

ЛІТЕРАТУРОЗНАВСТВО

UDC 82

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/2710-4656/2025.3.2/01>*Abdullayeva Ye. A.*

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IRIS MURDOCH'S "UNDER THE NET": SYMBIOSIS OF PHILOSOPHICAL NOVEL TRADITIONS WITH "THE OPEN WORK"

Iris Murdoch's creativity, a representative of the realistic and modernist novel, is distinguished by its connection with artistic experiments and its influence on newly emerging trends. It brings together the traditional philosophical novel with the already formed modernist novel, changes the canons of the traditional English novel, and takes the novel genre to a new level. The characteristic feature of the new symbiosis in I. Murdoch's creativity is, first of all, the combination of literary and philosophical directions, various trends, and various narrative techniques, the complete and comprehensive description of human destinies and existence, and complex reality. The article analyzes the novel "Under the Net" from this perspective, investigates and studies it in the light of the above-mentioned problems.

The author of the article expresses his attitude to the philosophical ideas of J.P. Sartre and L. Wittgenstein used in the novel "Under the Net", identifying them as the features of the manifestation of I. Murdoch's novel. He notes that such an approach is a sign of connection with the traditions of the English philosophical novel. But at the same time, he emphasizes that I. Murdoch uses the concept of "the open work" – the narrative used by modernists. The principle of such an approach opens up a symbiosis of the philosophical novel and the "the open work" in I. Murdoch's authorial narrative. I. Murdoch uses traditional experience, integrates with them and creates new improvisational possibilities and poetic technologies. The author of the article sheds light on the ambiguous world of the novel of the writer, and puts forward innovations that can allow for a more complete understanding of the processes taking place in the modern literary and cultural environment as a whole.

Key words: Iris Murdoch, "Under the Net", Existentialism, Philosophical Novel, "The Open Work", Authorial Narrative.

Introduction. Post-war English literature, especially novel creation, was associated with the philosophy of existentialism, and the novels of this period did not appear as "pure" as for ex. French existentialist novels. English existentialist novels raised deep problems based on existential absurdity in the context of modernist paradigms. Iris Murdoch, a prominent representative of English literature, who was associated with the traditions of philosophical prose, was also associated with realism based on national literary traditions on the one hand, and modernism on the other. It is for this reason that I. Murdoch's novels should be studied in the interaction of various literary and artistic systems.

Murdoch's intellectual novels combine a unique system of signs, philosophical tendencies that

encompass cultural codes. The structure and internal connection of such novels are connected with several literary-philosophical systems, determining the writer's novel world. It can be said with confidence that I. Murdoch's novels are a single unity of all elements of the artistic structure of the text created with his philosophical-aesthetic views. This important condition serves the writer to benefit from the principles of various literary-philosophical systems and organizes his novel world.

The aim of the study is to analyze the symbiosis of philosophical novel traditions with the "open work" of the novel "Under the Net" by I. Murdoch.

Among the research methods, comparative-typological and structural-semantic research methods were used. In the process of research, in accordance

with the nature of specific tasks, such research methods as description, analysis and interpretation were used, as well as scientific provisions from existing studies of specialists on this problem.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

I. Murdoch's novels are a mixture of several literary directions. His novels are a synthesis, a combination of philosophical, historical, memorial genres. I. Murdoch's work, as a rule, is devoted to the study of English literary traditions and commentary on the national cultural context. The writer's creativity was greatly influenced by various philosophical trends of the twentieth century. Special studies have been written on the problems of I. Murdoch's work, touching upon various aspects of his works. P. Conradi "The Saint and the Artist: A Study of the Fiction of Iris Murdoch" [5], J. Bayley "Elegy for Iris" [2], E. Dipple "Iris Murdoch: Work for the Spirit" [6], D. Johnson "Iris Murdoch" [9], R. Todd "Iris Murdoch: The Shakespearean Interest" [20], C. Kane "Iris Murdoch, Muriel Spark and John Fowles: Didactic Demons" [10], E. Brugmans "Poetry in the Novels of Iris Murdoch" [1] investigate the writer's novels as the most successful modernist and realistic texts. I. Murdoch describes English traditions, national and cultural values in the context of philosophical trends.

