Authoring the Earth Goddess: Unplacatable Wilderness and Transgressive Female Power in Daphne du Maurier's *Jamaica Inn*

Charlotte Yule
Doctoral Researcher, School of Social Sciences & Humanities, University of Suffolk

Abstract: In her memoir *Enchanted Cornwall* Daphne du Maurier wrote that Cornwall had "communicated" with her, and she with Cornwall, for it was there that she "found" herself, "both as a writer and a person" (7). Du Maurier wrote seventeen novels, several biographies and fifteen collections of short stories between 1931 and 1987, mapping her own navigation of this wild landscape and her own identity in a series of works whose geographical settings span England's most Southernly peninsula. Reflecting in 1989 du Maurier wrote: "Cornwall became my text", yet the notion of *place as text* which du Maurier explores in her writing extends beyond the textual representation of real geographical places and buildings (7). Du Maurier's writing has permitted generations of readers to inhabit a textual reconstruction of the rugged Cornish landscape, visiting the shorelines, clifftops and moorlands which characterise "this ancient place" as a wild repository of pagan folklore and Celtic heritage (7). This paper will excavate wild spaces in du Maurier's 1936 novel *Jamaica Inn* examining the ways in which her writing reinscribes a folk history of the moorlands. Du Maurier's novel privileges narratives of subversive female power and sexual agency through her narration of wild place, in which pagan folklore of an unplacated goddess infuses the landscape with agential properties, capable of giving and taking life and of shaping female desire. Throughout the text du Maurier authors her own navigation of sexual awakening, female appetites and agencies into her representation of this ancient wilderness, capturing the liberative potential of the wild landscape with which her own agency is intertwined.

Keywords: du Maurier, Cornwall, Wilderness, Place, Landscape

English writer Daphne du Maurier, whose work spans over fifty years, embedded her writing within the wild and rugged spaces of Cornwall's lowlands, moors and coastlines. In her memoir *Enchanted Cornwall* du Maurier wrote that Cornwall had "communicated" with her, and she with Cornwall, for it was there that she "found" herself, "both as a writer and a person" (7). Du Maurier wrote seventeen novels, several biographies and fifteen collections of short stories between 1931 and 1987, mapping her own navigation of this wild landscape and her own identity in a series of works whose geographical settings span England's most Southernly peninsula. Reflecting in 1989 du Maurier wrote: "Cornwall became my text", yet the notion of *place as text* which du Maurier explores in her writing extends beyond the textual representation of real geographical places and buildings (7). Du Maurier's writing has permitted generations of readers to inhabit a textual reconstruction of the rugged Cornish landscape, visiting the shorelines, clifftops and moorlands which characterise "this ancient place" as a wild repository of pagan folklore and Celtic heritage (7). Her fourth novel, *Jamaica Inn,* written in 1936, is set within the moors surrounding Bodmin, whose peaks and marshes are characterised by ancient stones, burial mounds and markers of primitive habitation. This paper will excavate the wild spaces of *Jamaica Inn* examining the ways in which her writing reinscribes a folk history of the moorlands. Du Maurier's novel privileges narratives of subversive female power and sexual agency through her narration of wild place, in which pagan folklore of an unplacated goddess infuses the landscape with agential properties, capable of giving and taking life and of shaping female desire. Throughout the text du Maurier authors her own navigation of sexual awakening, female appetites and agencies into her representation of this ancient wilderness, capturing the liberative potential of the wild landscape with which her own agency is intertwined.

