similar proposition is raised by Nick Royle and discussed by Jacques Derrida. Royle suggests that "following your [meaning Derrida's] work, the notion of the follower or acolyte becomes difficult, indeed perhaps impossible."¹⁸⁷ To support his argument, Royle quotes Montaigne's phrase "Who follows another follows nothing," and then relates it to one used by Derrida in *Monolingualism of the Other*: "Contrary to what one is often most tempted to believe, the master is nothing".¹⁸⁸ In response, Derrida claims that his own relation to the masters (e.g. Freud and Heidegger) "is a relation of fidelity and betrayal; and I betray them because I want to be true to them".¹⁸⁹ As Derrida goes on to confirm:

Within the experience of following them there is something other, something new, or something different which occurs and which I sign. That's what I call a 'counter-sign', a counter-signature, a term I use very often. A counter-signature is a signature which both confirms the first signature, the former signature, and nevertheless is opposed to it; and in any case it's new, it's my own signature. A counter-signature is this strange alliance between following and not following, confirming and displacing; and displacing is the only way to pay homage, to do justice.¹⁹⁰

In trying to pay homage to those he follows, Derrida acknowledges that he commits acts of betrayal. Alternatively, whilst du Maurier may not consciously want to be a follower of Christ, her acts of betrayal – as for example in her poem 'Apostasis' – often unwittingly become acts of fidelity, even whilst her stated aims are clearly about the necessity of disloyalty.

ENDWORD

The epigrams with which I started this chapter signal du Maurier's concern with 'following' Gollancz, that is with paying attention to his teachings. In her letters she affirms that she is a ready and willing pupil, yet something about her approach also signals betrayal. Some of her letters are carefully phrased so that she begins by agreeing with everything he says, perhaps to massage his ego, then she frequently proceeds to disagree with him on many points. In Derridean terms, she palimpsestuously confirms Gollancz only to displace him - in embracing his teachings she holds herself apart from them; conversely she denies the teachings of Christ only to remain loyal to her view of him.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Nicholas Royle, in Michael Payne and John Schad (eds.), *Life.After.Theory* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁸⁹ Jacques Derrida, in *Life.After.Theory*, op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

Although she acknowledges and engages with Gollancz's religiously-inspired socialist position, her letters persistently maintain a conservative stance. However, in later years, as my chapter on *Jamaica Inn* will show, something of the rebel – which always lurked in her nature – will begin to emerge, as she starts to engage with more left-of-centre concerns such as the Mebyon Kernow – the Cornish Nationalist Party. Also, it could be said that du Maurier's interest in Gollancz's political experiment at Repton was not wholly lost on her as it is possible that this formed the model for Aldo Donati's Renaissance-inspired consciousness raising campaign. So perhaps some of Gollancz's teachings, whilst not immediately effective, may eventually have coloured her views. Similarly, it is also possible to say that her time spent with followers of Frank Buchman's Moral Re-Armament movement was not without its mental repercussions, since some of their views appear in her discussion of Gollancz's works.

SECTION 3

LIFE INTO TEXT – RENAISSANCE MEN

(THE BACON BROTHERS – ANTHONY AND FRANCIS)

RENAISSANCE MEN AND THEIR MASKS *GOLDEN LADS (1975) AND THE WINDING STAIR (1976)*

Nowadays, with one sister a High Anglican like my godmother and the other a Roman Catholic, I still do not attend either matins or mass.¹
(Daphne du Maurier)

[T]he Queen of Heaven [...] was dragged into court by the young Puritan Jehovah [...] Throughout Shakespeare's lifetime, this was the Civil War within every citizen[.]²
(Ted Hughes)

Furthermore, every individual, in consequence of his education, interests, and constitution is attended by a delusive power, his own familiar demon, which mocks his mind and troubles it with unsubstantial spectres[.]³
(Francis Bacon in *The Masculine Birth of Time*)

Every man of superior understanding in contact with inferiors wears a mask[.]⁴
(Francis Bacon in *The Refutation of Philosophies*)

When I seek my ultimate formula for *Shakespeare*, I always find only this: he conceived of the type of Caesar. That sort of thing cannot be guessed: one either is it, or one is not. The great poet dips *only* from his own reality [...] And let me confess it: I feel instinctively sure and certain that Lord Bacon was the originator, the self-tormentor of this uncanniest kind of literature [...] We are very far from knowing enough about Lord Bacon[.]⁵
(Friedrich Nietzsche in *Ecce Homo*)

INTRODUCTION

Margaret Forster's biography of Daphne du Maurier informs us that she had become interested in Anthony and Francis Bacon at least twenty years prior to writing about them through her reading of the seven volumes of James Spedding's *The Life and Letters of Francis Bacon*.⁶ The enigmatic Bacon brothers seem to have presented a particularly powerful challenge to her research skills and to her imagination. Like her discovery of the mouldy bones of the beloved Menabilly, which she had named 'The House of Secrets,' the lives of the Bacon brothers became to her something which she must resurrect from the decaying effects of time, in the hope that just as Menabilly had daimonically "whisper[ed] her secrets," so the Bacon Brothers would, eventually, whisper theirs.⁷ Her work on the Bacon Brothers brought her into contact with many important members of The Francis Bacon Society, who were also

¹ Daphne du Maurier, 'Sunday', *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan Books, 1982), p. 148.

² Ted Hughes, 'Notes on Shakespeare', *Winter Pollen: Occasional Prose* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), p. 110.

³ Francis Bacon, in Daphne du Maurier, *The Winding Stair: Francis Bacon, His Rise and Fall* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1976), p. 60. Du Maurier gives the citation as chapter 14. The edition she uses is *Temporis Partus Masculus* in *The Philosophy of Francis Bacon* (Liverpool University Press, 1964), translated by Benjamin Farrington.

⁴ Francis Bacon, in *ibid.*, p. 62. Du Maurier does not state the page or chapter of the quotation. The edition she is using is *Redargutio Philosophiarum* in *The Philosophy of Francis Bacon*, op. cit.

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. 246.

⁶ Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow Books, 1994), p. 386.

⁷ Thus du Maurier entitles one of her chapters in *The Rebecca Notebook*, op. cit. The quotation is from p. 128 of this chapter.

engaged on the same ‘Grail Quest’ as herself.⁸ These she remained in contact with for many years. The Francis Bacon Society was favourably impressed by her work on the two biographies of the Bacons – *Golden Lads* and *The Winding Stair*, feeling that they aided the recuperation of Francis Bacon’s reputation and added to the body of evidence for his authorship of the works of Shakespeare.⁹ Both these aspects of her work accorded with the two fundamental tenets of the society, which are as follows;

1. To encourage the study of the works of Francis Bacon as philosopher, lawyer, statesman and poet; also his character, genius and life; his influence on his own and succeeding times, and the tendencies and results of his writing.
2. To encourage the general study of the evidence in favour of Francis Bacon's authorship of the plays commonly ascribed to Shakespeare, and to investigate his connection with other works of the Elizabethan period.¹⁰

For her services to the study of Francis Bacon and his secrets, she was duly accorded the Vice-Presidency of the Society in June 1977.¹¹ Oddly, it was precisely the references to Bacon’s authorship of Shakespeare in du Maurier’s biographies that were nearly lost in the editing process as Sheila Hodges, du Maurier’s editor at Gollancz, confirms in her article ‘Editing Daphne du Maurier’.¹² Hodges relates that the only time that du Maurier ever openly objected to any of her ‘cuts’ during the years she edited her books was when she excised the Shakespeare allusions in *Golden Lads*, deeming them “tenuous and lacking in point in the form in which they were included”.¹³ Du Maurier wrote to Hodges to ask for these “Shakespeare clues” to be put back; as Hodges notes that she writes:

The point being – you may not agree, no one may agree or even see them – but I first noticed these things, my clues, *years* ago, when I waded through the life of Francis Bacon by Spedding and checked some of Lady Bacon’s letters, which he had transcribed without a thought of any allusions ... From then on I have been hooked on clue searching, frail though they may be ... I probably would not have tackled the brothers Bacon at all if I were not *convinced* there is something in the Bacon connection, which, I may say, many people have believed long before I was born!¹⁴

⁸ This is how the Francis Bacon Society viewed their work. See quotation later in this chapter.

⁹ Daphne du Maurier, *Golden Lads: Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London: Pan Books, 1977). All future references to this work will be given in the text thus GLp.X. The phrase ‘Golden Lads’ is taken from Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, Act IV, Scene II. Du Maurier, *The Winding Stair*, op.cit. All future references to this work will be given in the text thus WSp.X. The phrase ‘Winding Stair’ is taken from Francis Bacon’s Essay XI. Francis Bacon, *Francis Bacon’s Essays* (London: J.M. Dent, 1958). It is highly likely that du Maurier named this volume *The Winding Stair* to give it the same initial letters as William Shakespeare.

¹⁰ See Anon, ‘The Francis Bacon Society’, <www.sirbacon.org/-links/bmembership.htm> [accessed 15 March 2004].

¹¹ See – Letter from Noel Fermor – Chairman of TFBS – dated 16th June 1977 which invites her to be the Vice President. That she accepted is evidenced by a congratulatory letter from Martin Pares dated 1st July 1977. See Exeter University Archives, EUL MS207/6/22.

¹² Sheila Hodges, ‘Editing Daphne du Maurier’, *Women’s History Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2002.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 296. The ellipses are in Hodges transcription of du Maurier’s letter. Hodges gives the letter as dated 13 October 1974.

This chapter will discuss the creation of secrets by the Bacons, the ambiguous methods employed to portray these secrets to a readership that may be either receptive or hostile, and the attempts of du Maurier, The Francis Bacon Society and others to uncover them. In a sense, therefore, this chapter is about reading practices, what Eco might term ‘Hermetic semiosis’ or suspicious interpretation of literary texts. Bacon is thought to have encoded all his secrets, whether these were intended to communicate with his contemporaries or with posterity, via either code language or special ciphers, and much work has been done by Bacon’s admirers to extricate his meanings. Bacon followers thus see his literary output as double-written, containing texts within texts as in the manner of a palimpsest, with the encoded texts bearing the suppressed meanings that it would have been dangerous, in one way or another, to express openly during Bacon’s time. Bacon himself is also palimpsested, since he is a twofomed character who for various reasons – which will become apparent - must wear a ‘mask’ in public as a form of self censorship to hide various aspects of his life. In an article entitled ‘The Epistemology of Expurgation: Bacon and *The Masculine Birth of Time*’, Graham Hamill points out that Bacon was aware of the metaphor of the palimpsest and used it to “theorize a model of pedagogical writing and reception”.¹⁵ Hamill refers to Bacon’s comment in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) where he states that writing is “a kind of contract of error between the deliverer and receiver”.¹⁶ Bacon thinks and writes in a palimpsestuous way, particularly in his *Essays*, where he defines truth as a “mixture of a lie”; as Hamill points out:

For the Bacon of the *Essays*, since truth is expressed through lies and “doth judge itself,” it is never singular, but always double. Truth is never a matter of similitude for Bacon, but a matter of dissimilitude – truth differing from itself to judge itself.¹⁷

Not only does this resemble Dillon’s idea of the palimpsestuous, but it conforms to the notion that the palimpsest is a metaphor for itself which at the same time destroys itself in an act of catachresis. Bacon admits, in so many words, that he and his works are palimpsested phenomena, and therefore he can never be identical with himself; in the words of Hamill, “Bacon is *the* dissembler par excellence”.¹⁸

¹⁵ Graham Hamill, ‘The Epistemology of Expurgation: Bacon and *The Masculine Birth of Time*’, in Jonathan Goldberg (ed.), *Queering the Renaissance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), p. 237. I found this article on Bacon after I had decided to use the method of the palimpsest in my thesis, and also after I had written the majority of this chapter. It is therefore evident that the life and writing of Bacon lends itself to such analysis, as the thoughts of Hamill and myself have tended, independently, in the same direction.

¹⁶ Francis Bacon, in *The Advancement of Learning*, cited in Hamill, *ibid.*, p. 237. Hamill gives the citation as: From *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath (Boston: Taggard and Thompson, 1857-74), 6:289. I give the citation as it appears in the article.

¹⁷ Francis Bacon, in the *Essays*, cited in Hamill, *ibid.*, p. 239. Hamill gives the citation as *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 12:82. Hamill, *ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁸ Hamill, *ibid.*, p. 240.

WILLIAM COMYNS BEAUMONT

I have already mentioned Forster's explanation of du Maurier's interest in the Bacon brothers. However she fails to mention that du Maurier's maternal uncle – William Comyns Beaumont – had written and self-published a revisionist history of Queen Elizabeth the First entitled *The Private Life of the Virgin Queen* (1947).¹⁹ In the 'Foreword' to this work he explains the reason behind wanting to publish a new work on Queen Elizabeth in spite of the large number of pre-existing histories and biographies. He suggests that historians have neglected a large mine of information which sheds a different light on her reign. For him, the biography of Queen Elizabeth the First is:

the story of a double life, of a queen to the outside world an unmarried virgin, but in actuality one secretly married and the mother of two remarkable sons, having a husband most prominent at Court and yet none of whom she could openly acknowledge [...]²⁰

Beaumont suggests that Queen Elizabeth's husband was Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester, and that Francis Bacon was their first-born child and hence the legitimate heir to the throne.²¹ The reason given in Beaumont's revisionist history for the secrecy surrounding her marriage to Leicester, and hence the failure to publicly acknowledge him or their children, is stated as the prior murder of Amy Robsart, Leicester's wife.²² Thus Bacon was sworn to secrecy by the Queen concerning his Royal birth, but Beaumont suggests that the information was nonetheless left to posterity in his literary works:

He was determined to transmit the secret of his birth to future generations and he knew only too well that if he dared openly to avow it, or if his ciphers were discovered during his life it would have been immediately forfeit. He told the story in many places of himself and the Queen hoping that some mind would perchance discover the secret of one or other of his ciphers [...]²³

Beaumont claims that these then defied discovery for nearly three centuries, until a Shakespearean scholar – Dr. Orville W. Owen - “stumbled on the first clue” over fifty years prior to the time of Beaumont's book.²⁴ Owen spent years working on the 1623 Folio edition text and eventually published his findings – the Word Cipher – in a set of volumes known as *Sir Francis Bacon's Cipher Story* (1893, 1895, 1896).

¹⁹ William Comyns Beaumont, *The Private Life of the Virgin Queen* (London: Comyns Publishers, 1947). William Comyns Beaumont was a literary agent and journalist who edited the fashionable magazine *Bystander* (in which appeared the first of du Maurier's published short stories 'And Now to God the Father'). Beaumont cites the works of Spedding in his 'Works Consulted' section which may explain how du Maurier came across them. In a letter to Mrs L. Hammer dated Oct 21st 1975 (see p. 84), du Maurier records that a lady of the name of Dora Mead used to teach her when she was 15-16-17 and was the first to tell her of the Shakespeare-Bacon connection. Du Maurier's correspondence with L. Hammer is recorded in *End of the Line*. This has no city of publication or publisher (vanity press?). *End of the Line* was published in 2002.

²⁰ Comyns Beaumont, *The Private Life*, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

²¹ Robert, the Earl of Essex, is given as the second son. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

His work was “hailed with a storm of abuse and invective on both sides of the Atlantic”.²⁵ In 1899, Beaumont relates, Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup published her first edition of the Biliteral Cipher, which made use of a facsimile edition of the 1623 Folio Shakespeare. In this work she claims that the following message appears, encoded in Jonson’s praise of Shakespeare,

Francis of Verulam is author of all the plays heretofore published by Marlowe, Greene, Peele, Shakespeare, and of the two-and-twenty now put out for the first time.²⁶

In an attempt to prove the veracity of Gallup’s Biliteral Cipher, Beaumont includes four facsimile pages of Gilbert Wat’s translation of Bacon’s *De Augmentis Scientiarum* which demonstrates the method of the Biliteral Alphabet. For Beaumont, as for many others, Bacon was a man of disguises, using both ciphers and people to conceal, with the hope of later revealing, the truth behind his various “masks”.²⁷

DU MAURIER’S BIOGRAPHIES AND *THE FLIGHT OF THE FALCON*

In many ways du Maurier’s biographies of the Bacons and her novel *The Flight of the Falcon*, which I discuss later, can be seen as peculiarly implicated with each other. Both the biographies and the novel tell the tale of two brothers – the Bacons in the biographies and the Donatis in the novel - who become embroiled in the politics of the day, and in both cases the elder brother dies prematurely and is succeeded by the younger. A further parallel concerns the actual, but hidden, parentage of one of the brothers, since in *The Flight of the Falcon* Aldo, like Bacon, turns out to be an adopted son. Although du Maurier makes no mention of any whiff of scandal concerning Francis Bacon’s birth in either of the two biographies, her correspondence with members of the Francis Bacon Society certainly reveals that she was aware of this as a distinct possibility. Roderick Eagle mentions, in a letter to du Maurier dated 17th March 1977, the intriguing phrase ‘Royal Birth’ and refers her to his article on the subject in the *Baconiana* of September 1955 – *Baconiana* being the journal of The Francis Bacon Society.²⁸ A careful look at the index for *Baconiana* highlights the society’s preoccupation with determining whether Francis Bacon was indeed the son of Queen Elizabeth, for example there is an article on ‘The Royal birth theme’ by J Arther published in 1948, and another by M.F. Bayley entitled ‘Was FB crowned King’ published in

²⁵ Ibid., p. 11. Beaumont mentions Dr. Owen as first in the field but acknowledges that this is to “leav[e] aside Senator Ignatius Donnelly, who claimed to have discovered another Bacon cipher but was unable to establish its claim, which was incomplete.” Ibid., p. 10.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 13. Beaumont gives the citation as Elizabeth Gallup, *The Biliteral Cipher of Sir Francis Bacon*. No further information is given.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁸ See Exeter University Archives. EUL MS 207/6/22.

1937, to name but two.²⁹ Other interesting echoes can be found between *The Flight of the Falcon* and the two biographies. The novel charts the Icarus-like trajectory of its key protagonist, Aldo Donati who, like Francis Bacon and many of his contemporaries, does indeed climb the “winding stair” (WSp.136) to political prominence only to “slip and fall headlong” (WSp.136) once the summit is reached. Concerning Francis Bacon’s political career, du Maurier notes that “he too, like the Earl of Essex, was to fly with waxen wings and fall like Icarus” (GLp.259); Aldo does this literally in the town pageant when he jumps from a tower and fails to operate a flying mechanism which would have prevented his demise. Of particular interest, too, is du Maurier’s portrayal of the Bacons’ accumulation of a male power group, similar to that of Aldo’s, and its concern with mysteries and secrets. Associated with this is the inference that Bacon is a type of philosopher-king, possessing “many facets to his character” (WSp.35) in the manner of the perturbingly multiple Aldo. Du Maurier notes that Bacon was a man who:

must have bewildered his contemporaries, who would recognise one aspect and not another, believing the one they saw to be the whole man. Hence, perhaps, the dislike, even the fear, of those in his own day who did not understand him, and the incredulity of succeeding generations; while to counter this we have the admiration, even the adulation, of his close friends, echoed in our own time by the more extravagant claims that have been made about him. (WSp.35)

Here we have, in real terms, the paradoxical reputation accorded to Aldo Donati and his Renaissance counterpart Duke Claudio in *The Flight of the Falcon*, being similarly accorded to an actual historical figure – Francis Bacon. Bacon’s Janus-faced reputation outlives the Renaissance and continues to du Maurier’s time and beyond.

SHAKESPEARE’S MYTH FOR THE AGE

Janus-faced, too, is Shakespeare’s characterisation of the age that he witnessed. The time period covered by the two biographies *Golden Lads* and *The Winding Stair* incorporates “the closing years of King Henry VIII” (GLp.15), the brief reign of Edward, the reign of the Catholic Queen ‘Bloody Mary’ (the Underworld side of the ‘old goddess’), Queen Elizabeth’s careful religious balancing act between the ‘old Goddess’ and the puritan God Jehovah, King James’s open rejection of the ‘old Goddess’, and anticipates the time when England’s internal psychic division finally breaks down into religiously-inspired Civil

²⁹ The index to *Baconiana* can be found on-line at <www.sirbacon.org/baconianaindex.html> There is a section devoted to articles by Beaumont, C. This is short for (William) Comyns Beaumont. The subject matter of the articles and the timeframe are consistent to that of his book *The Private Life of the Virgin Queen*. The book is mentioned on the website and the author is again given as C. Beaumont. The full list of articles by him can be found in Appendix 1.

War.³⁰ The religious terms I have used here are taken from Ted Hughes' studies of the mythic pattern Shakespeare manipulates throughout his literary works to underscore the issues and events of the time period he inherited, lived through and in some sense predicted. Based partly on a consideration of the Renaissance's fascination with classical mythology, Hughes' argument is that Shakespeare's myth derives from a combination of his long poems 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece', whereby the first represents the myth of Catholicism and the second represents the myth of Puritanism, thus encapsulating the two halves of the religious fanaticism that dominated English life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Venus, the love Goddess who is also the Queen of the Underworld, amorously pursues the Puritan youth Adonis. Adonis, however, refuses Venus in her love goddess incarnation, and as punishment is devoured by her underworld incarnation - the demon boar, which represents repressed sexuality and madness. The puritan Adonis is then re-incarnated as the usurping King Tarquin, who goes on to rape and destroy Lucrece, himself and all order. The demon boar is thus the occult force of Catholicism, which maddens the Puritan brain of those who reject her. In turn, the maddened Puritan thus becomes a usurping figure responsible for the rape of women and the death of kings – in Shakespeare, therefore, rapes are regicides and regicides are rapes. In summary, Hughes writes the following concerning the essential myth in Shakespeare's work,

from this collision of Puritan and Medieval goddess he found this consistent third figure emerging, performing consistent actions, in an upheaval of imageries of Civil War[.]³¹

As foreseen by Shakespeare, the internal psychic war in the citizens of England was thus destined to erupt into external Civil War.

Psychically divided herself, and caught between sisters who followed Catholicism and Anglicanism, it is perhaps not surprising that du Maurier was attracted by such a religiously fissured period – exploring this world and some of its key players would thus be an exploration of a doubled self, in much the same way that Shakespeare used his literary works to explore the mythic archetypes underlying both the twifomed age and himself as representative of the age he lived through. In *Winter Pollen*, Ted Hughes has this to say concerning the motivation behind Shakespeare's most intense writing:

³⁰ This distinction between the 'old Goddess' and the Puritan God Jehovah is encapsulated in Ted Hughes' work on Shakespeare. See Ted Hughes, *Winter Pollen*, op. cit. Also see Ted Hughes, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992).

³¹ Hughes, *Winter Pollen*, op. cit., p. 118.

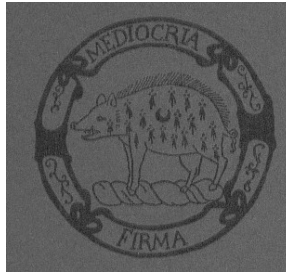
This was the way his imagination presented the mystery of himself to himself. It was his great recurrent dream. And it so happened that his nature was such and the time was such and the place was such that this symbolic form of his nature – his deeply divided nature – appeared to him, when he exploited it for drama, as a problem – the posing of a chronic sexual dilemma, a highly dramatic and interesting collision of forces.³²

For Shakespeare, as for du Maurier, at the heart of the religious dilemma there was also a sexual dilemma caused by the Puritannical tendency to repress the Venus side of the ‘old Goddess’. Du Maurier struggled for most of her life to repress the sexual tendencies of the ‘Eric Avon’ side of her nature. But what is the mystery of the divided Shakespeare? Du Maurier contests, in both the *Golden Lads* and *The Winding Stair*, that underlying the mystery of Shakespeare resides the enigma of the Bacons. In other words, beneath Francis Bacon’s ‘mask’ of ‘superior understanding’, lies his alter ego William Shakespeare, just as the man behind du Maurier’s mask was her alter ego Eric Avon. In her adolescence, this male alter ego had been enlisted to play out many of Shakespeare’s key male roles, as she recalls in *Myself When Young*, “naturally, I was Prince Hal [...]; Othello smothering Desdemona; [...] Macbeth confronting the witches”.³³ So, in a complex web, we have du Maurier’s alter ego acting out all the fictional alter egos of the actual alter ego she ascribes to Francis Bacon. In effect, she re-enacted Shakespeare’s underlying myth for herself, allowing her to explore many times over what Hughes has termed “the controlling, patterned field of force” of the myth, or alternatively the myth’s “daemonic dimension”.³⁴ Du Maurier was thus spectralised by this key Renaissance figure and the mythic aspect of his supposed works. Francis Bacon openly confessed to his own “familiar demon” (WSp.60), which was frequently accompanied by “strangeness, clouds, etc” (WSp.55), as du Maurier has already noted. In the works of Shakespeare, the daimonic, symbolised in the form of a boar, acquires a much more esoteric and pervasive character. Interestingly, the two men’s daimons are related since Shakespeare’s daimonic boar is also the emblem of Francis Bacon, and this emblem appears in both of du Maurier’s biographies. Du Maurier was always attracted to enigmatic men and their daimons, since they reminded her of the clouds of moodiness (and madness?) experienced by her father Gerald and grandfather George du Maurier before her.

³² Ibid., p. 106.

³³ Daphne du Maurier, *Myself When Young: The Shaping of a Writer* (London: Pan Books, 1978), p. 32. Daphne du Maurier’s two sisters – Jeanne and Angela - were always enlisted to play either the female parts or the minor roles in any drama the du Maurier siblings acted out.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 3.



