'How are ghostly appearances of unruly women used in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* to explore patriarchal structures?'

by Laura Grabher-Meyer

Gothic literature has intensely focused on social structures and gender issues throughout the centuries. As Donna Heiland proposes, a common trope in this context has been the exploration of patriarchal structures and their effects on both male and female characters, especially in domestic settings.[1] While early Gothic works such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* tended to present patriarchal structures as given systems, later works started questioning this form of gender inequality in society by including rebellious female characters, which is mentioned, for example, in Anne Williams' book chapter 'Wicked Women.'[2] This essay focuses on that latter aspect by analysing the approach towards patriarchal structures taken in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1938). It argues that both novels address patriarchal power in domestic settings by applying the Gothic concept of the ghost to one of the female characters in each novel. More precisely, it claims that the patriarchal figures Mr Rochester in *Jane Eyre* and Maxim de Winter in *Rebecca* cause the ghostly appearances of their first wives through acts of male oppression. The trigger for such repression will be traced back to the women's unruly behaviour, either caused by unconventional sexuality or madness. It will be shown that the ghostly appearances are further facilitated by the chosen setting of the estate houses, which replace the Gothic castles, and by the presence and actions of the maids in the novels. Moreover, it shall be illustrated that the ghostly first wives exert a substantial impact on the second wives, Jane Eyre and Mrs de Winter, and may even be interpreted as their doubles, representing hidden rebellious character traits of the second wives.[3] The essay will further discuss how the second wives react to the hauntings by their doubles and how they seek to elevate their power positions within patriarchal constraints. Finally, the endings of both novels will be analysed as symbolic of a potential subversion of patriarchal structures in society.

In Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, female unruliness manifests itself in Mr Rochester's first wife, Bertha Mason, due to her otherness regarding her Jamaican background and supposed madness. Bertha herself was not subject to colonialism in Jamaica, but due to her foreignness, she is still described and treated as an inferior other when brought to England by Mr Rochester, to whom her marriage was arranged.[4] Physical features of her foreign appearance are, for example, her 'thick and dark hair', which evoke the association of a vampire in Jane when she sees Bertha for the first time.[5] Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert argues that Gothic fiction frequently explores such elements of otherness in the context of colonialism.[6] This fits well with a Gothic reading of *Jane Eyre*. Additionally, Laurence Talairach-Vielmas argues that female madness is another common theme in Gothic literature that dates back to Gothic writer Anne Radcliffe.[7] Before the Madhouse Acts in 1774 and 1828, many women were incarcerated in so-called madhouses on

---

[1] Donna Heiland, *Gothic and Gender: An Introduction* (Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 10-11, ProQuest Ebook Central.
[2] ibid., 12-13; Anne Williams, 'Wicked Women,' in *Women and the Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, ed. A. Horner and S. Zlosnik (Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 91, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bgzdfx.
[3] Although the actual marriage between Jane Eyre and Mr Rochester happens at the end of the novel, I will generally refer to both Mrs de Winter and Jane Eyre as the second wives and clarify her status when necessary.
[4] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (Penguin Books, 1847), 367.
[5] ibid., 340-341.
[6] Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, 'Colonial and postcolonial Gothic,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, ed. J. E. Hogle (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 233.
[7] Laurence Talairach-Vielmas, 'Madwomen and Attics,' in *Women and the Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, ed. A. Horner and S. Zlosnik (Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 34, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bgzdfx.

their husband's account but often without a proper medical reason, according to Maria Purves.[8] After the Madhouse Acts, men may have searched for new options of captivity to punish their wives for unruly behaviour. Such an instance is depicted in *Jane Eyre* when Mr Rochester locks his first wive into the attic at Thornton Hall, his estate, as he accuses her of madness.[9] An example of Bertha's supposedly mad behaviour can be found in the scene when she severely wounds Mr Mason.[10] In that context, her behaviour is depicted as animalistic as she is compared to a tigress.[11] Thus, her foreignness and, above all, her madness are used to characterise Bertha as an unruly woman and justify her captivity.