In her early life du Maurier grappled with the conflict between her emerging sexuality and the outward societal expectations placed upon her sex, describing the allure of wild place like "a linnets desire to be free from its cage" (Horner and Zlosnik 60). Du Maurier first encountered Cornwall as a child and would return in her early twenties to write, inspired by the liberative wilderness of the Cornish landscape. Throughout this time tensions between the sexual agency du Maurier wished to

explore and the constraint of society was alleviated by the family's holiday home in Fowey which afforded an "escape" from the gendered roles which she viewed with growing resentment and frustration (Forster 47). Robert MacFarlane's work on *The Wild Places* explores the notion of identity in relation to wilderness, noting that for some travellers the quest for the wild "reflected their longing to achieve correspondence between belief and place, between inner and outer landscapes" (24). In her earlier novels, especially *Jamaica Inn,* du Maurier emphasises the alluring freedom she discovered in the coastlands and moors, collapsing a narrative of awakening sexuality onto the wild and challenging terrain she navigates. Her memoirs languish over the isolation of her time at Ferryside, especially her early twenties, when she was permitted to stay at the house in Fowey alone to write, on the understanding that she must sell her stories for enough to live on (Forster 57). During this time of financial independence, the appetites du Maurier explores are carnal and transgressive, her burgeoning sexuality set against recollections of first encounters denied to her in London's society: "memories crowd in thick and fast. Learning to row, to scull, to snare a rabbit and gut a fish. Climbing upon the rotting hulls of abandoned ships. Bathing naked in deserted coves. Trespassing upon estates, even breaking in through shuttered windows" (Vanishing 14). Du Maurier's experience of wild place is transgressive; a "refusal to submit to social regulation" through inhabiting a wilderness which, for du Maurier, constituted "a space of potential, an undoing 'that the young author found alluring and seductive (Halberstam 3). For du Maurier, in both her writing and personal life, wild place constitutes a site of becoming, as both author and her characters navigate emerging sexuality and evade societal constraints within Cornwall's landscape.

Du Maurier's memoirs reveal a preoccupation with the "origins" of place, the topographical features and landmarks which connect Cornwall to the "distant ages" where "ancient" and "wonderous" pagan populations set about shaping the landscape (Vanishing 18). The notion of wild inhabited space which du Maurier's writing explores contrasts with contemporary conceptions of wilderness as "empty of life and hostile in its asperities" (Macfarlane 28). Du Maurier depicts the wild places of Cornwall as transgressive and marginal, writing hardy Celtic-blooded peoples existing

on the rugged edgelands of wild moorland spaces (Vanishing 19). However, du Maurier's exploration of Cornwall's past is mediated by the mysticism of local folklore. She argues that to understand the Cornish, it becomes necessary to recognise that "the place held magic, and whatever dwelt there under a brooding sky should be placated" (20). In *Wild Things* Jack Halberstam writes that wilderness is not "a place you can go, a site you can visit; it cannot be willed into being, left behind, lost or found" (xii). The notion of wilderness, or wild place, Halberstam poses, is bound to the interaction between place and the self, and in histories of long forgotten primitive inhabitation (xii). In modern society wildness is conceived as something that "once existed and has now gone" placing notions of *wild* in opposition with "the modern, the *civilised*, the cultivated, and the real" (ix). Within both her memoir and fictional writing du Maurier utilises female folklore to inscribe wildness, cultivating an ancient landscape where "rocks and stones, hills and valleys, bear the imprint of men who long ago buried their dead beneath great chambered tombs and worshipped the earth goddess" (Vanishing 19). In *Jamaica Inn*, du Maurier's conception of unrestrained female identity is anchored to wild place, collapsing female agency and sexual freedom onto an ancient terrain of pagan folklore.

The wild desire which du Maurier privileges in her place writing evokes her own carnal appetites; the formative years spent gutting rabbits and netting eels after dark are reflected in the trail of dead things which proliferate *Jamaica Inn's* narrative. Drowned men, mysterious plagues and fallen livestock shadow the narrative of sexual awakening and unfolding female agency. In her writing therefore, du Maurier's notion of wild place infuses the Cornish landscape with the threat of unconstrained female power. The pagan landscape which makes death itself, "like the sea, ever present" (Vanishing 20) is simultaneously credited with giving life in du Maurier's writing, birthing men born "twisted, like the blackened shrubs of broom" on Bodmin's moors (Jamaica 13). Du Maurier's moorland men, "sullen and morose tenant" farmers are at the mercy of this landscape, succumbing to a despair shadowed by the unplacated earth goddess (Vanishing 146). Her writing reconstructs an ancient landscape from "an age where men did not exist", excavating narratives of female subversion in the wild moors where "queer" winds "in the crevices of granite […] sighed"