The Daimon Boar (see WS - reverse of jacket cover)

MORE CLASSICAL INSPIRATIONS – PALLAS ATHENE AND THE PLEIADES

The Greek archetype adopted by the Bacon brothers and noted briefly in passing by du Maurier in *Golden Lads* is the goddess Pallas Athena. In her account of Jean de la Jessé's correspondence with Francis Bacon, she mentions Jessé's assertion that his own muse "had been inspired by "Bacon's Pallas"" (GLp.53). Jean de la Jessé, incidentally, was the personal secretary to the duc d'Anjou, and like Francis Bacon was "an ardent admirer of his native Pleiades" (GLp.53). The Pleiades were a group of poets named after their Greek predecessors who desired to "break with all the traditions of the age in which they lived and return to classical grace" (GLp.52). Francis Bacon had been inspired by the Pleiades since boyhood and hoped to emulate them in England (GLp.52). The Bacons' interest in all things classical is a product of the Cambridge University education that was typical for the day. Later in life Francis Bacon re-interpreted the Greek legends to suit his personal politics and published them under the title of *De Sapientia Veterum*, or *Of the Wisdom of the Ancients* (1609)³⁵. In his preface to this work he praises the ancient fables for their "hidden and involved meanings."³⁶ By contrast, in the fable of Cassandra, her punishment for tricking Apollo into giving her "the gift of prophesying" is the inability to know "the due times when to speake and when to be silent".³⁷ Francis Bacon's ability with secret ciphers and symbols ensured that in his letters he would only emulate Cassandra's all-seeing wisdom and not her chronic verbosity.³⁸ To those who were uninitiated in Francis Bacon's secret codes, his letters and plays would therefore remain silent. As du Maurier writes, "[c]oncealment, like the "worm in the bud" in a different

³⁵ A picture of Pallas Athena (Minerva) appears on the title page of the 1641 version of *The Wisdom of the Ancients*. See Peter Dawkins, 'Image of Pallas Athena – The Spear-Shaker, Guardian of the Mysteries'. <www.sirbacon.org/sagesse-mysterie.htm> [accessed 04 February 2004]

³⁶ Francis Bacon, *De Sapientia Veterum and The Wisedome of the Ancients* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976). There are no page numbers in the English version of the preface. Please note that this is a facsimile edition and the English spelling is as Sir Arthur Gorges' translation of 1619.

³⁷ Ibid, *The Wisedome of the Ancients*, pp. 1, 2.

³⁸ She was also destined to be eternally disbelieved – like the Francis Bacon Society itself perhaps.

context, affected the many facets of his personality” (WSp.62) and it is this talent which caused Nietzsche to declare that “[w]e are very far from knowing enough about Lord Bacon[.]”³⁹

In his fable concerning the birth of his muse Pallas Athena, entitled ‘Metis, or Counsell’, Bacon relates how Jupiter takes Metis to be his wife and then devours her once she has conceived, whereupon he is delivered of a wondrous birth, “for out of his head or braine came forth Pallas armed”.⁴⁰ Bacon states that this fable contains a “secret of state” concerning the precarious marriage of Kings and their “Counsellours”, since Kings are apt to steal the ideas of their Counsellors and present them fully fledged as if from their own minds, thus concealing their true origin.⁴¹ In a similar manner, perhaps, the name of William Shakespeare has come to be seen, in certain circles, as a device for concealing the true origin of Francis Bacon’s literary ideas. As du Maurier relates:

this ingenious theory has a certain appeal for those who, like the present writer, can fancy a young barrister of Gray’s Inn as author of many of the sonnets[.] (WSp.67-8)

Here we have an instance of du Maurier being intrigued by an ‘ingenious theory’ (as she is, also, in *The Flight of the Falcon*) – or, in other words perhaps, the theory of someone’s genius. Although she makes many careful references to pieces of evidence to support the Bacon/Shakespeare theory throughout the two biographies, she does not overtly connect them with the inferences contained within the choice of the Bacon brothers’ Muse. Pallas Athena, who was born fully armed with her spear, was also known as the Spear-shaker, that is, she who would shake the spear of light at the darkness of ignorance.⁴² Like Aldo, this was a role that Francis Bacon had assigned to himself, as he had declared in a letter to his uncle, the Lord Treasurer, “I have taken all knowledge to be my province” (WSp.39). He was determined to become an agent of propagation of “the light of understanding” (WSp.39), thus appropriating the name Shake-spear – in whose hands the spear became a pen. The followers of Pallas Athena were renowned for their helmets – in German this would be Wilhelm, which becomes the English William – and these usually took the form of a beaver hat. Du Maurier may not have known the true significance of the Bacons’ beaver hats when she wrote *Golden Lads*, but she was definitely made aware of it by Doris Brameld in a letter dated February 12th 1976:

³⁹ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, op. cit., p. 246.

⁴⁰ Bacon, *The Wisedome of the Ancients*, op. cit., p. 165.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 165.

⁴² See Anon, ‘The Spearshaker’. <<http://216.10.26.55/amarushka/16.htm>> [accessed 13 February 2004].

The hat or helmet worn by Francis' brotherhood was a black beaver of a special measurement presented by the Master of the Lodge upon initiation which explains Anthony's large expenditure on hats! As you know Pallas Athena's Helmet symbolised invisibility[.]⁴³

Each member of the Shake-spear brotherhood differentiated himself from the others by an additional name, hence the use of William by Francis. Du Maurier alludes to many of the connections to Pallas Athena – and in particular her association with hats – throughout both biographies, for example, during their time at university the Bacons were prone to buying, wearing and giving out “beaver hats” (GLp.34), and at Gray's Inn, where Francis Bacon practiced law, the students elected a Prince of Purpool every Christmas who would act out plays and masques along with his “Knights of the Helmet” (GLp.125). Interestingly, in spite of all the scattered evidence she gives to the contrary, du Maurier states that, “[n]or is there any proof that Francis Bacon ever belonged to any mystical or other secret society” (WSp.202). This notion is contradicted by Peter Dawkins in a letter to du Maurier dated 25th February 1976, which states that the Bacon brothers and their circle of male friends:

were the backbone of the Renaissance and, as I expect you know, they surrendered all ideas of personal gain and recognition for the benefit of the whole, and their works were given out under pseudonyms [sic] or names of other living people who volunteered or were paid for the use of their “mask”. Thus they could work unhindered and in private[.]⁴⁴

It could of course be just a truism on du Maurier's part to state that there is no proof of the Bacons' secret society, since any true secret society would go to great pains to hide its existence, and any member of such a society would deny their membership if challenged. Similarly, Frances Yates consistently raises the point in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* – which du Maurier read as part of her research on the Bacon brothers – that the Rosicrucians, an esoteric European order, were known as the “Invisible Ones,” and goes on to write, both ironically and rhetorically, “[t]he Rosicrucians, do they exist? Are you one? No. Have you ever seen one? No.”⁴⁵ Baconians have a great interest in the Rosicrucians as their index also shows, as in for example H. Bayley's article entitled ‘Hidden Symbols of the Rosicrucians’ (Jan 1903), and L. Biddulph's two articles ‘A Rosicrucian document connected with FB’ (Apr 1899) and ‘The Rosicrucian three treasures’ (Jan 1948). Peter Dawkins notes, in the letter mentioned above, how du Maurier touches upon “the undercurrent of hidden secrets and true events” in *Golden Lads*, but wonders whether she did this “consciously or unconsciously”, inferring that she may have perceptively registered

⁴³ See Exeter University Archives, EUL MS207/6/21/2. Dorothy Brameld was one time secretary of The Francis Bacon Society.

⁴⁴ See Exeter University Archives, EUL MS207/6/21/2. Peter Dawkins was a member of The Francis Bacon Society.

⁴⁵ Frances Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 104, 206.

the key elements of the Bacons' mystery without understanding their significance.⁴⁶ Alternatively, she could simply be employing Francis Bacon's own method in not saying openly what the pieces of the puzzle actually mean – for as Peter Dawkins writes, in a way which echoes du Maurier's own words in *The Flight of the Falcon*, “[t]he crowds never stop to look at these things, but true seekers are well rewarded.”⁴⁷ Dawkins is writing on behalf of all the members of The Francis Bacon Society when he states:

You may begin to realise that we are not only engaged on a quest as exciting as that for the Holy Grail, but are indeed on the Grail Quest itself; and the historical figures – past and present – are the characters who compose this great drama of life.⁴⁸

Although the members of The Francis Bacon Society were, and still are, engaged on Pallas Athena's mission of enlightenment, it was thought necessary in their public works both to stimulate the imagination and yet do this in a covert way, in other words, they too should wear the necessary helmet of invisibility.

SECRETS AND LIES

“You remember a while since,” I said, “we spoke of necessary lies. Is there any device by which we might tell one genuine lie worthy of the name, and persuade the rulers themselves that it is true, or at least persuade the rest of the city?”
[Plato – *The Republic*]⁴⁹

The best composition and temperature is to have open-ness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign, if there be no remedy.
[Bacon – ‘Of Simulation and Dissimulation’]⁵⁰

Francis Bacon desired to be a great innovator, wishing for his fellow men the attainment of “a new understanding, a new freedom, [and] a new knowledge” (WSp.22). As Bacon was aware, all great innovators are faced with the problem of how to awaken their would-be allies from the living-death of Lazarus, and correspondingly how to “lay asleep opposition”.⁵¹ According to Laurence Lampert, “the problem of introducing novelty into the settled ways of a people – had already been thought through to

⁴⁶ See Exeter University Archives, EUL MS207/6/21/2. Letter from Peter Dawkins.

⁴⁷ Dawkins, *ibid.* See du Maurier's own earlier phrase “Today the tourist with his eye upon his watch, the message missed, would pass it by unquestioning[.]” Daphne du Maurier, *The Flight of the Falcon* (London: Virago, 2005), p. 201. This work was first published in 1965.

⁴⁸ Dawkins, *ibid.*

⁴⁹ Plato, *The Republic*, in *Great Dialogues of Plato* (New York: New American Library, 1956), p. 214. For some of the arguments in this section, I am indebted to the inspiration provided by the following work – Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times: A Study of Bacon, Descartes, and Nietzsche* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

⁵⁰ Francis Bacon, ‘Of Simulation and Dissimulation’, *Francis Bacon's Essays* (London: J.M. Dent, 1958), p. 18.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

the bottom by Plato.”⁵² Bacon would have been well acquainted with the phenomenon of the ‘noble lie’, or the ‘necessary lie’, as expressed in Plato’s *The Republic*, from his classical education. Yet Lampert maintains that all radical innovators “mask and seem to disown their debt to Plato”.⁵³ Du Maurier disowns the debt on Bacon’s behalf when she refers to him “criticising Plato” in *The Masculine Birth of Time* (WSp.29) – in this work Bacon suggests, and du Maurier goes on to record, that Plato’s writings were merely “scraps of borrowed information polished and strung together” (WSp.29). Du Maurier further disowns the debt when discussing the sources for Bacon’s *New Atlantis*, mentioning its similarities to Richard Hakluyt’s *The Principle Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, and also its borrowings from the Rosicrucian manifestos, but omitting its indebtedness to Plato inherent in its title; as Lampert points out, Plato’s account of Atlantis is recorded in *Critias*. Correspondingly, Bacon’s account of *New Atlantis* is a futurist fable concerning the secrets of rule, and like *Critias* it was unfinished, probably deliberately. Lampert goes on to argue that in Bacon’s *New Atlantis*, the mythical Bensalem actually represents “the fancied history of a Europe spared Europe’s fall into Christianity, a Europe in which Baconianism became the reigning Platonism for the people,” thus demonstrating how Bacon’s “feigned allegiance to Jerusalem veils actual allegiance to Athens.”⁵⁴ Lampert thus reveals Bacon’s own politic ‘noble lie,’ enlisted in an attempt to retrieve Europe from the spell of religious repression under which it had fallen, but without drawing attention to the fact, since it would have been criminal to do so. Bacon’s palimpsestuous beliefs – which suppress much in the course of their revelation - are as involuted as his works and his nature.

Francis Bacon’s “enfolded messages,” as Brameld calls them, were yet another means of speaking to the initiated without raising “an alarum to call up all that are against them”.⁵⁵ Du Maurier writes in *Golden Lads* that the brothers had written to their mother at Gorhambury to send strawberries (GLp.93). These were duly sent via Peter the kitchen boy with the following message:

I have sent I think all there be, and this day gathered [...] I send them by my boy of the kitchen [...] a shrewd-witted boy and prettily catechised, but yet an untoward crafty boy [...] He is able enough to do it, God willing[.]
(GLp.93)

⁵² Lampert, op. cit., p. 3.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 56-57, 51.

⁵⁵ See letter from Brameld, op. cit. Francis Bacon, ‘Of Simulation and Dissimulation’, op. cit., p. 19.

Brameld provides an interpretation of this letter for du Maurier, which I will paraphrase.⁵⁶ Strawberries have a particular meaning for the Bacons, which is given in Francis Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* – they are fruit which ripen best away from the hot sun and are hidden underneath the leaves. Their mother's gathering of this particular fruit represents work both in the strawberry field and in the esoteric, intellectual field. She has trained the boy Peter in the requisite hidden 'craft' – that of mason – and thinks that he is now ready to serve the Bacons. Young men such as these were entrusted with simple intelligence work, and once they proved themselves worthy, were promoted to 'Knight' and awarded the beaver hat.⁵⁷ In the section of *Golden Lads* entitled 'Interlude for Jacques Petit', du Maurier gives a clear example of a 'golden lad' sent on a mission by Anthony Bacon, a man whom Petit regarded as "my Apollo and my Oracle" (GLp.148).⁵⁸ Du Maurier admits that the "true nature of his mission is obscure" (GLp.144) but outwardly it was to wait upon Edward Russell, 3rd Earl of Bedford. Du Maurier provides all of Jacques Petit's correspondence to Anthony Bacon for this period, and at the end of one letter appears the phrase, "I have a cap from Ireland, brownish-green with a wreath of white Cyprus thread, to cover my beaver hat" (GLp.146). Providing a hint, then immediately throwing the casual, or sceptical, reader off the scent, du Maurier writes that this "could be a message in cipher" (GLp.146), but then suggests that perhaps he was just "taking pride in his personal appearance" (GLp.146). Brameld translates Jacques Petit's peculiar phrase thus:

I am being very careful to listen unobtrusively when Ireland and Cyprus are being discussed because I realise the importance of the news to you[.]⁵⁹

In this regard, the beaver hat has its symbolic meaning of invisibility in connection with the obtaining of political secrets. Dawkins also highlights undercurrents in du Maurier's narratives. In her biographies, she makes great play of their mother's chiding, religious letters from Gorhambury, revealing throughout, perhaps, her own distaste for what she saw as the condemnatory side of organised, authoritarian religion. Dawkins makes the point that since Ann Bacon was probably involved in her sons' activities, then the religious tirades probably enfolded a quite different meaning, and "that far more went on at Gorhambury than meets the eye".⁶⁰ He suggests that the same could also be true of Anthony's perpetual 'illness,' which appears in many of the letters used by du Maurier, so that 'illness' became "a blind for other

⁵⁶ See letter from Brameld, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ There is an obvious link between the beaver who builds a lodge and the freemasons.

⁵⁸ An echo of Aldo Donati in *The Flight of the Falcon*, and the effect he had on Armino Donati and also his 'lost boys'.

⁵⁹ Brameld, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ Dawkins, *op. cit.*

activities”.⁶¹ Dawkins intimates, politely, that in *Golden Lads* her “novelist’s imagination” may have taken over from her “intuitive imagination”.⁶² The real nature of the secrets ‘whispered’ to du Maurier by the Bacons, may thus have been embroidered over by her own discursive formulations. Although, it could be of course, that du Maurier is playing ‘Hermes’ in her biographies, in a tricksterish attempt to lead her readers beyond rational limits, in order to help them establish their own more intuitive, esoteric ‘hermeneutic’.

AEONIC SUPERCONSCIOUSNESS

In this section I hope to elaborate more fully on Eco’s conception of ‘Hermetic semiosis,’ which seems to be the method of Bacon followers when reading the identity and works of Bacon, and also the direct use of elements of the Gnostic myth in support of their method – again as referred to by Eco. As Mather Walker writes in ‘The Secret of the Shakespeare Plays’:

In esotericism superman is the Adept of the Alchemists, the Invisible Brothers of the Rosicrucians, [...] the Masters of Theosophy [...] the Übermensch of Nietzsche [...] Superman possesses superconsciousness [...] Superman possesses this consciousness as his normal state of consciousness.⁶³

Walker explains that the idea of a superman can be understood by resorting to Gnostic myth. A key element of this myth depends on the idea of Oneness, otherwise known as the Aeon. Aeon consciousness therefore becomes the ultimate level of consciousness and is a state of all inclusiveness. Ordinary man can only obtain flashes of superconsciousness, but the superman “knows all at once everything that he in general knows”.⁶⁴ The superman possesses the ability to maintain contact with all other supermen across the totality of time and space. Walker suggests that this is referred to in Christianity as the ‘Communion of the Saints’, a concept for which du Maurier had her own codespeak, terming it “beaming down”.⁶⁵ In the mystical and esoteric religions, such as The Eleusinian Mysteries for example, initiates were shown consciousness enhancing techniques enabling them to make temporary contact with such higher beings. Occasionally, it is possible for rare individuals to attain the threshold of

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Mather Walker, ‘The Secret of the Shakespeare Plays’ <www.sirbacon.org/mwbook.html> [accessed 20 February 2004]. Many of his articles appear on The Francis Bacon Society website - <www.sirbacon.org>

⁶⁴ Mather Walker, ‘Bacon-101-6’, <www.sirbacon.org/m101-6.htm> [accessed 17 March 2004]

⁶⁵ Oriol Malet gives a glossary of du Maurier codewords in Oriol Malet (ed.), *Letters from Menabilly: Portrait of a Friendship* (London: Orion, 1993). Many of du Maurier’s letters also resemble enfolded writing, so a glossary is needed to make them intelligible.

this level of being for themselves. It would seem that anyone inspired by more than a superficial interest in Francis Bacon eventually places him in this category. I have already referred to du Maurier's use of Francis Bacon's quotation in the epigrams, which affirms himself as a man of "superior understanding" (WSp.62), and demonstrates the usual tendency of such men to hide their understanding beneath "a mask" (WSp.62). Nietzsche's references to Francis Bacon in *Ecce Homo* – also in the epigraphs to this chapter – are similarly worthy of note for what they tell us about both of these men. *Ecce Homo* – Behold the Man – is Nietzsche's personal interpretation of his own life and work, designed to counteract previous misinterpretations. His comments on Bacon appear in the section entitled 'Why I am so Clever'. Why Bacon is 'so clever' according to Nietzsche is that he could conceive of the type of Caesar, and to do this you have to *be* of the type of Caesar. The obvious but unspoken conclusion to be drawn from this is that Nietzsche is 'so clever' because he recognises another superman type, i.e. Bacon, and is hence a superman himself. Nietzsche's knowledge – or should we say 'gnosis' – of Bacon's identity does not appear to be of the traditionally rational kind in this passage, but takes the form of a knowledge of an esoteric mystery. It is a 'gnosis' that he has come by "instinctively," as if the knowledge had communicated itself directly from Bacon's own superconscious mind. In the same passage, Nietzsche talks directly to his "dear critics," suggesting that if he had published his own works under another name – presumably as he believes Bacon to have done – then the "acuteness of two thousand years would not have been sufficient for anyone to guess that the author of *Human, All-too-Human* is the visionary of *Zarathustra*."⁶⁶ Nietzsche thus neatly accuses all sceptical critics throughout the ages of failing to possess the same level of consciousness as himself and Lord Bacon. In a harmless-seeming footnote to the passage about Bacon, it is mentioned that Freud believed the Earl of Oxford had written 'Shakespeare's' plays, but seen in the light of the entire section, this is obviously an aspersion against Freud. Walker, like Nietzsche, also believes that he has discovered the secret behind Shakespeare's Plays. In a process that can only be described as a glimpse of the superconscious, Walker alludes to his brooding over *The Tempest* thus:

This process of perceiving ever more and more levels of meaning in the play continued in my consciousness for an almost interminable time until there came a feeling of being caught up in an infinitude of levels for which there was no end. [...] Through some strange inner faculty I was aware of the entire play in one perception.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, op. cit., p. 247.

⁶⁷ Walker, 'The Secret of the Shakespeare Plays', op. cit.

For Walker, *The Tempest*, like the imaginary Renaissance artwork in du Maurier's *The Flight of the Falcon*, finally revealed itself as "an absolute equilibrium of opposing entities; the two radical entities being darkness and light" - such a work could only have been written by a man possessed of aeonic consciousness.⁶⁸ In his perusal of the play in the First Folio edition of 1623, Walker finds enfolded evidence that the work is indeed by Francis Bacon.⁶⁹ Walker thus believes that he has seen glimpses of a higher truth aided directly by the perpetual superconsciousness of Bacon himself, a paradigm that is repeated in the letters of Martin Pares to du Maurier.⁷⁰ Pares believes that du Maurier possesses the requisite "gift of Imagination" to enable her to pick up the messages whispered by the Bacons, and using "that approach to Divinity" suggests that she "ask Francis for a work of the Imagination" which he could put in *Baconiana*.⁷¹ It is apparent from the second undated letter that neither of them believes in the 'approach to divinity' entailing the "elderly white man with a beard," but rather that Francis can speak via the "Holy Spirit", which in Gnostic terms would be one of many Aeons.⁷² Indeed, Pares said he had received the following message from Francis, which was to be published in *Baconiana* after his death:

Into your hands we put a power, the power of words; to twist and turn and "mask" and so to inject with reality that on all planes they are truth. This we will give to you, the power to speak on one level and be understood on many.⁷³

Pares implies that this is the achievement of du Maurier's biography of Francis when he writes, "in *The Winding Stair*, for those who read between the lines you've done just that."⁷⁴ Accordingly, du Maurier has thus created a multi-levelled but masked work inspired by glimpses of the aeonic superconscious. The inference is that all those who are sympathetic to Francis and Anthony Bacon will be able to see the reality behind their elaborately constructed masks.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Du Maurier cites William Shakespeare, *Complete Works* – Text of First Folio with quarto variants (Nonesuch Press, 1953) in both biographies of the Bacons. Walker's evidence appears in his article 'The Secret of the Shakespeare Plays', op. cit.

⁷⁰ Martin Pares, Letters to du Maurier. Only one of them is dated – 5th January 1978. See Exeter University Archives, EUL MS207/6/21/2. Martin Pares was a member of The Francis Bacon Society. The letters are evidently a series as they refer back to things mentioned previously.

⁷¹ Pares, undated letter, *ibid*, the underlining is in the original. I have looked through the online index to *Baconiana* but can find no works under either du Maurier or Browning. This letter discusses other matters of a religious nature, evidently something that they had discussed or written about on previous occasions. The main topic concerns Elizabethan English as a sacred language and the current decline of English in this respect – Pares objects to the modern vernacular in use in churches.

⁷² Pares, second undated letter. This letter refers to a Christopher Woodward who had received a message from Francis Bacon telling Pares not to overdo it as he still has important things to write on his behalf. Pares was quite old at the time of writing.

⁷³ Ibid. This is an extract from a much longer passage.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

The second undated letter also suggests that du Maurier felt the aeonic bond most keenly with Anthony Bacon, as Pares writes, “Anthony is another matter and you’ve always been close to him.”⁷⁵ But just what is it about Anthony in particular that makes him so appealing to du Maurier? One answer to this question may be found in *Golden Lads*:

the cut of his hair, the trim of his beard, his intonation, even the accent, proclaimed him a Frenchman. His gestures were foreign, the shrug and the smile were Gallic[.] (GLp.86)

Du Maurier’s love of all things French permeates these lines, and her active imagination could sense Anthony’s newly acquired French attributes, which for her were “always menacing”.⁷⁶ It could be that she associated Anthony’s youthful French years with those of her grandfather George du Maurier, which he had so carefully described in *Peter Ibbetson* and *The Martian*. Indeed, the title of *Golden Lads* finds resonance with George du Maurier’s own phrase, “our golden youth” which he uses to describe the early days of himself and his schoolfriends in Paris.⁷⁷ Both phrases are consistent with the du Maurier family worship of youth, epitomised by J.M. Barrie’s famous Lost Boys in *Peter Pan*. George du Maurier depicted himself as the “golden-haired Greek god” he aspired to be in *The Martian*, and similarly du Maurier has shown how Anthony Bacon was worshipped as the god Apollo by his friends in *Golden Lads*.⁷⁸ Du Maurier’s key aeonic moment with her own Apollo is described in the Postscript to *Golden Lads*. Apollo held a certain fascination for du Maurier, since he was connected with her classical namesake Daphne. Du Maurier’s research had highlighted the long lost information that the Apollonian Anthony Bacon had been buried at St Olave’s Church, Hart Street, in London. It was whilst paying a visit to this church that her aeonic moment occurred:

When the present writer visited St Olave’s on October 6th 1973, the church was empty. It was very silent, very peaceful. Then softly, from the organ in the gallery above, an unseen musician, unaware of an intruder below, began to play the sixteenth-century melody of “Greensleeves” – that well-loved air, sung by courtier and commoner alike, known to King Henry VIII, danced to by his daughter Queen Elizabeth, and surely strummed upon the virginals by Anthony Bacon himself. (GLp.261)

What Du Maurier characteristically fails to mention in this ‘masked’ work is just why Anthony Bacon would be playing ‘Greensleeves’ at all, and thus why the moment is such a profound experience. The

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Du Maurier on Anthony Bacon. Daphne du Maurier, *Letters from Menabilly*, op. cit., p. 262. In a letter to Oriol Malet, Daphne writes that her Bacon researcher “had a *thing* about Anthony, like me” (see p. 263). ‘Menacing’ is a du Maurier codeword for attractive.