R. Safulina in her research work "Oriental Philosophical Systems and Work of Iris Murdoch" [18] defines the work of the writer of the most different philosophical systems – existentialism, marxism, freudianism, pragmatism. N. Stepanyuk explores the creativity of the writer through the philosophical principles of "Evolution of Iris Murdoch's Philosophical Novels" [19] and defines her as a writer-philosopher. D. Murtazina in her research work "Gender Problems of I. Murdoch's Novels" [16] studies the works of A. Murdoch in the context of gender studies and feminist literature.

Task statement. In our article, I. Murdoch's novel "Under the Net" is studied from the point of view of the structure and poetics of the modernist novel genre. I. Murdoch's novel is studied in the form of symbiosis of the English traditional philosophical novel and the modernist "open work".

Statement of the problem. The "uniqueness" inherent in I. Murdoch's style manifests itself from the early stages of her creativity and does not escape the attention of literary criticism. The writer's novels, which benefit from the context of "The Open Work" [7] are written in accordance with ambiguous interpretations and an open text.

Throughout her career, she wrote twenty-six novels and a number of philosophical and dramatic

works. I. Murdoch, as a rule, created complex life situations for her heroes and presented them with a choice, showing all the good and bad qualities of a person. Her main themes are the current situation of an intellectual person in front of the rules of life and society, the interaction of intellect and feelings, art and reality, ethical norms and morality, and examining them with philosophical and spiritual questions. In all her works, the writer acts as if she were a psychologist, a connoisseur of the human soul. Luisa Muraro quite rightly notes that "for Iris Murdoch fiction is imagination saving reality because while it makes us abandon the trap of generalizations" [15].

Although I. Murdoch's novels are considered the best samples of English realism, the writer is also called a representative of modernism, especially existentialism. There is some truth here. Thus, the works of I. Murdoch, which combine the best philosophical and artistic traditions, occupy a special place in the literary process of his time. Apparently, this is significant in that the writer was closely connected with the modernist aesthetic trends existing in the English literature and wrote under the influence of the philosophy of existentialism. A number of studies are also found in literary criticism regarding the study of the problem in this way. B. Mete writes that although they associate him with realism, "in accordance with her particular understanding of the meaning of those traditional approaches" [11, p.149] I. Murdoch creates a new style. But it should also be noted that there are also discussions about I. Murdoch's unusual writing style and the issues he raises. She herself wrote about this, "Moreover, literature or activity of telling stories function as defeating formlessness of the absurd world. For writer it's a challenge to expel fantasy and exhibit the world as itself" [13, p.105]. It is for this reason that she is also called the author of philosophical novels. The writer refers to the work of many philosophers, thus gradually creating his own moral philosophy.

Born on July 15, 1919 in Dublin, Ireland, I. Murdoch's surname comes from the Scots-Celtic languages. Murdoch, who moved to London with her family as a child, received a higher education, studied ancient philology, ancient world history and philosophy at Oxford University, and then studied philosophy at Cambridge University. I. Murdoch, who was closely familiar with the philosophy of existentialism, wrote her first critical essay, "Sartre: Romantic Rationalist".

In 1954, her first novel, "Under the Net", was published, and after this novel, she wrote "The Flight

from the Enchanter", "The Sandcastle", "The Bell", "A Severed Head", "An Unofficial Rose", "The Unicorn", "The Red and the Green", "The Time of the Angels", "Bruno's Dream", "The Black Prince", "A Word Child", "The Sea", "The Sea" and other novels.

The English writer and critic A. Bayett liked the writer and praised her works as the most beautiful samples of English literature. In her book dedicated to I. Murdoch, she wrote that her novels always open wide avenues for fantasy, and thanks to this the author brings additional brilliance to the work [4].

For this reason, U. Eco's concept of an "open work", which implies "a text that is multifaceted and open to interpretations", can be applied to I. Murdoch's novels. In U. Eco's words, a work can be considered open if it creates opportunities for different interpretations, has ambiguity, and the reader joins several reading processes in reading the text. In other words, according to U. Eco, such a work is a structure, a "unity" of elements that enter into various interactions [7, p.137]. I. Murdoch's novel "Under the Net", written in the context of philosophical and literary-philosophical discourses, indicates that it belongs to the type of "open work" with its ambiguous reading. Apparently, for this reason, the analysis of the novel opens the way to new interpretations every time.