and "moaned" like "a man in pain" (39). Themes of birth and death are mediated by the transgressive properties of wilderness as du Maurier reincarnates Matt Merlyn's drowning into the present, to be witnessed again by Mary and the reader. In her own encounter with Bodmin's moors, du Maurier conjures the figure of a man who "went out one night and drowned himself" in Withey Brook, tormented by the harsh isolation of living in such a place (Vanishing 146). The figure of the earth goddess is therefore associated with the power of taking and giving life, materialising man from the broom covered heathlands and drowning him in the concealed marshes. The notion of wildness which this essay explores is both carnal and transgressive, as du Maurier collapses themes of birth, rebirth and death onto the subversive figures of pagan female power in the moorlands of Bodmin. Within the novel, it is her own emerging sexuality and carnal appetites which are refracted into the themes of female selfhood and agency for her protagonist, constructing a wild landscape infused with the historicity of ancient landmarks, Cornish folklore and unconstrained female power.

Navigating the Wilderness: Placating the Goddess

The moor on which du Maurier sets *Jamaica Inn* is common land stretching between Launceston and Bodmin from North to South and bordering Liskeard in the East and Camelford in the West (Vanishing 143). Du Maurier records the site as "the greatest and wildest stretch of moorland," one of the few remaining moors which once comprised the "spine" of Cornwall (143). The moors, like the neighbouring Devonian commons of Dartmoor and Exmoor, are characterised by rising terrain, "frowning tors and craggy rocks" above slopes of rough grazing peppered with well concealed marshes and reed beds (144). In her memoirs, du Maurier describes a landscape which is remote, predominantly inhabited by farms and isolated dwellings whose income today is still sourced from the hardy cattle, sheep and fell ponies which graze there (143). Few trees can survive this topography, where unrelenting winds thrash the landscape even on the stillest of days. Historically, the moors were the setting for sustainable practices such as foraging, as bracken and turf were cut for fires, and where locals passed rarely to drive their cattle to market or to visit neighbouring remote moorland holdings (Hollowell 44). The moor in *Jamaica Inn* is dissected by the A30 road which passes between

Launceston and Bodmin, punctuated at its midpoint by Jamaica Inn. The building, today a museum and popular tourist attraction, was the inspiration for the novel and fictional home of Joss Merlyn and his wife Patience. Beyond the inn, Brown Willy and Rough Tor give way to the more challenging crags before falling away to the sloping woodlands above Trebartha.

Throughout the text, associations are drawn between the moors, superstition and female sexuality as Mary navigates the moorland places where men are said to have drowned in deep pools of concealed marshland and the land mounds over the resting places of pagan spirits who worshipped heathen Gods of fertility and death. At Bodmin, Mary is warned to travel no further by the coachman, who informs her that no one stops at Jamaica anymore (Jamaica 11). The animosity and fear exhibited by the wider community shapes the textual construction of the moors in such a way that the swinging Inn sign and tall chimneys come to embody the role of the gallows. The men who inhabit the rocky inclines are born pre-destined for wickedness, depravity and inevitably the noose. Mary's initial encounters with the townsfolk of Bodmin constructs Jamaica Inn, and the moorlands themselves, as "no place for a girl […] a wild, rough place" (10). The coach driver further emphasises the sense of uneasiness about Jamaica Inn in his retelling of local lore: "its what people say. Respectable folk don't go to Jamaica anymore" (11). Du Maurier frames the moorland landscape within the negative connotations of a place that is characterised by its un-" respectable" inhabitants and through which people "whip the horses past and wait for nothing" (11). Within this scene, however, du Maurier also agitates gender boundaries, depicting a landscape rich with heathen female power which is proclaimed "no place for a girl" illustrating societal unease about unrestrained female sexuality and agency (10).

