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# CONFIGURATION OF ALTERNATIVE SPACES THROUGH PERFORMATIVE AND NOMADIC ACTS IN DORIS LESSING'S SHORT FICTION

**Ph.D. Dissertation**

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## ABSTRACT

## CONFIGURATION OF ALTERNATIVE SPACES THROUGH PERFORMATIVE AND NOMADIC ACTS IN DORIS LESSING'S SHORT FICTION

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Doris Lessing is a protean author of the twentieth century due to her experimental writing style and a diversity of issues, ranging from race and ethnicity to class and gender. The richness in the material and form of her writing can also be traced in how she values spaces in her fiction set in Africa and England: wild nature, cultivated settler lands and homesteads in the African continent as well as a variety of closed, open and transitory spaces in the city, gain importance with respect to human intervention. Her two collections of African stories – *This Was the Old Chief's Country* and *The Sun Between Their Feet*; two collections of stories set in Europe and England – *To Room Nineteen: Collected Stories* and *The Temptation of Jack Orkney: Collected Stories*; and finally, one collection of stories and sketches *London Observed* lend themselves to an analysis based on the relationship between space and gender. Within the framework of recent theories of space by Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja, which are related to Judith Butler's and Rosi Braidotti's theories on performativity and nomadism, this dissertation discusses to what extent both genders, particularly women, help to constitute an alternative mode of thinking about private/closed, public/open and transitory spaces, and transform them into lived/social ones based on experience, appropriation and movement. For this purpose, in each chapter the stories in each

collection are classified in terms of space and one narrative from that collection is analysed in detail.

The variety of spaces in the stories – from the smallest unit to the largest scale – chosen for textual analyses mark at not only the physical parameters of space where everyday activities take place as well as the thoughts regarding social codes and norms that shape human behaviours and social relations, but also the possibilities of configuring these spaces in new ways through the characters' performative and nomadic acts. In addition, this dissertation also discusses the gradual change in the concept of home from one story to another. "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" depicts the appropriation of the private house of a family as a home-country-like space and its transformation into a social space for all inhabitants such as the children, the adolescents and the adults in "Getting off the Altitude". The stories set in England demonstrate how the meaning of home changes from a semi-open space in "A Woman on a Roof" to temporary spaces in "An Old Woman and Her Cat". Finally, transitory spaces like a taxi and a city are discussed in "Storms" from *London Observed*. Through these discussions, space is revealed to be a fluid entity changing with social intervention.

**Keywords:** Doris Lessing, Thirdspace, Social Space, Nomad, Gender Performativity

# ÖZ

## DORIS LESSING'İN KISA ÖYKÜLERİNDE PERFORMATİF CİNSİYET ROLLERİ VE GÖÇEBE EYLEMLER YOLUYLA ALTERNATİF MEKANLARIN YARATILMASI

GÜVENÇ, ÖZGE

İngiliz Edebiyatı ve Kültür İncelemeleri
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Doris Lessing farklı konuları deneysel yazı biçimleriyle ele alarak kendini sürekli keşfeden ve geliştiren çok yönlü bir yirminci yüzyıl yazarıdır. Eserlerindeki içerik ve biçim zenginliği aynı zamanda yaşadığı mekanlara nasıl değer verdiğini de gösterir. Yazarın çoğu roman ve öykülerinin Afrika ve İngiltere'de geçiyor olması yazarın hem bir çocuk hem de bir yetişkin olarak bu iki ülkedeki deneyimleriyle yakından ilgilidir. Lessing, Afrika kıtasında bulunan vahşi doğa, ekilen sömürge toprakları ve çiftlik evleri ile Avrupa şehirlerindeki geçici mekanlarda geçen öykülerinde sömürgecilik, ırkçılık, ulusallık, sınıf ve cinsiyet konularını tartışır. Bu açıdan yaklaşıldığında, öykü kitaplarının – *Burası Yaşlı Şefin Ülkesiydi*, *The Sun Between Their Feet* (Ayaklarının Arasındaki Güneş), *On Dokuz Numaralı Oda*, *Jack Orkney'nin Günaha Çağrılışı* ve *Londra Gözlemleri: Öyküler ve Taslaklar* – mekan ve cinsiyet ilişkisi çerçevesinde incelenmesinin mümkün olduğu görülmektedir. Bu tez her iki cinsiyetin, özellikle de kadın kahramanların, performatif ve göçebe eylemler yoluyla, özel ve kamu alanları ve geçici yerleri nasıl sınırları olan kısıtlayıcı mekan anlayışından alternatif mekanlara dönüştürdüklerini, Henri Lefebvre ve Edward Soja'nın mekan, Judith Butler'ın performatif cinsiyet ve Rosi Braidotti'nin göçebe kimlik kuramları kapsamında tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, her

bölümde ele alınan kitaptaki öyküler mekan açısından sınıflandırıldıktan sonra aynı kitaptan bir öykü seçilerek ayrıntılı olarak incelenir.

Analiz için seçilen öykülerdeki farklı mekanlar sadece günlük aktivitelerin gerçekleştirildiği yerlerin fiziksel özellikleriyle birlikte insanların davranışlarını ve sosyal ilişkilerini şekillendiren toplumsal norm ve değerleri yansıtmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda bu mekanların nasıl yeni biçimlerde yaratılabileceğini gösterir. Bununla beraber, bu tez ev kavramının öyküden öyküye nasıl aşamalı bir şekilde değiştiğini tartışır. Afrika öykülerinden "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" başlıklı öykü, aileye ait özel bir evin İngiltere'deki gibi yapılandırılmasını gösterirken, "Getting off the Altitude" böyle bir evin çocuklar, ergenler ve yetişkinler için nasıl sosyal bir mekana dönüştüğünü sergiler. İngiltere'de geçen öyküler ise ev anlayışının kapalı ve özel mekandan açık mekanlara doğru evrildiğini inceler. "A Woman on a Roof" başlıklı öykü bir kadının apartman çatısını evi gibi kullanarak kişiselleştirdiğini anlatırken, "An Old Woman and Her Cat" ev kavramının aidiyet duygusundan arındırılıp geçici bir barınma mekanına dönüştürüldüğünü sergiler. "Storms" adlı öykü ise taksi ve şehir gibi geçici mekanlarla insanlar arasındaki ilişkiyi ön plana çıkarır.
**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Doris Lessing, Alternatif Mekan, Sosyal Mekan, Göçebe Kimlik, Performatif Cinsiyet Rolleri

To My Daughter, Ecem Güvenç, and My Mother, Merih Üstündağ,

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## INTRODUCTION

Doris Lessing's fiction and non-fiction – be it play[1], poetry[2], novel, short story, autobiography, travel book,[3] personal document,[4] essay[5] – revolve around themes concerning race, gender, class as well as –isms such as marxism, socialism, communism and feminism. She deals with such issues by making use of various genres "through whichever form has appeared to her most appropriate" (Jeannette iix) because as Elizabeth Maslen puts it, she constantly tests "fresh ways of communicating with her readers" (*Doris Lessing* 1). She tries out new writing styles and believes that the socially committed writer can reform society by providing a vision of life which values human experience and individual potential in relation to her community. That is why she focuses on the working-class as a part of her social and political responsibility. *In Pursuit of the English*, for instance, tells her attempt to understand the situation of the workers. She was a member of the Communist Party in Southern Rhodesia and later, in London in the 1950s, and had idealistic thoughts about the working-class: "The pursuit of the working-class is shared by everyone with the faintest tint of social responsibility. . . . Like love and fame, it is a platonic image, a grail, a quintessence" (*In Pursuit* 6). However, as a result of her disillusionment with the practices of the Communist Party and her interaction with people of her neighbourhood from a variety of backgrounds with diverse attitudes towards these idealistic thoughts, she accepts the difficulty of defining the real working-class.[6]

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[1] *Each His Own Wilderness* (1958) and *Play with a Tiger* (1962) are two important plays of the author.

[2] Lessing collected her poems in *Fourteen Poems* (1959), which did not draw much attention compared to her fiction.

[3] Lessing's travel book, *African Laughter: Four Visits to Zimbabwe* covers her travels in 1982, 1988, 1989 and 1992 to Africa and reveals her observation of social and political changes after the country gained its independence.

[4] *Going Home* (1957) is a personal document including Lessing's description of reminiscences, anecdotes and incidents related to Africa.

[5] *A Small Personal Voice* (1974) is a collection of essays about Lessing's life and writing, other writers and Africa.

[6] Lessing expresses her disappointment about the real working-class as follows: "I came to England. I lived, for the best of reasons, namely, I was short of money, in a household

Like her attempt to understand the working-class, *The Golden Notebook* illustrates her commitment to write openly about women and their struggle for self discovery, and her *African Stories* best exemplifies the issue of colonialism displaying the hegemony of the whites over the blacks. She critically views the colonial life in Africa through a focus on the relationship between the settlers and the natives as it is reflected in spaces they occupy, their politics, language and culture. As Lynn Sukenick explains, Lessing's fiction "stands quite apart from the feminine tradition of sensibility. Her fiction is tough, clumsy, rational, concerned with social roles, collective action and conscience, and unconcerned with niceties of style and subtlety of feeling for its own sake" ("Feeling and Reason" 516) because her writing relies on commitment to social and political concerns of the time. In an interview with Christopher Bigsby, Lessing says "we live in a series of prisons called race, class, male and female. There are always those classifications," (*Conversations* 78) which she attempts to get rid of by drawing attention to the multiple ways of viewing life rather than siding with the privileged. Her struggle against such "prisons" dividing people into groups in which they feel under pressure because of unwritten rules of every layer as well as her emphasis on personal freedom can be observed in her works. She weaves together her desire to speak for the underprivileged and her political choices, and reflects them in her autobiographies, essays and travel books.

Although she does not confine herself as an author to any kind of thought, and rather explores each to develop her understanding of the world, she has many labels: at the beginning of her literary career, she is criticised because of being a colour-bar writer, later a communist, then a feminist. Through the end, she is categorised as a Sufi writer due to her mystical writings and finally, the space-fiction one. When she was interviewed by Stephen Gray and asked about these labels, she revealed "I've never felt anything but me" (*Conversations* 119). Instead of focusing on the juxtapositions created through race, class or gender, Lessing emphasises the importance of "what we have in common" (de Montremy, *Conversations* 197). In her

crammed to the roof with people who worked with their hands. After a year of this, I said with naïve pride to a member of the local watch committee that now, at last, I must be considered to have served my apprenticeship. The reply was pitying, but not without human sympathy: 'These are not the real working-class. They are the lumpen proletariat, tainted by petty bourgeois ideology. . . . The entire working-class of Britain has become tainted by capitalism" (*In Pursuit* 7-8).

works, she reflects the thoughts of different schools according to which one group is superior to the other, yet tries to undermine such discriminations such as the rich, the poor, the white, the black, the male, the female etc., by presenting new perspectives.

The variety of subjects Lessing covers in various literary forms regardless of labels and criticisms is based on her interest in "writing itself" (Watkins, *Twentieth-Century* 16). For her, literature is not only her "safety line" (Thorpe 100) to persevere in life but also a means of communication with the readers and providing them with a perception of life. Literature and history are "two great branches of human learning" (*In Prisons* 71) because they provide the "other eye," (*In Prisons* 8) which helps to perceive ourselves from a different perspective. She values the novel form for this purpose and notes in an essay, titled "The Small Personal Voice" that the task of a novelist is to talk "as an individual to individuals, in a small personal voice" (27). In *Prisons We Choose to Live Inside* (1987), she mentions the responsibility of an author whose aim is to "enable us to see ourselves as others see us" (7). This exemplifies her closeness to the realist tradition of the nineteenth-century as "the highest point of literature," ("The Small Personal Voice" 14) for such realist works display a "commitment to humanity" (King 2).

Among her several novels, the first published one *The Grass is Singing* (1950) illustrates racial and colonial conflicts in a critical realistic tradition. However, in the course of her writing career, her interest in nineteenth-century realism shifts into science fiction, sufism[7] and space fiction. Her five-novel sequence[8] collected under the title of *Children of Violence* (1952) questions the realist tradition through the depiction of Martha's personal experiences. *The Golden Notebook* (1962), on the other hand, is a radical novel which she is well-known for breaking the unity both in structure and subject. In her autobiographical work *Walking in the Shade*, she explains

[7] As Müge Galin notes in *Between East and West: Sufism in the Novels of Doris Lessing*, "Lessing believes in the possibility of individual and world amelioration, and her vision encompasses not only the earth but the whole of the universe. Sufi thought and Sufi teaching stories allow her to demonstrate the way to transformation" (8). Some novels like *The Four-Gated City*, *The Memoirs of a Survivor* and *The Marriages between Zones Three, Four, and Five* cover major aspects of Sufism: "ordinary life contrasted with life on the Sufi way, the role of the teaching stories on the Sufi way, life after death, and life as a result of the Sufi way" (Preface xxii). For more information about Sufism, see Hardin's "Doris Lessing and the Sufi Way" and "The Sufi Teaching Story and Doris Lessing". Also, see Fahim's *Doris Lessing: Sufi Equilibrium and the Form of the Novel*.

[8] *Martha Quest, A Proper Marriage, A Ripple from the Storm, Landlocked* and *The Four-Gated City.*

that *The Golden Notebook*[9] "was complex, not only because of what went into it but because of my state at the time. I really was at a crossroads, a turning point; I was in the melting pot and ready to be remade" (305). As is understood from her own words, Lessing's questioning of herself is reflected in the way she writes the novel as a critique of realist tradition. This book consists of sections categorised as black, blue, red and yellow, and dealing with different issues; being a writer, keeping a diary, concerning with politics and making stories out of experience, respectively. As King puts it, in *The Golden Notebook*, "the reader is confronted by literary discourse, psychoanalytic discourse, political discourse, and the discourse of sexual relationships," (39) and thus, the novel opens itself into various interpretations.[10] In *Canopus in Argos: Archives*[11] (1979), she moves completely away from the realist tradition and experiments with science-fiction by displaying a variety of perspectives of human existence from other planets.

The richness in the material and form of her writing can also be traced in how she values spaces she occupies. The fact that most of her fiction and non-fiction take place in Africa and England, particularly Southern Rhodesia and London has a connection to her experience both as a child and as an adult in these two countries. Born as Doris May Tayler in Kermanshah in Persia (now Iran) in 1919, raised by her British settler parents in Southern Rhodesia, travelled to Europe, Asia, North America and the USSR as an adult, and lived in London for the rest of her life until her death in 2013, she questioned the meaning of home and exile in her works.[12] Like a nomad,

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[9] As Susan Watkins puts it, "The text's experimentation with the conventions of novel, and its innovative shape, have encouraged many critics to align it with postmodernist fiction" (*Twentieth-Century* 65). In a different context, Elaine Showalter claims, "*The Golden Notebook* is such a monumental achievement that it is tempting to see it as Lessing's ultimate statement about twentieth-century women and the female tradition," (*A Literature of Their Own* 308) which illustrates "disillusionment and betrayal, that the 'free women' were not so free after all" (*A Literature of Their Own* 301).

[10] See Fishburn's "Wor(l)ds Within Words: Doris Lessing as Meta-Fictionist and Meta-Physician," Hite's "(En)gendering Metafiction: Doris Lessing's Rehearsals for '*The Golden Notebook*,'" Arnett's "What's Left of Feelings? The Affective Labor of Politics in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*," and Lalbakhsh and Wan Roselezam's "The Subversive Feminine: Sexual Oppression and Sexual Identity in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*" to name just a few.

[11] This science-fiction book includes five novels namely, *Shikasta, The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four and Five, The Sirian Experiments, The Making of the Representative for Planet 8* and *The Sentimental Ages in the Volyen Empire*.

[12] Susan Watkins discusses Lessing's understanding of home, exile and nation in her article, "Remembering Home: Nation and Identity in the Recent Writing of Doris Lessing."

she has "a sharpened sense of territory, but no possessiveness about it" (*Nomadic* 65) because she has the ability to home and dehome herself whereever she goes. As Watkins puts it, for her "the concept of 'home' is always bound up with its other, exile. Home is not always a place of safety and familiarity but necessarily includes within it differences, resistances and dependencies that must be acknowledged and that cannot be excluded and positioned as exterior" ("Remembering Home" 101). Her outsider position in Southern Rhodesia and London as well as her belonging to both countries enabled her to explore and write about a variety of subjects from multiple perspectives. As Braidotti puts it, "[t]he nomadic, polyglot writer is suspicious of mainstream communication" (*Nomadic* 44) and is able to practice her thoughts freely. Like a linguistic nomad, Lessing enacts a multilayered consciousness of complexity in terms of gender, race, class, nationality etc., in a wide range of experimental writing style. In short, her interest in racial and gender issues, marxist, socialist and communist ideologies, her experiment with literary forms to deal with such issues as well as her adventurous lifetsyle travelling from one country to another make Lessing a protean author of the twentieth-century as well as a nomad reinventing and transforming herself both as a polyglot and a female subject on the way of becoming.

Southern Rhodesia embodies a space of childhood memories and experiences on the veld, vleis and valleys, which provides her "freedom from the confinements of the female role" and "lifelong independence of mind" (Pickering 2). Despite the ideological conflicts because of her exile position as a white settler living in a colony, Lessing is content with living there and makes her contradictory situation into a source of material for her writings. Building upon her childhood and youth experiences in Southern Rhodesia, she writes two collections of African stories – *This Was the Old Chief's Country* and *The Sun Between Their Feet* – in which she portrays the relationships between men and women, white and black, children and adults, mother and daughters, and so on. Her happiness in Southern Rhodesia is evident in her description of her house in *Going Home* as a "living thing" (597). She notes, "The fact is, I don't live anywhere; I never have since I left that first house on the kopje" (594). Leaving her formal education at the age of fourteen, educating herself by reading the works of several authors and working as an au pair and typist in Salisbury, she gradually departs from her family and homeland. Then, she moves to London at the age of thirty as a single mother with a small child, twice married and divorced,

and longs to become a "self-created, self-sufficient" (*Walking* 3) author. In her transition from her homeland to London, she shows her appreciation of the city by comparing London and Southern Rhodesia as follows:

> I knew that my sense of space, adjusted to sprawling London, was going to take a shock; but I was more confused that I thought possible. If you live in a small town, you live in all of it, every street, house, garden is palpable all the time, part of your experience. But a big city is a center and a series of isolated lit points on the darkness of your ignorance. That is why a big city is so restful to live in; it does not press in on you, demanding to be recognized. You can choose what you know. (*Going Home* 593)

Lessing's perception of the city shows her heightened level of consciousness of space and the intense power of observation being in the city evokes. For her, the city is a space to be explored, confronted and appropriated.

When she arrives in London in 1949, "England was at its dingiest, [her] personal fortunes at their lowest, and [her] morale at zero" (*In Pursuit* 10-11) because the country was war-ravaged and Londoners were worn-out due to the effects of the two world wars.[13] That marks the beginning of her transient lifestyle characterised by movement, which she describes in her autobiography *Walking in the Shade* as "day-after-day periods of home-hunting" (256) until she "achieve[s] [her] own place" (131). The sections of her autobiography are allocated to the four temporary places Lessing lives in: an attic room in Denbigh Road W11, a war-damaged house surrounded by bombed buildings in Church Street, Kensington W8 where comrades drop in and out for political debates, a "maisonette" (137) in Warwick Road SW5 and the flat in Langham Street W1, which is "within walking distance of theatreland, Soho, Oxford Street, Mayfair, the river" (257). Not only London, which is unpainted, bombed, dull and grey, but also London rebuilt out of its ruins, full of young people socializing in cafés and restaurants inspires her to write about the city. Despite the high cost of owning a space of her own and making a living in London, she considers all her efforts worth it because "London is a cornucopia of delights" (*Walking* 357).

[13] As Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei explain in the introduction to *Living with Strangers: Bedsits and Boarding Houses in Modern English Life, Literature and Film*, "[a]fter both world wars, housing shortage was one of the most critical issues facing Britain, resulting in the proliferation of communal, often inconvenient, dwelling spaces" (1).

Her London life in four similar dwellings gives a glimpse about the social, cultural and economic climate of the 1950s and 1960s. As a result of shortage of housing in post-war England, London is occupied with transitory domestic spaces like boarding houses and bedsitting rooms where a variety of people belonging to different ideologies and cultures (immigrants from India, Africa, Canada etc.) merge together. As Paul Delany explains, the boarding house or the bedsitter

> was a place of complex 'in-betweenness,' both temporally and socially. Temporally, it offered a period of transition between living at home through adolescence and forming a new family in a home of one's own. One was starting out as an adult, but without property or furniture or anything else that went to create a settled identity. Socially, bedsitter life did not have the fixed markers of class that, in Britain, were attached to other kinds of places to live. It might represent a temporary loss of status for a young middle-class person or a new opportunity for someone moving to London from the provinces. Instead of being a well-defined rung on the social ladder, the bedsitter was a place for the marginalized and the nomadic. ("Writing in a Bedsitter" 63)

The transitory spaces she lives in London serve for her development as a nomad "with an awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries" (*Nomadic* 66) living "in a pack," (*Walking* 21) a polyglot writing not only from the periphery but also from the center, and an unstable personality giving way to new and alternative views of life.

With respect to her experiences in Africa and England where she interacts with several people including authors from diverse backgrounds and ideologies, her writings are multifaceted. Struggling against oppressive impositions of societies with respect to social, cultural, racial and gender issues have widely been a subject of research on her fiction. Although images of space ranging from the smallest units such as a room, a flat, a house to their outward extensions like a garden, a street, natural environment and a city recur frequently in her works, the scarcity of studies on her fiction in relation to space analysis is evident. In addition, studies particularly on the novels of Lessing appear to overshadow those on her short stories collected in five books – two collections on African stories, two on England and a collection of sketches titled *London Observed*. Among the studies that engage in an analysis of space, there are readings[14] of her short stories in terms of a racialized and gendered

[14] For different readings of Lessing's stories, see Singleton's *The City and the Veld*, Ropero's "*Colonial Flâneurs: the London Life-Writing of Janet Frame and Doris Lessing*," Chaffee's "Spatial Patterns and Closed Groups in Lessing's 'African Stories,'" Couto's "*Winter in July*:

division of space, which are partly related to my study; however, they deal with such spaces based on dichotomies like the coloniser/the colonised, the civilised/the uncultivated, the public/the private and the open/the enclosed. Patricia Chaffee, for instance, displays how the whites, the blacks and the half-castes live in closed groups through spatial patterning which has its own rules distancing one from the other. Pat Louw analyses gender in relation to the colonial division of space between domestic indoors as feminine and outdoor veld coded as masculine and emphasises the fluidity of cultural identity in terms of border crossings. Maria Emilia Alves Couto discusses the fear of the bush and the native, and frustration of the social, physical and political restraints reflected in the theme of enclosure. This study, unlike those that deal with binarisms in terms of the setting, aims to bring an insight into Lessing's stories and sketches with respect to the complicated relationship between space and gender. The primary objective of this dissertation is to explore and discuss to what extent genders are portrayed as experiencing and configuring the human-made and natural environment in stories set both in Africa and England.

Focusing on the significance of space reflected in multiple forms brings about a need to clarify how setting traditionally functions in literary texts and how this study lays bare new possibilities for a discussion on space. Setting is "[t]he background against which action takes place," (477) write William Harmon and C. Hugh Holman in *A Handbook to Literature*. This definition provides a broad perspective for understanding the concept of setting as a place where events and relations are revealed. Analysing the setting of literary texts requires a knowledge of its elements:

> (1) the geographical location, its topography, scenery, and such physical arrangements as the location of the windows and doors in a room; (2) the occupations and daily manner of living of the characters; (3) the time or period in which the action takes place, for example, epoch in history or season of the year; (4) the general

Mapping Space and Self in Doris Lessing's Short Stories," Arias's "All the World's a Stage': Theatricality, Spectacle and the Flâneuse in Doris Lessing's Vision of London" and Louw's "Landscape and the Anti-Pastoral Critique in Doris Lessing's African Stories," "Inside and Outside Colonial Spaces: Border Crossings in Doris Lessing's African Stories" as well as "Domestic Spaces: Huts and Houses in Doris Lessing's *African Stories*."