⁷⁷ George du Maurier, *The Martian*, in *Novels by George du Maurier* (London: The Pilot Press, 1947), p. 538. First published in *Harper’s Monthly Magazine* (Oct 1896 to July 1897). Published posthumously in 1897.

⁷⁸ See Daphne du Maurier’s preface to *The Martian*, *ibid.*, p. xv. I have already mentioned Jacques Petit’s reference to Anthony Bacon as “my Apollo and my Oracle” (GLp.148).

answer can be found amongst her correspondence from members of The Francis Bacon Society. In

answer to a question about ‘Greensleeves’, Dawkins replies:

You asked me how did I know about “Greensleeves”, and is there any documented evidence? My reply can only be that what I said is so, but that I doubt if you will find documented evidence of such things. Whether “Greensleeves” was composed and written consciously to convey the symbol it does, I don’t know. It is said that Henry VIII composed it, Certainly whoever did write it was inspired, and equally certainly it became adopted as a signature tune of Francis’ brotherhood, and it still is.⁷⁹

In this light, du Maurier’s daimonic experience in St Olave’s Church can be seen as an Elizabethan serenade from a sixteenth century Apollo to a twentieth century priestess of the Baconian oracle. The song itself also carries a hidden Greek meaning, for Greensleeves is “Venus, the Princess of Life who is rescued by her spear-carrying Adonis, Knight of Light”.⁸⁰ This recognition, in a sense, brings us full circle, since the Bacons’ signature tune ‘Greensleeves’ carries the true representation of the Venus and Adonis myth which Francis Bacon’s supposed Shakespearean alter ego corrupted for his own literary ends.

ENDWORD - DU MAURIER’S MASK

Wandering on Par beach she found herself hating ‘all the honks’ and was reminded of a quote of Francis Bacon’s as she tried not to show her disgust – ‘Every man of superior intelligence when in contact with inferiors wears a mask.’ She knew she had worn a mask most of her life and now found it slipping. She had always been pleasant and even tempered while inside she had often felt vicious and full of rage, and she had never allowed her real feelings to emerge except in her work.⁸¹

The work *End of the Line* reproduces in facsimile du Maurier’s correspondence with a Mrs L Hammer during the period February 1973 to March 1978.⁸² Many of the letters of 1973 and 1974 concern their mutual interest in the Bacon brothers and Hammer’s attempts to determine details of the Bacon’s lives by Extra Sensory Perception - thus Hammer, like many of their fellow Baconians, was engaged in a Gnostic reading of the Bacons. My interest in this correspondence concerns a letter of January 14th 1975 that du Maurier wrote concerning becoming a member of The Francis Bacon Society; as du Maurier records, “I’m back to my Bacon reading, and have been made a member of The Bacon Society. They are rather a

⁷⁹ Dawkins, op. cit.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Forster, op. cit., p. 396.

⁸² Du Maurier, in Hammer, op. cit. I am unable to determine how Hammer knew du Maurier was working on the Bacons. The correspondence about them in Hammer’s book was written before the biographies were published.

cranky lot, I have always understood [...]”⁸³ Du Maurier’s remark about the members of the Bacon society in this letter is very much in the vein of her comment about her “despised Groupy friends”, written in a letter to her sister Angela.⁸⁴ It seems du Maurier cannot resist making adverse statements about any group with which she comes into contact; her outward collusion thus ‘masking’ an inner collision. Again, in censoring the face that she presents to the world from the palimpsest of her divided nature, du Maurier here resembles the characters she writes about in her biographies and novels, such as Francis Bacon, Francis Davey, and Aldo Donati. In a sense it is as though du Maurier realises that her mind is palimpsested by her interaction with such groups and wishes to purge their influence from her mind in the form of negative outbursts. But according to Hamill, this is very much the method of Bacon who writes abusively about such men as Plato in works such as *The Masculine Birth of Time*, so that the intellect can be probed and purged to prepare it for the new; thus Hamill writes, “[p]urging in other words looks like palimpsest revision”.⁸⁵

⁸³ Ibid., p. 66.

⁸⁴ Daphne du Maurier, quoted in Angela du Maurier, *It’s Only the Sister: An Autobiography* (Cornwall: Truran Books Ltd, 2003), p. 216.

⁸⁵ Hamill, op. cit., p. 243.

SECTION 4

SPECTRALISED LIVES IN TEXT – REBIRTHING

PART 1 AUTOCHTHONOUS MEN AND THE REBIRTH OF MARY YELLAN: JAMAICA INN (1936) AND THE CELTO-CORNISH REVIVAL

Like Mary Yellan who, in the novel comes to Bodmin Moor from the tranquil hills and valleys of Helford, I came unprepared for its dark, diabolic beauty.¹

These moors have a fascination unlike any other, they are a survival from another age.²
(Daphne du Maurier – *Enchanted Cornwall*)

Out of the old Greek past, that had been so vivid, sometimes an unappeased spirit of murderous hate against the usurping moderns. A sudden presence of murder in the air, because of something which the modern psyche had excluded, some old and vital thing which Christianity has cut out. An old spirit, waiting for vengeance.³

And then the Cornish night would gradually come down upon the dark, shaggy moors [...] And as Somers sat there on the sheaves in the underdark [...], he felt he was over the border, in another world. Over the border, in that twilight, awesome world of the previous Celts.⁴
(D.H. Lawrence – *Kangaroo*)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss du Maurier's novel *Jamaica Inn* and her involvement with what D.H. Lawrence terms the "twilight, awesome world of the previous Celts".⁵ The word twilight in this context resonates with Dillon's discussion of the word twilight in her section on Lawrence, whereby twilight becomes a metaphor for the theoretical implications of the palimpsest. Twilight is a liminal word with ambiguous, shadowy connotations as befits notions of the Celtic at the end of the nineteenth century. Those writers who engaged in the Celtic phenomenon at that time were in revolt against the harsh, exclusive light of Victorian Christianity, which they felt had tried to censor the pagan world. However, as in the palaeographic palimpsest, the pagan narrative which is excluded by the representatives of Christianity seeps back through the Christian text. Cornwall's landscape and the people who inhabit it become palimpsests whereby Christianity and Paganism are inextricably interlaced so that the one haunts and disturbs the other. These two more emotive concerns then become imbued with the political in the form of Celto-Cornish Nationalism, so that religion, psychology and politics are palimpsestuously played out

¹ Daphne du Maurier, *Enchanted Cornwall* (London: Penguin Group, 1989), p. 69.

² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³ D.H. Lawrence, *Kangaroo* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), p. 235. This novel was first published in 1923.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵ Daphne du Maurier, *Jamaica Inn* (London: Virago, 2007). All further references to this work will be given in the text thus (JIp.x).

on the landscape of Cornwall and in the mindscape of the Cornish and those who write about Cornish concerns.

CELTIC REVIVALISM AND CORNWALL

Cornwall's relationship to the British Isles is difficult to define. In *The Literature of Cornwall*, Alan Kent maintains that the general view of Cornwall is a paradoxical one; "It *is* and *is not* an English county. It *is* and *is not* mentioned in the same breath as Wales, Scotland and Eire."⁶ Kent's first statement hints at Cornwall's troubled, peripheral relationship with an English governing centre. His second statement is suggestive of a disputable Cornish Celtic personality which thus occupies a less privileged position with respect to other regions also struggling to assert marginalised Celtic identities. Celtic Revivalism, which began in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century, can be seen as a way of challenging modernity with archaism, but also as a way of challenging the internal colonialism of a central government based in London.

It has been argued that the defining characteristic of a Celtic nation is linguistic rather than racial. For example, Peter Berresford Ellis, in his work *The Celtic Revolution: A Study in Anti-Imperialism*, writes, "a Celtic people is by definition a people who speak, or were known to have spoken, in modern historical times, a Celtic language"⁷ He notes that the Welsh, Cornish and Bretons are part of the Brythonic-speaking group and that the Irish, Manx and Scots are part of the Goidelic or Gaelic-speaking group.⁸ The ancient Greek chroniclers were the first to document the Celts, naming them Keltoi, a word that may have the same root as ceilt, an act of concealment.⁹ This note of secrecy stems from the early Celtic policy of not using their language in written form.¹⁰ As can be inferred from the title of his work, Berresford Ellis is a firm supporter of the Celtic cause in opposition to what he sees as an oppressive governing centre. His model of oppression is based on the key idea that the invasion of the British Isles by the Angles and Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries pushed back the Celts to the western and northern parts of Britain.¹¹ Dick Cole also draws attention to this view in his article, 'The Cornish: Identity and Genetics – An Alternative View'. As he writes:

⁶ Alan Kent, *The Literature of Cornwall: Continuity, Identity, Difference 1000-2000* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 2000), p. 11.

⁷ Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Revolution: A Study in Anti-Imperialism* (Ceredigion: Y Lolfa Cyf, 1997), p. 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12. See also Amy Hale, 'Rethinking Celtic Cornwall: An Ethnographic Approach', in Philip Payton (ed), *Cornish Studies: Second Series – Five* (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1997), p. 86.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

England, the traditional historians had argued, was formed by the large-scale migration of hordes of Germanic settlers and the replacement of the indigenous Celtic population, leaving genetically distinct populations in opposed Anglo-Saxon and Celtic areas.¹²

Cole's article, however, argues against this 'traditional' historical view, regarding it as a form of 'right wing' mythology to see Britain as the "political and cultural product of conquest and colony".¹³ In his argument, Cole refers to writers such as C. Taylor and Charles Thomas who have put forward the view that only 100,000 Saxon settlers came into the country during the period in question.¹⁴ The relatively small number of settlers suggests that total population replacement and attendant migration is not a feasible idea, and so Cole's conclusion is that Britain's:

modern cultural and political identities were not formed through the mass migration of people but as a result of more complex and complicated factors such as assimilation, acculturation and accommodation.¹⁵

In spite of such arguments against the 'traditional' narrative, the mythology it embodies has been heavily influential in the thinking of many of those people who have interested themselves in the Celts and their culture. There are also those people whose interest accidentally becomes complicit with the colonising theme of the 'traditional' narrative.

According to Amy Hale, Pan-Celticism began its development at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁶ By the turn of the twentieth century the main organ of the Pan-Celtic movement was the Celtic Association, which published a journal known as *Celtia*. At this time the president of the Celtic Association was the Anglo-Irish Lord Castletown. Hale suggests that the agenda of the Celtic Association in its early years took the form of "Romantic nationalism," whereby "'tradition' was a strategy that needed to be well thought-out and effectively presented".¹⁷ Hale views the work of the Celtic Association as a demonstration of Hobsbawm's theory of 'invented tradition' in action. In this sense, tradition becomes a construct to be manipulated in the quest for identity.¹⁸ Against this Pan-Celtic background, L.C. Duncombe-Jewell founded the Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak, or Celtic-Cornish Society (CKK) in 1901.¹⁹ The aims of the Society were published in *Celtia* in 1902:

¹² Dick Cole, 'The Cornish: Identity and Genetics – An Alternative View', in Philip Payton (ed.), op. cit., p. 25.

¹³ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 26. Cole cites C. Taylor, *Village and Farmstead*, London, 1983. I give the citation as it appears in Cole's article. The reference to Charles Thomas appears in Taylor's work.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁶ Hale, 'Rethinking Celtic Cornwall: An Ethnographic Approach', op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 92, 93.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁹ Amy Hale, 'Genesis of the Celto-Cornish Revival? L.C. Duncombe-Jewell and the Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak', in Philip Payton (ed.), op. cit., p. 100.

1. To preserve from damage and destruction and to study the stone-circles, cromlechs, menhirs, hut circles, beehive dwellings, camps, hill forts, castles, logan and crick stones, crosses, oratories, holy wells, cemeteries, barrows, and inscribed stones.
2. To keep carefully every National Custom and above all the truly Cornish sports of Wrestling and Hurling, by presenting every year a Belt to be contended for by Cornish wrestlers, and inscribed silver Hurling balls to each Parish in the Duchy that will ordain an annual Hurling match on its feast day.
3. To revive the Cornish Language as a spoken tongue, by publishing a grammar and Dictionary of the Language, by printing all Cornish manuscripts not yet printed, by giving prizes for fresh competitions in Cornish, by paying a premium for teaching Cornish to Schoolmasters able to satisfy the Council of their fitness, and also
4. by reviving the ancient Cornish Miracle Plays and re-establishing the Cornish Gorsedd of the Bards at Boscawen-Un.²⁰

As can be seen from the Society's stated aims, they too were engaged in a process of cultural, or romantic nationalism, as opposed to political nationalism. At this time their aims were consonant with cultural preservation and propagation rather than issues of self-government. Hale suggests that Duncombe-Jewell formed the CKK to provide substance for his lobbying to have Cornwall recognised as a Celtic nation by the Celtic Association, since at the time *Celtia* only recognised five Celtic nations – Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Brittany²¹. A motion to this effect was brought before the Pan-Celtic Congress in August 1901, but it was voted to postpone the decision until the next meeting of the Congress.²² As stated earlier, the defining idea behind Celticism was one of language. The fact that Cornish was considered to be a dead language proved to be a stumbling block for Lord Castletown, the then president of the Celtic Association. This led to an angry exchange between Duncombe-Jewell and Castletown in the pages of *Celtia* in 1902, with the result that by 1903 Duncombe-Jewell had ended his short-lived involvement in the Cornish Revival.²³ Henry Jenner replaced Duncombe-Jewell as head of the CKK and presented the Cornish case at the next meeting of the Congress in 1904. This time, Cornwall was formally accepted as a Celtic nation by the Celtic Association, even though Castletown was documented as still trying to postpone any decision.²⁴ Thus it can be seen that the acceptance of Cornwall as a Celtic nation was surrounded by dispute and subjected to challenge from within the Celtic movement itself.

Early twentieth century Celtic Revivalism in Cornwall has thus come to be seen as antiquarian and romantic. Ronald Perry suggests that such generalisations arise from a consideration of the work of four leading figures: the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Louis C. Duncombe-

²⁰ Ibid., p. 100.

²¹ Ibid., p. 103.

²² Ibid., p. 104.

²³ Ibid., pp. 108-109.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 109.

Jewell and Henry Jenner.²⁵ The first two of these men were household names in Cornwall at the time. Perry gives Baring-Gould's credentials as "country parson, novelist, writer of guides such as *The Book of the West*, pioneer collector of folklore, [...] and also President of the Royal Institution of Cornwall".²⁶ Quiller-Couch, famous for his 'Troytown' stories based on Fowey, was knighted for his services to the Liberal Party, occupied the post of Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University, became the Chairman of Cornwall Education Committee and was a founder member of the CKK.²⁷ Duncombe-Jewell and Jenner's involvement with the CKK has already been noted. Perry's key argument is that although the early Revivalists interested themselves in Cornwall's economic position, they "kept their revivalist and their modernizing tendencies in separate mental compartments".²⁸ Perry gives two possible explanations for this psychic division; firstly their indifferent attitude to economic regeneration may have been a result of their position in an "affluent, self-confident, anglicized elite", and secondly their failure to link economic interests to cultural preservation reflected a conflict between their "love for ancient Cornish values and the imperatives of an anglicised, imperial upbringing".²⁹ In Perry's opinion, these Celtic Revivalists were antiquarians and not revolutionaries; they saw no need for radical change.³⁰

Garry Tregidga's article, 'The Politics of the Celto-Cornish Revival, 1886-1939', may help to shed further light on the Cornish Revivalist political reticence, a reticence made all the more remarkable by the background of ongoing debate over Home Rule for Ireland, one of the most dominant issues in British politics from 1886-1914.³¹ In his article, Tregidga shows how the rise of nationalism in the Celtic countries developed within a Liberal framework. The Liberal leader Gladstone had converted to the cause of Irish self-government in December, 1885, and his positive attitude in this respect became a key factor in the rise of political nationalism in both Scotland and Wales.³² In Cornwall, by contrast, the 'Irish Question' had an adverse effect on local Liberalism:

In 1885 the Liberals had monopolised the parliamentary divisions of Cornwall with victories in all seven divisions, but the split over Home Rule led to a local Unionist majority from 1886 to 1900. Virtually all of these Unionist MPs, as Pelling noted, were Liberal Unionists, and their political beliefs, 'radical on domestic questions [but] conservative on Imperial matters, ensured that they were in a strong position to attract the support of Cornish voters.'³³

²⁵ Ronald Perry, 'Celtic Revival and Economic Development in Edwardian Cornwall', in Philip Payton (ed.), op. cit., p. 113.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 113.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 113-114.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 121.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 121.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 122.

³¹ Garry Tregidga, 'The Politics of the Celto-Cornish Revival, 1886-1939', in Philip Payton (ed.), op. cit.

³² Ibid., pp. 126-127.

³³ Ibid., p. 129.

Many Cornish families relied on financial support from relatives in the colonies, and as a result they feared any policy that might have a destabilising effect on the British Isles since this might endanger the entire Empire.³⁴ Cornwall's people, politicians and revivalists thus all seemed to unite on a Unionist policy. Even the creation of the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies in 1924, which tried to reach a wider audience than CKK had done, merely continued along antiquarian lines.³⁵

Tregidga notes a wind of change beginning for Cornwall in the 1930s. Younger activists were starting to replace the older generation, and Celtic Revivalists were now operating within a wider Celtic framework that had more obvious political intentions. 1932 saw the creation of Tyr ha Tavas (Land and Language), and although this was a language pressure group Tregidga suggests that it seemed to have a greater nationalist awareness.³⁶ However, given the advent of Hitler's brand of nationalism in the 1930s, the group had to tread carefully in what had now become a political minefield. Nonetheless, Tregidga sees Tyr ha Tavas as a "bridge from the purely cultural and academic concerns of individuals like Jenner to the political objectives of Mebyon Kernow in the 1950s."³⁷ As Berresford-Ellis notes in *The Celtic Revolution*, the initial aim of Mebyon Kernow (Sons of Cornwall), founded in 1951, was:

to maintain the character of Cornwall as a Celtic nation, to promote the interests of Cornwall and the Cornish people and to promote the constitutional advance of Cornwall and its right to self-government in domestic affairs.³⁸

Here then, for the first time, we have a Cornish organisation that makes a clear statement of its interest in cultural preservation and combines it with an overtly political 'home rule' objective. Mebyon Kernow began life as a political pressure group and then made the change to a political party. Their first county councillor, Colin Murley, was elected in 1967, and in 1970 Richard Jenkin stood as their first parliamentary candidate.³⁹ Their current website states that the four cornerstones of their political agenda are "Cornish, Green, Left-of-Centre and decentralist".⁴⁰

The above discussion of the Celto-Cornish Revival and its position in the wider Celtic movement is intended to give a sense of the cultural and political context of du Maurier's Cornwall-inspired novels. Her first novel *The Loving Spirit* – which had a Cornish setting – was published in 1931, and her last novel *Rule Britannia* – also set in Cornwall – was published in 1972. She is thus, in a sense,

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 129-130.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 133.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 145.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 146.

³⁸ Berresford-Ellis, op. cit., p. 142.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 143.

⁴⁰ Anon, Mebyon Kernow, <www.mebyonkernow.org/Public/Stories/89-1.shtml> [accessed 30 November 2004]

one of the second generation Revivalists; her early writing coincides with a period in which cultural nationalism was starting to be intertwined with a more political consciousness. By the time of her late writing, Celto-Cornish political awareness had given place to political activism.

THE CELTIC REVIVAL AND LITERATURE

Many writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries became fascinated by the paradoxical possibilities of these Celtic regions, especially, it would seem, those who would have been considered as outsiders from the point of view of the indigenous peoples. W.B. Yeats, for example, was one of the most prominent of the late nineteenth century Irish revivalists, and yet he was Anglo-Irish by descent; thus he was caught up in a hybrid position somewhere between “colonizer and colonized.”⁴¹ I draw attention to the idea of paradox, hybridity, twofold-ness and liminality in the conceptualising of the Celtic regions, and the people who were drawn to write about them, as a particular way of thinking about the involuted, palimpsestuous nature of the phenomenon. Yeats’ initial interest lay in collecting and publishing the folklore of the Irish people in works such as *The Celtic Twilight* (1893); later on he developed a desire for a more elite, esoteric literature as is evidenced in *The Secret Rose* (1897) and *Rosa Alchemica* (1897).

In the early twentieth century certain influential writers also began to visit Cornwall in pursuit of the Celtic experience. In 1916, D.H. Lawrence moved to Zennor, attracted by the alternative spiritual possibilities and sense of freedom Cornwall presented. John Doheny suggests that in the place and the people Lawrence saw “echoes of a pre-industrial, pre-Christian, even pre-history Celtic world”.⁴² Inspired by what he found, he wrote to his friends suggesting that they try to found a Rananim in Cornwall; Rananim is a term Lawrence took from a line of a Hebrew dirge meaning a utopian community.⁴³ But the First World War was an inauspicious time for Lawrence and his German wife Frieda to attempt to build Rananim in Cornwall. The anti-German propaganda emanating from the wartime authorities in London inevitably aroused Cornish suspicion against them and they were forced to leave. They were thus doubly rejected - firstly by the Cornish people they sought to embrace, and secondly by the England they were trying to escape - putting them too in an unfortunate hybrid position. Du Maurier had settled in Cornwall to escape the bustling centre, but the popularity of her novels set in Cornwall merely drew the centre dwellers out to the periphery in ever-larger numbers. Her removal to the realm of the would-be colony

⁴¹ Gregory Castle, *Modernism and the Celtic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 3.

⁴² John Doheny, ‘Seeking the Living Body of Reality: *Women in Love* and the Social Fabric’, in Melissa Hardie (ed.), *A Mere Interlude: Some Literary Visitors in Lyonesse* (Penzance: Patten Press, 1992), p. 76.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

paradoxically dragged the colonisers along with her. Du Maurier recognised herself as an outsider in Cornwall, yet liked to think that her Breton forebears allowed her to claim these fellow Celts as distant kin:

As an outsider with Breton forebears, I like to think that the two races, facing an Atlantic seabord blown by identical gales, washed by the same driving mists, share a common ancestry[.]⁴⁴

In being attracted by the liminal possibilities of the ‘Celtic twilight,’ the writers I have mentioned all put themselves in a curiously twilight position.⁴⁵

One of the reasons for the compelling nature of the Celtic regions is given in Gregory Castle’s *Modernism and the Celtic Revival*. Quoting Terry Eagleton, Castle writes that the attraction of the Celts for certain writers “springs from the estranging impact of modernizing forces on a still deeply traditionalist order,” and hence :

The ‘no-time’ and ‘no-place’ of the disregarded colony, with its fractured history and marginalized space, can become suddenly symbolic of a condition of disinheritance which now seems universal.⁴⁶

The marginal position of the Celts in the British Isles thus echoes the situation of those writers who experienced a sense of dispossession and spiritual unease in the face of a modern, material world and a rapidly increasing population. Likewise, the Celts were seen as having been dispossessed of their spiritual inheritance by the usurping forces of a more modern spiritual phenomenon – Christianity. As du Maurier herself pointed out in a letter to Oriel Malet, Christianity, particularly Catholicism, “is too modern for me, like living in a block of flats, instead of in a cave.”⁴⁷ Christianity may be two thousand years old, but for du Maurier it has become inextricably linked with a growing mass populace and the need for quick, cheap, ugly, repetitive housing solutions. By extension, the natural, earthy cave is a haven of antiquity, and suggestive of a purer, indigenous spirituality. Spiritual tensions such as these are explored in both ‘The Nightmare’ chapter of Lawrence’s novel *Kangaroo* and in du Maurier’s *Jamaica Inn*. Lawrence’s ‘The Nightmare’ – an expression of his time spent in Zennor – will figure in this chapter as a literary precursor of *Jamaica Inn* and also provide a theoretical framework in which to view du Maurier’s own position concerning the interweaving of Christianity and Paganism in her novel.

⁴⁴ Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 11.

⁴⁵ The *Celtic Twilight* (1893) is the name Yeats gives to his collection of Irish folk-lore. The *Celtic Twilight* can be found in W.B. Yeats, *Mythologies* (London: Macmillan Press, 1977).

⁴⁶ Terry Eagleton, in Castle, op. cit., p. 2. Castle gives the citation as Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1995), pp. 297, 298.

⁴⁷ Daphne du Maurier, in Oriel Malet (ed.), *Letters from Menabilly* (London: Orion, 1993), p. 71.

