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An Annotated Bibliography:

Iris Murdoch as a Writer and a Philosopher

Introduction

Iris Murdoch is described as a vigorous and energetic writer. She started to publish her novels at the age of thirty-five (1954), and continued to publish twenty-six long novels almost every year. Her novels, which were far different from other contemporary and experimental writers, have so complicated structure that readers sometimes have difficulties in following their plots. Her works are also regarded as the nineteenth-century's heritage and her literary style is often compared with traditional British novelists such as Jane Austen, George Eliot and Charles Dickens. Her depictions of the intricate human relationship and of the imaginative human minds are often connected with Shakespeare or Tolstoy.

Murdoch was also well known as one of the British modern philosophers. With writing her literary works, she taught philosophy at Oxford and her first published book was a philosophical essay on Jean P. Sartre, who was the key person to evoke Murdoch's interests in philosophy. She wrote five philosophical critiques and sought for the relationship between art and philosophy or between moral and evil, through the studies on Plato, Kant or Wittgenstein. Her critical studies and keen analysis on modern philosophy elicit various

responses, so the valuation of her philosophical aspects depends on each researcher.

This British intelligent, although there had not been anything sensational in her life, passed away at seventy-nine after four-year suffering from Alzheimer's disease on February 8, 1999. Her husband, John Bayley, took care of her daily activities and came out her disease in public in 1997, which shocked people. Bayley published two essays, *Elegy for Iris* (1999) and *Iris and her Friends: A Memoir of Memory and Desire* (2000) which recollects her later years.

My aim in this project is to collect almost all of the materials both by Murdoch and on Murdoch's literature and philosophy published in from 1997 to 2001. An annotated bibliography which covers Murdoch's primary and secondary sources until the end of 1996 has already written by George Soule's *Four British Women Novelists: Anita Brookner, Margaret Drabble, Iris Murdoch, Barbara Pym* (1998), which will be very helpful in the comprehensive understandings of Murdoch. The readers who need to consult materials of other languages than English should choose John Fletcher and Cheryl Bove's *Iris Murdoch: A Descriptive Primary and Annotated Secondary Bibliography* (1994). It contains almost all of primary and secondary source of Murdoch until the fall of 1993, including translations of other languages than English.

This bibliography covers books, articles and essays dealing with Murdoch's literature and philosophy emerged in journals, periodicals and magazines. Most of the materials are written in English, but I could add numbers of useful Japanese articles as many as possible thanks to the geographic

advantages. Especially, the writings by Dr. Yushiro Inouchi and Hisayasu Hirukawa, the two of the Murdoch's authority in Japan, would be helpful for Murdoch's interpretations in Japan. This also holds primary sources by Murdoch published or reprinted since 1997. The entry of the items is divided into two parts; primary sources and secondary sources, and the part two has three sections; books on Murdoch, articles and essays on Murdoch's literature or philosophy, and the articles partly on Murdoch's literature or philosophy. They are arranged in chronological order.

What is to be mentioned is that after her death in 1999, some kinds of literary materials such as her poems, dramas, and her only short story begin to be published continuously. Moreover, some of the obituaries or critical essays on Murdoch treat her biographical connections with her poems, which had not been adopted until she passed away. The secondary sources since her death have not collected yet, so I hope that this bibliography might be useful for Murdochean researchers. In this bibliography, I used the abbreviation IM for Iris Murdoch.

My research sources for this project were the *MLA International Bibliography*, *OCLC Site Search Suite*, *Book Review Digest*, *COPAC*, and other resources. I had excluded the materials which do not refer to Murdoch's literary or philosophical aspects but only depict her biography. I had had to neglect some materials which Hokkaido University's brilliant interlibrary loan's system could not offer. However, I still continue to search for more materials useful for Murdoch's study.

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Part One**Primary Sources**

Murdoch, Iris. *Poems: Collected and Edited with a Biographical and critical introduction by Yozo Muroya and Paul Hullah.* Ed. Muroya, Yozo and Paul Hullah . Okayama, Jap: U Education P, 1997.

