U.PORTO
FLUP FACULDADE DE LETRAS
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO

MESTRADO EM ESTUDOS ANGLO-AMERICANOS - VARIANTE DE LITERATURAS E CULTURAS

Winter in July: Mapping Space and Self in Doris Lessing's Short Stories

Maria Emília Alves Couto

M

2017

Maria Emília Alves Couto

Winter in July: Mapping Space and Self in Doris Lessing's Short Stories

Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Estudos Anglo-Americanos, orientada pelo Professor Doutor Rui Manuel Gomes Carvalho Homem e coorientada pelo Professor Doutor Gualter Mendes Queiroz Cunha.

Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto

Setembro de 2017

Winter in July: Mapping Space and Self in Doris Lessing's Short Stories

Maria Emília Alves Couto

Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Estudos Anglo-Americanos, orientada pelo Professor Doutor Rui Manuel Carvalho Homem
e coorientada pelo Professor Doutor Gualter Mendes Queiroz Cunha

Membros do Júri

Professor Doutor Carlos Manuel da Rocha Borges de Azevedo
Faculdade Letras - Universidade do Porto

Professor Doutor Nuno Manuel Dias Pinto Ribeiro
Faculdade Letras - Universidade do Porto

Professor Doutor Gualter Mendes Queiroz Cunha
Faculdade Letras – Universidade do Porto

Classificação obtida: 16 valores

Às minhas filhas Natércia, Natália, Nádia,
ao encontro e encanto de outros povos e culturas

“Who am I then? Tell me first, and then, if I like being that person, I’ll come up; If not, I’ll stay down here till I’m somebody else.”

Lewis Carroll, *The Annotated Alice*

Acknowledgements

A todos os professores que me acompanharam no percurso académico desta faculdade quero expressar o meu reconhecimento pela sabedoria partilhada, ensinamentos para a vida.

Ao Prof. Dr. Gualter Cunha, por ter ficado mais um ano comigo para me orientar na minha dissertação, com os seus preciosos conselhos, sempre paciente e atento às minhas dúvidas, faz com que eu assim conseguisse terminar o meu trabalho. Os meus sinceros agradecimentos.

Ao Prof. Dr. Rui Carvalho Homem, obrigada.

Aos meus colegas de curso e da faculdade, muitas horas de alegria compartilhamos!

Alejandro, Estaban e Rosinha.

À família Tormenta pelo apoio e carinho: Palmira que coordena as tropas, Amélia Lopes que as orienta, Rafael que passou uma hora na fila para abraçar o São Tiago de Compostela por mim, e que resultou! Aníbal, não te esquecemos. À Lara e Nuna e restantes 'rebentos' que trazem á família muita alegria.

Ao Jorge, o incentivo e o imprescindível apoio…sempre presente.

Resumo

O segundo trabalho de Doris Lessing a ser publicado apôs o seu primeiro romance foi a coleção de contos "This Was the Old Chief's Country", publicado no Reino Unido por Michael Joseph em 1951. Os contos desta coleção, com a exceção de três 'The Old Chief Mshlanga', 'A Sunrise on the Veld' *and* 'No Witchcraft for Sale'*, são os mesmos que se encontram em Winter in July publicado mais tarde em 1966 e são estes os contos que trato no meu trabalho. A data certa em que foram escritos é desconhecida, até podia ter sido antes da partida de Lessing para Londres em 1949. A escritora evitava ser categorizada simplesmente como uma romancista ela considerava-se muito mais do que isso. Lessing preocupava-se com questões sociais do seu tempo e escrevia-os de um modo autobiográfico, interligando factos realísticos e comportamentos individuais com factos históricos. O seu trabalho é normalmente apresentado pelo ponto de vista feminino mas revia criticamente os papéis de ambos os sexos. Nesta coleção de contos, a Lessing apresenta mulheres que vivam em Africa a procura de liberdade dos espaços fechados em que se encontravam e dos homens escreve da necessidade de estes de ter uma mulher para cuidar da casa e procriar. Escreve sobre homens eroticamente envolvidos e em incesto que partilham a mesma mulher. Dá a conhecer o pavor e a pobreza. Lessing é conhecida como ser uma escritora 'profética' que vê as possibilidades do futuro, onde a Verdade lhe é fundamental, escolhendo bem o 'tempo' para dizer essa verdade. Os sete contos nesta coleção são realistas, historicamente corretos e a base para muito do que Lessing veio a escrever depois.*

Palavras-chave: Herdade Africana, espaços fechados, pavor, homossexualidade.

Abstract

Doris Lessing's second book and the first of her short stories was "This Was the Old Chief's Country", published in Great Britain by Michael Joseph in 1951. The stories found in this collection with the exception of three stories, 'The Old Chief Mshlanga', 'A Sunrise on the Veld' *and* 'No Witchcraft for Sale'*, are the same as those found in the 1966 Winter in July the subject of my thesis. Whether these stories were written in 1951 or prior to her departure for London in 1949 is unclear. Lessing tries to avoid being categorized simply as a woman novelist as she felt she was more than that. She was a writer preoccupied with the social concerns of her time and she wrote about her world through autobiographical accounts linking realistic facts and individuals' behaviour to historical facts. Her work is generally presented through a woman's point of view but she critically reviews both female and male roles with an insight far beyond that of other writers of her time. In this collection Lessing wrote mostly of woman, living in Africa, who wanted to be freed of enclosures imposed upon them by men and by society and she wrote of a woman who was free but accepted enclosure in order not to be alone. Of men, she wrote of those who needed women to run their household and to have their children and of those homoerotically involved and in incest, who needed women to shield their homosexuality. She writes of fear and poverty. Lessing has been called a 'prophetic' writer as she seemed to foresee how present events would affect the future and she was rarely wrong. Truth to her was fundamental, how much of it to tell, was a question that had to be carefully considered as the timing of telling the truth was essential. The seven stories found in this collection* Winter In July *are realistic, historically correct and the foundation for much of her later writing.*

Keywords: African farm, enclosure, fear, homosexuality.

Table of Contents

Part 1: Introduction

In dealing with the short story collection, *Winter in July*, I chose themes running through the book which I felt would demonstrate how Doris Lessing saw herself and the country she lived in and how this earlier writing laid the foundations for her later work. Through the uniqueness of the country, its people both native and coloniser, Lessing renders the reader a perspective of an Africa through the eyes of children, adolescents and adults and does this often by resorting to her own memories while running through the bush of this vast continent. The themes chosen are those which relate to the self and identity within a space and place, Southern Rhodesia, in a time of colonial occupation, between World Wars I and II, in which self and identity were moulded or then collapsed due to fear, enclosure and poverty. Memories were formed. The house and the bush are significant in these stories as they are the settings, enclosed and exposed, where the protagonists either fall from or rise to a new identity within themselves or the community.

Winter in July presents the reader with seven short stories: 'The Second Hut', 'The Nuisance', 'The de Wets come to Kloof Grange', 'Little Tembi', 'Old John's Place', '"Leopard" George' and 'Winter in July'. These stories are all set in Southern Rhodesia during the 1930's and serve to recall life between people of different races and ethnicities living under British colonial rule within a specific time and space in history. They are all set on an African farm. The settings are real as Lessing was fortunate enough to have been there as part of a society which, within a short space of time, suffered dramatic changes significant enough to be told. She writes about Southern Rhodesia in all its 'Africanness', of its unfathomable silence and of her feelings within the beauty and wilderness of Africa. The reader is put in contact with characters that were hard struck by poverty, by fear of landscape and fear of enclosure with which they were often faced. The children seem to have escaped unscathed, Lessing and her brother included. Her love for Africa and its limitless potential is patent throughout her stories, her observations being graphic and intuitively truthful as she describes a colonised country where oppression and isolation took its toll on everyone, colonised and the coloniser alike.

The short stories take place within the white community, mainly amongst those living in the farming district of Banket, Lomagundi, where the African native is of Shona descent and known to be peaceful people. The land was dry, affected on many occasions by years of severe drought but the farming soil was excellent. Animal, maize, tobacco

and cotton farming were produced for commercial purposes and this attracted settlers to the land for which the natives provided the labour force. To the coloniser, the land was the country's richest source of income and to own it implied having wealth and power even though this was not necessarily true of many farmers who struggled to survive. To the native the land was a natural force inhabited by ancestral gods that transmits a sense of belonging and this was a source of well-being to them. Other women writers of worth who also helped shape white colonial literature in Africa were Olive Schreiner with *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), Isak Dineson's *Out of Africa* (1937), and Nadine Gordimer's *The Lying Days* (1953). The main theme linking all of these writers is that of white women living in black Africa from a perspective of their generation, their nationality, social and political views. These writers grew up in Africa, accordingly they may be viewed as white African writers and as Lessing herself mentioned in her book, *Under My Skin,* to remember Africa is to remember Africa as a construct of the remembering self, 'you remember with what you are at the time of your remembering'. I shall commence with a very brief history of the country.

Part 2: Southern Rhodesia 1890-1950

Southern Rhodesia, today Zimbabwe, is situated in central southern Africa and was presented in 19th century maps in bright pink as according to Cecil John Rhodes, who claimed to be the first European arriving there, this served as an outward sign of the country's joyful allegiance to the British Empire. This perspective was enthusiastically received by many men and women living in Britain who agreed this would unquestionably be good for Africa to be made British. Therefore, in 1890 the first Pioneer Column made up of 180 men and some policemen arrived in Southern Rhodesia from the United Kingdom coming up from the Cape through a land considered to be full of beasts and natives, who were no more than savages. They were travelling into unknown lands, for even though explorers and missionaries had been ahead of them, no one had yet settled as homesteaders. The colonisers were on this adventure for the sake of Empire, Rhodes and the Queen, and "they were a pioneering breed, people who had to see horizons as a challenge" (*African Laughter, Four visits to Zimbabwe*: 3*).*

Rapidly, a town was built, Salisbury, with a church, a hospital, a school, banks, hotels and bars - a white town - English in feel, flavour and habit. It is on record that the progress of the pioneer columns was watched closely by the natives who laughed at the

sight of these white men dressed in thick clothes and whom they called ‘men with no knees’ due to the fact that their trousers hid the knees. The women in the column were respectable Victorian women, who did not dispense with their petticoats and corsets when travelling. Amongst them were Mother Patrick and the Dominican nuns in their black and white habits on a mission to teach children and to nurse the sick and Mary Kinsley, an English writer known for her notorious explorations of West Africa. As the Europeans began to settle, concession-seekers commenced negotiations with the natives and these, with little knowledge of the implications, signed their land away to the Rudd Concession which justified the occupation and the colonisation of the country. Soon the natives found they had lost a great part of their land and to return to the bush was virtually impossible as they were pursued and forced to work as labourers and servants for the white communities. So, it was no wonder that the first violent reaction against the colonisers occurred in 1896-97 with the Ndebele-Shona rising known as the First *Chimurenga,* their first national war of liberation. The making of Southern Rhodesia became a complex one as the white settlers attempted to indigenise themselves and the natives attempted to make sense of their new position as a colonised people. Tribal chiefs became subjected to and administrated by the Native Affairs Department which pursued policies of social and spatial segregation based on race causing ambiguities in governance, which provoked contradictory reactions from the natives.

By the 1900s, Southern Rhodesia had established its borders and had as its neighbours Mozambique, South West Africa, Bechuanaland, Northern Rhodesia and the Transvaal, ignoring the existence of all pre-European tribal borders established between the different tribes living in the area, an example being the Shona’s ‘Mutapa’ state which in the 16th century included much of central Mozambique. It was not surprising therefore that from the time of colonisation and especially during the 1950s, organised African resistance movements began to take shape and by the 1960s these became powerful forces paving a hard road ahead for both blacks and whites and for the history of the country, a struggle which today, 2017, is still ongoing. Doris Lessing lived within this environment for twenty-five years having arrived as a child of five in 1924 and having left in 1949, deported, as a young woman of thirty. She wrote her first novel *The Grass is Singing* (1950) before leaving the country but was only able to have it published in London the following year. Her African Stories were next to be published.

2.1 Background to the stories – Space and Place

Over the last few years, in an attempt to understand cultural phenomena, a growing number of studies have acknowledged a spatial and affective turn in the study of humanities. These studies have transformed or reframed contemporary criticism. By concentrating on the changing relationship between space, place and literature they have helped to re-orientate literary theory, history and criticism in a real or imaginary world, where reality meets fiction. Doris Lessing's African stories, as found in *Winter in July*, explore the misunderstandings and conflicts arising from closed groups within spatial patterns, which are either psychological or physical within white or native communities. According to Giogio Agamben, to understand a community (Richardson: 35) is to look at the empty space in which communication between individualities is made possible, and not at their identity or the place they have in common. Space cannot be seen as a final frontier as a frontier depicts some form of wall or barrier but it is rather, as Gertrude Stein puts it "there is no there there" (Stein: 298) In Lessing's stories to study the characters that shift through her African space is to study their vision of boundaries and landmarks and what exists within this gap. Boundaries and landmarks encompass or impose a shape on space, the perception of it being relative to its visual overview, evident in all of Lessing's seven stories.

For a social theory of space, George Simmel's (1858-1918) sociology of space is an important beginning, (Zieleniec: 35-59). He was a major contributor to the thinking of social science emphasising that space was a concrete feature of social life where human experiences became real. There are many forms of socialisation that cannot be fully understood without taking into account both their spatial context and their use of space. Space therefore, is not an unbiased, uninspired void but is a dimension shaped by social forces that limit future possibilities. The key to how life is experienced and lived is largely through changing relations of proximity and distance through cultures of movement and mobility. (55) Social space may be considered therefore as the consequence of past actions which permits new actions to occur and which may suggest or prohibit others. For Jacques Lacan, a psychoanalyst, there are three registers of subject-formation, the real, the imagined and the symbolic, where the real is equated to the body, the imaginary to the ego and the symbolic to the linguistic and cultural. Language therefore becomes significant in thinking space. Olsson refers to its importance by noting that as language changes so does the view of the world, "the limits of my language means the limits of my world", and as Heidegger put it, the being of man is found in his language. (Crang and

Thrift: 94). The *Winter in July* stories present the coloniser's language and the native's language and within the colonisers language we have the English and the Afrikaans, and according to the language spoken we find the 'being of man' and the realm he lives in, and the difference between them is significant.

Thus the spaces of language and self, the spaces of other and place become agitated spaces which extend themselves out to spaces of experience where writing is made possible; the space of writing. This is visible in Lessing's stories, she relates to others departing from her 'self', she takes an African farm subjected to a coloniser's rule and she writes her experiences in relation to time and history creating a bond between herself and place thus gaining "a sense of that place's uniqueness and value" (Tally:60). When place is represented in a literary work, a link is formed between literature, history, geography and mapping and the role of this spatial literacy leads often to studies which connect to art, philosophy, architecture, social theory and politics. Spatial criticism may not be limited only to real world spaces but may often explore what Edward Soja referred to as 'real-and-imagined' places as experienced in life and in literature.

For Lessing the country was real, her life was all that she did not want and communism was what she had imagined to be the answer to everyone's problems, her own and the country's so, as a form of rebellion against capitalism and the order of things, Lessing joined the local Communist group in the early 40s. She was taken by the party's rallies and found the atmosphere of conspiracy appealing because of its idealism. She became a communist because of the spirit of the times, *Zeitgeist* (*Under My Skin*: 259), and in her novel *A Ripple from the Storm*, Anton Hesse describes a communist as "a person…dedicated to the cause of freeing humanity [and] consider himself a dead man on leave. A communist is hated, despised, feared and hunted by the capitalists of the world. A communist must be prepared to give up everything: his family, his wife, his children, at a word from the party." (37) But as the Soviets in October 1956 brutally suppressed a Hungarian uprising, Lessing became utterly disillusioned with its ideologies and left the party shortly after stating that at the time it had seemed the right thing to do. She left her first husband because she had an affair, not a love affair because they did not love each other, but because, once again, of the spirit of the times (265). Considerable research has been made in the literary representation of identifiable and well-known places, such as Joyce's Dublin or Lessing's Africa, but a consensus as to what makes up the definition of place has not been achieved. What makes a place identifiable?

Towards this end, Neil Alexander has made an interesting contribution in his essay 'Senses of Places' (Tally: 39-49) In this article, Alexander reflects on the importance of the intersection between literary studies and human geography and draws on conceptual vocabulary from both disciplines to make sense of the places we inhabit or encounter. He adds 'sense' to 'place', and argues that a place is identifiable by its unique 'sense of place'. He reflects on the difficulty of defining sense of place, especially when confronted with other terms such as genius loci or the 'spirit of place', but he draws on recent research carried out on the culture of senses and sensuous geographies and defends that the senses of place emerge through the use of our five senses when wanting to understand, build-up or make sense of the place we find ourselves at. However, first there must be a sense of the world, as it is from here that we are led to a sense of place and then onto creating 'sense of place'. He agrees there may be an overlapping between the concepts of genius loci and the sense of place and that these are at times interchangeable. He mentions various critics whose thoughts have led to potential confusions and ambiguities, where place seems to waver between objective property and subjective experience or seems to be a concrete reality emerging from a total experience which combines physical awareness and mental reflections.

Throughout history Southern Rhodesia, now modern day Zimbabwe, was made up of several 'shifting territories' to which Lessing's stories make reference, especially to the existence of a type of *Genius*, the Roman guardian spirit thought to be the protector of people and place. Landscapes, rivers and valleys were also thought to have their own genii loci, especially in places associated with the natural world and with nature, where the spirit of place intuitively guarded against changes of place in order to keep its uniqueness (42). In Lessing's stories, the genius loci is felt by the natives and lives naturally within them spreading knowledge and communal well-being but for the coloniser living on farms it led them to experience an incomprehensible fear and enclosure which caused them physical pain and illness even though, "for a moment we (they) shared the understanding of people who have been made by the same landscape" in (*Going Home:* 9). D.H. Lawrence also believed in a 'spirit of place' as he notes in *Studies of Classic American Literature "*call it what you like the spirit of place is a great reality". (Pomerance: 206)

In 'Old Chief Mshlanga', the young protagonist of the story lets the reader know of "…how the bigness and silence of Africa, under the ancient sun, grows dense and takes shape in the mind, till even the birds seem to call menacingly, and a deadly spirit comes

out of the trees and rocks" (*African Stories:* 53). In another story '"Leopard" George', George had never felt fear in the bush, until he went out looking for the leopard that killed his native mistress. As he walked the kopje's path through the boulders in the dead silence of the night, he felt the coldness of it and he prayed, allowing his fear to grow inside him expecting his enemy to come at him at any time. He knew the place, he knew it by instinct (*Winter in July*: 150-151). In 'Little Tembi' Jane went out looking for Tembi in the bush, as she was certain he was responsible for the robberies that had occurred recently in her farm and in nearby farms. Tembi did not respond and Jane was "trembling so she could not control her limbs", her fear came from within her, "like a wound bleeding invisibly" and "she felt the silence like a coldness, the light had gone." (82-83)

The position that is adopted in the environment that we live in, the sense of self, the view we have of others, the interpretation we put on historical events or the way we see power being enacted around us, often leads to an attempt to transform or manipulate a change within which such events exist. To say, we are where we are, is true in the sense that we achieved an adequate understanding of recognition of the spatial and temporal context we find ourselves in but it is also true that there is a human desire to, as Henri Lefebvre's notes, produce space in order to be able to create a reality which meets our desires and dreams, as the white farmer wished to do. Because we are situated beings we create meanings that have to do with us being in the world, therefore, objects, entities and living beings constitute and are inconceivable without space; we are aware and often self-conscious of this facet, so to express ourselves symbolically requires looking at the importance and deciphering the multiple ways spatiality plays in the constitution of self and our relationship with others (Richardson: 41). In *Winter in July,* we find overlapping circles of individuals where some members may consider themselves to be superior to, or isolated from, other members of circles.

