

## SECTION 12. TRENDS IN PHILOLOGY

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### PECULIARITIES OF PROBLEMATICS OF I. MURDOCH'S NOVEL "AN UNOFFICIAL ROSE"

#### ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПРОБЛЕМАТИКИ РОМАНУ А. МЕРДОК «ДИКА ТРОЯНДА»

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The article is devoted to the aspects connected with problematics of I. Murdoch's novel "An Unofficial Rose". This novel is considered to be one of the most consummate psychological works of fiction written by Iris Murdoch. Plato's unity of love, good and beauty acquires particular relevance in "An Unofficial Rose". I. Murdoch renews the essence of such categories as will, freedom and choice through existential problematics.

Elements of poetics, genetically dating back to the pastoral romance of the Renaissance, neoplatonically love and philosophical in nature, appear in the novel "An Unofficial Rose" (1962), which L. Martz classifies as one of Murdoch's virtuoso psychological works associated with the tradition of H. James [1, p. 75]. But in this novel, the key role is played not so much by the pastoral poetics itself, but by the famous, ethical and philosophical allegorical "Roman de la Rose" (1230–1275, by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung), one of the most important genetic sources of the Renaissance novel pastoralism, containing neoplatonic and antiplatonic concepts of love. The connection with this classic work about the nature of love with the problem that is central and cross-cutting for I. Murdoch's work is stated in the title. The title of the novel "An Unofficial Rose" includes one of the most polysemantic cultural images-symbols, which, with an abundance of meanings, is primarily associated with love.

The title "An Unofficial Rose" carries a playful metaphorical and symbolic meaning. "An Unofficial Rose" is not a simple paraphrase of the "rose hip"; in the text of the novel there is an opposition between the noble, cultivated rose flower and the unassuming "wild" rose hip, which

has both plot and situational as well as conceptual and metaphorical semantics. I. Murdoch plays on the well-known mythopoetic image of a rose, which permeates the structure of the novel and has a literal and allegorical meaning, in a multifaceted way.

The allegorical imagery of “Roman de la Rose”, where in the center of the garden there is a single beautiful Rose, under the pen of the writer takes on the vital and everyday meaning of a rose garden – the heart of a local locus, where roses are nurtured, but does not lose its metaphoric meaning, “flower garden of love”. At the same time, the wonderful manifestation of creative nature turns out to be a source of income. “An Unofficial Rose” is a metaphorical image borrowed by Murdoch from the poem “Grantchester”, a quote from which serves as the epigraph to the novel, by the gifted poet Rupert Brooke, who died in the First World War, symbolizing the harmonious union of a man and woman loving each other (the English were originally free, straightforward and virtuous as a contrast to the regulated, orderly life of Germany) [3, p. 135].

R. Brooke likens their relationship to a flower, traditionally symbolizing love and a happy marriage. And Murdoch, having picked up this motif in his novel, strengthens the somewhat ironic interpretation present in the author of “Grantchester”, where “An English unofficial rose” is a kind of patriarchal idyll, the roots of which are in the past, and are lost in the modern world with the “metaphysics” of Love “Roman de la Rose”, which at one time influenced the pastoral novel of the “Elizabethans”.

“An Unofficial Rose” by I. Murdoch is a book about the destruction of habitual stereotypes of social behavior, about marriage without love and about love outside marriage as a sign of the time, about a certain social and ethical phenomenon that becomes a reason for thinking about the merits and imperfections of the union of a man and a woman in post-war England. But both Brooke and Murdoch have a connection with the prototype of the Rose, the traditional poetic meaning of the “rose” with the real pragmatic aspirations of the people of the twentieth century.

In the novel, the symbolism of the rose is semantically expanded, used in difficult situations as a special emblematic clue-evaluation of the event: the roses on the grave of the martyr Fanny, who died from a serious illness, in traditional Christian legends are correlated with the idea of resurrection, which in general happens in the novel, so how Fanny, underestimated during her lifetime, is reborn in Hugh’s memory, transformed from “earthly love” to “heavenly love.” About the pink thorn, a symbol of suffering and a Christian symbol of sin, Ann gets hurt, Emma’s dress gets tangled in roses (the motive of unfreedom, obstacles).