Castle also argues that a key feature of the literary output of, and the thinking behind, Celtic Revivalism is its incorporation of ideas from early anthropological work. He goes on to say that this in itself is problematic, since “anthropology developed as a “human science” within a context of imperial expansion and domination”.⁴⁸ Celtic Revivalism thus becomes complicit in anthropology’s “discourse of primitivism”, which essentialises and idealises the notion of man’s ‘noble’ savagery.⁴⁹ In other words, many of the Celto-philic writers, faced with the alienation induced by modern mass society, found themselves feeling nostalgic for the lost “authenticity of the “primitive””.⁵⁰ This led to a preoccupation with disappearing cultures – a preoccupation in which du Maurier herself indulged later on in her career with respect to Cornwall, as can be seen from the title of her book *Vanishing Cornwall*.⁵¹ I will thus engage with some of the ideas of twentieth century anthropology in this chapter, particularly as espoused by Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner. Gennep’s key work, *The Rites of Passage*, is an analysis of the “ceremonies accompanying an individual’s “life crises” which Gennep called *rites de passage*” and is “usually considered to be his unique contribution” to the field of anthropology.⁵² Turner worked with Gennep’s ideas on the threefold structure of the rites of passage – separation (pre-liminal), transition (liminal), incorporation (post-liminal) - and expanded his work on the idea of the liminal phase.

Another ideal context for imagining primitive man in the Celtic regions was provided by the field of psychology, which was also beginning to flourish in the same period. As John Carey suggests, in *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, the Freudian concepts of the ego and the id, and similarly the conscious and the unconscious, can be seen as a “reflection of the social division between the ruler and the masses”.⁵³ Society can thus be imagined using terms normally used to describe the individual psyche. For Freud, the id represents the unruly forces of biology, which seek immediate satisfaction, whereas the ego represents the pragmatism and self-control that can overcome the desires of the id. In this way, primitive, pagan man could be represented by the unconscious in which the anarchic forces of the id held sway, and the civilised coloniser could be viewed as the conscious in which the ruling forces of the ego prevailed.⁵⁴ The potential coloniser could twist the idea to support his political stance by suggesting that it is natural for a superior consciousness to take control of the masses. However, this was also a time when

⁴⁸ Castle, op. cit., p. 13.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

⁵¹ Castle notes this preoccupation in *ibid.*, p. 41. Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972). This work was first published in 1967.

⁵² Solon Kimball, ‘Introduction’, in Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), p. vii. This work was first published in French in 1908.

⁵³ John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. 191.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 192.

irrationality and obscurity – such as maintains in the id - were being cultivated, so the psychological model also allows for a contrary view of society to be propagated. As the id is a purer, if darker, force than the self-conscious ego, it can be seen as possessing the lost authenticity that many of the followers of Celticism craved. The psychological model may seem as though it is tinged with a logical contradiction concerning its conception of the Celtic populace, however it should be remembered that there is a difference in the conception of the idea of mass man as opposed to primitive man; the former is a pejorative term implying the mediocrity of the present, whereas the latter appeals to a nostalgic emotionalism focused on the past. Primitive man and his role in society can thus be explored, for differing purposes, using both palimpsestic (conscious versus unconscious) and palimpsestuous (id versus ego) terminology for models of the mind. As well as Freudian concepts, I will also use ideas from Jungian psychology on the nature of the chthonic as derived from the Greek word chthonos meaning earth, and which he expresses in his essay ‘Mind and Earth’, written in 1927. Jung’s essay looks at the idea that man is conditioned by the land which he inhabits, and that the mind can thus be understood as a “*system of adaptation determined by the conditions of an earthly environment*”.⁵⁵ Jungian psychology is based on the idea of archetypes, which are basically a set of primordial images – most often to be found in dreams, myths, and legends etc – which are inherited by mankind within the brain structure. In effect, archetypes are the “chthonic portion of the psyche,” and accordingly the “psychic influence of the earth and its laws is seen most clearly in these primordial images.”⁵⁶ My work on *Jamaica Inn* will thus look at how the moorland’s psychic influence determines the psychological characteristics of its autochthonous inhabitants, and how it subtly alters the mind of Mary who goes to live there.

So far I have attempted to provide the ideological context with which du Maurier’s early work on the Cornish Celts interacted. As I will argue in what follows, her work on *Jamaica Inn* certainly engages with ideas of nostalgic ‘primitivism’ from the field of anthropology. Her work can also be read in the light of psychological models which paradoxically support her conception of Cornwall as a repressed but positive force, struggling to make itself heard, whilst at the same time they theorise her re-instatement of a central political status quo. In addition, Jungian ideas on the chthonic are enlisted to explain why Celtic, pagan man possesses the requisite characteristics required by Celto-philic writers such as du

⁵⁵ Carl Jung, ‘Mind and Earth’, *CW10 The Collected Works of Carl Jung: Civilization in Transition* (London: Routledge, 1974), p. 29. The italics are in the original.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Maurier and Lawrence, who are more interested in earthy, immanent spiritual phenomena than transcendent Christian ones.

JAMAICA INN AND KANGAROO

The rest of this chapter will focus on du Maurier's stance with regard to the occupants of Celtic Cornwall and their relationship to a governing centre, as can be discerned from a study of the novel *Jamaica Inn*. I will pay particular attention here to Kent's claim in *The Literature of Cornwall* that "[t]hough initially there is a distance between the Revivalists and du Maurier as a novelist, as her career progresses we notice an ideological shift."⁵⁷ Here I take him to mean the Revivalist agenda of the 1930s - the time when du Maurier's first Cornish novels were being published – which was becoming more politically as well as culturally nationalist. I will therefore assess whether, and how far, *Jamaica Inn* engages with and promotes a politically nationalist agenda, rather than just maintaining a conservative, cultural outlook or colluding with a Unionist position. The ideological shift alluded to by Kent is presumed to refer to her becoming a member of the Mebyon Kernow in the 1960s, a party who give their political stance as left-of-centre. If du Maurier's position in *Jamaica Inn* is in any way Cornish Nationalist, then there would only be a progression in her thinking; if it is primarily cultural or Unionist, then perhaps we can agree with Kent's opinion that du Maurier underwent an ideological shift when she joined Mebyon Kernow. An ideological shift to the left would also imply a move away from what Alison Light, in *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars*, has termed du Maurier's "romantic Toryism".⁵⁸ This would not in itself disprove Light's thesis since she concentrates on a limited time span which does not stretch to cover du Maurier's involvement in the Mebyon Kernow. In his 1971 introduction to *Frenchman's Creek*, Wilfred De'Ath also claims that at the time of his writing du Maurier was "politically left of centre".⁵⁹ There is a possible alternative to the idea of a straightforward shift in du Maurier's political thinking in later life and that would be to read her politics as a fluctuating, palimpsestuous "mixture of the rebel and the conformist," a view also put forward by De'Ath in the same article.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Kent, op. cit., p.183.

⁵⁸ Alison Light, 'Daphne du Maurier's romance with the past', *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 156.

⁵⁹ Wilfred De'Ath, 'General Introduction', in Daphne du Maurier, *Frenchman's Creek* (London: Heron Books, no date), p. xii.

⁶⁰ De'Ath, *ibid.*, p. xii.

Jamaica Inn is not the first of du Maurier's novels to have a Cornish background; *The Loving Spirit*, the first of her works to be published, is also set in Cornwall. However, it is the first to address issues that specifically relate to a Cornish Celtic identity and a political relationship with a governing centre. The novel itself was inspired by a visit she made to the actual inn of the title, intending to use it as a base from which to explore Bodmin Moor on horseback with her friend Foy Quiller Couch, daughter of Arthur Quiller Couch, otherwise known as 'Q'. The pair set out from Jamaica Inn one day in November 1930 intending to visit an elderly lady who lived near North Hill, which is across the moor to the east of the inn. However, they soon became aware of the dark, supernatural aura of the moorland, and also of its liminal nature. The moor's treacherous bogs, which looked solid to the eye but turned into liquid under the feet of the unwary, soon resembled a "hell on every side," and du Maurier was reminded of an illustration from "*Sintram, And His Companions*, where a dispirited knight had travelled such a journey with the devil in disguise".⁶¹ Likewise, Lawrence viewed his time on the moors at Zennor as a time of communion with the 'dark gods' in their liminal, twilight world. For writers such as Lawrence and du Maurier, the dark, unknown, subliminal, mysterious, pagan world is set in direct contrast with the "white, conscious day" of nineteenth century Christianity.⁶²

Jamaica Inn is the story of Mary Yellan's passage from the beautiful countryside of Helford, with its associated Christian way of thinking, to the sublime scenery of the moors and a new Celtic view of the world, a view which she takes into her new life beyond both Helford and Bodmin Moor. Mary Yellan's progress is thus a territorial 'rite of passage' across a magico-religious zone, an idea that chimes in with the early anthropological work of Arnold van Gennep. In *The Rites of Passage*, van Gennep uses the idea of a 'territorial passage' across a 'neutral zone' as a way of introducing his discussion of the key transitions that must take place in the life of an individual and the rites of passage that accompany them:

The neutral zones are ordinarily deserts, marshes [...] Because of the pivoting of sacredness, the territories on either side of the neutral zone are sacred in relation to whoever is in the zone, but the zone, in turn, is sacred for the inhabitants of the adjacent territories. Whoever passes from one to the other finds himself physically and magico-religiously in a special situation for a certain length of time: he wavers between two worlds. It is this situation which I have designated a transition[.]⁶³

⁶¹ Daphne du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 145. This work was first published in 1967.

⁶² Lawrence, op. cit., p. 264.

⁶³ Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, op. cit., p. 18.

This passage also resonates with Lawrence's feelings of being "over the border, in another world" during his time at Zennor.⁶⁴ Van Gennep's anthropological work, situated in the early twentieth century, refers to those cultures that had not gone through the industrialisation associated with the western world at that time; such cultures were viewed as "semicivilized".⁶⁵ The territories of these cultures were "usually defined only by natural features," marked by the installation of milestones such as upright rocks, and mediated by frontier divinities such as Hermes or Priapus.⁶⁶ In between individual tribal territories there were neutral zones, also defined by their unusual physicality and van Gennep gives deserts, marshes and virgin forests as clarifying examples.⁶⁷ Passing from a clearly defined territory to a neutral zone and back again is essentially a magico-religious act for van Gennep, and results in a period of liminality whereby the individual concerned "wavers between two worlds".⁶⁸ In a sense then, Mary Yellan's progress through the neutral zone of Bodmin Moor, is characterised by a palimpsestuous meeting of the two worlds of Paganism and Christianity. In charting her progress I will be using material from Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, particularly the 'The Nightmare' chapter, and Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, as well as other material relevant to this meeting of ancient and (comparatively) modern ideologies.⁶⁹

FROM CHRISTIAN HELFORD TO PAGAN BODMIN MOOR

Du Maurier's description of Bodmin Moor's "dark, diabolic beauty" is inflected with notions of the gloomy, the obscure, and dark, supernatural elements. Yet for du Maurier this seems to contain the very ideal of spiritual beauty. Writers such as du Maurier and Lawrence were engaging positively with more esoteric beliefs such as Celticism, seeing the acceptance of the obscure elements within the human mind as an essential spiritual act. For Lawrence in particular, Christianity is to be disparaged since it leaves no place for the obscure, repressing it palimpsestically out of the conscious mind into the unconscious and then denying that the latter exists. This can be seen as analogous to de Quincey's 'bigoted monks' who attempted to repress pagan texts by overwriting them with orthodox Christian ones, with such texts having the unfortunate tendency to seep back into existence. Thus, as Lawrence points out

⁶⁴ Lawrence, op. cit., p. 235.

⁶⁵ Van Gennep, op. cit., p. 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

⁶⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ* (London: Penguin, 2003).

in *Kangaroo*, his God is the liminal one that stands at the threshold to the conscious, tapping away in the dark to make himself heard again:

The Lord thy God is the invisible stranger at the gate in the night, knocking. He is the mysterious life-suggestion, tapping for admission. And the wondrous Victorian Age managed to fasten the door so tight, and light up the compound so brilliantly with electric light, that really, there *was* no outside, it was all in. The unknown became a joke: is still a joke.⁷⁰

Lawrence thus uses the notion of light pejoratively to criticise what he sees as the failings of nineteenth century Christianity, which is unable to appreciate the entirety of the human mind. For Lawrence and du Maurier, the moors exemplify their idea of a spiritual zone. From beneath the porous surface of the liminal moors seep dark messages from the unconscious, and these seek to make themselves heard beyond the immediate confines of their own psychic landscape.

The ‘pretty’ Mary Yellan of Helford is initially unaware of this subliminal world. Helford is light, airy, Christian and unchallenging; as du Maurier writes, its skies are a “blue heaven” (JIp.3) and it is only ever a “gentle rain” (JIp.3) that falls there. Mary is forced to leave her Helford paradise on the death of her mother, whose dying request is that she should go to live with Aunt Patience, who in her youth “was as pretty as a fairy” (JIp.7). Helford is thus symbolically the maternal land of the pretty women, from which Mary must be separated before she can reach full womanhood. Mary’s coach journey to Bodmin Moor enacts in miniature the magico-religious transition she will undergo as a result of leaving Helford and coming into contact with the subliminal moors and the men who eke out a precarious existence there. It is not long before her conventional Christian hope begins to fail on this journey and she feels her mind nagged by the rapidly nearing presence of the autonomous, moorland landscape. The voice of the moors reaches her ears like the utterances of the repressed unconscious struggling to be heard from a long way off:

Already, though barely forty miles by road from what had been her home for three and twenty years, the hope within her heart had tired, and that rather gallant courage which was so large a part of her, and had stood her in such stead during the long agony of her mother’s illness and death, was now shaken by this first fall of rain and the nagging wind. (JIp.3)

This is not the Helford rain to which Mary is accustomed. It is accompanied by the kind of restless wind that is the very voice of the moorland unconscious, both here and throughout *Jamaica Inn*. Such a conception of the wind, it might be suggested, accords with Jung’s symbolic rendering of the wind in *The*

⁷⁰ Lawrence, op. cit., p. 313.

Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Here he suggests that the wind moving over a psychic landscape:

hints at an unseen presence, a numen to which neither human expectations nor the machinations of the will have given life. It lives of itself, and a shudder runs through the man who thought that “spirit” was merely what he believes, what he makes himself, what is said in books, or what people talk about. But when it happens spontaneously it is a spookish thing, and primitive fear seizes the naïve mind.⁷¹

Jung’s unseen presence lies beyond any definition made by man. It is not predictable or containable by any theory such as Christianity may seek to impose, and it is this which gives rise to the initial alarm. On approaching the neutral zone of the moors, Mary’s mind begins to waver between two worlds as van Gennep’s theory predicts. She is caught between the well-defined, well-illuminated Christianity of her childhood upbringing and the unknown, autonomous, numinous spirit calling from the distant moors.

When Mary reaches her destination, her conformist mind finally greets the moorland with a typically Manichean attitude that persists in separating out good and evil into an opposing duality. She reasons that the children of the moors would be “born twisted” (JIp.13), and as a result of their subjection to “marshland and granite, harsh heather and crumbling stone” (JIp.13) their “minds would be twisted, too, [and] their thoughts evil” (JIp.13). Evidently, those who are fated to be born on the moors must suffer the sins of their origins and hence grow up with “something of the Devil left in them still” (JIp.13). At this stage in her spiritual journey, she is unwilling, or unable, to respond positively to the possibilities of this meeting with the emanations of the chthonic unconscious.

If Helford had been the land of ‘pretty women’, then Bodmin Moor is the land of dangerously attractive men. Her encounter with the first of the ‘habitations’ of the men linked to this strange neutral zone begins with her sighting of the “tall chimneys” (JIp.14) of Jamaica Inn itself; these rise phallically into the air at the side of the main road from Bodmin to Launceston, becoming its manmade, Priapic or Herm-like waymarkers. Jamaica Inn is the residence of Aunt Patience and Uncle Joss Merlyn who, like his brothers Jem and Matthew, was born on the moor itself. In due course, Mary will also spend time in Jem Merlyn’s cottage, the original family home, and pass by the eternal last residence of Matthew Merlyn, who was “drowned in Trewartha Marsh” (JIp.25). The surname du Maurier chooses to give to the indigenous Merlyn family is, in itself, an indicator of the magico-religious nature of the moors and its men.

⁷¹ C.G. Jung, *CW9 Part 1 The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 17.

AUTOCHTHONOUS MEN AND CHTHONIC DEITIES

Of particular relevance to the idea of the power relations between the ‘coloniser’ and those that are ‘colonised’ is the following passage in Victor Turner’s anthropological study *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, which sees the invaders in terms of the political system and the indigenous peoples in terms of land and religion:

The invaders control high political office, such as the kingship, provincial governorships, and headmanships. On the other hand, the indigenous people, through their leaders, frequently are held to have a mystical power over the fertility of the earth and all upon it. These autochthonous people have religious power [...] and represent the undivided land itself as against the political system[.]⁷²

Viewing *Jamaica Inn* in these early twentieth century anthropological terms, we can identify two sets of competing power structures; the first being that of the rapidly encroaching, centralised legality of “His Majesty’s Government” (JIp.170) and the second being that of the Merlyns who represent the indigenous, rebellious, peripheral, Cornish people obeying their own set of laws.⁷³ In using the word autochthonous to represent the indigenous peoples, Turner is making use of the idea that they are sprung directly from the soil they inhabit.⁷⁴ The Greek word khthon is one of several words for earth; typically it refers to the interior of the soil and evokes at once the idea of fertility and the grave.⁷⁵ Joss Merlyn is the figurehead for a highly organised body of indigenous men plying the dangerous and illegal occupation of wrecking. This organisation is centred on Jamaica Inn in the middle of Bodmin Moor, but its chain of command spreads out across the entirety of Cornwall. The darkly subversive trade of these men demands the blood sacrifice of innocent victims, and also of any member of the organisation who develops a Christian conscience about the group’s activities. In this sense the autochthonous moors men possess the opposite of the power over fertility as defined by Turner, for the wealth of these men comes from their power over death; their gods are thus those of the underworld, or in other words, the chthonic deities. In *Vanishing Cornwall*, du Maurier suggests that Cornishmen are “an earthy people with an earthy knowledge, the word earthy not used as a slight but as a salutation”.⁷⁶ The chthonic deities stand in contradistinction to

⁷² Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 234.

⁷³ The time period of *Jamaica Inn* is pre-Victorian, so it would be early 19th century.

⁷⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary gives the following definition of the word autochthon - “a human being sprung from the soil he inhabits; a ‘son of the soil’.” J.A. Simpson and E.S.C Weiner (eds.), *The Oxford English Dictionary, Vol 1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 801-2.

⁷⁵ The Oxford English Dictionary gives the following definition of the word ‘chthonic’ - “dwelling in or beneath the surface of the earth”. It also cites the following, “The chthonic divinity was essentially a god of the regions under the earth; at first of the dark home of the seed, later on of the still darker home of the dead” - which it takes from 1882 C.F. Keary, *Outl.Primit.Belief* v.215 (this reference is given as found). Oxford English Dictionary, *ibid.*, pp. 801-2.

⁷⁶ Du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

the Olympian gods; whereas the intended victim in Olympian cults was sacrificed on a raised altar, the Chthonian victim was slaughtered in a pit or sunken chamber. Matthew Merlyn's accidental death in the liminal bog can thus be seen as an involuntary sacrifice to the chthonian gods, with the seemingly solid earth opening up directly into a liquid underworld. This perhaps demonstrates how close the moors men are to their earthly deities, and also how porous is the threshold between the light of day and the subliminal world. If it is an easy matter for Matthew to sink into the underworld then it is also possible for the unknown, chthonic presences to seep out again.

Rumours of the murderous activities of the followers of these chthonic gods have emanated from the moors like dark utterances. These rumours reached as far as Helford in Mary's childhood, but the subject of wrecking became a taboo and any talk of it had to be suppressed:

One of the men would bring back some wild tale after a visit to the coast, and he would be silenced at once; such talk was forbidden by the older men; it was an outrage to decency. (JIp.167)

In the beautiful, Christian Helford even to voice the word "wreckers" (JIp.167) is to speak "blasphemy" (JIp.167). In *Vanishing Cornwall* du Maurier suggests that part of the reason for this fear of wrecking lay in a concern that the dead sailors would not receive a proper "Christian burial" and hence their "ghost would always haunt the scene of death, forever restless".⁷⁷ Intertwined with this Christian notion, though, are the remnants of a barely acknowledged pagan superstition, as du Maurier writes, "[h]ere is very ancient myth at work again, the belief of primitive peoples that the dead are to be feared unless, with due ritual, their bones are burnt or buried."⁷⁸ Here we see quite clearly du Maurier indulging in the discourse of primitivism mentioned earlier in this chapter; Cornwall might deliberately espouse Christianity, but it is a Christianity that offers palimpsestuous glimpses of an undead pagan past. In the novel, this primitive past is represented by Bodmin Moor itself, as du Maurier writes:

There was a silence on the tors that belonged to another age; an age that is past and vanished as though it had never been, an age when man did not exist, but pagan footsteps trod upon the hills. And there was a stillness in the air, and a stranger, older peace, that was not the peace of God. (JIp.39)

Here, du Maurier's regretful narration becomes absolutist since she bemoans the idea that a more authentic past has been totally lost. This should, however, be read alongside the fact that the main narrative is filled with evidence to the contrary; the pagan past is so powerfully authentic that it continually infiltrates the consciousness like the return of the repressed. Evidently, in *Jamaica Inn*, du

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 71.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 71.

Maurier wants it to be understood that although Christianity 'killed' the pagan past it did not see fit to give it a proper 'Christian burial', and so it still restlessly stalks the hills that have always been its territory. This would account for the vengeful, murderous nature which the moors men instinctively enact, and which Lawrence notes in *Kangaroo*:

A sudden presence of murder in the air, because of something which the modern psyche had excluded, some old and vital thing which Christianity has cut out. An old spirit, waiting for vengeance.⁷⁹

For Lawrence this vengeance is inevitable, for "each denial of the spontaneous dark soul creates the reflex of its own revenge".⁸⁰

The information that I have given so far about the nature of the gods in du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn* and Lawrence's *Kangaroo* has been vague, and in a sense this obeys the requirement that they should be unknown, shadowy, twilight beings in contrast to the Christian God of light. However, since I have said that Cornwall's Celticity is a disputed identity, I should examine whether it is really the Celtic gods that du Maurier and Lawrence had in mind when they wrote their novels. Du Maurier's thoughts with regard to Cornish religion as a whole can be found in the 'Religion and Superstition' chapter of *Vanishing Cornwall*. In this she argues that the first settlers, who were Mediterranean peoples, worshipped the Earth Mother, the goddess of fertility, then the Celtic races came along with their cult of sky-gods and tree spirits, followed by holy men from Ireland and Wales who brought along Christianity.⁸¹ To examine the Celtic tradition is, in itself, to follow a shadowy trail, since according to Caitlin Matthews "in every recorded story, people refuse to name their deity", thus warding off "the scrutiny of outsiders".⁸² Matthews argues that Celtic mythology, like the Classical mythology alluded to by du Maurier, is also filled with goddesses who represent the land; the tribal mother of the Celtic peoples being Anu, Danu or Don.⁸³ The Young Son – who is often associated with the idea of the Great Mother - is also important to the Celts and has been linked with stories of Apollo and his maternal origins. These last two points demonstrate how some of the stories of Classical mythology have been subsumed into Celtic mythology.⁸⁴ Du Maurier evidently intended to invoke ideas of the Earth Mother in her depiction of Bodmin Moor, the land of "granite, harsh heather and crumbling stone" (JIp.13), since she claims in

⁷⁹ Lawrence, op. cit., p. 235.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 294.

⁸¹ Du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, op. cit., p. 111.

⁸² Caitlin Matthews, *The Celtic Tradition* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1989), p. 14. I will take my references to the Celtic Tradition from this volume.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 16.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

Vanishing Cornwall that “[t]he granite rocks and stones thrown up by nature in a million million years were [the Earth Mother’s] handiwork”.⁸⁵

Matthews also explains that the Otherworld of Celtic myth is an “inscape of or overlay upon the land” with specific “gateways”, such as Matthew Merlyn encountered on the day he met his end in the bog.⁸⁶ Ideas of the Otherworld have become entangled with conceptions of the Underworld, which is not a hell but a primal, creative place.⁸⁷ As Matthews writes, “the chthonic power of the Underworld is never far away from the Celtic imagination”.⁸⁸ In *Jamaica Inn*, the liminal Bodmin Moor seems to possess this self-same chthonic power, emanating from the depths of the land, and affecting all those who have made their home within its boundaries. Bodmin Moor is thus the sacred centre of Cornwall, and this idea of a mystical place is common to the Celtic nations.⁸⁹ In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence refers frequently to the Celts, who for him are Cornish as well as Irish, as is evidenced when the character Richard Somers – a thinly veiled Lawrence – declares, “Celts – Cornish, Irish – they always interest me”.⁹⁰ Unlike du Maurier, Lawrence mentions the Celtic gods by name:

[Somers] would go out into the blackness of night and listen to the blackness, and call, call softly, for the spirits, the presences he felt coming downhill from the moors in the night. ‘Tuatha de Danaan!’ he would call softly. ‘Tuatha de Danaan! Be with me. Be with me.’⁹¹

In Celtic mythology, the Tuatha de Danaan are the children of Danu, a godlike race who, with the coming of the Milesians – one of the six races to arrive in Ireland – take up residence in the hollow hills of the sidhe.⁹² It is interesting that Lawrence attributes these Irish gods to the Cornish as well as to the Irish, although their presence in Cornwall could be explained by Irish travellers moving to Cornwall and taking their Gods with them. Other key features from the Celtic tradition – particularly the druids, the role of birds, and the elemental power of the wind - will also be referred to in the course of this chapter.