The white community deemed themselves superior to the natives and erected borders accordingly to keep them out of their circle thus constituting closed spaces in terms of skin colour and race. The Afrikaners are relegated to a space of their own by both the white and native community. Within the stories, bush which is not occupied by farms, settler houses or towns is "the territory of children, natives and Afrikaners these metonymies are extended to innocent, savagery, raw and uncultivated" (Sprague: 33). In 'The Second Hut' when Major Carruthers is looking for a manager for the farm and the only young man applying for the job was an Afrikaner, the Major "instinctively dropped his standards of value, for this man was an Afrikaner and thus came into an outside

category" (*Winter in July*:10). As for Van Heerden, he recognised his enemy at once as his dislike for the English was very strong. If he had not been an Afrikaner, the Major would have put him up in his house but instead he housed him in a thatched mud hut that stood in un-cleared bush and which was used to store sacks of grain. Both the materials used for building the hut and the environment fitted those used for the natives' compounds rather than for the settler houses. The distance the Afrikaner's hut was kept from the workers huts and from the main farmhouse suggests how they were seen to occupy middle ground within the British settler discourse, (Sprague, *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing*: 34). The natives also hated the Dutchman and threatened to leave the farm if he continued to manage it. They claimed that "Dutchmen are no good" (*Winter In July*: 16) and openly displayed their hatred for that section of white men because amongst the whites, the Afrikaner was their most brutal oppressor. In 'The De Wets come to Kloof Grange', Mrs Gale feels resentment towards "Mrs De Wet, the Dutch woman who was going to invade her life with impertinent personal claims" (43). Mr De Wet was hired as the farm's new manager and when she met him, "distaste twisted her again" as she witnessed the manner in which he treated his wife. Mrs Gale had created an English garden with fountains around her homestead which looked towards the mountains, rivers and ravines and Mrs De Wet refuses the conventions Mrs Gale's space imposes on her and instead chooses to roam the mountains and swim in the river. At the end of the story Mrs Gale labels both the De Wets as savages, a description made possible by a Rhodesian discourse of the Afrikaner. "Both Mrs De Wet and the Van Heerdens make themselves subjects of the wilderness in a way few adult English-speaking settlers do in the stories." (Sprague *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing*: 34)

As space is a matter of orientation, to take up space means having a location that faces towards, or away from other places thus space is relative to place. Every location is a place contingent to another and to be in place is to be in this place rather than another, at this time and not another. Possible time is to be in a time and in a space that is both contingent and inescapable. Space and time are therefore articulated in place and place is made up of divisions and space boundaries marked by names, by remembrances, by the presence of past events, by future hopes and by fears. (Richardson: 21) To the African native, the land was the nexus of existence where rituals and traditions passed from generation to generation giving him a sense of belonging and self-knowledge. Owning the land conveyed human worth. Having the land in possession of the whites caused great apprehension. Their ancient law for survival was to plough the land by sweat and tears

and when the coloniser took over their land the native became a mere employee on it. They were subjected to a new social reality which dislocated them from their traditions, their history and their life experiences - the spirit of place had been violated. Before the arrival of the colonists, the Shona had occupied the country for more than a thousand years and the Ndebele for two hundred years having come up from South Africa. These two ethnic groups were responsible for forming the country's identity, the Shona in Mashonaland and the Ndebele in Matabeleland. These two regions are geo-political spaces whose spatial identities based on nomenclature, merge with linguistic and ethnic identities. To the native, the two key life stages that connect and identify them to home, belonging and heritage are the acts of birth and death. The rituals carried out during these two acts of life are significant as they allow for a community to "come together to witness and interpret an event for its own survival". (Mwandayi: 54). A ritual at birth is the burial of an infant's umbilical cord, which serves to root the child to the land in which it is born. The cord is buried in the family's hut or homestead, in an antheap or in any other significant spot in the village. Lessing's stories regarding hut building points to this fact, the refusal of the native to upturn the soil of an antheap so as not to disturb the ancestors. A poem by Dzvairo illustrates how the native connects to the land, how they gain their identity from it: (Kadhani and Zimunya)

They took my umbilical cord
And buried it
In the fertile soil of the field nearby
Mingling me with the soil…
Giving me birthright.

At death, the ritual is more complex, going through various stages until the spirit of the ancestor is returned to live among the living a year after death. This close bond between the living, the dead and the land, may be illustrated by the Shona's traditional concern for burying their dead. When an adult dies, his family are concerned with two important duties, that his spirit, *mudzimu*, be properly settled and that they take part in the ritual for the distribution of the deceased possessions. In order to do this his spirit must be returned to his hut. First the corpse is to be buried close to his home, usually at the side of an anthill (point made by Lessing) and once this is dealt with it is essential that the immediate family carry out a *gata*, which is a visit to a diviner of high repute, who will

tell them the cause of death of the deceased. A year after the burial, amid singing and dancing, a ceremony known as *kurova guva* takes place and the purpose for this ritual is to bring the spirit of the deceased from its grave and escort it back to the hut to be among his descendants. The proximity of the grave to the living quarters and the return of the spirit to his home illustrate not only the unity of family but most of all the family's identity to and with the land.

On the interpretation of indigenous space, "the concept of the body extends from the corporeal to the corporate; from a body of limbs and organs, to a body of different people and patrifilial groups." (Richardson: 115). It becomes a particular and concrete place, operated by each to reach out to the world. Heidegger's 'language is the house of being' complements the body as language comes from within it; language moves, someone speaks, another listens it enters into a person to be spoken; sometimes it does not transit, it remains unpronounceable, "where language stops is not where the unsayable occurs, but rather where the matter of words begin" (37). Language becomes the medium through which the subject discovers and investigates the object being observed and it is through representation that native authors too, order and clarify the world and offer their represented interpretation for the education and entertainment of others. (131)

Part 3: Englishness

The concept of Englishness has become central to defining the national identity of English Literature and British culture, especially as debated in the 1920s and 30s. Looking at Neville Cardus' 1934 essay entitled, 'Good Days', he passionately describes his admiration for cricket matches and its players and the gracefulness of a batsman. This drew on an instinctive balance of good manners and culture which was bred in their bones, a background of skill and beauty no less pleasurable and aesthetic as listening to the most celebrated Italian tenor that ever lived. The blessings of a boys' public- school education and the construction of a certain image of Englishness, associated with the idea of a world divided into 'gentlemen and players' cannot be better depicted (Walder, *Literature in the Modern World:* 171-175). For E.M. Forster, the character of the English was essentially middle class; they were the dominant force of the community who were wealthy due to the Industrial Revolution and politically powerful because of the Reform Bill passed in 1832 which was connected to the rise and organization of the British Empire, (176-177). Whereas Russia was symbolised by the peasant and factory worker and Japan by the samurai, the English had a Mr. Bull, a gentlemen in a top hat, dressed in comfortable clothing who displayed a substantial stomach with a no lesser substantial bank balance. Some say even Saint George wore a top hat once. Forster notes the importance of the public-school system to the making of Englishness, schools created by the middle-class which remained unique and expressed the character of their founders, with systems of prefects and fagging, boarding rooms and the insistence on a good physical form made playing games compulsory. Young men were taught that the classroom was the world in miniature, that to love their country they had to love their school and the happiest days of their lives were the ones spent at school. But their hearts were not developed as these boys were taught not to feel.

It was not that an Englishman could not feel if he was cold or not, it was just that he was afraid to feel. He was taught that feelings were not to be expressed, that all emotions had to be kept in and it was this form of being in the world that was vastly responsible for the difficulties the English faced abroad. As young men left school, they faced a world with fairly developed minds, well-developed bodies but underdeveloped hearts. The world out of the school grounds was not all composed of men who had attended a public school nor were they all entirely Anglo-Saxons.

George Orwell, in his essay 'The Lion and the Unicorn' pins down other characteristics of Englishness, this time of the lower middle class and the working class (Orwell:180-189). Generally, in Orwell's view, the English as a whole were not an artistically gifted people and had a horror of abstract thought. They had no need for a philosophical or systematic view of the world, claiming to be practical in everything they did with a certain power to act without taking thought. But, in moments of supreme crises the English seem to draw the nation together and act upon instinct, according to a pre-defined code of conduct which was generally understood by everyone and all at once they drop into a mode of sleep-walkers. A trait which is minor but well-marked in the English is their love of flowers, they have no aesthetic feelings whatsoever yet this trait, linked up with that of a craving for hobbies and spare-time occupations is the private-ness of English life. What is a truly native culture to them centres round things that are communal such as tea parties, garden sunset gatherings, sports activities and pub meetings. The private liberty of the individual is held dear to everyone and the nosey parker is a well detested name.

The genuinely popular culture of England is what goes on beneath the surface and there is nothing puritan about it: drinking, gambling and the foulest of language in the world. There is no definite religion practised by the common people yet they retain a Christian feeling but forget the name of Christ. They hate war. In peace time, with a huge number of unemployed, no one joined the ranks of the standard army. The mass of the people had no military knowledge or tradition and even though literature is full of battle poems the most popular amongst them is of the brigade of cavalry which charged in the wrong direction. The names of great battles that ended the war with the Germans are simply unknown to them which revolted foreign observers at times when it came to the question of the British Empire – it looked hypocritical as they held on to a quarter of the globe with the means of a huge navy yet claimed war to be wicked. The working class hardly knew the empire existed and as to officers of the British armed forces, they loathed them hence the habit of an officer never wearing a uniform off duty. A military parade seemed no more than a ritual dance and a stern affirmation of power, a laughing matter to most. What was important to the English was undoubtedly their respect for the law, the constitution and a belief that justice, liberty and objective truth were incorruptible. An Englishman is not a Scotsman, inequality of wealth and patriotism connects them all, with this sentiment running deeper within the working classes rendering them more intolerable of foreign habits and foreigners. England is a class-ridden land of snobbery and privileged people who seem to be bounded by an invisible chain which brings them together in times

of crises, having its own language and memories but often a family where the wrong members are in control, and this according to Orwell, is the best definition of England.

3.1 The Tylers, England and Southern Rhodesia

Lessing's family were from England and she has written much in her autobiographies and autobiographical novels about her parents, of being English and how as a family they faced living in Southern Rhodesia. She begins her novel, *In Pursuit of the English*, by saying she came into contact with the English at a very young age because her father was an Englishman and she had spent a good part of her life trying to understand him. Her mother was not English but British as she was a mixture of English, Scottish and Irish and depending on her mood she would refer to herself as either Scottish or Irish but Lessing does not recall her mother ever saying she was English. In a colony, being English took on an awkward and indefinable variety of meanings. People were very English when either they were sorry they had emigrated or when they were glad they had, that is, they always considered their roots to be in England. However, when Lessing was declared a persona non grata in 1949 and had to return to England she was shocked to realise how few English lived in London as the city was full of foreigners.

Lessing is not afraid of ideas or of bending the shape of a novel to explore ideas and during her career she dealt with the end of imperialism, the rise and fall of communism, the threat of nuclear disaster, madness, terrorism, ecocide, faith, and freedom. She felt that her father, Alfred Cook Tyler, had died with the First World War as his spirit had been crippled by it and he was physically and psychologically damaged. Her mother, Emily Maude McVeagh, born in London, was essentially an urban woman who later found herself on a farm in the middle of an African veld. She took a long time to decide whether she should marry Tyler and when she did in 1919, they moved to Persia where Lessing was born in that same year. Lessing sees herself as a child and heir to the Wars and the five books that make up her novel series, *Children of Violence*, are her metaphor for all who lived in the twentieth century. (Green: 11). Her father had hated Persia and had hated banking, but was glad to have left England. Coming back from the War he felt betrayed by the politicians who had lied to them, betrayed by civilians who knew nothing of patriotism, and betrayed by the jingoistic newspapers. He left England and never returned.

Mrs Tyler had two children and her favourite child was her son Harry, who was born in Southern Rhodesia. Lessing's birth, in Persia, had been a difficult one for her and to worsen matters she was a girl, her mother had wanted a son, and it was the doctor on call who named Doris as Emily did not have a name for her. Moreover, she was a difficult and tiresome baby, so the resentment that marked the mother-daughter relationship began at a very early stage and shaped in part Lessing's view on life. They remained in Persia for five years, her father worked in Kermanshah as a bank manager and then transferred to Tehran where he had to work under someone else, and this displeased him. The family moved back to England where they remained for six months. After visiting the Southern Rhodesian stand at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wimberley, which exhibited eighteen- inch maize cobs and posters claiming that anyone could make his fortune in maize-farming within five years, Mr. Tyler decided to move there and try his luck. Mrs Tyler took to the colony: trunks full of clothes from Harrods, curtains from Liberty's, visiting cards and a governess. They bought 1500 acres of land in Banket and were seventy miles north of the capital, Salisbury. The land was still wilderness, virgin bush, and not an acre of it was cleared for planting. It was full of wildlife, kudu, sable, bushbuck, anteaters, wild pigs, snakes. They built a mud and thatched roof hut which was expected to last for just a year but it remained their home for the next twenty years.

Mr. Tyler's attempts to grow maize failed as he knew nothing of farming but the worst was that he did not really care as left to himself he would dream his life away. He was content to gaze on the African skies and the changing colours of the veld; he became ill and hypochondriac. Mrs Tyler fell ill a year after arriving in the country and she took to her bed and stayed there. Being isolated on the farm was the worst predicament of all and although she tried to be brave and resourceful, she began to break down. She refused to face what she knew she eventually had to, that her husband was not living in a real world and that the miracle they waited for, a gold-find or the sweepstake, would not happen. He would not go back home. The children, Lessing, 'Tigger' as she was lovingly called by her father, and Harry saw their childhood in the thatched mud house as a miracle of good luck. They loved the bush and the animals and were allowed to wander free over the thousands of acres of magnificent highveld in solitude, which for Lessing was the most precious of gifts.

The books she read, her mother had shipped from home, held tales of fairies where slow and peaceful English rivers and streams flowed and snow fell on occasions. Nothing compared to the reality she encountered in the bush as Lessing elegantly depicts in her

short story, 'The Old Chief Mshlanga'. Here, the narrator recalls what it was like growing up as a child on an African farm, where the veld meant strangeness and seemed unreal. The child saw a msasa tree but could not identify it for what it was and as she grew older she would wonder the bush with her shotgun by her side at all times for self-protection. She was taught not to trust black people, not even those who worked about the house, and they were certainly not to be treated or spoken to as friends. One day, she met an old man with white greyish hair stooped over a walking stick accompanied by two younger men. The older man had a red blanket over his shoulders and the younger men carried pots and other utensils. It was an unusual group but what was more striking to the girl was the air of dignity about these men. She spoke to the old man in English and he replied in his own language, one of the younger men doing the translation. She learnt the old man was a chief and she sensed the pride he had in standing before her as an equal "(he wore) dignity like an inherited garment" (*African Stories*: 50). While the words used to describe the encounter reveal a new language to the narrator, she understood her pride in meeting the chief but essentially, she saw she had no place in his territory and no authority to walk in it. After this meeting, the child understood the senselessness of the gun and began to carry it in a different spirit; to shoot for food and to dance amongst the trees.

Lessing's mother grieved as her children were not living in a good middle-class suburb as she had imagined for them. They lived on the farm for twenty years and for twenty years Mrs. Tyler waited for life to begin for her and her children but what for her was a calamity was a blessing for her children. She never understood what was happening to her on the farm and to relieve her fate she was endlessly inventive with too much energy for her situation and eventually she burnt herself out. Lessing's father, whose nature was so different from that of his wife's, would spend hours sitting outside the house watching the sky and mountains, taking in the silence.

Lessing was sent to boarding schools for schooling in Salisbury from age seven to fourteen but she hated it so much that she packed her bags, returned home without her parents' permission and educated herself. She read books, began to write and later returned to Salisbury to work at the Central Telephone Exchange, much to her mother's grief. Shortly afterwards, due to her father's illness, her parents too moved to Salisbury. At nineteen Doris met and married Frank Wilson and it was "an utterly wrongheaded marriage", they had two children, John and Jean, but in 1943 she divorced Frank and left her children with him. She became a typist in parliament and an active member of a Marxist group where she met and married her second husband, Gottfried Lessing a

refugee from Hitler's Germany. They had a son Peter and once again Lessing got divorced in 1947. She remarked that marriage was not one of her talents and that she was much happier being unmarried than married. She left for London in 1949 and as female and colonial she was doubly dispossessed and doubly exiled. She spent her childhood among people who wanted to return to England, but when she moved to England she wanted to return to Africa, which she could not do as, due to her communist inclinations, she was deported from Southern Rhodesia and declared a Prohibited Immigrant.

