Abstract

Chapter-1: Iris Murdoch explored truth both in her fiction and philosophy in spite of her solid post-modern context. Her characters always have a separate external and internal world and a complex relationship exists between both worlds. Her focus is always on the interior, dark convulsive ego which the self generally avoids. Through her novels she wants to portray how the unconscious works; it controls people making them go round in the vicious circle of ego and self complacence. The researcher has looked into Iris Murdoch’s novels keeping in mind Derridean deconstruction which insists that there is nothing outside the text. The deconstruction process does not see the world as fixed entities, but a ‘dynamic process of differentiation’. The following chapters will show how the meaning, the reality is always prolonged and postponed both for the characters and readers in Iris Murdoch’s novels; the only way to come closer to its understanding is by looking at the other as different from one’s own selfish self. The Derridean ‘aporia’ in Murdoch is a device to glossify the text, to keep the otherness hidden under layers of meanings. There is an unconscious narrative process in her novels which brings out the gap between meaningful, ordered fiction and the chaotic, contingent reality of the lived experience which is the Derridean ‘play’ in her novels.

Chapter-2: Under the Net, her first novel is a critique on the contemporary fiction. She believes literature to be the portrait of real life; an external expression of the internal recesses of the mind. She has created multitudinous patterns to achieve several views and each perspective throws light on a small piece of reality. This novel is a Bildungsroman, has a Menippean and an epistemophilian aspect to it. It is
self-referential, self-begetting, self-conscious and is comic, a parody and carries a philosophical context too. She has tried to show life’s mysterious nature by juxtaposing various stylistic devices.

Chapter-3: Bruno’s Dream begins with a Psychological dive into the consciousness of Bruno who is a typical past obsessed character of Murdoch with a deep need to make sense of the past, but is unable to comprehend it; and when he does it is too late. For Murdoch life is a journey from dreaming fantastic ego to actuality and understanding the other which Bruno failed to do in his life. Now on his death bed he has come closer to understanding that love is all that matters and death shorns one of everything; attachments, passions and possessions but love holds out to the end and is the only thing that matters.

Chapter-4: Sacred and Profane Love Machine shows the plurality of human nature. Murdoch never gives a judgment; she always ends with open endings; as truth is always multi-dimensional and truth for her characters is always deferred or post-postponed and short lived. The characters epiphanic moments last but for a short period before they fall again in the illusory world; under the power of unconscious which she calls machine in the title of this novel. The novel shows a strong depiction of power and controlling needs of humans and also has an ethical-moral angle to it. Each character has its own working machine; the unconscious whose basic nature is to fulfil desires and find happiness. All the characters relationships work on this principle; their illusory worlds mingle showing the chaotic reality of the world we live in.

Chapter-5: There is a personal quest of goodness in The Good Apprentice by Stuart
Cuno who has given up on his materialistic desires to go in search of a pure life. His step brother is also set on a search by uncle and Psychologist Thomas Mc Caskerville. By the end of the novel one of them moves a step closer to his answers and the other is about to fall back into another net of illusion.

**Chapter-6:** Murdoch has showed the value of goodness, truth and love in the post modern era retaining her unusual style of presenting these themes in contradictory world of contingent, metaphysical and melodramatic novels. *The Green Knight* is a novel full of illusions, fantasy and tricks. It is also about retribution, reconciliation and forgiveness. Murdoch sees fantasy as a destroyer of reason and one has to come out of fantasies to be able to see the world as it is. There is a search and struggle to be perfect in her characters but who decides the ideals? One has to beat one’s own dilemmas, imperfections and fantasies and move on in life, it is ‘self-realisation’.

**Chapter-7:** Murdoch’s novels show a level of hope which is otherwise absent in post-modern writings. Her novels present a deep, mysterious and indefinable quality; good which makes one realise that truth is not as harsh and unjust as it appears and it is attainable provide you ‘unself’ of your fantasies. We readers, through her characters, plots and stories get to learn about life’s myriad details and develop certain kind of tolerance and acceptance towards life and truth. Murdoch's work is multi-layered and it is up to the readers to find how many layers, how many of the hidden allusions and possible interpretations can they discover. Murdoch entraps her readers in the Derridean ‘play’. It is a fact that Murdoch uses numerous stylistic devices to make her novels interesting and exclusive and that she never allowed anybody to edit her work. The researcher feels that Murdoch is a mysterious, mystic,
magical writer who wants to show us the world as it is; utterly confused, selfish, fragmented and disoriented working under the power of the unconscious but still the last impression that we get after finishing off her novels is of wholeness and oneness, as she leaves the little light of truth behind which is difficult to decipher but not impossible.