As opposed to Charlotte Brontë, Daphne du Maurier focuses on the theme of sexuality to create the notion of unruliness in Maxim de Winter's first wife, Rebecca. Her sexuality could be regarded as unconventional at the time in two ways. Firstly, she is described as a woman who had many affairs with other men, which contradicts the social standard of fidelity and the socially respected family model of a husband and a wife.[12] Secondly, there are several hints that Rebecca might have been either lesbian or aromantic, even though it is never explicitly stated. However, she is described as being unable to feel true love for any man.[13] Additionally, the relationship between her and the maid, Mrs Danvers, seems to have been exceptionally close, which may further support the interpretation of her being a lesbian.[14] Terry Castle devoted her monograph *The Apparitional Lesbian* to the topic of lesbianism in literature and argues that lesbian characters are frequently depicted in a 'derealized' manner in that they are represented as ghosts.[15] He denotes this as a 'representation through negation,' which means that the ghostly representation of lesbian characters allows the inclusion of homosexuality in literature in a hidden manner.[16] Due to the ghostly quality of lesbian characters in literature, Gothic novels lend themselves well to address the topic of non-heteronormative sexuality since ghosts are typical elements of the Gothic, as argued by Paulina Palmer.[17] Palmer further mentions that the lesbian is often depicted as a 'disruptive, transgressive influence.'[18] This applies to Rebecca as well since she is described as a rebellious, unfaithful character who does not follow her husband's wishes.[19] Rebecca, thus, serves as a second example of a first wife who behaves unwantedly in the social context.

Both husbands take advantage of their patriarchal power position to oppress their unruly first wives during marriage, and their actions cause the ghostly appearances of these women in the novels. Even though the novels are not classified as traditional, supernatural ghost stories, they still draw from the typical Gothic ghost stories described by Julia Briggs, which were most prevalent between 1830 and 1930.[20] Neither Bertha nor Rebecca are supernatural beings, but their presence is depicted in a ghostly manner. As in a typical ghost story, the ghostly first wives are a telling example of a 'return of the repressed.'[21] In *Jane Eyre*, Mr Rochester's first wife,

---

[8] Maria Purves, *Women and Gothic* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 152.
[9] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 372-373.
[10] ibid., 249-258.
[11] ibid.
[12] Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* (Virago Press, 2015), 305-311.
[13] ibid., 304.
[14] ibid., 113; 269-277.
[15] Terry Castle, *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture* (Columbia University Press, 1993), 34.
[16] ibid., 60-62.
[17] Paulina Palmer, 'Lesbian Gothic: Genre Transformation, Transgression,' *Gothic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 118-119, https://doi.org/10.7227/GS.6.1.11.
[18] ibid.
[19] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 305-311.
[20] Julia Briggs, 'The Ghost Story,' in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. D. Punter (Wiley, 2012), 170, ProQuest Ebook Central.
[21] ibid., 172.

Bertha, is oppressed by him as she is locked up in the attic.[22] Thus, Mr Rochester sets the circumstances for Bertha's hidden existence and her ghostly appearance since he prevents her from being seen by the residents at Thornfield Hall. Bertha's haunting and her occasional escapes from captivity can then be seen as the mentioned 'return of the repressed.' In *Rebecca*, Maxim de Winter tolerates Rebecca's unruly behaviour and her affairs with other men as long as she plays the role of the perfect wife at Manderley, his estate.[23] While this may initially be a more lenient form of oppression than the one observed by Mr Rochester in *Jane Eyre*, the situation suddenly changes when Rebecca announces that she will break Maxim's rules. By literally killing her on that prospect, Mr de Winter creates the circumstances that enable Rebecca's ghostly perception in the first place.[24] Again, Rebecca's subsequent haunting symbolises the return of an oppressed woman.