For writers, the shifting of continents with its experiences of dislocation and displacement is widely accepted as being formative and in this sense Lessing was privileged more than most. As first-generation British emigrants, her family were at the tip of a racially complex and controversial society and throughout her childhood and adolescent life she benefited from her place in this elite social group even though she felt discomfort in its environment. The things her parents longed for in Southern Rhodesia, the culture and traditions from England, were the things they missed but these were also what they had once repudiated and which provoked their leaving England. Lessing was concerned in establishing the transitory and shifting nature of Englishness and its enduring mythical power as fiction. White settler colonial writing, written within a neither/nor territory may be considered as Stephen Slemon refers to, a second –world life writing and considers that Lessing, as the daughter of white settlers, to be "complicit in colonialism's territorial appropriation of land, and voice, and agency" (*Journal of South African Studies*:139) and acknowledges that Lessing evidences in her writing the sense of split subjectivity, as she implicates herself in, and attempts to at the same time refuse, the imperial discourses around her. Southern Africa as abode to second-world writing of discursive polemics, space of dynamic relationships between coloniser and colonised, foreigner and native, settler and native and home and away (141)

To illustrate this point an episode from *Martha Quest* is helpful. Martha took the train to visit a near-by village and stood for a while watching different people going by, wondering how they fitted in with each other, and remembered remarking to her left-wing Jewish friend how she repudiated race prejudice, a statement which she guiltily acknowledged was not entirely true. She first thought of them in terms of race, colour and groups and only then as people; it was 'not easy to put flesh and blood on the bones of an intellectual conviction' (*Martha Quest*: 63). Martha thought the word 'Afrikaners' held a poetic ring to it and felt this helped to emphasise their strong origins and that the British

and their numerous subgroupings were held together because they lived in a country that was pronounced British, so they shared the same knowledge of ownership. The natives were just a great multitude of nameless people. She found each community by group, colour or clan would anxiously strive to keep together in order to separate themselves from the other, "It was as if the principle of separateness was bred from the very soil, the sky, the driving sun" (56) The implication here is that ethnic, racial and social differences, the identities it produces for the white settler, are inevitable and is directly derived from the natural world particularly from the land. (Watkins: 15). Thus Lessing's preoccupation with issues of empire and nation, race and gender, her complicity to colonialism, her resistance to it, categorises her African writing into part memory writing, part travel writing and part essay. Another important point to bear in mind about Lessing is as Anthony Chennells, a professor at the University of Zimbabwe, points out is that her experiences were not with Africa but with Southern Rhodesia and the colonial experience in this country had no counterpart anywhere else in Africa (Bertelsen: 31). Southern Rhodesia was different beginning with the fear of the whites of being taken over by South Africa and the antagonism they held towards Afrikaanerdom, which made them keen to remain a British colony. They were also anxious of Britain's move to give the native population the right to vote. The natives far outnumbered the white community, who defined themselves as Southern Rhodesians by the differences they believed existed between them. Therefore, Lessing's reaction to the English when she arrived in London in 1949 came as no surprise.

In her novel *In Pursuit of the English*, an autobiography in a comic mode of those first few years in London, the narrator called Doris, focuses on a single London house and represents it as a microcosm of English society into which English values and traditions are played out. As the title of the book suggests, Lessing is looking for the English, but what she finds is a community of women trying to negotiate different kinds of employment, domestic, sexual and emotional orientations. Women got married to have children and the Commonwealth was formed to replace Empire. According to the 1948 British Nationality Act, British subjects were considered to be either citizens of the United Kingdom or if they came from the colonies, Commonwealth citizens. It was at this point that ethnic nationalism, in which race, culture and ethnicity, began to play an important role towards the idea of Englishness. National identity deriving from place-of-birth was replaced by blood-line and inherited lineage. Lessing tries to establish Englishness and the exclusiveness of English identity models by focusing on what Englishness was not

and the extent to which Englishness was not equal to Britishness. She exemplified this point by contrasting her father to her mother. Her mother would refer to herself as either Irish or Scottish depending on her mood but never English, whereas her father was at all times an Englishman.

Lessing's key novels, written during the years 1945-1960, examine the years post War and show her preoccupation with the scars this war left in Europe and the scars which begin to form in the colonies as nationalist liberation movements were now gaining force. In 1953 Southern Rhodesia was unified with two of its neighbours, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was established. Featuring prominently in the nationalist struggle movements were the issues concerning African land ownership and agricultural policies. In her novel *Going Home,* Lessing describes her first visit to Rhodesia after being exiled. As she flies into Salisbury she recalls how living in London made her turn inwards, she "had become a curtain-drawer, a fire-hugger, the inhabitant of a cocoon" and as she views Salisbury she once again found it "easy enough to turn outwards again: I felt I had never left at all. This was my air, my landscape, and above all, my sun" (*Going Home*: 8). At the same time as she acknowledges that Africa belongs to the Africans, she acknowledges also that it belongs to those who feel at home in it and what she hoped for the future was that for the love of Africa, S. Rhodesia would be strong enough to connect people who were at the time hating each other; as in, 'The Old Chief Mshlanga', where the young white girl felt the hostility and loneliness of walking the country in the footsteps of a destroyer yet, she felt that having been born there it was her country too.

In the 1987 edition of *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, Doris Lessing is given a place as a Zimbabwean writer. To be considered a native writer, one has to write Zimbabwean literature which is defined as "the works of Zimbabwean Africans who through their prose and poetry have expressed the human and cultural aspirations of the nation and its people" (Sprague, *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing*: 17). This definition would disqualify Lessing on two grounds; firstly, she is not black and secondly in her writing the natives are either fixed on their traditions and see their past with nostalgia or they are hopeful for a more dominant place in the white society. They were not at the time seeking a new nationhood. Lessing refused to pursue a narrative of Africa as a primitive place of adventure where African nationalism was a risk to the whites' control. Instead, and in helping native writers, Lessing created a literary space whereby African novelists could speak of and work towards the birth of a Zimbabwean identity. The transformation of

Rhodesia (after Southern Rhodesia and the Federation) into Zimbabwe was the most crucial spatial change to which the country's literature had to face. Lessing, as early as the 1970s, worked in helping Zimbabwean writers of her generation who were seeking "new voices from within Rhodesia". Writers, such as Stanlake Samkange, Charles Mungoshi, Dambudzo Marechera and Ivone Vera, reflected on the civil-war realities of the *Second Chimurenga* and the effects colonialism had on African traditions and on the ambitions of the younger generations for a future in an independent country. (Raftopoulos, Mlambo: 262)

Part 4: Lessing's Africa

In Africa, the writing of white identity is deeply connected to the writing of self and for Lessing what urged white writers to write about Africa was the need to grasp the nostalgia of something lost, undefinable, but found in instinct. Africa for her was a place that transcended human condition, a place of remembered pain and suffering, of poverty and of exile, some good moments too, but above all Lessing's Africa is about truth. It is in her autobiography, *Under my Skin,* that she reveals her Africa. In this book, she starts by questioning how much of the truth should be told as telling the truth about one's self is one thing but of others is another. She clearly separates her life in Africa from her life in England stating that she can stick to the truth about people and experiences in Africa but she cannot do the same for people and experiences in England. As she grew older the more secrets she held and she felt, as Simone de Beauvoir did, it was not the duty of friends and lovers to tell all (11). We are assured therefore that, about Africa, Lessing writes as close as possible to the truth, even though through shifting perspectives for as she went through life she saw it "differently at different stages, like climbing a mountain while the landscape changes" (12).

One of the first descriptions she gives us of her African surroundings is when her parents built their house on the farm, she mentions the beauty of the place, on a hill, from where she could view hills over minor ridges, vleis, the rivers Muneni and Mukwadzi, the Hunyani rivers, the Hunyani Mountains and the Great Dyke, where the sun showed up crystalline colours which kept changing with the light of day. The rainy season brought up lush green virgin bush, where among the trees, ridges and reefs of quartz could be found as this was gold district (54). The family house, its outbuildings and the farm labourers' village, little affected the landscape as it all merged into the bush naturally. The buck would spend hours in the shade of antheaps, where she and her brother would go in search of them. They would follow the flatten grasses, the hoof prints, the pellets of dung and in order to avoid snakes they would climb high onto a rock shielded by branches and wait, at six in the morning, to catch a view of the animal. They would catch sight of a koodoo and would be close enough to see the colour of its eyes and fur. The children would hardly breathe as the koodoo looked around him nervously, knowing something was wrong. It would panic and run off in terror and the children were able to witness, 'how the beast experienced its life, in constant threat, always on the watch for enemies. The koodoo was one day, one time, one memory'. (115).

Then there were the sounds of the bush, "the sounds of time taken for granted", (116) sounds never recorded and which are lost to Africa for ever. Lessing and her brother would often spend time under the telephone lines their ears pinned to the metal pole listening to the wind on the wires as hundreds of birds sat there chittering away. While concealed by the high grass they would listen to a man shouting at the oxen as he ploughed the soil for harvest, or to working men singing work songs as they toiled the soil or to another as he walked a trail among the trees playing the mbira, a national instrument conveying the 'voice of the ancestors'. Often their dogs would be with them and as they lay on the grass the ticks could be seen leaving the grass and snuggling onto their fur. The sound of thunder over the mountains could mean rain towards the end of the day, the doves would coo and the cicadas whose noise "is like having malaria and being full of quinine" would be insanely incessant (*The Golden Notebook* : 373). The hawks would circle the sky. Then there were the drums, the beating of the drums breaking into the silence of the night from the natives' compound, the music, the natives dancing with fires for light. In the preface to the 1981 anthology of *African Stories,* Lessing commented what a pity it was that reviewers and critics did not look at her work beyond what she called the colour problem and the colour bore, as the greatest gift she had received from Africa to her writing was the Continent itself so how could she not be able to 'share the best of (her)self, that is to say, the self- made by the farm' (*Under My Skin* :149).

Chennells, (Bertelsen: 142) points to how Lessing explicitly rejects race as the shaping principle of her stories, "did we talk about the Africans? – the "kaffirs"? Not much. They were there taken for granted…I don't propose to elaborate on white settlers' attitudes, there's nothing new to say about them. My African stories describe the District – Southern Rhodesian farms at that time." (*Under My Skin*: 113). She does not want to evade nor repeat what her reader already knows but rather she wants her stories to be true in atmosphere and feeling and, if not literally truth, she wants her stories to record what is factual, "that is from a white point of view", (143). Lessing therefore writes truthfully of home, of growing up, of laughter and of the pain of letting go.

In the *'Winter in July'* collection she takes indigenous space and illustrates with in it the changes the country went through with the arrival of the foreigners. She takes space and articulates it with race, bringing whites and blacks into an intimate proximity yet at the same time in remoteness, and presents this new literary experience as a socially selected landscape where narrative and culture serves as an intermediary between author,

society and the reader. The gender she chooses to write in precedes and shapes some of the stories in the collection as Lessing uses the option of writing either in a 'feminine' or 'masculine' mode as she relies on gender differentiation to code, sort and make sense of the landscape and what is experienced in it. In 'Old John's Place' for example, the sex of the narrator is only known to the reader several paragraphs into the story and the choice to make use of a young girl to be the main observer figure as she, not having entered into her sexuality differentiated adult role, can act as a filter to blot out larger areas of experiences. The white male and female attitudes to Africa in these stories are differentiated; men characteristically feel they own Africa as they impose European notions of order and development on it, whilst the women by contrast are alienated from it, both culturally and physically. By writing like 'a man' Lessing attempts to enter the field of male discourse, male history and male power, an attempt to take over and possess Africa. The masculine prose is a language of selection, excision and expropriation; the law of masculine language becomes the law of being. By writing in the 'feminine' Lessing makes close contact with the effects of what the 'male' Africa instils in women, the question of their Africanness, as they attempt to impose their order or civilization on Africa, but which lead instead to their complete alienation from it. Women are in opposition and the natives are usually in the background serving the whites.

According to Barua and Bhattacacaryya, place-as-subjective-experience and place as environment, are equally interrelated, inseparable and interdependent as are organisms and environments themselves. They seek a "better understanding of the intertwined characteristics of place, landscape, memory and the self." (Estok: 197). Place is a meaning put together by experience whether a territory, a rural area, the veld, or a neighbourhood. Place may also be a form of understanding the meaning of self as memory recalls distinctive elements of that place such as odours and textural or visual qualities in the environment. In Lessing's case, it could have been either the dirt road used by the native children to get to school, the freedom of veld where she used to spend hours alone or the road her parents took to get from the farm to the city. People attach special and individual meaning to places and different people from different cultures observe and understand the Earth's surface in different ways. The physical form for place is landscape and landscape is often seen as being a panoramic view having scenery. Place is associated with time, memory and experiences and tends to undergo few changes whereas landscape, is always a scenescape which is seldom named. Edward Casey in his essay, 'Body, Self and Landscape' (405-406) compares this to the fact that one does not put a name to one's

body although one has a name for oneself. He concludes that body and landscape are the boundaries of place where the body is the inner boundary and place the outer one, consequently, place is what takes place between body and landscape and is filled with traces of human culture; landscape teaches history and by having the knowledge of history, the appreciation of the landscape can be fully apprehended. Casey concludes that, "landscape is the traditional domain that links cosmos and hearth, place and space, self and other" (418).

4.1 Landscape and Self

Environmental landscapes which may be considered to connect human and spiritual dwelling places are rivers, streams and mountains and being attached to a particular landscape forms part of an individual's identity and culture. The familiar surroundings become an integral part of their psychological make-up and sense of rootedness so when these surroundings are lost, the 'felt value' of experiencing these places become even more important to people's inner lives. Landscape may also be language. English spread by travellers and colonisers both remained and changed as the language came in contact with the other. As the landscapes people moved through changed, physically and culturally, archaeology of cultures and languages was erected and engrained into the land literally and historically. Looking at a landscape through nativism has linguistic, social and ethological aspects. Landscapes alter over time as did the story of the English. There was a change in spatial imagination and as they moved, they were translated, their lands, their tongues, their cultures, their imagination. An attempt was made to imagine something beyond the obvious in an effort to see a little better.

In (*Going Home*: 12-14) Lessing refers to having been brought up in a colour-bar country and yet having no feeling about colour. At first, she thought this may have been due to some lucky psychological chance that must have made her immune to it but the best probability was that she was unlike other people who were brought up in that country therefore she watched her every attitude and response while she lived in Africa. Even though she was immune to 'colour feeling', she was sensitive to social pressures and she often wondered if these pressures came from people actually having colour prejudices or if it was simply a question of what the next -door neighbour had to say and this possibility was shocking to her. As an example, Lessing refers to a scene which happened at a

London hospital where she witnessed a white patient having a nervous collapse because she was being treated by a dark-skinned doctor. In writing this, and when on her first trip back to Rhodesia after leaving in 1949, Lessing was conscious of a feeling of 'fatigue and sterility' as she internalised that she would have to face all this prejudice over again. She had believed for a long time that this was the result of being a minority among her own kind and always on the defensive, testing everything she said or did against what was considered general standards. But returning to Rhodesia eight years after leaving it she believed this no longer to be true. What she felt was boredom and irritation by all the colour attitudes and prejudices, for "as soon as one sets foot in a white settler country one becomes part of a mass disease; everything is seen through the colour bar" (*Going Home*: 14) The memory of place is thus significant as it depends on place-attachment and the experiences attached to it. Jonathan Hart (Estok: 22) notes that what defines the self (and the other) is the movement in time and space within ever-changing cultures of the then and now. As nature becomes the substance of an imaginative space for text, where the production and reception of texts, including historical imagination, meet in an attempt to reach past experiences of an otherness, otherness defines its own mapping in text and context. "Otherness becomes something rooted in one's own experience, the spatial and the temporal, from infant to child to adult to an aged person. It has roots in the places one grew up in, moved to, and visited," (29). Mapping the other is therefore a "matter of point of view, the shifting involved in the art of moving and in the space of time" (38). Lessing fits nicely into this view. On the whole, the mixture of geographical and ethnographical writing with descriptions of customs and traditions is characteristic of narratives' attempt to capture in words the essence of inhabited places as seen by colonists. It was in this manner that European settlers represented, both to themselves and to others, the colonies and their relationship to them.

As landscape becomes a human construction and production between the observer and a geographical real object therefore, Lessing's short stories evidence the veld as her primary symbol for the limitlessness of African space where the imposition of behavioural codes and customs by the colonizer became a symbol of its enclosure; the sun being its dominant feature. Defining and keeping geographical boundaries was not an easy task but her characters managed to impose economic, racial and social boundaries upon themselves and their farming neighbours (Budhos: 29). It was in the veld that Lessing connected her characters to their perceptions of inner and outer space. Edward J. Hall, sociologist and psychologist, also notes that an individuals' behavioural and system

of beliefs are based on early experiences in the space they inhabit, a place defined by geography, climate, housing conditions and density of population (28). At age five Lessing recalls travelling on an ox wagon from Salisbury to her parents' newly purchased farm in Banket, where they had dreams of becoming successful farmers and never once did they think they would become dependent on long-term bank loans and slowly decline into poverty.

To fill their settler home Mrs. Tyler brought with them all that was English, from the jam to heavy silver to clothing, a piano and even a governess for the children. Their house was of mud and thatch and was very similar to the Africans'. It stood on the kopje built length wards with the rooms sliced across it. The floor was of stumped dung and mud and the pale grey mud of the walls were left free of whitewash because it looked better with the Liberty curtains. Most of the furniture was bought from a farm sale; the rugs were from Persia, the bedspreads were of flour sacks dyed orange and the washstands and dressing tables from petrol boxes painted black. Lessing's mother would play the piano they had brought over from London to the accompaniment of the persistent thudding of the tom-tom from the nearby native village, but almost at once she realised life was not going to happen as she had expected. (*Under My Skin:* 56-58). Their neighbours lived several miles away from them and they were separated by poor roads and wild bush. Lessing remembers how she spent most of her childhood alone in the landscape where very few people lived and how 'hellishly' lonely it all was but later on in life, she came to realise how extraordinary it had been and how lucky she was (*A Small Personal Voice*: 45). This insistent solitude encouraged Lessing to develop a physical and mental independence which contributed to the difficult relations she had with her parents, especially her mother, and which she describes as a jiggered intimacy; "we use our parents like recurring dreams, to be entered into when needed" (46). As her parents' economic and personal setbacks grew, Lessing and her brother wandered more around the bush at their will and they were sent off to school as soon as possible. Tigger, as she was called by her father, hated school. From a colonizer's point of view, Lessing's autobiographical writing is a reliable source of Southern Rhodesian memory and truthfulness. Because of her childhood, she always remained an African, an identity well rooted within her and as a writer of African stories she is unique as she writes from a subjective-point of view. While her novels have received wide attention and are discussed in critical literature, her short stories have been somewhat ignored, which is a pity, for these contain most of her

accomplished work having herself commented that she thought some of her best work was to be found in her short stories.