In du Maurier's narrative, the "wild, rough" spaces of the moors function as a site of female agency, grounding Mary's sexual awakening in the unrespectable wilderness, which the coach driver had considered unsuitable for a girl. As Mary continues her journey towards Jamaica Inn, she rehearses patriarchal anxieties about female sexuality, perceiving "malevolence" in the quiet of the coach journey which had previously "rocked her like a cradle" (13). Here, du Maurier frames female

fertility, inferred by the image of the rocking cradle, with the threat or 'malevolence 'produced by its liberation from societal restrictions. On the moors, freed from constraint, female sexuality is depicted in the wild place, a corrupting and dangerous force causing "children to be born twisted […] their minds twisted too, their thoughts evil, dwelling as they must amidst marshland and granite, harsh heather and crumbling stone" (13). Du Maurier layers the landscape with relics of pre-Christian beliefs and female subversion, infusing the moorlands with a paganism which resists patriarchy and instead embraces a primitivism associated with female authority and superstition.

In the novel du Maurier excavates local folklore of the moors, privileging the ancient dead of Cornish myth such as the "weeping queens" of Avalon who rest beneath the lands where Iseult seduced Tristan: all "buried now […] never to be disturbed again by pick and spade" (Vanishing 35). Du Maurier's moors are shaped by this notion of wild and primitive place, characterised by lineages of subversive and powerful women, famed for their "seduction and betrayal" (31). Despite associations between Cornish folklore and the well-known figures of Mark, Tristan and Arthur, it is the women of these legends who haunt du Maurier's wild landscapes. Her memoirs resurrect the ancient moors where "centuries dissolve" and standing stones reveal a long dead "queen or priestess" awaiting her "passage to the underworld" to "defy 'man's answers […] to the challenge of death" (20). Within the novel it is this primitive landscape which Mary navigates, situating her unfolding sexuality against a terrain of female power which resists the passing of time and which codes the moors with superstition and death. Du Maurier contrasts this depiction of the moors with Jamaica Inn itself, positioning the tall chimneys of Jamaica on the long road between Bodmin and Launceston on the "breast of a hill" surrounded by "rough" moorland, "looming ink-black in the mist" (Jamaica14). The isolated setting of Jamaica Inn, detached from settlements, farms and nearby towns, alongside its raised positioning affords the site with the same characteristics as rural gallows sites, and within the text the Inn's parlour becomes the location for a hanging when Mary discovers a "rope slung through a hook" in a beam (61). Later that night, while she lies awake in bed Mary hears the groaning of the Inn sign swinging "gently to and fro" and mistakes it for a dead man hanging in a gibbet (27). Du

Maurier places the moors in opposition with the Inn, contrasting the way in which both sites frame death. Jamaica stands, gallows like, as setting for a male death and violence, overshadowed by a landscape invested with spectral female power and Cornish folklore. The towering chimneys of the Inn also invest the site with male virility and the violence evoked by the smuggling activity which takes place there. The proximity of the moors, and the saturation of this landscape with female freedom and power, mediates the threat of the noose and the depravity associated with Jamaica Inn.

Helford, Mary Yellan's childhood home, is also set against the wild moorlands of Bodmin, which lie "barely forty miles away by road" (Jamaica 3). The narration of Mary's homeland takes place as she journeys away from it towards an uncertain future, and her early depictions of home are loaded with a nostalgia at odds with the narrative of death, sickness and loss which precipitates her departure. Helford is situated among "green hills and sloping valleys" where "gentle rain" and "grateful soil" mark the opposing spaces of Bodmin and the moorlands as harsh and bleak, a land characterised by "stones, black heather and stunted broom" (3). This depiction loads Helford with the sentimentality that is produced by her exile from it, reconstructing her home of twenty-three years from within the walls of the carriage that carry her away from it. This passage echoes du Maurier's own childhood journey to Cornwall, where sitting in a rail carriage with her mother, she describes being "disenchanted" by a landscape which fell short of her expectations: "I went on staring out of the window. There must be a mistake. Somewhere there awaited the hidden land. It was not this" (Vanishing 13). Like Mary Yellan, du Maurier's expectations of place are thwarted by her initial encounters with an unremarkable landscape, which cannot compete with the memories of home that both young women have left behind.