> environment of the characters, for example, religious, mental, moral, social, and emotional conditions. (Harmon and Holman 477)

Like the elements of setting given in the quote such as location, scenery, time and environment, M.H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, refer to "the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs" (363) to explain the meaning of setting. The words to describe setting in literary texts recall a similar set of concepts used in geography including place, landscape, nature, environment to name a few, all of which can be discussed under the umbrella term "space".

Because setting is only a backdrop for historical and social realities of literary texts, this study aims to foreground how spaces in Lessing's short fiction may be continually produced as lived spaces through performative gender acts and nomadic interventions. Hence, the next chapter demonstrates how thinking about space has evolved from a fixed and limiting framework to an alternative multidimensional understanding of space where individual acts and actions create social space. Few studies were undertaken concerning the meaning of space before the 1950s and the concept was simply understood as a measurable and mappable container in which things happen. Space meant the spatial dimensions reduced to its physical qualities. Until the 1970s, it was also defined with respect to mental conceptions based on representations of ideologies, values, norms and beliefs. From that time onwards, theorists attempt to free the concept of space from its reductionist and essentialist understanding and attribute a relational and productive feature to it. It is conceived as a dynamic entity produced and configured through social relations and spatial practices. Since this study deals with the interaction between space and gender and human appropriation of their surrounding, Henri Lefebvre's and Edward Soja's approaches to space are discussed along with Judith Butler's and Rosi Braidotti's theories on performativity in gender and nomadism, respectively. Thus, the chapter gives a theoretical background to the analysis of Lessing's stories and sketches. What distinguishes this study is not only its attempt to move beyond the setting descriptions in literary texts but also to open up Lefebvre's and Soja's theories of space that have

been utilized in the fields of architecture,[15] sociology,[16] geography,[17] urban and regional planning[18] to include literature as well.

In each chapter the stories in a collection are classified in terms of space and one narrative is analysed in detail. The classification of the stories as open/closed, public/private and transitory/imaginary spaces appears to display a Cartesian understanding of space, which is defined in terms of dichotomies like the physical and the mental. However, this classification of space is used for practical purposes to categorise Lessing's stories. And depending on the characters' behaviours and acts in compliance or conflict with the social norms and values, space in most of the stories is utilized beyond the Cartesian limits.

Chapter Two focuses on Lessing's first collection of African stories, titled *This Was the Old Chief's Country* (1951). Because it is mainly about the impact of colonialism on the whites and the blacks including both genders, the first part of the chapter is allotted to the classification of stories in terms of gender and racial relations reflected in open space (the veld, the vlei, the mountains, the river) and closed space (the farm compound, the house, the hut, the garden) in Africa. The second part presents a textual analysis of "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" from the collection, which displays the male characters' connection to the veld and the farm, and the female characters' configuration of the house, the garden and their natural environment such as the river and the mountains through performative and nomadic acts. The husbands are so occupied by farming that they do not attribute meaning to their surrounding other than business, but their spouses, particularly the white settler's wife cannot adapt to Africa and longs for her home in England. Her homesickness is reflected in her attempts to configure the private sphere of her house and the garden as alternative spaces where she feels at home. Not only the title of the collection (*This Was the Old Chief's Country*) but also of the story ("The De Wets Come to Kloof

[15] See Kocabıçak's *Locating Thirdspace in the Specifities of Urban: A Case Study on Saturday Mothers, in İstiklal Street in İstanbul*, Yoltay's Queer *Space as an Alternative to the Counter-Spaces in Ankara*, and Archibald's *Placemaking, Sites of Cultural Difference: The Cultural Production of Space Within a University Construct*.
[16] See Rosa's *Producing Race, Producing Space: The Geography of Toronto's Regent Park*. and Koçak's *Social and Spatial Production of Atatürk Boulevard in Ankara*.
[17] See Koskela's "Gendered Exclusions: Women's Fear of Violence and Changing Relations to Space."
[18] See İlkay's *(Re)Production and Appropriation of Open Public Spaces: Representational Moments for Urban Green in Ankara*.

Grange") have a relation to space. While the former refers to the African land, the latter is about the visit of an Afrikaner couple to a white settler farm compound. This link gives a glimpse of the interconnectedness between space and human beings and how they relate to each other.

The second collection of African stories, *The Sun Between Their Feet* (1973) is explored in Chapter Three. It covers a variety of issues such as racial and gender conflicts, power of nature and effects of the Second World War. Like the previous chapter, this one is divided into two parts: the first includes a classification of stories, which are examined in relation to how these issues are revealed in open, closed, imaginary and transitory spaces. The second part of the chapter displays a textual analysis of "Getting off the Altitude" from the collection. The titles of the collection and the story suggest a connection to the natural environment and geographical features of the African land. Unlike "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" dealing with gender and racial issues, "Getting off the Altitude" merely focuses on gender relations in an enclosed district, which is "off the altitude" as the title suggests, and how this place influences the way people live. While the house in the previous story is appropriated by a white settler woman as her alternative space recalling her home-country, the one in "Getting off the Altitude" extends beyond its private sphere of a family and becomes a social space where inhabitants of the district come together during parties.

Chapter Four dwells upon Lessing's collection of stories set in Europe and England, titled *To Room Nineteen: Collected Stories* (1978). The title of this collection is taken from one of the narratives, "To Room Nineteen" and directly reveals a connection to an enclosed space. In the first part of the chapter, the stories are classified into transitory spaces including hotels, parks, beaches, streets, taxis, cafes and pubs; into closed spaces such as houses, flats and rooms, and into imaginary space where the characters' relation to their surrounding are revealed. The second part displays a textual analysis of "A Woman on a Roof" which takes place in a semi-open space, as its title suggests. Unlike "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" and "Getting off the Altitude" which illustrate the appropriation of a private house in Africa, this story demonstrates the configuration of the roof of a building by a woman in London. Although she presumably lives in a flat, her movements inside are not depicted; rather, the whole story revolves around her performative and nomadic acts on the roof like

sunbathing comfortably, which helps to convert the traditional space into an alternative one.

In Chapter Five, the second collection set in Europe and England – *The Temptation of Jack Orkney: Collected Stories* (1978) – is scrutinized in two parts. The stories and sketches encompassing various subjects ranging from a challenge of social norms and marriage to political, class and gender issues are analysed in terms of how they are reflected in public and private spaces in the first part of the chapter. This is followed by a textual analysis of "An Old Woman and Her Cat," which tells the story of a nomadic woman and her cat's survival under poor living circumstances. It discusses how she appropriates several spaces ranging from the streets, the Council flat to a room in the slum and a ruined house in a wealthy neighbourhood, and turns them into alternative spaces for the cat and herself until her death.

Chapter Six examines the collection of stories and sketches, titled *London Observed*, which differs from the previous collections in terms of its title and context. While the first four collections of stories that take place in Africa and Europe derive the title of the volume from one of the stories, this one has a separate title which presents various scenes in London as a frame. The collection vividly demonstrates the narrator's observation of the city with its streets, parks, buildings, and Londoners in public spaces. This chapter is also divided into two parts: the first attempts to classify the sketches in one group taking place in transitory spaces and the stories in open and closed spaces. The second part displays a textual analysis of a sketch, "Storms," which portrays a vision of London from two opposite perspectives – that of the taxi driver and of the narrator – including a critical view of everyday life and rhythms of the city.

In the Conclusion, the variety of spaces in the stories chosen for textual analysis are compared to the gradual change in the concept of home from one story to another. The *African Stories* displays the appropriation of the private house of a family as a home-country-like space in "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" and its transformation into a social space for all inhabitants such as the children, the adolescents and the adults in "Getting off the Altitude" through performative gender acts. The stories set in England demonstrate how the meaning of home changes from a semi-open space in "A Woman on a Roof" to temporary spaces in "An Old Woman and Her Cat," and finally, to transitory ones like a taxi and a city in "Storms". All these analyses reveal in different ways a discussion of private/closed and public/open

spaces with respect not only to the physical descriptions and conceived ideas about space but also to everyday activities and social relations of both genders, particularly women. Above all, this study provides the ground for the discussion on to what extent performative gender acts and nomadic interventions help to constitute an alternative mode of thinking about these spaces, and transform them into lived/social ones based on human experience, appropriation and movement.

## CHAPTER I
## THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The discussions in the following pages will focus on two areas: space and gender. The former will cover the theories of Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja, whose consideration of space paves the way for thinking differently about its meaning, function and production. A brief exploration of the similarities between the concepts of space these theorists use will be included so that they can give insights into the complexities of contemporary life. The French philosopher and sociologist Lefebvre's dialectically materialist conceptualisation of space inspired many scholars in transdisciplinary fields. As Christian Schmid puts it, "[c]entral to Lefebvre's materialist theory are human beings in their corporeality and sensuousness, with their sensitivity and imagination, their thinking and their ideologies; human beings who enter into relationships with each other through their activity and practice" ("Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space" 29). In a similar vein, the American geographer, Soja acknowledges Lefebvre's theory on human experience, social relations and everyday life in space, and argues for a more critical spatial thinking. He extends the discussions to politics of identity and difference by drawing on an eclectic study of bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldua, Michel Foucault and Homi Bhabha in a postmodern context.

In the theories of space there are no references to specifically gender issues. Because the primary objective of this study is to discuss the relationship between space and gender, feminist views are utilized to understand how these two concepts are closely interrelated to and interdependent on each other. Starting from the politics of the personal, as Chris Weedon puts it, in most feminisms "women's subjectivities and experiences of everyday life become the site of the redefinition of patriarchal meanings and values and of resistance to them, feminism generates new theoretical perspectives from which the dominant can be criticised and new possibilities envisaged" (*Feminist Practice* 6). Therefore, Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and Rosi Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity will also be discussed in this

chapter to relate gender issues to space theories. Butler is an American feminist scholar whose theory of performativity focusing on the distinction between sex and gender, which are related to power relations, has been influential in a variety of philosophical feminisms of the late twentieth century. Like Butler's contribution to the development of feminism through gender politics, Braidotti's politically projected configuration of nomadic subject helps to problematise and subvert the conventional representations of women by underlining sexual differences.

It is important not to overlook the fact that this study does not try to generate a fixed definition of space and gender; rather, it aspires to lay bare to what extent both male and female characters in the stories are able to appropriate and configure spaces they occupy in alternative ways through spatial practices and everyday experiences. Despite their apparent incompatibility in terms of the concepts – space and gender – discussed in different fields such as sociology, geography and feminism, what Lefebvre, Soja, Butler and Braidotti have in common is their poststructuralist approach to these matters: "Poststructuralism is deeply subversive. It deconstructs all those binary oppositions that are central to Western culture and give that culture its sense of unique superiority. In deconstructing those oppositions, it exposes false hierarchies and artificial borders, unwarranted claims to knowledge, and illegitimate usurpation of power" (Bertens 123). This anti-essentialist approach which Lefebvre and Soja practice on space, and Butler and Braidotti on gender, will provide an articulation of alternative ways of analysing these concepts beyond the Cartesian understanding based on dichotomies.

### 1.1. Theories on Space

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the theory of space not only in the fields of architecture and urban studies but also in social sciences and geography. The focus on space has become one of the primary concerns for theorists and scholars including critical geographers (Nigel Thrift, Derek Gregory, David Harvey, Edward Soja, Rob Shields) and feminist geographers (Doreen Massey, Linda McDowell, Gillian Rose) to name just a few. This interest in spatial thinking is related to French social theory, particularly to the works of Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre. Since then the theoretical claims about space have been grounded on common points. The heterogeneous nature of the physical environment constituted by diverse human practices is the focal point of these critics. As Foucault claims, space

is no longer treated "as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile" ("Questions on Geography" 70) but it is acknowledged as a product of social relations, experiences and transformations embracing diversity. With respect to the discussion of the concept in social sciences, the employment of space in the analysis of literary texts has become a significant issue.

Before the "spatial turn" in the history of Western civilisation, the conception of space was based on the Cartesian dichotomy between the mind and the body. In Dialogue III of his book *Discourse on Method,* René Descartes foregrounds the thinking ability of the subject and highlights the importance of the mind over the body, with his premise *cogito, ergo sum*. The Cartesian space was developed "on the basis of extension, thought in terms of coordinates, lines and planes, as Euclidean geometry" (Elden, *Understanding Henri Lefebvre* 186-7). Thus, it was regarded as a measurable and static place like a container waiting to be filled in not only by things but also by social events and actions. This reductionist approach brings about the separation of the physical space from the mental one. Such oppositions in the discussion of space allows the penetration of oppressive and dominating patriarchal ideology into the social relations and gender roles in societies where the mind is privileged over the body. Therefore, Descartes has been criticised because of his "totalitarian urge to extend the reach of scientific rationality into every corner of society" (Snider 300) including the social, economic, cultural and political matters. Since this dichotomous thinking is restrictive and hierarchical in every sense and is solely defined in terms of oppositions, new conceptualisations of space have been acknowledged by philosophers from various disciplines. Paul Cloke and Ron Johnston, for instance, in *Spaces of Geographical Thought: Deconstructing Human Geography's Binaries*, claim that through the use of third terms as in the example of thirdspace, the understanding of space "transcends what is produced by binary processes. . . . Third spaces thus combine the material and the symbolic to elude the politics of polarized binaries and to enable the emergence of radical new allegiances by which old structures of authority can be challenged by new ways of thinking and new emancipatory practices" (15). Through the problematisation of dualistic thinking and introduction of a third alternative, scholars reconfigure a new concept of space which foregrounds difference rather than the fixed position of binaries and hierarchical structures in the process of developing heterogeneous spaces.

### 1.1.1. Henri Lefebvre's Theory

Henri Lefebvre's theory of space contributes to the discussion on space from a materialist perspective. The publication of *The Production of Space* has influenced many critical geographers such as David Harvey, Stuart Elden, Neil Smith to name just a few and paved the way for a reconsideration of social and spatial theory. In this work, Lefebvre focuses on the idea of space as a social product and the reciprocal relationship between the body and its surrounding. He challenges Western dichotomous way of thinking, particularly the previous conceptions of space based on Cartesian duality. At the very beginning of his book, he indicates that "with the advent of Cartesian logic, space had entered the realm of the absolute. As Object opposed to Subject, as *res extensa* opposed to, and present to, *res cogitans*, space came to dominate, by containing them, all senses and all bodies" (*The Production* 1). He makes a critique of the absolute conception of space that is conceived as a geometrically measured exact and precise entity, and that hinders the creation of a heterogeneous society through the practices of dominant ideology. Instead, drawing on the theories of production in economic relations and class struggles introduced by Marx and Engels, Lefebvre emphasises the producible nature of social space in which

> . . . . each living body *is* space and *has* its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space. This is a truly remarkable relationship: the body with the energies at its disposal, the living body, creates or produces its own space; conversely, the laws of space, which is to say the laws of discrimination in space, also govern the living body and the deployment of its energies. (*The Production* 170)

Like the Marxist theory according to which each society with its mode of production creates its own space, Lefebvre displays how space is created through cultural and political relations and social interactions. His reconceptualisation of the concept invites heterogeneity in terms of social relations and identities. For him space itself is active and is constituted by the activities of its inhabitants. Unlike the understanding of space as a void to be filled in, Lefebvre emphasises the "shift from *things in space* to the actual *production of space* . . . ." (*The Production* 37) in order to reveal the fact that it is a production in process. According to his view, space has been not only created, produced, appropriated and used in alternative ways but also commodified and colonised throughout history.

Lefebvre claims that the previous conception of space based on the Cartesian division between the physical (body) and the mental (mind) space fails to explain the social, historical and economic relations of people living in particular surroundings at particular times. Thus, he introduces the third dimension; that of social space through which the human relations, historical developments, and productive processes are revealed. The focus on how his conceptualisation of space departs from the Cartesian understanding of it highlights the significance of the conceptual triad which Lefebvre calls "moments of social space" (*The Production* 40). Through the interaction of the three dialectically interconnected dimensions – the physical, the mental and the social – Lefebvre introduces his tripartite aspects of space as follows:

> 1 *Spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance*.
> 2 *Representations of space*, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.
> 3 *Representational spaces*, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art. (*The Production* 33)

In contrast to the Cartesian emphasis on the completeness of space ending up in a synthesis, Lefebvre takes these three spatial aspects into consideration "in interaction, in conflict or in alliance with each other. Thus, the three terms or moments assume equal importance, and each takes up a similar position in relation to the others" (Schmid, "Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space" 33). He underlines the production of space through the use of his conceptual triad in order to attain a more interactive concept.

For him, the first part of his spatial triad, the "spatial practice," occurs in a material environment. As Merrifield puts it, "people's perceptions condition their daily reality with respect to the usage of space: for example, their routes, networks, patterns of interaction that link spaces set aside for work, play and leisure. . . . Spatial practices structure daily life and a broader urban reality" ("Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation" 524). Such space is perceived through the senses. Spatial

practices give information about the social relations, cultural interactions, political issues and everyday life of individuals and communities.

The second item in his triad is the "representations of space" which refers to a "conceptualised space, the space of scientists, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers . . . all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. This is the dominant space in any society" (*The Production* 38-39). According to Lefebvre, this is conceived space embedded with ideological norms and values as well as implications of power and knowledge. It includes descriptions and definitions at the level of discourse. Maps, signs, plans of space, for instance, represent the dominant ideology and serve for the maintenance and control of hegemony. Such representations have "a substantial role and a specific influence in the production of space" (*The Production* 42). As Merrifield notes, "in this ordered, enclosed and controlled world, Lefebvre felt that people are crushed by routine" ("Henri Lefebvre: A Socialist in Space" 177). This order in space does not welcome the diversities among people, confining them into well-defined spaces in terms of their social identities such as race, class, gender, ethnicity etc. Despite being abstract notions, representations of space are important in the formation of social relations and social roles under the hegemony of patriarchy.

The third dimension is defined by Lefebvre as representational space which is

> directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'. . . . This is the dominated - and hence passively experienced - space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces . . . tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs. (*The Production* 39)

On the one hand, the symbolic dimension of space is interpreted by individuals from their personal viewpoints and appropriated by their imagination. Such space is constituted out of meanings attributed to it as well as the experience of everyday life; on the other hand, it refers to ideology, knowledge and power which intervenes in the construction of meaning related to social relations, norms and values. With respect to the interpretation of symbols and images by individuals, lived space can be altered and reconfigured as an alternative space.

Considering these three dimensions, Lefebvre demonstrates the impact of the abstract constructions of space or its representations extending into the private and domestic space of reproduction, into the home and family (social space) in the form of restrictions and confinements. He also suggests social space as a potential arena for resistance and struggle against the oppressive norms of Western society, saying

> There can be no question but that social space is the locus of prohibition, for it is shot through with both prohibitions and their counterparts, prescriptions. This fact, however, can most definitely not be made into the basis of an overall definition, for space is not only the space of 'no', it is also the space of the body, and hence the space of 'yes', of the affirmation of life. (*The Production* 201)

He encourages people to question the established notions of space which restrict their thoughts and actions. By doing so, people can free themselves from the oppression of the conceived representations of space and configure alternative ones.

Lefebvre shows that space is not static; rather, it is open to new formulations and interpretations based on the relationship between space and body. Thus, he introduces the body as the middle ground where all the three aspects of space; the perceived, the conceived and the lived, intersect with each other. He draws attention to the importance of the body in philosophy and social thought because "Western philosophy has betrayed the body; it has actively participated in the great process of metaphorization that has abandoned the body; and it has denied the body" (*The Production* 407). What differentiates Lefebvre from the other philosophers working on the theory of space is that he takes the discussion on the body one step further by focusing on "the production of space" rather than the division between "the active role of the body in social life, of the body as lived and generative . . . [and] the body as acted upon, as socially and historically constructed and inscribed from the outside" (Simonsen 10). Instead, Lefebvre questions the Cartesian notion of the body subordinated to the mind and places the body at the center of his spatial triad in order to understand how the perceived, conceived and lived dimensions interact with each other. His philosophy "has re-embraced the body along with space, in space, and as the generator (or producer) of space" (*The Production* 407). Lefebvre's contribution to the theory of space and his discussion on the relationship between the body and its environment open the way for further arguments from feminist perspectives, which I will explain in the next section.

### 1.1.2. Edward Soja's Theory

In a similar vein, Soja questions the Cartesian understanding of space and shows its inadequacy to explain the dialectical relationship between the spatial and the social aspects of human life. In his book *Postmodern Geographies* (1989), he writes a case study about the impact of space in social life in Los Angeles to illustrate the socio-spatial dialectics. However, his main contribution to the discussion of space has been to interpret and rewrite Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space by using a new terminology. Soja, in *Thirdspace* (1996), elaborates on the Lefebvrian triad and asserts that *The Production of Space* is "arguably the most important book ever written about the social and historical significance of human spatiality and the particular powers of the spatial imagination" (*Thirdspace* 8). Soja's analysis of space relies on the social, geographical and political aspects of spatiality. He indicates that so far the relationship between space and people has been interpreted with reference to the "historicality and sociality" (*Thirdspace* 2) of life that has remained insufficient in explaining the complexities of contemporary life. The twentieth-century which is characterised by the advancements in urbanism and its impact on human and societal developments foreground the significance of spatiality and geography. Therefore, Soja underlines "the inherent *spatiality of human life*" (*Thirdspace* 1) by underlining the potential of people to construct their social space. He adds the spatial dimension to the traditional dual understanding of historical and social life, and in this way shows the ontological existence of human beings as having historical, social and spatial practices.

Soja names Lefebvre's physical space as firstspace which deals with the "real material world" and Lefebvre's mental space as secondspace "that interprets this reality through 'imagined' representations of spatiality" (*Thirdspace* 6). The firstspace refers to the physical and spatial locations, sites, regions and territories in spaces where the organisation and design of buildings, houses, towns, cities shape the social life of individuals. The relations between people and their firstspace including the built-environment and nature show not only the materiality of space but also the sociality of human life. As Soja puts it, "human spatiality continues to be defined primarily by and in its material configurations, but explanation shifts away from these surface plottings themselves to an inquiry into how they are socially produced" (*Thirdspace* 76-77). This change shows the mutually complementary relationship

between human beings and their surrounding. As a response to the restrictive analysis of firstspace, Soja introduces the secondspace in order to reveal the fact that "spatial knowledge is primarily produced through discursively devised representations of space, through the spatial workings of the mind" (*Thirdspace* 79) rather than the perceived materiality of things in space. He exemplifies the impact of mental space with its images and representations on human beings by referring to an experiment conducted by the geographers. A group of people are asked to draw the maps of the places they live in to identify their imagined spatiality. The results of the study show that their maps differ from each other depending on their gender, race, and class. The perception of firstspace with its materiality and the different ways of experiencing it are actually connected to each other. It means that spaces are socially produced and formalised by the imposition of power, knowledge and ideology.

Like Lefebvre, Soja accepts the fact that "space in itself may be primordially given, but the organisation, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation, and experience" (*Postmodern Geographies* 79-80). Thus, he renames Lefebvre's representational space as thirdspace where all binarisms or oppositions confront with another/other alternative(s), what he calls "a critical strategy of *thirding-as-Othering*" (*Thirdspace* 60). He writes "Othering" with a capital letter to highlight the inadequacy of traditional notions of space relying on the physical and the mental or the real (firstspace) and the imagined (secondspace) spaces, out of which the latter is privileged over the former. Unlike these restrictive dimensions of space, thirdspace is, for him:

> an efficient invitation to enter a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, uncombinable. It is a space where issues of race, class, and gender can be addressed simultaneously without privileging one over the other; where one can be Marxist and post-Marxist, materialist and idealist, structuralist and humanist, disciplined and transdisciplinary at the same time. (*Thirdspace* 5)

The understanding of social space or thirdspace enables people to experience life in various ways without being confined by traditional norms and values, and by extension provide an all-embracing space to live in. Soja exemplifies the flexible nature of thirdspace by referring to Jorge Luis Borges's short story titled "The Aleph"

that is "an allegory on the infinite complexities of space and time" (*Thirdspace* 56). Similar to the description of the Aleph where all places are interwoven and are seen from different angles, Soja's thirdspace is all-inclusive in the sense of confrontation and contestation between opposites to comprehend the multifaceted meanings of spatiality. Human beings generate their own space through their personal experiences and interpretations that are also under the influence of the representations of space constituting knowledge. In other words, physical space with its material objects and their various interpretations by individuals from different social backgrounds as well as cultural and political views about that space are all comprehended as social constructions and are simultaneously reconstructed.