In du Maurier’s novel, Cornwall’s Celtic, ‘primitive peoples’ are embodied in the figure of Joss Merlin. When we are first introduced to this character, he is associated with several different types of animal: “he had the strength of a horse” (JIp.16); his frame gave the “impression of a giant gorilla” (JIp.16); and his face had the “lean and hungry appearance of a wolf” (JIp.16). This sense of the primitive seems to be informed by nineteenth century Darwinism, which had made man just that little bit closer to

⁸⁵ Du Maurier, *Vanishing Cornwall*, op. cit., p. 111.

⁸⁶ Matthews, op. cit., p. 8.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 72.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

⁹⁰ Lawrence, op. cit., p. 229.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 251.

⁹² Matthews, op. cit., p. 3.

the animal kingdom, and correspondingly just that little bit further from the kingdom of the Christian God. His character, like the Bodmin Moor from which he is autochthonously sprung, is oddly ambiguous since a sinister beauty also accompanies his dangerously dark primitivism, as Mary notices when he “delicately” [JIp.20] prepares her a slice of buttered bread:

there was something almost horrifying in the change from rough brutality to fastidious care [...] this sudden coming to grace, this quick and exquisite moving of his hands, was a swift and rather sinister revelation, sinister because it was unexpected[.] [JIp.20-21]

There is something within Mary, and other women of Helford like her Aunt Patience, which responds to the unexpected beauty of the men of the moors as an instinctive act of recognition:

Nature cared nothing for prejudice. Men and women were like the animals on the farm at Helford, she supposed; there was a common law of attraction for all living things, some similarity of skin or touch, and they would go to one another. [JIp.136]

Mary is attracted to Jem, as her Aunt Patience had been attracted to Jem’s brother Joss before her, and for the same reasons, “She could see her uncle in [Jem’s] walk, in the turn of his head; and she knew why Aunt Patience had made a fool of herself ten years ago” [JIp.135]. Mary had despised the courtship rituals at Helford, but on Bodmin Moor she is unable to resist the upsurge of instinctive, pagan longing. As Horner and Zlosnik point out in *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination*, concerning the archetypal man of the moor, “his association with the natural and the primitive seems to validate his virility”.⁹³ The dark beauty of the moors and its men is as dangerous for the women of Helford as it is intoxicating; Mary’s experiences led her to realise for the first time that “aversion and attraction ran side by side; that the boundary-line was thin between them” [JIp.140]. In Helford, Mary had been able to keep attraction to the opposite sex at bay as if by an act of will, on Bodmin Moor the attraction springs up autonomously and unbidden in opposition to her will.

FRANCIS DAVEY – THE ALBINO VICAR OF ALTARNUN

Francis Davey - the albino Vicar of Altarnun - is a similarly ambiguous character, representing in human form the palimpsested, involuted spirituality which plays itself out on the landscape. Even the colour of his skin has paradoxical spiritual resonances, an idea which accords with Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*:

⁹³ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998), p. 78.

in the Vision of St. John, white robes are given to the redeemed, and the four-and-twenty elders stand clothed in white before the great white throne, and the Holy One that sitteth there white like wool; yet for all these accumulated associations, with whatever is sweet, and honourable, and sublime, there yet lurks an elusive something in the innermost idea of this hue, which strikes more of panic to the soul than that redness which affrights in blood.⁹⁴

Thus writes Melville in the middle of the nineteenth century of the whiteness of the whale in *Moby Dick*. Melville's whale is also an ambiguous spiritual avatar. Its whiteness contains the usual Christian connotations of light, purity, innocence and sacredness, and yet there is also something oddly disturbing in it. The lightness that should give a sense of religious security becomes instead a source of panic and terror. For Melville, this spiritual terror also attaches itself to the Albino man, whose "pallor were as much like the badge of consternation in the other world, as of mortal trepidation here".⁹⁵ When Mary first meets Francis Davey, the vicar of Altarnun, and also the Albino man of du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn*, she is similarly transfixed by his otherworldly albino qualities:

she saw his eyes for the first time from beneath the brim of his hat. They were strange eyes, transparent like glass, and so pale in colour that they seemed near to white; a freak of nature she had never known before. They fastened upon her, and searched her, as though her very thoughts could not be hidden[.] [JIp.95]

In Francis Davey, whiteness takes on a dual aspect; it denotes both the colour of Christian purity, as befits his status as a vicar, and yet it hints at the supernatural obscurity of a non-Christian other world, as Melville's writing suggests. When Mary takes a ride with Davey in his dog-cart, she becomes "aware of a feeling of discomfiture, as though he had betaken himself to another world and had forgotten her existence" [JIp.105]. Although Davey is a vicar he seems strangely unChristian, an idea which Mary tries to grasp by comparing him with her own vicar at Helford, who would "beam upon his world" [JIp.110] rather than transfix it with an uncanny, Albino stare. As du Maurier notes, the fact that he is an albino gives the impression that he is "without flesh and blood" [JIp.144], and thus appears anaemic. The implication is that Davey's Christian religion is similarly anaemic; it is all spirit and no substance. In other words, it has rejected the reality of the body and its lifeblood, leading to what Nietzsche – in *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ* – has termed "ressentiment against life in its foundations."⁹⁶ In *Kangaroo*, Lawrence tries to retrieve the spirituality inherent in the body and its blood through his

⁹⁴ Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). This was first published in 1851.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁹⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, op. cit., p. 121. Note the use of the word 'twilight' again.

concept of “blood-consciousness.”⁹⁷ This is demonstrated by the character of Lovat, who desires nothing more than:

to drift into a sort of blood-darkness, to take up in his veins again the savage vibrations that still lingered round the secret rocks, the place of the pre-Christian human sacrifice.⁹⁸

Remembering the “blood-sacrificial pre-world” of the pagans allows him to escape “his own white world, his own white conscious day” and experience to the full the life-giving darkness which is inherent in the blood.⁹⁹

For Nietzsche, in his work *The Anti-Christ*, a white and bloodless vicar like Francis Davey would be a fitting servant for the Christian God who, because he is “himself so pale, so weak, so *decadent*” attracts the “palest of the pale” or, in other words, “the conceptual albinos”.¹⁰⁰ A pale god is easily mastered by his pale followers and as a result becomes “something ever paler and less substantial”.¹⁰¹ The anaemic and the bloodless require the blood of others to survive, turning them into spiritual vampires. For this reason, Nietzsche declares, has the “whole labour of the ancient world been in vain”, for it was “[n]ot trampled down by Teutons” but “ruined by cunning, secret, invisible, anaemic vampires! Not conquered – only sucked dry!”¹⁰² Nietzsche sees pale Christianity as the supreme vampiric religion of history, and the one that lies at the bottom of this ruination of the legacy of the ancient world:

Christianity was the vampire of the *Imperium Romanum* – the tremendous deed of the Romans in clearing the ground for a great culture *which could take its time* was undone overnight by Christianity.¹⁰³

This dreadful task has been performed stealthily by the representatives of this anaemic religion.

In the magico-religious world of Bodmin Moor, it is Francis Davey who has been du Maurier’s ‘cunning, secret, invisible’ force. In the course of the narrative, it is discovered that it is he who has been the real master of sinister operations for which Joss Merlyn was only ever the figurehead. When meetings have been held at Jamaica Inn to organise future operations, Davey has lurked in the guest room next to Mary’s. Mary assumes that the unknown man “must wish to remain concealed, otherwise he would have stepped out onto the landing when she had done” (JIp.57-58). Davey later confirms to Mary that he was the person who had “gone to and fro in stealth, possibly in the silence of the night when [she] and [her] aunt were abed and asleep” (JIp.268). But there are other activities that Davey has also concealed, for it

⁹⁷ Lawrence, op. cit., p. 264.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 264.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 264.

¹⁰⁰ Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 140.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 140.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 194, 195

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 192.

transpires that his outer Christian persona is only a mask for his pagan interests. When Mary is sent to rest at Davey's vicarage at Altarnun, she finds a picture that he has drawn of his congregation, which on closer inspection has disturbing qualities:

The people of the congregation were bonneted and shawled, and in their best clothes as for Sunday, but he had drawn sheep's heads upon their shoulders instead of human faces. The animal jaws gaped foolishly at the preacher, with silly vacant solemnity [...] The preacher, with his black gown and halo of hair, was Francis Davey; but he had given himself a wolf's face, and the wolf was laughing at the flock beneath him. (JIp.261-2)

Mary realises that she had "stumbled upon a secret, and she would rather that the secret stayed concealed" (JIp.262). Davey is not a harmless priest, but a predatory animal, who sees his congregation as merely a vacant mass possessing a Nietzschean 'herd instinct' to be exploited. Christianity has been used as a tool to make man foolish and helpless or, in other words, to domesticate him. The Christian is therefore the type of man who has been "willed, bred, *achieved*: the domestic animal, the herd animal, the sick animal man".¹⁰⁴ Davey himself had tried Christianity as a sanctuary but had been forced to reject it, as he explains to Mary:

I sought refuge from myself in Christianity, and found it to be built upon hatred, and jealousy, and greed – all the man-made attributes of civilisation, while the old pagan barbarism was naked and clean. (JIp.277)

Du Maurier seems to be implying here that civilisation has been manufactured for the masses out of the second-rate materials that are the by-products of an inauthentic religion. Conversely, the raw materials of paganism, possessing the authenticity and purity of another age, are superior building blocks with which to build a society.

For Davey, as for Nietzsche, Christ becomes merely "a figurehead, a puppet thing created by man himself" (JIp.274), just like his associate in crime Joss Merlin. Mankind created the idea of Christ as a spiritual leader, but one whose strings could be pulled, and similarly Davey propagated the idea of Joss as the brains behind the smuggling ring, so that he could manipulate him for his own personal gain. Davey tells Mary that his congregation had been just as gullible but in other ways; they had sat in his church unaware of its palimpsestic heritage:

They do not know that beneath the foundation-stone lie the bones of their pagan ancestors, and the old granite altars where sacrifice was held long before Christ died upon His cross. I have stood in the church at midnight, Mary, and listened to the silence; there is a murmur in the air and a whisper of unrest that is bred deep in the soil and has no knowledge of the church and Altarnun. (JIp.280)

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

Thus, in the course of his conversation with Mary at Altarnun, Davey relates his own experiences of the obscure, chthonic utterances that Mary had only dimly sensed, but failed to articulate, on her way to Bodmin moor from Helford. His congregation may have listened to him talking about Christianity, but all the time he had been listening to the voices of other gods.

But Davey's involuted nature does not end with being a covert pagan, or with being the real ring-leader of an illicit smuggling gang, for he is also on the side of law and order in the region, and thus has always been one step ahead of the moves to defeat his own operations. He has frequently attended meetings in Launceston where the plans of "His Majesty's Government" (JIp.170) have been discussed. On his way back from one of these meetings, he had once given Mary a lift to Jamaica Inn, and by way of reassurance that the end of the smuggling operation was near, enigmatically informed her that "[o]ur bright days are done, and we are for the dark [...]"¹⁰⁵ (JIp.170). His meaning is that as a result of government policy, the "false lights have flickered for the last time, and there will be no more wrecks" (JIp.170) along the Cornish coast. The government will begin to make its presence felt in Cornwall and this will quell the anarchy of the Cornish Celts:

His Majesty's Government were prepared to take certain steps during the coming year to patrol the coasts of His Majesty's country. There will be watchers on the cliffs instead of flares, and the paths known only at present to men like your uncle and his companions will be trodden by officers of the law. (JIp.170)

Here we have the point in du Maurier's narrative where the idea of the Celts as the idealised 'primitive man', representing the irrational id, shades over into the alternative depth psychology model whereby the Celts are seen as modern mass man to be ruled over by a rational, conscious ego. In *Jamaica Inn* centralised legality eventually encroaches into the lives of the Celts, taming their savagery, and spreading 'civilisation'. Even Francis Davey is tracked down by the representatives of the law in the end, and bemoans the fact that "[t]he gods have gone against me after all" (JIp.284).

Francis Davey, like the god Hermes, is a double-operator in many senses, deceiving all the people with whom he comes into contact. Ann Yeoman, in *Now or Neverland*, gives a few of the qualities of the complex, trickster nature of Hermes; he is "audacious, innocent, cunning, wise, chthonic, phallic, magical, dark, light, shameless, delightful, provocative [and] protecting".¹⁰⁶ In a way, Hermes can be

¹⁰⁵ This is a quote from Shakespeare. See *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V, Scene II. The words are spoken by Iras to Cleopatra. Iras is one of her female attendants. "Finish good lady; the bright day is done,/And we are for the dark".

¹⁰⁶ Ann Yeoman, *Now or Neverland: Peter Pan and the Myth of Eternal Youth: A Psychological Perspective on a Cultural Icon* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1998), p. 36. The information on Hermes in this paragraph is all taken from this work – see pp. 36-40.

regarded as the archetype behind the character of Davey, since his attributes inform many of Davey's traits and actions in the novel. Like Hermes, Davey is a master thief, using his cunning and audacity to fool both the law and his criminal associates. Also like Hermes, Davey is a psychopomp, or guide of souls to the Underworld; he stands at the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, or correspondingly the light and dark forces. The position of his church and vicarage at Altarnun are a spatial indicator of his location at the boundary, since Altarnun is just over the border to the north of Bodmin Moor. In the course of the novel, Mary has experienced the chthonic power of the neutral zone Bodmin Moor from its adjacent territories to both the north and south. On her journey from Helford in the south into the neutral zone, she experienced this power for herself, but in the adjacent territory to the north she is verbally inducted by Davey, the self-confessed custodian of the chthonic, phallic forces. In this respect, Davey becomes the human representative of the frontier divinities Hermes and Priapus as noted by van Gennepe, and discussed previously. Davey's position at the boundary of light and dark forces is mirrored by the criminal actions of his wrecking operation. He uses false lights in the dark to lure cargo ships to destruction on the rocks. Also, as alluded to earlier, he regards the conclusion of his operations as the end of his "bright days" and the onset of darkness. Indeed, in one of the versions of the myth, Hermes is said to be the son of Heaven (Uranus) and Bright Day (Hemera). In any case, he is usually associated with the original Goddess in one of her many forms. This connection to the feminine is emphasised in Hermes' incestuous relation to his sister Aphrodite, from which union is born the androgynous Hermaphrodite. But Aphrodite can also be seen as representing Hermes' feminine attributes. Horner and Zlosnik, in *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination*, have also made a connection between Davey and the hermaphrodite figure, pointing out many of the stereotypically feminine characteristics which Mary finds so disturbing, such as his womanly voice and fluttering eyelashes.¹⁰⁷ Horner and Zlosnik's view, drawing on the work of Clare Kahane, is that the sexually ambiguous figure of Davey in particular, and the hermaphrodite in general, echoes the infantile desire to destroy distinction and limitation and be both sexes.¹⁰⁸ This, I would suggest finds particular resonance with du Maurier's own ambiguous sexuality, since she regarded herself as a kind of 'divided self',

¹⁰⁷ Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), pp. 79-80.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

whereby outwardly she knew herself to be stereotypically female but inwardly she felt very male.¹⁰⁹ Her frequent wish was that she had been born a boy and this is often echoed in her writing, as when Joss says to Mary in *Jamaica Inn*, “[t]hey ought to have made you a boy” (JIp.128). Hermes and the hermaphrodite may thus represent the archetypal background for du Maurier, as well as for some of the characters in her works, the implication of this being that du Maurier herself is an ambiguous trickster figure, that she is not quite what she seems.

THE FLIGHT

The title of this section is deliberately multivalent, as in the title of du Maurier’s later work *The Flight of the Falcon*.¹¹⁰ When Davey’s guilt is discovered, he takes flight with Mary across the moors, bound for the north coast of Cornwall. Like Aldo Donati in *The Flight of the Falcon*, Davey possesses esoteric knowledge and the power to fly shamanically, as if he were a bird of prey. As the narrator of *Jamaica Inn* relates, their journey across the moors is as much about flying as fleeing :

Ever and again the horses stumbled on the stones, or sank in the soft ground bordering the marshes, but Francis Davey found his way like a hawk in the air, hovering an instant and brooding upon the grass beneath him, then swerving again and plunging to the hard ground. (JIp.281)

Davey, it seems, is a bird man. This is especially pertinent for the Celtic tradition since birds are particularly associated with the Otherworld or Otherworldly states.¹¹¹ The Birds of Rhiannon, for example, were especially renowned for their sleep-inducing music, which could “bring the listener into the Otherworldly dimension by creating communion with their song”.¹¹² It may be that du Maurier had something of this bird tradition in mind when she wrote the flight scene. When Davey and Mary are forced to come to a halt on their journey as a result of fog, the bird man falls silent, but this seems to induce the wind to sing to Mary instead:

He said nothing; and out of the silence came the whisper of the wind again. [...] It rose from the stones themselves, and from the earth beneath the stones; it sang in the hollow caves and in the crevices of rock, at first a sigh and then a lamentation. It played upon the air like a chorus from the dead. (JIp.286)

¹⁰⁹ This is the title of a work on schizophrenia - R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1990). This work was first published in 1959. I have direct evidence that du Maurier was aware of this work from my study of the Exeter University archives. I am therefore using the term advisedly, but in a metaphorical sense, as I have no wish to imply that du Maurier was schizophrenic. My usage denotes her fissured experience of her own selfhood.

¹¹⁰ *The Flight of the Falcon* and du Maurier’s many readings of the word flight are discussed in a later chapter. ‘The Flight’ is also the title of one of the chapters in J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*. See *Peter Pan, Peter and Wendy, and Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (London: Penguin, 2004).

¹¹¹ Matthews, op. cit., p. 71.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 71.

Mary thus hears the call of the Sidhe – the supernatural race of Celtic mythology - and its voice is that of the nagging wind that she has heard so many times before on her walks over the moors. The music of the Sidhe can represent a call to the Otherworldly state, and also a lament presaging the death of someone who has a close association to the Otherworld.¹¹³ In the flight episode, the music Mary hears fulfils both of these options; it is Mary that is called and Davey who must die. In this reading, Mary becomes the new Celtic shaman to replace the outgoing Davey. The call of the Sidhe induces a trance-like state in Mary, and a “dream that was no dream” (JIp.287) plays itself out:

In her fancy she could hear the whisper of a thousand voices and the tramping of a thousand feet, and she could see the stones turning to men beside her. Their faces were inhuman, older than time, carved and rugged like the granite; and they spoke in a tongue she could not understand, and their hands and feet were curved like the claws of a bird. (JIp.286-7)

These bird men bring the death that must precede a shamanic rebirth; Mary sees them “moving like blind things to her destruction” (JIp.287), and then she starts to her feet, “every nerve in her body throbbing and alive” (JIp.287). As the bird men are born directly from the stones of the moors, so Mary’s experience of these Otherworldly men means that she can now feel at one with the granite herself. It is no longer threatening but protective; as she lies on the rock she feels “as though the granite had become part of her and held her close” (JIp.288). Mary has finally accepted the call that her Christian mind has been repressing and rejecting throughout the novel. When the law finally catches up with them on the moors, Davey - like that other bird man Aldo Donati in *The Flight of the Falcon* - dies a fitting shamanic death:

Mary saw the tall black figure of Francis Davey outlined against the sky, standing upon a wide slab like an altar, high above her head. He stood for a moment poised like a statue, his hair blowing in the wind; and then he flung out his arms as a bird throws his wings for flight, and drooped suddenly and fell; down from his granite peak to the wet dank heather and the little crumbling stones. (JIp.292)

Davey has become a voluntary human sacrifice, his body returning directly to the moor, his spiritual home in life as well as death. After her Otherworldly experiences on the moor, and her acceptance of its chthonic powers, which are as much concerned with the landscape as with the dark forces of the unconscious, Mary seems to lose all her former anxieties. Out on Twelve Men’s Moor one day, some time later, she wonders:

why it was that Kilmar, to the left of her, had lost all its menace, and was now no more than a black scarred hill under the sky. [...] The moors were bleak still, and the hills were unfriendly, but their old malevolence had vanished and she could walk upon them with indifference. (JIp.293)

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 70.

Thus, by the end of *Jamaica Inn*, Mary has been transformed by her contact with the moors and its autochthonous men. Although she feels one last nostalgic pull for Helford, the land of the pretty women, it transpires that her future lies with Jem Merlyn and a life beyond even Cornwall itself. The novel ends with her face set resolutely “towards the Tamar” (JIp.302).

POSTSCRIPT FOR THE CORNISH NATIONAL PARTY AND *RULE BRITANNIA*

To leave du Maurier’s interest in Cornwall in the 1930s is to neglect how her attitude towards it progressed in her life and writing. I will therefore give two instances of the shift in thinking that occurred later in her life: firstly, joining the Cornish National Party (Mebyon Kernow), and secondly, the ideas contained in the novel *Rule Britannia*. As is evident even from her novel *Jamaica Inn*, du Maurier cared a great deal about Cornwall, her adopted homeland, and these feelings did not waiver throughout her life. But her attitude towards Cornwall in the 1930s seems to be one of romantic, cultural nationalism, and also of neglecting the political aspects of Cornish nationalism in favour of maintaining a Unionist, central status quo. By the time of the 1960s, Margaret Forster, in her biography of du Maurier, remarks that her involvement in Cornish affairs was at the level of contributing “steadily and widely to a huge variety of charities and organizations concerned with helping Cornish people or preserving the Cornish countryside”.¹¹⁴ Forster also relates that du Maurier “kept up a stream of concerned letters to local councils” about various societal issues which she deemed to be spoiling the landscape she loved.¹¹⁵ As a result of her ongoing, but mostly low profile, work for Cornwall she was invited to join the Cornish National Party.¹¹⁶ Concerning this invitation, Forster relates that du Maurier:

¹¹⁴ Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow, 1994), p. 371.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

¹¹⁶ I wrote to the Mebyon Kernow to find out more about du Maurier’s membership and received the following response from Dick Cole:

My understanding of Daphne Du Maurier's involvement is limited, and most of the main activists from the 1960s are no longer alive. I will ask around and see if anyone does remember the nature of her membership.

2) She wrote an article for the Jan/Feb 1969 edition of *Cornish Nation* - the party newsletter. Send me your address and I will forward a photocopy of it to you.

3) I have seen little general comment on her time as a member, having noted just her comments in *Vanishing Cornwall* and a couple of mentions in letters published a few years ago. Cannot remember the title of the book but assume you are well aware of it.

From your perspective, it is important to understand that in the late 1960s, MK was not a political party in the modern sense. It had starting contesting elections, but people could also still be members of the London parties. There is a book on the history of MK - *Mebyon Kernow and Cornish Nationalism* (2003) Welsh Academic Press by Bernard Deacon, Dick Cole and Garry Tregidga.

I hope that helps.

Dick

The article in question that Cole sent to me is - Daphne du Maurier, ‘Stand on your own two feet’, *Cornish Nation* (Published by Mebyon Kernow), Vol. 1, No. 5, Jan-Feb 1969.

accepted at once, greatly amused, after a warning that she would never attend any meetings 'because I am a recluse'. She wrote to Foy that she was thinking of wearing the Party's black kilt and quite fancied 'blowing up bridges' should the need arise. The whole idea appealed to her sense of the ridiculous, but there was also a real belief in what the Cornish Nationalists were about. So long as she could maintain her low profile and not be asked to do anything more strenuous than write for their journal, she was happy and proud to think she belonged to a 'rebel' organization.¹¹⁷

It is evident from Forster's account that at this point in du Maurier's life there was still an element of emotive fantasy about accepting a practical invitation from the world of political affiliation. Her attitude at this point resembles that of Shelagh Money in the short story 'A Border-line Case' who fantasises about throwing in her life on the stage in order to join her father in his bombing campaigns for a united Ireland.¹¹⁸ There is an air of wanting to live in yet another boy's adventure story, conveyed in both life and art, where rebellion is exciting and never carries any real element of danger. Forster explains that du Maurier's feelings on the matter ran thus:

The rebel in her was still strong, though she knew it was only in spirit and not in her actions that she had been rebellious. At the end of this decade she was beginning to be depressed that she had never really 'broken out', except in her books.¹¹⁹

The rebel and the conservative thus vie palimpsestuously in du Maurier's mind, with sometimes one aspect of her nature and sometimes the other becoming dominant, dependent on circumstance.

As far as her later novels on Cornwall are concerned, *Rule Britannia* (1972) – du Maurier's last novel - is perhaps the one that most highlights Kent's idea of an ideological shift expressed in political terms. The novel centres on the activities of Mad (short for Madam) – a retired actress - and her adopted family of 'lost boys' who together form part of the Cornish rebellion against the occupying forces of a new US/UK alliance.¹²⁰ Mad believes that the only way that the US forces in Cornwall can be defeated is to wage a "war of attrition."¹²¹ Eventually, the Cornish farmers and the Cornish doctors all go on strike, although Willis – Mad's Welsh friend who lives close by her home in Cornwall – hints that it is much more than that; as he comments:

¹¹⁷ Forster, op. cit., p. 372.

¹¹⁸ Daphne du Maurier, 'A Border-line Case', in *Not After Midnight* (London: Book Club Associates, 1972). At this point in du Maurier's story Shelagh was not aware that this man was her father; she had also fallen in love with him (echoes of du Maurier's relationship with her father Gerald here).

¹¹⁹ Forster, op. cit., p. 372. Forster is referring to the 1960s.

¹²⁰ US/UK – deliberately homonymous with 'you suck'. The title of the novel is a piece of irony.

¹²¹ Daphne du Maurier, *Rule Britannia* (London: Pan, 1974), p. 220.