Collects IM's twenty-eight poems with biographical and critical introduction and four appendices; the chronology of poems paralleled with her novels, philosophical works and drama, the extracts of "A Year of Birds" from earlier version, the manuscript of "A Merciful Solution", the original places and dates of publication. Especially in

---. *Occasional Essays.* Ed. Yozo Muroya and Paul Hullah. Okayama, Jap.: U Education P, 1998.

Contains some essays, interviews, and four appendices including IM's linocut named 'The Prisoner'. This book notices IM's positive and serious attitude to homosexuality and her deep affection to Ireland, necessity of women's education 'really' equal to men, which offers some clues to her philosophical and literal interests.

---. *Something Special.* 1957. New York: Norton, 1999.

Portrays a girl in Dublin who is tired of her daily life and seeks for "something special". This story is the only short story written by IM.

---. *Iris Murdoch Gikyoku Nihenn.* [*Two Pieces of Dramas by Iris Murdoch.*] trans. Yozo Moroya. Tokyo: Otowa Shobo Tsurumi Shoten, 2000.

Translates into Japanese the two of Murdoch's dramas; *Joanna Joanna* (1994) and *The One Alone* (1995). The former is almost the comedy, but the latter seeks the deep thought of human beings.

---. *An Unofficial Rose.* 1962. Read by Christopher Cazenove. Audiocassette. New Millennium Audio, 2001.

Is the narration of abridged version.

---. *Sovereignty of Good.* 1970. London: Routledge, 2001.

Is the republication of IM's critical and philosophical three essays. Murdoch treats Goodness as one kind of God, and connects them with love and freedom, and she also seeks for the relationship between aesthetic idea and philosophical thoughts.

---. "Mass, Might and Myth." *Critical Essays on Elias Canetti.* Ed. David Darby. New York: G.K. Hall, 2000. 154-157.

Is a reprint from *Spectator*. 6 September 1962, but not available by now.

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Part Two

Secondary Sources

Section I: Books on Murdoch

Bayley, John. *Elegy for Iris*. New York: St. Martin's, 1999.

Mostly traces his experiences of nursing care for Alzheimer's disease-tormented IM of her last moment. Suffering from his wife's everyday activities such eating and sleeping, Bayley recollects his devotion to IM and his assistance for IM's writings, which provides us the useful suggestion of her some novels such as *The Bell*.

Nicol, Bran. *Iris Murdoch: The Retrospective Fiction*. New York: St. Martin's, 1999.

Treats the strong power of past in the plots and the characters of IM's novels. Showing how IM's novels relate to the current ideas such as postmodernism, poststructuralism, modernism and psychoanalysis, Nicol states that past in IM's fictions is influential in forming present in such various ways as guilt, nostalgia and the uncanny.

Jedrzejkiwicz, Maria. *Perspektywa Etyczna w Powiesciach Iris Murdoch*. [*The Ethical Perspective in the Novels of Iris Murdoch*.] Warsaw, Pol.: Wydawnictwa U Warszawskiego, 1999.

Philosophically examines the ethical idea in IM's fiction. Demonstrating her fiction's world, which contains various contingency of plots and characters, Jedrzejkiwicz analyzes Murdochean freedom and morality in relation to her concept of good and its influences from Plato,

Christian, Buddhist and Kant. This has an English synopsis for Polish book.

Antonaccio, Maria. *Picturing the Human: The Moral Thought of Iris Murdoch*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.

Focuses on IM's philosophical ideas in itself. Contrary to the literary researches of IM's novels, this book makes valuable remarks on IM's philosophy of moral, ethics, and concept of the individual, using the current philosophical tendency. Although IM's concept of individual consciousness and of human cognition based on the good is under discussion, Antonaccio re-evaluates IM's thoughts of systematic human life.

Bayley, John. *Iris and Her Friends: A Memoir of Memory and Desire*. New York: Norton. 2000.

Mostly portrays Bayley's memory of his life with Murdoch, of his own younger days, and of the friends around this married couple, but Bayley slightly traces Murdoch's literary and philosophical themes and re-evaluates the combination of comic and tragedy in her novels and the treatment of love and human relationship.

