

研究発表要旨

Colours in Literature: Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* and Anita Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*

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Virginia Woolf wrote 'All great writers are great colourists'. This statement seems to be true for Iris Murdoch (1919-99) and Anita Brookner (1928-2016). Focusing on colours, I comparatively examine two Booker Prize winning novels: Murdoch's *The Sea, The Sea* (1978) and Brookner's *Hotel du Lac* (1984).

It is noteworthy that Murdoch and Brookner, both of whom were deeply interested in painting, used various colour words in their novels to make their fictional world visually impressive, though there has not been much discussion on this in previous studies. In her article 'Colors of Consciousness in the Novels of Iris Murdoch', Rebecca Moden presents the inspiring thesis that the richly coloured description of the sea in *The Sea, The Sea* implies the protagonist's egoism. However, Moden does not clarify what kinds of colours are distributed throughout the work. This study will complement previous research by analysing the colour references in *The Sea, The Sea*, specifically as much as possible, as well as those in *Hotel du Lac*. Through comparison, I identify the similarities and differences between these works.

The similarities of colour usage in the two works can be summarized as follows: first, Murdoch and Brookner utilize the meanings of the predominant colours to develop their themes; second, both novelists use colours to differentiate characters and express their psychology.

Regarding the differences, Murdoch is more eloquent with colour words than Brookner. According to my count, *The Sea, The Sea* has an average of 1.77 words per page. This is almost twice as many as in *Hotel du Lac*, in which Brookner uses only 0.9 word per page in average. In *The Sea, The Sea*, the predominant colour hue is black, which symbolises death, sin and horror. Overall, the visual contrast between black and the other colours is outstanding. This confrontational relationship of colours seems appropriate to Murdoch's dynamically unfolded plot. Meanwhile, in *Hotel du Lac*, Brookner dramatises an unpretentious plot, and the predominant colour hue is grey, which symbolises depression, ominousness and mystery. In colour theory, grey can match any kind of colour. Brookner creates a harmonious colour scheme by using grey in the large background and more vibrant colours in the details.

Finally, I explore the possibility of the influence of *The Sea, The Sea* on *Hotel du Lac*. It should be difficult to deny the influence, when we consider the following points: both novels have the same setting that the protagonist writes at a waterside shelter; both describe water as the mirror of human psychology; both use white and blue many times; the given name of the most colourful lady in *Hotel du Lac* is Iris, just like Iris Murdoch and the Greek goddess of the rainbow.