**研究発表要旨**

**Money, Marriage and Literary Allusions  
in Iris Murdoch's *Nuns and Soldiers***

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It is generally acknowledged that the plot if Murdoch's *Nuns and Soldiers* (1980) is indebted to Henry James's *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), just as previous novels such as *An Unofficial Rose* (1962) show unmistakable signs of Jamesian influences. According to her biographer Peter J. Conradi, from 1944-45 Murdoch read much Henry James and identified strongly with his heroines.

In this paper I compare and contrast Murdoch's *Nuns and Soldiers* not only with James's *The Wings of the Dove* but also look at connections between James and his most famous 'disciple'-Edith Wharton - in such popular novels by Wharton as *The House of Mirth* (1905) and *The Glimpse of the Moon* (1922).

The four novels share a strikingly similar plot, revolving upon the necessity characters in each feel to marry for money. In the opinion of the American critic Van Wyck Brooks, the heroine of *The Wings of the Dove* is the 'victim of the basest plot that ever a mind conceived'. Milly Theale is an orphaned, shy, gentle girl who is immensely wealthy but terminally ill. She is befriended by a fellow American, an impoverished but resourceful and socially-ambitious Kate Croy. The 'plot' which so horrified Van Wyck Brooks is one hatched by Croy, who conceives of the idea of throwing the man with whom she herself is in love-Merton Densher, a journalist who lacks the means for them to marry-into Milly's path, in the hopes that Milly, too, will fall in love with him and, on her death, make provisions for Densher in her will, thus enabling Densher and Croy eventually to wed.

Wharton's heroines in *The House of Mirth* and *Glimpses of the Moon*, like James's Kate Croy, inhabit the vanished world of patrician American East Coast society in the 1890s. They are women who are poor, who depend on their wealthy friends' hospitality, who feel they must marry well or face both social as well as financial ruin. They are constrained by a rigidly hierarchical, strait-laced society governed by strict rules of behavior. In *The House of Mirth*, for example, the protagonist, Lily Bart, finds herself set on a course of irretrievable ruin because of her careless, casual acceptance of a bachelor friend's invitation to take tea alone in hi s flat.

Social context represents the crucial difference between *Nuns and Soldiers* and its literary precedents. Murdoch's Tim Reede and Daisy Barrett face no such social restrains preventing their gainful employment, yet they often contemplate the expedient of 'marrying well' to escape from their wretched 'hand- to-mouth' existence. Their poverty is perversely self-willed. Murdoch's plot therefore revolves upon a questionable premise.

The characters in *Nuns and Soldiers*, like the typical inhabitants of Murdoch's novels, exist in what Martin Amis has described as a 'suspended and eroticised world's far removed from what most of us would recognize as 'reality' Does Murdoch's inability to connect with real life in her novels matter? Conradi thinks not, arguing that the task Murdoch set herself in such novels as *Nuns and Soldiers* was 'how to marry the inner and outer worlds, how to create fictions that honour both a strict causality and a strict sense of the privacy and "freedom" that the moral agent might find herself endowed with'.