

## ACTIVITIES OF IRIS MURDOCH

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### Abstract

The article presents a brief biography of the talented English writer Iris Murdoch and some information about his development as a writer. Iris Murdoch, both a scientist and a writer, has been particularly active in the modernist and postmodern world, with a cultural and spiritual crisis in society and a tumultuous influx of innovation. The work shows the unique creative path of the author, the features of the English character in his novels.

**Keywords and phrases:** novel, Iris Mirdok, modernism, existentialism, character, problem. Iris Murdoch (Jean Iris Murdoch) holds a significant place in the history of British literature as a prolific writer, playwright and scholar. During his creative activity, the writer wrote twenty-six novels, several dramatic works, scientific treatises on the history of ancient literature, the leading features of English literature, existentialism, and the work of John-Paul Satra. Several times he was awarded prestigious awards in England.

The biography of Jean Iris Murdoch began on July 15, 1919 in the capital of Ireland - Dublin. Her father was a cavalryman in the First World War, and later entered the civil service. The girl's mother was an opera singer. Young people first met in Dublin, and in 1918 they tied the knot. A year later, a daughter appeared in the family [1].

In 1920, Iris moved to London with her parents. It was in the capital of England that the childhood years of the writer passed. Despite this, the problems of her native Ireland always touched the woman to the quick, she did not deny her origin. In an interview, the author mentioned that her childhood was happy, and called her union with her parents «the perfect trinity of love».

Murdoch graduated from an independent school in Roehampton, after which she entered an educational institution for girls in Bristol. In 1938, she became a student at Somerville College, which belongs to the University of Oxford. At first, the girl studied in the English language course, and later began to study ancient and British literature. In 1942, she received a diploma of the 1st degree, graduating from college with excellent marks.

From 1938-1942 he studied ancient languages, ancient history and philosophy at Somerville College, Oxford University. Newham then studied philosophy more broadly and in depth in college. It is here that he listens to the lectures of the mature professor of his time, the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Here he became interested in the philosophy of modernism, in particular the theory of existentialism. True, he is seriously interested in such issues as the thinkers of antiquity, including Plato and his knowledge of the universe, the theory of building society, the place of a person in a developed society, personal life, and these views are also

expressed in his novels. However, he studied the theory of John Paul Sartre during his master's degree in analysis. He meets and talks with Sartre. Iris Murdoch understood the teachings of this current of modern literature so deeply that she instilled the ideas of existentialism into the minds of the heroes of her life and novels. As a result, the description of his novels, the language of the work and the state of mind of the characters are recognized by contemporaries [4].

Murdoch's writing career began rather late. Her debut novel, *Under the Net*, was published in 1954. For a woman, writing stories was at first an amateur pastime. She composed even before the official release of her book, but the initial literary attempts had not been demonstrated to the mass public before that.

Critics have received «*Under the Net*» in completely different ways: someone admired, and someone categorically denied the complex combination of traditions of picaresque novel and philosophy. In the future, the book was included in the list of «100 unsurpassed English-language novels of all time» according to *Time* magazine. Iris' debut work was the only one of her entire bibliography with the dominance of the humorous genre.

Deciding to engage in literary work professionally, Murdoch began to act productively and confidently. Just 2 years after the first success, her second book appeared on the shelves of bookstores, entitled «*Escape from the Wizard*», which was largely influenced by the then popular philosophy of existentialism [5].

In 1953, a woman created a book about Jean-Paul Sartre. At the very beginning of her career, carried away by the philosophy of existentialism, the girl was influenced by such novels by this author as *The Wall* and *Nausea*.

The end of the 60s was marked by the publication of a series of books, called by the researchers of Iris's work «novels of horror and secrets»: «*The Unicorn*», «*The Time of Angels*», «*The Severed Head*», «*Italian*». In them, Murdoch explores the influence of destructive passions on a person [6].

