

Abstract: This dissertation aims to provide an insight into English country house fiction by twentieth and twenty-first century authors, such as E.M. Forster, Evelyn Waugh, Iris Murdoch, Alan Hollinghurst, and Sarah Waters. The variety of literary depictions of the country house reflects the physical diversification of the buildings in question, from smaller variants to formerly grand residences on the brink of physical collapse. The country house is explored within the wider social and cultural contexts of the period, including contemporary architectural development. Given the exceptionally evocative and integrating properties that the influential theories of Martin Heidegger and Gaston Bachelard attribute to a house in general, it is unsurprising that the concept of the country house has inspired discussion of such a wide spectrum of topics. Its unique centring quality is echoed in the dense intertextuality prominently marking its literary representations, and enables the successful implementation of various temporal idiosyncrasies, which often set the house apart from the habitual passing of time. Within the scope of contemporary fiction, architecture and poetics of space, the country house accentuates different conceptions of dwelling. Consequently, the literary portrayals of the country house can be seen as both prefiguring and reflecting the contemporary practice of living.

Key words : country house fiction, country house, house, spatial poetics, dwelling, literature and architecture, architecture and literature, E.M. Forster, Evelyn Waugh, *The Sea, The Sea, The Stranger's Child, The Little Stranger, The Uninvited Guests*