Outline of the main material of the study. The story of the novel "Under the Net" is narrated by a literary translator named Jake Donaghue, who has not yet put his life in order. As he himself says, "I want everything in my life to have sufficient reason" [14, p.38], on the other hand, he can't put his life in order. Each new attempt brings new problems. Life tests him, first he loses his temporary home and goes in search of a place to live. Then he is left without money and takes up writing jobs he doesn't want, and even works as a hospital orderly. But despite this, Jake doesn't become discouraged, doesn't fall into depression, doesn't condemn his life, he simply doesn't understand why his affairs are going the way they are. A meeting with Anna Quentin, whom he met by chance, changes his whole life, opens the way to incredible and unexpected events.

Life is a romantic and mysterious, miraculous world for him, which is why Jake refuses to compromise and half-truthful positions and go his own way, not wanting to live under the domination of materiality: "When does one ever know a human being? Perhaps only after one has realised the impossibility of knowledge and renounced the desire for it and finally ceased to feel even the need for it. But then what one achieves is no longer knowledge, it's a kind of co-existence" [14, p.62].

The author describes the inner world of the hero in such a way that the reader sees his psychological state. As the novel progresses, the hero gradually sees, understands and comprehends the moments when lonely people meet, encounter and come face to face. He realizes that a person wants to get rid of the web of coincidences and absurdities that surrounds him, but this web can only be freed if he destroys it at the cost of his own life, because the web that surrounds him is life itself.

The novel "Under the Net" deals with the dramatization of philosophical ideas, the complexity of human characters. The positions of the characters in the work are measured by their individual character, subjective approaches. This is due to the existentialism that was fashionable in England during the time of I. Murdoch and its place in linguistic philosophy. The issues of free choice, individuality of situations are expressed in the novel by the problem of existential choice. It is clear that all the listed problems are based on the philosophical views of J.P. Sartre. In I. Murdoch's essay "Sartre: Romantic Rationalist", she puts forward a number of considerations about literature and philosophy. And we should note that this essay sheds light on her almost subsequent work and determines the artistic and aesthetic position of the author. On the other hand, along with his philosophical ideas, I. Murdoch gives the novel a comic effect, presenting the hero's adventures in the spirit of an English adventure novel. For this reason, the events take on a humorous and tragicomic character. As for its connection with the problems of existentialism, the novel focuses on the absurdity of life and the idea that love is an illusion. The relationship between Jake and Anna Quentin, Hugo Belfounder's approach to the world and people become clear in the light of the problems of existentialism. J.P. Sartre's idea "Hell Is Other People" (No Exit) is that according to I. Murdoch's hero Jake, hell doesn't belong to people themselves, but only to the existence of self-centered, indifferent and vulgar thoughts. J.P. Sartre's idea can actually be applied to the description of the invisible sides of complex human relationships in his work "Being and Nothingness". He notes that human relationships consist of a constant struggle. Jake and other characters in the novel also go through this struggle.

The friendship between Jake and Hugo Belfounder shows the idea put forward by L. Wittgenstein that words have no meaning in the world of feelings. Wittgenstein writes that "In the picture of language, we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the

word. It is the object for which the word stands” [21, p.38]. So, according to L. Wittgenstein, words are sufficient in a certain context of time. Human feelings are infinite and no words are enough to explain them. Jake's editing of his friend's thoughts and publishing them in the form of a book is not successful and is not accepted by readers. This is because it is impossible to express human feelings, what they feel and their state in words, because they lose and distort meaning. As L. Wittgenstein also noted: “The different nets correspond to different systems for describing the world” [21, p. 58] It seems that this is why J. Ridenhour, who analyzes “Under the Net”, writes that language can't explain the truth, “therefore that silence is preferable to speech, action to dialogue” [17].