We may boast we've started something in this peninsula [...] for they say there isn't a farmer in Cornwall that isn't protesting at our men being taken into custody. Give them a day or two, and it will spread to Devon and Dorset. The doctors are doing the same. Communications must be restored to this area, lighting, water, telephone, or they'll practise no medicine, visit no patients, perform no operations. It isn't a strike for money, you see, it isn't a strike at all. It's a protest against domination by the strangers in our midst over one section of a small community.¹²²

In her ongoing struggles against the occupying US forces, Mad – via the CB radio of Willis - enlists the aid of other Celtic nations who are also encouraged to use similar tactics to resist the new brand of central government; as Willis also comments, “Civil disobedience in Scotland and Wales [...] no violence, just nobody going to work”.¹²³ Eventually, the US/UK alliance begins to dissolve into turmoil as the Celtic “infection” begins to spread “through the whole blasted country like an epidemic of smallpox”.¹²⁴ Bevil Summers, one of the Cornish dissenters and the local doctor, eventually summarises the situation thus:

‘We’ve done it, we’ve done it [...] I haven’t felt so bucked with myself since I passed my first medical exam. Civil disobedience [...] the pundits who said it wouldn’t work are licked.’¹²⁵

In this last novel therefore, unlike in *Jamaica Inn*, the Celts are victorious against an invading force sanctioned by central government, showing du Maurier’s greater awareness of the issues of Celtic Nationalism and a willingness at this time in her life to engage creatively with its central tenets.

Interestingly, in spite of the eventual outcome of the novel, du Maurier still has the central character Mad say:

I never can make up my mind about nationalism [...] It’s inclined to turn fanatical, and the fanatics make such a point about where one is born. I was born in Wimbledon, and although I used to adore going to the tennis there in the old days I wouldn’t die for it. In fact it wouldn’t worry me if Wimbledon and all its houses ceased to exist. But I’ve made this corner of this particular peninsula my home for a long time now, and I’d certainly die for it if I thought it would do any good.¹²⁶

Her friend Willis dismisses this by saying, “It’s a form of mistaken idealism the way men and women sacrifice themselves, only to be forgotten by their contemporaries and their immediate successors”.¹²⁷

This exchange highlights du Maurier’s ongoing need to criticise that with which she engages; in this instance she resists what is effectively a movement of resistance against a totalising central government in case it also turns too fanatical. Her narrative thus complicates the more straightforward Celtic-cum-nationalistic outcome of the novel.

¹²² Ibid., p. 276.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 279.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 298.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 299.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 280.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 280.

ENDWORD

In Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, the character Somers, like Lawrence himself, had gone to live near the moors of Cornwall in a state of alertness to the workings of its chthonic life-force. He desired to escape residual Victorian Christian values and experience the dangerous yet desirable energies of this pre-Christian peripheral territory. The moors thus act as a 'neutral zone' for Lawrence and he is well aware of their magico-religious possibilities. In Lawrence's novel, the chapter in which they are described also becomes a kind of 'neutral zone' since it is situated in the middle of Lawrence's account of time spent in the Australian bush, yet another colonial territory with underlying chthonic potential. Thus his Australian chapters resonate more forcibly through being placed alongside the chthonic gods of the Cornish landscape. Time spent near the Cornish moors marks a period of transition for Lawrence; they can only be experienced for a limited period between the worlds of his nomadic existence. Lawrence travels but never really arrives; his spiritual quest is perpetual. Indeed, the novel ends with a chapter entitled 'Adieu Australia' and Somers on his way to experience the influence of the soil of a different land - this time New Zealand. When du Maurier came to write *Jamaica Inn*, her theme of psychic potential in a Pre-Christian Cornish landscape was thus not new, and so met a readership primed to accept such ideas. Du Maurier's Mary Yellan, however, is unlike Lawrence's Somers in that whilst she had heard rumours of dark deeds emanating from the moors, she was not initially prepared for, or desirous of, a change in her own psychic landscape. But once the restless energy of the moors was experienced and accepted, she too became nomadic and decided to follow Jem to experience the particular chthonic effect of the English midlands. It may be that in *Jamaica Inn*, du Maurier was reflecting on her own early relationship with Cornwall. Her initial arrival in Fowey had been epiphanic and she had determined that her life and writing career depended on the peace, freedom and space that Cornwall offered. The first novel she wrote - *The Loving Spirit* - persuaded the man she was eventually to marry - Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Browning - to visit Cornwall in the hope of being able to meet its author. Marriage to a military man liable to be posted anywhere was not the best way of maintaining a settled lifestyle in Cornwall, and it was perhaps this nomadic prospect that du Maurier was drawing on when she caused Mary to pause before choosing Jem and a life across the Tamar as opposed to returning to a partnerless life in her beloved Helford.

Du Maurier's divided self is very much in evidence in *Jamaica Inn*, particularly in her approach to Celticity. Celticity is embraced at the level of the personal in this novel, as can be seen in the actions

and beliefs of many of the main characters. But at the level of the political, the dangerous forces represented by Celticity are to be overcome by the new policies of a centralised legality. The anarchic potential of the ‘neutral zone’ is indeed to be neutralised by the presence of representatives of law and order watching over the Cornish coastline for the ‘false lights’ of the wreckers. This seems to imply, perhaps unintentionally on the part of du Maurier, that the darkness of Celticity may itself be regarded as a form of false spiritual light. However, it may just be that this negative inference is one that can be drawn by a colonising centre rather than by the authoress herself. With regards to a Celtic Revivalist agenda, the individual in *Jamaica Inn* can be seen to adopt a culturally nationalist stance, but the novel as a whole rejects a politically nationalist agenda. This lack of a positive political agenda for Cornwall in *Jamaica Inn* is in line with Kent’s criticism of du Maurier’s early writing career, which he suggests is at a distance from the aims of the Revivalists operating at the time of her writing.¹²⁸

Where the novel does lend itself to the idea of successful revolt can be seen in its attitude to the nineteenth century past and its Christian world-view. Mary is propelled out of an unthinking acceptance of her traditional religious upbringing into a recognition of an alternative way of thinking about morality and her own unconscious impulses. Du Maurier’s modern, divided conservative mind may fret about an inauthentic present, but it cannot return to the immediate past for succour since that would be the very source of the inauthenticity that her brand of modernity is revolting against. Instead she feels she must adopt a Pre-Christian, or pagan humanist, response, as did Nietzsche and Lawrence before her. The tension inherent in this form of interwar conservatism has been summarised by Light in the ‘Introduction’ to her study of the work of Ivy Compton Burnett, Agatha Christie, Jan Struther (Mrs Miniver) and Daphne du Maurier:

They all try, in different ways, to capture something of the flavour of a cultural compromise with the new and to isolate what I see as the dominant mood between the wars, one which could be conservative in effect and yet was often modern in form; a conservatism itself in revolt against the past, trying to make room for the present.¹²⁹

In Light’s view the conservative revolt against the past of these interwar writers was really the “revolt against Victorianism”.¹³⁰ The type of conservative response that Light has in mind is not that of “an overtly politicised high Toryism” but “a more intimate and everyday species of conservatism”.¹³¹ It is a response that in itself is full of the tension that De’Ath also ascribes to the rebellious conformist du

¹²⁸ Kent, op. cit., p. 183.

¹²⁹ Light, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 11.

Maurier.¹³² As Light goes on to note in her ‘Introduction’, it cannot be assumed that such conservatism (or indeed any form of radicalism for that matter) is necessarily “consonant with party political belongings”, which is why it is interesting that she then goes on to use the phrase “romantic Toryism” in the chapter devoted to du Maurier, as it gives a harder and more practical sounding edge to “the ‘softer’ questions of psychology and motivation” she had been developing earlier.¹³³ Light does not fully explain in du Maurier’s case why the capitalised term ‘Toryism’ becomes more appropriate than the lower case ‘conservatism’ she has taken great pains to define. Du Maurier’s affiliations and motivations certainly waiver between the emotional and the practical throughout her life, and between different forms of the practical (her level of involvement in Cornish concerns being a key example). The nature of this fluctuation is something that Light’s work only hints at but does not really attempt to capture, since it is concerned primarily with the interwar years in the lives of the writers in question. Horner and Zlosnik criticise Light’s work on du Maurier’s ‘conservatism’ and ‘nostalgia’, since for them she seems “forced into making ‘conservatism’ and ‘nostalgia’ internally fissured and contradictory categories in order to accommodate this reading”.¹³⁴ This particular criticism seems unduly harsh, since fissure appears to be an important part of du Maurier’s political and emotional makeup, and ambiguous concepts thus resonate well with her character. Du Maurier’s fissured, palimpsestuous responses to the political and the religious in *Jamaica Inn* are played out historically on the moors landscape of *Jamaica Inn* and psychologically with respect to the pagan-cum-Christian character of Francis Davey, the albino vicar of Altarnun. Thus, that which is esoteric and unorthodox is repressed in Cornish history and in the Cornish mind, but seeps back into present consciousness, palimpsestuously interfering with the exoteric and orthodox narrative. Also, like du Maurier’s portrayal of Francis Bacon, Francis Davey is a masked man, presenting – in true trickster fashion - only the one chosen face of his palimpsested identity.

¹³² De’Ath, op. cit., p. xii.

¹³³ Light, op. cit., pp. 16, 156, 16.

¹³⁴ Horner and Zlosnik, op. cit., p. 2.

PART 2 THE RESURRECTION/REBIRTH OF RENAISSANCE MEN : *THE FLIGHT OF THE FALCON (1965)*

The appearance of *ekphraseis* in a fictional text not only recalls to us myth, legend, history, but also, and cardinally, reminds us that we have a moral, aesthetic, and intellectual duty not only to perceive – and to perceive in an orderly if stimulated way – but also to interpret the *entire* work at hand.¹
(Margaret Doody)

All childhood memories are visual. A face, a figure, somebody smiling or frowning, and the image stays forever. A moment in time, held captive.²
(Daphne du Maurier)

[The] message-bearing experience of the image [...] recalls the Neoplatonic sense of images as daimones and angels (message-bearers).³
(James Hillman)

Perhaps – who knows? – these eternal images are what men mean by fate.⁴
(Carl Jung)

INTRODUCTION

Ekphrasis, as Margaret Doody notes in *The True Story of the Novel*, means merely “telling at length, description”.⁵ However, among the Greek rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic, it acquired the specialised sense of “exploring and explaining (supposed) graphic works”.⁶ Doody alludes to the *Kebētos Pinax* by Cebes, a pupil of Socrates, and also to the *Eikones* or *Imagines* of Philostratus (c. A.D. 220), as key examples of the textual confronting and interpreting of graphic images.⁷ This ancient device has its more modern variants; for example, Dorian Gray’s demonised self becomes manifest in truly daimonic fashion as the verbal artwork enshrined in the title of Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.⁸ The beautiful youth Dorian, in whom is vested “the perfection of the spirit that is Greek”, finds his counterpart in du Maurier’s Armino Fabbio (Donati) – otherwise known as “Il Beato, the blessed one” – in *The Flight of the Falcon*.⁹ Like Dorian Gray, Armino is also haunted daimonically by graphic images. These have been fixed in Armino’s imagination by the force of personality of his elder brother Aldo Donati. *The Flight of the Falcon* becomes, in effect, an extended *ekphrasis* on two works of art – the ‘Raising of Lazarus’

¹ Margaret Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (London: Fontana, 1998), p. 138.

² Daphne du Maurier, ‘Sylvia’s Boys’, *The Rebecca Notebook And Other Memories* (London: Pan Books Ltd., 1982), p. 80.

³ James Hillman, *Archetypal Psychology: A Brief Account* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1983), p. 14.

⁴ Carl Jung, *CW7 Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953), p. 107.

⁵ Doody, op. cit., p. 136. *Ekphraseis* is the plural form of *ekphrasis*.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸ Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). First published in 1890.

⁹ Wilde, *ibid.*, p. 10. Daphne du Maurier, *The Flight of the Falcon* (London: Virago, 2005), p. 11. All future references to this work will be given in the text thus (FFp.X).

(FFp.11) and the ‘Temptation of Christ’ (FFp.13) – which are presumably conjured out of du Maurier’s imagination, but based perhaps on pre-existing Renaissance artwork of the type that would have been found in the Ducal Palace at Urbino.¹⁰ This real Italian city, prominent in the Renaissance, provides the inspiration for du Maurier’s fictional Ruffano, where much of the action of *The Flight of the Falcon* is set. I shall explore this novel through the perspective provided by the two fictional paintings, thus performing my own *ekphrasis* of the messages borne by the images in the text. It will become evident that du Maurier views these artworks as palimpsests, in that they contain messages invisible to the casual passer-by in the same way that her novels contain meanings undiscovered by the careless reader. Du Maurier’s palimpsests are thus palimpsestic; however, like her novel, they can be read in a palimpsestuous way by resorting to “myth, legend, [and] history” as Doody has suggested. *The Flight of the Falcon* was intended as a novel concerning the action of predestination, so I will therefore show how her key characters are palimpsestuously spectralised by the images in question and the myths, legends and historical precedents with which they are associated.

THE DIVIDED NATURE OF THE RENAISSANCE

In order to draw on the themes suggested by the two fictional artworks, I shall quote at length their descriptions from du Maurier’s text. She describes the ‘Raising of Lazarus’ thus:

out of a gaping tomb came the figure of the dead man, still fearfully wrapped in his shroud – all save his face, from which the bindings had somehow fallen away, revealing staring, suddenly awakened eyes, that looked upon his Lord with terror. The Christ, in profile, summoned him with beckoning finger. Before the tomb, in supplication and distress, her arms bowed, her flowing garments spread, lay a woman, supposedly the Mary of Bethany who, often confused with Mary Magdalena, so adored her Master. But to my childish mind she resembled Marta. Marta, the nurse who fed and dressed me every day, who rode me upon her knee, who rocked me in her arms and called me Beo. (FFp.11)

Like Lazarus, this painting is brought vividly and horrifyingly to life for Armino (Beo) in the childhood role-play games invented by Aldo. Aldo dresses Armino as Lazarus, and takes the part of Christ beckoning him out of the linen closet, which serves for Lazarus’ tomb-like cave. For Armino:

the horror was that I did not know whether I should meet with the Christ or with the Devil, for according to Aldo’s ingenious theory the two were one, and also, in some manner which he never explained, interchangeable. (FFp.12)

¹⁰ See the Du Maurier archives in Exeter University Library – reference EUL MS 207/6/18 – du Maurier’s research notes on *The Flight of the Falcon*. This box contains various postcards, notes, guidebooks relating to the Ducal Palace and the University of Urbino. This collection contains substantial reference material on Renaissance art.

This creation of startling paradoxes is repeated in the second picture, the ‘Temptation of Christ’, which:

showed Christ standing on the Temple pinnacle. The artist had composed the Temple to resemble one of the twin towers of the ducal palace, the most notable feature of the whole façade that reared itself in beauty above the city of Ruffano. Furthermore, the face of the Christ, gazing out from the portrait to the hills beyond, had been drawn by the daring artist in the likeness of Claudio, the mad duke, named the Falcon, who in a frenzy had thrown himself from the tower, believing, so the story ran, that he was the Son of God. (FFp.13)

Du Maurier adds to this palimpsestic glimpse of an unorthodoxy lurking beneath the surface of Renaissance Christian iconography when she mentions later in the text that:

The tempter, Satan, was the same Christ in profile, suggesting, not a lack of models, but a rash attempt at truth. The portrait might have lost its power to terrify, but not to cause unease. I wondered that it had survived five centuries, to confound the vandals and to mock the Church. Today the tourist, with his eye upon his watch, the message missed, would pass it by unquestioning. (FFp.201)

It is interesting to consider the nature of the “ingenious theory” (FFp.12), which du Maurier is drawing on in this novel, whereby she combines Christ with the Devil and hence the principle of good with the principle of evil. This theory has obvious antecedents in Eastern philosophies; for example, Chinese philosophy holds that the universe is run by a single principle – the Tao – which is composed of the complementary principles yin and yang. However, I am restricting the search for an explanation of du Maurier’s ‘ingenious’ non-moralistic theory (FFp.12) to within a range of theories available in the Western cultural locus, and more specifically to those theorists and ideas in which she herself had a demonstrable interest. In the 1950s, du Maurier had become increasingly fascinated by the work of Carl Jung, who had criticised Western culture for its denial of “the opposites in human nature,”¹¹ referring not only to good and evil, but also to lightness and darkness, and masculinity and femininity.¹² In the decade preceding the writing of *The Flight of the Falcon*, Jung had drawn attention to the Nag Hammadi library of Gnostic writings that had been discovered in 1945. One of his reasons for being interested in these works was that:

[i]n contrast to the dismissive polarising of good and evil in the developing Christian Church, the Gnostics proclaimed that God includes the opposites, both darkness and light – that God is accountable for *all* of creation.¹³

Gnostic myth refers to Aeons, these being intermediate beings who reside between mankind and the spiritual realm, and in this sense Gnostic myth is a variant of the daimonic. In his work *Aion*, Jung

¹¹ See John Conger, *Jung and Reich: The Body as Shadow* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1988), p. 83.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

discusses the ‘Christian aeon’ using Christian, Gnostic and alchemical symbols to pursue the dilemma of Christ and the Antichrist.¹⁴ He writes of the equivocal nature of the figure of Christ, noting:

the remarkable fact that in the hermeneutic writings of the Church Fathers, which go right back to the days of primitive Christianity, Christ has a number of symbols or “allegories” in common with the devil. [...] It is also worth noting that Lucifer, the Morning Star, means Christ as well as the devil.¹⁵

Indeed, since there is very little emphasis on the devil in the Old Testament and much written about him in the New Testament, it is possible to say, along with Jung, that “[o]nly with Christ did the devil enter the world”.¹⁶ This may account for the propensity of those in early Jewish Christian circles to regard Satan as “Christ’s elder brother”.¹⁷ I specifically mention this as *The Flight of the Falcon* concerns two parallel sets of brothers - the twentieth century Aldo and Armino Donati and the sixteenth century Dukes Claudio and Carlo. In both cases, the elder brother exerts a powerful hold on the individual and collective imagination, and is eventually succeeded in political office by the younger brother. Considering du Maurier’s interest in Carl Jung and his preoccupations at the time, it is therefore possible to put a Gnostic interpretation on the two paintings and their intended paradoxes.

Scratching away at the surface of du Maurier’s intentionally palimpsestic fiction and its fictional artwork thus reveals the underlying narrative which she feels a casual tourist-cum-reader might miss. In my reading of du Maurier’s work, monotheistic, orthodox, exoteric Western religions are palimpsestuously implicated with more heterodoxical, esoteric concerns. According to Joscelyn Godwin, in *The Pagan Dream of the Renaissance*, a similar religious tension can be found in the Renaissance period itself.¹⁸ Although he acknowledges that it would have been tantamount to suicide, in an era dominated by the Inquisition, to articulate a non-Christian or pagan position, what he does suggest is that:

some people during this period “dreamed” of being pagans. In their waking life they accepted the absurdities acknowledged as the essence and *credenda* of Christianity, all the while nurturing a longing for the world of antiquity and a secret affinity for the divinities of that world.¹⁹

¹⁴ See the Foreword in Carl Jung, *CW9 Part II Aion* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. ix. This work was first published in 1959. Aeon and Aion are the Latin and Greek words for the same idea. The word has a variety of meanings. Aeon as an intermediate emanation of the Deity has already been noted. It can also mean a phase (time period) of the Deity. The title of Jung’s work may refer to both ideas.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁶ See Norman Cohn, ‘Changing Views of the Devil and his Power’, *Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (London: Pimlico, 1993), p. 16. Carl Jung, in Jolande Jacobi (ed.), *Psychological Reflections: A New Anthology of his Writings 1905-1961* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 233.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁸ Joscelyn Godwin, *The Pagan Dream of the Renaissance* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Godwin's work is a study of the "Imagination" or "*mundus imaginalis*".²⁰ In it he argues that the 'pagan dream' of his title seeps into the European imagination through the visual arts, and principally by means of "archetypal images that reside in consciousness, prior to their verbal formulations".²¹ He also maintains that these images derived from Greek culture, and thus the birth of the Italian Renaissance was essentially Hellenic in conception.²² Du Maurier herself was already alert to the influence of the stories of Greek Gods and Goddesses on the entirety of Western tradition; as she remarks in her essay 'Romantic Love':

[t]hese stories, savage, brutal, utterly amoral, are the foundation of our literary culture. They spread from Greece to Rome and so throughout Europe.²³

She goes on to suggest, in the same essay, that even the Christian story is not immune from the Hellenic influence, commenting that "the birth of a heavenly son to a virgin has a curious similarity to the Greek myth preceding it".²⁴ In this way, du Maurier's own writings bring us to an awareness that the Christ who is all Good in a strictly Christian sense can be shown to have his antecedent in an amoral mythology - as Friedrich Nietzsche maintains in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), in the religion of the Hellenic world, "all things, whether good or bad, are deified".²⁵ Thus, we find that du Maurier's fictional Renaissance artwork not only palimpsests Gnostic heresy, but also suggests the polytheistic presence of the Greeks and their daimons as well. Drawing inspiration from du Maurier's own interest, what follows in this chapter will draw its interpretive framework from Greek philosophy and mythology, and also from Renaissance and modern scholars who have either incorporated or criticised these Greek ideas within their own works. Friedrich Nietzsche becomes particularly relevant in this context as he is one of the philosophers mentioned by name in *The Flight of the Falcon* - as du Maurier writes:

'Your German Commandant should have quoted Nietzsche to you,' he said. 'He who no longer finds what is great in God will find it nowhere; he must either deny it or create it.' (FFp.292)²⁶

²⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

²¹ Ibid., p. 2.

²² Ibid., p. 10.

²³ Daphne du Maurier, 'Romantic Love', *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan Books, 1982), p. 92.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 92. As it is not immediately obvious which Greek myth du Maurier is referring to, I will give a possible explanation later in this essay on *The Flight of the Falcon*.

²⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1995), p. 8. Translated by Clifton Fadiman.

²⁶ I am as yet unable to locate the original source of this quotation. Du Maurier may have obtained this quotation directly from the works of Nietzsche, or it is possible that Jung may have cited it in one of his works, as he was particularly interested in the writings of Nietzsche and often referred to them.

The further relevance of Nietzsche here, and to my thesis as a whole, derives from his fascination for, and elevation of, the Renaissance world. For Nietzsche, “‘Progress’ is merely a modern idea, that is to say a false idea” and “[t]he European of today is of far less value than the European of the Renaissance.”²⁷ In the mind of Nietzsche, one of the principle Renaissance virtues was their freedom from “moralic acid”.²⁸ As he goes on to state, “the harvest of the Renaissance” was its “*revaluation of Christian values*.”²⁹

THE DAIMONIC HUMAN

In *The Flight of the Falcon*, du Maurier attempts to fix her daimonic, message-bearing graphic images in the mind of the reader by methods that startle the imagination into contemplating paradoxes. She causes Aldo to perform a similar task on his impressionable younger brother, Armino. According to archetypal psychologists, who combine Jungian theory with the Neoplatonism of the Renaissance scholars, an image that produces a powerful affective response takes on a numinous quality, and correspondingly indicates that a daimonic encounter has occurred. Such images, James Hillman suggests, can at first seem to be:

hallucinations (things seen); *then* one recognizes them as acts of subjective imagining; but then, *third*, comes the awareness that images are independent of subjectivity and even of the imagination itself as a mental activity.”³⁰

Similarly, du Maurier plays on the significance and origin of images, and their subsequent effect on the imagination of the individual throughout her novel. For example, Armino is often unable to tell where his personal imagination ends and the independent, autonomous realm of images – as theorised by Hillman – begins. When Armino first sees his long-lost brother Aldo, whom he had assumed was killed in a plane crash during the war, many years previously, his imagination begins a debate with itself:

he whom I had just seen was indeed a living person, but wrongly identified with a man long dead. This was hallucination. This was what had happened to the disciples when they looked, as they thought, upon their Lord, the risen Christ[.] (FFp.64)

In the Renaissance, the Neoplatonic Michelangelo referred to Armino’s type of imagination, i.e. one that bases itself on the image and gives way to creative fantasy, as the “*immagine del cuor*” or “creative

²⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 128. This set of quotations is from *The Anti-Christ. Twilight of the Idols* was first published in 1889. *The Anti-Christ* was first published in 1895. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 196, 197. For Nietzsche, the great project of the Renaissance was destroyed by Germans, in particular Luther, Leibniz, and Kant.