The slightly contrasting depiction of the first wives regarding their behaviour and power position mentioned above suggests a particular development of the patriarchal system in society between the 19th and the 20th century. This development can indeed be related to historical accounts. In *Jane Eyre* (1847), Rochester hides his first wife, Bertha, from anybody but the maid Grace Poole. Locking her up in a room and denying her any form of personal freedom appears as the most radical form of oppression. At the beginning of the 19th century, married women had indeed hardly any personal or political rights. They were highly dependent on their husbands because they lost every right to their property, potential earnings, and freedom of decision to the husband as soon as they entered marriage, according to Glynis Cooper.[25] They needed to fulfil their husbands' expectations in any respect and were not able to postulate a divorce even in highly difficult situations, such as adultery.[26] In Bertha's case, it is shown that even physical abuse and unlawful detention were circumstances women needed to cope with since they did not have any possibility of escaping patriarchal oppression. Moreover, the novel is titled after Rochester's second wife, which is another element of Bertha's hiddenness and partial ignorance. In contrast, *Rebecca* (1938) is named after Maxim de Winter's first wife, which already foregrounds her importance in the story. As long as she was alive, she was asked to represent Manderley as Maxim de Winter's wife in public, which elevates her social position compared to Bertha. Additionally, she was given the freedom to leave the estate on her own, and even her affairs were tolerated as long as they remained hidden. Such a development towards slightly more personal freedom can also be found in larger structures of society. One important step towards increasing the independence of married women was the *Married Women's Property Act*, which granted women the right to keep their own property; this law was passed in 1870 and extended in 1882.[27] Another important building block against gender inequality and female oppression was women's right to vote. While it had been demanded since the mid-19th century, its legal implementation only followed in the 20th century, when first women over the age of thirty gained their suffrage in 1918, and finally, equal voting rights were granted to both men and women in 1928.[28] Thus, this occurred ten years before the publication of *Rebecca*, which impacts the perceived social status of women at the time and may well account for Rebecca being portrayed as a more independent wife than Bertha in *Jane Eyre*. However, the fact that Rebecca is still killed by the patriarchal figure Maxim de Winter in the end

---

[22] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 369.
[23] ibid., 304-313.
[24] ibid.
[25] Glynis Cooper, *Struggle and Suffrage in Manchester: Women's Lives and the Fight for Equality* (Pen & Sword Books Limited, 2018), 26-28, ProQuest Ebook Central.
[26] ibid.
[27] Maria Purves, *Women and Gothic*, 158-159.
[28] Cooper, *Struggle and Suffrage in Manchester*, 78-79; Valerie Sanders, 'First Wave Feminism,' in *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*, ed. S. Gamble (Routledge, 2001), 23, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203011010.

clearly shows that patriarchal structures are still omnipresent at the time and that gender equality and female independence have yet to be reached.

The ghostly appearances of both Bertha and Rebecca, which are caused by the mentioned patriarchal structures, are strongly facilitated by the chosen setting of the spacious estate houses. While the typical setting of early Gothic novels, such as Robert Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* or Ann Radcliffe's *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, is certainly the castle, David Punter and Glennis Byron argue that there was a shift of the Gothic into domestic spaces in the 19th century.[29] In Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, there are, in fact, several homes that might represent the traditional castle, but this analysis will focus on Thornfield Hall, Mr Rochester's estate. Punter and Byron argue that the castle is usually 'a place where heroines and others can be locked away.'[30] The same argument applies to the estate house Thornfield Hall since it is used to hold Rochester's first wife, Bertha Mason, captive.[31] Her imprisonment constitutes an important aspect of Bertha's ghostliness in the novel since it means that she is always present in the house, even though in a hidden place. A feeling of haunting is evoked since this is also a typical feature of a supernatural ghost. Similarly, the estate house Manderley in du Maurier's *Rebecca* enables a ghostly depiction of Maxim de Winter's first wife, Rebecca. While Rebecca herself is dead, part of her is kept alive through Manderley. Not only do the house routines remain the same after her death, but also her belongings stay inside the house, and even her bedroom is preserved precisely as she had left it.[32] This evokes a feeling of her still being present at Manderley as if she were haunting it. Thus, the chosen setting is fundamental for the ghostly qualities of the first wives depicted in both novels.