I. Murdoch transforms J.P. Sartre's ideas about existence in a unique way, transforming them into the idea that the reality of thoughts exists in the essence of words. That is why her hero Jake moves away from real and unreal words and becomes silent, moves away from literary translations and writing books and works as a janitor. His meeting with Anna also takes place in an atmosphere of silence. For Jake, love is no longer connected with the idea of the absence of unnecessary words, but simply expressing oneself silently. Anna's singing is a novelty for Jake. However, Anna moves away from him and turns to the art of pantomime. Because this type of art is a purer and more honest type of art. According to the author, modern man hides his true face under a mask in order to exist in life. If human life consists of illusions, then life has no meaning. I. Murdoch puts forward such a thesis in the novel that a person will go through suffering and be reborn, but this will have no end, because he will fall into the illusions of a new life. Therefore, the heroes of the work are doomed to exist under a big net. This idea is indirectly noted by T. Milligan and he writes that “her novels could be philosophical in a robust sense, or (even stronger) that they could be instances of philosophy” [12, p.165].

As can be seen, the title of the novel expresses the chaos of existence, this chaos draws people into its bosom and brings them into mutual misunderstanding, creates unimaginable obstacles and abysses. On the other hand, the word net in the title of the novel can be interpreted in several meanings, that is, a person's principles and beliefs trap him, which in turn binds him. A. Murdoch puts existential problems into a new artistic form in unique interpretations and, moreover, adds Wittgenstein's aesthetic views to the text.

The incredible and unexpected connection of events in the author's narrative indicates the confusion

of human thoughts. In describing the fictional world of the novel, the author considers all the details, creating an atmosphere of reality, but the reader feels that unusual, fantastic events are about to occur, as if the whole world is enclosed in the thoughts of the hero. It is this approach that brings the novel closer to existentialism.

The ideas voiced by Hugo Belfounder, another protagonist of the novel, stem from ideas from Wittgenstein's “Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus”. Wittgenstein's influence can also be seen in the title of the work. Wittgenstein repeatedly presented the image of a net as a picture of reality in how a person expresses the world. According to the thinker, between truth and its existence lies a net consisting of theories, ideas, concepts, and language itself. This idea is included in Hugo Belfounder's worldview and manifests itself in his intellectual battle with Jake Donahue. According to Hugo, no matter how hard a person tries, he can never escape from the “net” consisting of words and ideas, and therefore can't perceive reality and fully understand it. According to Jack, existence can be truly understood, and silence is not a way out, but a bigger trap than language games. Jake's attempt towards freedom of choice, decision, and behavior, the idea of truly understanding existence, is a way out of the “net” in the future. As you can see, for Hugo, the concept of the “net” is a model for understanding life, understanding it, and thus for a comfortable human existence. No matter how much a person tries to describe his life in words, he will simply escape from reality, hiding under a net of words and concepts. Atamoglan asserts that “texts containing of one single language and by means of transferring information, they possess modes of equal rights” [8, p.121].

On the other hand, the novel “Under the Net” expresses the “net” of humanity and at the same time can be interpreted as a symbol of an unfree personality, a person who is dependent on external and internal interventions. In the author's concept, this is the “net” of love, the “net” of moral duty, the “net” created by relationships between people.

So, the “net” is our knowledge that encompasses a person in life situations that come to mind and do not come to mind, affects him, and prevents him from seeing the world as it is. This knowledge prevents a person from making the right decision, prevents him from being himself. The idea of the work is that a person should get rid of the “net” and try to become a new, free person. People like Jake can focus on good deeds and achieve freedom more painlessly. I. Murdoch puts his heroes through a unique

“Purgatory”. Such purification consists of pains such as loving and dying.

Wandering the streets of London all the time, Jake meets interesting, a little strange people. They are writers, philosophers, just intellectuals, artists and scientists. For the first time, the reader sees London through the eyes of the author, follows his values. Emphasizing this important point, Ch. Bove, unlike other researchers, presents I. Murdoch's work as a writer who represents a wide spectrum of human relationships in this respect [3, p. 29].