³⁰ Hillman, *Archetypal Psychology*, op. cit., p. 7.

imagination of the heart”.³¹ In acting as mediators for these encounters with the otherworldly - the daimonic realm of the imagination - Aldo and du Maurier fulfil the role of daimonic humans or, in other words, shamans. To become a shaman requires an act of initiation; the old childish self must die, the adult self must be born, and the secrets of the tribe or the soul must be passed on. The fact that du Maurier’s fictional artwork and her time parallels are drawn from the Renaissance, the archetypal period of rebirth in the Western mind, automatically indicates the importance of the initiatory theme in *The Flight of the Falcon*, as does the death and resurrection motif of the ‘Raising of Lazarus’ – which finds its echo in the joint resurrection of the two brothers in each other’s lives. Indeed, the relevance of the subject matter of both the ‘Raising of Lazarus’ and the ‘Temptation of Christ’ to the novel as a whole would seem to indicate that the paintings are to be read as archetypal images that have an effect on the destiny of the individuals concerned. As Hillman notes, images that bear witness to the daimonic seem to possess “prior knowledge (coded information) and an instinctive direction for a destiny, as if prophetic, prognostic.”³² In the narrative, du Maurier draws attention to this prophetic theme – Armino questions whether the unfolding events proceed by “[c]hance or predestination?” (FFp.165) and surmises that “[t]he scientists could not tell us. Nor could the psychologists, or the priests” (FFp.165). In her biography, Margaret Forster confirms du Maurier’s intent to write a novel that plays on the theme of fate when she writes of *The Flight of the Falcon*’s intended allegory:

The allegorical meaning was to do with the Jungian idea of psychological predestination which had fascinated her for so long. She wanted to identify ‘that link with the past’ in which lost childhoods are part of the continuous pattern until the whole of life is seen as ‘an unending journey’.³³

The initiation of a daimonic human, or shaman, is an awe-ful experience, as Lazarus’ expression of terror would seem to dictate; yet at the same time it is also a moment of spiritual ecstasy. As such, it is a doubled experience. Aldo relates to Armino his own shamanic initiation as a pilot during the war, which occurred when his plane was hit by enemy fire:

I was climbing at the time, and I knew what it was – the explosion and my release in the sky happened almost simultaneously, and the moment of triumph, of ecstasy, was indescribable. It was death and it was power. Creation and destruction all in one. I had lived and I had died. (FFp.130)

It is interesting to note that whereas Aldo’s alter ego Lazarus was reborn from a womb-like cave, Aldo himself is reborn from a plane, symbolising man’s creation of artificial, technological wombs and thus the

³¹ Ibid., p. 7.

³² Ibid., p. 14.

³³ Margaret Forster, *Daphne du Maurier* (London: Arrow Books, 1994), p. 336.

negation of the mother. This way of thinking has its precursor in the work of another influential Italian – F.T. Marinetti – founder of the International Art Movement known as Futurism. His ‘Futurist Manifesto’ of 1909 extols the virtue of technology and speed whilst at the same time provocatively professing scorn for woman and feminism, a philosophy that could be deemed proto-Fascist in intent.³⁴ This is of special relevance to *The Flight of the Falcon* and its setting in the aftermath of the Second World War, which only came to an end as a result of a colossal act of technical, nuclear devastation. Firstly, Aldo himself had been a member of the Fascist Youth and therefore would have imbibed the misogynistic theories at the heart of Fascism, and secondly his shamanic rebirth also occurs in the midst of an act of martial destruction.³⁵ In *Gyn/Ecology*, Mary Daly discusses the theme of technocracy in general and Futurism in particular, highlighting the “necrophilic tendencies of technocracy” at whose core is “hate against women”.³⁶ The negation of the woman and the organic womb is a theme I will return to later.

Aldo is the man who ascended to the sky and fell to earth, thus making metaphorically the sacred trajectory required of the shaman – the heavenly ascent to commune with the gods and the descent to the underworld to commune with subterranean spirits.³⁷ This journey has already been prophesied in the picture of the ‘Temptation of Christ’; Christ may not have descended from the sky in response to the Devil’s promptings, but the Renaissance Claudio and the twentieth century Aldo certainly made this ambiguous leap of faith. Aldo and Armino had already endlessly discussed the nature of this flight and its outcome during their childhood games – Aldo all the time maintaining that Claudio “soared over the rooftops and the city that was his, and the people stared up at him in wonder” (FFp.14), and Armino persistently countering “He was not a bird, he was not a falcon. He was a man, and fell. He fell and died” (FFp.14). The first time that Aldo descended from the sky was an initiatory encounter, the second time resulted in his death, thus fulfilling both halves of the brothers’ argument over the meaning of the painting and the events to which it refers.

The shamanic calling confers a responsibility to pass on the secrets of death and rebirth to the next group of initiates, thus leading to the setting up of ‘secret societies’. This was certainly the case in ancient Greece where those eligible were initiated into the Mysteries of Eleusis, as Patrick Harpur relates:

³⁴ See F.T. Marinetti, ‘The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism’, <<http://www.unknown.nu/futurism/manifesto.html>> [accessed 16 January 2004]

³⁵ For an in-depth study of fascist man and his concern with women, war and violence, see Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies: Vol. I Women, Floods, Bodies, History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987) and Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies: Vol. II Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

³⁶ Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology* (London: The Women’s Press, 1991). This was first published in 1979. See pp. 61, 62.

³⁷ See Patrick Harpur, *Daimonic Reality*, op. cit., p. 239.

The wisdom of Socrates and the philosophy of his pupil, Plato, cannot rightly be understood without taking into account their initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries. Since it was forbidden to speak of these, we know little about them; but, significantly, they were thought to revolve around a re-enactment of the Demeter-Kore-Hades myth – the classic myth, in other words, of death and rebirth.³⁸

Like Peter Pan, Aldo has gathered around him a Wendy-less, that is to say motherless, “secret society” (FFp.74) of ‘Lost Boys’ to replace the Beo (Armino) that he thought he had lost as a result of the roving exile induced by war. Aldo confesses that in each one of them he saw Beo; “a child abandoned on some bloody hill, torn by bullets or a bomb” (FFp.217). Aldo’s precursor, Claudio, had also “surrounded himself by a small band of dissolute disciples” (FFp.77), echoing the formation in the Renaissance of the Platonic Academy in Florence by Marsilio Ficino – Neoplatonist and “Renaissance Patron of Archetypal Psychology”.³⁹ Neoplatonism was the Renaissance’s ‘metapsychology’ and was based mainly on Ficino’s translations of Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, and other Neoplatonist writers in Greek. This underground movement believed that their texts were the revelations of the God or sage, Hermes. Ultimately, Neoplatonism “dangerously relativized the absolute superiority of Christian revelation”, so that it became merely “one perspective among many”.⁴⁰

In light of the above, it could be said that the Svengali-like characters in *The Flight of the Falcon* (Aldo and his Renaissance precursor Claudio) take their archetypal background from the Neoplatonists’ favoured daimonic manifestation – Hermes – “the patron of daimonic reality itself”.⁴¹ According to Patrick Harpur, Hermes is a ‘trickster deity’ who “specializes in teasing us beyond endurance, leading us beyond all rational limits”.⁴² This description should be compared with the many references to Aldo in du Maurier’s narrative. Aldo evidently possesses “powers to distort imagination to breaking point” (FFp.185) and makes frequent use of this ability. Aldo’s childhood baiting of Armino has already been noted. In adulthood, very little has altered - following Aldo’s verbal rousing of the Commerce and Economics students against the Arts students, Armino reflects:

My brother had not changed in two-and-twenty years. His technique was the same now as then. The only difference was that, where he had once played upon the imagination of a sibling and devoted ally, he was now playing upon the raw and feverish emotions of fifteen hundred students. (FFp.163)

³⁸ Ibid., p. 241.

³⁹ James Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p200. The information on Marsilio Ficino and Neoplatonism - which follows - is taken from this work, pp. 200-202.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 202.

⁴¹ Harpur, *Daimonic Reality*, op. cit., p. 251. Svengali is the main character of George du Maurier’s novel *Trilby*. Svengali has the power to exert a daimonic hold over people.

⁴² Ibid., p. 251.

His previous address, in his capacity as Director of the Arts Council, had excited the passion of the Arts students against all other faculties, leading to a debate on his political affiliations - is he preaching “fascism all over again”, is he a “Communist” or, more tellingly, is he just a “magnificent hoaxer” (FFp.99) ? In his duplicitous dealings with the separate faculties of students at the university of Ruffano, Aldo is using exactly the same tactics as Hermes, the “God of equivocation”, who works just as well “through the messages of lies as through truths”.⁴³ This ambiguous way of dealing with the world would also account for his equivocal theory on Christ and the Devil; indeed for Armino, Aldo “was my god, he was my devil too” (FFp.276). Paradoxically, the aim of Hermes’ trickster-ish deceit is to expose the flaws in society and thus arrive by devious means at the truth. Here we have then, the method behind Aldo’s so called “madness” (FFp.215), as he explains to Armino in terms which Jesus himself had already used:⁴⁴

I’m here to bring trouble and discord, to set one man against the other, to bring all the violence and hypocrisy and envy and lust out into the open, on to the surface, like the scum on Domenico’s pool. Only then, when it bubbles and seethes and stinks, can we clear it away. (FFp.215)

Aldo, like Hermes, is the unmasker of society’s masquerades; he is the one who wishes to see, following the example of the Renaissance Claudio, “the haughty violated... the slanderer silenced, the serpent die in its own venom” (FFp.260). And yet, ironically it was Aldo himself who was caught out by his own methods. When he eventually found out the truth about his origins - that he was actually the son of Marta the nurse and not the Donatis’ first-born child after all – it was:

Aldo who had lost face, not to the friends who did not know, but in his own eyes. The hoaxer had been hoaxed. He who had wanted to unmask hypocrisy had been himself unmasked. (FFp.269)

Having been unmasked, Aldo’s final act is to leap from the tower, subsequently removing the technical apparatus which would have helped him glide to earth, and thus falling to his death in front of the huge crowd gathered for the festival. However, there is a hint in the text that this act, corresponding to Jesus’ own act of martyrdom, may be followed by yet another resurrection/rebirth, since the epitaph penned for Aldo by Gaspare Butali, the Rector of the University of Ruffano, is published in “The Weekly Courier” (FFp.303) during “Easter Week” (FFp.304). As Richard Kelly remarks in *Daphne du Maurier*, the timing of this article suggests “the rebirth of Aldo’s powerful spirit among his followers”.⁴⁵ Butali’s epitaph is written to “salute the courage of a man who dared” (FFp.304) - this echoes du Maurier’s praise of daring published in *What I Believe*:

⁴³ Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, op. cit., p. 160.

⁴⁴ Compare this with “Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.” Luke 12. 51.

⁴⁵ Richard Kelly, *Daphne du Maurier* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1987), p. 113.

The historical Jesus nailed to his cross, the mythical Prometheus chained to his rock, both dared to refashion men on earth by breathing fire upon them, to turn them from figures of clay and matter into living gods. Their failure was their glory. For only by daring can man evolve, shake himself free, triumph over the hereditary shackles that bind him, as the animals are bound, to his own species.⁴⁶

Read in this way, Aldo's removal of his flying apparatus – his own shaking free of life's shackles - amounts to a metaphorical act of defiance against all restraints placed on man, whether these be imposed from within or without. Aldo thus accomplishes du Maurier's own life dream of becoming a "disembodied spirit" (FFp.35) – a shamanic, daimonic presence able to travel "at will across Time and Space" – a feat achieved by "discarding the body's aids that have served in ages past".⁴⁷ Du Maurier's attitude to Aldo's demise in particular, and to death in general, is self-avowedly caught in the lines of Humbert Wolfe's *The Uncelestial City*:

[...] to plunge upwards is the way of the spark,
and that, burning up and out, even as we die
we challenge and dominate the shameless dark
with our gold death – and that is my reply.⁴⁸

Du Maurier, then, adheres to the Greek or Aryan stance propounded by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*, which salutes the "bold individual" and regards "active sin as the essential Promethean virtue".⁴⁹ This should be seen in direct contrast with the fall of man as prescribed by Semitic myth, which Nietzsche describes as caused by "deception, weakness in the face of temptation".⁵⁰ If the heart of the Prometheus myth exposes the "necessity for crime imposed on the titanically striving individual," then du Maurier believes that it is better to fall to one's death through the active strength encapsulated in the figures of Greek myth rather than exhibit the passive weakness highlighted by the Genesis story.⁵¹ For du Maurier, Aldo thus represents all the daring flyers of Greek myth from "Icarus" (FFp.304) – who "flew too near the sun" (FFp.304), to Phaeton – who failed to control "the powerful horses of the chariot of the sun".⁵² Icarus is explicitly mentioned in the text of *The Flight of the Falcon*, whereas the myth of Phaeton is implicit in the horse and chariot scene, which Aldo and Armino enact for the Arts Festival. It should be

⁴⁶ Daphne du Maurier, 'Daphne du Maurier', in George Unwin (ed.), *What I Believe* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1966), p. 95. This article was republished in - Daphne du Maurier, 'This I Believe', *The Rebecca Notebook: Aand Other Memories*, op. cit.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 95.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 96.

⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, op. cit., pp. 31, 32.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 32.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 33.

⁵² Luigi Zoja, *Growth and Guilt; Psychology and the Limits of Development* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 133.

noted however, that in *The Flight of the Falcon*, Aldo does actually manage to control the horses pulling the chariot, whereas Phaeton is eventually struck down by a thunderbolt from Zeus.⁵³

CAVE-DWELLERS AND MOTHER-KILLERS

John's Gospel in *The New Testament* notes that Lazarus' tomb "was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance".⁵⁴ The lifeless, senseless body of Lazarus in the cave symbolises mankind's general inertness to the spiritual realm or otherworld. Plato uses a similar cave analogy in the middle of his extended political treatise *The Republic*, to illustrate just how dim mankind's perceptions are:

Take the following parable of education and ignorance as the condition of our nature. Imagine mankind as dwelling in an underground cave [...]; in this they have been from childhood, with necks and legs fettered, so they have to stay where they are.⁵⁵

What mankind is capable of perceiving in this state are merely shadow projections on a wall, and these are just the "shadows of handmade things," constructed in the likeness of real objects, which in themselves are just imperfect imitations of the perfect object in the realm of the Forms.⁵⁶ Plato's Forms are, in a sense, the archetypes of all that exists. Mankind is at several removes from the realm of the Forms – Plato's real world – and none of mankind's five bodily senses can actually help him to perceive it. Yet mankind is born with innate knowledge of the Forms, but must be helped by education to recollect it. Since "philosophers alone are able to lay hold of the ever same and unchangeable," these are the best equipped to educate the rest of mankind and therefore to lead Plato's ideal city.⁵⁷ In *The Flight of the Falcon*, the role of 'philosopher-king' is assigned to Aldo. He has already made the necessary ascent to the "upper world" which, according to Plato, leads to "the rising of the soul into the mind."⁵⁸ He must therefore return to the cave of shadow images to help educate the Ruffano cave-dwellers, so that they will

⁵³ Ibid., p. 133.

⁵⁴ John 11. 38.

Some of the inspiration for this section comes from Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik, 'Murdering (M)others', *Daphne du Maurier: Writing, Identity and the Gothic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998), pp. 159-173. It should be noted however, that their interest is in understanding the 'mother' element of *The Flight of the Falcon* from the point of view of the Gothic genre. My interest lies in determining how the 'mother' element relates to certain archetypal themes pertaining to Plato, the Greek pantheon and Christianity. I have drawn on the following works which they cite; Luce Irigaray, *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985); Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies: Vol. I Women, Floods, Bodies, History, and Male Fantasies: Vol. II Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, op. cit.

⁵⁵ Plato, *The Republic*, in Eric Warmington and Philip Rouse (eds.), *Great Dialogues of Plato* (New York: New American Library, 1956), p. 312.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 313.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 281.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 315.

“know what the images are and what they are images of”.⁵⁹ The Room of the Cherubs in the Ducal Palace becomes Aldo’s makeshift cave, where he will deliver his address concerning the Arts Festival. Armino notes that the room itself was:

illuminated by flares and torches, which, throwing monstrous shadows upon the fluted ceiling and saffron walls, gave to the whole an eerie, sombre flavour, mediaeval and at the same time strange, exciting. (FFp.93)

As befits a philosopher-king, Aldo – the master of ceremonies and images – makes a dramatic entrance. For Armino, as for the others gathered to hear Aldo speak, it is as if “the tomb had opened. The heavens roared. Christ had come again in all his majesty” (FFp.94).

However, it should be noted that Aldo addresses an exclusive society, as du Maurier writes of the assembled multitude:

All seemed to be young, and nearly all were male. The sprinkling of young women present would appear to be of the company on sufferance. (FFp.93).

As in the picture of the ‘Raising of Lazarus’, women cannot hold their heads up high in this company – those who are to be resurrected are male like Lazarus, and the token woman in the scene must lie with her head in the dust, prostrate at the feet of man and spiritual mediator alike. The cave, then, is the realm of men. Similarly, Luce Irigaray explains in ‘Plato’s Hystera’ – published in *Speculum of the Other Woman* - that Plato’s parable of the cave:

tells us that men – *hoi anthrōpoi*, sex unspecified – live *underground*, in a *dwelling formed* like a *cave*. Ground, dwelling, cave, and even, in a different way, form – all these terms can be read more or less as equivalents of the *hystera*.⁶⁰

Irigaray invites us to read the parable as “metaphor of the inner space, of the den, the womb or *hystera*, sometimes of the earth, but at the same time she recognises that this metaphor is impossible.”⁶¹ The men in Plato’s cave, can “only look forward” - they thus sit with their “backs turned on origin,” symbolically rejecting the maternal womb.⁶² Any education received in the cave, as Irigaray argues, can only serve to cut off the listeners “from any remaining empirical relation with the womb”, and thus she maintains “[t]he offspring of Truth become bastards,” or even “[o]rphans of a simple, pure – and Ideal – origin”.⁶³ Irigaray’s theories of patriarchal illegitimacy and motherless-ness find particular resonance within du Maurier’s *The Flight of the Falcon*: Aldo’s disciples are all necessarily orphaned boys, and

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 318.

⁶⁰ Luce Irigaray, ‘Plato’s Hystera’, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 243.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 243.

⁶² Plato, *The Republic*, op. cit., p. 312. Irigaray, ‘Plato’s Hystera’, op. cit., p. 245.

⁶³ Irigaray, *ibid.*, p. 293.

also, in the course of the narrative, both Aldo and Armino discover that the elder Donati is only an illegitimate foundling, mothered by Marta:

Aldo was Marta's son. Then it all swung into focus. The pieces fitted. The foundling boy, with his mother to care for him as nurse, came to live under my parent's roof. The foundling took the place of the boy they had lost. The mother stayed, devoting herself to Aldo, then to me. (FFp.299)

Aldo, the man who aspires to reveal the Truth, is merely the son of a deception. The real truth behind his origins – his mother Marta - is symbolically despised, rejected and killed at the start of the novel and yet continues to exert a powerful non-presence over the entire narrative. In fact Marta is killed, literally and metaphorically, many times over by the sons of patriarchy: she is killed by the unknown representative of mankind – an opportunist thief in Rome; she is killed by Armino - who gave her the ten thousand lire note which sparked off the murderous theft; and she is killed by Aldo – who subsequently confesses to the exact nature of his offence against motherhood:

‘Yes, I killed her,’ he said, ‘but not with a knife – the knife was merciful. I killed her by despising her, by being too proud to accept the fact I was her son. Wouldn't you say that counts as murder?’ (FFp.299)

It could be said, of course, that Jesus himself rejected his own natural mother and the sons of her womb - his own blood brothers - in favour of his chosen male disciples. Matthew's gospel records that Jesus asked, rhetorically, “[w]ho is my mother, and who are my brothers?”⁶⁴ Pointing to his disciples, Jesus answered himself, saying, “[h]ere are my mother and my brothers.”⁶⁵ It may be stretching a point to read these statements in a way which shows Jesus placing the woman and mother outside of his fellowship and hence that of the Church, and yet it seems that this is precisely the point du Maurier makes early in *The Flight of the Falcon* when we first see Marta. Marta is described as “a poor old woman, very ill, humped in the doorway of a church” (FFp.7), seeking “sanctuary” (FFp.7) in Jesus and the Church like the female figure in the picture of the ‘Raising of Lazarus’. Immediately, we see that the woman is *outside* the church – as an object of “refuse” (FFp.8), she is symbolically refused entry to yet another of patriarchy's artificial wombs. The archetypal mother-despising deity is also to be found among the pantheon of Greek Gods, as Mary Daly writes in *Gyn/Ecology*, “Apollo was the personification of anti-matriarchy” and the “opponent of Earth deities”.⁶⁶ Daly points out many of the features of Apollo that lend archetypal relevance to the outworking of du Maurier's novel: he is a “death-dealer” and a “woman-hater”, his real

⁶⁴ Matthew 12. 48.

⁶⁵ Matthew 12. 49.

⁶⁶ Daly, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

enemy was Delphyne, “a name connected with an old word for womb”, making his temple at Delphi an “artificial womb”, he legitimates “male power bonding” and his offspring are products of technology.⁶⁷ Luce Irigaray, in *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*, exposes yet another of Apollo’s attributes that would seem to directly correspond to the way that the figure of Aldo, and his alter ego Duke Claudio, have been expressed:

He comes down from the sky in the shape of a bird of prey. Sign, accessory, of the god’s coming. He lands – he is there. Not incarnate, but expressed in the figure of a raptor.⁶⁸

Compare this with du Maurier’s description of Claudio, contained within the German scholar’s *The History of the Dukes of Ruffano*; as she writes, “[n]o one could walk by night for fear of the Falcon’s sudden descent into the city, when, aided by his followers, he would seize and ravage....” (FFp.77). Apollo becomes an important mediator between heaven and earth, one whose celestial interventions, in the words of Irigaray, are designed to draw man “out of his sleep or coma”.⁶⁹ Thus Christ parallels Apollo in du Maurier’s picture of the ‘Raising of Lazarus’. Apollo may also be the Greek God to whom du Maurier refers, in the quotation provided earlier, when she states that “the birth of a heavenly son to a virgin has a curious similarity to the Greek myth preceding it”.⁷⁰ Elsewhere, in a letter to Oriel Malet, she makes more explicit the connection of Christ with Apollo, when she berates the Biblical Paul for “making Jesus more Apollo-ish to appeal to his Greek audiences”.⁷¹ In the same letter she also criticises Jesus for his “contradictory character”, remarking that “one moment Jesus is being so noble, and saying everyone must love each other, and then in the next He calls everyone vipers”.⁷² Apollo’s mother-despising, rapacious nature thus informs the dark side of the palimpsestuous characters of Jesus, Aldo and Claudio in *The Flight of the Falcon*.

The despised mother – Marta – has many points of reference for du Maurier. During her research for *The Flight of the Falcon*, she was in frequent correspondence with Joan Saunders of the Writers and Speakers Research centre, who followed up several avenues of interest for her. It was Joan who recommended the assistance of her Italian-educated daughter-in-law, Marta, who amusingly “was half

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 62-63.

⁶⁸ Luce Irigaray, *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 146.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 146.

⁷⁰ Du Maurier, ‘Romantic Love’, op. cit., p. 92.

⁷¹ Du Maurier, ‘Letter to Oriel Malet dated Palm Sunday, 7 April, 1968’, in *Daphne du Maurier: Letters from Menabilly - Portrait of a Friendship* (London: Orion Books, 1994), p. 216.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 217, 216.

proud, and half piqued at being killed off so soon” in du Maurier’s narrative.⁷³ However, I suspect that her interest in using this name also stems from the resonance it finds in her grandfather George du Maurier’s novels; for example, Svengali’s faithful aunt in *Trilby* is also called Marta, and in *The Martian*, the Martian of the title is named Martia - or Marty for short – and is supposed to represent George du Maurier’s favourite daughter May.⁷⁴ It may be obvious to point out that Marta is Martia with the ‘I’ missing, but this does have some relevance to their contrasting circumstances - although both Marta and Martia exert a daimonic, otherworldly influence on the key male characters in their individual narratives, Martia manages to retain her subjectivity and is worshipped, whereas Marta loses her ‘I’ and is thus turned into an object of scorn. Marta – who sounds so like the Latin mater - eventually becomes a homonymic martyr. Horner and Zlosnik also allude to this polyvalence of Marta’s name – “Marta/Martha/mater/matter/martyr” – noting how Marta represents the domesticated feminine like her biblical namesake Martha⁷⁵. Incidentally, the Marta who is Svengali’s aunt in George du Maurier’s *Trilby*, also fulfils this domestic function. This should be contrasted with patriarchy’s other casting of the feminine, woman as whore – this is the view that Armino has of his own mother, as is evidenced when he recalls his “beautiful slut of a mother feeding her conqueror with grapes” (FFp.29).⁷⁶ This mother is also killed by the sons of patriarchy; as Armino explains, when she was dying of cancer, “she had scribbled me a line from hospital, I had not answered” (FFp.299). Armino kills his actual mother with scornful neglect. Horner and Zlosnik go on to explain the relevance of matter to Marta, referring to Irigaray’s concern that Western culture:

relegates the maternal feminine to the status of inchoate matter out of which the male must, through a painful and complex process, rise; in Plato’s terms this is his journey out of the cave and into the light.⁷⁷

Marta thus represents matter, soil, earth etc for Aldo, which in his career as a pilot he has constantly tried to escape through ‘flight’ – escape being the other meaning of flight intended by du Maurier’s novel. To ascend is thus to flee – but as Irigaray argues, the ascent always contains “the risk of falling back down.”⁷⁸ At the end of the novel, Aldo passes behind the hymen-like “concealing tapestry” (FFp.41), in the cave-like, womb-like “Room of the Cherubs” (FFp.40), ascends the hidden, vagina-like stairway to

⁷³ See letter from Joan Saunders dated May 3, 1964. Du Maurier archives in Exeter University Library – reference EUL MS 207/6/18.

⁷⁴ See George du Maurier, *Trilby*, in *Novels of George du Maurier* (London: The Pilot Press, 1947), p. 415.

⁷⁵ Horner and Zlosnik, op. cit., pp. 171, 166.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 166.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 165.