As any haunting needs a person to be haunted, the ghostly qualities of the first wives only become relevant when they resonate with the husbands' second wives as they come to live at the estate houses. In *Jane Eyre*, the female protagonist, Jane, moves to Thornfield already with a personal history of haunting. The most prevalent example occurred in her childhood years when she was locked inside the Red Room at her aunt's place, where she experienced fainting after a suspected supernatural encounter.[33] Already the first time Jane is led to the third floor at Thornfield Hall, she suddenly hears a strange laugh, which scares her.[34] She repeatedly re-encounters the laugh, murmuring and other strange noises throughout her time at Thornfield.[35] The ghostliness of these appearances is enhanced since the danger seems quite close and immediate to Jane, but its source is not tangible. The two most frightening occurrences are the night when Mr Rochester's bedroom is set on fire and the night before their wedding when Bertha enters Jane's room, tearing her wedding veil apart and scaring her.[36] Unlike in earlier Gothic novels, in which dangerous situations often occur in the dungeons of a castle, in *Jane Eyre*, the threat is elevated to the attic and even moves through the whole house. Similarly, Rebecca's ghost haunts the whole of Manderley. Mrs de Winter's haunting already begins before she arrives at Manderley, namely during a car ride with Maxim when she discovers a poetry collection Rebecca dedicated to Maxim.[37] Mrs de Winter borrows the book, but it evokes a constant feeling of unease, which finally leads her to rip out the page with the dedication.[38] At Manderley, this discomfort continues, and she feels like an intruder in the house.[39] She

---

[29] David Punter and Glennis Byron, *Gothic: The Gothic* (Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 259, ProQuest Ebook Central; Fred Botting, *Gothic* (Taylor & Francis, 2013), 104, ProQuest Ebook Central.
[30] Punter and Byron, *Gothic: The Gothic*, 262.
[31] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 372-373.
[32] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 194.
[33] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 12-13.
[34] ibid., 125-126.
[35] ibid., 129.
[36] ibid., 339-341.
[37] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 34.
[38] ibid., 63.
[39] ibid., 122.

constantly tries to fill the void Rebecca left at Manderley by behaving as she expects Rebecca to have behaved and continuing her daily routines. Mrs de Winter takes Rebecca's place at the desk in the morning room even though it makes her shiver; she starts writing letters because she feels expected to do so; she arranges the flowers as Rebecca would have done it; she even organises a ball with Maxim to keep another tradition alive.[40] Mrs de Winter also borrows Rebecca's mackintosh and discovers one of Rebecca's handkerchiefs with her initials on it.[41] The fact that the handkerchief is described as not having been washed after Rebecca's last usage evokes an even stronger feeling of Rebecca's presence.[42] The most daunting emotions are, however, felt by Mrs de Winter when she enters Rebecca's bedroom in the west wing.[43] She is overwhelmed by Rebecca's belongings, such as her nightgown, clothes, slippers, brushes and even Rebecca's particular scent, which fills the room.[44] Mrs de Winter does not feel safe at Manderley as she experiences a haunting from the past. Having said this, it becomes clear that the second wives in both novels feel frightened due to the felt or actual closeness of the ghostly first wives in the estate houses.

Besides the importance of the houses, the maids are another crucial factor in the ghostly appearance of the first wives. As mentioned by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in *Jane Eyre*, it feels as if the maid Grace Poole is the fully living counterpart that represents Bertha in public, especially toward Jane.[45] Any noise heard from Bertha's room is ascribed to the maid, who tries to ensure that Bertha stays in her room and remains undiscovered.[46] Grace Poole, thus, enhances Jane's feeling of uneasiness since she supports the sense of haunting and remains a mysterious character. In *Rebecca*, in contrast, the maid, Mrs Danvers, does not try to hide Rebecca but rather aims to keep her memory alive. Even though the approach differs, Mrs Danvers' actions create an effect of ghostliness as well. She ensures that the routines at Manderley remain the same and keeps all rooms as they had been, especially Rebecca's bedroom.[47] When Mrs de Winter enters Rebecca's bedroom for the first time, Mrs Danvers appears shortly after her and starts showing her Rebecca's belongings. Mrs Danvers even forces her to touch them and take in their scent, drawing Mrs de Winter even closer to her husband's first wife.[48] This illustrates that the ghostly qualities and the feeling of haunting could not be evoked in the same manner without the maids in both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca*.