What these two theoreticians have in common is the analysis of creative uses and alternative configurations of space for human practices, which stimulate other philosophers to go beyond what is already known. Lefebvre's spaces of representation (representational spaces) and Soja's thirdspace invite a reinterpretation away from the Cartesian dualism toward a reconsideration of space as an open field for new discussions. Lefebvre's and Soja's thirdspace encompass all three aspects of space – the perceived, mental and lived space – and "these lived spaces of representation are thus the terrain for the generation of 'counterspaces,' spaces of resistance to the dominant order arising precisely from their subordinate, peripheral or marginalized positioning" (*Thirdspace* 68). That is to say, their concept of space is characterised by its radical openness and social struggle that leads to liberation of human experiences. Their analysis of space in terms of what Soja names "trialectical thinking" is "disorderly, unruly, evolving, unfixed, never presentable in permanent constructions" (*Thirdspace* 70).

Soja also mentions the impact of hegemonic power on space that "actively *produces and reproduces difference* as a key strategy to create and maintain modes of social and spatial division that are advantageous to its continued empowerment and authority" (*Thirdspace* 87). In hegemonic societies, individuals are left with an either/or situation: to comply with the norms and regulations or to revolt against the system, what Soja calls "are inherently spatial responses, individual and collective reactions to the ordered workings of power in perceived, conceived, and lived spaces" (*Thirdspace* 87). Therefore, third spaces play a significant role in reconstituting alternative orderings. On the one hand, these spaces are available for a variety of

social identities because of their radical openness; on the other hand, they are sensitive to strategic impositions by the dominant ideology. The spatial theories of these two thinkers, then, show how various dimensions of space cannot be thought in isolation and how they can be utilized by human beings as alternative spaces.

### 1.2. Theories on Gender

Since this study will focus on the relationship between space and gender, Lefebvre's and Soja's conceptualisations of space as an ongoing process of social relations could be related to the questioning and destabilisation of fixed notions of gender and sexuality. In this theoretical framework, Judith Butler's theory of "gender performativity" which she first argues in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) and elaborates in *Bodies That Matter* (1993) will be the first one to be dealt with. Similar to Butler's disavowal of the dichotomous categories by making a critique of fixed gender identities, Rosi Braidotti suggests a fluid gender identity, which blurs the boundaries and subverts stable definitions, and thus her theory of "feminist nomadic subjectivity" will also be discussed in this part.

#### 1.2.1. Gender Performativity

Drawing on the theories of Simone de Beauvoir, Butler criticises the categories of gender and sex as fixed, and attempts to destabilise dualisms related to sex and gender. De Beauvoir makes a distinction between biologically determined sex and socially/culturally constructed gender with her statement in *The Second Sex* that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (330). While sex is considered as an unchanging natural given, gender refers to the social and cultural attributes a person acquires in society. Despite having been widely criticised because of her reification of Cartesian mind-body dualism, de Beauvoir's separation of sex from gender paves the way for further explorations in numerous disciplines.

Unlike de Beauvoir, Butler, in her *Gender Trouble*, aims to show how the term gender as well as sex are constructed and reconstructed as fluid entites. For Butler,

> [g]ender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pregiven sex (a juridical conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "a natural sex" is produced and established as "prediscursive," prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts. (*Gender Trouble* 11)

Butler rejects the dichotomous categorisation of gender as a cultural construct whereas sex as natural. To this aim, she criticises the polarized notion of gender into two categories, men and women, what she calls "coherent gender" (*Gender Trouble* 119) and emphasises the fact that gender does not rely on such limited notions. Rather she proposes possible subversive acts based on her theory of gender performativity in order to complicate gender. As Butler points out, "[g]ender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (*Gender Trouble* 43). The way a woman dresses, behaves appropriately or deals with certain tasks are all codified in terms of gender definitions. That is why for Butler, gender refers to a doing of acts rather than a being. Having a gender means repeating the same patterns of life and behaviours so that it becomes a part of the identity that is accepted without questioning. However, the identity of woman is in the process of becoming through a continuously performed and repeated acts and activities in a variety of ways.

Despite the naturalisation of gender acts, the process of performativity in everyday life changes from person to person, and thus, the notion of gender can be contested and altered in the course of reiteration. As Butler puts it, "if gender attributes and acts, the various ways in which a body shows or produces its cultural signification, are performative, then there is no preexisting identity by which an act or attribute might be measured; there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender . . ." (*Gender Trouble* 180). She introduces gender not just as an expression that displays one's gender identity but as entity achieved through its articulation and reiteration. With respect to Friedrich Nietzsche's assertion in *On the Geneology of Morals* that "there is no 'being' behind the deed, its effect and what becomes of it; 'the doer' is invented as an afterthought, - the doing is everything," (26) Butler argues that "[t]here is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (*Gender Trouble* 33). That is to say, gender identity is the result of a process in which the subject repeatedly performs gender acts under the influence of social impositions but it is also "a changeable and revisable reality" (*Gender Trouble* xxiii) in line with individual preferences.

In addition to the alterable and constructed formation of gender, Butler rethinks the notion of sex through her questions such as "Is it natural, anatomical, chromosomal, or hormonal, and how is a feminist critic to assess the scientific discourses which purport to establish such 'facts' for us? Does sex have a history? Does each sex have a different history, or histories?" (*Gender Trouble* 10) and by doing so, challenges its biological determination. Sex, like gender, is not a fixed identity, rather it is performatively enacted. Sex, as Butler points out, is also "a sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice" (*Bodies That Matter* 10). What she argues is that both gender and sex are socially, culturally and discursively constituted, which culminates in "no distinction at all" (*Gender Trouble* 11) between the two concepts. In a heterosexual society, the meaning of gender and sex is stabilised, and accordingly, the position of women and men is naturalised and institutionalised through a set of gender identities and gender roles, which perpetuates men's domination and women's subordination. Butler, however, attempts to criticise the notion of gender in compulsory heterosexuality and open up such definitions to contestation.

To demonstrate her argument on the constructed nature of gender and sex, Butler elaborates on her theory of gender performativity by referring to drag performances as a strategy of subversion. She exemplifies the uncertainty of gender identities through the depiction of men wearing women's clothes and acting like women as well as women wearing men's clothes and acting like men, which problematises the stability of gender and blurs the distinction between what is seen and what lies behind it. Since woman and man are socially constructed categories, when a man in women's clothes acts like a woman, for instance, his performance becomes an imitation of a construction: "*In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency*" (*Gender Trouble* 175). In this case, gender becomes a kind of impersonation that is accepted as true gender identity. As Butler points out, "[d]rag is an example that is meant to establish that 'reality' is not as fixed as we generally assume it to be" (*Gender Trouble* xxiii-xxiv). It is a means of denaturalising gender identities as culturally and discursively performative constructions through the reiteration of gender acts. Hence, gender performativity produces disruptive and subversive possibilities of identity formation, which enable individuals to transgress the regulatory norms of the society.

### 1.2.2. Nomadic Subjectivity

Although Braidotti shares Butler's challenge against the phallogocentric thinking that devalues woman and her extension of discussion from the differences between the two genders to gender performativity for each subject, she believes gender theory maintains binarisms through a reduction of the female subject to its biological and social construction. For Braidotti, sexuality and its role in the constitution of subjectivity are more important than gender. Because the notion of sexual differences is not reducable to natural or sociological levels of existence, she aims to show the interrelated nature of social, cultural and political codes which affect the formation of subject positions based on large-scale differences rather than sex/gender or sexuality/sex distinction. For this purpose, she proposes a nomadic theory of the subject,[19] foregrounding the steps the subject passes through as a response to the question of what it means to be on the process of becoming. Building on Deleuzian and Guattarian concept of "becoming" and Luce Irigaray's theory of "sexual difference," she rethinks female subjectivity in terms of nomadism. As Braidotti claims, it is "the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour," (*Nomadic* 26) which helps to constitute alternative becomings. Hence, like Deleuze's departure from the Cartesian dualistic thinking by drawing attention to "rhizomatic mode of the subject as nonphallogocentric," (*A Thousand* 277) she emphasises the interconnectedness of relations in the process of becoming. As opposed to the traditional notion of the subject that is socially constructed, her nomadic subject is "a dynamic and changing entity," (*Metamorphoses* 2) free from the fixed and permanent definitions of identity.

In order to make a critique of the dialectical relationship between the mind and the body, Braidotti refers to Deleuze and Guattari's two contradictory ways of subjectivity: "the molar, sedentary, or majority" and "the molecular, nomadic or minority" (*Patterns* 114). The molar acts in accordance with the phallogocentric system whereas the molecular searches for possibilities and "lines of transgression" (*Patterns* 115). And they prefer the latter to fight against the essential attributes defined by the Cartesian cogito. Their rejection of a unitary sense of self and focus on

[19] For more information, see Braidotti's *Transpositions*, *Nomadic Theory: The Portable Rosi Braidotti* and "Comment on Felski's 'The Doxa of Difference': Working Through Sexual Difference".

multiple becomings is a foundational notion in explaining nomadic subjectivity because as Braidotti puts it, "[p]rocesses of becoming . . . are not predicated on a stable, centralized Self who supervises their unfolding. They rest rather on a non-unitary, multi-layered, dynamic subject" (*Metamorphoses* 118). The acts of becoming do not fit into certain categories such as subject/object, man/woman or self/other, etc., rather, flow in a web of relations and interact with various subject positions. That is why becoming is connected to "movement between points, marked as a border-line or an in-between zone of contact between possible worlds" (*A Thousand* 293). However, while the notion of becoming provides possibilities for nomadic consciousness and opens the way for women to reclaim a female subjectivity by revealing their desires and experiences, and repossessing their body as a site for intensities and possibilities, it offers a "gender-free sexuality" (*Patterns* 120). Braidotti questions whether it is an affirmative approach to female subjectivity or not because "[t]he gender-blindness of this notion of 'becoming-woman' as a form of 'becoming-minority' conceals the historical and traditional experience of women: namely of being deprived of the means of controlling and defining their own social and political and economic status, their sexual specificity, their desire and *jouissance*" (*Patterns* 121). Therefore, she proposes the notion of nomadic female subjectivity or becoming nomad through which women can gain access to a space of articulation. Not only the specificity of the lived and embodied experience of women but also their desire to become, to speak and to transform should be taken into account.

Like Deleuzian becomings, Braidotti's nomadism is a means of disengaging one's subject position from the sedentary phallogocentric thought. In an attempt to offer alternative ways of defining female subjectivity, she draws attention to the new feminist waves such as the studies by Luce Irigaray,[20] Donna Haraway[21] and Monique Wittig.[22] Despite their different points of reference, the first focusing on sexual differences, the second on the cyborg as a high-tech imaginary, the last on the lesbian, they foreground different female figurations subverting conventional representations. Particularly by underlining Irigaray's theory of sexual differences, Braidotti critiques the gender theorists focusing on sex/gender distinction because of their inadequacy of

[20] See Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1985) and *This Sex Which is Not One* (1985).
[21] See Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century."
[22] See "A Lesbian is not a Woman."

appealing to non-English Western European contexts where the focus is on sexuality and sexual difference. As Braidotti puts it,

> the focus on gender rather than sexual difference presumes that men and women are constituted in symmetrical ways. But this misses the feminist point about masculine dominance. In such a system, the masculine and the feminine are in a structurally dissymmetrical position: men, as the empirical referent of the masculine, cannot be said to have a gender; rather, they are expected to carry the Phallus – which is something different. They are expected to exemplify abstract virility, which is hardly an easy task. Simone de Beauvoir observed fifty years ago that the price men pay for representing the universal is a loss of embodiment; the price women pay, on the other hand, is at once a loss of subjectivity and a confinement to the body. Men become disembodied and, through this process, gain entitlement to transcendence and subjectivity; women become over-embodied and thereby consigned to immanence. ("Feminism by Any Other Name" 38)

Braidotti explains her reliance on sexual difference theory by referring to three phases: "difference between men and women," "differences among women," and "differences within women" (*Nomadic* 151). The first concerning men and women represents "an asymmetrical relationship" (*Nomadic* 152) in which the notion of the subject is "a self-regulating masculine agency" and the notion of the Other is "a site of devaluation" ("Feminism by Any Other Name" 39). In this phallogocentric system, the representations of the masculine subject and the feminine object are clearly defined, and thus, are irreversible. For Braidotti, reversing the subject positions of man and woman means to propose a new kind of domination, which would not change the existing social, economic and political conditions of inequality. Because the concept of difference meaning "to be worth less than" (*Metamorphoses* 4) is exclusionary, she valorizes the sexual difference theory to open up "a multiplicity of alternative forms of feminist subjectivity without falling into either a new essentialism or a new relativism," ("Feminism by Any Other Name"40) and changes her shift from the asymmetry between the two genders to the second level of differences among women, as she claims, "to an exploration of the sexual difference embodied and experienced by women" (*Nomadic* 152). These real-life women are "constituted across intersecting levels of experience" ("Feminism by Any Other Name"40) and have multiplicity in terms of variables such as race, class, ethnicity, age, nationality, lifestyle and sexual preference, etc. The third level of differences within each woman

underlines “the complexity of the embodied structure of the subject,” (*Nomadic* 158) which Braidotti deals with through her nomadic figurations.

Her concept of nomadic subject is “materialistic mapping of situated, or embedded and embodied, positions” (*Metamorphoses* 2). It is the multiplicity of figurations that enable women to escape from mainstream discourses without falling into dualistic categories, and allow them to critically observe ideological and social constraints, explore changes and develop nomadic consciousness, which is “a form of political resistance to hegemonic, fixed, unitary, and exclusionary views of subjectivity” (*Nomadic* 58). Nomadic subjects are fluid and performative not only in the sense of transgressing borders and territories but also of experiencing different levels of identity, and configuring new ways of dealing with set conventions. They are in the process of becoming through interconnections with various spaces and cultures as well as mutiple levels of experience outside the regulatory norms and values.

Butler’s performative acts beyond restrictive forms of gender practices and Braidotti’s nomadic interventions questioning set conventions create a possibility for configuring female subjectivity that is in the process of becoming. The idea of engaging with interconnected levels of experience with other subjects and spaces occupied recalls Lefebvre’s and Soja’s spatial trialectics where there is always interaction and alliance or contradiction and conflict between the perceived, the conceived and the lived dimensions of dwellings and their inhabitants. Therefore, this study will make use of these theories of space, gender and nomadism to discuss how the characters in Doris Lessing’s stories appropriate and reconfigure their environment and how they are shaped by in return.

## CHAPTER II

## The First Volume of African Stories: *This Was the Old Chief's Country*

The first volume titled *This was the Old Chief's Country* portrays the circumstances in which both the blacks and the whites are affected by colonialism: the suppression of the African people by the colonisers and the white settlers' struggle for complicity with the colonial system in Africa. There are thirteen stories in this volume: "The Old Chief Mshlanga," "A Sunrise on the Veld," "No Witchcraft for Sale," "The Second Hut," "The Nuisance," "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange," "Little Tembi," "Old John's Place," "Leopard George," "Winter in July," "A Home for the Highland Cattle," "Eldorado" and "The Antheap". These stories display Lefebvre's and Soja's tripartite conception of space: there are (firstspace) physical descriptions of the veld and the farm or the untamed nature and the cultivated land where everyday activities take place. The secondspace perspective is also revealed through ideas and thoughts about these spaces, which conceptualise them as belonging to the natives and to the whites or as dangerous and safe. Moreover, gender relations can be observed both in closed and open spaces such as the house, the room, the garden and the veld in which native and white women are colonised. This chapter demonstrates to what extent an alternative mode of thinking about space (thirdspace) is possible in these stories. While Part I is allotted to the classification of the narratives in terms of how gender relations are reflected in open and closed spaces through performative and nomadic acts, Part II will be devoted to the textual analysis of "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange".

### Part I: Classification of Stories

### 2.1. Open Space

The stories that foreground the relationship between human beings and open space (wild nature) including the veld, the mountains, the kopjes, the vlei, the natural flora and the animals are "The Old Chief Mshlanga," "A Sunrise on the Veld," "No Witchcraft for Sale," "The Nuisance," "Leopard George," "Eldorado" and "The Antheap". In the first story there are two main settings, cultivated farms of the white

settlers and wild veld of the natives. Although there are references to the settler's farm compound and the house as closed spaces, the story mainly focuses on open spaces to reveal how the land is dominated and exploited by the colonisers. The land of the natives made up of "trees, the long sparse grass, thorn and cactus and gully" (Lessing 13) is wild, "untouched" (Lessing 19) and green. On the other hand, the farms that belong to the whites are domesticated and cultivated to serve the whites. The settler's young daughter, who is also the narrator of the story, observes, "hundreds of acres of harsh eroded soil bore trees that have been cut for the mine furnaces and had grown thin and twisted, where the cattle had dragged the grass flat. . . ." (Lessing 19).

The firstspace view of the land gains further meaning when the girl goes for a walk in the veld accompanied by two dogs and carrying a gun, because of possible dangers like wild animals, which also shows the secondspace perspective of the veld from the coloniser's viewpoint. The child's initial prejudices about the inferiority of the natives as opposed to the superiority of the whites alters upon her visit to the kraal where the Chief and his tribe live. In addition to her perception of the physical features of the two parts, the child feels the enmity between them and how the whites are considered to be destroyers of the African continent. When the narrator meets the chief, she realizes "a queer hostility in the landscape, a cold, hard, sullen indomitability . . . as strong as a wall, as intangible as smoke" (Lessing 23). As Patricia Chaffee puts it, in "Spatial Patterns and Closed Groups in Lessing's African Stories," the African land is seen "as black territory, and a white person in them is considered as trespasser" (47). The spatial patterns that segregate the whites and the blacks and the unwelcome attitudes of both towards each other are reflected from the child's viewpoint. Since the story foregrounds the different conceptions of space between the natives and the whites, it is possible to talk about how the African continent is perceived (firstspace) and conceived (secondspace) by the young girl but there are no implications of an alternative mode of thinking (thirdspace) about it.

Apart from its focus on the conflictive view of the African continent in terms of colonialism, the story also displays the transformation of a white young girl from innocence to experience during which she questions gender relations, cultural values and social norms in relation to spaces she occupies. The child has a close connection to nature and a tendency to explore unknown places. She does not fix herself in prescribed roles like taking care of the household chores and spending time in the

garden, rather she goes for walks along the veld, which might show her nomadic spirit. Because of her interest in the natives and the veld as well as her visit to the kraal, she breaks the social norms that dictate her that "walking the veld alone as a white man might" (Lessing 22) is not appropriate for a white young female. The veld is, indeed, conceptualised as male sphere "where only Government officials had the right to move" (Lessing 22). Her experience in the native land transforms not only her views about the colonisers as she understands their exploitation of the African soil but also her understanding of gender as she is not welcomed by the men in the kraal. Despite her attempts to exceed the boundaries through exploration of nature and the natives, the story does not show her configuration of thirdspace but her awareness of the problems in colonial and gender issues.

In "A Sunrise on the Veld," the child narrator goes on a journey in a wild landscape like the one in "The Old Chief Mshlanga". He leaves "the cultivated part of the farm" (Lessing 28) and starts his discovery in a "crimson" and "gold" (Lessing 29) vlei, because he loves hunting and walking barefoot, which might show his close connection to nature. In the material description of the house and the veld, the closed space which is not attractive for the child is juxtaposed with the open one. The child's perception of nature directly has an effect on how he conceives that open space as a place where "all the birds of the world sang about him" (Lessing 29). Hence, the boy feels that he belongs to nature. Unlike his affinity with open space, the boy conceives the house as a space with borders, which shows the secondspace perspective.

Nevertheless, when he witnesses the death of a buck and how it is eaten by ants, he realizes violence in nature. The joy of the buck jumping in the bush as opposed to its despair in wild nature eaten by ants might be compared to the boy's excitement in nature in the morning and his realization of how living things actually have a very short existence in the afternoon. In "Landscape and the Anti-Pastoral Critique in Doris Lessing's African Stories," Pat Louw explains the boy's encountering wildness as a shift from "pastoral to anti-pastoral as the boy's relationship to the rural environment changes from harmony to disharmony" (39). In this sense, the buck's being eaten by ants in the flow of natural life seems to challenge his sense of identity and destroy his peace in nature. In addition to Louw's anti-pastoral critique of the story, the boy's escape from nature and retreat into the borders of the closed space can be explained in spatial terms: on the one hand, his initial

thoughts about nature where he feels free – unlike the colonial view of African nature as dangerous (secondspace) – might be interpreted as an attempt to create an alternative mode of thinking about wild nature. On the other hand, his disappointing experience with the buck causes him to feel unsafe, so he has to turn back to the house which he thought to have boundaries. His peaceful and emancipatory conception of open space (wild nature) is replaced by the so-called protected conception of the closed space (the house).

Both stories foreground open space rather than closed one and show not only how African land is left untouched by the natives and exploited by the whites but also how the whites cannot be a part of it, but belong to their tamed and domesticated lives in the farm compounds. Nevertheless, the former story focuses on the experiences of a young girl, the latter one deals with the experiences of a young boy. This distinction between the two stories reveals the close connection between gender and space. While the girl problematises social norms and gender relations through her experience in the veld, the boy's interaction with nature and animals is an accepted male act. That is why "The Old Chief Mshlanga" has both colonial and gender overtones, but "A Sunrise on the Veld" seems to reflect the colonial issues and the relationship between nature and human beings without any implication of gender.

Like the previous two stories, "No Witchcraft for Sale" foregrounds a different conception of open space (wild nature). The story takes place in the white settler's, the Farquar's homestead around which there are "flowerbeds, scattering squawking chickens and irritated dogs" (Lessing 36). It is perceived as a closed and safe place where their child, Teddy plays with the native cook, Gideon. However, Teddy is beaten by a tree snake while playing in the garden. As a result of his mother's failure to cure his eyes with medicine, Gideon, by using the leaves of a plant from the veld, cures his eyes and prevents his going blind. Thus, the idea of a safe house as opposed to a dangerous veld (secondspace perspective) appears to be shattered by this event. After that, the Farquar's conception of open space with perils changes into a place of remedy because of its herbal plants that can heal illnesses. There are no long physical descriptions of wild nature in the story but implications of how it is conceived by the natives as a space of "secrets" with "an ancient wisdom of leaf and soil and season . . . of the darker tracts of the human mind – which is the black man's heritage" (Lessing 38). The white scientist thereupon wants to take samples from the plant to

produce a kind of medicine, but Gideon does not allow the whites to exploit the wild veld, and make use of plants in nature for their own purpose. Thus, the whites' conception of the wild and dangerous nature shifts into a place of wonder, which remains unknown. Since this story focuses on nature and its herbal plants and the whites' attempt to exploit it, the relationship between space and gender remains in the background. There are no implications other than the secondspace perspective which confines women like Teddy's mother into closed spaces like the farm, the house and the garden.

The perception and conception of the African land from the viewpoint of the whites and the natives are further displayed through the description of open spaces in "The Nuisance". For instance, there is a farm compound belonging to the whites which is located on the ridge and surrounded by two narrow tracks, an old well, "half a mile of tall blond grass" (Lessing 67) and "clustering huts" (Lessing 67). The location of the farm and its protection from the huts display the material placement of the two races in closed spaces. Rather than the inside of the compound and the huts, the wells in open space are foregrounded in this story in the same way that the farm and the wild nature are contrasted to each other in the previous stories. There are two wells in the district: the one used by the whites is clear but the other one used by the natives is pale brown. Such difference of the wells might signify racial differences between the two cultures because the polluted one belongs to the natives whereas the clean one belongs to the whites. Moreover, the well used by the native women serve for socializing purposes as they wash their clothes, their children, their hair etc., and gossip. In Lefebvre's terms, they configure the well as a social space based on their lived experiences. As the narrator puts it, it is these native women who attribute meaning to the well because without them "the place was ugly, paltry" (Lessing 68). Unlike the clustering of women around the well, the farm is peopled with male workers. Like the farm as men's place, the well becomes women's public sphere.

