

DOI 10.36074/logos-01.10.2021.v1.39

THE PROBLEM OF PERSONALITY IN THE WORKS OF I. MURDOCH AND C. WILSON

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The end of the Second World War, according to many Russian and European critics, is considered the starting point for the development of existentialism as an artistic direction in the UK. The victory over fascism in the European states caused a radical reassessment of spiritual and aesthetic values. The English novel was split into separate fragments. It is a bizarre mosaic structure. They began to talk about this with alarm already in the 1950s.

It should be noted that the foundations of Western civilization were shaken, and this sad fact influenced the psychology of English writers. The discrepancy between the real dream and the illusory ideal, on the one hand, gave rise to a departure into the world of religious mysticism, on the other – the psychoanalysis of conflicts. Unremarkable literary heroes, sometimes obsessed with some maniacal idea, entered into conflict situations. It would be wrong to classify I. Murdoch and C. Wilson as one or another “shore”. In the English society of those years, discontent gradually accumulated, taking a variety of, sometimes bizarre forms, especially among young people. The fiction of the 1950s and 1970s absorbed these moods of universal dissatisfaction. These moods were also transmitted to the characters of English literature. In the spirit of existentialism, they were deprived of any ideological and moral supports and hopeful ideals of a happy future. They also felt their social loneliness with particular acuteness in a world where living human ties were broken, functional rationalism and cold calculation reigned. It should be emphasized that this kind of pessimistic mood was not characteristic of some positive or reflective heroes of the works of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson.

However, it is existentialism that has most fully expressed such disillusionment with the previous foundations of a philosophical and religious nature. The teaching that was created by J.-P. Sartre. In the preamble of one of the latest publications devoted to the life and work of the French thinker, we read: “J.-P. Sartre, as you know, was one of the pillars of existentialism. In the 1950s and 1960s, existentialism was mentioned among the main philosophical trends of our time. Strictly speaking, none other than Sartre is the person who introduced the term “existentialism” into philosophical usage. Moreover, in the report “Existentialism is Humanism” (1946), he also reported on which philosophers can be attributed to this direction” [2, p.5].

Under the direct influence of the Sartre doctrine, a significant part of European literature developed in the 1940s and 1950s. The term “existential novel” itself appears, which has acquired all sorts of modifications, and the philosophy that gave rise to it has, as it were, dissolved into the spiritual sphere, has entered organically into the life ideas of Europeans. He defined the positions of even those writers who do not consider themselves followers of Sartre at all.

Iris Murdoch and Colin Wilson were followers of the teachings of Sartre. They adhered to a number of his philosophical positions throughout their lives and

activities. However, on the one hand, they never blindly imitated the Sartre doctrine, but approached the creation of their novels with a creative measure. The existential theory attracted I. Murdoch and C. Wilson not with its initial idea of a global universal bacchanalia and acceptance of chaos, but with the struggle against this global evil, the desire of writers to affirm the high purpose of the individual. It was as if they wanted to raise his moral and ethical level above the ordinary. Therefore, a number of critics argue that A. Camus was objectively closer to them than J.-P. Sartre.

On the other hand, in their best novels, I. Murdoch and C. Wilson managed to rise to the heights of realism. It should also be recognized that in some realistic moments, the authors' desire for the general, and therefore true, is visible, because such a position once again confirms a living connection with the surrounding world. At the same time, in a closer and mutually acceptable contact, it is easier to avoid the heavy feeling of longing from thoughts about the singular, accidental and in general the instantaneity of your life. However, sometimes the problem of the existential choice of personality in the work of these writers is resolved in the opposite direction. Numerous characteristic details often create a general atmosphere of absurdity and absurdity in their novels. Sadness and loneliness are associated with the global problem of alienation. The hero does not understand his relatives and friends, they do not understand him either.