4.2 Border Crossings

Shortly after Doris Lessing was awarded the Nobel Prize, Sarah Lyall and Motoko Rich opened their description of her in the *New York Times* as a "Persian-born, Rhodesian raised, London-residing novelist who joined the communist party in Africa to later refute Marxism theories". She denied being a feminist. Lessing did have a life full of contradictory standpoints where she transgressed and crossed borders, both literally and socially, and some of these are clearly reflected in her work which, and in terms of African writing, makes her a unique writer. She mapped shifts across geographical, ideological and generic borders; her most marked memory being the literal border crossings she made as a child with her parents and when she returned 'home' to Britain. To research narrative in Lessing's African stories is having to take into account cultural boundaries as well, how these were enforced by the colonizer and what the possibilities were of transgressing them. The most easily understood signifier for these cultural boundaries as has been mentioned, was the skin, which defined the multiple border zones of the society living in Southern Rhodesia in the 1930s. To the identifier what begins as identical space becomes place as its localities, landscapes and landmarks become significant to him as he attributes a value to it. Lessing writes about her early years on an African farm both as a time of wandering freely through the bush and a time of outrage and rebellion against her mother's rule that seemed to live in Edwardian England rather than on a poor African farm. Lessing's childhood was not easy, World War I had damaged both her parents, her father having lost a leg in the war was haunted by memories of the trenches and her mother, having lost her lover to the war, nursed the wounded. In Lessing's last book, *Alfred and Emily*, she admitted how this war had squatted over her childhood and she could not free herself of it.

The need to break free and the unwillingness to accept boundaries imposed on her are recurrent themes in her work; everything in her world-view is linked, it is a part of a whole and although she takes pleasure in crossing boundaries set up by society she invites readers to question the existence of such boundaries. In her African stories, she uses realism to emphasise the importance of what is a historical view of events and the

development of humankind against its social background. She queries standard views of normality by exploring individuals through their consciousness when affected by social pressures and experiences. She explores dreams and visions and writes of issues which the society she writes for, were not ready to face. In Lessing's novel *The Grass is Singing*, a white woman having had a relationship with her African houseboy was subsequently murdered by him and the causes that led to the murder were simply not discussed among the white community, "Everyone behaved like a flock of birds who communicate – or so it seems- by means of a kind of telepathy." (10). Lessing here exposed how a society can work as an organism, for the British white community had its standards regarding women and race and it was absolutely necessary to conform to these unspoken rules. Mary had let down the community but by being dead she no longer presented a problem to the community's social norms, whereas whatever happened to Moses, the houseboy, was expressionless, indifferent. An out-of-bounds border had been crossed.

Throughout her stories in *Winter in July*, Lessing uses this similar language and shows the reader an interpretation of it. When old settlers said "one had to understand the country", (18) what was implied was that one had to learn their ideas about the native and how to deal with them or else it was better to leave the country. Colonialism from the settler's point of view was reflected as a process of place-making; at first the new country was nothing more than a blur of images then as localities become familiar, space became place. There was however a further complexity to consider. As the settler became confronted with an entirely different world to the one he was accustomed to, in order for him to perceive African space as place, he had to find landmarks which were other than geographical. One such landmark was the bush, an expressive natural area unknown to the white settler and once domesticated, it became an enclosed domesticated space to the settler. The rest continued to be outside space, the inside and the outside of a colonial border, a process of place-making. An example of domesticating space and borders may be seen in the clearing of land for the building of a homestead. To extend the house to the outside a veranda would be built and to connect the building to the land a garden, a beautifully cared for English garden, would be built.

In 'The De Wets come to Kloof Grange' the homestead had a "veranda which was lifted on stone pillars, (which) jutted forward over the garden like a box in the theatre. Below were the luxuriant masses of flowering shrubs, and creepers whose shiny leaves, like sequins, reflected light from a sky stained scarlet and purple and apple-green" (36). Here, a crossing of borders, from an inside to an outside and onto a beyond. Such place-

making examples may be found in the stories as description of how the African landscape was transformed by the settler as they set up new borders and barriers, established rules for crossing them and enforced the law when rules were broken. This subjective representation of space shows how a culture settles in its environment and the role the latter plays in individual and collective identities. Marking the territory, building up a farm and planting a garden are all prints and traces of this relationship. Landscape and spatial imagination as exposed in these texts reveal instances of spatial memory and show how landscapes can be read as a collective cultural representation (Estok: 50). Both the English language and its people are effects for spatial imaginations, language particularly, being a colonising tool for the increasingly mobile early moderns, creating an intimate relationship between viewer and environment.

There is also the different perspective of gender roles. Men's and women's different social functions influence and partially determine their relationship to the land. Constructing colonial boundaries implicated erasing all traces of the natives from the land, taking them from their inhabited space by firstly separating them through anthropology and ethnography and then by creating native reserves and compounds where they would be settled. To the white settler, financial incentives were given by the Imperial Land Bank to fence off properties and separate what was 'mine' from what was 'not mine', nonetheless these boundaries were not always clear and most of the time failed to keep the wildness out. As Imperial discourse strongly influenced the settler's attitude towards the landscape, they strongly believed they were contributing towards the civilization of Africa such as the English guidebooks for prospective settlers which announced imperial adventures in the continent's waste places requesting support for the growth of civilization. These waste spaces were to be kept separate from those that were domesticated and women were to be kept off them, only men could go out into the bush to mine or farm which paved the way for a spatial division through gendered roles.

The native and the white settlers' attitudes towards land and borders were very different as Channells points out (Sprague, *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing*: 25). To the settlers, what was empty land waiting to be toiled and mined was to the indigenous land crowded with ancestral connections and spiritual presences; what was wildness to the whites was structural to the blacks. As settlers became more familiar with Rhodesia, settler novelists stopped writing about the country as a place of savagery and adventure and exchanged the metonymies of warriors, witch-doctors and white heroism to dust, drought and disillusionment. It is in Lessing's time of 1920s, 30s and 40s that whites had

the most freedom to create a discourse of Rhodesia in where the natives were not portrayed as savages but rather as harmless, irritating, suspicious and backward people (18). Lessing had a complex view towards empty land and this is evident in the first African short story she wrote in 1951, *'This was Old chief's Country'* where she emphasises the natives' belief that the land was occupied by strong spiritual presences of African ancestors - well before the arrival of the settler. This spiritual presence is referred to in many of her other stories too and especially expressed in her book *Going Home* (32) when a grave of tribal chiefs was uncovered and three skeletons were dug up from an ant-heap during the building of their family home. I recall here the connection between ant-heaps and the native's life and death rituals. The labourers refused to continue to work on these sites out of fear the ancestral spirits being present implying that the bush could not be so easily appropriated by white settlers; there could be no crossing of borders here. Yet Lessing saw in the empty land an opportunity for self- realization and for personality development, empty land linking the landscape to the formation of identity. On her return to Rhodesia in 1957 she met a fellow passenger on her flight and after a long conversation with him notes, "For a moment we shared the same understanding of people who have been made by the same landscape" (9). She found intimacy with the magnificent nightscape and nights where through the "small intimate talking of the crickets", who talked in her ear, receiving her, made her part of Africa. (30).

4.3 The Colonial Child

In the Forward to Lawrence Vambe's book (xvi-xvii) Lessing writes "…the children and grandchildren of these invaders condemn their parents, wish they could repudiate their own history. But that is not so easy". Indeed, it is in her short African stories, in *The Grass is Singing* and in her *Children of Violence* series that Lessing describes what it was like to be a child growing up in colonial Africa. As Channells (Sprague, *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing* : 32) notes, some settler children, unlike their farmer parents, were not interested in success, they accepted the bush as wild space for playing, for growing up, for being free. In the bush, they were free of their parents' demands to emulate them, especially little girls whose mothers hoped to bring them up as a reflection of an English society. Martha, in *Martha Quest,* found delight in the acres of long pale grass and recalls how her mother, on the other hand, was threatened by it. The narrator in 'The Old Chief Mshlanga' nostalgically remembers, "they were good, the years of ranging the bush over her father's farm" signifying that for this child the bush did not produce a free identity and as the story unfolds the child learnt it could not be appropriated by the white settler. The fourteen year old child comes to discover that her family cook is a chief's son. Out of curiosity, she visits the chief and becomes aware of how different the bush is from the northern forests of her English literature books. She meets the chief but having nothing to say to him and as she returns home she senses "there was a queer hostility in the landscape, a cold, hard sullen indomitability that walked with me, as strong as a wall, as intangible as smoke: it seemed to say to me: you walk here as a destroyer". (*African Stories*: 56) This was the old chief's country as the chief himself, speaking through the cook, once let her father know and kept him silenced. The child felt alienated and dislocated. In Lessing's short stories we find the bush occupied by the children, the native and the Afrikaners as the metonymies for "the space beyond adult, English-speaking settler control, extended to innocence, savagery, raw, uncultivated" (Sprague, *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing*: 33). Children therefore become significant silent and unnoticed observers in places where the adult is denied access and it has been suggested further that Lessing places children in nature in order for them to form and understand their own identity and that of the world around them.

In 'A Sunrise on the Veld' a young, unnamed fifteen year old boy leaves his home early in the morning with his gun and his dogs to see the sun rise. Although he is full of confidence in his abilities the bush does make him shiver as it is still dark and the morning is cold. He crosses the row of trees, looks back to the house where his parents are asleep

in a stuffy dark room, and wanders out freely into bush, the closeness of nature giving him a sense of power. As soon as he was well away from the cultivated land he ran, shouted and sang, "he was clean crazy, yelling mad with the joy of living and a superfluity of life [there] was nothing he couldn't do, nothing!" (*African Stories*: 62). Then, "in the deep morning hush that held his future and his past was a sound of pain" (63). The boy had his gun with him and he went to look where the sound was coming from and found a buck, and fear arose in him when he realised that the grass around him was alive with whispering. He looked around in desperation and found the ground full of gigantic, active black ants that ignored him as they moved towards the buck that was fighting for its life. The animal soon fell unconscious and the screaming stopped. The boy was horrified. He knew he should shoot it to end its pain but he reasoned that this type of thing happens all the time in the bush so he should not interfere. The ants in a matter of minutes had clean-picked the animal. He went over to see the animal and noticed it had a broken leg, perhaps the natives had tried to kill it for food and in running away had fallen prey to the ants. The boy could not face it all and he found himself "a small boy again, kicking sulkily at the skeleton, hanging his head, refusing to take responsibility" (66). He thought of breakfast picked up his gun and returned home and thought he would leave it for the following day to think about what happened here. This child, unnamed, so it could be any colonial child, learnt how the relationship with nature can be complex and that despite his joyful connection with nature he discovered he could also be a mediator of destruction within it. He left home feeling superior to the world and returned unsure as to his responsibility in what he had witnessed.

In addition to stories of children and their relation to the bush, Lessing also offers the readers stories where the white settler farming society is seen through a child's view such as in 'Old John's Place'. This story narrates the story of newcomers to the farming district, the Sinclairs. As soon as they moved into 'Old John's Farm, the neighbours recognised that the Sinclairs were not the settling or farming type as they were too attracted to city life and were no more than cheque-book farmers. Mr. Sinclair made no attempt at all to make money on the farm and Mrs. Sinclair gardened and gave glamorous parties remembered with admiration by the community; week-end affairs commencing with tennis on Saturday morning and ending on Sunday evening with a formal dinner for forty people or so. True to the neighbours' predictions, the Sinclairs soon left the farm claiming that Mrs Sinclair could not take life on the farm but by the time they threw their

farewell party it was known to everyone that they had bought another farm surrounded by cheque-book farmers where they felt they would be more at home.

Due to its various owners, the farm house had been built onto and extended so often that it fascinated the children, they would run wild through it until they grew tired and settled next to their parents where they became a nuisance to them. By nightfall they would be found rooms to sleep in and put out of the way so that the party was free to start. Among these children was a thirteen year old girl who was too old to be put to sleep and too young to be allowed to stay with the adults. Although the Sinclairs' parties were 'foreign' to the farmers of the district, as they were more lively and lasted longer, Kate was always miserable at these functions. She had come to recognise four stages at every party. They all started with the women on one side of room and the men on the other, then as the liquor started to flow they would come together for a while until slowly and discreetly, or so they thought, couples exchanged partners and disappeared into rooms or into the garden, "Kate, after many such parties, had learned that after a certain time, no matter how bored she might be, she must take herself out of sight. This was consideration for the grown-ups, not for her; for she did not have to be present to understand" (*Winter in July*: 91). The last stage was the one Kate hated the most when voices began to rise and things turned ugly. Then it was time to go. As the Sinclairs left the farm, in came the Laceys who proved to be "even more expensive and ugly, yet kind and satisfactory, than the Sinclairs themselves" (95). They were going to rear horses, not suitable for the area, and Kate came to understand that anyone who came to live at 'Old John's Place was not the kind of people its neighbours wished for.

Kate understood this better when much to her mother's annoyance she and Mrs. Lacey became friends. The Laceys were not like the others of the district and Mrs Lacey was not the homely kind and definitely not a farmer's wife. Everyone took to her, and Kate was invited to spend a day with her which she did a week after their arrival. She found the place transformed, the walls had colour an innovation for the district, other walls had been replaced with sheets of glass, and the bedroom floor had white carpets, it had nothing to do with anything Kate had experienced. As the day went by Kate felt as if she was being used as a test for other people's reactions and "Kate could already hear the sour criticisms which would eventually defeat the Laceys" (99). The only thing the women of the district would appreciate would be the three rooms set up for the baby. The little boy had a native nanny to look after him and a room to herself whereas normally a child would be looked after by the cook's wife. Mrs. Lacey was described as being

"clever" her house was beautifully set up and the house warming party was given several weeks after they moved in. It was nothing like the parties Kate was used to. The children were put to bed in arranged camp-beds with a nanny to look after them, the guests were then arranged putting husbands and wives together with other partners close by. "Kate was astonished that Mrs Lacey could have learned so much about these people in such a short time" (103). Everything worked as she intended it to and as the night progressed so did old habits and Kate understands two facts; few of the district farmers shared her father's sexual morality and even with these abnormalities', their lives were continued dull and provincial compared to the glittering lives of the Laceys. When she saw that when Mrs Lacey came for lunch at her house and was left out of the women's circle it became obvious to Kate that the Laceys would be moving. "I think, you'll have to move again" said Kate reasonably "You ought to go somewhere …that has your kind of people". At this comment Mrs Lacey looked unkindly at Kate and stated that when she was Kate's age she thought of nothing else but hockey.

As Kate drifts in and out of these child-adult, conservative-adventurous groups she recognizes their incompatibility and knew she had to choose between loyalty to the values and traditions of the district's farming community and the Lacey's'. In this story, Lessing uses a child to observe the cultural levels, social life, and the moral codes of the district and how these are brought up by contrast between settled farmers and the passers-by.

Part 5: Theme of Huts and Houses

It is in Lessing's autobiography, *Under my Skin*, that the importance of houses and huts is understood as it is in and through her home that she becomes intimate with the African landscape and shapes her identity. She makes a clear distinction between the natives' and the settlers' homesteads whereby a hut was suited for the native only and a house for the white settler. When Lessing's family built their farm house on a hill it was built of materials taken from the bush: grass, tree poles, mud and dung worked by her parents, herself and her little brother, all similar to a native's hut, except larger. The child Doris knew unconsciously every detail of the house and of its mud walls. Only she could see where Tobias, the painter, had put his flat hand on the whitewash for, 'at a certain moment of the sunrise, when the sun was four inches over the mountains in the east, judging by the eye, that hand came glistering out of the whitewash like a Sign of some kind' (*Going Home*: 42) For her the house represented a living entity, built with affection where she always kept her bedroom door open so she could view the bush she loved so much and wait for its visiting animals.

Her mother, on the other hand, always kept the doors shut as to her the house was her place of exile. These opposite views revealed how differently each of them saw the bush; Lessing opened to it, accepting it in its naturalness and her mother out of fear of it maintained a barrier between her and the bush. The colonial stereotyped idea of a superior settler homestead was not Lessing's reality. Settlers may have aspired to have homes superior to that of the natives but the fact was that the first settler's homes were huts, sharing the same features and existing in continuum as the native huts. The term 'hut', from the French is also the African vernacular for one-celled structures and a native homestead was formed by a group of huts intended for different purposes especially in a polygamous family where there was a hut for each wife, reflecting a social organization. The European settlers' thatched huts were few in numbers and joined by pergolas to form a single unit, an indication of the insecurity the settlers felt in the veld. The natives blended their space by spending time cooking and working on crafts connecting outdoor and indoor spaces, which contrasted strongly with settler housing where all living spaces were contained exclusively within its walls. (Raschke, Perrakis, Singer: 168).

As money and building materials became available to the settler, their huts developed into bungalows whose origins were in India and this imposed an imperial domestic dwelling within the landscape; the hut then taking on a derogatory meaning in colonial terms. These buildings created a complex relationship with the land as they

imposed a foreign ideology on what was native. To the settler, however, the dwelling created a sense of belonging, set up boundaries around their domestic space which they felt gave them claim to the land. Here, space becomes historically and socially constructed, with overlapping individuals within or in spite of built boundaries around the perimeter of the house. These boundaries may be physical or invisible, such as social norms, an example being in '"Leopard" George' where George's black mistress appears before party guests making her relationship to George known to them, or *In the Grass is Singing* where social boundaries between Moses and Mary failed to be enforced leading to scandal and death.

These images used by Lessing play a key role in the depiction of colonial society, the hut being particularly vulnerable to the colonial process. The hut represented a different way of life and therefore a challenge to the settler community as it threatened to break the rules and values of settler society. For the native, the hut when invaded by the settler became a space under threat and border transgressions were committed (170). In 'The Second Hut' placing a white man in a hut constituted an invasion of African space. In this story an English-speaking family, with two small children, move to Southern Rhodesia to farm maize and breed cattle and Major Carruthers hires an assistant, an Afrikaans speaking man who is very poor. Due to his nationality and because he was part of what the Rhodesian settler society termed the 'poor white problem', the Afrikaner was not invited to stay at the main house with the English family but instead was housed in a hut. By doing this the Major placed him in a difficult situation, as a white man placed in authority over black workers yet living in a situation similar to theirs was unwise. When a second hut was required to house the Afrikaner's large family, the natives were asked to build it and they rebelled. They found it to be a takeover of their style of building and expecting the hut to be built by them for a white man went against the context of hut-building, as hut building for the native was always a communal experience and often a religious one too. So, it was no surprise that racial tension broke out which led to the eventual destruction of the hut and the death of a white child. Lessing expresses through this story how the violation of the native's domestic space of the hut became a medium for their resistance to colonialization and how this invaded space constituted the crossing of boundaries. It also indicated how tension between white settler groups could arise and add to their downfall.