Hardy, Robert. *Psychological and Religious Narratives in Iris Murdoch's Fiction*. New York: Edwin Mellen P. 2000.
Not available by now because of the shipment delay.

Kimura, Masao. *Iris Murdoch to Zen*. [*Iris Murdoch and Zen Buddhism*.] Enlarged ed. Tokyo: Shohaku

Sha, 2000.

Connects IM's ideas with Japanese 'Zen Buddhism'. Kimura examines the elements of Zen Buddhism in IM's novels and defines these elements as the concept of 'innocence'. Kimura also compares IM's literature and philosophy with Daisetsu Suzuki, a prominent zen scholar in Japan.

Section :

Articles and Essays on IM's Literature or Philosophy

Antonaccio, Maria. "Moral Identity and the Good in the Thought of Iris Murdoch." Diss. U of Chicago, 1996. Discusses IM's re-description for moral self and its relation to the good, dealing with her disagreement with the contemporary ethics and considering the outline of IM' constructive implications for future ethical inquiry; re- conceptualization of the relation of ethical theory to aesthetic and religious discourse. DAI 57 (1997): 9636775.

Burns, Elizabeth. "Iris Murdoch and the Nature of Good." *Religious Studies* 33. 3 (1997): 303-313. Demonstrates IM's general concept of the Good. The Good requires certain moral rules and imaginations to be understood and even those who can recognize the Good without any imaginations are unable to define literally their perception. Showing IM's aspects of Good, Burns explains our ability to recognize goodness without any theistic religion.

Byatt, A.S. and Inges Sodre. "Iris Murdoch: Unofficial Rose." *Imagining Characters*. New York, Random: 1997. 153-191.

Critically categorizes the good and bad characters in IM's *Unofficial Rose* in a dialogue style and seeks for moral philosophy. Pointing out her artificial affinity for Dickens, Forster, and Austen, and her psychological approval to Freud, Byatt and Sodre successfully regard this novel as the realist narrative inhabited by mythic and fairytale narratives.

Hussein, Aahra A. "A Spectrum of Image-Making: Master Metaphors and Cognitive Acts in Murdoch's *Bruno's Dream*." *Orbis Litterarum* 52.4 (1997): 259-279.

Focuses on the metaphors in *Bruno's Dream* and relates them with Platonism. The metaphors in it reveal the difficulties of perceiving the reality; the reality of self or others' identity and the reality of Good which is equal to God for IM. Hussein evaluates Murdochian ability to interweave her Platonism with the ordinary life by using these metaphors.

Inouchi, Yushiro. "Hakuun-kyo wo motomete: Iris Murdoch Shikinotori to Soseki Kanshi no Setten." ["Seeking for Lord of Heaven: The Connection between Iris Murdoch's 'Year of Birds' and Soseki Natsume's Chinese Poems."] *Hikaku No Shiya*. [The Viewpoint of Comparison.] Tokyo: Oushisha, 1997. 33-66.

Clarifies the quintessence of Japanese haiku and of Zen Buddhism in IM's poem collection, 'A Year of Birds' (1984). Inouchi also finds out similarities in IM's tendency to the oriental concepts with the strong interests in Chinese poetry by Soseki Natsume, a great Japanese writer.

---. "Iris Murdoch no Shi '1939 nen no Agamemnon no Class'" ["The Poem 'Agamemnon Class 1939' by Iris Murdoch."] *Hikaku No Shiya. [The Viewpoint of Comparison.]* Tokyo: Oushisha, 1997. 67-90.

Interprets IM's 77-line poem, 'Agamemnon Class 1939' (1977) as the very rare emergence of her own experiences in her college days. As is often the case with IM's novels, Inouchi remarks on the concrete and calm images and on the absence of romantic or sentimental elements in her poems.

---. "Saikin no Iris Murdoch." ["Recent Iris Murdoch."] *Hikaku No Shiya. [The Viewpoint of Comparison.]* Tokyo: Oushisha, 1997. 91-98.