The comic overtones are continued in Murdoch's *Wild Rose*. In it, the woman managed to prove herself as a talented realist writer, as well as a successor to the traditions laid down by the classics of British literature. The novel talks about freedom, love and marriage, and the author studies the relationship between these phenomena. In 1974, a 4-episode film was released on American television, which is an adaptation of this book [7].

The 1970s were characterized by Iris' maturity as a writer. She sought to continue the traditions laid down by Shakespeare, who is an exemplary embodiment of goodness. The author immersed her readers in theatrical poetics and created her own versions of classic literary stories. The «Shakespearean» cycle includes such works as «*Jackson's Dilemma*», «*The Black Prince*», «*Sea, Sea*». Classical heroes received an updated interpretation from Murdoch and switched their attention to the search for the meaning of life and goodness.

During a significant period of her creative life, Iris drew inspiration from Plato. She began to



reflect in her books on the search for a moral life, the relationship between illusion and reality. In the work "The Man of Accidents", the woman talked profusely about moral quests, and also explored the moral problem of the responsibility of the individual to other people, using the comic form of presentation.

Iris' novel *The Black Prince*, which is traditionally considered the best, was released in 1973. This work represents the author's interpretation of the story of Hamlet. Literary critics also rank it among the «Platonic» series [8].

The «Black Prince» is characterized by a symbolic and intricate structure, as well as saturation with philosophical views. The complex construction of the plot is replaced by frequent reflections of the protagonist. Thus, the book turned out to be difficult, but very exciting. In addition, the author does not fully interpret the novel, offering readers several options for its interpretation. The novel, which won the James Tait Prize and was nominated for the Booker Prize, was met with critical acclaim.

This is especially evident in the image of young people, who went down in history in the middle of the last century under the name of the «nervous generation of youth», and in their indecision in making decisions. It is interesting that the writer tries on the views of existentialism on a dilemma, on the choice of one of several options for a life path. After graduating from two universities, Iris Murdoch initially followed the ideas of Marxism. For a certain period, the Communist Party operates in Great Britain. He supports their ideas such as humanism and social justice. He opposes some government decisions. However, after a certain period of time, he becomes disillusioned with them. Hearing from his acquaintances that there was work in the British Treasury, he got a job there and worked there from 1942 to 1944. It turns out that even here there are few or no people who understand him and appreciate his work. In 1945-1946 he worked as an administrative officer in the direction of humanitarian aid and rehabilitation in the UN offices in Austria and Belgium. But he quickly returns home and finds himself unemployed for some time. During this period, he rethinks his whole life. Now he considers his work philosophy and literature. Continuing the scientific research he started in the magistracy, he defends his dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in philosophy. During this period, she falls in love with Franz Steiner, a poet and an intelligent young man of Czech origin. They live together for about four years, but in 1952 Franz leaves this world [9].

After that, Iris Murdoch's life begins to suffer again from such problems as finding a solution to her problems, showing people the essence of life and existence. It was difficult for him to find people who understood his feelings. He realizes that his main task in life is not to teach students, and although late, he is puzzled by the philosophy of life that torments him. As a result, he tries to understand artistic creativity. In addition, during the years 1953-1967, the scientist taught philosophy and fiction as his main work.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of all his scientific research, in 1953 he wrote a scientific-critical essay entitled «Sartre the Romantic Rationalist». Entering into controversy with Jean Paul Sartre, he also puts forward his personal views on existentialism. As a result, his fame in the scientific community is increasing. But he soon realizes that it is impossible to change the consciousness and thinking of ordinary people with the help of scientific thinking and scientific-theoretical views. He is now beginning to write fiction and is writing his first major novel Under the Net. The work will be published in 1954. Here, in the image of a lazy, cunning, but good poet and translator, a young man trying to find his place in life, he describes the spiritual emptiness of the post-war years, doubts, scientists who spend their lives reading dry philosophy. and occupy people with different ideas and influenced by the ideas of existentialism. But in a work of art, in contrast to a scientific work, reality is considered artistically. As a result, the novel will appeal to many. The novel brings great fame to the author. Nevertheless, Iris Murdoch continues to teach at the university. At the same time, he continues to write fiction.

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