5.1 The House and Hut as Gendered Space

In settler societies, the home was the woman's domain, where she was in charge. Having left her mother country a woman had a strong need to establish a place of belonging in the new country and the house served as that territorial marker, becoming part of her identity, the new identity she had to forge and this gave her a settler woman's status. In Lessing's stories, the settler house was therefore a site of gendered power but simultaneously of enclosure and exile. Her short stories may be seen as a microcosm of the settler's life in a process of relocation and dislocation that is characteristic of colonialism. There is a relationship between the domestic space and the bush and between the house and the hut, both involve the intrusion of the foreign power which affects both the human and nonhuman environment and the play out of submission and domination: Husband, wife; mother, daughter; farmer, labourer; white, black relationships.

The settler society was no different to a patriarchal society in general where the home was run by the woman and she had no say in politics or economics. The man's domain was the bush and the children who were not yet bonded to the colonial project were allowed to run free, often as transgressors of gender boundaries or as enforcement of them. Often domestic space and huts became a site of resistance both in racial and gender domination resulting in dramatic consequences. The hut and its surrounding area were native, where a tribal chief was the supreme leader and where men, women and children wandered freely and where outsiders, whites, were not allowed in. This was their land. In the 'Second Hut' the farm labourers revolted against building a hut for the Afrikaner family as this was a transgression by the white man of what was native. The farmer refused to have the assistant in his house due to his cultural gender. In 'The de Wets come to Kloof Grange' we have the Gales' house and the de Wets' house. Mrs. Gale refused to have the assistant in her house as he had a wife but put them up instead in an 'old house' they had on the farm. When the Gales first arrived at the farm Mrs. Gale changed its name from Kloof Nek to Kloof Grange linking it to home, and gendering it hers. Mrs De Wet on the other hand was not interested in her house, preferring to spend her time at the river and in the mountains. In a way Mrs Gale saw this as treason to the white settler female ideology as the house was an expression of ownership for a woman providing her with the domestic role she required in society and giving her the sense of being mistress of her home and husband. But not all houses were gendered female. Thus the house, the domestic space, conveyed a social identity which often became threatened

when transgressed by native women or contested when occupied by native men such as in '"Leopard" George' and *The Grass is Singing*.

In '"Leopard" George', George Chester returning from fighting in the War bought a piece of wild, virgin, rocky and uncultivated land, in fact this is the only story of the book that does not touch on agricultural land. A contradiction in narratives as George does work the land and become wealthy, building a house that would last for years furnishing it carefully as he intended to live there for the rest of his life. He wanted to be his own "boss". Eventually outhouses, storehouses, wash-houses and poultry yards spread about the place, and he had laid out a garden, and paid two boys handsomely to keep it beautiful" (*Winter In July*: 133-134). He was miles from his nearest neighbour but when the valley was later divided among new settlers his neighbours became closer and George was invited to parties and gave parties, usually swimming parties, on Sundays where anyone wishing to could attend. The women of the district could not understand why such a rich man chose to live alone in a house which would be the dream of any housewife. His servants were faithful workers and George made sure their compound was not made up of disdained shambling huts but that it was a proper native village. What provoked the white women of the district was George having such faithful workers.

It was in December, at one of his parties, that a native girl appeared making her way towards the guests at the pool. Everyone noticed her including George who excused himself, got up casually from where he was sitting and went to meet her. He spoke with her and after a while the girl moved away and returned to the compound which was not far off. "She walked dragging her feet, and swinging her hands to loosely clutch at the grass-heads: it was a beautiful exhibition of unwilling departure; that was the impression given, that this was not only how she felt, but how she intended to show she felt" (139). It was obvious to George's guests that the girl was his mistress and upon George's return no one spoke of the matter and conversation carried on where it had been let off but what the men felt towards him was an "irritation which was a reproach for not preserving appearances" and the women "were noticeably acid" (140). As George takes on a native mistress he invades the space of the other by exploiting the young girls' sexuality'. When she invades his space he sends her into exile. What the native girl was seeking was for George to give her recognition and she was aware of the importance of the house and of its guests as the place to obtain her identity as the desired mistress of the house.

In, *The Grass is Singing*, we have a white woman who gets involved with her black servant. From early on in the story we find Mary Turner ill-treating her servants, so

much so, that they leave her employment and she has difficulty in having anyone else wanting to work for her. Her house is completely her domain; she wants her home to be a fine example of English domestic life and expects her servants to know the difference. The reason for Mary's punitive and unreasonable treatment of the servants seems to be tied up with the way she identifies herself within her home. Mary had hated her childhood and she disliked her mother who made a confidante out of her early, "she used to cry over her sewing while Mary comforted her miserably, longing to get away" (33). Her parents fought over bills and the family was always moving, there always seemed to be "dust and chickens; dust and children and wandering natives; dust and the store – always the store" (34). As she became an adult she was mocked by her friends who accusingly said that at thirty she was not mature enough to find a husband; she still wore pinafore dresses and ribbons in her hair. This had a profound effect on her. So when she married Dick and moved from the city to the farm she thought her life would change and she would after all become her own mistress and have a home of her own. What she was not expecting was the poverty in which Dick lived, the house was small and stuffy and had a corrugated iron roof; the paraffin lantern made her sick and all about the house brought back memories of her mother and "she began to feel, slowly, that it was not this house she was sitting, with her husband, but back with her mother, watching her endlessly contrive and patch and mend". She was unable to bear it. (54). She becomes powerless and threatened in the face of poverty and her identity also comes under threat if she does not try to keep up the living standards she was accustomed to. Mary's relationship with Moses comes from her loneliness and the distance she has kept from everyone living close to the farm. Their relationship transcends what is politically acceptable and may be defined by both their proximity and socially constructed differences. Their gendered and racial differences determine their relationship and the physical space of the house which is small lacks privacy inviting intimacy thus "control of the domestic space is contested as Moses slowly begins to assert his power over Mary. Their relationship develops a pathological quality as the social boundaries are crossed and power relations reversed" (Raschke, Perrakis, Singer: 179). Mary loses the domination of the domestic space as she enters into a power struggle with Moses. "She breaks down traditional colonial definitions of gendered space and shows the fragility of the colonial situation" (179). The white homestead may indicate the presence of the settler but it is not enough to create the power they wish to attain.

5.2 The Veranda

In colonial architecture, the veranda is a significant feature in theorising the relationship the settler had between the external world and the internal domestic place. The veranda not only became an extension of the interior of the house, as it held settees and tables, but it extended the house onto the garden and became part of it as pots of plants were placed on it. The steps leading from the veranda onto the garden constituted the furthermost border of the domestic space, as close to the peripheral, outside space. The veranda may also be seen as a metaphorical reflection of gender positions, between the bordering ground of the exterior space of the men's domain and the interior domestic space of the women's domain. In this way, Lessing provides the settlers a space to be in Africa but not of Africa, a safe space from which to survey the landscape and at the same time follow their English traditions without getting dirty or taking risks. This is evident in the story 'The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange' where the owners of the successful farm spent most of their time on the veranda watching the sunset and entertaining visitors. "The veranda, which was lifted on stone pillars, jutted forward over the garden like a box in the theatre…there sat Major Gale and his wife, as they did every evening at this hour, side by side trimly in deck chairs, their sundowners on small tables at their elbows, critically watching, like connoisseurs, the pageant presented for them" (*Winter In July*: 36). The veranda being lifted above the plants below is significant because it is as if a distance was being kept between the human construction of the veranda and the African soil. The imagery used here, is taken from European culture, the theatre box, the connoisseur and the pageant but what stands out is the inactiveness of the Gales on the veranda, they simply sit back and wait for a 'show' to be presented. Their relationship with the land is indicated by their separation from it and their elevation above it, conveying the Gales' sense of superiority to Africa and their complacency about their life there.

This sense of superiority given by the veranda scene is carried over to illustrate the ethnic and cultural divisions between the Afrikaner and English- speaking settler in this story. Mr. Gale employs an Afrikaner to help him manage the farm, who has a seventeen year old wife, the De Wets. From the start, Mrs. Gale and the De Wets clash because of the cultural and ethnic division between them as they have different attitudes and values towards life. The first difference is in regard to the gardens, in which the young Afrikaner bride takes no interest at all. Mrs. Gale, on the other hand, could not imagine

anyone not being fond of gardens. According to Robert Balfour, the colonial garden in Africa represented the European transformation of an alien space and formed a buffer between the coloniser and the alien space of the bush, the veranda being part of the buffer region. "The concept of 'White Experience' is able only to convey meaning insofar as it denies and excludes its subconscious links with 'Black Experience'". (Balfour: 126). Mrs Gale's veranda space is then replicated in the garden by a bench situated on a rocky ledge overlooking the valley where she sits to view a mountain scene and the ridges below. She dislikes the alien space of the wild valley with its smells and dangerous river intensely, yet Mrs. De Wet prefers the valley to the garden. Much to Mrs. Gale's horror the younger woman disregards her invitation to sit with her on the bench and instead goes down to the valley and swims in the river, enjoying the smell of the vegetation. Ultimately, it is the attitude that each has to the veranda that divides them as women, Lessing suggesting here that Mrs. De Wet, as a representative of the Afrikaans-speaking settler and younger than Mrs. Gale, is more integrated with Africa than is the Englishwoman. She opens herself out and responds to the outdoor environment while Mrs. Gale keeps her distance from it.

The veranda in this story serves to illustrate the artificial life that Mrs Gale has created for herself in Africa and Lessing conveys the snobbishness of the English upper-class by Mrs. Gale's closing statement, whereby she advises her husband that the next time he takes on an assistant, it must be people of their own kind; the de Wets, by the manner of their behaviour, were no better than savages. (*Winter In July*: 62) Mrs Gale's 'veranda attitude' clearly shows Mrs Gale's own racism towards both the Afrikaner and the African and her refusal to let go of what was English. Whereas young Mrs de Wet was more open to Africa and could move beyond the house into the freedom of the bush suggests that future generations could integrate successfully with its land and its people and take on a different view of landscape.

Part 6: Enclosure

Lessing was a woman who enjoyed freedom, she lived it as a child, she fought for it as an adult and in much of her work she presents a multifaceted view of reality hoping to reveal the relationship between the individual and a society of its time. In her less fictional novels, Lessing often depicts a power-less but self-conscious individual struggling against bonds of a restricting and constraining social order. The subject of women's enclosure in sheltered space, the domestic life which restricts personal choice and freedom, and the term "sheltered space" comes from an essay by Elizabeth Janeways'. Sheltered space refers to the 'other world' of women where 'real processes of cause and effect do not operate' (Sprague, *Critical Essays on Doris Lessing*: 66). Women's sheltered spaces in Lessing's short stories, illustrate the barriers felt by them, which defined the structures of their roles. However, in her work, men too are defined by economic, political and sexual institutions so that failed relationships reflected a weakness in society, especially that of marriage. As their sheltered place was not connected directly to a work-place the limits for women were there to keep them in bounds which led them to become more aware of the roles they had to play. With the historical separation of home and work, women became more managers of emotion than active decision-makers causing considerable conflict which "may be the only thing that gives it unity". (67). The multiplicity of women's roles made it impossible for them to initiate actions or use power within their own space as their role was continuously changing in accordance with the needs of their family.

Lessing's initial experience with enclosure may be said to have been in Rhodesia where the sense of one's self was intently defined and controlled. (Raschke, Perrakis, Singer :89). Lessing uses space, time, typography and events from other stories to describe the world to the reader. A number of her female characters reject or try to escape the traditional roles expected of them as wives and mothers and seek personal freedom. However, a women's sense of liberation is not entirely dependent on her married state but on her awareness of the limitations set by herself, the community, spouse and society. Women who often fight domestic enclosure eventually find themselves enclosed in another category or role, such as spinsterhood, professions, divorce, or as men's lovers. In each case the woman undergoes inner and outer changes which may be as equally unsatisfactory. In, 'Winter in July', Julia is married to a successful farmer whose half-brother lives with them. Here in the bush and to escape the traditional role of marriage,

she has a love affair with her brother- in- law, Kenneth, who thinks marriage is no more than a necessity to create an illusion of fulfilment. Julia, aged thirty, designates a life in marriage which is without meaning, rootlessness and impermanence, as 'the evil sterility of the spirit', just as her marriage to Tom is. Tom, in order to keep Kenneth on the farm, sells out his wife to his brother as an accessory to another need. The three come to a brutal and loveless truce in order to lessen the unpleasantness of their bedroom arrangements and when Kenneth's impending marriage to a woman, who is also to live with them in the same house, shocks Julia, as she realizes the shallowness and the mistrust both men have towards her. Julia had assumed that she had managed to mask her disillusionment with marriage to two complementary male partners but, they too, had been aware of the necessity to maintain an illusion of love, which evidenced to her that a bond never really existed between them. The brothers remained deeply attached to each other whereas their relationship with Julia could catalogue her as an independent woman.

The title of the story symbolises Julia's state of spirit and her recognition of a sense of evil connected to the lifeless, heartless quality of her existence on the farm. She had married to escape her own feelings of emptiness and failure as an unmarried woman roaming the world, which now she finds nullified by the knowledge that she served no more than as a concubine, an insignificant one at that, not valued as a person or a lover. More miserably was that the escape she had falsely built for herself ultimately became her prison. Julia resents both Tom and Kenneth. The recurrent evil at the end of this story is that of sterility, alienation and isolation and at the moments of crises Julia has a heightened sensitivity to the African landscape in which she recognises she is a stranger. What saves Julia from breaking down, but never from alienation, is her capacity for self-knowledge.

As Lessing depicts individuals, especially women, as being enclosed on a farm or as restricted in marriage she tries to free them by having them transcend the limitations of their socially defined roles, often leading them into inner 'madness' in order to escape their enclosed space. This was the case with Mrs De Wet, who one night hid under the bed at home and had her husband and the farm labourers looking for her all night. Marriage for her was a restrictive, non-supportive, non-expansive relationship where she was expected to take care of her husband, of the house and have children to occupy her time. Mr De Wet would not have married her otherwise. The young couple met at the cinemas and married the next day "thought I had better get a wife to cook for me, all this way out in the blue. Cooking is what I married you for" (*Winter in July*: 46). Mrs Gale

had to point out that there was more to a woman than cooking and having children and as they searched for the girl she wondered if Mrs De Wet had run off because she was so blind with anger and grief that she did not measure consequences. But the worst danger of being on the veld at night was falling victim to fear; knowing one was lost would throw anyone off balance. As the search continued for Mrs De Wet, the Gales' marriage entered in eruption as Mrs Gale's hostility towards the men during their search revealed. What she had tried for so many years control, the sense of power that the veld had on her, its enclosure which filled her with loneliness came to the surface and eroded her away. Her composure breaks and she repudiates all she had cultivated, "that night Mrs Gale hated her garden, that highly-cultivated patch of luxuriant growth, stuck in the middle of a country that could do this sort of thing to you suddenly. It was the fault of the country!" (59) This story fully illustrates the isolation and the accumulated despair felt by living in the bush, the bitterness, the compromises and marital injustices which remained inexplicable and unspoken. This frustratingly imperfect enclosure of space, and marriage, defines how community functions in distant, formal relationships. According to Edward Hall's context of spatial relationships, (Raschke, Perrakis, Singer: 39), the patriarchal order in the bush is based on circumscribed proximity and in this story reveals the psychological and social boundaries between husbands, wives and community members and the power structure, which steps into many aspects of their colonial life: men and women, women and black servants, nature and man, all remain locked in parallel patterns of conformity and rigidity. The rivalry between the two women is shown in each action taken by Mrs De Wet which evokes in Mrs Gale's memories of past frustrating experiences. The image of the bush here goes hand in hand with the manifestations of the turmoil of disclosed hidden emotions, images of powerlessness and desolated women, unable to accept society's rigid code, where they have no impact whatsoever on their circumstances, their husbands or on their children. In the unity of nature, which the bush represents, the individual counts for nothing.

Lessing does not participate in the feminist view that women are restrained by the dominant figure of men as she considered it was society, and not biology, which determined women's actions and repressed their talent and initiative. She uses the theme of marriage as a symbol to reveal man's inability to find a coherent and balanced place for himself in society, and marriage for its own sake, became a destructive but necessary force in their lives. Lessing uses the relationship between men and women to demonstrate her views on society's restrictions and how these defined the individual and symbolised

the way the settler community functioned. Men were designated by whatever position they held in economic and social rankings whereas it was the women's relationship with men that determined their role and function in society. Marriage confined women within domestic enclosures (sheltered enclosures), their repetitive patterns of behaviour being compelled by their personality which was influenced either by society or by the woman's form of being. Emotional, physical and social confinement is symbolized in the stories by the metaphor of the room or the house and the institution of marriage had physical and psychological limitations which corresponded to the geographical, political and economic boundaries of the society. Marriage as enclosure was related to the need of an individual to, here men included, connect and assume roles as dictated by society. In an attempt to free themselves of these roles, escaping consciousness became the need for change and liberation but ironically this only lead to yet another enclosure, that of a self-limiting enclosure, as the metaphors of space enclosures as dictated by society, contrasted with expansions of perceptions during mental voyages. The protagonist's quest would be associated with the need to combine her inner conflicts and emotions while the narrative voice would serve as a balanced and stable force between these two opposites. (Raschke, Perrakis, Singer: 1-45)

In her African stories, Lessing reveals her opposition to the political, social and psychological enclosures that her protagonists found themselves in; she wanted to see them free like the children were, but only until they became aware of adult life. For Mrs Carruthers in 'The Second Hut' and Mrs Gale in 'The De Wets come to Kloof Grange' for example it was near impossible. These women shared the same fears as their lives in the bush are controlled by tiresome and self-defeating patterns, and even if an attempt was made to modify social boundaries and implicit rituals, these women would continue to experience psychological suffocation, enclosure, restriction and frustration due to the bush environment. The two women in 'Winter in July' are primarily young whose security and freedom are gradually lost as they become socially and sexually aware of their society and environment. By marrying farmers, under the circumstances they did, not to be alone and as a means to populate the country respectively, they assumed social roles which demoralised, defined and limited them, resulting in restrictions to their intellectual and emotional growth. In both the "The Second Hut" and the 'The De Wets come to Kloof Grange,' the women try to accept their social discrimination but they are unable to hope for human contact and expressiveness. The conflicts these women experience within themselves are many; they marry outside the bush and move to the

bush where they lose the ability to learn and develop as emotionally balanced and functioning people. Another forceful contributing factor to this inner emptiness is the land's cruel indifference to man, which is accepted by all as fate. Women become aware of the "lovelessness in their lives and see themselves ruthlessly against the agricultural standard of endurance and morality", (31). Deteriorating marriages reflect the settlers isolated communities' dread of failure and of lack of prosperity.