Through the depiction of native women dealing with everyday chores in the well, this story also displays their subordination and treatment as inferior beings. Among the natives, the position of women is inferior to their husbands who have many wives, for instance. Upon the Long One's having problems with his oldest wife, as the narrator states, "a nagging woman in [his] house was like having a flea in [his] body; [he] could scratch but it always moved to another place, and there was no peace

till [he] killed it" (Lessing 71). The comparison of the woman to a flea shows how native women are subordinated and trivialized by men. When the narrator's father gets annoyed upon the Long One's complaint about his oldest wife, he tells him to solve his problems on his own. Although the narrator's father senses the fact that the Long One might have dealt with his old wife by killing her and throwing her body to the well, he keeps his silence to protect him, which shows male cooperation. Also, the well as a place of interaction for native women becomes a grave in the end.

"Leopard George" is another story which reveals the differences between the whites and the natives and their relation to the African land. George Chester, the son of a first settler family, buys a new farm called "Four Winds" (Lessing 173) upon his return to Rhodesia, which is not "a desirable farm," (Lessing 175) because it is "five thousand acres of virgin bush, lying irregularly over the lower slopes of a range of kopjes that crossed high over a plain where there were still few farms" (Lessing 175). The long physical descriptions (firstspace) of the farm and its surrounding display how the open space is left untouched and untamed. Unlike white men's imposing on the land "a pattern of their own," (Lessing 175) George wants to leave the open space as it is, but to produce the closed space – the house and the garden – to his delight. Rather than being in a constant struggle against wild nature, he manages to cultivate the land and become rich by being in harmony with his environment. He employs the natives, Smoke and his men to work for him in the Four Winds which is "a bare, gusty rocky stretch of veld on the side of a mountain" (Lessing 176). Since the compound stands "above the rest of the country" (Lessing 182) and the natives do not go home, the farm is like a native village where George gives swimming pool parties on Sundays for the neighbours. The conception of a farm compound belonging to a white man changes into a social space of the whites and lived space of both races.

Despite his respect for wild nature, his sexual affairs with native women cause trouble between George and Smoke. George's egotism in his affairs with native women including Smoke's nephew and new wife contradicts with his initial intentions like keeping the wild nature and having intimate relations with the natives. His abuse of native women and their voluntary involvement in such relations lead to their expulsion from the society. The native assistant, Smoke, exhibits the social problem to George in what follows:

> These girls, what happens to them? You have sent the other one to the mission school, but how long will she stay? She has been used to your money and to ... she has been used to her own way. She will go into the town and become one of the loose women. No decent man will have her. She will get herself a town husband, and then another, and another. (Lessing 191)

The Mission school, for instance, is a prison-like place with borders and rules which entrap young girls, and they end up in towns becoming prostitutes. The town, then shows how the secondspace perspective works for the disadvantage of women. Hence, like his father and the other settlers, George cannot go beyond the established conceptions of space divided into that of the coloniser and the colonised, which reflect the colonial perspective and his false steps towards women reveal how native women are left with no choice but to become outcasts in towns.

In "Eldorado," the tense relations between the coloniser and the colonised are not foregrounded. Rather, this story mainly focuses on how the white settlers struggle for a comfortable life through farming and gold mining, and exploit the land for their own purposes, so there are long physical descriptions of open space instead of closed ones. Alec Barnes, one of the farmers, for instance, enjoys looking at the bare and empty veld, clears all the trees and bush in his farm compound. When he first came to the land, "the house was bedded in trees" (Lessing 304) but now there is a sowed land without any green area, because "Alec's instinct was for space" (Lessing 304). Despite the experts's warning that Alec is ruining his farm, he always looks for "a new field" (Lessing 305) and ends up with no grass to graze for the cattle. His colonial conception of land as a space for exploitation (secondspace) causes him to fail in farming. After that experience, Alec diverts his attention to search for gold but in a similar way, he cannot find it and become rich. Through Alec's obsession with farming, and later, gold mining, the white men's attempts to achieve ideals are revealed, yet his ill-luck and incorrect decisions lead to his failure in adaptation to the country. Thus, the colonial view of open space stays within the limits of firstspace and secondspace perspectives with material descriptions and conceptions of open land.

The story also shows how the white women are doomed to be confined to their inner spaces because of the indifference of their husbands and the harsh conditions of life in Africa. Alec's wife, Maggie, who is used to city life in England gets bored of farming, gold mining and divining water from the wells in Africa, and becomes

"infected by the lunacy" (Lessing 320). Although she realizes that her relation to Alec is not working, she cannot think of divorce as a solution because she is an "old-fashioned" (Lessing 320) woman. Maggie's routinised life and learned helpessness in colonial Africa exemplifies the intricate relationship between gender and space because she cannot liberate herself not only from her inner imprisonment but also spatial confinement to a house.

Like "Eldorado," "The Antheap" is about the possibility of gold mining in open space where no one prefers to live because of its geographical features. As the narrator unfolds, the land is surrounded by mountains and kopjes, and in the midst of them "is a mile-wide reach of thick bush" (Lessing 354). The firstspace perspective of the land as "mountain-imprisoned hollow" (Lessing 354) from which smoke like the "cigarette of a giant" (Lessing 357) rises might imply the harm that the whites give to the African land, suggested with "imprisonment," "cigarette" and "giant". After years of stability in the place, Mr Macintosh, another farmer, who is called "The Gold Stomach" by the natives, revitalizes the gold mine where there used to be "a deeper hollow, then a vast pit, then a gulf like an inverted mountain" (Lessing 357). Because of its depth and danger, the place is called "the pit of death" by the natives. While Mr Macintosh conceives it as a space of earning money, the natives consider it to be a grave-like place, a place of oppression. Since Mr Macintosh does not warn the natives about the dangers of mining, they accidentally fall into the hollow. This implies his ambition for gold and money which is further supported with his motto, "one can't make an omelette without breaking eggs" (Lessing 358).

Mr Macintosh is not only a powerful colonial oppressor who owns and manages the land and the natives but also has a half-caste son, Dirk, as a result of an affair with a native woman. Despite his dominance ever and kindredship to the natives, as Chaffee puts it, Mr Macintosh "may enter the compound to visit his mistress, but his presence is tolerated rather than welcomed" (47) like the white child's unwanted situation in the kraal in "The Old Chief Mshlanga". The enmity between the two races is reflected within the spatial boundaries. Also, the difference between the whites and the natives is emphasised not only through their placement on the opposite sides of the gulf but also through the distinction between silence and noise. While the natives are associated with noise, sound and dance, which suggest

the feeling of livelines and communal spirit, the whites are defined by their silence, which shows their lack of communication in Africa.

Through the depiction of a close friendship between Tommy (the white child) and Dirk (Mr Macintosh's half-caste child), the racial conflicts and problems are revealed in this story. Since their playing together is prohibited, they build a shed on the antheap for themselves like an alternative space where they disorder the dichotomies between the two races. Although they sometimes call each other "lazy white bastard" and "dirty half-caste" (Lessing 374) when they get angry, they settle down and continue sharing knowledge in a space of their own. After several attempts of the children to be treated on equal terms, Mr Macintosh sends Tommy to a university to study art and Dirk to study engineering. As Selma R. Burkom notes "[t]he story recounts the boys' increased comprehension of the color bar, that code of the outer life which unalterably separates blacks from whites, and their continued assertion of the value of the inner life, their friendship, despite the code" (58-59). The two boys' success in achieving their ideals takes place not within the limitations of secondspace perspective of the African land as a place of colonial exploitation, but in the possibilites of thirdspace created in the shed on the antheap, where they become intimate, and share ideas and feelings.

Similar to Maggie in "Eldorado," Annie, Tommy's mother, as "a naturally solitary person," (Lessing 360) is the only white woman in the compound and seems to have adapted herself to Africa by keeping quiet in her house. Because of pervasive silence in the compounds and lack of communication between Annie and the two men – her husband, Mr Clarke and the owner of the farm, Mr Macintosh – she is confined into her inner space. The white women are left with no choice but drawn into mental instability within the boundaries of marriage.

**2.2. Closed Space**

The stories that foreground the relationship between human beings and closed spaces such as the farm compound, the house, the hut and the garden are "The Second Hut," "Old John's Place," "Little Tembi" and "Winter in July". "The Second Hut" discloses the inability of the white settlers to adapt to the African land and its harsh living conditions, by putting emphasis on the material descriptions (firstspace) of closed spaces such as the Carruthers's "neglected house" (Lessing 44) and Mrs Carruther's room. Because of poverty and failure in cultivating the land, Major

Carruther, his wife and children live on a ragged farm: “It was the sort of the house an apprentice farmer builds as a temporary shelter till he can afford better” (Lessing 43). The use of “temporary shelter” in place of the house as well as “battered furniture,” (Lessing 43) the piano out of tune, “silver tea things” from England and “bits of paper, accounts, rubber rings, old corks” (Lessing 44) create a sense of shabbiness in the house. Their failed life is also emphasised through the depiction of Mrs Carruther’s room as a gloomy greenish “place of seedy misery” (Lessing 44). For Louw, “the attitude towards landscape, sky, sun, and light [is] an indicator of a person’s degree of connection to place” (“Landscape and the Anti-Pastoral” 42). Thus, Louw interprets Mrs Carruther’s confinement into the gloomy room of her own which is not open to the landscape “as a sign of her rejection of Africa” (“Landscape and the Anti-Pastoral” 42).

Major Carruther decides to have a man to help him and employs an Afrikaner, Van Heerden to run the farm. Van Heerden and his family are given a house, actually a “thatched hut” in “uncleared bush,” (Lessing 48) outside the borders of the house because of class distinctions. The use of “poles” and “mud” in the construction of the hut, the “stale musty smell because of the ants and beetles” as well as the “spider web,” “small flies and insects” (Lessing 48) give the sense of a storehouse rather than a proper dwelling. As Major states, “if his new assistant had been an English man, with the same upbringing, he would have found a corner in his house and a welcome as a friend” (Lessing 48). While the Major conceives the hut as a storehouse where only an Afrikaaner can stay, for Van Heerden it is better than living “in a tent in the bush” (Lessing 52) before they came here.

Although Van Heerden’s ill-treatment of the natives creates trouble for them, Major tries to find a middle ground and decides to build a second hut for Van Heerden and his big family since they live in a very small place. With the help of the natives, they start to build the second hut, which would be larger than the former. The act of building this dwelling can be interpreted as the Afrikaaner couple’s reconfiguration of the land with the help of the natives. However, it is burnt down in which one of the children dies in the fire. While the conception of the second hut, for the Major and Van Heerden, is a kind of settlement and agreement between them, for the natives it is a violation of the relations with the Major, because Van Heerden prevented them from having direct contact with the Major. The unknown fact that whether the fire

happened accidentally or set deliberately by the natives and the Major's acceptance of his failure in Africa at the end of the story culminates in their going back to England. Through the depiction of closed spaces like the house and the huts, the tense relations between the races and the settler's struggle for conformity in Africa is revealed, but such descriptions cannot go beyond the firstspace and secondspace perspectives of the African continent. This story also illustrates a white woman, Major's wife, who has nearly lost her mind, facing the wall. Her confinement in a ragged room, which her husband defines as "the cave of a sick animal" (Lessing 63) resembles the solitary and lunatic lives of Maggie in "Eldorado" and Annie in "The Antheap".

In "Old John's Place," the house as a closed space is foregrounded with its material (firstspace) description. Old John is the name of a farm which is far away from the other houses, located on the opposite side of the ridge and is temporarily owned by many people who cannot stay long, since they cannot adapt to the norms and values of the district. As the narrator Kate, states, Old John's House is "an unlucky place, with no more chance of acquiring a permanent owner than a restless dog has," (Lessing 130) despite the fact that "this part of the district had been settled for more than forty years" (Lessing 130). This shows the distant past of the house which belongs to nobody but is conceived as a social space of the district where people including the adults, the adolescents and the children, come together during parties. Viewed from Kate's perspective, the Sinclairs, the present owners of the house, cannot appropriate the house but arrange it in accordance with the social norms and traditions of the district. Old John's place is a very big house with several rooms, large places and a veranda where "ancient convention of the segregation of the sexes" (Lessing 133) can be observed at the beginning of the parties, when men and women sit in separate parts of the veranda. Then, however, they start to mingle for dance and talk. Both men and women betray their partners but do not face this reality or forbid such affairs. This is how they perceive the relations between the two genders and consider the house as a space of interaction, a socially lived space opening possibilities for the couples. As it always has been, the Sinclairs cannot adapt to the settler life not because of wild nature, but because of the lifetsyle of the white families in the district.

Unlike the other farms on the opposite cultivated slope, old John's house is on an uncultivated ridge due to lack of permanent owners. However, with the arrival of the Laceys together with their business partner Mr Hackett, the new owners of old John's house, the perception and conception of it changes. Because of the two men's passionate bond to the horses and Mrs Lacey's distinct personality and lifestyle, they become the center of attention in the district. As the narrator states "Mrs Lacey was not like the homely mothers" (Lessing 140) since her dressses, her configuration of the house and her taking care of the baby differ from the other women and mothers in the neighbourhood. As soon as she moves into the house, she changes the furniture, the floor and the walls and "[t]he place was transformed" (Lessing 142) into a personal one, which reflects Mrs Lacey's preferences. In contrast to the previous owner Mrs Sinclair, Mrs Lacey appropriates the house and makes it a space of her own, which is observed in its physical descriptions. The tradition of giving parties in old John's place rather than in other houses continues with Mrs Lacey's parties, but the way she organises the rooms and seating has an effect on the way people live their relations. For instance, she prepares the big room for the adults in which "husbands and wives were put together, yes; but in such a way that they had only to turn their heads to find other partners" (Lessing 147). There are no phases in Mrs Lacey's parties unlike those organised by Mrs Sinclair, because from the very beginning she arranges their seatings next to each other, thus, removes the boundaries between genders. This might be interpreted as her attempt to configure an alternative mode of thinking (thirdspace) about the house where men and women are confronted with each other and the dichotomies are disordered.

Mrs Lacey appears to be a non-conventional woman who has liberal thoughts about gender relations, which she discloses through her arrangement of parties, and her own flirtatious behaviours with men and her revealing dresses. Nevertheless, when Kate informs her about the gossip whether her child's father is Mr Lacey or Mr Kenneth, she alienates herself from the rest of the women, and feels the impact of society on her. The Laceys are not welcomed in the district because of the clash between the conservative old settlers and liberal new ones. As Kate discloses "[i]t's not what people do, it's how they do it. It can't be broken up" (Lessing 169) in this enclosed society which employs its own rules and has its own norms.

In “Little Tembi,” like the established relationship between the whites and the African land, Jane and Willy McCluster’s attitude towards the land is to appropriate it. Based on the colonial conception of space in Africa (secondspace), while Willy tries to cultivate the land and expand his farm business, Jane devotes her life to the education and health care of the natives, who live in very unhealthy conditions “in the dark and smoky huts,” (Lessing 106) and the rivers are full of bilharzia. Jane’s attempt to build a clinic on the farm where she can heal the wounds of people shows her determination to create a space not only for herself as a strong woman, but also for the natives in Africa. She is a dedicated and experienced nurse who also works in the city hospital voluntarily. Rather than confining herself into a closed space like the house, Jane creates an alternative one by converting an old dairy into a dispensary in the compound. This also shows the distinct conceptions of space in relation to gender, because while Jane considers the natives as “poor things” (Lessing 104) who need her attention and uses the clinic to heal them, Willie regards it as a space for earning money. Moreover, there are two gardens: one is in the farm compound but the other one belonging to the natives is near the compound. They are cultivated and used for practical reasons like growing vegetables instead of ornamental purposes. The spatial organisation of the huts and the gardens shows the segregation between the colonisers and the colonised like the wells in “The Nuisance”. Except for Jane’s configuration of a thirdspace in the clinic, the closed and open spaces in the story are conceived only within two dimensions: that of the coloniser and the colonised.

Jane is a very strong woman who takes care of her children, and the clinic on her own without neglecting either of them. Rather than confining herself into the borders of the house, she deals with the natives, particulary “little piccanins,” (Lessing 106) and thus, the natives call her “the good-hearted one” (Lessing 196). However, her close connection to Tembi, one of the native children, causes Jane and Willie to have trouble with the natives because as Burkom explains, “[r]aised to expect privileged treatment, [Tembi] cannot reconcile himself to his role in society” (“Only Connect” 58) when he is grown-up. Because of Tembi’s disturbing behaviours and the increasing number of thieves in the district, Willie “put[s] bars in all of the windows of the house” which annoys Jane and makes her feel “confined and a prisoner in her own home” (Lessing 122). Despite all her efforts to have a space of her own (the clinic) and her individual gender practices in the compound, she feels

dependent on “that invisible support a husband gives” (Lessing 124). Mrs Lacey in “Old John’s Place” and Jane in “Little Tembi” exemplify to what extent confident women can lead an independent life in Africa by creating a thirdspace for a period of time. Despite their white origin, Mrs Lacey and Jane are themselves victims of colonial and male hegemony; yet they try to exceed their limits through gender performativity.

Finally, the most independent woman is depicted in “Winter in July” which recounts the life of three friends: Julia, Tom and Kenneth. Julia is a self-sustained woman who has moved from one place to another, from one job to another and from one lover to another throughout her life. Like a nomad, she does not belong anywhere and does not let herself be connected to anyone until the day she meets the brothers, Tom and Kenneth. After a period of nomadic lifestyle, Julia wants to have a sense of belonging, and that is why she accepts the two brothers’ companionship. However, she realizes that the relation between the two men is different from what she expects: they are like husband and wife. Tom is the authority at home and Julia and Kenneth enjoy being under his control and responsibility. Julia marries Tom to have a peaceful relationship but cannot avoid “the destructive nihilism that [Julia and Kenneth] had in common” (Lessing 219). There appears a love triangle when Tom joins the army and leaves the two alone, and but their relation is a restless one without Tom. Julia feels “unsupported and unwarmed . . . She was still floating rootlessly . . . she belonged nowhere and even Africa” (Lessing 216). Paradoxically enough, such a woman with nomadic spirit tries to find consolation in a man. After Tom’s return to the farm and Kenneth’s decision to marry, Julia feels alienated from the house, loses her sense of home because “she was suffering from an unfamiliar dryness of the senses, an unlocated, unfocused ache” (Lessing 230). The idea of sharing the house with another woman forces Julia to confront her relationship with the two men, because “the way they took their women into their lives, without changing a thought or a habit to meet them” (Lessing 233) is shocking for her. She realizes that the devotion and attachment between Tom and Kenneth is stronger than their bond to her. Once the idea of marriage was something positive, giving her shelter and a feeling of belonging, but later their house has become a space of restraint for her. Her initial attempt to create an alternative space of her own where she seems to be the center turns out to be her jail with boundaries.

### 2.3. Open and Closed Space

There are two stories in this category: “A Home for the Highland Cattle” and “The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange”. The first of these stories reveals the colonial conception of space through the spatial segregation of the two races. Like so many white settler families, Marina Giles and her husband, Philip, leave England to have a house of their own, a “legendary roof” (Lessing 245) in Rhodesia. Unlike the previous stories in which the farm compounds are located at the center of the veld, this one takes place in a city made up of suburbs invading the natural environment of the land. Despite its bare veld sixty years ago, “[t]he city, seen from the air, is half-buried in trees” (Lessing 242) and the fragment of a street “has no beginning or end, for it emerges from trees, and is at once reabsorbed by them” (Lessing 242). The city is not isolated from the other parts of the African land, such as the kopje which is surrounded by “the slums, the narrow and crooked streets where the coloured people eke out their short swarming lives among decaying brick and tin” (Lessing 243). Such a place with poor conditions is juxtaposed with “the business centre” where “the imported clothes, the glass windows full of cars from America, the neon lights” (Lessing 243) can be observed. As is seen in the above physical descriptions (firstspace) of the city and the town in the African land, there appears to be a hybridity of the two cultures on the material level of space. In addition to the mingling of cultures and physical features of space, the vlei “is rapidly being invaded by buildings, so that soon there will be no open spaces left,” (Lessing 244) which shows the exploitation of the African land by the white settlers.

There is a fierce hostility between the natives and the whites, and both parties have prejudices about each other, which is reflected in the conception of space (secondspace). For instance, while the town is conceived as a space for living by the white settlers, it is conceived as a work place by the natives. Outside the borders of the town, the places where the natives live have bad conditions. The neighbourhood of the natives “smelled unpleasant and was covered by a haze of flies. . . . scattered buildings, shacks, extraordinary huts thrown together out of every conceivable substance, with wall perhaps of sacking, or of petrol boxes, roofs of beaten tin, or bits of scrap iron” (Lessing 290-91). Unlike the juxtaposition between wild nature and the tamed one to show the colonial relations in the previous stories, this one deals with

the same dichotomy by drawing attention to the lack of space in the town for the natives and the inhumane conditions of their habitats.

Not only the open space in the town but also the closed spaces like the settler houses demonstrate the secondspace perspective of gender and colonial relations. Marina and Philip could only afford to rent a small house in one of the suburbs which consists of little houses with small rooms and a garden. While Marina's first response to these houses is a dislike, Philip is "in a mood of fine optimism" because he is "prepared to make gardens flourish where deserts had been" (Lessing 245). Since he could not find an opportunity in England to achieve his ideals, he feels more enthusiastic about the new place. Nevertheless, like most of the white settler women, Marina will be alone in the house when Philip travels from one place to the other for the purpose of doing business. That is why although the house and the garden serve as spaces for cultivation and appropriation for Philip, for Marina they are places of captivity, which was built "according to the whims of the first owners," (Lessing 246) and is surrounded by other houses. Because of the nested structure of the houses in the district where the rooms, the windows and the gardens of all open to each other, there is a forced togetherness with the other white women as well as the native servants of the houses, and thus, "[i]t was a truly shocking place" (Lessing 251) for Marina.

In addition to the differences between men's and women's way of conceiving space, the secondspace perspective of the houses differs among the white settler women as well. Mrs Black, for instance, prefers to live in a shabby house whose door handle is broken and she does not mend it because "if [she] start[s] doing the place up, it means [she's] here for ever" (Lessing 252). Unlike her refusal to appropriate the house, Mrs Pond seems to accept her position as a settler woman constricted into a small house with two rooms and appropriates it by painting its walls, mending what is broken and planting lillies and roses in her garden. Although for Marina, "[t]he whole system was disgraceful," (Lessing 253) at the end of the story, her going shopping to buy a table for her new house in a new suburb, in better condition than the former one, shows her inevitable adaptation to settler life in Africa. Apart from the firstspace and secondspace perspectives of the town which reflects spatial segregation in terms of gender and race, there are no implications of an alternative way of thinking about space.

Like all the other stories in the first collection, "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" also displays how space is constructed within two dimensions – the firstspace (the perceived) and the secondspace (the conceived) – through everyday activities of both genders and practices of the dominant ideology, namely patriarchy and colonialism in this context. Above all, this story provides the ground for the discussion on to what extent gender performativity and nomadic interventions of female characters, help to configure an alternative mode of thinking about these spaces and transform them into thirdspace based on the lived (social) experience of characters. Hence, the reason why this study focuses on the detailed analysis of the relationship between space and gender in "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" is that the story presents multiple relations between genders from two groups (the British and the Afrikaan) with different parts of closed and open spaces such as the house, the veranda, the living-room, the garden, the mountains and the river.