For both young women, their disenchantment with the moors of Cornwall betrays the extent of their desire for the wilderness such place promises, and the alluring freedom associated with that notion of wild place. Du Maurier's memoirs reveal a yearning for the "tremendous" vision of rugged place which her mother had promised, where smugglers might lurk, and where she might be freed from the restrictions associated with her home (Vanishing 13). In *Jamaica Inn*, Mary's agency is

similarly curtailed by the home which she initially sentimentalises, where following her mother's death, she is not permitted to live or work and is denied any involvement in decisions about her future: "One by one Mary saw the things she had loved and understood pass into other hands. The livestock went at Helston market. The furniture was bought by neighbours […] A man from Coverack took a fancy to the house" (8). In this opening narrative, death displaces Mary, making her "an interloper in her own home"; however, the moorlands, also coded with death, afford Mary the autonomy which her homeland had denied her (8). The wilderness of the "barren moor" is reframed as the sea as Mary narrates her "desolate" journey where the "wind thundered in the rigging and the and the sea licked her decks" (12). Du Maurier's childhood desire to see the landscape of smugglers is echoed in this scene where the two young women gaze out of windows at strange and unknown place. However, she invests this imagery with paganism, describing a "menace" in the sway of the carriage as it carried her further across this "dark and silent land" where men were still touched by "the Devil" (13). Du Maurier's notion of the moors as a primitive space is made visible in the threat of a godless landscape, with Mary positioned passively being carried across it, in the form of a ship at the mercy of the waves and in the dark confines of the carriage. However, it is precisely this primitivism which later permits Mary, and du Maurier herself, to anchor herself into the wild spaces of Cornwall and assert her burgeoning selfhood onto this rugged landscape.

Early in the text, du Maurier grapples with cultural perceptions of the moorland, and wilderness, through the mysterious sickness which precipitates Mary's relocation to the moors. Du Maurier's engagement with the moorlands is framed by the extent to which they are embedded within folklore and myth: a "reliance on the old magic that had never died away" (Vanishing 113). Her memoirs shape a topography dominated by the superstitions and beliefs associated with healing and health, midwifery and folklore, where still, driven by "instinct, infallible" men pay homage to whatever ancient power remains beneath "field and furze" (20). The way in which du Maurier frames myths of female power with the "stillness" of death reinforces the associations between the moors and a "concealed" and subversive female power, which "should be placated" (20). In *Vanishing*

Cornwall, du Maurier recounts a local legend from 1664 in which a "shower of blood" rained upon the rocky outcrops of the moors, staining the stone red, a foreshadowing of the Black Death which broke out less than a day later (156). In *Jamaica Inn*, this folklore of unappeased power is reframed in the sickness which sweeps across Helford, and which constitutes a foreshadowing of the events which lead Mary to Jamaica Inn. In the months before her mother's death, a nameless sickness overshadows the "shining waters of home", indiscriminately savaging cattle, poultry and Nell the mare, "much as a late frost will out of season, coming with the new moon and then departing, leaving no trace of its passage save the little trail of dead things in its path" (Jamaica 3). In this passage the narrator's language ascribes the inevitability of the changing seasons to the disease which plagues her home. Du Maurier uses this perception of the moors to collapse boundaries between place, such that the illness which indiscriminately plagues Helford's lush landscape is invoked in the bleak moorlands which the narrative constructs. Mary's opening narrative describes the moors as "wasted country" where "no human being could live", recalling the sickness which indiscriminately extinguishes ducklings, cattle and finally her own mother (5).