In "Old John's Place", the story is focused on a child's growing awareness of adult life. A thirteen year old child discovers how the privileged and unfriendly spread-out bush settler community destroyed newcomers to the area. The people living in the district were solid established farmers who intended to die on their land and when new arrivals settled in nearby farms with the intent interest of settling just for the sake of it, the settled farmers did not take too kindly to them. In this story it is Kate Cope, a teenager, who acts as the intermediary between two forces in an adult world. In her relationship with the newcomers to the district, she reveals to the Lacey's' the forceful power of the established farming community and their determination to drive them away as it had become obvious to them that the Lacey's "had taken no more than a vagabond's interest in homestead and stock and land" (*Winter In July*: 87). Because of her age, Kate occupies an ambiguous position in regard to the newcomers and to others like her parents. She neither belongs to the children's or the adults' social group, consequently, she moves behind a façade of childhood innocence acknowledging the newcomer's fair protest against the farmers' cruelty and their motives for it. The rigid boundaries erected by the settled farmers are patterns of behaviour based on the desolation of being isolated, the adolescent child became caught between this boundary and that of the town dwellers and was torn between "passionate partisanship and the knowledge" that the Lacey's were a lost cause as they would never be accepted in the district (102). Lessing uses the point of view of a child here as Kate was more open to the strangeness of differences and more aware of unbridgeable gaps. The adults were too fixed in subduing the newcomers into an ethos of their own.

Part 7: Fear

Raymond Williams in his book, *The Country and the City*, refers to how Lessing uses imagery to involve the reader deeper into her work. In Britain during the 19th Century, the enclosure of common lands led to an orderly destruction of traditional and settled communities which in turn lead to the increase of landless labourers who moved to urban areas in search of work. Industry at this point was booming as was travel literature, which described exotic foreign lands. As the growth of the urban community coincided with the decline and importance of agriculture and as poverty coincided with the overcrowding of cities, distant lands became rural areas of Britain and emigration to the colonies became the solution for poverty. For many of Lessing's characters, the myth of pastoralism in the colonies did not always coincide with its reality and to many this became the foundation of unrest. In the colonies, the idea of England was linked to 'home' and in a sense 'home' was a memory and an ideal but in reality the prestigious, powerful London and the rural England with its peaceful scenery was a far cry from the tropic and dry places that the settlers had to endure. This idealized sense of community and of belonging in a new country contrasted heavily with the tensions of isolated settlements under colonial rule. (Williams: 281). Many whites were aware that they were intruders in a black world and feared the isolation of their whiteness. As white Southern Rhodesians became more dedicated to making wealth or in redeeming previous failures they became torn between their growing sense of building their own nation and the consciousness of themselves as a British people facing the bush. Therefore, the feeling of fear began to take its toll on the settler communities and this new way of seeing relationships between settlers and the natives was recorded in literature, and in Lessing's work, the unfamiliar laws and regulations imposed on the indigenous communities, who had no say on the matter, contributed to the restlessness felt by the settler population in a primarily agricultural and hostile setting. In her choice of characters, plot and images, Lessing represents the settler who, justifying his paternalistic viewpoint of the land and the natives, contributes to the ambiguities and the divisions in the society depicted.

The areas assigned to the natives were not complementary to the areas lived in by the settlers, they were opposites as Lessing's work illustrates, by implication, the separation between coloniser and colonised. She does not openly join the two worlds unless they clash if the white settler has to face or re-evaluate his behaviour such as in the case of '"Leopard" George'. The story clearly sets out how abstract and fragile George's

hold on power was and indirectly Lessing stresses how nearly all social and political institutions were related to the logic of colonialism, including the institution of marriage. She uses marriage and the imposition of foreign values on a colonial society as the symbol of the latent insecurity felt by colonials who held on to the myth that "the British, (and) their innumerable subgroupings, (were) held together only because they could say, 'this is British country'" (*Martha Quest*:56) This mutual knowledge of ownership lent them security.

Fear is a sentiment Lessing works well into all her stories of the *Winter in July* collection. It is either made visible to the reader or then it is made to be felt throughout the stories. In 'The Second Hut' we find Major Carruthers had hoped to master the bush and become a wealthy farmer but he fails miserably and is forced to return to England. The emphasis of this story is not on the English family but the approach to life that the assistant they hire, Mr Van Heerden, has to life. It jolts the lives of the Carruthers. The Afrikaner and his large family had gone 'native' accepting the laws of nature and adapting their way living to the bush's primitive conditions of shelter and poverty. The Carruthers, on the contrary, could not adapt to the country's conditions their English-lived-African way of life was a far cry from reality. Although Mrs Carruthers tried hard to adapt it overran her and she gave up; she became heartbroken for home and became ill. The Carruthers feared for their physical survival and feared the look of pity their children gave them when home from school. As finances grew scarce, the Major feared the day he would have to write to his brother in England for a loan or even worse for passage money to return to England. As he walked his farm one day, he discovered to his horror the Afrikaner's family, living in the most appalling conditions in the one hut given to him for shelter and "fear rose high in him. For a few moments he inhabited the landscape of his dreams, a grey country full of suckling menace, where he suffered what he would not allow himself to think of while awake: the grim poverty that could overtake him if his luck did not turn" (13). The Major feared for his family's life and as he saw the inhuman conditions his assistant and family lived in, he asked the natives to build a second hut for them. Van Heerden was not the best of assistants and treated the natives badly so they unwillingly to build the hut. The natives also showed fear here as the invasion of their hut by the white man constituted invasion of their space. Hence it was no surprise that the hut catches fire and is destroyed. One of Van Heerden's children dies in the hut fire and Carruthers is stricken by his assistant's apparent uncaring remark: "well one comes and another goes", (27). The harsh influence of the land is shown here by the conflict between

native and foreign, employer and employee but especially by the contrast between the two wives; the major's wife ill and nearly destroyed by the unbearable conditions of her circumstances and the other a nurturing earth-mother giving birth to endless children. By returning to England, the Major releases his wife from her imprisonment and by the use of the word 'curiously' in the story's final paragraph, Lessing depicts the gap between the wife's agonising outbursts and the husband's wariness and disassociation from her and the conditions in which she finds herself enclosed, "He watched her curiously as her face crumpled and the tears of thankful release ran slowly down her cheeks and soaked the pillow" (28). It was only when he was able to face his own despair and fear that he was able to change his course of life.

In 'The Nuisance' the reader encounters another kind of fear, the fear of the white settler losing a native worker. Here the story opens with a colourful description of native women gathered at the well of their compound, a well which also served the main homestead during the dry season. The story ends grimly as 'the nuisance' is found at the bottom of the well. 'The nuisance' was a solitary, cross-eyed and hideously disfigured woman and the Long One's first wife. He was the farm worker who handled the cattle and watching him was like watching a circus as he managed a team of sixteen fat, tamed oxen with a twelve-foot-long lash circling in black patterns over the backs of the herd, never leaving a mark on them. He was indispensable to the white farmer. However, the Long One had another two wives who began to quarrel among themselves and eventually the family problems began to interfere with his work. He sought advice from the farmer but was told to sort out his problems on his own. Which he did, 'the nuisance' disappeared. The Long One told everyone she had returned to Nyasaland, her home country and no one doubted that this was true until the cleaning of the old well. Perhaps 'the nuisance' killed herself or slipped and fell, although the farmer found it odd that the natives should commit suicide, to which he added "Well, I don't know, I'm damned if I know, but in any case he's a damned good driver" (35). The 'Long One' was known as to never let anyone down but this time he was allowed to get away with murder as the white settler would rather see him on the farm than going to prison. Slight value was put on a native's life.

Fear in 'The De Wets come to Kloof Grange', has to do with Mrs Gale's fear of the landscape, of the de Wets open-mindedness towards Africa and, as already mentioned, the fear of becoming victim to fear. In an attempt for Mrs Gale to overcome inner fear of

the surrounding area, she recreates an English garden and furnishes the veranda which extends to the garden as near to possible as to the garden she had left in England. Her garden was outstandingly beautiful and she lived for the trees, flowers and shrubs giving it every care and attention; she felt secure in it. Yet, in the evening, when she crossed the garden towards the farm road to take a walk she felt afraid "she did not know what made her afraid" (41) it was not of the natives as she thought of them nothing more than children. The farm road was lined with trees which she had begged not to be pulled down as she considered them her trees. She came to fear the young Afrikaner assistant's wife's disconcerting affinity to Africa as she claimed Mrs Gale's river and the mountains as hers; Mrs de Wet swam the river, walked the mountains without fear. This connection to the landscape was far beyond the illusion of Mrs Gale's garden and this lead to the destruction of the artificial tranquillity the English couple lived in. (Budhos: 38). Like the Van Heerdens, Mrs De Wets's attitude towards the law of nature was similar, she fused with Africa, whilst the English couple carefully tended roses. This affinity to the wilderness offended Mrs Gale, and it transformed her into an angry and bitter woman, as her name predicts, and the gentleness of the quite life on the veld for her is lost. The contrast of the two women given here by Lessing is quite striking, the de Wets' ('law' in Afrikaans) "violent wind", in opposition to the Gales' "gentle breeze", with the peacefulness of the grange ending as the English couple were unable to connect with the newcomers. The fear of falling victim to fear was always present in the white settlers' minds especially when lost in the bush as reasoning became clouded and it would seem one would be going around in circles. The vastness was so overwhelming. To tranquilise Mrs Gale's fear she asked her husband that when he got an assistant "get people of our own kind. These might be savages, the way they behave" (62)

In this story, 'Little Tembi', we find fear of betrayal. Jane is willing to treat the natives on her husband's farm with justice and humanity and does her best to understand their culture and traditions. She is a nurse and gains a special affection for a little black boy whom she saved as a baby but whom later into adolescence turns into a thief. Jane had always granted him special favours, 'spoiling' the child, and as Tembi grew up he is unable to accept the position he has in his own society and he also realises he cannot be in full equality with the whites. This position of ambiguity devastates him and Jane cannot understand his attitude as she had done everything she could for him and he was not showing gratitude. His thieving was deliberate and planned and he received beatings as punishment and Jane would feel hurt for him. Later Tembi joined an organised gang of

thieves and they terrorised the district, Jane knew Tembi had to be involved because Tembi had disappeared and the gang operated as if they had inside information from somewhere. Jane was right, and one late afternoon she went out looking for him, she could not see him but she could feel his presence, watching her. As she walked the bush and called for him she could not control her fear "I can't be afraid of Tembi! How can I be? Tembi, you are being very foolish. What's the use of stealing…" (82) Jane would question why Tembi turned into a thief and was even willing to be caught and imprisoned. What had he wanted? Lessing lets us know the answer, "What, he, they were wanting was a warm-hearted, generous, open-sharing of the benefits of the 'white' civilization, instead of doors shut in their faces, coldness, stinginess of the heart" (*Under My Skin*: 113). The tolerance shown in this story by the farmer and his family seems as ineffectual as attitudes of racial prejudice.

'Old John's Place' is the fear of rootlessness and of newcomers. Here we find an older community of white farm settlers, solid farmers who intended to die on their farms and two other families who are newcomers to the district and inexperienced farmers. The older settlers are an inflexible lot, sure of themselves and of their moral standards, and intolerant of newcomers, especially those who show more flexibility towards the bush and the natives than themselves. The Sinclairs' and the Laceys' were the two successive newcomers to Old John's Place, an unlucky farm for some reason as it kept changing hands. Both Mrs Sinclair and Mrs Lacey tried to raise the quality of the district's society mostly by introducing a much more 'urban' style of living. Vagabond or 'check-book' farmers they were called, not cut out for farm life. Both families fascinated and puzzled thirteen year old Kate who gets caught between the newcomers and the old settlers. She spends a lot of time at Old John's Place, much to the annoyance of her mother, and these visits enlarged her vision of the complexities of human relations giving her confused references of the obscurities of love and nature of corruption. As Kate's admiration grew for the newcomers, her parents feared her closeness to the cultural levels and moral codes and what influence they would have on her. They forbade Kate visiting the farm although she kept going back until eventually Mrs Lacey becomes irritable with her and she knows its time not to return.

"They say you are bad for me."

"Do you think I am bad for you?" (*Winter in July*: 125)

'"Leopard" George' presents two characters who feel fear. There is George, a white born in the country, who comes to fear the landscape he loved so much and there is his native mistress who fears her way back to the native compound through the kopjes in the middle of the night. In this story, everything about Africa is here, the natives, the settlers, odd characters like George and lonely women on isolated farms. Lessing portrays fear as a recurring theme so as to make an impression on the reader as to how it is a significant part of Africa. George had never felt fear until he went out looking for the leopard that killed his native mistress. On the night she died, before knowing of it, he took in all the sounds coming out of the bush the animal sounds, the sounds of the natives from the compound. The moon cast shadows among the trees and he acknowledged being a part of all of it, "He knew no terror; he could not understand fear; he contained that cruelty within himself, shut safe in some deep place" (146). With his servants, he had created a kind and feudal relationship, he considered himself a 'good' master.

As a second generation Southern Rhodesian, he returned home from WWI a hero and bought a piece of wild tract land, empty and harsh, and developed it into good farming soil where he built an extensive house on it. The labour force for the work came from the local natives who were led by Old Smoke, his father's old and trustworthy servant. The team Old Smoke brings to the farm is from among his own kinsmen and his nephew is the native who manages the work force. Old Smoke also provides George with a mistress, his young daughter. In the colony this relationship constituted sexual licentiousness and a contamination of white society therefore not seen with kindly eyes. When the girl one day presents herself at a party being given by George for his white neighbours, he sends her away and provides for her at a local mission school. As soon as this happens, another girl who, unknown to George, is Old Smoke's younger wife, comes to his bedroom at night despite the fact that George keeps treating her badly and sending her away. He does not allow this girl so many privileges as her predecessor and forces her to go back to the compound through the bush and kopjes every night after her visits. The girl is terrified, the walk is mile-long and one night she is killed by a leopard. George's pursuit of the leopard and of its killing forms a moving narrative by Lessing taking the reader into George's being.

Fear is aroused in George as he tracks the leopard "(George) moved into the shadows with a sharp tug of the heart, holding fear in him cold and alive, like a weapon. As he went he prayed. He was praying that the enemy might present itself and be slain. He remained quite still and allowed his fear to grow inside him, a controlled fear, so that

while his skin crept and his scalp tinged, yet his hands remained steady on the rifle". (150-151). He killed the leopard, smelt its blood, butted it several times and in the end he felt helpless and let down. Nothing had changed; he could not undo what had been done. "He had not been given what he had come for. When he finally left the beast lying there, and walked home again, his legs were weak under him and his breath was coming in sobs; he was crying the peevish frustrated tears of a disappointed man" (151). What feelings he had for Africa were now destroyed, "there was a hurt place in him, and a hungry anger that no work could assuage. For him, now, the landscape was simply a home for leopards" (152). His sense of belonging, his love for the bush, his understanding of the natives, is lost and George no longer recognises the Africa he knew as he realises he cannot transcend his foreignness and become part of it. He gave recognition to his white skin.

The native mistress' fear had been for her life. George had sent her back to the compound in the middle of the night but she had refused to go. He got angry with her "But bass, I'm afraid". "What are you afraid of?' (146). She did not say and did not leave. It was the first time George had been disobeyed and he did not like it, he left and went back into the house. George, who never married, thought himself in control of his black mistresses but had been taken by surprise by the first girl who had embarrassed him in front of his white guests but with the second he was angry. When he was told by the houseboy that Old Smoke's wife was missing, he noticed the servant's eyes were fixed on the kopjes and for the first time, where the night before he had seen beauty in them he now felt a chilling danger, "fear moved in George; it was something he had not known before" (149). This sensitiveness which he felt as a white man was the mark of this failure to impose his standards and values on the continent he inhabits. "The fear is also, simultaneously, the sign of his own awareness in contrast to his denser, more complacent fellow colonials". (Bloom: 21). Lessing's acknowledgment of the blacks' significance is an acceptance of the settlers' failure to civilise Africa although not all whites are alike in her stories. She praises the old generation of white colonials as not all white men came to take what they could get from Africa as she recalls in *Going Home.*

Lessing has a childhood memory of a prospector who went to their home to visit. He had spent his life drifting around Africa, having only once returned to England but left after a week, too many people there and "man needs an empty space somewhere for his spirit to rest in" (9). He went away to the Zambezi escarpment into the bush with his bearer, built a hut and stayed there alone. He got black-water fever and when his wife got to know of it she went to fetch him back to the city. He refused to leave and died, the

village people buried him there. ‘It seems to me that this story of the man who preferred to die alone rather than return to the cities of his own people expresses what is best in the older type of white men who have come to Africa. This man loved Africa for its own sake”. (10)

Part 8: 'Winter in July'

This is the last story found in the book and which gives its title to the collection short stories. It is a story which nearly nothing has been written about by either critics or academics, but which may be one of Lessing's most interesting and complete stories concerning human relationships. It is unsettling, refuses to yield to established definitions or parameters, it is not easily categorized, just as Lessing liked her work to be. I am therefore giving it more attention. Unlike the other short stories, (with the exception perhaps of 'Old John's Place' where we find a married couple and a Mr. Hackett living together on the farm but the relationship between the three is not made known to the reader), Lessing presents here the relationship that exists between the protagonists, a white woman and two white men who live and share the same homestead and, each other. Anything about the landscape or the natives which has been found abundantly in her other stories is reduced to a minimum towards the end of the story.

The woman in this story has nothing to do with other women found in the collection, she is an intelligent independent woman, having travelled the world, been with many lovers, staying just long enough with each as not to get married. The two male protagonists are half-brothers who are inseparable to the point that the woman, married to Tom, was uncomfortable with their proximity. Their complicity seemed somewhat perverse. When her brother in law Kenneth remarked "the fact is, it was just about time Tom and I had a wife" (164) she felt revulsion and her marriage and her role in it took on an entirely new meaning. Yet she chose not to think about it. "Better to be affectionately amused at Tom's elder-brother attitude towards Kenneth; there was often something petulant, rebellious, and childish, in Kenneth's attitude towards Tom". (163). Tom took on the same attitude towards Julia, that of a protective elder-brother who managed her life and saw to her well-being, and she had to admit that was the reason she had married him for. By having Julia admit this fact, Lessing surprises the reader as she places Julia into the same enclosed space of every other farmer's wife. She starts the story by placing Julia into a role of an independent woman, far ahead of her time, so why reduce her to this domesticated role and further into a role where she's willing to accept her husband's sexual relationship with his half-brother?

