

# IRIS MURDOCH

*“The Black Prince”* (1973)



Lysenko Olga 10-A

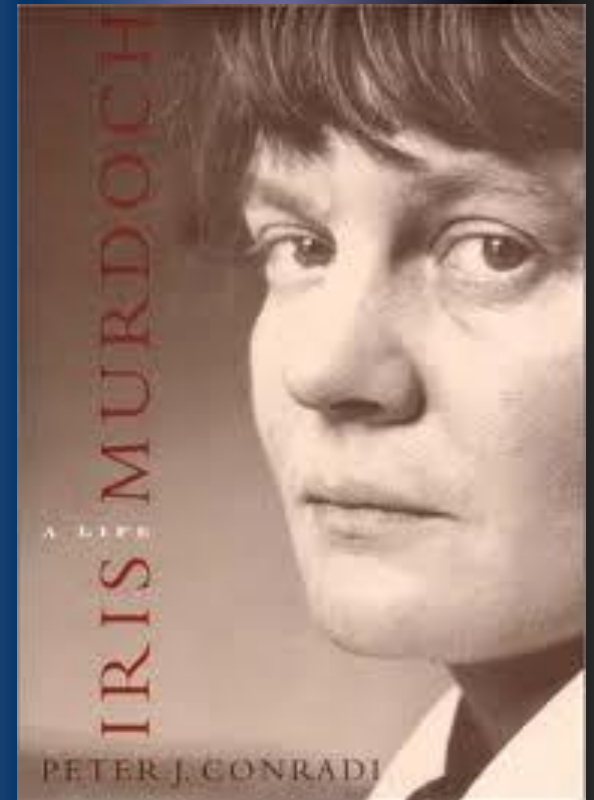
# WOMEN WRITERS – IRIS MURDOCH

*"We live in a fantasy, a world of illusion.  
The great task in life is to find reality."*

*"Writing is like getting married. One  
should never commit oneself until one  
is amazed at one's luck."*

## BIOGRAPHY

- born in 1919 in Dublin
- died in 1999 in Oxford
- teacher of philosophy in Oxford



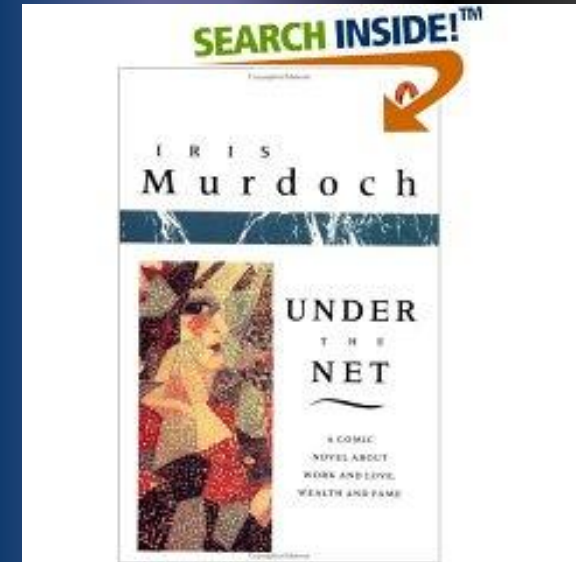
# IRIS MURDOCH – GENRES, TOPICS, NOVELS

## GENRES

- 26 thought-provoking novels
- Numerous plays
- Book of poetry: *A Year of the Birds*, 1978
- Numerous philosophical essays:

*Sartre: Romantic Rationalist*

*The Fire and the Sun: Why Plato Banished the Artists*



# IRIS MURDOCH – GENRES, TOPICS, NOVELS

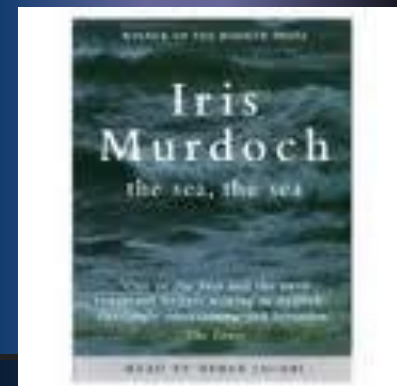
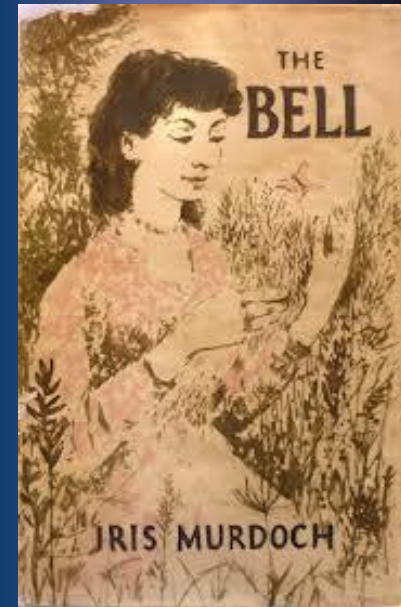
## TOPICS

- Comic, pathetic, difficult or embarrassing life situations
- Modern love stories
- Modern variations of friendship, fame, wealth
- Emotional and intellectual paralysis of modern man



# NOVELS BY IRIS MURDOCH

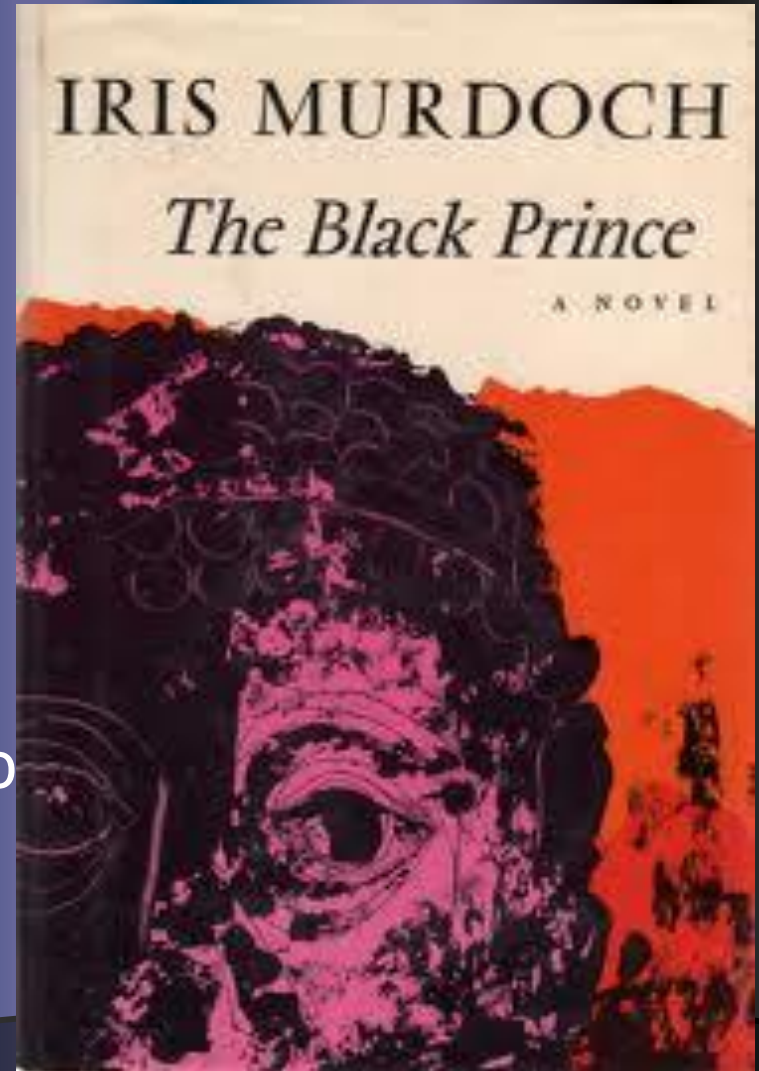
- *Under the Net*; 1954
- *The Bell*; 1958
- *The Nice and The Good*; 1968
- *The Black Prince*; 1973
- *The Sea, The Sea*; 1978
- *The Jacob's Dilemma*; 1995





# *"The Black Prince"* (1973)

- *The Black Prince* is widely considered the best of Murdoch's novels. It won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in its year of publication. It was, like almost all of her novels, a resounding popular success.
- Part metaphysical enquiry into the nature of art and truth, part romantic liaison, part psychological thriller.