**Part II: Appropriation of Home from a Colonial Perspective in "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange"**

Lessing's "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" in her first volume of Collected *African Stories* takes place on a farm in Rhodesia where the British settlers, Major and Mrs Gale have lived with their African servants for thirty years. Despite these long years away from their home country, they are still attached to English customs in terms of the way they appropriate their house and perform daily habits. They are portrayed as a couple who have lost their emotional ties and drifted away from each other in time.[23] While Major Gale, a former colonalist military, is dedicated to his farm work, Mrs Gale learns to love her isolation and keeps up a connection with a childhood friend Betty, who is a doctor in England, though they have changed a lot. Their routinized farm life acquires a new dimension with the arrival of a newly married Afrikaner couple, the De Wets[24] – reflected in the title – to assist Major Gale in cultivating the land. The efforts of the female characters of this story – Mrs Gale as

[23] It has been a long time since the Gales forgot to love and care for each other to the extent that they sleep in the same room but in different beds placed on opposite sides of the room. They are so accustomed to their individualized daily routines that they do not even recognize each other's feelings and thoughts.

[24] The family surname "De Wet" originated in Holland and was introduced to Africa as "an occupational name, reflecting the trade or profession practiced by the initial bearer or father", and thus it sheds light on the Afrikaner background of the De Wets in this story. Cited from http://thedewets.com.

the owner of the farm and Mrs De Wet as the newcomer – to reconstruct private space such as their home and its surrounding, as well as their relation to the natural environment can be interpreted in terms of creating alternative spatial possibilities within the framework of recent theories of Thirdspace/Third space by Edward Soja and Homi Bhabha.

The discussion on third space also requires an elaboration on the concept of hybridity, whose original meaning is related to biological cross-breeding of plants and animals. Robert J. C. Young, in *Colonial Desire* (1995) summarizes the history of this concept and explains how it has become a controversial term in postcolonial theory. At the beginning, hybridity was a contentious issue which had opposing connotations and implications. In biology, for instance, the mixture of two different species (the infertile mule is the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse) culminated in an inferior hybrid. Based on this, the idea of mixed race people (being neither white nor black), an unwanted hybridisation became "part of a colonialist discourse of racism" (Ashcroft et al. 120). Rather than putting emphasis on the negative side of the concept, Bhabha affirms the significance of hybridisation as a prominent sign of cultural productivity, which lessens the effectiveness of the ideas like originality and purity because he contends that cultures, languages and identities are continuously in interaction with one another. Young promotes Bhabha's notion of hybridisation "as 'raceless chaos' . . . . restless, uneasy, interstitial hybridity: a radical heterogeneity, discontinuity, the permanent revolution of forms," (*Colonial* 25) which has the potential for collective and individual change and transformation. Young shifts the emphasis away from its negative racial connotations to a more positive and enhancing intention with his reference to Bhabha's "raceless chaos". Apart from its discussion in botany, zoology and science, as Young puts it, "in the twentieth century it has been reactivated to describe a cultural one" (*Colonial* 6). There are several theoreticians in postcolonial studies, who have contributed to this reactivation, yet, as Ania Loomba, in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (1998) states, "it is Homi Bhabha's usage of the concept that has been the most influential and controversial within recent post-colonial studies. Bhabha goes back to Fanon to suggest that liminality and hybridity are necessary attributes of 'the' colonial condition" (176). Viewed from Bhabha's perspective of hybridisation, the cross-breeding of cultures or the absorption and integration of people, ideas or languages have taken on a positive meaning.

Bhabha considers the colonial interaction between two cultures – the coloniser and the colonised – as an enhancing acculturation leading to new formations rather than corruption of the original. As he puts it in "Signs Taken for Wonders,"

> Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal. . . . Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of dicrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. (Ashcroft et al. 42)

Bhabha is against any kind of binarisms or oppositions between the self and the Other, the center and the margin, the civilised and the uncivilised etc., which are merely the Western representations of other cultures. Instead, he argues for multiple and ongoing interaction between the cultures in terms of social, cultural, political, economic, linguistic aspects, which will bring about the development of societies. Hence, he contributes to the discussions in postcolonial theory by promoting his ideas through the concepts like hybridity, ambivalence, in-betweenness, liminality to name a few, all of which destabilise the established categories of relations, nations and identities. For Bhabha, hybridisation in colonial and post-colonial contexts paves the way not only for the enunciation of colonial power but also of the counter colonial resistance, which is possible in the "Third Space of Enunciation" (*The Location of Culture* 37). It is the space in which hybridity emerges at the point of intersection of two cultures. What happens at the moment of interaction in the third space between the two genders, races or classes in terms of enunciation, for instance, is the exchange of knowledge, sometimes in the form of conflict and tension leading to resistance, sometimes of acceptance and submission. No matter how it happens, the liminal instants of articulation and the potential hybridisation are, as Nikos Papastergiadis notes, "not confined to a cataloguing of difference. Its 'unity' is not found in the sum of its parts, but emerges from the process of opening what Homi Bhabha has called a third space within which other elements encounter and transform each other" ("Tracing Hybridity in Theory" 258). In that sense, Bhabha's hybridisation builds bridges between the two cultures by dismantling the fixed definitions of identity and providing the possibility of self-identity formation in the act of enunciation through discursive activity.

Despite Bhabha's positive approach to cultural hybridity, the term has also generated heavy criticism and controversial ideas. The basic critique of Bhabha's hybridity is grounded in its one-sided perspective, which excludes the experiences of other cultures, particularly the colonised in general. Among the critics of Bhabha, Jane M. Jacobs, Robert J. C. Young, Arif Dirlik, Amar Acheraiou, Aijaz Ahmad and Benita Parry share a common critical view of hybridisation because of Bhabha's lack of complete historical source and study of colonial history in different contexts. Jacobs, for example, criticises Bhabha because of his prevailing focus on the discussion of terms such as discourse, ambivalence, mimicry, hybridity, third space etc., from a colonial viewpoint. As Jacobs puts it, "this is because Bhabha's main concern is with the field of colonial discourses, rather than anti-colonial discourses and formations" (*Edge of Empire* 28). Young claims that his theorization of hybridity creates an apparently harmonious colonial contextualisation. However, in Young's words:

> On each occasion Bhabha seems to imply through this timeless characterization that the concept in question constitutes the condition of colonial discourse itself and would hold good for all historical periods and contexts – so it comes as something of a surprise when psychoanalysis suddenly dissappears in favour of Bakhtinian hybridization, only itself to dissappear entirely in the next article as psychoanalysis returns, but this time as paranoia. It is as if theoretical elaboration itself becomes a kind of narrative of the colonial condition. Inevitably, of course, different conceptualizations produce different emphasis – but the absence of any articulation of the relation between them remains troubling. (*Colonial Desire* 186-7)

In addition to the necessity of Bhabha's enhancing the historical and theoretical background of the concepts to have a more comprehensive study, Young also draws attention to Bhabha's generalisation of the colonial discourse and hybridisation without reference to cultural, linguistic, economic, social and ethnic differences among the colonised societies. Similarly, for Acheraiou, Bhabha neglects the presence of past colonies as well as the differences between them such as India, Egypt, Africa and so on. What is urgent is to "clarif[y] and restore [hybridity] in its multiple historical, political, economic, conceptual, and ideological manifestations," (*Questioning Hybridity* 107) and to this aim, he suggests a "diachronic" approach that "embraces the remote past and remains attentive to the immediate global present," (*Questioning Hybridity* 107) and will bring about "a more sober, realistic, and historically grounded conception of hybridity" (*Questioning Hybridity* 108). As

Acheraiou puts it, Ahmad also "blames postcolonial scholars, specifically Bhabha, for developing a theory of postcoloniality that is completely disconnected from the material colonial context and post-independence realities of the former colonies" (*Questioning Hybridity* 108). In a similar vein, Parry declares that

> while appreciative of the ground Bhabha has broken in asking new questions of old problems, I am uneasy about his disposal of the language model to explain both colonialism's pasts and contemporary 'postcolonial' situations; and what I will be proposing is that Bhabha's many fecund insights into cultural processes are paradoxically denatured by the theoretical modes which inform his work. (*Postcolonial Studies* 57)

In presenting Bhabha's concept of hybridity and its criticisms, I aim to display a broad understanding of the concept in order to discuss it in multiple different situations. What I would argue is the possibility of hybridisation in relation to the interruptions which occur in spatial and temporal dimensions of the text through the play of light, smell, mosquitos and dialogues because as Young puts it, "there is no single, or correct, concept of hybridity: . . . . Hybridity here is a key term in that whereever it emerges it suggests the impossibility of essentialism" (*Colonial Desire* 27). From this point of view, Bhabha's conception of hybridity will enable me to unveil the interventions in the flow of the Gales's life in Rhodesia, and to show how an essential stability of finiteness in terms of differences cannot be realized.

Major and Mrs Gale's veranda where the story starts frames the context to display how the concepts third space and hybridity are dealt with on various occasions. In the first scene, they are sitting on the veranda "side by side trimly in deck chairs, their sundowners on small tables at their elbows, critically watching, like connoisseurs, the pageant presented for them" (Lessing 75). The comparison of the veranda to "a box in the theatre" (Lessing 75) and the couple to spectators shows how they perceive life in Rhodesia, as if they are watching a spectacle or performance in their private compartment of a theatre. Moreover, "connoisseur," which echoes Homi Bhabha's criticism of Western connoisseurship,[25] that is their colonialist attitude towards the African culture and land, brings about a two-sided discussion of the issue. Bhabha, in an interview published in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, claims

[25] For more discussion on the differences between cultural diversity and cultural difference, see *The Location of Culture* (2004).

"Western connoiseurship is the capacity to understand and locate cultures in a universal time-frame that acknowledges their various historical and social contexts only eventually to transcend them and render them transparent. . . . This is what I mean by a *creation* of cultural diversity and a *containment* of cultural difference" (208). In this sense, he argues that the Western view fixing differences into a universalist framework of its own choosing is limiting as it creates a form of control and manipulation on the observed just like the appreciation of art objects displayed in a museum. On the other hand, he focuses on the cultural differences which cannot be framed within universal standards stereotyping them in terms of dualistic thinking. Instead of being stable, a culture's difference should rather be ambivalent and changing, and thus, is open to new interpretations. Therefore, there is a constant play between universalizing and limiting. Accordingly, what the Gales perceive out there – the bright sunset view and the crystal moon "presented for them" (Lessing 75) like a pageant – exemplifies a fixed image of Africa, and points to the idea of the Gales's distant observant position. Similar to the pageant's implication of a theatre stage, "the dusk [drawing] veils across sky and garden," (Lessing 75) seems to evoke the closing of the curtain after a performance. The garden below the veranda is full of "flowering shrubs, and creepers whose shiny leaves, like sequins, reflected light from a sky stained scarlet and purple and apple-green" (Lessing 75). In addition, the comparison of the bright leaves to sequins and the changing colour of the sky are evocative of the decor on the theatre stage. Sitting neatly ("trimly") rather than relaxed on deck chairs tacitly fosters the idea that they do not exactly fit into the African life and stay aloof from their immediate surroundings.[26] It may also suggest their well-organised and civilised traits in contrast to their sided-opinion about the Africans as savages. Not only their view of the sunset but also of their posture and distant position seem to demonstrate the Western universalist structure which incarcerates the African nature and culture into their own frame of mind.

Major and Mrs Gale's watching the sunset and the moonrise from the veranda constitute not only their materialised space but also their socially produced and empirical space which is, in Soja's terms, "directly sensible and open, within limits,

[26] Similarly, Pat Louw in her article "Landscape and the Anti-Pastoral Critique in Doris Lessing's African Stories," (2010) compares their flimsy deck-chairs to "the settler's version of a throne," (40) which also shows "the typical imperial 'prospect picture' where the colonials view their land from an elevated position" (40).

to accurate measurement and description" (*Thirdspace* 66). Soja names Lefebvre's physical space as firstspace which deals with the relations between human beings and the material world including the built-environment and nature. Thus, the description of the physical elements in the firstspace is based on the empirical determination of human beings. Hereby, the firstspace is often thought of as "real" space characterised by its physical descriptions, perceptions of the viewers and their daily life. Each of the couple establishes individual bonds with what they observe in the act of watching. While Major Gale appreciates the sunset view, Mrs Gale does not get in touch with the material reality in front of her eyes. Instead, she prefers to remember her childhood, where she finds happiness. Unlike her husband's interest in the present condition of the landscape, Mrs Gale is nostalgic[27] for her past life in England "when she had been Caroline Morgan, living near a small country town, a country squire's daughter. That was how she liked best to think of herself" (Lessing 79). Nostalgia is a complexly intertwined concept with a variety of meanings and associations related to trauma, memory, utopia, future etc., but the word derives from the Greek "nostos" or homecoming, and "algia", pain or grief (OED). What characterises Mrs Gale's authentic sense of home is paradoxically not an everyday feeling of home in Rhodesia, eventhough she has been living there for the last thirty years, but a spatial longing for her home[28] in England before she got married. As John McLeod notes, "conventional ideas of 'home' and 'belonging' depend upon clearly defined, static notions of being 'in place', firmly rooted in a community or a particular geographical location" (*Beginning Postcolonialism* 214). Unlike its conventional meaning, as Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling put it in *Home* (2006), "home is multi-scalar," (27) which encompasses a discussion of different scales such as house/dwelling, city, nation, body etc. It can act as a valuable means of positioning, location and placement by providing a sense of place in the world. Nevertheless, they base the idea of home on both material and imaginative elements. "Home is neither the dwelling nor the feeling, but the relation between the two" (22). In a similar vein, Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space* (1969), emphasises the feelings attributed to the concept of home

[27] See Davis's *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*. For a discussion of the broader implications, see Su's *Ethics and Nostalgia in the Contemporary Novel*. Boym's *The Future of Nostalgia*. and Rubinstein's *Home Matters: Longing and Belonging, Nostalgia and Mourning in Women's Fiction*.

[28] Also see George's *The Politics of Home*.

and the material condition of home as a place. Viewed from this perspecive, the disjunction between Mrs Gale's past and present, between Rhodesia and England, makes the idea of home not a fixed notion but ambivalent in time and space, and it can only be sensed through an act of the imagination. This could also be explained with reference to Rosemary Marangoly George, who analyses the dimensions of home in *The Politics of Home* and suggests that "the basic organizing principle around which the notion of the 'home' is built is a pattern of select inclusions and exclusions" (2). Home-countries, for instance, are exclusive because as George puts it, the mention of the home-country indicates that "the speaker is away from home," (2) which might relate to Mrs Gale's distant location from England as her home-country. Homes are inclusive that are grounded on a sense of sharing the same class, race, or gender. Mrs Gale seems to be in search of the location in which she feels at home in terms of inclusion yet understands that it is not about reducing the notion of home to a geographic place where her own kind live together or the representation of home as the domestic sphere. The problem with the idea of home and belonging is also observed in the settler women's houses in "A Home for the Highland Cattle". Marina Giles and Mrs Black, for instance, do not appropriate their houses because they do not want to lay claim on hovels as their homes in a small suburb. Actually, like other women, for Mrs Gale, home becomes a mental construct built from her memories that survive from the past and exist in a fractured and discontinuous relationship with the present.

Since Mrs Gale cannot adjust herself to the white settler life in Rhodesia, she creates an alternative space that would fall not between the dual categories of the real (perceived) and imagined (conceived) places. Through the constitution of space in her imagination by simply dreaming about the past, Mrs Gale tries to remain intact in life. She has not been to England for a long time and may not be able to return, which might imply her detachment, but through writing letters to Betty, Mrs Gale keeps her connection to her home country and an old friend, whose present situation she has no access to. When Mrs Gale reads the letter from Betty which is "about people she had never met and was not likely ever to meet – about the weather, about English politics," (Lessing 76) she allows her memory to take her to "half a century to her childhood" (Lessing 77). The act of writing and reading letters is merely an imagined connection to her past within the dimensions of space and time because the two friends write to

each other in "a sense of duty" (Lessing 76) rather than by heart. Mrs Gale makes use of Betty as a medium to reconnect to her personal history, and by doing so, she escapes into an imagined home. In a Braidottian sense, Mrs Gale is a nomad because of her "lines of flight" (*Nomadic* 7); she travels to England, to her childhood years at least in her imagination to overcome her loneliness in Rhodesia. As Braidotti puts it, nomadism does not necessitate "the literal act of travelling" (*Nomadic* 26). Thus, Mrs Gale's being in constant mental movement from Rhodesia to England, from the present to the past indicates her potential for nomadic becoming. Like a nomad, Mrs Gale "has no passport or has too many of them" (*Nomadic* 64). Unlike restless and rootless Julia, in "Winter in July," who has travelled from one place to another throughout her life, it is the distance between the two worlds for Mrs Gale that constitutes her liminal position as a nomadic figure belonging nowhere, which also contributes to her construction of a thirdspace.[29] She does not restrict herself to the dualistic understanding of space defined by the senses (what she perceives on the veranda, for instance) and the dominant social structures (how she is supposed to stay within the limits of the house not only because of women's spatial segregation by patriarchy but also of the colonialist view of the African nature as savage and uncivilised). Rather, she creates a thirdspace in her imagination based on her memories, which seem to replace her experiences on the veranda and assuage her longing for the homeland. Her mental recreation of the homeland might show that places are not only fixed geographical locations but lived spaces.

Another reason why the veranda reflects characteristics of a thirdspace is – whether it refers to Soja's spatial dimension or Bhabha's dialogical space – because it is imbued with new meanings as a site of resistance, offering possibilities to challenge the repressive views that socially and spatially entrap women at home. It is the indeterminate in-between space on the veranda where the positions of gender represented by the two women and their husbands are blurred and the interactive dialogue among them (except Major Gale) disrupts the hegemonic patriarchal and

[29] This thirdspace perspective shifts the established conceptualisation of space based on binary oppositions: mental/material, imagined/real etc., to a conceptual triad consisting of three interdependent levels defined by the senses, the dominant social structures and the individual experience, none of which is separable from the others. For broad-ranging studies of the conceptualisation of space in social, cultural and political contexts, see Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991), Soja's *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996), de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984).

colonial ideologies. As Bhabha puts it in his essay titled "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences," "it is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew" (157). Building upon his emphasis on the performatively produced meaning of culture, I would argue that the contradictive dialogue between the women and Mr De Wet can be interpreted as the representation of gendered differences and the interruptions at the time of speaking can be considered as intervention where essentially based identities are problematised. The conversation between the two men about farming on the veranda is interrupted by Mrs Gale when she questions how a newly married young woman passes time alone on the farm "with not enough to do" (Lessing 95). To Mr De Wet's suggestion of having a baby as a solution for his wife's loneliness, Mrs Gale claims that "there's more to women than having children" (Lessing 96). She also reveals the young woman's visits to the river in the mornings and warns him about the possible dangers like contracting a disease (bilharzia) and being attacked by wild animals. By bringing such issues into question, Mrs Gale criticises male indifference, which she also has been suffering for so long. Like Mrs Gale and Mrs De Wet, Maggie in "Eldorado" and Annie in "The Antheap" are solitary figures who are obliged to take the responsibility of the children and are left alone in the house by their husbands. Taking courage from Mrs Gale, the young women questions her husband's instructions to go home by saying "Is that an order?" (Lessing 97). However, the women's attempt to show their reaction to their husbands, Mr De Wet's lack of understanding about Mrs Gale, his "brutal" (Lessing 96) responses and even worse Major Gale's not being "aware of any interruption" (Lessing 95) might suggest that like cultures, gender roles and gender identities can be problematised through confrontation in the third space of enunciation. As can be seen, the veranda is characterised by the two women's resistance against the dominant social structure that segregates them not only from male business but also disregards and ignores them as men's equivalent. The women's, particularly Mrs Gale's intrusions upon the seemingly accepted gender values lead to conflict between the genders. The dialectic between them works with opposition but ends with the resolution of this conflict. Their confrontation – though without understanding each other – unsettles the binary structures of patriarchal

representation of gender because it generates a multiplication of difference than the containment of it. They reach a wider understanding of gender differences although they still disagree. Such interruptive arguments blur the boundaries between genders and the dissolution of the codes of difference established by the dominant ideologies.

Unlike this clash between genders, the veranda serves as a place of intimacy for women when Mrs De Wet tries to seek solace from Mrs Gale "weeping, weeping, her small curly head burried in Mrs Gale's stomach" (Lessing 91). Their shared loneliness and boredom on the farm is what brings them together, and the veranda serves as the medium of this intimacy. Such interaction brings about new meanings for them, embracing each other's differences based on nationality, class, age and personality rather than rejecting them.[30] Prior to this incident, the veranda was merely a place constitutive of uneasy moments because of their inability to communicate and forced situation to become friends. With respect to their distinct social and cultural values, they have nothing in common to talk about and share. While Mrs Gale considers Mrs De Wet's mind as "a dark continent, which she had no inclination to explore," (Lessing 90) Mrs De Wet regards Mrs Gale as "nuts" (Lessing 90) because she sends an invitation note to the house which is only five minutes away. The metaphorical identification of Mrs De Wet's mind as the dark continent because of her Afrikaner origin, in fact, evokes its association with the savage and uncivilised Africa in need of light – civilisation – brought by the enlightened and civilised English scientists, missionaries and explorers. The term was first used by Henry M. Stanley who wrote about his journeys to Africa and collected them in two books, titled *Darkest Africa* and *Through the Dark Continent* in 1878. From then on, Africa has been depicted as the dark continent and as the Other of the Western civilisation to be tamed from the imperialist viewpoint. Although there are multiple arguments about the evolvement and reasons of such labelling for Africa in recent theories, in Roland

[30] Mrs Gale is a middle-aged English lady with four grown-up children, who has also lost intimate connections and sexual relationship with her husband. She is "as thin and dry as a stalk of maize in September," (Lessing 78) which might suggest her aging and tiredness. Mrs De Wet, on the other hand, is an Afrikaan, coming from a family of thirteen. She is a newly-wedded, "half-grown girl" (Lessing 85) who might be eighteen "with delicate brown legs and arms, a brush of dancing black curls, and large excited black eyes," (Lessing 85) which is an implication for the freshness of youth. Her husband's desire to go home early to "catch it hot" (Lessing 89) is an evidence for being sexually active. Unlike Mrs Gale who is formal in her manner, clothings and speech, Mrs De Wet, in her shabby clothes, acts "with an extraordinary mixture of effrontery and shyness" (Lessing 85).

Barthes's terms, the dark continent functions as a myth which universalises and naturalises the otherness of the country. This is what Barthes names, "*depoliticized speech*" (*Mythologies* 142). As he puts it, "Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact" (*Mythologies* 143). In this sense, the metaphor or myth of the dark continent used for Africa becomes a naturally accepted fact which is shaped by the political, economic, cultural and social impositions of the West.

In addition to the phrase "dark continent" which has strong colonial implications, Mrs Gale's mention of Afrikaners as having "a tribe of children" never less than twelve "running wild over the beautiful garden and teasing her goldfish" (Lessing 81) also suggests her prejudiced feelings and ideas. The use of the word "tribe" rather than family or community and its association with uncivilised people can be read as the racial attitude of the British towards the Afrikaners (British-Dutch racism). In Mrs Gale's imagination, they are depicted as a tribe interrupting her peace and tamed artificial garden, but later she warns herself about not "jump[ing] to conclusions" and not being "unfair" (Lessing 81). Mrs Gale is so habituated to her solitary life that she has concerns about sharing it with another woman like Julia in "Winter in July". At one moment, she judges Mrs De Wet to be uncivilised, at another, she tends to "make atonement for her short fit of pettiness" (Lessing 81). Like her liminal sense of home, Mrs Gale's imagination is filled with ambivalency, going back and forward between two ideas about the new woman.