This point in itself could probably lead to a dissertation all of its own, there are many questions here that could be taken further. Homosexuality, incest, polyandry, infidelity, cohabitation, moral and ethical standards both European and African, the socio-legal regulations of a colonised country and more could be added to the list. Quite a

handful from Lessing, for a family living on an African farm during the 1930s and 40s. Towards the end of the story we find another woman, nameless, who finds herself in the colony under the subsidized scheme for importing marriageable women, who was "coming to the great rich farm, like the poor girl in a fairy tale" (187) in order to marry Kenneth. "A latecomer to the party, entering a room where everyone is already cemented by hours of warmth and intimacy". (188) When Julia looked at a picture of her, instead of seeing a younger woman full of vitality as Kenneth had described her to be, she saw an anxious older woman with haunting features.

Marriage had become the regulating force for the building of empire, for controlling race, gender and sexuality behaviour. A valid marriage excluded concubinage and informal marriages practices such as broomstick weddings, where couples would jump over a broomstick in the presence of witnesses and be considered married. Monogamous heterosexual marriages represented the ideal situation for sexual evolution and the English who kept to this ideal helped defining them as a superior race in the colonies, hence the justification for empire. Rejecting polygamy at the end of the eighteenth century was part of England's "defining itself both as distinct from and morally superior to, the polygamous Other. Monogamy is instituted as part of England's national definition, and whatever practices its explorers might find to tempt them in other worlds, England asserts its public stance that marriage means one man, one wife, at least in law" (Leckley and Brooks:178)

The study of marriage and empire has been extensively studied previously but the study of sexuality and empire has only recently taken on its own importance. According to Foucault, sexuality is considered to be the privileged place where the human subject's deepest "truth" is found and expressed placing sexuality at the heart of existence. As for homosexuality he maintains it first emerged as a species and as an identity within a regulatory process of producing sexualities. The homosexual was seen to have a deviant personality with "an indiscreet anatomy and mysterious physiology". (Leckley and Brooks: 174). Foucault has been criticised for looking at homosexuality from only a Western point of view and ignoring the emergence of the modern nation and empire building. To fill this gap Rudi Bleys studied the shifts in the construction of homosexuality. By resorting to other European ethnographic discourses on male-to male sexual behaviour outside the West he was able to better understand the production of sexuality and how it was integral to the shape and form of Empire. Domestication and the cult of domesticating "were central to British imperial identity" and essential to

having properly sexualized subjects. Domestication and domination go hand in hand and was essential for the taming of sexual immorality, "promoting women's sexuality, promoting maternity and breeding a virile race of empire builders' was crucial to empire" (175).

It is this domestication that Lessing seems to want to defy with her story 'Winter in July'. Tom and Kenneth were half-brothers and Tom always portrayed an elder-brother protective attitude towards Kenneth. They lived on a very prosperous farm and all that the reader knows of them is what the narrator sees through the eyes of Julia. The brothers were on holiday in Cape Town when they met Julia with whom they spent a lot of time. Julia would flirt with Kenneth but it was Tom who offered her the security she was prepared to accept. He acknowledged her as being an independent woman and a pleasant one it seemed as if he wanted to fit her into the sort of picture he had for a wife. He claimed and married her. Kenneth had a defensive and resentful manner towards Julia, even though they would flirt; they understood at once that between them their relationship would be that of only lovers and never of husband and wife. Both men had been looking for wives, but from the story the reader becomes aware of a homoerotic love between the two.

As time went by, Julia began to feel that something was not quite right between the brothers. Lessing uses the word 'uneasy' when she addresses the homosexuality between the men and 'easy' when the protagonists are comfortable in their respective relationships. Julia was quite content to get married, it had been easy to get along with Tom and in Kenneth she had a friend. The first time Julia becomes uneasy was when she realised something was not quite right about the men's relationship with each other was when she and Tom sat in their two big chairs with Kenneth in front of them for he sat there "watching them with his observant, slightly sarcastic smile" (*Winter In July*: 162). At first, she put it down to antagonism between the two but she came to realise it ran deeper than that. At the end of the night as Kenneth withdrew to his rooms looking amused, she noticed Tom became restless, he missed Kenneth and Julia saw "with a curious humorous sinking of the heart that they were so close to each other they could not bear to be apart for long." (163) Tom and Kenneth would "tease each other in a way that, had they been man and woman, would have seemed positively flirtatious" (163). Julia felt this as perversity but she chose not to think of it, she wanted to think Tom just had an elderly brother's concern for Kenneth and the latter responded with a "petulant,

rebellious, childish attitude" towards his brother. Tom was head of the family and the other two accepted gladly his handling of all their affairs.

Julia came to notice that Tom liked her to spend time with Kenneth and encouraged it in fact, but Kenneth would rebel reminding Tom that Julia was his wife. Tom's reaction to this would be to laugh uncomfortably but say he did not like to be possessive. Julia would mention to Kenneth how she did not understand any of it, as it was against the face of nature to which Kenneth urged her to take things as they came, especially under the circumstances.

"But what are the circumstances?" Julia asked, puzzled.

"Oh *Lord*, Julia…" Kenneth expostulated irritably. (164) The fact really was they just needed to have wives for the sake of having wives.

Consistent with the idea that masculinity included the domestication of women through marriage, marriage was also the adequate system to govern sex and the dynamics for the production of a modern nation, especially in a colony. Kenneth did in fact begin to search for a wife and would come home making witty remarks of his performance as a lover. Tom would listen intently to every word and Julia would get the uneasy feeling that Tom was just too interested, not the easy-going interest of an outsider but almost as if Tom was participating in the affair too. "On these occasions Julia felt a revulsion from Tom" (164) When W. War II broke out Tom enlisted and the conversation he had with Kenneth was in line with an apology and as Julia watched her two men in this conversation she became uncomfortable and hurt at the manner her husband could leave them so easily. With Tom's departure, Kenneth lived in permanent anger. Julia and Kenneth continued as lovers; they understood one another, they were of "the same kind of animal". During their tempered arguments Julia would complain that Kenneth did not like women it was much easier dealing with Tom, to which Kenneth replied that "of course it's easy, the whole damn thing is a lie from beginning to end. However, if that's what you like…" (169)

When Tom returned from the War and Julia met him in town, she could see "he was terrified she might say that Kenneth had decided to move" and they discussed Kenneth only to the extent to be acknowledged that nothing had changed between Tom and Julia. Life after a while returned to normality and to the complicity between the three but, it was hard for Kenneth and Julia to let go of the attraction they had for each other and to Julia's dismay and helplessness, she saw that Tom did not really care.

It was Kenneth that mattered to him most and she became aware that, by sharing the same woman, in some perverse way, the two men were brought even closer, this was "the plain and brutal fact" (172). Kenneth at this point insists he needs to get married to which Julia agrees and Tom panics over the prospect. The conversation that followed this announcement became dangerously close to voicing what was really going on between the three and afraid that this might destroy them, Julia said, "Let's not talk about it. It doesn't do any good to talk about it" (173). Kenneth found a woman to marry, Julia felt betrayed and Tom resentful as he thought there was no need for his brother to get a wife; but Kenneth's reply was an angry one, he also wanted a wife and wanted children before getting too old.

As the story comes to an end the reader is directed towards Julia's inner space. On the day Kenneth left for the city to meet with his bride, not an easy day for either of them, she and Tom went together to the farm lands, "it was a windy, sunlight morning, and very cold; winter had taken possession of the veld overnight"; it was a July winter day. As she walked with Tom she realised how restless and uneasy he was; she wanted to feel the security they had once had and that things would be right again between them. That security no longer existed and they both felt sadly helpless, they could not support each other and Tom wanted to be alone. As Julia passed the lawns and flowers surrounding the house walking towards the farm road, she looked back at the house, it was her home, but that day she rejected it, as Africa had rejected her at times; she felt a stranger. "What am I" (178) she queried of herself, "what do I contribute to all this?" She wondered if she should have children and knew she would not. Tom showed concerned over her, he had not realised that Kenneth's decision to marry would have affected her so much; the warmth between them was gone but they hoped it would come "right again".

When Kenneth returned from the city he came alone but with the marriage date set. The three went into practical questions such as had this woman any money, which of course she did not or otherwise she would not have been on the scheme for importing marriageable women. The farm's finances were discussed and Julia learnt they were rich, very rich, and she thought of what this could bring to them in the future. What Julia was not expecting was for Kenneth and his wife to stay on at the farm to live with them. As she looked at both men Julia saw "that this had been the real crises of the business, something she had not expected, but which they had both been wanting, consciously or unconsciously, for her to approach" (181). Julia was shocked, and even more so when she realised Tom's uneasy longing for her to make it possible. She hated both of them, the

way they took on their women, "without changing a thought or habit to meet them" (182). Julia realised how Kenneth was bringing a woman to the house to be used by him, to have children and he was bringing the woman to her. Kenneth however did not think the prospect of bringing his wife 'to her' as shocking as Julia was making it out to be.

"Can´t you see?" says Julia desperately, "She couldn't compete…"

"Don't flatter yourself," said Kenneth briskly.

"Oh I don't mean that. I mean we've been together for so long. There's nothing we don't know about each other. Have I got to say it?"

"No," said Kenneth quietly, "Much better not." (182)

Tom appealed to Julia to accept what his half-brother was proposing after all both men had had to adjust themselves to her. This made her angry and as she suggested discussing the 'adjustment' openly, Kenneth refused to again. There was no point, and Julia had by now realised that neither of the brothers had ever cared for her, it had always been about them, their relationship, everything else was just role play. To compensate, the brothers would give their women money, lots of it, and pretty dresses.

"What do our lives add up to?"

"What do you expect us to tell you?" asked Kenneth curiously at last.

"I suppose I should take the consequences for marrying the pair of you. If I left tomorrow, you simply would not miss me." (184)

Julia finds the answer to her question "What am I?" (178) when she realised she had been nothing more than a concubine for both men and that their lives were put together just for an illusion of necessity; it was obvious that even though Kenneth was getting married he could not bear to leave Tom. When Julia saw the picture of the new woman in Kenneth's room her fears subsided for this woman was as old and as tired as she was. She thought of the word that this newcomer would use to describe the three once she got to know them and she came up with just one word, evil. Julia had only on one other occasion thought of this word and that was when she was in Argentina thinking of committing suicide, "she had a vision of evil. It was at the window of a large hotel…" (159). In joining the three at the farm this woman would be as good as committing suicide.

It is interesting to note how at the end of the story Lessing 'frees' the female protagonist and 'encloses' the male protagonists. She forcibly submits the men to the woman for the consent they required so as to allow them to continue their homosexual relationship. Julia gains the upper hand here; she may be enclosed by the farm but she is

given the freedom to decide what to allow her men to do. With women in improper marriages, such as this one, Lessing uses their descent into nullity as a "stage in a psychic voyage to integration, in an attempt to locate themselves" (Sprague, *Critical Essays*: 87) as in Julia's case. By displaying the shifts in their relationship and the effect these changes had on the protagonists Lessing brought to the reader the complexity of a homoerotic relationship and Julia's willingness to accept her role within it. As Kenneth said to her "Are you prepared to do something about it? You aren't are you? Then stop making us all miserable over impossibilities". (188). Julia while physically present but spiritually absent, agreed that the relationship between the three was worth keeping even if the 'fag-end' of it was a double bladed sword.

Here we find a transgressive Lessing who unsettles her readers completely with the added plot of incest. The story may not always be what the reader thinks or may it have the emotional effects expected. She intelligently uses the "rhetoric of incest to explore familial relationships, paralleling the anticlimactic rhetoric of incest to…the anticlimactic structure of the plot" (Gardner: 9). Incest was of a perverse nature, a taboo, and in literature rarely spoken of between two male figures. Incestuous relationships were detrimental to a sound family environment. Lessing, it seems, wanted to voice the struggle of these emerging subcultures. 'Winter in July' is not the first time (or the last) that she refers to incest in a story. In her earlier novel The Grass is Singing we find a possible father-daughter relationship. Mary referred to an incident with her father who would hold her close, between his legs, that she smelt the "unwashed masculine smell she always associated with him. She struggled to get her head free, for she was half suffocating, and her father held it down, laughing at her panic." Mary's feared she was being transformed into her mother.

Same-sex sexual practices were understood as non-productive and in conflict with what was required for empire building, for the domesticity of its inhabitants and for reproduction within it. (Leckley and Brooks: 176) Homosexuality and polyandry were considered a danger to proper social, cultural and moral order and a threat to political unity of a colony. Polygamy was natural to African communities but in order for the superior white coloniser to differentiate itself from the 'other' the practice of polygamy was found to be repulsive. Incestuous relationships were detrimental to a sound family environment. Lessing, it seems, wanted to voice the struggle of these emerging subcultures.

The fact that Tom and Kenneth were half-brothers is only mentioned twice in the story, once to say they had the same mother and the other towards the end of the story when both men were appealing to Julia to accept having Kenneth wife living with them. It seems here the brothers were seeking a motherly, understanding response from Julia. Any union, except that of a monogamous heterosexual marriage, defined the dark side of a relationship so if Julia granted them her approval, a motherly one, would this, in the men's minds, help make their relationship less dark? While Julia found it hard to accept the men's relationship she seemed to admit fitting into the role that was expected of her, polyandry. The themes Lessing's explores, incest, sexuality, identity, family and social conventions are themes taken up in her later novels such as The Golden Notebook (1962) where she explores both homosexuality and homophobia and in her short story "Each Other" (1963) where the central story is brother-sister incest. In this story the sex between the siblings is never consummated as they do not allow themselves to experience orgasm. Through the refusal of an orgasm "Lessing attempts to envision a mode of sexuality distinctive to incest", (Gardner: 12) and uses "a rhetoric of incest as a way of titillating her readers while exploring in new ways themes of identity, family, social convention and sexuality" (9). The sister takes on a motherly role in the relationship and allows her brother to substitute her husband's role. They both realise there is nothing else to add to what they have but are still inclined to carry on regardless. Tom and Kenneth's incest is never explicit, yet it is there. In both these stories, the psychology of incest is not shown as those in real cases, for these are much more harmful and less fun than depicted in fiction. Lessing does not help the reader to conclude whether incestuous behaviour is right or wrong or if something else, but she achieves her "own criteria of treating the reader to a rhetoric informed by a deceptively simple prose style and a deliberate subtle moral stance" (13) Lessing in the 1971 preface to the Golden Notebook wrote it would be childish of a writer to hope her readers would see and understand her work the way she did. A book must be alive and give fruits so as to promote thought and discussion through its inability to be understood in its entirety.

Part 9: Conclusion

Winter in July draws its readers inwards towards a colonised Africa of the 1930's and outwards towards Lessing's quest for freedom from a colonial society that controlled everyone's life especially that of a woman. She writes with dedication and often stated that her work was misunderstood by her readers, which was not surprising as Lessing needed readers with her calibre of understanding of the world and at that time it was not easy. She believed in telling things as they were and this disturbed people as once it was written, reality became fixed. Lessing was able to describe the impact that imperialism and colonialism had on personal and national identities and the extent and influence that the dominance of rhetoric of the British Empire had on its subjects. She condemned the subjugation of the natives by the whites and referred to the nostalgia that caused the colonisers to overvalue their original mother country. Lessing manged to show how the whites failed to recognise their blending into the new environment as they became adapted to it and the ridiculousness of the idea that they had that the British Empire would never end.

Lessing's African stories were written with nostalgia for the bush and for her childhood and she resorted to memory not merely for the notation of history through feminine eyes but as testimony to her social and ideological concerns. She revealed a commitment to present the world she lived in as she perceived it and analysed the relationships of individuals and society within the rational and irrational elements of the human psyche and the categories of objective and subjective reality. Lessing describes the process of change in her protagonists as they seek to escape from the social roles, names and categories imposed on them at the time. Lessing's literary search for freedom resembles her characters' search for personal freedom from the enclosures they find themselves in, and, in freeing themselves from such enclosures they often found themselves enclosed by another, especially that of fear.

Lessing, by presenting fear throughout these stories, seems to reveal to the reader how the colonialists were not able to supress the 'other', whether native, Afrikaans or the bush. She interrogates the English colonial's nostalgia for 'home' and their adaptation or not to their African homes while holding on to their 'true' home in England.

In the 'Second Hut' we see the anguish of an English family, the poverty of an Afrikaans family, a poverty far beyond that of the African and the revulsion of the native towards the white man who goes native, taking from them what only belongs to them,

their hut and their way of living, their identity. Fear engulfs everyone in this story and death and departure become acceptable elements to enable life to move on.

'The Nuisance' brings the laughter and freedom of the natives, where the women's singing and dancing bring beauty to the land but again where death seems a necessary element to maintain peace in the compound and to appease the white farmer's fear of losing his best native worker.

The English family in 'The de Wets come to Kloof Grange' are unable to accept the Afrikaners closeness to the bush; this defies their sense of location. The English garden built around the home stands as a safe boundary between them and the bush, the fear of 'hybridity' heavily contrasted to the Afrikaners' 'native-ness'.

Jane McCluster, who has treated 'Little Timbi' as best she could, curing him and giving him more than she did other native children was not able to understand why, once grown up, Timbi had wanted more from her. The love she had for the little boy turned to fear, for herself, her family and the land she lived in.

In 'Old John's Place' the farmers feared the arrival of the cheque-book farming neighbours as these were none other than city comers who knew nothing about the land, and were due to upset the social farming environment and mostly influence their children into 'new' ways of thinking.

George Chester, who never feared anything in his life, lived for the bush and considered himself part of it came to know fear, as he was challenged by death when his native mistress was killed by a leopard. He came to know fear of the bush and the loss of the respect the natives had for him; they turned their backs on him and he was left on his own. Lessing does not share the white settlers' beliefs as she portrays them in her short stories but she does depict the settler as valuable and feeling people. She identifies and pinpoints their suffering and difficulties with political, social and physical isolation in order to establish that the pursuit of spiritual and humanistic values is shared by all despite differing norms and morality among the settler and the native.

'Winter in July' stands apart. Here, fear by a woman, is not related to the outside world of landscape, bush or native-ness but to the dimension of a relationship asked of her which goes beyond 'normality'. Lessing seems to be stressing here that emotional knowledge may be far more important and central for the integration of mind and body than logic, and that the acceptance of a 'mad' world may be a fluid state of becoming. Lessing's colonial experience adds psychological and political dimensions to the understanding of man's relationship to society and his fellow man. The shock of incest is

transgressive on conventional sexual and marital choices and may not have the emotional effects expected as the transgression may prove to be as boring or as emotionally uplifting as the normative.