⁷⁸ Irigaray, ‘Plato’s Hystera’, op. cit., p. 13.

the second tower and leaps into the air. Normally this would be a leap towards Platonic Ideas, but instead it becomes a final recognition of maternal birth – this particular Apollo makes his peace with the earth deities by falling back into their realm.⁷⁹ As Armino relates, instead of relying on his feathered apparatus, Aldo

threw himself clear, spreading his arms like the wings he had discarded, then, bringing them to his side, he plummeted to earth (FFp.302)

Irigaray would call this the “fall back down to another sex”.⁸⁰

Is this final journey to earth an implicit criticism of patriarchal rule, which Aldo, in his trickster-ish way had been determined to make all along? In his address to the Commerce and Economic students, he warned of the smear campaign being conducted against them and the plot to get the faculty closed down saying, “Then, so they think, patrician rule will be resumed, and Ruffano fall asleep once more” (FFp.162). Here, Aldo thus equates patrician rule with the spiritual death-sleep of Lazarus. So is du Maurier making a case for a return to matriarchy and the worship of the earth deities instead? In a letter to Oriol Malet, she suggests that women can be deemed to be one of three types - “the ruling type, the ministering type and the prostitute,” and not just the two polarities of angel and slut as prescribed by men.⁸¹ Du Maurier presumes that the “rule of the Mother” had once been an historical reality, existing in “Greece and Asia about 10,000 BC”, which is how the Son became important, and also how “the conception of Dionysus came about, the singing god with hordes of trailing, excited women following him”.⁸² However, if woman took to ruling again, she ponders in the same letter, would society be any better? - as she writes:

Professor Daphstein peers into her crystal, sees the powerful ruling Mothers, sees the pansy young men leaping like little goats, spoilt and god-like, sees the wretched husbands toiling dingily to bring in food, and of course none of this is really any advance on the rule of the Father.⁸³

In du Maurier’s opinion, society, like personal psychology, should therefore strive for the “correct balance”, which is what, in effect, the interaction of the Greek Gods, in their various personifications, comes close to achieving.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Horner and Zlosnik make a similar point in *Daphne du Maurier*, op. cit., p. 165. “his deliberate plunge to earth can be viewed as a final acknowledgement of the maternal”.

⁸⁰ Irigaray, ‘Plato’s Hystera’, op. cit., p. 322.

⁸¹ Du Maurier, ‘Letter to Oriol Malet dated 14 June 1955’, *Letters from Menabilly*, op. cit., p. 50.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 49, 50.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 50.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

PLATO'S *PHAEDRUS*

The Flight of the Falcon is in itself a novel concerned with achieving balance both in the city and the psyche, which Plato's *The Republic* regards as intimately linked. For Plato, as for the archetypal psychologists, "city is psyche" and "[t]he psyche is a city."⁸⁵ Plato argues in *The Republic* that "both city and each soul of man have their classes, the same in each and the same number" – where classes relate to the necessary attributes which hold the city and psyche together.⁸⁶ Each of the classes of city and soul must perform their allotted functions correctly, otherwise, Plato suggests, "their error will be injustice and riot and cowardice and ignorance".⁸⁷ Both Aldo and his precursor Claudio deemed themselves fitted to maintain justice and balance within the city of Ruffano, which is something that Armino comes to realise following on from the two bizarre events involving Signorina Rizzio and Professor Elia:

My brother had been behind both incidents. I saw that in his view, and in that of these boys, justice had been done. The scales were balanced, according to the strange laws of Duke Claudio the Falcon over five hundred years ago.
(FFp.212)

But if Aldo had been predestined to maintain balance in the city, both Donati brothers are predestined to maintain, albeit metaphorically, the balance in the psyche, or soul. In *Phaedrus*, Plato likens the soul to "an organic whole made up of a charioteer and his team of horses", where the charioteer represents "our inner ruler" and the horses represent our two opposed inner impulses, the one "noble and good" and the other an "ally of excess and affectation".⁸⁸ It is thus the job of the charioteer to rein in the horses to prevent the crippling of the soul. Du Maurier hints at Armino's destiny in this respect early on in the novel, showing how his "inner demon" (FFp.6) causes him to wonder "[w]hat urge drove me, like a stupefied charioteer, on my eternal useless course?" (FFp.6). Elsewhere, he says to himself, "[a] courier, a charioteer, has no time. No time" (FFp.10). The Sunshine Tours bus, on which he works, is also likened to a chariot – as du Maurier writes, the "chariot swept left" (FFp.15). Armino's "inner demon" eventually plagues him with so much restless guilt about his treatment of Marta in Rome that he leaves his job as a tourist courier and returns to the city of his birth. It is here that Aldo finally invites him to play Claudio in the reconstruction of the chariot-driving scene, which is to be enacted in front of the multitude of students gathered for the Arts Festival. Armino, dressed as Claudio, and "predestined to what must be" (FFp.289), regards himself in the mirror before the start, and sees that he now fulfils the two pictures of his

⁸⁵ James Hillman and Michael Ventura, *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World's Getting Worse* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp. 82, 84.

⁸⁶ Plato, *The Republic*, op. cit., p. 241.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 244.

⁸⁸ Plato, *Phaedrus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 28, 38. Translated by Robin Waterfield.

childhood, since the eyes that stare back at him are “the eyes of Claudio in the ducal palace picture” (FFp.290) and “the eyes of Lazarus in the church of San Cipriano” (FFp.290). Armino-as-Claudio soon learns that the driving of the chariot, and hence the care of the soul, is a precarious business; “[o]ne check, one startled shy from any of the twelve leading horses, and he would bring his fellows down” (FFp.293). Yet the wayward horses are kept under control until they come to rest outside the Ducal Palace – similarly, instead of the expected riot of the student factions, the symbolic chariot drive produces unity and balance in the individual psyches of the students. Rather than fight each other, as Aldo had originally incited them to do, the students all unite and follow the chariot, shouting “Donati ... Donati ... viva Donati” (FFp.293). Here we have, finally, the Dionysian element of du Maurier’s novel. For if Apollo represents, according to Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the “*principium individuationis*,” or the principle of individuation – which refers to the singularity of the individual – then Dionysus represents the very collapse of this principle.⁸⁹ Donati-Dionysus causes the “subjective to vanish into complete self-forgetfulness,” in that all the individual students of the university forget the carefully engineered enmity and, as if enchanted, become a re-membered, harmonious unity behind the “chariot of Dionysus.”⁹⁰ This is Nietzsche’s formulation of the Dionysian, for:

Now all the stubborn, hostile barriers, which necessity, caprice or “shameless fashion” have erected between man and man, are broken down. Now with the gospel of universal harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled, blended with his neighbour, but as one with him [...]⁹¹

ENDWORD

Du Maurier’s novel thus highlights elements of the Apollonian and the Dionysian in constant interplay, with the Hermetic element holding the reins of these two unruly impulses. In *The Flight of the Falcon*, all these elements appear within a single character – that of Aldo – who also stands in for Duke Claudio and the figure of Christ. Du Maurier would appear to reject a strict version of Christianity, which sets up a polarisation of opposites, in favour of a more Hellenic conception whereby seemingly opposed principles are yet held in palimpsestuous, constructive tension. This would apply as much to the collective psyche of society as to the psyche of the individual. Hillman, in *Re-Visioning Psychology* has described

⁸⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, op. cit., p. 3.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 4.

the relations between the three daimonic manifestations – Apollo, Dionysus and Hermes - which seep spectrally into Maurier’s novel, and their importance for psychology thus:

To the Apollonic perspective, psychologizing seems tricky, shadowy, nocturnal, without objective distance, and without concern for either healing or beauty. In the Dionysian perspective, psychologizing seems too individualistic, intellectual, elitist without enough nature, community, and abandon. Hermes holds this bridge, and connects, too, to night, to death, and the hidden hermetic message in all things.⁹²

In a sense, the daimonic Aldo also stands in for du Maurier herself, since he mediates the graphic images to Armino in the same way that she mediates them to the reader. The whole novel can thus be read as metatext with the graphic images standing in for du Maurier’s own literary output and the way it is received by her readership. In comparing her output to multi-layered Renaissance paintings, she seems to be making a case for her writing to be classed as ‘high art’ of the sort that academics would appreciate for its hidden, hermetic messages. She thus hoped to appeal to Apollonic rationality, but feared that her underlying meaning would be missed by a too casual reading. As is well known, many of her novels were wildly successful, thus demonstrating how she united the public behind her in a Dionysian fashion, rather than being admitted to the intellectual canon accessible only to an elite male few. The ecclesiastical undertone of the word canon is particularly pertinent, since in being rejected from the realm in which she sought sanctuary, du Maurier suffered the fate of Marta and became disregarded refuse at the hands of male-led orthodoxy. In recent years however, there has been a growth of interest in du Maurier’s works, thus suggesting that Daphne-as-Hermes may yet find a hermetic balance between the popular masses and the individualist academic.

⁹² Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, op. cit., p. 163.

SECTION 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The novel took its roots in historical documents and has always had an intimate link with history. But the novel's task, unlike that of history, is to stretch our intellectual, spiritual and imaginative horizons to breaking-point. Because palimpsest histories do precisely that, mingling realism with the supernatural and history with spiritual and philosophical re-interpretation, they could be said to float half-way between the sacred books of our various heritages, which survive on the strength of the faiths they have created [...], and the endless exegesis and commentaries these sacred books create, which do not normally survive one another, each supplanting its predecessor according to the Zeitgeist[.]¹
(Christine Brooke-Rose)

Brooke-Rose's use of the phrase 'float half-way' implies that she is making a case for 'palimpsest histories' and 'palimpsest religions' to be viewed as liminal texts, in a similar way that Eco advances the idea of the liminal author. When I began the research for my own work I was intent on reconstructing du Maurier's religious framework, starting from the concept of the 'daimon' which acts as a mediator between the two realms of the spiritual and the physical, and as such is in itself a liminal entity. But I knew when I started my project that such a reconstruction was always, already impossible. When I review my work, I find that what I have created instead is a 'palimpsest history' of a 'palimpsest religion' – and indeed of a 'palimpsest psychology' and a 'palimpsest politics' - or in other words a fictive account of a 'liminal author's' involuted interests. For I have, in a sense, mingled the biographical pseudo-realism of du Maurier and various male characters, both real and imaginary, with a set of supernatural, daimonic concerns. Sometimes the latter are viewed on a theoretical level as an impersonal body of knowledge such as Greek myths and Gnosticism, and sometimes – taking my cue from du Maurier herself – they are taken as autonomous powers that interact directly with the human world in ways that could be said to affect the destiny of the individual(s) concerned. In reviewing du Maurier's output as a whole we find many texts which could perhaps be viewed as 'palimpsest histories' since they are often based heavily on historical research - as in for example *The Glass-Blowers* which concerns the participation of her Masonic Busson du Maurier ancestors in the French Revolution – and incorporate a wealth of ideas culled from her interest in both esoteric and exoteric traditions. *Castle Dor* – the novel which I discuss in my introduction and for which du Maurier supplied the missing ending – actively recognises itself as a palimpsest history in its 'Prologue' and becomes further palimpsested owing to its multi-authored construction. In suggesting that the novel's task is to "stretch our intellectual, spiritual and imaginative horizons to breaking-point",

¹ Christine Brooke-Rose, 'Palimpsest History', in Stefan Collini (ed.), *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 137.

Brooke-Rose also accidentally implies that the novel is in itself a daimon for such are the qualities of the archetypal trickster Hermes. Perhaps it is in the nature of a Hermetic figure such as du Maurier to take up such a tricksterish profession; conversely it may be the qualities of this daimonic career that affect the nature of the person. Sadly, and I might say analogically, writing played du Maurier false as much as it played her true, since she bemoaned the fact that no-one noticed the palimpsestic nature of her novels even though many of them were consumed in large quantities.

The conception of the palimpsest that I have been working on in this thesis is that of a space where diverse texts continually intermingle, particularly but not solely those of Christianity and Paganism. It is also a space where various personalities interact, in collision or collusion, producing fresh configurations. On the palimpsest, suppressed texts are inadvertently enabled and refined, taking on a spectral quality. In the title and structure of my thesis, I am at pains to demonstrate the spectral, palimpsestuous nature of the time period known as the Renaissance and its associated motifs of cultural resurrection and spiritual rebirth. For this reason, I have started with two politically opposed spiritual reformers – Frank Buchman and Victor Gollancz - who both professed an interest in the Renaissance as either an age or an idea, and have assessed the level of their influence on du Maurier’s thinking. I then moved onto a discussion of actual figures from the Renaissance – Anthony and Francis Bacon – and du Maurier’s part in the contemporaneous obsession with their palimpsestuous lives, finding that their impact was not thought solely due to the works that Francis in particular bequeathed to history but to their ongoing aeonic superconsciousness, recognised by such as Nietzsche and the members of The Francis Bacon Society. My last section concerns the outworking of such considerations within two works of du Maurier’s fiction, *The Flight of the Falcon* and *Jamaica Inn*; the former was chosen for its concern with how the Renaissance-as-age shaped men of the twentieth century and the latter was selected to demonstrate how the Renaissance-as-idea (spiritual rebirth and cultural resurrection) manifested itself as a subliminal but unnamed force in connection with the Celtic Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The totality of my thesis demonstrates how du Maurier et al., were spectralised by the ‘Renaissance’,² a deeply fissured period when people openly professed one legitimised spiritual practice but inwardly ‘dreamed’ of a forbidden other. The idea of fissure, division, doubling, thus recurs tropically throughout my thesis, both at the level of society and at the level of the individual. With the exception of

² In this I include not only Gollancz and Buchman, but the fictional characters du Maurier created such as Aldo Donati, and theorists such as Nietzsche (to name but a few). They were not, however, all spectralised by it in the same way.

Frank Buchman, the characters I have written about were all self-consciously fissured, spiritually or otherwise, but (as I hope that I have shown) Buchman's ideas were in themselves fissured, in that his language of spiritual revolution and rebirth masked a political conservatism.

Of particular relevance to my thesis have been the writings of Nietzsche, Jung and Plato. Nietzscheanism, as Richard Noll explains, was *the* fissured philosophy par excellence; its "seductive" doctrines promised "the release of creative powers of genius within the individual", and yet "rather than promote widespread liberation" it exalted instead "the master of the many by the few" thus serving to maintain such "conservative and especially elitist classes in society" as I have discussed in several of my chapters, and have frequently restated in Platonic terms.³ Yet Nietzsche provided a model for convention breaking that influenced the "spiritual landscape of the Western world"; in particular it created the spiritual climate from which, according to Noll, "the international movement centred on the transcendental ideas and the idealized personality of Carl Gustav Jung" could germinate and grow.⁴ In a sense, much of Jung's work is syncretic, a blending of symbol and myth from many cultures, enabling him to envisage psychoanalysis as a way to achieve both personal and cultural renewal and rebirth; Plato followed the Greek Eleusinian mystery cults to achieve similar ends.⁵ Noll cites Jung's *Wandlungen* (1912) as a particular example of Jung's syncretism, which pits Mithraism against Christianity, and allows the following conclusion to be drawn:

Two thousand years of Christianity makes us strangers to ourselves. In the individual, the internalization of bourgeois-Christian civilization is a mask that covers the true Aryan god within, a natural god, a sun god, perhaps even Mithras himself. This is as true as the scientific fact that within the earth is glowing sun-matter that is hidden by thousands of years of sediment as well. In society, too, Christianity is an alien mask that covers our biologically true religion, a natural religion of the sun and sky.⁶

The literal and theoretical palimpsest provides a way of re-stating such 'masked' and 'masking' phenomena, an idea of which du Maurier was aware both with regards to her life and fiction; indeed, du Maurier-as-palimpsest is a conclusion to which all my preceding arguments have been leading.

³ Richard Noll, *The Jung Cult: Origins of a Charismatic Movement* (London: Fontana Press, 1996), pp. 4-5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

My research into du Maurier's religious, psychological and political interests has revealed a wealth of involuted esoteric and exoteric concerns. Although I have chosen, in the main, to travel a less well-charted passage through du Maurier's works, as in *Come Wind, Come Weather*, the letters contained within the archives of Victor Gollancz, and the biographies of the Bacons, I have reinforced the ideas arising by reference to two works of fiction, the enormously popular *Jamaica Inn* and the less well-known *The Flight of the Falcon*. The themes that I have developed can be extended into many more of the works in the du Maurier repertoire.

In this paragraph I will note, briefly, several of the texts which are of interest concerning the themes I have developed. In the remainder of what follows, I will dwell longer on a few specific examples. Du Maurier's interest in Freemasonry can be pursued with respect to *The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë* (1960) and *The Glass Blowers* (1963).⁷ Many of du Maurier's short stories are specifically related to Christianity, for example 'The Way of the Cross' (1971), 'La Sainte-Vierge' (1927-30), 'And Now to God the Father' (1927-30), and 'Angels and Archangels' (1927-30).⁸ Her interest in Greek archetypes can be seen in such works as 'Not after Midnight' (1971) which shows what happens to the followers of Dionysus, 'The Breakthrough' (1966) which refers to such gods as Hermes and is a palimpsest of religious and scientific ideas, and 'Ganymede' (1959) which mentions Zeus, Poseidon, and the spiritual symbolism of horses and chariots.⁹ Du Maurier's short story 'The Pool' (1959) elaborates on how a young girl desires to offer herself to the earth, for which the pool of the title demands a sacrifice.¹⁰ The works I have mentioned here are indicative, and by no means exhaustive, of du Maurier's interest in such matters as I have discussed throughout my thesis.

Jung's work on archetypes emphasises the image of the mother figure; a primordial image which is supposedly embedded deeply into the psyche of us all, and explains the resonance behind the appeal of

⁷ Daphne du Maurier, *The Infernal World of Branwell Brontë* (London: Penguin, 1972). Daphne du Maurier, *The Glass Blowers* (London: Virago, 2004). The book on Branwell contains an extensive list of sources used and a Bibliography. The Du Maurier Family Archives at Exeter University contain du Maurier's research into Freemasonry and the French Revolution.

⁸ Daphne du Maurier, 'The Way of the Cross', in *Not After Midnight* (London: Book Club Associates, 1972). All others are contained in Daphne du Maurier, *Early Stories* (London: Todd, 1955). The preface states that all the stories in this volume were written between 1927 and 1930. The stories were originally printed in periodicals.

⁹ 'Not After Midnight' and 'The Breakthrough' are contained within the volume *Not After Midnight*, *ibid.* Daphne du Maurier, 'Ganymede', in *The Blue Lenses* (London: Penguin, 1980). This list is by no means exhaustive.

¹⁰ Daphne du Maurier, 'The Pool', in *The Blue Lenses*, *ibid.*

“Mother Earth, Mother Nature, and “matter” in general”.¹¹ Jung considers it dangerous for society if mankind “loses touch with the dark, maternal, earthy ground of his being”.¹² Jung elaborates further on the idea of the primordial mother in his essay entitled ‘The Psychological Aspects of the Kore,’ which explains how the legend of Demeter and Kore – mother and maiden daughter – operates on a symbolic and psychological level.¹³ Demeter and Kore, as Jung explains, “extend the feminine consciousness both upwards and downwards” such that “every mother contains her daughter in herself and every daughter her mother”, giving the sensation that a single life is spread out through the generations in an ongoing “life-stream”.¹⁴ As an example of this ‘life-stream’ manifesting itself in works of her fiction, I cite du Maurier’s first novel – *The Loving Spirit* (1931) – which relates the story of how a mother’s spirit communicates after death with the future generations of her family, thus foreshadowing her later sentiment in ‘This I Believe’ that:

In my beginning is my end. The I who writes this essay lives and dies.
Something of myself goes into the children born of my body, and to their
children, and those children’s children. Life, whatever shape or form it takes,
goes on, develops, adapts.¹⁵

The Loving Spirit constructs the nurturing image of the mother archetype. *Hungry Hill* (1943), by contrast, demonstrates the full power of the mother archetype in her negative, vengeful form.¹⁶ John Brodrick fails to respect the chthonic power of the hill in question when he refuses to ask her permission to start his mining enterprise. In return for his disrespect of Mother Nature the ongoing ‘life-stream’ of his family is cursed throughout several generations.

The palimpsestuous nature of du Maurier’s interest in religious matters can be pursued further through a consideration of a novel such as *The Scapegoat* (1957). One of the key motifs in this novel is the involuted Jeanne d’Arc, a cross-dressing, spiritually ambiguous character of the Renaissance. Jeanne d’Arc, supposedly, comes from a long line of legendary huntresses stretching back to the Goddess Diana; indeed Margaret Murray makes the case in her Appendices to *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921) that she was a member of a Dianic cult for which the wearing of male attire was an outward sign of

¹¹ Carl Jung, ‘Mind and Earth’, *Vol 10 The Collected Works of C.G. Jung: Civilization in Transition* (London: Routledge, 1974), p. 35. It should be remembered that the Latin word for mother is mater, hence physical material is the mother of us all.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹³ Carl Jung, ‘The Psychological Aspects of the Kore’, *Vol 9 Part 1 The Collected Works of C.G. Jung: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 1969), pp. 182-203.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹⁵ Daphne du Maurier, *The Loving Spirit* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965). Daphne du Maurier ‘This I Believe’, in *The Rebecca Notebook: And Other Memories* (London: Pan, 1982), p. 108. This article was first published in George Unwin (ed), *What I Believe* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966).

¹⁶ Daphne du Maurier, *Hungry Hill* (London: Penguin, 1969).

faith.¹⁷ Diana, the huntress, forest protector and great mother, has her Greek counterpart in Artemis, whose statue has been placed in the woods surrounding the château of the French Comte Jean. This statue becomes a focus point, or shrine, for English John – one of the scapegoats of the title and who is Jean’s physical double. Du Maurier’s namesake in classical legend – the nymph Daphne – is a fellow hunting companion of Artemis/Diana. So John, Jeanne and Daphne become inseparably linked via the symbolism of legendary female huntresses. Further to this, Murray also suggests that Jeanne d’Arc’s trial was “the first great trial of strength between the old and new religions, and the political conditions gave the victory to the new”.¹⁸ Jeanne d’Arc was thus condemned to death for her pagan connections, but in a subsequent act of assimilation was canonised by the Catholic Church and thus resurrected as a ‘true’ Christian saint. Given the popularity of Jeanne d’Arc, the church probably thought it politic for her to be admired as a conformist rather than adored as a martyred, anti-patriarchal rebel. The ambiguity of Jeanne d’Arc’s religious connections may help to explain du Maurier’s use of this historical character in her novel. Can we see in Jeanne d’Arc the ideal Renaissance woman masquerading as Renaissance man, and can we say that this is how du Maurier viewed herself? I end with some verses from ‘Ars Poetica?’ by Czeslaw Milosz, who summarises poetically the idea that all of us are spectralised in some way; as du Maurier is haunted by others, so she will continue to be the ‘revenant’ who spectralises us.

That’s why poetry is rightly said to be dictated by a daimonion [sic],
Though it’s an exaggeration to maintain that he must be an angel.
It’s hard to guess where that pride of poets comes from,
When so often they’re put to shame by the disclosure of their frailty.

What reasonable man would like to be a city of demons,
Who behave as if they were at home, speak in many tongues,
And who, not satisfied with stealing his lips or hand,
Work at changing his destiny for their convenience?

The purpose of poetry is to remind us
How difficult it is to remain just one person
For our house is open, there are no keys in the doors,
And invisible guests come in and out at will.
(Excerpts from ‘Ars Poetica?’ by Czeslaw Milosz)¹⁹

¹⁷ Margaret Murray, *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 274. This classic work was originally published in 1921 and has been much criticised for its tendency to take witch trial testimony as truth. Interestingly, however, it has become a key handbook for modern witchcraft devotees.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

¹⁹ Czeslaw Milosz, ‘Ars Poetica?’,

<www.vasudevaserver.com/home/sites/poetseers.org/html/nobelprize/mi.../ars_poetic> [accessed 15 June 2004]

APPENDIX 1

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ARTICLES IN *BACONIANA* BY BEAUMONT, C.

Beaumont, C.

- The Bi-literal cipher of FB 130 Jan 1949 p.11-23
- Did FB die in 1626? 139 Apr 1951 p.79-86; and 140 July 1951 p.131-138
- Donnelly's cryptogram cipher Pt. 1 112 July 1944 p.88-97;
Pt. 2 113 Oct 1944 p.128-136; Pt.3 114 Jan 1945 p.8-15
- FB's cipher signatures 118 Jan 1946 p.13-17
- The Importance of the FB cipher signatures 119 Apr 1946 p.57-62
- The Importance of the word cipher 111 Apr 1944 p.39-47. Illus.
- The Oxfordians (freakish) claims to Sha. 123 Apr 1947 p.87-95
- The Quaint aberration of A. A. Milne 115 Apr 1945 p.48-50
- Quiz on Eagle's attack on Mrs. Gallup 131 Apr 1949 p.99-103
- Quizzing the press critics 125 Oct 1947 p.217-219
- The Royal birth of FB confirmed Pt.1 134 Jan 1950 p.21-30;
Pt. 2 135 Apr 1950 p.72-76; Pt.3 136 July 1950 p.155-161
- Shakespeare's handwriting 128 Summer 1948 p.156-160
- Those ciphers! 138 Jan 1951 p.25-29¹

¹ See <<http://www.sirbacon.org/baconianaindex.html>> [accessed 16 January 2007]. This list is as it appears on the index. FB = Francis Bacon. Sha = Shakespeare.

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¹ Also known as *Growing Pains*

² Also known as *Don't Look Now*

³ Also known as *The Apple Tree*.

⁴ Also known as *The Breaking Point*

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