Gives the main points of IM's lecture on literature held in Tokyo in 1993. Murdoch criticizes the contemporary philosophy, especially Jacques Derrida's, because of its too esoteric theory to be understood by ordinary people. For Murdoch, the main theme of both literature and philosophy should discuss how human beings live, and her subject in her novels is the 'remorse' in human minds.

Kerr, Fergus. "Back to Plato with Iris Murdoch." *Immortal Longings: Versions of Transcending Humanity*. Norte Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame P, 1997. 68-88.

Discusses the limitations in IM's ideas of theological concept in eight sections of brief essays; Reviving ethical intuitionism, Against voluntarism in ethics, Fear of fact/value dichotomy, Against voluntarism in theology, A mother-in-law's change of heart, Obedience, not resolution, Anselm without theology, Desire for perfection, and Back to Plato.

Schneiderman, Leo. "Iris Murdoch: Fantasy vs. Imagination." *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality* 16.4 (1997): 379-397.

Considers IM's meanings of 'imagination', standing against 'fantasy'. Schneiderman pays attention to IM's uniqueness toward individuals, which is born from imagination, and her criticism of the novelist who sticks to their own emotional, traumatic and solipsistic influences in terms of her Plato's view and her own novels.

Armstrong, Isobel. "And Beauty? A Dialogue: Debating Adorno's Aesthetic Theory." *Textual Practice* 12. 2 (1998): 269-289.

Comprehensively discusses Theodor Adorno's aestheticism and partly compares his aesthetic concepts and those of IM's in a dialogue form among Isobel Armstrong, Helena Smith-Bradley, Tim Jones and the audience. Even though some of their aesthetic angles are different with one

another, both Adorno and Murdoch deal with great art equal to moral.

Nakamura, Yoshio. "The Problem of 'Reality' in Iris Murdoch's *The Black Prince*." *Naagasakidaigaku Kyouikugakubu Jinbunkagaku Kenkyunempo [Bulletin of Faculty of Education,]* Nagasaki, Jap.: Nagasaki U 1998. 31-39.

Clarifies our destiny of lack of self-recognition, focusing on the lack of 'reality' in *Black Prince*. Nakamura explains IM shows the difficulty of erasing personal ego by presenting obviously in her novels the weakness in human minds.

Painter, Rebecca Miriam. "Attending to Evil: Fiction, Apperception, and the Growth of Consciousness." Diss. New York U, 1998.

Analyzes the treatment of evil in IM's *A Fairly Honourable Defeat* and *The Message to the Planet*, and other novels by Margaret Atwood and Alice Walker. Painter defines their views of evil as the exploration of the depth of malevolent and victimized characters. *DAI* 59 (1998): 9831750.

Watson, George. "Iris Murdoch and the Net of Theory." *Hudson Review*. 51.3 (1998): 490-500.

Defines IM as a philosophical novelist, though Murdoch herself denies that. Characterizing IM's standpoint against T.S. Eliot, Sartre, Marxism and the literary

deconstruction, and her approval for Jane Austen and Shakespeare, Watson presents IM's own aspect of the world of no pattern in the context of traditional British philosophy.

Whibley, M.E.L. "Redemption of Art." *British Journal of Aesthetics* 38.4 (1998): 375-383.

Comprehensively discusses IM's standpoint between philosophy and art. Murdochian perspective is between Plato's negative views of art and Kant's regards of imagination as the center of human understandings, and Whibley explains IM could succeed in rendering art into a kind of moral by using quite paradoxical interpretation of Plato.

Arnell, Carla Ann. "Medieval Illuminations: Patterns of Medievalism in the Fiction of Janette Winterson, Iris Murdoch, and John Fowles. Diss. Northwestern U, 1999. Locates medievalism in IM's *Green Knight* shows its influence on the late twentieth-century novels such as Winterson's or Fowles'. Arnell explains that Murdoch, although showing the ethical and metaphysical usefulness of the medieval genre, employs the essence of medieval romance in order to make her characters recognize freshness and sacredness even in our ordinary life. *DAI* 60 (1999): 9932127.

