

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i> | ix |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | xi |
| <i>Preface to the Second Edition</i> | xii |
| <i>Preface to the First Edition</i> | xv |
| | |
| 1 Revisiting the Sublime and the Beautiful: Iris Murdoch's Realism | 1 |
| Murdoch's 'aesthetic of the sublime': realism and the modernist inheritance | 4 |
| Putting the real into realism: philosophy and fiction | 10 |
| Liberal postmodernism/postmodern liberalism | 18 |
| 'A sort of post-Freudian Henry James': Murdoch and the liberal soul | 24 |
| 2 The Insistence of the Past | 29 |
| Nostalgia: <i>The Book and the Brotherhood</i> | 34 |
| <i>Jackson's Dilemma</i> : making sense of the past | 38 |
| Redemption, spiritual and secular: <i>A Word Child</i> and <i>The Good Apprentice</i> | 41 |
| 3 Narrative as Redemption: <i>The Bell</i> | 49 |
| 'Outside inwards'/'inside outwards' | 51 |
| 'We never discuss our past lives here': the rational and the uncanny | 54 |
| Narrative acts | 57 |
| 4 Author and Hero: Murdoch's First-Person Retrospective Novels | 64 |
| Dramatizing narrators | 67 |
| Writing in retrospect | 75 |
| Recovering the past: two kinds of retrospective novel | 82 |
| 5 Reading Past Truth: <i>Under the Net</i> and <i>The Black Prince</i> | 87 |
| 'Some things can't be unravelled...': reading <i>Under the Net</i> | 89 |
| The framing of Bradley Pearson: <i>The Black Prince</i> | 95 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----|
| 6 | The Writing Cure: <i>A Severed Head</i> and <i>A Word Child</i> | 108 |
| | The textual uncanny: <i>A Severed Head</i> | 113 |
| | Narrative exchange: <i>A Word Child</i> | 121 |
| | 'Ambiguously ever after' | 127 |
| 7 | The Ambivalence of Coming Home: | |
| | <i>The Italian Girl</i> and <i>The Sea, the Sea</i> | 130 |
| | A strange memory: <i>The Italian Girl</i> | 131 |
| | A demon-ridden pilgrimage: <i>The Sea, the Sea</i> | 136 |
| | Murdoch's ambivalence | 145 |
| 8 | Philosophy's Dangerous Pupil: <i>Metaphysics as a</i> | |
| | <i>Guide to Morals</i>, Derrida and <i>The Philosopher's Pupil</i> | 150 |
| | Philosophy and literature: Murdoch and Derrida | 154 |
| | Philosophical anguish: <i>The Philosopher's Pupil</i> | 161 |
| | The currency of ideas | 165 |
| | Postscript: Reading Iris Murdoch | 167 |
| | Authorship as masochism | 170 |
| | Monsters and mothers: <i>The Sacred and Profane Love Machine</i> | 175 |
| | <i>Notes</i> | 179 |
| | <i>Select Bibliography and References</i> | 190 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 197 |