The ghostly qualities of the first wives and their haunting of the second wives can further be interpreted in a symbolic manner by applying the concept of doubles in literature. Claire Rosenfield argues that the idea of a double has been frequently implemented in 19th-century literature and beyond, triggered by a stronger focus on the individual during the French Revolution and accompanying social developments in European countries. [49] She explains that doubles may serve to 'juxtapose or duplicate two characters; the one representing the socially acceptable or conventional personality, the other externalizing the free, uninhibited, often criminal self.'[50] As argued above, both Bertha and Rebecca are depicted as unruly in the novels; Jane and the late Mrs de Winter, on the other hand, largely follow social conventions. This contrast is most strongly expressed in *Rebecca* since Mrs de Winter is pedantic about being the perfect

---

[40] ibid., 87; 91-98; 155; 214-217.
[41] ibid., 132.
[42] ibid.
[43] ibid., 187.
[44] ibid., 187-195.
[45] Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gaubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (Yale University Press, 2020), 350, ProQuest Ebook Central.
[46] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 129; 373.
[47] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 188-195.
[48] ibid.
[49] Claire Rosenfield, 'The Shadow Within: The Conscious and Unconscious Use of the Double,' in *Daedalus* 92, no. 2 (1963): 328, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026781.
[50] ibid.

wife for Maxim. Mrs de Winter's ultimate goal to rid herself of Rebecca's haunting even leads her to accept Maxim as a murderer and further support him in covering his lie.[51] Mrs de Winter is, in fact, relieved when she discovers the truth. It means that Rebecca does not pose a threat to her anymore, as Maxim never loved his first wife.[52] In *Jane Eyre*, Jane also tries to fulfil Rochester's expectations, especially in her role as the governess and later as his prospective wife, but she does not accept all circumstances, contrary to Mrs de Winter. When Jane discovers that Rochester is already married, she does not feel able to stay with him under the given circumstances.[53] Similar to Mrs de Winter, Jane tries to free herself of her double Bertha, which is a common trope in literature about doubles, according to Otto Rank.[54] Thus, in both novels, the second wives are haunted by their doubles, who impersonate the husbands' first wives, and they try to overcome the first wives' influence.

Moreover, such doubles may not only create a contrast but can even represent a suppressed character trait of the person they double, which applies well to Bertha and Jane in *Jane Eyre*. In line with this argument, Gilbert and Gubar propose that Bertha represents the rage and rebellion Jane feels towards patriarchal society but does not dare to enact.[55] Hints towards a rebellious side to Jane already appear in the section that narrates her childhood. An example is her behaviour towards her aunt Mrs Reed, whom she insults repeatedly.[56] Furthermore, there are physical descriptions of Jane that connect her to Bertha. When she is talking to Mrs Reed, she is described as having a savage voice, and when she is locked in the Red Room for punishment, it says that she utters a 'wild, involuntary cry.'[57] These elements link her directly to the monstrous qualities with which Bertha is associated, especially because Bertha is often represented through her laughing, murmuring, and crying in the novel.[58] Jane tries to leave her rebellious traits behind, but she keeps being haunted by them in the form of Bertha until she takes action by leaving Thornfield Hall and Mr Rochester.

The interplay between Jane and her double Bertha in *Jane Eyre* strongly impacts Jane's power position in the context of the domestic patriarchal structures at Thornfield Hall. Bertha counteracts Mr Rochester's patriarchal power in several ways. One element that creates an inequality in power between Rochester and Jane is the fact that he conceals the existence of his first wife, Bertha, from her.[59] This power structure is acted against by elements such as Bertha's screams and the fire set to Rochester's bedroom by Bertha; the final break of the power hierarchy in this realm is achieved when Bertha shows herself to Jane on the night before the wedding, which forces Rochester to reveal his secret and create equality in knowledge.[60] Jane's recognition of Rochester's deeds lessens their bond and gives her a tangible reason to prevent the wedding. This is crucial for Jane's position in society since she would have entered the marriage in an inferior position due to her lack of knowledge, wealth and social status. After Bertha has led to an increase in knowledge on Jane's side, she further lessens Rochester's power position when she burns down Thornfield Hall, which is symbolic of his wealth and his patriarchal power, as discussed above.[61] Furthermore, he loses his eyesight and one arm during the fire, which renders him physically less powerful and negatively impacts his social status.[62] At the same time, Jane