Throughout the novel, du Maurier's descriptions of the Merlyn family draw on her own travels across Bodmin, mirroring the imagined fate of the desolate farmer drowned in Withey Brook in the demise of Joss's younger brother, Matt, who drowned in the marshes below Kilmar Tor. In the novel, Mary walks the East Moor and finds herself below the Tor: "somewhere amongst that solid mass of stone, where the ridges hid the sun, Joss Merlyn had been born, and his brother lived today" (Jamaica 40). Mary narrates the Merlyn men into the landscape, destined to be born, to live and to die within the shadows of the tors, "born twisted and evil" (115). This description of the brothers mirrors the opening description of the moorland folk, who, Mary fears, must be born "twisted like the blackened shrubs of broom" (13). The repetition of this phrasing invokes the threat of unconstrained female sexuality, betraying Mary's awakening sexuality. Throughout the novel, the time Mary spends on the moors near Jem's cottage is rich with references to paganism, omens and superstitious encounters generated by the flora and fauna of the moorland landscape and her interactions with it. As Mary

stares at the marsh where her uncle's brother drowned, memory reanimates the past tragedy in the screaming call of a curlew which rises from the marsh, "flapping his wings and whistling his mournful cry" (40). Within this scene, Mary's own encounter with place is coded with the subversive power of the moors, resurrecting the instance of Matt's drowning into the present such that the curlew's call melds with the "panic-stricken" screams of the man who "floundered helplessly, beating the weed with his hands" (40).

Du Maurier saturates the marshes with pagan references to death, sickness and healing, constructing a "trail of dead things" onto the moorland landscape Mary navigates (Jamaica 4). Mary's unfolding sexuality is situated against this pagan landscape, couched within a lineage of female subversion capable of blurring the boundaries of time and ultimately death (Vanishing 20). After the curlew has passed over the ridge, Mary notices that the landscape is quiet again, the thrashing of the drowning man subsiding into the silence of memory. Later in the novel, before Mary discovers Jem's cottage, she encounters the portentous curlew once again, sending it soaring into flight, "calling his plaintive note" in mimicry of Mary's earlier encounter (Jamaica 111). The ponies which Jem grazes on the slopes surrounding the cottage, a rare sign of wealth and fortune in a landscape most often grazed by cattle and hardy sheep, evoke the Cornish lore that passing a sick child beneath the stomach of a piebald mare would cure whooping cough (Vanishing 115). Natural springs and streams were also believed to have healing properties and Jem's cottage is set "on the slope of the hill above the Withy Brook" (Jamaica 117). Mary's interactions with place and her unfolding agency precipitate these encounters, reinforcing associations between the wilderness of the moors and a lineage of transgressive female power. As Mary's sexuality awakens du Maurier invokes the image of the unplacated goddess of folklore, temporarily investing Mary with the ability to exhume the dead from the marshland.

In a later scene Mary is captured by her uncle and his band of smugglers, bound and subjected to violence and depravity as the drunken men work up to a "a state of wild excitement […] the presence of a woman amongst them brought a vicious tang to their enjoyment" (Jamaica 177). Despite

Mary's "weakness and distress", her burgeoning sexuality continually undermines the company who become distracted by her desirability, "laughing and singing to win her notice" (177). Later, abandoned in the carriage while the men head for the shoreline, Mary is reinvigorated with the "feeling of shelter" produced by the sound of the sea, restoring agency as she affects her escape from the carriage (179). Du Maurier loads this scene with references to subversive female power, employing the proximity of the waves to construct Mary's maturation through a process which evokes rebirth. Within this wild place the early descriptions of men born blighted by the pagan landscape is reframed in Mary's delivery into maturation and womanhood. As she attempts to squeeze through a small gap in the carriage window, childbirth is evoked in the description of "a sickening squeeze and pressure" as her hips pass through the gap, a "trickle of blood" that accompanies her entry into the landscape followed by a moment of weakness in which she "fell backwards" landing headfirst on the ground below (180). In the encounters with menfolk that follow, Mary's agency is heightened, investing her with the subversive power of the wild place into which she has been delivered. The transgressive delivery, in which sexual maturation is borne from blood loss displaces both the socially ordained act of lost virginity and the notion of birth with a wild embrace that is inherently feminine. Here du Maurier invokes the earth goddess again, delivering Mary onto the moorland soil with a ritualistic blood-letting suggestive of primitive practices of sacrifice and worship. In the moments that follow du Maurier authors an agency which evades capture by Harry the Peddlar and reinforces Mary's power, as she fights off the men and embraces the obscurity the moors in 'a wall of fog which closed in upon her '(182). The mysticism of the fog, which conceals Mary's movements shrouds the men, consuming them as the marshes had consumed Matt Merlyn.