# CHARACTER LIST

**Bradley Pearson** - the main character of the novel and also the one who writes the majority of it. In the beginning of the book, Bradley is a cold, occasionally cruel man.

**Arnold Baffin** - The very successful popular writer whom Bradley is accused of killing at the end of the novel.

**Rachel Baffin** - The wife of Arnold Baffin.

**Julian** - the twenty-year old daughter of Arnold and Rachel Baffin, with whom Bradley falls in love.

**Francis Marloe** — his primary role in the novel is comic.

**Priscilla Saxe** - The sister of Bradley Pearson.

**Christian Evansdale** - Bradley Pearson's ex-wife.

**Roger Saxe** - Priscilla's husband and Bradley Pearson's brother-in-law.

**Marigold** - Roger Saxe's mistress who is pregnant with his child.

**P. Loxias** - The editor of the novel.

**Hartbourne** - A friend of Bradley's from work.

**Oscar Belling** - Julian's ex-boyfriend.



# THEMES

**1.) Art as a Vehicle for Truth**

**2.) Eros's Facilitation of Expression**

**3.) The Randomness of Life**

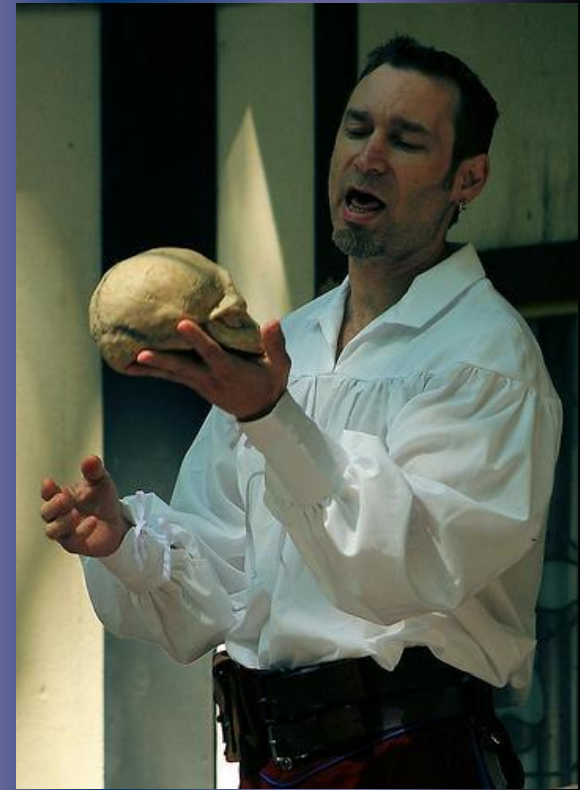


# MOTIFS

**-Marriage** :the Black Prince begins and ends with a domestic quarrel between a married couple.

**-Hamlet** :Hamlet is major motif in the novel. Hamlet's characters, text, and themes recur several times.

**-Feet and Boots** :attention to Julian's feet is a motif that chronicles the sexual awakening of Bradley.



# SYMBOLS

## Kites

The kite symbolizes the glimpse of the eternal that he is soon to get, but has not yet received.

## Priscilla's jewels

They represent her sole legacy, but it is a sad legacy, as jewels are cold, meaningless items whose primary significance is their monetary value.

## Der Rosenkavalier

The opera has a special symbolic role because it contains sexual partners of grossly different ages, similar to the one in The **Black Prince**.



## **INTERNET SOURCES**

<http://www.aesthetics-online.org/memorials/bonzon.html>

<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/imurdoch.htm>

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/12/20/specials/murdoch-prince.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iris\\_Murdoch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iris_Murdoch)