---

[51] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 316-319.
[52] ibid., 306.
[53] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 380.
[54] Otto Rank, *Der Doppelgänger: Eine Psychoanalytische Studie* (Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1925), 24, Internet Archive.
[55] Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, 339.
[56] Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 37.
[57] ibid., 13; 38.
[58] ibid., 125-129.
[59] ibid., 351.
[60] ibid., 125-129; 176-177; 340-341.
[61] ibid., 514-518.
[62] ibid., 519.

keeps her good health and even increases her wealth by inheriting from an uncle.[63] Jane, thus, manages to overcome her inferiority, which was caused by the patriarchal structures that used to govern her relationship with Mr Rochester, largely through the support provided by Bertha, her rebellious double.

Turning back to du Maurier's *Rebecca*, the discussed concept of the first wife symbolising a hidden character trait can also be applied to Rebecca and the late Mrs de Winter. In contrast to Jane, Mrs de Winter is never described by any rebellious character traits; instead, she pays particular attention to behave according to the patriarchal rules imposed upon her, symbolised by Maxim's wishes. This already becomes apparent when Mrs de Winter is introduced to the routines at Manderley shortly after her arrival at the estate, which she proves willing to follow without question.[64] In a sense, Rebecca can be seen as the sum of rebellious traits that Mrs de Winter would never dare to show, even though they shape her identity through Rebecca's haunting. Firstly, the aspect of naming is crucial since the late Mrs de Winter is not given a first name throughout the novel. Rather, she is only known as Mrs de Winter, which connects her to her husband, Maxim de Winter, and his first wife, Rebecca de Winter, as she takes on their last name. Secondly, Mrs de Winter's fate is strongly connected to Rebecca. Mrs de Winter feels threatened by Rebecca and attempts to repress Rebecca's former presence at Manderley. In an attempt to justify her existence at Manderley, she tries to incorporate the perfect wife and refrain from any rebellious behaviour. However, Mrs de Winter does not manage to eliminate Rebecca from her life, primarily due to Rebecca's omnipresence in the form of objects, conversations about her and, finally, the discovery of Rebecca's body.[65] Only when she acknowledges Rebecca's existence, and by that her suppressed rebellious traits, can she escape the haunting.

Mrs de Winter's confrontation with and reaction to Rebecca strongly impacts her position in the patriarchally dominated estate of Manderley. Since Mrs de Winter is already married to Maxim when she realises Rebecca's haunting and her inferiority in the system, she cannot simply leave Maxim as Jane did with Mr Rochester. Auba Llompart Pons goes even further by arguing that Mrs de Winter, in fact, 'needs patriarchy because it is what secures her one and only identity.'[66] This connects well to the observation that Mrs de Winter is only defined by her role as Maxim's husband since she remains unnamed until the wedding and is utterly dependent on him as she has no financial or social resources. This may explain why the revelation of Maxim murdering Rebecca and his confession of never loving her draws Mrs de Winter closer to him and has, thus, the opposite effect compared to the revelation of Mr Rochester's secret in *Jane Eyre*. Like Jane, Mrs de Winter gains power by discovering the truth. Mrs de Winter's self-confidence and power position are elevated because Maxim makes himself highly vulnerable to her. Rebecca is no longer a threat to Mrs de Winter's relationship with Maxim since he never loved Rebecca.[67] As Pons mentions, the roles of power are switched when the secret is revealed because Mrs de Winter is no longer treated as a child; instead, Maxim acts childishly by re-iterating the assumption that Rebecca has won their battle when her body is found on the boat.[68] Thus, through her double Rebecca, Mrs de Winter elevates her power position at Manderley and becomes more of Maxim's equal. However, the haunting only truly ends after Mrs Danvers has burnt down Manderley, most likely to revenge Rebecca.[69] As in *Jane Eyre*, this act initiated by the rebellious double represents the metaphorical destruction of domestic patriarchal structures, represented by the burning of the patriarch's estate house. Despite both

[63] ibid., 461.
[64] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 88-92.
[65] ibid., 298.
[66] Auba Llompart Pons, 'Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne du Maurier's "Rebecca,"' in *Atlantis* 35, no. 1 (2013): 78, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43486040.
[67] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 304.
[68] Pons, 'Patriarchal Hauntings,' 74.
[69] du Maurier, *Rebecca*, 427-428.