What does such alienation lead to? The general misunderstanding on the pages of their novels symptomatically leads to a lack of logic, both in mutual communication and in taking responsibility for choosing a solution, to chaos and confusion. And this ultimately turns out to be antilogical and meaningless. The verbal confusion leads Murdoch and Wilson also partly to chaos in the minds, hearts and behavior of the actors. At the same time, everyone remained in their place in the literature of Great Britain and had their own unique handwriting.

Murdoch and Wilson are primarily united by a passion for a single artistic direction – existentialism. However, it must be recognized that in the former Soviet literary criticism, the works created by them, as a rule, were exposed as reactionary and anti-scientific. In any case, in the 1970s and 1980s, their publication in Russian was limited. In our opinion, their artistic significance is great and therefore requires a decisive re-evaluation from the standpoint of modern philological science. Murdoch, Wilson and their associates M. Spark, W. Golding and some other existentialist writers broke the usual norms of the worldview of human relations with society.

In the novels of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson, the problem of personality occupies a special place. The approach of the writers to the chosen problem is distinguished by originality. National criticism still cannot come to a consensus in this regard. Most often, in the person of I. Murdoch, a deep predilection for mysticism and irrationalism is revealed. C. Wilson is attributed to the current of orthodox symbolism with the synthesis of existence and the detective genre. This is perhaps the most well-established opinion. From these positions, many writers, in fact, turned to the critical analysis of the image of a person in novels.

In certain aspects, common points of contact were found; in other cases, they diverged. But at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, some critics (G. Anjaparidze, V. Skorodenko, N. Grebennikova and others) united C. Wilson the subject with W. Golding on the principle of reflecting the so-called "animal atavism". In turn, they tried to find an associative connection between the works of I. Murdoch and M. Spark as representatives of Catholic existentialism with signs of modernism and satirical pathos. The first position, as we see, contradicts the second, and the question of the artistic reflection of the concept of the personality of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson rises again with a new force.

Thus, the ambiguity of judgments in the assessment of these representatives of English existential literature is obvious. These two English existentialist writers are united by an increased attention to the problems of individual freedom of choice. It is obvious that the concept of freedom of choice is justified not only as a philosophical term, but primarily as an important and all-defining symbolic attribute in the novels of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson.

The problem of personality can be correctly interpreted and disclosed on the artistic material, which is associated with the penetration of the philosophical and ideological ideas of Murdoch and Wilson on the pages of their existential novels. I. Murdoch and C. Wilson came to the world of great literature as already established and mature authors with their own range of topics and ideas. However, the ideological and thematic unity (the peculiarity of the existential manner of writing, detective and game elements, grotesque, irony, farce, attitude to God, etc.) acquires a new and relevant sound. This circle of traits and signs is very closely connected with the coverage of the problem of personality, the description of the character of the characters in their novels. The problem of personality in the existential novels of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson is ambiguous. On the one hand, the attitude towards a person in the works as a whole characterizes their loneliness, departure from the immaterial world, relatives and friends. In some cases, we are talking about a potential way out of hopeless pessimism and doom. On the other hand, the existentialism of I. Murdoch and C. Wilson is closer to realism in its traditional sense, since the writers seem to mutually oppose the preaching of the absurdity of human existence, hopelessness. They do not take into account the darkest and most mystical aspects of existential teaching. Optimism objectively takes over.

I. Murdoch and C. Wilson, for religious and aesthetic reasons, could not avoid mystification and irrationality. But all the best that they have created tends to the correct understanding of real reality. Although it is considered by them from an existential position. It is clear that the research conducted from this angle of comprehension of the laws of human existence has left a noticeable imprint on the views of writers in the process of developing the problem of personality and parallel topics.

The discovery of these patterns, of course, has an important theoretical significance. In addition, the reflection of the main philosophical ideas through character is particularly difficult during the analysis. This is the only way, in our opinion, to analyze the problem of personality. Despite the pronounced existential orientation, the writers were tasked with creating such characters that would be a concrete embodiment of a certain attitude to reality. At the same time, without becoming an abstraction and reflecting the deep psychology of the characters.

References:

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