Although the veranda evokes the idea of a thirdspace in Soja's terms becoming a place of imagination, resistance and intimacy, in Homi Bhabha's terms, hybridity of cultures in the third space of enunciation cannot be achieved because negotiation between cultures in this place cannot be realized. Before moving onto the analysis of an instance in the text, it is necessary to elaborate on the concept of third space. Although third space, among Bhabha's other concepts, is the least elaborated one, it is introduced as the "precondition for the articulation of cultural meaning" (*The Location* 38). Even, Bhabha regards third space as the same as hybridity, which he states in an interview, saying "hybridity is the Third Space which enables other positions to emerge" (*The Location* 211). What he means refers to the need for a

spatial dimension or an in-between space where hybrid formations can take place. Thus, the two concepts seem to be the equivalent of or interdependent to each other. Bhabha's third space may not have an inherently spatial meaning like that of Soja's thirdspace, yet in the preface of the book *Communicating in the Third Space* (2009), he states that "[i]t is a place and a time that exists in-between the violent and the violated, the accused and the accuser, allegation and admission" (x). Viewed from Bhabha's perspective, third space seems to be an undefinable or unrepresentable one since it is a space of confrontation, articulation, contestation where the relations between two cultures are extended and hence, become more complicated. When the native steps onto the veranda with a sack of letters and raw meat, for instance, the veranda may be read as a location of differences where the English and the native confront each other, yet without any sense of communication. Since they do not interact mutually, there is no possibility for a hybrid formation between the cultures. Nevertheless, in terms of interruption on the concentration of the Gales's reading letters, the veranda might be considered as a third space. The fact that letters are marked or stained by the colour of blood because of the raw meat in the same sack helps to understand how the Gales's so-called preserved and bordered life on the homestead is unguarded against the potential interruptions from the African environment and its people. Since the letters are a means of connection to outside, perhaps to England, to family, to friends, to business and public life, this communication is interrupted immediately, loses its unique experience due to the blood from the meat, which is suggestive of a recently hunted animal and wild life in Africa. In the description of the native coming through "a bush filled with unnameable phantoms, ghosts of ancestors, wraiths of tree and beast" (Lessing 75) to bring letters, there is a reference to the native's cultural context and connection to "dark continents" (Lessing 90). Like the previous discussion, the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised as well as the master and the slave is evident in the simile used for the native "put[ting] on a pantomime of fear . . . like an ape, to amuse his master," (Lessing 75) which might be connected to staging in a theatre as well.

In addition to the veranda, Major and Mrs Gale's living room is likewise an important place to show how the first, second and third spaces are constructed. The description of the living room exemplifies material and social production of firstspace:

> It was more than the ordinary farm living-room. There were koodoo horns branching out over the fireplace, and a bundle of knobkerries hanging on a nail, but on the floor were fine rugs, and the furniture was two hundred years old. The table was a pool of softly-reflected lights; it was polished by Mrs Gale herself every day before she set on it an earthenware crock filled with thorny red flowers. Africa and the English eighteenth century mingled in this room and were at peace. (Lessing 76)

On the surface, the combination of African and English objects and furniture in this room stands for the Gales's physical appropriation of space. The antelope horns and knobkerries suggestive of Africa seem to represent the hunter and prey relationship, which can be associated with masculinity. The fine rugs and old English furniture, on the other hand, reveal an attachment to home country, to create, in Bachelard's terms "a nest for dreaming, a shelter for imagining" (viii). The second sentence in the quotation that refers to furniture from both cultures is combined with the conjunction "but" to underline the contrast between the African objects of wild nature and the English furniture of "fine" quality. The terminology used to describe these objects in both languages – Afrikaans and English – might suggest another colonial combination between the two cultures. Moreover, the two hundred-year old English furniture could evoke the historical memory of colonialism. Nevertheless, Mrs Gale appropriates the place setting on the table "an earthenware crock filled with thorny red flowers," (Lessing 76) which are a part of the African wild nature. In relation to the idea of home mentioned earlier, the living room, then, not only reflects her attempt to convert the house into a home but also a contrasting combination of the two cultures, which can be explained with Bhabha's notion of hybridity. Thus, the living room represents the material coexistence of culturally specific things but this is a conflictive one beyond a simple mingling or merging. The split between the house and the outside as well as between the old English furniture and African objects represents a form of hybridisation at least on the material level in the living room. In a similar way, through the descriptions of the city and the town in the African land, there appears to be a hybridity on the material level of space in "A Home for the Highland Cattle".

Mrs Gale's appropriation of the living room with old English furniture as well as her outdated physical appearance – dressed "in a shapeless, old-fashioned blue silk dress, with a gold locket" (Lessing 86) depicted by the De Wets in their first meeting – can be explained with reference to Susan Stanford Friedman's explanation of the

settler life in *Mappings: Feminism and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter*. As she puts it, such mannerism and style "tend to be transferred or preserved almost as historical artefacts in their consciousness, so that sometimes the behaviours in the settler society have become rather out-of-date versions of what is happening in the original homeland" (62).

The material constitution of the living-room shifts to an inquiry into how space is socially produced. Apart from such appropriation of the room, for instance, Major Gale and his wife's routine of reading letters is the main aspect of the social and lived experience. The letters for Mrs Gale are from her oldest friend Betty and those for Major Gale are about business. Similar to their spatial practices on the veranda, while Mrs Gale remembers her childhood in England and is disconnected from the farm life in Africa, Major Gale engages in farming. As mentioned at the outset, hybridity is not a fixed concept based on neatly defined characteristics. It is not a simple mingling of two cultures as well but can be a series of interruptions where one "reality" intrudes on another. Thus, at the moment of reading letters, the Gales become involved in different realities – while Major Gale stays in the present, Mrs Gale establishes a contact with the past – without any interaction between them. The monotonous atmosphere is foregrounded through the mosquitoes[31] dropping "one by one, plop, plop, plop to the table among the letters," (Lessing 76) and their concentration on reading is broken by "a continuous soft hissing noise" (Lessing 76). Hence, their routinised life as is seen in the act of reading, watching the sunset and eating dinner is constantly interrupted by flies, which are symbols of disturbing African nature. On the one hand, the repetition of such imagery throughout the story may perhaps demonstrate the dull and unchanging life of the Gales. On the other, it could also be an implication for dangerous and hostile African wilderness, which Mrs Gale fears. Even in the only private space created in her imagination, Mrs Gale cannot escape from the present reality disrupting her emotional bond with the past. This interruption creates a kind of hybridity in the sense that she is left in a neither/nor and either/or situation. Although she prefers to connect to the homeland in her imagination, she neither detaches herself from the present reality nor engages in the past, which results in her going in between the two worlds.

[31] "Certain kinds of mosquito are the agents by which the germs of malaria are introduced into the human body" (OED 1 a).

The hybridity of different cultures obvious in the description of the living room could be linked to the incident when Mrs Gale immediately changes "the name of the farm from Kloof[32] Nek[33] to Kloof Grange,[34] making a link with home" (Lessing 80). This act of replacing "Nek" with "Grange" shows her effort to feature an English characteristic of home to the place. Hence, "Kloof Grange" represents a mingling of the African and British cultures with the former word in Afrikaans while the latter in English. A contrast between the former and the latter conditions of the house underlines the shift in the material construction of the farm. It was owned by two South African brothers and "separated by a stretch of untouched bush with not so much as a fence or a road between them" (Lessing 79). As natives of the land, they did not put a border between the house and the wild nature, and lived "in this state of guarded independence" (Lessing 79). However, because of a sense of insecurity caused by the wild surrounding, the Gales divide the African veld from the house with a fence, a boundary that separates their place from the natural environment which will be discussed in the analysis of garden, too. The characteristics of Kloof Grange (fenced and protected) respond not only to local environmental conditions such as the dangerous empty veld and the potential wild animals but also to cultural traditions and the social organisation of the Gales.

Unlike the Gales's own place, the location of the other house, like Van Heerden's hut in "The Second Hut," represents the position of Afrikaners outside the borders of the homestead, situated as the place of the inferior, the place of the assistant, whatever it is named. The other house below the valley which is allocated for the De Wets is not a home for the Gales as it is "denuded of furniture and used as a storage space. It was a square, bare box of a place, stuck in the middle of the bare veld, and its shut windows flashed back light to the sun" (Lessing 80). The repetition of the word "bare" to modify the house as well as the veld, and the closed windows imply desolation and a sense of lifelessness. Before the arrival of the De Wets, Mrs Gale decides to arrange the house for them. When she dares to go there at night under the moonlight, "it looked dead, a dead thing with staring eyes, with those blank

[32] Kloof is "a deeply narrow valley; a ravine or gorge between mountains" in South Africa (OED).
[33] Nek is an African origin word meaning "a neck or saddle between two hills" (OED).
[34] Grange is "a country house with farm buildings attached, usually the residence of a gentleman-farmer" (OED 2 a).

windows gleaming pallidly back at the moon" (Lessing 81). Repeating the word "dead" and the blank windows in this quotation further suggest desertion, even though the house is paradoxically personified with eyes looking at the moon, like its previous description during daylight. In addition to its outside appearance, the inside full of "sacks of grain," "loose mealies," "mice" and "cockroaches" (Lessing 81) add to the meaning of a dead house devoid of order and loveliness. Soon, however, Mrs Gale turns it into a house of her own appropriation "furnished with things taken from her own home," (Lessing 82) and in which beds are placed on opposite sides of the room, like the ones in her own place. She thinks that the arrangement of the house would be good "for a woman who might be unused to living in loneliness" (Lessing 81). This is how she conceives the house as a place lacking love, care and intimate relations. Mrs Gale's own appropriation of the house could also be interpreted as an instance of colonial desire for a reformed house for the employees whose structure is intrinsically inferior (located in the empty veld) and, consequently, needs to be appropriated and improved through the taste and interest of the coloniser.

Major and Mrs Gale's decision to allocate the other house for the De Wets also displays the relationship between power and spatial division. As Soja notes,

> [t]he multisidedness of power and its relation to a cultural politics of difference and identity is often simplified into hegemonic and counter-hegemonic categories. Hegemonic power, wielded by those in positions of authority, does not merely manipulate naively given differences between individuals and social groups, it actively *produces and reproduces difference* as a key strategy to create and maintain modes of social and spatial division that are advantageous to its continued empowerment and authority. . . hegemonic power universalizes and *contains* difference in real and imagined spaces and places. (*Thirdspace* 87)

Rather than creating an alternative mode of thinking about space that restructures the opposites in new ways, Major and Mrs Gale impose the power of the British over the Afrikaner couple through social differentiation and spatial division of the houses in the real and imagined spaces of the land. This shows how their colonial authority is constituted in two ways: on the one hand, the evidence of their authority comes from within itself, namely their employer position. On the other hand, the location of homestead away from the other house, which is also fenced and protected, can reveal their superiority. Through the establishment of a social and spatial difference between the two cultures, the Gales seem to prove their colonial authority. Accordingly, their

conception of the other house might be considered as a space where issues of hegemony are addressed. As Soja puts it, the repressed people "have two inherent choices: either accept their imposed differentiation and division, making the best of it; or mobilize to resist, drawing upon their putative positioning, their assigned 'otherness', to struggle against the power-filled imposition" (*Thirdspace* 87). The De Wets appear to accept their otherness due to employer-employee and British-Afrikaner relationship, by staying in the old house as Major Gale's assistant, yet they show their reaction to Mrs Gale's arrangement of the house by changing its decoration. After their settlement into the old house, Mrs Gale visits them and notices "the front room was littered with luggage, paper, pots and pans. All the exquisite order she had created was destroyed. . . . [and] the two beds had already been pushed together" (Lessing 87). This presumably shows the grid the British impose on the Afrikaner and the spatial and cultural response of the De Wets to the practices of power. The mixture of disparate appropriation of the house can be read as the articulation of cultural differences and reaction against the exercise of power, and allows the De Wets to construct their own vision of the house. Also, the order Mrs Gale sets and the mess the De Wets make represent how the boundaries between organisation and chaos changes in line with cultural backgrounds – the British and the Afrikaner in this context – as well as might be interpreted as another instance of hybridity where personal preferences and cultural habits clash.

Apart from the De Wets's subtle changes to Mrs Gale's construction of space, the younger woman questions assigned gender roles as a wife, using the same house as a medium of reaction. Butler's notion of "gender performativity" in *Gender Trouble* (1999) is helpful in understanding how Mrs De Wet shows her reaction against her husband's indifference as well as the male view of women as wives and mothers. Butler argues that gender identity is the result of a process in which the subject repeatedly performs gender acts under the influence of discursive enforcement but it is also a practiced and changed concept in line with personal preferences. The fact that Mr De Wet marries his wife because he wants her to take care of the domestic affairs and have children reveal his view of the roles attributed to the woman. However, through individual gender performance, Mrs De Wet attempts to create a thirdspace within the boundaries of the assigned real-and-imagined space of the house. After a visit to the Gales's house and homecoming one night, Mrs De Wet

hides under the bed in order to take her husband's attraction. She creates, in Soja's terms, "an alternative mode of understanding space as . . . . a location from which to see and to be seen, to give voice and assert radical subjectivity. . . ." (*Thirdspace* 104). Watching her husband and the "silly" natives "running about like ants,[35] looking for [her]" (Lessing 101) in the empty and dangerous veld all night from the place where she hides can be a real challenge to her husband's lack of interest in her, and by extension, seems to be a political act. As bell hooks puts it in "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness," "It was this marginality . . . as a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives" (149). In relation to this, Mrs De Wet is able to problematise gender relations by reconstructing her identity as a venerable Afrikaner woman and reconstituting her house as a site of resistance. Through individual performances, she shows who she wants to be, a respected woman, and by doing so, affirms and sustains her subjectivity.

Since there is an intense interaction between the women and their physical environment, particularly their relation to different parts of the landscape – artificial and natural – may indicate various aspects of human perception, thought and lived experience. In order to understand these relations, it is necessary to discuss briefly the development of the concept of landscape. After centuries of discussions, ranging from being a linear, measurable and geographical space to having an aesthetic value, in the twentieth century, the concept of landscape has been revitalised by foregrounding the subjective inferences of the landscape. As Denis Cosgrove puts it, it is time "for the incorporation of individual, imaginative and creative human experience into studies of the geographical environment" ("Prospect" 45). Viewed from this perspective, landscape is considered no longer as a static entity to be observed, looked at, represented or described but as a transformed and reconstituted one through human actions, which also evokes Lefebvre's groundbreaking conceptualisation of space as a socially produced product of human relations. In a similar vein, Cosgrove also

[35] The word "ant" comes from Old English aemette, akin to "emmet". "The ant is known for its wisdom, prudence, or foresight". Cited from Ferber's *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*. In the story, however, Mrs De Wet's laughing and depiction of her husband and the natives as "silly" and "stupid, running like ants" might show her humorous attitude toward a group of people rushing around and looking for her rather than emphasizing their intelligence or insight.

claims that "landscape is a *social* product" (*Social Formation* 14). The concept designates broader circumstances of human involvement through experience of the particular landscape, attribution of meanings, interpretation of symbols, practice of everday activities and workings of ideology. From such a perspective, as Christopher Tilley notes, landscapes might be defined "as perceived and embodied set of relationships between places, a structure of human feeling, emotion, dwelling, movement and practical activity within a geographical region which may or may not possess precise topographic boundaries or limits" (*The Materiality* 25). Landscapes disclose not only the human actions and activities based on perception, conception and experience of space but also the attributed meanings, symbols and cultural images that form a way of understanding the relations between humans and space. With respect to Lefebvre's spatial trialectics, the interpretation of landscapes operates on various levels: a particular part of landscape can gain meaning first, through personal interaction based on sensual experiences and practice of everyday activities, second, through the workings of knowledge and power in structures of domination which articulates, controls and manipulates the individual and collective experiences, and finally, through the direct and lived experience of the socially, culturally and imaginatively produced space. Among these different levels of interpretations, the latter one which puts the emphasis on the personal and individual experience of the landscape implicates its complexity as well as plurality. In Stephen Daniel's words: "we should beware of attempts to define landscape, to resolve its contradictions; rather we should abide in its duplicity" ("Marxism" 218). Although the word "duplicity" appears to imply a negative connotation meaning deception, this perspective disentangles the concept of landscape from its geographical, social and cultural boundedness and provides ground for more interpretations, which might reveal the personal and alternative modes of experiencing the relations with different parts of the landscape.

Following the discussion on how women try to create alternative (thirdspace) domestic sphere, different parts of the landscape such as Mrs Gale's garden should be taken into consideration. Although it is difficult to generalise about the way that the garden represents meaning, I will argue that it has multiple and changing meanings based on the perception, conception and lived experience of the characters, especially of Mrs Gale. It provides an essential insight into not only the socially constructed

gender relations and cultural differences but also the possibility of its reconstitution from a thirdspace perspective paving the way for new meanings. What is perceived and conceived about the garden in the text, for instance, is an artificial and tamed part of nature, an ordered entity with everything arranged spatially, a display of the semi-public domestic sphere where the gender relations are observed. For Major Gale, it functions as a space of taking walks in order to discuss business with his assistant. Based on colonial ideology, he presumably considers the garden, like the other parts of the landscape, as a space to be cultivated and expanded. With its ostentatious nature and architectural elements, the garden might also be an evidence for social status, wealth and power to be shown. Yet, paradoxically, Mrs Gale attributes deeper meanings to the garden, and in fact, creates an alternative space within the apparent boundaries.

The creation of an English garden is a way of dealing with the life in Rhodesia, which Mrs Gale equates with physically and mentally being in exile. Similar to the decoration of the house, her English background is also seen in her garden. The attempt to create as much of the home country environment as possible is nowhere more evident than in her desire to plant and embellish the garden with English flowers and elements. She tries to overcome her loneliness by creating a two-acre garden "over years of toil," (Lessing 80) which evokes her struggle for the constitution of a space of her own. "[T]he rose garden," (Lessing 83) "her vivid English lawns, her water-garden with the goldfish and water lillies" (Lessing 80) and the fountains are all natural and architectural elements used to epitomise her life in England. Since the African climate is not appropriate for the English plants to grow, the Gales spend a lot of money to water them throughout the year, which is "an extravagance" (Lessing 83). The presence of water is not related to a practical or functional purpose like irrigation but to an aesthetic and ornamental one. As Mark Bhatti notes, "gardens are artefactual and therefore creations of human creativity that mould nature according to individual frames of reference" ("The Meaning of Gardens" 184). Indeed, a considerable amount of time, effort and money is spent by the Gales to create the garden which becomes an important part of their social identity and colonial superiority. However, such a creation also seems to be an illusion attained by transferring recognizable design patterns. Despite its familiarity, there are certain differences in terms of plants and flowers, which adds a distinctive cultural meaning

to the garden. Mrs Gale's garden is not only characterised by the English features but also interwined with "her flowering African shrubs" (Lessing 80) that grow naturally under the walls of the garden. These walls are constructed to act as a point of interaction between the dry and harsh conditions of the veld and the green, shaded and comfortable environment of the garden. No matter how hard she tries to separate her house from the veld, the natural flora of the African environment penetrates into the so-called bordered garden. The description of the African shrubs and the English lawns – with adjectives like "flowering" and "vivid" – actually might show the forced juxtaposition or gathering of the plants and underline the inevitable merging of the two cultures as a kind of interruption which breaks the continuity of the garden's Englishness.

The garden might offer possibilities for individuals to develop sensual, conceptual and personally lived experiences as well as allow the individual to connect to the natural world. In the case of Mrs Gale, it serves as a border that distinguishes the house from "the austere wind-bitten high veld" (Lessing 83) surrounding the farm, and by extension, becomes a shelter where she retreats from the pervasive wilderness of the empty veld and has her most immediate and sustained contact with nature. The garden is significant because it is here that she observes the landscape such as the hills, the mountains, the valley and the river from a distance. As Tilley puts it, monuments and places are important because they "afford a particular sensory perspective in relation to its surroundings" (*The Materiality* 38). Mrs Gale's garden seems to be her monument that is of cultural and personal importance and interest providing a view particularly towards the mountains and the hills, which she possesses and values so much.

In addition to the perceptual and conceptual understanding of the garden, what is lived and experienced involves personal and individual contact with nature. Thus, it discloses enlivening experiences of individuals including confrontations, discoveries and transformations, and becomes more than a physical space where everyday activities take place. That enhancing interaction with the garden is actualised when Mrs Gale takes a step further and goes out alone for the first time one evening to prepare the old house for the De Wets, and even though she has an unnamed fear outside the garden she walks without a lamp light. That night "[t]he garden was filled with glamour, and she let herself succumb to it" (Lessing 79). Feeling enchanted by

the beauty of the flowers under moonlight, the garden seems to take on a new meaning other than its practical usage for daily activities, and becomes a place for discovering the unknown for Mrs Gale. Since she is not used to going outside the garden at night and feels some kind of uneasiness and anxiety, she stops "[a]t the gate under the hanging white trumpets of the moonflowers . . . looking over the space of the empty veld between her and the other house" (Lessing 80). The gate functions as a threshold where she hesitates to go beyond at least for a moment. By means of the moonflowers that blossom at night, she manages to step forward through the gate "shutting it behind her with a sharp click," (Lessing 80) which shows her determination to challenge her confined life and confront her fears. She goes beyond the boundaries[36] one by one passing through the garden, the gate and the empty veld on her way to the other house. By building on a secondspace perspective which considers the garden as a part of the private/domestic space, Mrs Gale restructures it as an alternative space where she disorders the dichotomy between the inside and the outside, and transforms the established conceptualisations of the garden from a restrictive place with its boundaries to an illusionary one where she escapes to. From then on, she disregards her husband's warnings – "You can't go running over the veld at this time of night" (Lessing 98) – saying she will act as she desires. Hence, she draws upon the material and mental spaces of the dual categories but goes beyond them, and by extension, like a nomad "blur[s] the boundaries without burning bridges" (*Nomadic* 26). Mrs Gale's lived experience[37] provides a confrontation not only with her fear of being outside at night but also a discovery of deceiving herself with her friend Betty. "The thought of

[36] Alice Ridout and Susan Watkins analyse in *Doris Lessing: Border Crossings* (2009) the writer's "border crossings by mapping her shifts across all kinds of borders – geographical, ideological and generic" (3). Among the writers of the book, I share Pat Louw's interest in the effect of landscape and place on the construction of identity in Doris Lessing's African stories. Louw, in her article "Inside and Outside Colonial Spaces: Border Crossings in Doris Lessing's *African Stories*" analyses both gender and genre in relation to the colonial division of space between domestic indoors as feminine and outdoor veld coded as masculine, and emphasises the fluidity of 'cultural identity' in terms of border crossings. In addition to the women's moving in and out of the enclosed spaces, which is a two-dimensional movement, I will contribute to the analysis of the relationship between female characters and their surroundings by focusing on how they constitute a thirdspace perspective based on their lived experiences.

[37] The garden, appropriated by Mrs Gale, is constituted out of meanings attributed to it from a personal viewpoint. By doing so, she intervenes in the construction of meaning of the garden under the influence of colonial and male hegemony and reconfigures it as a space of her own based on lived experience.

Betty . . . sustained her through the frightening silences" (Lessing 82) on the road to the other house and worked "in imagination at least, as a counter-weight to her loneliness" (Lessing 82). However, the intermingling odour of decay in the veld and of the heavy perfume of the moonflowers "at the gate," (Lessing 82) force Mrs Gale to realize that she has, in fact, nothing to share with Betty, as she has not seen her for years; therefore, she stops consoling herself with her friend from then on and describes this experience as "a victory over herself" (Lessing 83).

The meaning of the garden varies in accordance with the personal relations as well as social and cultural backgrounds of the individuals. As opposed to Mrs Gale's interest in the garden and her intimate connection with it, for Mrs De Wet, it is just a physical space used for practical reasons. In response to Mrs Gale's showing off her garden, Mrs De Wet says, "My mother was always too busy having kids to have time for gardens" (Lessing 93) and shows her indifference to cultivating a garden. For her, Mrs Gale's garden is just a place which "must cost a packet to keep up" (Lessing 93). This suggests class and economic differences as well as employer/employee relations. As the daughter of a crowded Afrikaan tribe and the wife of an assistant, Mrs De Wet reflects the social and cultural differences between the two women emerging in their attitudes to the garden. The garden, then, becomes a source of differences and represents the dissimilarities between, for example, men versus women (Major and Mrs Gale) and Afrikaan woman versus British woman. The meanings that are attached to the garden, in line with the perceptual, conceptual and lived experiences of the individuals are, therefore, multidimensional.