Heptonstall, Geoffrey. "The Poetry of Iris Murdoch."

Contemporary Review 274. 1957, (1999): 84-89.

Analyzes 'Agamemnon Class 1939', 'Music in Ireland', and 'A Christmas Carol'. Although giving some valuable comments on them in terms of war, death and love, Heptonstall asserts the importance of examining these poetry with her novels and philosophical theses.

Hirukawa, Hisayasu. "Jiyuuna Hitono Sumikawo Egaita Sakka: Murdochno Shousetu Ron." [A Writer who Depicts the House for Men of Freedom."] *Eigo Seinen: Rising Generation* 145.3. (1999): 153-155.

Finds IM's vacillations between portraying accidental events and describing mythologies in her long pieces of novel although, Hirukawa appreciates the profundities in IM's artificial works.

Hoy, Cyrus. "Homage to Dame Iris Murdoch." *Sewanee Review* 107.4 (1999): 595-599.

Traces the series of almost all of IM's novels from *Under the Net* to *Jackson's Dilemma*, and categorizes them into the three types; comedy, character settings, and the reference to Shakespeare. Hoy pays special attentions to *Under the Net*, *The Black Prince*, and *The Good Apprentice*.

Inouchi, Yoshiro. "Iris Murdoch to Shiteki Souzouryoku: Shikinotori Heno Michi." [Iris Murdoch and her Poetic Imagination: The Passage to 'A Year of Birds'.] *Eigo Seinen: Rising Generation* 145. 3. (1999): 156-158.

Analyzes IM's poem, 'Agamemnon Class 1939' and her only

poem collection, 'A Year of Birds'. Inouchi points out the appearance of IM's inspiration from Japanese haiku, and explains that such world of oriental harmony is derived from IM's attempt to keep her mental balance with her severely intellectual novels.

Kennel, Vicki Renee Munro. "The Persistence of *Pygmalion*: Inscribed Selves in Twentieth-century British Narrative (George Bernard Shaw, John Fowles, Muriel Spark, Ford Madox Ford, Iris Murdoch)." Diss. Purdue U, 1998. *DAI* 59 (1999): 9900208.

Partly treats IM's literary works as one of the transformation of *Pygmalion* in terms of the sociological, aesthetical, and philosophical perceptions. Kennel regards some later British narratives including Murdoch's as the identity creation which philosophically makes reality and real self.

McEwan, Neil. "Iris Murdoch and talk about Plato." *Kenkyu Nenpou*. [Annual Report of Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences] (Nara, Jap. Narajoshidaigaku) 43 (1999): 93-105.

Presents IM's acceptance of the Platonism. The main characters in nearly all of her novels refer to Plato, and treat this philosopher as one of their circle members. Although this intellectual climate makes a distinction between her fiction and the actual world, McEwan regards this feature as IM's reliance on Plato.

Okada, Sumie. *Western Writers in Japan*. London: Macmillan, 1999.

Discusses some Western writers in connection with Japan. In chapter 4, Okada summarizes the interview with IM in 1989, and explains IM's thoughts of Zen Buddhism, religion and women, especially her approval of the doctrine for women's rights such as Virginia Woolf's but her severe criticism for narrowed feminism which exclude men.

Wood, James. "Iris Murdoch's Philosophy of Fiction".

Broken Estate: Essays on literature and Belief. London : Jonathan Cape, 1999. 174-185.

Critically analyzes IM's concepts of philosophy and aesthetics. Pointing out her appeal to metaphysics in relation to Plato, Kant and Simone Weil, and to transcendent as one kind of art, Wood slightly censures Murdoch, who regards art as an incarnation of the Good, for her quasi-philosophical aesthetics.

Amidon, Stephen. Rev. of *Something Special*, by Iris

Murdoch. *New York Times Book Review* 105. 46 Nov. 12 2000: 26.