In this scene the transgressive power of wild place culminates in simultaneous acts of rebirth, maturation and death, framed by the primitive female power which now lies placated. In the final pages of the novel Mary recognises that within this rugged landscape she was "at liberty now to go where she would" ascribing a sense of liberation in her inhabitation of the moors (Jamaica 293). Du Maurier's closing paragraphs reflect the ritualistic attainment of Mary's autonomy, as wild place "had

lost its menace" and the "old malevolence" of a landscape invested with unplacated desire lies dormant under a "clear blue sky" (293). The way of life which Jem offers her, to rove the wilderness with "never any ties, nor roots … with the sky for a roof and earth for a bed" concludes Mary's narrative transition from socially sanctioned domesticity to a wild notion of home embedded within the ancient habitation practices of her pagan forbears (299). In the close of the narrative du Maurier's protagonist is authored into the landscape, between the earth and sky, written into the lineage of women associated with the moors. It is through this wild land, and her rebirth into that, that du Maurier interweaves Mary's agency with the pagan goddesses which shape the Cornish moorlands. In the closing lines Mary's speech mirrors du Maurier's own writing of Cornwall; as the place "where I belong to be" (302). *Jamaica Inn* therefore, not only authors Mary's belonging but also du Maurier's own, writing herself and her protagonist into the wild landscape of Cornwall's moors.

Conclusion

For du Maurier, the essence of Cornwall and the Cornish people is encapsulated by its landscapes and the histories and folklores which those landscapes preserve. Within the coastlines, commons and coves, barrows and Tors, du Maurier identifies histories of occupation, ritual and burial practices which layer the landscape with a primitive paganism. However, du Maurier's memoirs reveal the extent to which her perception of this landscape is mediated by Cornish folklore, infusing place with the subversive power of ancient women capable of reading the omens, evading death and resisting patriarchal authority. Her memoirs retrace the movements of mythical queens and goddesses onto the barren moors and lush lowlands of Cornwall's landscapes, constructing a lineage of transgressive women. Du Maurier's love for the Cornish landscape is sympathetic to this relationship between place and history, positioning her novels within the ancient and mysterious spaces of Cornish folklore. However, her writing is also introspective, privileging a personal account of topography and terrain which seeks to preserve the Cornish spaces integral to her own navigation of independence, societal expectations and sexual awakening.

Like du Maurier, *Jamaica Inn*'s protagonist maps the spaces of Cornish folklore, constructing a topography shaped by the barrows and stones which load the moors with ritualistic paganism (Vanishing 144). It is her own memories of the moors which give shape to the terrain she authors, in which rural ways of life, female agency and wilderness are celebrated. Against Brown Willy and Kilmar Tor the text constructs a Cornish landscape saturated with pagan relics of its primitive history, folklore and superstition (Trower 202). The mysticism of marshes and bogs concealed between tor peaks come to signify places of death, drowning sites and by extension burial grounds, which du Maurier frames with references to the image of the pagan earth goddess who must be appeased. It is this depiction of unplacated female power which the author uses to explore her own, and Mary's unfolding sexuality, constructing a female resistance to societal constraint and patriarchal control in the narrative's depiction of coming of age and wild rebirth.

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