Mrs Gale's garden, which was once a place of comfort and peace, is indeed emptied of such feelings when Mrs De Wet disappears in order to attract attention of her husband: "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 all the fault of the country!" (Lessing 100). Following this incident Mrs Gale immediately destroys her own creation, "tearing blossoms and foliage to pieces in trembling fingers," (Lessing 100) which might show her frustration at the fragility of her constructed alternative life in the garden. Her garden functions not only as a space to escape but also as an imaginary space where she constructs her identity and a sense of home. Thus, the realization of the potential dangers in the veld compels Mrs Gale to question the configuration of the garden

"stuck" in Africa. Being in the garden was a way of ensuring a solitary life of contentment or a shelter for her; however, on this occasion, it seems not to act as a thirdspace of possibilities which has catalysed Mrs Gale's life between the binaries like the inside and outside, the civilised and the primitive, the cultivated and the wilderness etc. After Mrs De Wet's showing up from where she hides, eventually, the garden seems to be transformed to its earlier peaceful atmosphere – "musical with birds" (Lessing 103) – however, nothing remains the same for Mrs Gale. She awakens from her so-called peaceful and isolated life confined to the limits of the house and the garden. Her construction of a sense of home in Kloof Grange, her identity as Major Gale's wife and as the mother of four children and her connection to an old friend Betty are all destroyed with the realisation of her illusionary experience of the constructed world of her own.

Despite Mrs Gales's interest in cultivating a garden, and Mrs De Wet's indifference to human-made nature, both women attach a bonding with the natural environment and create alternative understandings of such space. Generally speaking, names are given to certain geographical places such as the mountains, rivers, valleys etc. to imbue them with a local meaning and significance but in this story the names of places are not specified so they are more open to have symbolic meanings and personal interpretations. Moreover, the location of the mountains and the river somewhere in Africa might evoke the idea of everywhere and nowhere for Mrs Gale and reveal her sense of in-betweenness.

There is an interaction between the mountains and Mrs Gale's perception through a frame of meanings which are shaped by her imagination. She perceives the mountains from the bench in her garden with awe and transforms them into symbols of power and strength to reflect her challenge: "Sitting here, buffeted by winds, scorched by the sun or shivering with cold, she could challenge anything. They were her mountains: they were what she was; they had made her, had crystallized her loneliness into a strength, had sustained her and fed her" (Lessing 84). Through her claim to the mountains by using the possessive pronoun "my" and her appropriative gaze, she creates an illusion of possessing the spatiality of the mountains in her mind which enables her to forget the perception of the physical reality and to attribute metaphorical meanings of power supporting her life.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the poetic plural form of the word means "a region remote from civilization" (OED I. 1. d) that may suggest the idea of being in an uncivilised place, and paradoxically enough Mrs Gale consolidates her exile position as a white settler's wife in Africa with the mountains' stability in the distance. The winds, the sun and the cold refer to the natural cycle of life and together with the use of the words "buffet," "scorch" and "shiver," they recall her hard times in the country. It is the mountains, nevertheless, that materialise her loneliness into a symbol of power. With their enormity and vastness, they stimulate in her a sense of resistance and freedom. While watching how their beauty and grandeur changes under the play of light, she moves away from her isolation, just like the veranda scene where she is described as a spectator: "Modulating light created them anew for her as she looked, thrusting one peak forward and withdrawing another, moving them back so that they were hazed on a smoky horizon, crouched in sullen retreat; or raising them so that they towered into a brilliant cleansed sky" (Lessing 84). This suggests that the mountains (as she imagines them) keep shifting in their metaphorical stability, depending on the light which conditions her gaze. The phrase "crouched in sullen retreat," according to Louw, is a suggestion for "the anti-pastoral settler fear of black uprisings as a result of their colonial dominance," ("Landscape" 41) but I find this interpretation unrelated to the context of the story, which has no implications of uprisings by the Africans. On the other hand, however, the reason why watching these peaks and retreats relieves her may be associated with the dynamics of her life with ups and downs, struggles and confrontations. Thus, through her claim to the mountains, "my mountains," (Lessing 93) she actually territorialises them as her own to eliminate the pain of her loneliness, and to provide a spatial relief from her limited farm life. It is possibly an important indicator of her attitude about African land when the mountains, among the other parts of the landscape, are selected as the symbol of freedom and strength.

Mrs Gale's relation to the mountains may also signal an escape from the life going on the lower parts of the landscape such as her domestic environment. Perhaps her association with the mountains might define her as a woman trying to figure out her marriage. The phallic connotation of such natural elevation and the changing view of the mountains under the play of lights, coming forward and receding, thrusting and withdrawing evoke a sexual imagery, combined with her claim on the mountains,

might be interpreted as a transformation of sexual desire into a possessing spatiality. Despite her distant relationship with Major Gale and her marriage without any affection and sexual intercourse as is reflected in her aloofness from the mountains, Mrs Gale keeps her connection both with her husband and the mountains since they strengthen and sustain her struggle in Africa. What is conceived about the mountains seems to be related to the colonial understanding of the landscape, which regards such physical entities as potentially dangerous and wild places in the form of secondspace perspective. However, it is the lived experience of Mrs Gale and her conception of herself in relation to the mountains that bestows new meanings and creates a thirdspace perspective.

Rivers are also important parts of the natural landscape that are held in respect and admiration in different cultures for various reasons. Apart from their practical functions, rivers are also embedded with powerful symbolic meanings and values. As J. E. Cirlot notes, in *A Dictionary of Symbols*, river is "an ambivalent symbol since it corresponds to the creative power both of nature and of time. On the one hand it signifies fertility and the progressive irrigation of the soil; and on the other hand it stands for the irreversible passage of time and, in consequence, for a sense of loss and oblivion" (262). With respect to this, unlike her adoration for the hills and the mountains, the river which acts as a border dividing the Kloof Grange from the African wilderness does not evoke the same positive feelings in Mrs Gale. Rather, she associates the river with danger because of the indigenous plants, wild animals such as the crocodiles and "bilharzia," (Lessing 94) a life threatening disease. She never crosses the river, never gets closer to it, perhaps in order to avoid the recognition of her situation in exile. Apart from being a dangerous place for Mrs Gale, the river acts as an interruptive element intruding upon her physical reality by disturbing her concentration on the mountains because of "an intoxicating heady smell" (Lessing 94). Similar to the unpleasant odour of the meat which disconnects the Gales's from reading the letters, the natural smell of the river seems to invade her present connection to the mountains. This shows how smell defines and pervades spaces. What is interesting is that her attitude towards natural smells changes when she is outside. Having challenged herself by going beyond the borders of the house at night with the intent of preparing the other house for the De Wets, for instance, she draws "in deep breaths of the sweetish smell of maize and made a list in her head of what

had to be done" (Lessing 81). The word "maize" is locally understood to denote the main crop of a district, which might belong to Africa in this context. Similarly, after cleaning the house in the days following, for Mrs Gale "the place was bare but clean now, and smelling of sunlight and air" (Lessing 82-3). Her attribution of positive meanings to the smells coming from the natural environment when she is outside the borders of her house might explain how her sensorial and perceptive understanding of the physical realities – the veld, the other house, the natural and local material reality – alter accordingly. However, since she views the river from her restricted perspective, its heady smell does not change for Mrs Gale.

As opposed to Mrs Gale's dislike for the river because of its suggestion of danger, Mrs De Wet shows her excitement for it through her acts and words, calling it "my river" (Lessing 93). It is a counter point to Mrs Gale's "my garden" and "my mountains". She walks to the river everyday, sits on the edge of a big rock, dangles her legs in the water, picks water lillies and fish. What she observes, in contrast to the older woman's fear, is "a lovely pool" in which "there's a kingfisher, and water-birds, all colours" (Lessing 94). Mrs De Wet's upbringing in Africa has a direct impact on how she conceives the river as smoothly flowing water with a "lovely smell," (Lessing 94) what Tim Ingold calls the "perceptual relativism – that people from different cultural backgrounds perceive reality in different ways since they process the same data of experience in terms of alternative frameworks of belief or representational schemata. . . ." (*The Perception* 15). The river in this context, with its clean water and visible rocks under it, becomes a peaceful place with the suggestion of a flux in life. The continuous flow of water signifies new beginnings for Mrs De Wet. This reading of the river may bring into mind Heraclitus's famous premise: "One cannot step twice into the river, nor can one grasp any mortal substance in a stable condition, but it scatters and again gathers; it forms and dissolves, and approaches and departs" (53). Her relation to the river as a place of continuity, transition and fluidity, and her comparison of the river to a pool evokes a reaffirmation of herself. As opposed to the fixed qualities of the garden and its static appearance, the river is in motion. Moreover, it offers a place to escape from the monotony of life and to struggle against loneliness. The responses of both women, then, to the river are determined by what they think of them under the influence of their cultural backgrounds. The river below the hills and the high mountains are the two poles that these women represent, and the meanings

attributed to these geographical formations by them reflect their differences in terms of socio-cultural issues.

Mrs Gale's appropriation of the house, construction of the garden, creation of an imaginary home and going in between the two states of mind (past-present, England-Rhodesia, Betty-Mrs De Wet, etc.) can also be interpreted by building upon Freudian idea of movement between homely and unhomely. At the outset of "The Uncanny," Freud asserts that the uncanny is "related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror . . . tends to coincide with what excites fear in general" (219). Among Freud's presentation of a variety of dictionary meanings of the uncanny between shifting terms as *heimlich* and *unheimlich,* the former, equivalent of homely, is first defined as "belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, intimate, friendly etc.," (222) then as "the enjoyment of quite content, etc., arousing a sense of agreeable restfulness and security as in one within the four walls of his house" (220). Freud also suggests that *heimlich* refers to a place which is "concealed, kept from sight, so that others do not get to know of or about it, withheld from others," (223) which evokes Mrs Gale's garden, an appropriated place of her own where she can be alone and find happiness. Having analysed various definitions of *heimlich*, Freud brings forward the opposite term *unheimlich* by quoting from Schelling "*Unheimlich is the name for everything that ought to have remained . . . secret and hidden but has come to light*" (224) and concludes that "what is *heimlich* comes to be *unheimlich*" (224). Thus, the meaning of the term uncanny shifts between what is familiar and what is not, what is concealed and revealed or what is *heimlich* and *unheimlich*. In relation to this constant movement of Freud's uncanny, on the one hand, Mrs Gale is depicted within the safe borders of the house which is protected from the wilderness. Especially, in her artificially constructed and tamed garden, she indulges in a feeling of home like her old childhood days in England and in all aspects of nature including her hills and mountains. On the other hand, despite Mrs Gale's attempts to create a *heimlich* place within the limits of the Kloof Grange, her sense of home is interrupted by not only the material realities like the hissing sound of the flies or the disturbing smell of the meat but also by the arrival of the De Wets, particularly the presence of another woman who intrudes upon her peaceful atmosphere and makes her confront with present realities.

Mrs Gale is a woman of taboos, restricting and making herself in charge of things such as managing the servants, writing letters to Betty, inviting the De Wets to dinner and morning teas, removing "the weigth of worry off her husband's shoulders," (Lessing 78) adapting herself to his routine, taking care of Mrs De Wet like a child, all of which are actualised as a sense of duty. Correspondingly, she tends to keep things in control, put everything in order, and thus, attempts to categorise not only her physical materiality but also her feelings and relations. After her first meeting with the De Wets, to illustrate, Mrs Gale sits on the veranda, "looking at the sunset sky without seeing it, and writhing with various emotions, none of which she classified" (Lessing 86-7) because her long-standing so-called peaceful life is broken. In order to have a sense of security, a sense of home and a sense of identity, she constitutes individual patterns in her life. It might explain why she creates such a garden, why she tries to impress Mrs De Wet with her garden, why she stays within the boundaries of her house and why she associates herself with the mountains rather than the river. Because of her dependence on her responsibilities and taboos, she feels "guilty all the time" (Lessing 90). She suffers from a feeling of having committed wrong or failed in an obligation. When she hears the news of the De Wets's arrival, there is "a look of guilt" (Lessing 78) in her eyes, perhaps because she might have neglected her duties as a wife and mistress of the house. As a result of sleeping until eight and wasting those three daylight hours, "she was guilty enough" (Lessing 79) since she could not string along with her husband's routine. Rather than sending the houseboy to invite the De Wets to dinner, Mrs Gale herself walks to the house "partly from contrition" (Lessing 87) because she admits the fact that "it was no crime to get married" (Lessing 87) for the new couple. The words "contrition" and "crime" imply a feeling of guilt again because she might be accusing herself for her insistent and manipulating treatment of the De Wets.

The analysis of the interdependent relationship between the female characters and their surrounding, such as the house and the natural environment gives insight into how space is constructed within the realms of the real (material) and the imagined (mental), which lead to the social and spatial confinement of the two women in the story. Although both women attempt to restructure those spaces as alternative orderings and transform them from restrictive conceptualisations with boundaries to places where they can escape to, what they achieve in the end is open to interpretation.

Along with the arrival of the De Wets in Kloof Grange, "who had succeeded in upsetting her and destroying her peace," (Lessing 97) Mrs Gale confronts the vulnerability of her life in Rhodesia, and questions her relation to her husband and imaginary friend Betty. This questioning also leads to her recognition of the constructedness of material reality and sense of home. Not only her appropriation of the house and her identification with the mountains but also her changing attitude towards the garden, which was comforting at the beginning, later disturbing, and finally ambivalent, might suggest Mrs Gale's nomadic nature or her sense of belonging nowhere. Mrs De Wet, on the other hand, dares to challenge her husband's indifference by extending the house to a lived space where she problematises the established understandings of gender and seems to sustain her identity as an Afrikaner woman. Her association with the river suggestive of fluidity and transition and her new life in Kloof Grange could also be promising for a young woman. The inconclusive ending of the story with a depiction of the Gales standing at the gate about to enter the garden and Mrs Gale's requirement of getting people of their kind next time can imply a return to their established routine and acceptance of the differences. As for the women, the ambiguous ending paves the way for interpretations about whether they will continue leading their lives as performing idiosyncrasies of gender and constituting alternative spaces or not.

## CHAPTER III

### The Second Volume of African Stories: *The Sun Between Their Feet*

Unlike the first volume which mainly focuses on the impact of colonial system on the coloniser and the colonised, the second volume of Doris Lessing's African stories, titled *The Sun Between Their Feet* portrays a variety of issues: racial conflicts, effects of the Second World War, generation gap between mother and children, issues of gender, power of nature and insignificance of human beings, to name a few. There are seventeen stories in this volume: "The Story of a Non-Marrying Man," "The Black Madonna," "The Trinket Box," "The Pig," "Traitors," "The Words He Said," "Lucy Grange," "A Mild Attack of Locusts," "Flavours of Exile," "Getting off the Altitude," "A Road to the Big City," "Plants and Girls," "Flight," "The Sun Between Their Feet," "The Story of Two Dogs," "The New Man," and "Hunger". There is one story titled "The Trinket Box," which does not display the physical descriptions of both open and closed space, but focuses on the nomadic life of an old woman, a spinster, Aunt Maud who is nearing her death. She is a white educated woman from a respectable English family who has a chance to move "from continent to continent, from family to family, as a kind of unpaid servant" (Lessing 61) helping the families with household chores, such as doing "the piles of mending, the delicious cooking, the nights and nights of nursing" (Lessing 62). What differentiates Aunt Maud from other stereotypical women is that she is independent, as she makes her own decisions and feels no attachment to any place as her home. She has seen South America, Africa, the Andes, the Christmas islands and regards any place as her temporary home because she does not fix her identity to a permanent place. Like Braidotti's concept of a nomad with no passport or with many of them, Aunt Maud belongs to neither the British nor the African, neither the coloniser nor the colonised societies and perphaps to both.

Not only her mobile position but also her marital status contributes to her nomadic spirit. Unlike the fixed gender roles attributed to a woman like getting married and having children in many of the previously discussed stories, Aunt Maud refuses a marriage proposal and devotes herself to her widowed father who is in need

of care. She chooses not to be a wife or a mother, nevertheless, her daugtherly submission to her father turns out to be pointless when her father remarries a woman. Aunt Maud, with no one and no place to feel attached, enjoys her solitary life wandering around different places in the world. As Iren Annus puts it in her article, for Aunt Maud, "the state of being homeless transforms the journey into a permanent form of existence, offering the opportunity of ongoing self-transformation and self-discovery, without the fear of a potential homecoming and subsequent re-imposition of binding social norms and conventions" ("The Unheroine" 62). To illustrate, when she is in Africa, regardless of colonial issues which separate the whites and the blacks in terms of relations and spaces they occupy, Aunt Maud is the first woman to buy herself an ancient Ford model car and goes "rattling in it over bad corrugated roads and even over the veld, if there were no roads" (Lessing 61). She neither confines herself into the borders of perceived space nor defines herself in relation to how it is conceived.

Like the previous chapter, Part I presents a classification of the narratives in four groups: stories in open versus closed space, those in imaginary space, one story set in transitory places and finally, the stories set in closed space. The stories in the first group will be divided into three sub-categories related to racial, adult-child and human-nature conflicts. Part II will focus on a textual analysis of "Getting off the Altitude" to discuss the relationship between space and gender.

## Part I: Classification of Stories

### 3.1. Open versus Closed Space

#### 3.1.1. Open versus Closed Space: Stories about Racial Conflicts

The first group of stories that foreground the conflict between the whites and the natives through the juxtaposition of open space and closed space are "The Story of a Non-Marrying Man," "The Pig" and "Hunger". In "The Story of a Non-Marrying Man," the narrator is a young girl whose parents are settler farmers in the middle of Africa. They live in a house "on a hill, the highest point of [their] farm" (Lessing 30). The superiority of the whites over the natives is reflected in the location of the house at the highest point. Apart from the other settler houses which are at least three, four, and seven miles away, there are a railway station and a shopping and mail centre in the district. The road that links the farm and the railway station is "mostly a white man's road, for the Africans moving on foot used their own quicker, short-cutting

paths" (Lessing 30). Not only the position of the narrator's house but also the distincton between the roads and paths display racial differences: while the white people prefer the road for transportation, the natives use the paths for walking. Both the roads and the railway station are transitory places which connect one part of the land to the other. In addition to the physical descriptions of the house and the road (firstspace), the way the road is mostly used by the whites and the paths by the natives show how space is conceived and shaped by colonial ideology (secondspace).

This story revolves around the adventures of an English man, Johnny Blackworthy, who has "probably gone native" (Lessing 31). Despite his nationality, the surname, composed of two words – black and worthy – can be connected to his closeness to the natives rather than the English. The word "worthy" was used as a noun (in the 1300s) meaning "person of merit" (vocabulary.com). When it is combined with the word "black" as is in Johnny's surname, it might give a glimpse about his view of the natives. Unlike the narrator's parents who define themselves as cultivators of land, Blackworthy is a passerby carrying "maize-meal porridge," (Lessing 31) which implies his native tendencies. As the narrator unfolds, "white men did not eat it, at least, not as the basis of their diet, because they did not wish to be put on the same level as Africans" (Lessing 31). Viewed from the perspective of the child, Blackworthy is a wanderer who has a nomadic spirit due to "walking quietly by himself through the bush, sometimes twenty miles or more a day, sleeping by himself under the stars or the moon, or whatever weather the seasons sent him, prospecting when he wished, stopping to rest when he needed" (Lessing 32). He is isolated from the white society, because after his experience of mining, farming, owning a store, he realizes that he likes to be his own master. He shows his rejection of the white values and social norms by relating himself to open rather than closed space like the house or the farm. According to Louw, "the figure of Johnny Blackworthy continually crosses borders between domestic and wild African space" ("Inside and Outside Colonial Spaces" 38) because he lives with several women in different places. Although he has a wife, he does not confine himself to the domestic sphere, rather he wonders freely like a nomad. His lack of material possessions, having no fixed place to go and no attachment to a woman, and native-like appearance show his alienation from the white society, which he attains at the end of the story: "he drifted North, out of the white man's towns, and up into those parts that had not been 'opened up to

white settlement', and where the Africans were still living, though not for long, in their traditional ways. And there at last he found a life that suited him, and a woman with whom he lived in kindness" (Lessing 43-44). His continuous movement in open space can also be interpreted as an attempt to produce an alternative understanding of space in which he can act as he wishes.

In contrast to Blackworthy's rejection of domestic spaces and nomadic travels, women in the district are confined in the house in which they perform the established gender roles. The closed and open spaces occupied by two genders confer status on women and men: while the women's enclosure within the boundaries of the house affirms gender roles imposed by the society, Blackworthy's refusal of settler houses and preference of a native tribe where he lives with an African woman problematises the social norms and values.

Unlike the previous story that critiques the closed space of the white society by focusing on how a white man makes use of open space, "The Pig" foregrounds the conflict between the whites and the natives. As a closed space, the farmer's compound is set against the open space of the natives which is "dark under foliage," (Lessing 67) and is only lit by the lantern hung on the kitchen door. The natives, likewise, need light to be seen because of their "dark" and "dimly-lit faces" (Lessing 67). Emphasising the darkness of the natives's open spaces and their faces reveals the colonial mindset, which portrays them as inferior and uncivilised. When the natives are to be paid by the farmer, they are questioned because of the stolen cobs. In order to avoid theft, Jonas, the farmer's native assistant, is made responsible for killing anything that moves in the dark, including "buck, baboons, pig" and "human pig" (Lessing 68). The farmer states that "[m]y lands are no place for pigs of any kind" (Lessing 68) and equates the natives with the pigs. If the farm is wild and full of pigs of every kind for the white settler, his closed space is safe and lighted. When the conversation between the farmer and Jonas is over, Jonas is left in darkness, in open space and walks "down the path, finding his way by the feel of the loose stones under his feet" (Lessing 70). The perception of open space as dark goes hand in hand with how it is conceived as the space of the natives and there is no character in this story to create an alternative one, like Johnny Blackworthy in the previous story.

Similar to the Long One, the native assistant of the farmer in "The Nuisance" from the first volume of African stories, Jonas is an old-fashioned man and has two

wives: the old one "who had borne him several children and a young one who gave him a good deal of trouble" (Lessing 69) like sleeping with another man in the absence of Jonas. Their hut is like "a small conical shape" (Lessing 70) where his wives wait for Jonas "with his food prepared and ready," (Lessing 70) which shows the traditional gender roles in the black society. What is ironic is that the two women ridicule Jonas in their own way: his old wife "mocked him with her tongue" (Lessing 70) and his young wife, though submissive in her answers, "mocked him with her actions" (Lessing 70). Despite their enclosure in the hut performing fixed gender roles, the way they relate to their husband is intriguing. Particularly, the young woman has extra marital relation with another man from the same black district within the borders of domestic space. Thus, the hut expands beyond not only the material descriptions and everyday routines but also its secondspace perspective that defines it as the space of women. Rather, it is configured as an alternative space by the young wife whose betrayal becomes "an old wound" (Lessing 70) aching in Jonas's heart and causes him to lose contact with his friends in order not to cope with their questions about his betrayal. This suggests how gender relations and roles are problematised together with space.

"Hunger" is a novella that deals with racial conflicts through the lens of an African boy, Jabavu. As John Reed asserts, the story

> is a version of the parable of the prodigal son, the story of the African adolescent who leaves his village drawn by the unendurable hunger that he feels for all things of the white man's world – and returns, after degredation and disaster, not to his father, but to the African political leaders who offer him an alternative to this ruthless, acquisitive individualism. ("The Emergence of English Writing in Zimbabwe" 256)

Contrary to Johnny Blackworthy who rejects the white man's lifestyle shaped by spatial confinement to white farms, Jabavu admires "the men of light," (Lessing 281) their knowledge and comfortable life in the city.