Sassy, mischievous as a little green elf, Miranda, Randall’s daughter, disrespectfully throws an armful of roses into Emma’s lap, and this is probably a sign of a less than reverent attitude towards the world of beauty

and love that will mark the younger generation of representatives of the “brave new world.” The beauty of roses prompts Emma to utter a shocking self-description phrase, in which she declares that she needs to write a novel about murder in the rose garden [3, p. 158]: the heroine seeks to destroy beauty, which emphasizes the significance of the motive of disharmony, the hostility of the rational intellect to emotions, the feeling of love.

In the European cultural tradition, the rose symbolizes the number five. There are five prominent married couples in “An Unofficial Rose” [2, p. 10]: Fanny and Hugh Peronett; Mildred and Humphrey Finch; Sarah and Jimmy Graham; Douglas and Clare Swann. In Catholic usage, the beads and a special prayer for them are called the “rosary”. In the novel, Ann Peronett is a religious heroine who attends church, which annoys the atheist Hugh. The deeds and dreams of a number of heroes are connected with roses.

One of Randall’s successes is a white rose, named “Miranda” in honor of his daughter, the younger Peronett’s dream is the creation of a blue rose, an image of oblivion in Eastern poetry, which influenced the allegorical interpretation of the Rose in the classic novel, although he himself prefers old Provençal varieties: in the subtext of the novel, quite subtly, there is a sign-allusion to the role of Provençal culture, to a special type of love etiquette of “serving the lady”.

The symbol of the rose is also mentioned in many ways in the characterological properties, constant features of the characters’ behavior as a recognizable allusion (for example, the main “rose gardener” Ann, who often cries in the novel, in the subtext contains a play with the motif of Venus, from whose tears, according to legend, the rose arose). Murdoch also pays tribute to floral symbolism in the names of the characters in “An Unofficial Rose” [2, p. 87], where the name of the deceased Fanny Peronett and her namesake grandson, the son of Randall and Ann, who died of illness, a fourteen-year-old youth – Steve (Fanny – short for English Stephanie; Steve – abbreviated from Stephen, Steven, Greek Stephanos, Latin Stephanus – wreath) correspond to the motif of a wreath, crown as the result of life, its burden and sacrifice.

Not only the rose, but also the “wreath” is among the characteristic pastoral attribute, but Murdoch in “An Unofficial Rose” also uses elements of the poetics of the Gothic novel (secrets, illnesses, betrayals, deaths occurring in the family estate), the combination of which is subject to everyday verisimilitude and existential issues. The novel is permeated by a color play with “rose symbols”, which is organic to the English mentality (the famous war of the “red” and “white” roses).

A hint of the “white rose”, which is traditionally a symbol of purity and spirituality, is contained in the name of the heroine of Tintoretto’s painting on the theme of Susanna and the Elders, for Susanna in ancient Hebrew means a white water lily, which in German is called a water (white)

rose (Wasserrose). European novelistic pastoralism widely introduced descriptions of paintings, the meaning of which was correlated with the problems and situations of the work.

Murdoch in *Susanna* not only has similarities with Lindsay Rimmer, for whom Randall leaves Ann, but also contains the characteristics of the hero who sold the painting for the sensual pleasures of “earthly” love, as in the classical pastoral. The flower code is also used by Murdoch as an opportunity to compose the “rose” names traditional for European culture, present in the novel: both the name Ann Peronett and the names of her rivals in love – Lindsay, Marie-Laure – can become a part of a multi-compound name, the symbol of which is the rose (Linda – Rosalind; Ann – Anna – Roseanne; Marie-Laure – Rosemary).

Freeing the classic Rose, which has entered the cultural use of European society, from the unambiguous symbolic meaning, Murdoch multiplies the shades of meaning, plays with them, using the effect of direct and symbolic meanings, sometimes bringing them together, sometimes separating them, sometimes merging them: “literariness” acquires a vital motivation, permeated with allusions to the classical symbolism of the image of the Rose, expands it, preserves mythopoetic semantics.

I. Murdoch translates the love issue, central to both the Romance of the Rose and the Renaissance pastoral novel, into an existential and Freudian context, updating the sound of such categories as will, freedom, choice and interpreting them in the context of love relationships.

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