Lessing presents women as complex people who are not necessarily victimized by men as such but by their own views of themselves in a world which sees men as more important. They are emotional figures who early in their social roles define themselves by their relationships with men and who realise that their own emotions determine their personal boundaries. The institution of marriage in these stories becomes a psychological, sociological, and political structure which discloses restrictions or enclosures. Lessing's intention is to render a realistic image of the world and she offers an idealistic and moral alternative to explain, teach, and direct the reader's attention to the inherent moralistic message that complicated connections exist between what we know and feel and what we understand and act upon in order to function. Her work is focused on the vision of the struggle between individual freedom and social, psychological, physical, social and political restraints which is symbolised in the theme of enclosure and fear. Her protagonists are the approximate of the thing they purport to be, as real as possible.

Lessing may have been hoping 'Winter in July' would disturb the reader, the thought of a homosexual-incest relationship in which both men then shared a same woman was sure to have discomforted people at the time. Julia does not ever refer to Tom and Kenneth as not being 'normal' or 'real' men the reader only knows she feels revulsion and is uncomfortable with their relationship. As Lessing belonged to the Rhodesian Communist Society, she would have come in contact with the shifting attitudes towards homosexuality; incest however throws in another dimension, bi-sexuality yet another. This certainly defied the idea of domesticity which empire had for the colony.

Lessing's work is ultimately an instructive chronicle of life and she always envisioned a more benevolent future for the human race and hoped it would be possible for the human race to advance positively from what seemed to be its destructive pattern of behaviour. She was an extraordinary literary and ideological writer always remaining ahead of readers' expectations; an absolute literary shape-shifter. 'Winter in July' could be a story to be researched further, taken to another level of understanding, taking the taboos of the early twentieth century and discussing how these are looked upon today, what has changed. I would say not only within literary scholars but perhaps also those in psychology, philosophy or theology studies. The work left by Lessing in testament which

she wished to be made public only after her death, will undoubtedly be precious to any academic study which may be carried out on her work.

Bibliography

Allen, John. *Lost Geographies of Power*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2003. Print.

Balfour, Robert. "Gardening in Other Countries, Schoeman, Coetzee, Conrad" *Alternation 4,2. Literature and Languages*. CSSALL conference, University of Durban-Westville, 1995. Web. 5 Jul. 2017.

Bertelsen, Eve. *Doris Lessing and the Rhodesian Settler Novel.* Johannesburg: McGraw-Hill, 1985. Print.

Bloom, Harold. *Doris Lessing – Modern Critical Essays*. New York: Chelsea House, 1986. Print.

Brazzelli, Nicoletta. *Lands of Desire and Loss: British Colonial and Postcolonial Spaces.* Bern: Peter Lang, 2012. Print.

Brewster, Dorothy. *Doris Lessing*. New York, 1965. Print

British Archive for Contemporary Writing. "Guide to the Whitehorn Letters, 1944-1949" *University of East Anglia.* 2015. Print.

Budhos, Shirley. 'Free women, the irony of escape'. *The Theme of Enclosure in Selected Works of Doris Lessing.* Troy, N.Y: Whitson Publishers. Co., 1987. Print.

Burton, Antoinette M. *Gender, Sexuality, and Colonial Modernities.* London: Routledge, 1999. Print.

Casey, Edward. 'Body, Self and Landscape. A Geographical Inquiry into Place-World'. "<https://philosophydocuments.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/22-body-self-landscape.pdf>" Web. 5 Jul. 2017.

--- *Getting Back into Place: Toward a renewed understanding of the place-world.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993. Print.

--- *Remembering. A Phenomenological Study*. USA: Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2000. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Chafee, Patricia. "Spatial Patterns and Closed groups in Lessing's African Stories", *South Atlantic Quarterly 43.2*:126. May 1978.URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/3198787

Chang, Hsin-Yu. "Women's Identity Searching Through Everyday Life in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*" Masters. *National Sun Yat-Sen University*, 2013. Web 8 May 2017.

Chown, Linda E. *Narrative Authority and Homeostasis in the Novels of Doris Lessing and Carmen Martín Gaite*. New York: Garland, 1990. Print.

Crampton, Jeremy W, and Stuart Elden. *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*. Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007. Print.

Crang, Mike, and N J. Thrift. *Thinking Space*. London: Routledge, 2000. Print.

Dolins, Francine and Robert Mitchell. *Spatial Cognition, Spatial Perception, Mapping the self and Space*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Print.

Doris Lessing Society. *Doris Lessing Studies* "<http://www.dorislessing.org/winter2.html>", Ontario. Web. 8 Aug. 2017

Doris Lessing Studies. "<https://dorislessingsociety.wordpress.com/doris-lessing-studies/forthcoming-issue/>" Ontario. Web. 8 Aug. 2017

--- Gardiner, Judith K. "No Climax: The Rhetoric of Incest and Short Story Form in Lessing's "Each Other"". Vol.30 No. 2: 9-14, Fall 2012. Web. 10 Aug. 2017

--- Bentley, Nick. ""Unanchored fragments of print": Lessing's Experiments with Drama and Poetry in the Late 1950's". Vol 32, Nºs 1 & 2:19-24. Fall-Winter 2014. Web. 17 Aug. 2017

--- Shannon, Drew P. “Review of *Literary Half-Lives: Doris Lessing, Clancy Sigal, and Roman á clef, by Roberta Rubenstein,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2014”. Vol. 33: 30-31. 2015. Web. 10 Aug. 2017

--- Rubenstein, Roberta, “Doris Lessing. An Appreciation”. Vol. 33: 32-33. 2015. Web. 10 Aug. 2017

--- Weinhouse, Linda. “Comparative Empires: Diaspora and Hybridity in *Children of Violence* and *Canopus in Agros: Archives*”. Vol. 34: 16-20. 2016. Web. 17 Aug. 2017

Estok, Simon C. *Landscape, Seascape, and the Eco-Spatial Imagination*. New York : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016. Print.

Flishman, Rita. “Freedom and Form in the Fiction of Doris Lessing”. Masters. *Rhodes University*. Undated. Web. 8 Oct. 2016.

Geller, Pamela. *The Bioarchaeology of Socio-Sexual Lives Queering Common Sense About Sex, Gender, and Sexuality.* Springer International Publishing Switzerland, 2017. Web 5 Aug. 2017.

Gieseking, Jen J, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha M. Low, and Susan Saegert. *The People, Place, and Space Reader.* New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014. Print.

Greene, Gayle. *Doris Lessing: The Poetics of Change*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994. Print.

Holdstein, Deborah H. *The Prentice Hall Anthology of Women's Literature.* Upper Saddle River, N.J: Prentice Hall, 2000. Print.

Jackson, Shannon. ‘Cape Colonial Architecture, Town Planning and the crafting of Modern space in South Africa’, *Africa Today 5.4:34, 2005*. Web. 5 Nov. 2016.

Jansen, Sharon L. *Reading Women's Worlds from Christine de Pizan to Doris Lessing: A Guide to Six Centuries of Women Writers Imagining Rooms of Their Own.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Web. 6 May 2017.

Keeler, Henrik L. "We! What Rubbish" An Exploration of the Haunting and the Rupture of White Colonial Identity in Doris Lessing's The Grass is Singing and J. M. Coetzee's In the Heart of the Country". Masters. *University of Oslo*, 2011. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

King, Jeannette. *Doris Lessing.* London: Edward Arnold, Hodder and Stoughton, 1989. Print.

Leckley, Robert, and Kim Brooks. *Queer Theory: Law, Culture, Empire.* Abingdon, Oxen: Routledge, 2010. Web. 12 Aug. 2017.

Lessing, Doris, and Earl G. Ingersoll. *Putting Questions Differently: Interviews with Doris Lessing, 1964-1994.* London: Flamingo, 1994. Print.

Lessing, Doris. *African Laughter: Four visits to Zimbabwe*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1933. Print.

--- *African Stories.* New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 2014. Print

--- *A Man and Two Women*. London: Grafton Books, 1988. Print

--- *A Ripple from the Storm*. London: Panther, 1974. Print.

--- *A Small Personal Voice*. New York: Knopf; [distributed by] Random house, 1974. Print.

--- *Going Home*. New York: Harper Publishers, 1996. Print.

--- *In Pursuit of the English*. London: Granada, 1981.Print.

--- *Martha Quest.* London: Panther, 1974. Print.

--- *The Grass is Singing*. London: Fourth Estate, 2013. Print.

--- *The Golden Notebook.* London: Fourth Estate, 2013. Print.

--- *The Sweetest Dream.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001. Print.

--- *Time Bites.* London: Harper Perennial, 2005. Print.

--- *Under My Skin.* London: Fourth Estate, London, 2013. Print.

--- *Walking in the Shade*. Volume Two of my Autobiography 1949-62. London: Flamingo Publishers, 1988. Print.

--- *Winter in July.* St. Albans Herts: Panther Books, 1966. Print.

Louw, Patricia M.. *"*'Wilderness' in Doris Lessing's African Stories" Masters. *University of Zululand*, 2003. Web. 8 Oct. 2016.

Kadhani, M and Zimunya, B. *And Now the Poets Speak.* Gweru: Mambo press, 1981. Web. 10 May 2017.

Kirby, Kathleen M. Indifferent Boundaries: *Spatial Concepts of Human Subjectivity.* New York: The Guilford Press, 1996. Print.

Klein, Carole. *Doris Lessing: A Biography.* New York: Carroll & Graf, 2000. Print.

Krasniqi, Shkurte. "Identity and narrative in Doris Lessing's and J.M. Coetzee's Life Writings". Masters. *University of Tromso*, 2013. Web. 15 Jan. 2017.

Maslen, Elizabeth. *Doris Lessing.* United Kingdom: Northcote House Publishers, 2014. Print.

Mbongeni Z. Malaba and Geoffrey V. Davis eds. *Essays on Zimbabwean Literature in English, Ndebele and Shona.* Amsterdam –New York, 2007. Web 16 Feb. 2017.

Mills, Sara. *Gender and Colonial Space.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005. Print.

Mul, Sarah . *Colonial Memory: Contemporary Women's Travel Writing in Britain and the Netherlands.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011. Print.

Muponde, Robert and, Ranka Primorac. *Versions of Zimbabwe: New Approaches to Literature and Culture.* Harare: Weaver Press, 2005. Print

Mwandayi, C. *Death and After-life Rituals In The Eyes of the Shona: Dialogue with Shona Customs in the Quest for Authentic Inculturation.* University of Bamberg Press, 2011. Web. 10 May 2017.

Ndlovu, Thabisani. "Escaping Home: The case of ethnicity and formal education in the migration of Zimbabweans during the Zimbabwe 'crisis'". Web. 16 Feb. 2017. http.//www.hsrcpress.ac.za

O'Brien, Lauren L.. "Self, Family and Society in Nadine Gordimer's Burger's Daughter, Rachel Zadok's Gem Squash Tokoloshe, and Doris Lessing's The Grass is Singing". Masters. *Rhodes University*, 2003. Web. 8 Oct. 2016

Orwell, George, *Essays.* London: Penguin Books, 2000. Print

Penny, James. *After Queer theory: the limits of Sexual Politics.* London: Pluto Press, 2014. Web. 3 Aug. 2017.

Perera, Nihal. *People's Spaces: Coping, Familiarizing, Creating.* New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016. Print.

Pickering, Jean. *Understanding Doris Lessing.* Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 1990. Print.

Pomerance M. *The Horse who Drank the Sky: Film Experience Beyond Narrative and Theory*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London, 2008. Web. 10 Oct. 2016.

Raftopoulos, Brian and, Alois Mlambo. *Becoming Zimbabwe – A history from Pre-Colonial period to 2008.* Harare: Weaver Press, 2009. Print

Raschke, Debrah, Phyllis S. Perrakis, and Sandra Singer. *Doris Lessing: Interrogating the Times*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2010. Print.

Richardson, Bill. *Spatiality and Symbolic Expression: on the links between place and culture.* 2015. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Print.

Ridout, Alice R.. "The good parodist: beyond images of escape in the fiction of Doris Lessing". Masters. *University of Durham,* 1997. Web. 8 Oct. 2016.

Rowe, Margaret M. *Doris Lessing*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1994. Print.

Rubenstein, Roberta. *Literary Half-lives: Doris Lessing, Clancy Sigal, and Roman á Chef.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Print

Shannon, Drew. 'Review of *Literary Half-Lives: Doris Lessing, Clancy Sigal, and Roman á clef, by Roberta Rubeintstein*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014'. *Doris Lessing Studies.* Vol.33: 30-31. Ontario, 2015. Web. 12 Aug. 2017

Singer, Peter. *A Companion to Ethics.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2000. Web. 6 Jul. 2017

Singleton, Mary Ann. *The City and the Veld. The Fiction of Doris Lessing*. London: Associated University Presses, 1977. Print.

Sprague, Clair. *In Pursuit of Doris Lessing: Nine Nations Reading.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990. Web 15 Sept. 2016.

--- *Rereading Doris Lessing, Narrative Patterns of Doubling and Repetition*. The University of North Carolina, 1987. Print

Sprague, Clair and, Virginia Tiger. *Critical Essays on Doris Lessing.* Massachusetts: G.K. Hall and Co. Boston, 1986. Print.

Stein, Gertrude. *Everybody's Autobiography.* New York: Random House, 1937. Print.

Tally, Robert T. Jnr. *The Routledge Handbook of Literature and Space*, Abingdon, Oxon, New York, NY : Routledge, 2017. Web 8 Oct. 2016

--- eds. *Geocritical Explorations Space, Place, and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Web 8 Oct. 2016.

--- *Spatiality.* Routledge, 2013. Web 8 Out. 2016.

Tarrant, Shira, and Jackson Katz. *Men Speak Out: views on gender, sex and power.* New York: Routledge/Taylor and Frances, 2008. Web 10 Aug. 2017.

Vambe, Lawrence. *An Ill-fated People: Zimbabwe before and after Rhodes*. London: Heinemann, 1972. Web 16 Feb. 2016.

Visel, Robin E.. "White Eve in the "Petrified Garden": the Colonial African Heroine in the writing of Oliver Schneider, Isak Dinesen, Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer." PhD. *University of British Columbia,* 1987. Web 8 May 2016.

Walder, Dennis. *Literature in the Modern World: Critical Essays and Documents.* Oxford: Oxford University Press in association with Open University, 1990. Print.

--- *Postcolonial Nostalgias: writing, representation, and memory*. New York: Routledge, 2011. Print.

Watkins, Susan. *Doris Lessing.* United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2010. Print.

--- "Epiphany and Feminine Subjectivity in the Novels of Charlotte Bronte, D.H. Lawrence, and Doris Lessing." PhD. *University of Sheffield*, 1992. Web. 8 May. 2016.

--- "Second World Life Writing: Doris Lessing's Under my Skin". *Journal of South African Studies,* 1465-3893, 2016. Web. 30 Sept. 2016.

Whittaker, Ruth. *Doris Lessing* St. Martin's Press New York, 1988. Web Sept. 2016.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973. Print.

Yeline, Louise. *From the Margins of Empire: Cristina Steed, Doris Lessing, Nadine Gordimer*. Cornell University, 1998. Print.

Zieleniec, Andrzej J. L. *Space and Social Theory*. Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE Pub, 2007. Print.

Appendix

Guide to Whitehorn letters, 1944 -1949. University of East Anglia

Doris Lessing donated to the University of East Anglia and to the University of Austen a substantial amount of her personal letters and diaries which is being catalogued to be made available to her appointed biographer and to the public in general. The letters I had access to at East Anglia University are known as the Whitehorn Letters 1944 - 49 and are made up of 110 letters which Lessing wrote to her three lovers, RAF servicemen John Whitehorn, Coll MacDonald and Leonard Smith (Smithie). All the letters are signed by Lessing's nickname, 'Tigger'. On the death of the servicemen the letters were handed back to her but she refused to keep or re-read them as she thought there would be too much pain in those long ago memories.

The letters begin when the servicemen were in training in S. Rhodesia and continue throughout the time they are away on service and return to the United Kingdom. Lessing said she had loved all three, in undivided one-third shares. Her husband knew of these affairs and these eventually lead to their divorce. She was not too concerned with the separation as she acknowledged that when she married it was on the specific understanding that she would be unfaithful. As she continues with her letters she discusses with her lovers such subjects as relationships, morality and honesty; she often refers to her marriage and the problems she had with it and describes the reactions she seemed to inspire in people. She compares Frank Wilson, her first husband to her second husband Gottfried Lessing and describes the reactions of the two to her infidelities. She loves all of her lovers; some passionately, others unpassionately.

In the letters to John Whitehorn and Coll Macdonald, numbers 25 and 26, dated April and May 1945 respectively, Lessing expresses her thoughts on gay relationships, bisexual relations, her own sexuality and the sexuality of the characters within the novel she was writing. She had learnt of Smithies bisexuality.

In the letter dated June '45 (30), Lessing notes she had started to write short stories, having put her novel aside. In July of this same year she confirms she is writing three short stories and acknowledges having received Lady Chatterley's Lover and Baudelaire to read.

In August '45 (36) (37), Lessing writes to John and Coll, and mentions a relationship Smithie is having with Graham and discusses at length this relationship with them.

In October '45 (42), she reports on her attempts to get her short stories published.

In January ’48 (81), in a letter to John, Lessing discusses the feelings she has for Smithie and discusses his homosexuality and she feels that “it would be a good idea if all three of us congregated round a round table and said out loud all the things we thought about each other.” (Just as Julia thought should have happened with Tom and Kenneth: ‘Winter in July’:173)

By December ’48 (100), she had twelve short stories in her head and wanted them printed and in January ’49 (102) she sends off a short story to Colliers in America who ask for more specimens of her work.

It may be therefore, that the story ‘Winter in July’ was influenced by the discussions she had with her three lovers, as this story was published in 1951 and its’ content very different from the other stories found in this collection. Her novel The Grass is Singing, which was published the year before, dealt with heterosexual and inter-racial sexual relationships although in her letter to John Whitehorn in December 1948 Lessing lets him know that she had re-written her novel, “cutting out Howard and leaving Mary and Dick”. She was hopeful that this way it got published although “it’s theme will not recommend it”

It is interesting to note that the complicity and the language with which Lessing writes to her lovers is very similar to that which is held between Julia and her two men.