Maxim's and Mrs de Winter's attempts to continue living in these structures, the novel shows that patriarchy is doomed to end.

In conclusion, the ghostly appearances of the unruly first wives in both *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca* are symbolic of the patriarchal oppression in the chosen domestic settings. While both first wives are not truly supernatural ghosts, the novels still draw from the tradition of the typical Gothic ghost story by depicting them in a ghostly manner. In *Jane Eyre*, it is Mr Rochester's act of locking his first wife, Bertha, in the attic of Thornfield Hall which reduces her to a ghostly figure in the novel. This is presented as a punishment for her madness, which was characterised as unruly behaviour at the time the novel was written. Similarly, in *Rebecca*, Maxim's first wife Rebecca is murdered by her husband when she does not satisfy his expectations anymore, which sets the circumstances for her ghostliness. The oppressive treatment of the first wives by both Mr Rochester and Maxim, thus, causes a haunting that further affects their second wives. The strong impact of the first wives on the second wives, as well as the ghostly representation of the first wives, further lends itself to the interpretation of the first wives as the repressed doubles of the second wives. These doubles may, in fact, symbolise suppressed, rebellious character traits of the second wives. Only after the second wives acknowledge the existence of the doubles, i.e., their rebellious traits, can the given patriarchal structures truly be counteracted. In both novels, this is symbolised by the destruction of the estate houses that represent the husbands' patriarchal power. Consequently, both novels allude to a future in which patriarchal structures are counteracted, given that women allow themselves to show rebellious behaviour and fight for their personal freedom.

Bibliography

Botting, Fred. *Gothic*. Taylor & Francis, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Briggs, Julia. 'The Ghost Story.' In *A New Companion to the Gothic*, edited by D. Punter. Wiley, 2012. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Penguin Books, 1847.

Castle, Terry. *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture*. Columbia University Press, 1993.

Cooper, Glynis. *Struggle and Suffrage in Manchester: Women's Lives and the Fight for Equality*. Pen & Sword Books Limited, 2018. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Du Maurier, Daphne. *Rebecca*. Virago Press, 2015.

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Gaubar, Susan. *The Madwoman in the Attic*. Yale University Press, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Heiland, Donna. *Gothic and Gender: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, 2004. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Palmer, Paulina. 'Lesbian Gothic: Genre Transformation, Transgression.' *Gothic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 118-119. https://doi.org/10.7227/GS.6.1.11.

Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. 'Colonial and postcolonial Gothic.' In *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, edited by J. E. Hogle. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Pons, Auba Llompart. 'Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne du Maurier's "Rebecca."' In *Atlantis* 35, no. 1 (2013): 69-83. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43486040.

Punter, David and Byron, Glennis. *Gothic: The Gothic*. Blackwell Publishing, 2004. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Purves, Maria. *Women and Gothic*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014.

Rank, Otto. *Der Doppelgänger: Eine Psychoanalytische Studie*. Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1925. Internet Archive.

Rosenfield, Claire. 'The Shadow Within: The Conscious and Unconscious Use of the Double.' In *Daedalus* 92, no. 2 (1963): 326-344. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026781.

Sanders, Valerie. 'First Wave Feminism.' In *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*, edited by S. Gamble. Routledge, 2001. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203011010.

Talairach-Vielmas, Laurence. 'Madwomen and Attics.' In W*omen and the Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, edited by A. Horner and S. Zlosnik. Edinburgh University Press, 2016. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bgzdfx.

Williams, Anne. 'Wicked Women.' In *Women and the Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion*, edited by A. Horner and S. Zlosnik. Edinburgh University Press, 2016. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1bgzdfx.