Finally, we should also note that the epigraph of the novel is taken from John Dryden's work “The Secular Masque”. The epigraph taken from the English poet and playwright is an allegory for human life. People are forced to wear a “secular masque” in order to adapt to certain circumstances. I. Murdoch combines the baroque aesthetics of J. Dryden with the problems of existentialism, and sometimes hints at the features characteristic of courtly poetry, parodies it. Jake's thoughts about Anna give reason to say this. On the other hand, Jake's warlike wanderings remind of the heroes of an adventure novel. I. Murdoch's artistic experiments do not bypass Shakespeare's play “A Midsummer Night's Dream”, the relationships between the heroes of the novel “Under the Net” are just as intricate as in the play. It is for this reason that the novel has several shades of meaning. The comic fable and Jake's adventures, lost in the labyrinths of love, are more reminiscent of an adventure novel. On the other hand, the love story of the main character hints at a knightly novel. Finally, the description of the ideas of existentialism, which highlight the hero's spiritual searches, seems to be the conceptual basis

of the work. The author especially emphasizes the idea that the existence and essence of the hero are connected precisely with this idea. By the way, it should be noted that this problem makes the author think more and for this reason he dwells on it more.

Conclusions. Love and death are the touchstones of I. Murdoch's creativity. Love, like life itself, is connected with death, and therefore it has many sides. Love embodies a miracle and mystery in the author's works, but at the same time, due to the duality that lies at its core, in its nature, it can both elevate and humiliate a person. If it is arrogant and selfish, it turns into a “net”, but if it is real and selfless, it becomes a great force and has the power to save humanity. Such love is the path to beauty, goodness, self-realization.

There is no secondary hero in I. Murdoch's novel “Under the Net”. The life of each character plays a special role in the organization of the novel, helps to reveal its idea. But it is interesting that they don't remember real people, they think, talk, hypothesize all the time, don't eat and sleep like other living characters, don't live with the worries of everyday life. Apparently, such an approach was the most appropriate artistic way for the author to express his own view of life. Therefore, many researchers evaluated I. Murdoch's novels for their ability to show the true face of reality. In other words, according to the author, creativity should neither lull people to sleep nor console them. Her revealing of reality, although tragic, is the true face of life. I. Murdoch raises various problems in “Under the Net”, presents various ways, but doesn't express any specific idea. From this point of view, we can say with confidence that “Under the Net” is a symbiosis of the traditions of the philosophical novel and the “open work”.

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Абдуллаєва Є. А. АЙРІС МЕРДОК «ПІД СІТКОЮ»: СИМБІОЗ ТРАДИЦІЙ ФІЛОСОФСЬКОГО РОМАНУ З «ВІДКРИТИМ ТВОРОМ»

Творчість Айріс Мердок, представниці реалістичного та модерністського роману, вирізняється зв'язком з художніми експериментами та впливом на нові тенденції. Вона поєднує традиційний філософський роман з уже сформованим модерністським, змінює канони традиційного англійського роману, виводить романний жанр на новий рівень. Характерною рисою нового симбіозу у творчості А. Мердок є, насамперед, поєднання літературних і філософських напрямів, різних течій і різноманітних наративних технік, повний і всебічний опис людських долі і буття, складної дійсності. У цьому слід зазначити, що романи Еге. Мердок поєднують у собі філософські течії, які мають своєрідні знаки і культурні коди. Структура та внутрішні відносини таких романів пов'язані з кількома літературними та філософськими системами. У статті під цим кутом зору аналізується роман «Під сіткою», досліджується і вивчається у світлі вищезгаданих проблем.

Автор статті висловлює своє ставлення до філософських ідей Ж.П. Сартра та Л. Вітгенштейна, використаних у романі «Під сіткою», визначаючи їх як особливості прояву роману А. Мердок. Він зазначає, що такий підхід є ознакою зв'язку з традиціями англійського філософського роману. Але при цьому підкреслює, що А. Мердок використовує концепцію «відкритого твору» - наративу, який використовували модерністи. Принцип такого підходу відкриває симбіоз філософського роману та «відкритого твору» в авторському наративі А. Мердок. А. Мердок використовує традиційний досвід, інтегрується з ним і створює нові імпровізаційні можливості та поетичні технології. Автор статті проливає світло на неоднозначний світ роману письменниці, а також висуває новації, які можуть дозволити більш повно зрозуміти процеси, що відбуваються в сучасному літературному та культурному середовищі в цілому.

Ключові слова: Айріс Мердок, «Під сіткою», екзистенціалізм, філософський роман, «Відкритий твір», авторське наратив.