Critically reviews *Something Special* with a little bit comparison with James Joyce's *The Dubliners*, but Amidon finds no merit of this short story.

Asiedu, F. B. A. "Intimations of the Good: Iris Murdoch, Richard Swinburne and the Promise of Theism." *Heythrop Journal* 42 (2001): 26-49.

Judgmentally compares IM's philosophical atheism and Richard Swinburne's theism. While Swinburne is overly-confident about theism, IM's argument insists on the Good without God. Focusing on IM's relationship with Plato, Augustine and Kant, Asiedu slightly criticizes Murdochean atheism because it seems like the latent nihilism.

Carter, Françoise. "The Transforming Power of Goodness and Love: A Study of Iris Murdoch's *Jackson's Dilemma*." *Houbungakuronshu Jinbungakkahen*. [Bulletin of the Faculty of Law and Letters Humanities.] (Ehime, Jnp.: Ehimedaigaku) 8 (2000): 1-17.

Reviews IM's last novel, *Jackson's Dilemma* (1995) and discusses the remorse, loss and love in it. The characters are obsessed by the traumatic history, and these past only can be healed by accepting the power of goodness and love. Carter shows IM's belief in goodness and her attempt to remove the miserable ego.

McColgan, Gillian, James Valentine, and Murna Downs. "Concluding narratives of a career with dementia: accounts of Iris Murdoch at her death." *Aging and Society* 20 (2000): 97-109.

Examines the narratives of IM's career and life course emerged in her obituaries. The authors indicate that Murdoch is described in the stereotype narratives as a patient of dementia and that these retrospective application of characteristics of dementia are traced with those of goodness and purity.

White, Roberta S. "Iris Murdoch: Mapping the Country of Desire." *British Women Writing Fiction*. Ed. Abby H.P. Werlock. Tuscaloosa, AL: U of Alabama P, 2000. 23-41. Explains IM's fictional styles in nearly twenty pieces of her novels, scrutinizing her character settings, the lack of chronology, the elements of comedy like Shakespeare's dramas, the male viewpoints, and the complicated human sexual relation such as homosexual or incest. White regards these features as the connection with her central theme of love and desire.

Section :

Articles Partly on IM's Literature or Philosophy

Baker, John F. "John Bayley & Iris Murdoch: Growing Old Together." *Publishers Weekly* 245. 50 (1998): 52-53. Explains about IM's first novel, *Under the Net* (1954) as the mixture of fantasy, myth, psychological insights and the humour.

Cohen, Richard. "Iris Murdoch: Half-believer." *Tablet* 13 Feb. 1999: 208.

Generally portrays his meetings with IM and his reminiscence about her novels such as *Under the Net*. In her interview, Murdoch remarks on her concept of religion without dogmas or any religious institutions and her location of religion of seeking for personal tranquility.

Meyers, Jeffrey. "Iris Murdoch: a memoir." *New Criterion* 18. (1999): 22-30.

Mainly depicts IM's personality and his memories with her. Showing some IM's aspects such as her criticism of the structuralism and the semiotics, Meyers also mentions her struggles in writing her literary works.

Saga, Lorna. "In Praise of Mess." *TLS* 5003 (1999): 12

Explains the features emerged in IM's novels with a little introduction of her biography. Mentioning some of IM's fictions ranged from *Under the Net* to *The Book and the Brotherhood*, Saga grasps the density or fertility of plots or characters.

Wilson, A.N. "In memory of Iris Murdoch." *Spectator* 18 Dec. (1999): 79-81.

Introduces IM's life and her novels, especially *The Black Prince* and *A Severed Head*. Comparing her literary style with that of the mainstream from early 1950s, Wilson evaluates the well-constructed characters and significant moral thoughts in her novels.

Feeney, Joseph J. "Remembering Iris Murdoch on the First Anniversary of Her Death." *Month* 33.2 (2000): 71.

Describes Feeney's memory of his interview with IM. Slightly criticizing 'the new novel' writers such as John Fowles, IM insists the importance of learning the traditional backgrounds in reading good literature such as Dickens, Tolstoy, and Proust.