Jabavu and his family live in "a native kraal . . . a casual arrangement of round mud huts with canonical grass roofs" and beyond them are "a belt of trees" and "the fields" (Lessing 216). The physical description of the kraal and its surrounding demonstrate how the natives live in open space without boundaries. In terms of gender, however, like "The Pig," while women are supposed to take care of the hut and the children, men deal with cultivating the land. Thus, open space of the natives

appeals to men rather than women in the kraal, which shows how space is structured in relation to gender roles in the kraal. The city of the whites, on the other hand, has a well-ordered spatial pattern with streets and houses. As Jabavu observes, "the houses run in patterns, the smooth grey streets" (Lessing 242) have "no dust, only smooth, warm asphalt" (Lessing 243). Similar to women's association with closed space as opposed to men's with open space in the kraal, women of the city are confined into their domestic spheres – houses with gardens – whereas men are mobile and active in public space like the government buildings or the African leagues. Such spatial division displays the structure of gendered spaces shaped by patriarchal and colonial ideologies.

Jabavu's life journey starts in the open space of his kraal, continues through transitory places like the roads which are full of white drivers trying to trap black people, and ends with the closed spaces of the city such as houses, gardens, government buildings and prison. He notices "gardens [that] lie around each with flowers of red and purple and gold, and in the gardens are stretches of water, gleaming dark, and on the water flowers are floating" (Lessing 243). The physical description of the closed spaces reveals much about how they are conceived as admirable places by Jabavu. His hunger for the material things of the whites and comfortable and respectful life "roars and burns in him like a fire" (Lessing 287). Contrary to the well-kept and comfortable places where whites live, the native neighbourhoods are disorderly shabby ones. The skin colour and the economic conditions of people have a direct impact on where they inhabit. Thus, space is socially and ideologically shaped, which might explain how the secondspace perspective is imposed upon the structure of these closed spaces.

Since Jabavu is a greedy kraal boy, his passion for worldly things leads him to meet new people in new places. When he discovers how space is constituted in accordance with the social, cultural and economic backgrounds of people, his hunger for a comfortable life increases. What is interesting in this story is that Jabavu, at last, is caught by the police in the leader of the African league, Mizi's house and is driven to prison where he stays in "a cell to himself, a small brick room with a stone floor and a window high up with bars" (Lessing 324). Paradoxically enough, it is the cell, the smallest closed space where he transforms from being a selfish child obsessed with individual needs and wants to an adult who learns to think collectively as "We,"

(Lessing 331) the native people. As Burkom claims, "that hunger in [Jabavu], which has raged like a beast all his life, swells up, unrefused, and streams gently into the word We. The grammatical shift from 'I' to 'We' is graphic evidence of the successful connection of the individual and the communal, the private and the public spheres" ("Only Connect" 57). The fact that his transformation finds its meaning and rises to the surface within the limits of a cell might also reveal the relative understanding of space and the possibility of restructuring it on an alternative basis. The cell is configured as an alternative space by Jabavu because he "no longer sees the grey walls of the cell, he does not even think of the Court or of the prison afterwards" (Lessing 331) but "the warm hands of brothers" (Lessing 331). His relation to the cell extends beyond its secondspace understanding of punishment and opens the way for a realization of collectivity. Since Jabavu's relationship to the female characters such as his mother and Betty, a prostitute, is not foregrounded, there are no implications of gender issues in the story but intense racial conflicts.

### 3.1.2. Open versus Closed Space: Stories about Adult-Child Conflict

The second group of stories that foreground the conflict between the adults and the children through the juxtaposition of closed space and open space are "Traitors," "Flavours of Exile," "Flight" and "The Story of Two Dogs". "Traitors" starts with a description of open space which is outside the borders of the farmer's house: "the bush was dense and frightening, and the grass there higher than a tall man. There were not even paths" (Lessing 75). This wild open space is in sharp contrast with the protected farm land. In this story, the contradiction between the closed and open space displays the differences between a mother and her two daughters. The mother associates the fenced house with safety and the bush with dangers, and lives a confined life within the boundaries of the house and the garden. However, the girls are willing to explore wild nature with its plants and animals, and thus, liberate themselves from the constrictions of farm life in Africa.

For the girls, the bush represents the unknown to be experienced with a sense of bravery. One day they "pushed their way past ant-heap and outcrop, past thorn and gully and thick clumps of cactus where any wild animal might lurk" (Lessing 75). When they discover the nature beyond the protected farmland, they realize that "the forbidding patch of bush was as easily conquered and made [their] own as the rest of the farm" (Lessing 75). The emphasis on conquering and possessing the bush has

overtones of colonialism but they feel disappointed with "the barbed fence," "the boundary" what they call "a sort of Wall of China," (Lessing 76) which is a form of restriction, an enclosure. Although they realize their mother's "look of disapproval, and distaste and unhappiness" (Lessing 82) because of their wandering over the farm, they continue their adventures in open space.

These explorations of space can be interpreted as nomadic interventions as well since the two girls do not fit themselves into social conventions, but subvert the expected gender roles in their own way. The deserted Thompson's house which they discover during their wandering serves as a place of opportunity for them to construct their sense of identity. They "ma[k]e the place entirely [their] own" (Lessing 77) by "sweeping the debris from the floor and carrying away loose bricks into the bush," (Lessing 77) and marking out the rooms of the house with empty bottles, and "making walls of shining bottles" (Lessing 78). Through physical appropriation of the house and laying claim on it, the girls configure a space of their own in the veld. As Louw puts it,

> the process of identity formation is fostered by the wild landscape as it gives the girls an opportunity to experiment with both male and female roles. They imitate the role of the male-adventurer by exploring the natural environment but they also re-enact the role of the mother by making an imaginary home in the bush on the site of an old ruined house. In this way they cross the border between gendered spaces in an attempt to balance the male and female imperatives in their lives. ("Inside and Outside Colonial Spaces" 35)

I disagree with Louw's idea that the children might be performing gender roles by creating an imaginary home, a thirdspace different from the Thompson's place. Their lived experience can exceed the established gender roles, represented by their mother, because they can act as they wish in this configured house.

Similar to the relationship between the two generations in the previous story, in "Flavours of Exile," there is a conflict between the mother and her daughter, which is reflected in their relation to the closed space and the veld. Unlike the mother who is attached to her English background and who attempts to create an English garden, the child narrator tries to embrace open space with its spreading natural flora. The story begins with the description of the garden with a variety of vegetables such as carrots, lettuces, beets, cauliflowers, tomatoes, lemons, pawpaws, bananas etc. Even

though she succeeds in taming the garden by planting English vegetables and fruits, the garden still "represented a defeat" (Lessing 112) because of the bad African soil. For Louw,

> The mother in this story occupies a number of different spaces simultaneousy in her mind. She longs for the gardens of England and of Persia where she lived in previous years. She attempts to bring the past into the present, thus attempting to occupy different times simultaneously: the time when she was a girl, growing up in England; the time when she lived in Persia as a colonial wife; and the time in Africa. In fact, she tries to erase present time with past time. ("Inside and Outside Colonial Spaces" 32)

Unlike her mother who tries to revive her life in England and Persia, the daughter is active in the present time and creates a playground with the Cape gooseberries in wild nature. The spread of gooseberries seems to blur the boundary between the mother's vegetable garden and the wild veld outside. While this is an invasion of the orderly closed space of the garden for the mother (secondspace), it might create an access to the natural world for the daughter (alternative space), where she can experience her childhood with her friend, William MacGregor.

The mother associates fruits and vegetables with her memories. For instance, "brussel sprouts" which are "unattainable" (Lessing 113) in Africa come from Glasgow, which she identifies with home. She shows her dislike of tasteless Cape gooseberries by comparing them with the English ones and the pomegranates remind her of the happy life in Persia. As the daughter explains "pomegranates were an exotic for my mother" (Lessing 114) because of its connection to Persia where "pomegranate juice ran in rivers" (Lessing 114). Although the mother planted four pomegranate trees in her garden, they did not give fruit because of African soil. In order not to miss the moment "when [the pomegranate tree] must burst and scatter crimson seeds," (Lessing 116) the daughter goes to the tree everyday. Her relation to the pomegranate and daily visits is different from that of the constructed playground of the gooseberries. Through the association of the pomegranate tree and its ripening crimson fruit with William, she tries to have a sense of identity free from the pressure of the adult world. The crimson colour of the seeds evokes a sense of sexuality for her who is in the process of becoming a woman. When the daughter and William become half-grown after years, she thinks that "William and the moment when the

pomegranate split open would coincide" (Lessing 117). Nevertheless, she cannot involve William in this newly created space of pomegranate because he ignores her effort to keep the tree alive and shows his reaction by destroying the plant. When he hits the tree whose one part is cracked and eaten by the ants, "the pomegranate flew into the air and exploded in a scatter of crimson seeds, fermenting juice and black ants" (Lessing 119). This also shows how he does not take notice of her transformation from childhood to adulthood, which disappoints her. Like William, she pretends to adapt to the adult world and they retreat into the borders of the house where "the grown-ups sat over the teacups" (Lessing 119) rather than extending the boundaries and exploring themselves. It is the social norms and values of the society that restrict and shape the behaviours of the children and their attitudes towards nature.

Like the previous two stories, "Flight" also displays a conflict between the two generations, yet this time, the grandfather and the granddaughter contradict with each other. The grandfather lives with his daughter Lucy and granddaughter, Alice, in the cultivated part of the land, "along the road to the village," (Lessing 154) and the trees and the grass constitute a border between the house and the landscape. Part of the closed and domesticated space where Lucy, the mother, sews and sits are the garden and the veranda. Since the other granddaughters got married, the grandfather is too possessive of Alice and wants her right beside him like his pigeons, which he keeps in "the dovecote, a tall wire-netted shelf on stilts" (Lessing 154). To stay away from loneliness, he spends a lot of his time in the dovecote. The story focuses on how the grandfather has to learn and accept the change in his granddaughter, Alice, who is in the process of growing into an adult and becoming independent. While the mother stays within the borders of the closed space (the house and the veranda) and the grandfather in the dovecote, Alice is depicted sometimes going back "to the gate," sometimes shouting "from the gate" (Lessing 155). If the gate is regarded as a threshold, then, it shows her transitory position from the borders of the house to the free and open space of the bushes. This also signifies her transformation from childhood to adulthood as well as from a single woman to a married one since she is engaged to Steven, the postman's son.

Despite his anger and sadness, the grandfather admits the fact that Alice has her own life and makes her own decisions when Alice and Steven give him a bird as a gift and as a symbol of their togetherness. In return, the grandfather shuts the new

bird in a box and takes out "his favourite" (Lessing 158) which he associates with Alice, and sets it free. The association between the mother and the house shows the gendered spatial patterns, which contradict with Alice's liminal position at the gate because she tends to go beyond these restrictions by indulging in her preferences like wandering in the bush and meeting her fiance rather than staying close to her grandfather. Nevertheless, the fact that Alice will become a woman of her house when she marries Steven seems not to create a possibility for her future life free from spatial confinements.

"The Story of Two Dogs" can be classified under the first group of stories that reflect the distinction between the whites and the natives through their experiences in the closed and open spaces as well as under the second group focusing on the tension between adults and children. Set in the white settler's farm compound, the narrator tells the story of two dogs, but in fact, she criticises her parents, particularly her mother's exaggerated attachment to English values, from the very beginning of the story: "Getting a new dog turned out to be more difficult than we thought, and for reasons rooted deep in the nature of our family" (Lessing 166) because the mother does not want their good, noble and well-bred dog, Jock to play with "those nasty dirty [kaffir] dogs" (Lessing 167) in the compound. Jock is important for the mother since it consoles her after the narrator's brother leaves home for school in the city. The arrogance of the whites and their sense of superiority is reflected through the mother's insistence on having a "delicate" (Lessing 167) puppy, which is not welcomed by the narrator. Her difference from the mother is evident not only in her choice of a dog but also in her connection to open space: while the mother is confined into the borders of the house and the garden, the narrator spends most of her time outside the farm, in the vlei.

Talking about the relatives, the narrator unfolds the distinction between the space the whites occupy and African land: "They now lived in a small brick and iron house surrounded by granite kopjes that erupted everywhere from thick bush" (Lessing 168). The use of "brick" and "iron" in the material description of the house as well as the "granite kopjes" drawing its borders evoke a sense of imprisonment and alienation of the white farmers. Their isolation is also reinforced through the description of the landscape, where the narrator sees the "black dog" (Lessing 169) Billy: "The moon, large and remote and soft, stood up over the trees, the empty white

sand, the house which had unhappy human beings in it, and a mad little dog yapping and beating its course of drunken joyous delirium" (Lessing 169). Not only the unhappiness of the whites and the joy of the black puppy but also the well-bred Jock and the "bad blood" (Lessing 170) Billy are juxtaposed in order to show the contradiction between the whites and the natives.

As the representative coloniser, the father wants the two dogs "thoroughly trained" (Lessing 173) in order to make them behave properly like watchdogs. However, Bill, the delirious dog who is ill-disciplined like the natives, refuses to be trained and dissuades Jock from obeying the rules. Instead, "they liked, learning the joys of freedom" (Lessing 179) and preferred to "go wild" (Lessing 179). Whenever they kill an animal in the bush or from the neighbour compounds, it is Billy that is accused of corrupting Jock. The place where the children, the brother and the narrator, prefer to train their dogs is the Great Vlei, which is referred to as the "paradise" (Lessing 178) full of "intense greenness" (Lessing 178) unlike the Big Vlei, which is "burned-out and eroded" (Lessing 177) because of the cultivation of the colonisers.

It is not only colonial and racial attitudes that are reflected on the spatial patterns of the closed and open spaces but also gender relations are revealed through the division of labour between the brother and the sister (the narrator) when they go each morning to the Great Vlei to train the dogs. In such an untamed open space, the brother, "so intent and serious," (Lessing 176) carries a rifle, which is a symbol of male power and leads the two dogs while the narrator "with no useful part to play in the serious masculine business, but necessary to provide admiration," (Lessing 176) accompanies her brother. As "a small fierce girl," (Lessing 176) she is supposed to "walk away on one side of the scene" (Lessing 176) rather than actively taking part in male business. Nevertheless, she questions this submissive role by her enthusiasm to explore new places like the Great Vlei.

### 3.1.3. Open versus Closed Space: Stories about Nature-Human Conflict

"A Mild Attack of Locusts," "The Sun Between Their Feet" and "Plants and Girls" can be categorised as stories reflecting the conflict between nature and human beings in open and closed spaces. The first of the stories reveals the traditional gender roles defined in relation to spaces both men and women occupy. As the story opens, Margaret, her husband, Richard, and her father-in-law, old Stephen are depicted as settlers living in Africa for long years. While Margaret has no experience of farm life,

and is confined into the house, Richard and Stephen are responsible for running the farm and cultivating the land, and thus, are mobile. The secondspace perspective, which distinguishes private, domestic sphere attributed to women from the public one belonging to men, is observed in this story.

Apart from this interconnected relationship between gender and space, the story particularly foregrounds the power of nature and the settlers' attempt to survive despite the difficulties. They are accustomed to wild nature such as the veld, the bush, the mountains, the rivers and the animals but they are also dependent on nature to survive. For instance, in order to grow their crops, they need the rain because unless there is enough rain, there will be no crops, and if there are no crops, the cattle will find nothing to eat. As the narrator reveals, their farm is located

> three thousand acres on the ridges that rise up towards the Zambesi escarpment, high, dry windswept country, cold and dusty in winter, but now, being the wet season, steamy with the heat rising in wet soft waves off miles of green foliage. Beautiful it was, with the sky blue and brilliant halls of air, and the bright green folds and hollows of country beneath, and the mountains lying sharp and bare twenty miles off across the river. (Lessing 104)

As is seen in the physical description of the farm, on the one hand, the wild nature displays its beauty and provides the rain and the sun necessary for the crops to grow. On the other hand, the same nature is full of destructive forces because of the attack of locusts. After the invasion of the locusts, for example, there is "no green left" (Lessing 110) just "a devastated landscape" (Lessing 110). However, the swarm of locusts that ruins the land does not discourage Richard and Stephen from recultivating it. This event also transforms Margaret from an inexperienced city girl to a woman who helps the farmers by providing drinks and food for them, giving support for her husband and father-in-law. Thus, the story shows how human beings cope with nature by cultivating, recultivating, fighting againts the forces of nature and never giving up.

"The Sun Between Their Feet" starts with the material description of space (firstspace) where there are two distinct parts of the district separated by the station: "the road from the back of the station went to the Roman Catholic Mission, which was a dead-end in the middle of a Native Reserve. It was a poor mission, with only one lorry, so the road was always deserted," (Lessing 160) and "the good country in front was settled thick with white farmers, but all the country behind the station was

unused because it was granite boulders, outcrops, and sand" (Lessing160). As this description suggests, while the part of the district the settlers live in is full of life, the other part is empty and lifeless. Despite the desolate open space uninhabited by human beings, the child narrator, reveals the fact that this open space was utilized by people like "the Matabele," "the Mashona" and "the Busmen" (Lessing 160) before the white settlers arrived.

The narrator subverts the established conceptions of settlers' space as civilised and open space as uncivilised, going beyond the sheltered space of the farmers and entering into the wild space as an observer of nature. When she sits on "top of the jutting rock" and watches the beetles in the grass, she compares the conceived space of the beetles and the meaning of their movement written in the book with the natural environment and the real beetles in front of her eyes. As a result, she realizes that what is conceived about them does not fit into their lived experiences. The beetles "roll the dung up the mountain, rescue it from the dried bed of the mountain lake, and force it up to the exposed dry shoulder" (Lessing 164) again and again. In order to clear their way, the narrator lifts them, "dung and beetles, away from the precipice, to a clear place where they had the choice of a dozen suitable gentle slopes, but they rolled their ball patiently back to the mountain's foot" (Lessing 164). The narrator's attempt to help the beetles can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, she tries to help the beetles by clearing their way; on the other hand, she intervenes in their natural flow of life by changing their route, and thus, dominates them.

Unlike Margaret and her husband in the previous story who take the destructive power of nature as it comes and struggle against it, the child narrator in "The Sun Between Their Feet" cannot figure out her intervention with nature. In the former story, the swarm of locusts destroys the human land but in the latter the child disturbs the balance of nature. However, he develops an awareness of wild nature and its rules and notices the difference between how it is conceived by people and how it is lived by the beetles. In both stories, the reciprocal relationship between nature and human beings and how they affect each other can be observed.

Finally, "Plants and Girls" displays how the conflict between nature and human beings can damage not only the balance of nature but also human relations. The story focuses on the experiences of a boy, Frederick, living in a small house in Africa. The family's small house used to be "the last in the street, so that he walked

straight from the garden, across a railway line, and into the veld. He spent most of his time wandering by himself through the vleis and the kopjes" (Lessing 144). The physical description of the house demonstrates that the house is on a border between the railway and nature. As the town begins to expand and imprison the natural flora including the rivers, the vlei and the animals beneath it, because of the white settlers' invasion of the African land, the boy tries to avoid observing the annihilation of nature. Hence, he retreats into the borders of the house and spends most of his time with his mother rather than playing with other children in the street. While the other children are associated with civilised town life, the boy identifies himself only with nature, which is about to disappear.

As he grows up, he starts to spend time alone, away from home and his mother, under "a big veld tree that stood a short way from their gate in a space between two street lamps" (Lessing 146). Instead of having friends in the district, such as the girl in the next house, he prefers to be with the tree and is "driven, night after night, to the silent love-making, with the branches of the tree between him and the moon" (Lessing 148). Upon the girl's insistence of seeing each other, Frederick involuntarily "would take her in his arms beside the tree outside the gate, embracing her as he had embraced the tree, forgetting her entirely, murmuring strangely over her head among the shadows" (Lessing 148). In a way, he substitutes the tree which has the potential for extinction because of the exploitation of nature with the girl. His mother and the tree represent the foundation of his life, both of which are strong enough for him to depend on. However, one day, both his mother and the tree outside the gate die: "the big tree had been cut down; all the wild trees in that street were gone, because of the danger from the strong old roots to the bricks of the foundations of the houses" (Lessing 150). They are replaced by new exotic trees like "bauhinea and jacaranda," (Lessing 151) which do not give the same sense of strength. When he starts to have a relationship with another girl, he identifies her with the new trees, embraces her closely in his arms and presses her bones, and finally, kills her. These stories display the everchanging balance between nature and human beings and how the two parts affect each other.

### 3.2. Imaginary Space

"Black Madonna" exemplifies the conception of an imaginary space in a work of art by Michele, the Italian artist, a bricklayer, and a prisoner of war. He paints the walls of a church or a room and draws portraits of women to earn money. When the

General of Westonville, “the capital and hub of Zambesia” (Lessing 46) plans “a military tattoo or show for the benefit of the civilian population” (Lessing 47) to give an idea of what war is like, he wants a model village built to be destroyed “by shell-fire before” (Lessing 48) the eyes of the public.

Michele works at the parade-ground to create the fictional village. By making use of “sheets of ceiling board” and “a slant of steep roof supported on struts,” he forms two walls and part of a third, what he names as “The church” (Lessing 51). What is interesting about the church is that in the sunlight with “the illusions of light and dark” there is nothing at the parade-ground but “skeleton-like shapes;” however, at night, when the lights of the parade-ground are swicthed on, there is “the village, solid and real against a background of full green grass” (Lessing 52). People who examine the fictional village, and see “only tall angular boards leaning like gravestones in the moonlight” (Lessing 55). The use of skeleton-like shapes and gravestones to describe the church reveal the negative impact of war on people and their surrounding. Michele’s image of a village in the church creates an illusionary effect on its viewers, which is regarded as “uncanny,” “unfair,” “cheating” and “disturbing” (Lessing 55).

Michele also draws “a picture of a black girl” with her child, surrounded by “thin yellow circles around the head” (Lessing 54) for himself and “as an offering to the Madonna,” (Lessing 54) which has multiple meanings for the beholders. For Michele, it is the Madonna, which should be protected from the bombing of the city. When it is time for shelling the village, Michele being drunk, wants to take the Madonna with him but “the village disintegrate[s] in a mass of debris” like a real war bombing and the picture can only be gazed by Michele “in the light from the flames” (Lessing 56). With respect to the various meanings and associations of the figure of Madonna, Michele creates the impact of an imaginary space in the minds of the viewers, which all differ from each other. The illusionary village can also be interpreted as the configuration of an alternative space in which other characters in the story construct meaning of their own based on imagination and experience. For instance, for the British officer, Captain Stocker, the image of a black girl in the church who is “young and plump” (Lessing 54) carrying a baby on her back, stands for his bush-wife Nadya.

Apart from its emphasis on imaginary space created by a painter, this story also juxtaposes life in the bush with city life, as is seen in the Captain's experience. Stocker tells Michele that he hates city life and does not stay in the city where his wife lives with her parents and children. Since he is tormented by the idea that his wife is unfaithful to him, the Captain enjoys talking about "his favourite bush-wife, Nadya" (Lessing 52). While his "scornful," "gay and hard" (Lessing 53) wife lives in the city, his lover is in the bush. The Captain's relation to the two women and his feelings for them are defined in terms of spaces they occupy. Because of his unhappy married life, he hates the city and prefers to be in open space together with his bush-wife, liberated from his obligations. The city life is characterised by its spatial patterns, rules and responsibilities in which gender relations are also defined. However, the Captain's and his wife's extra-marital affairs with others problematise these relations. The bush, as it is associated with freedom and openness, connotes positive meanings for the Captain and becomes a place where he escapes to.

### 3.3. Transitory Space

Different from all the previously discussed stories, "A Road to the Big City" is set in transitory places such as a train station and a hotel. In addition to the transitoriness of places in the story, the creation of an imaginary space by a young female character is also observed like the girl living in her private thoughts in "The New Man". A man named Jansen, who is in a "dreamy frame of mind of the uncommitted traveller" (Lessing 137) is depicted at the beginning of the story at a train station buffet hosting passersby temporarily. Jansen's independent mobility seems to fit into these places and is also emphasised in his way of watching people like "the spectator at a play which could not hold his attention" (Lessing 137). Jansen likes wandering in the streets of the city, Joburg, because for him, "in every place there dwelt a daemon which expressed itself through the eyes and voices of those who lived there" (Lessing 137). The word "daemon" connotes a negative meaning, which might imply the dangers in the city and this potential is reflected in the eyes and the voices of people.

At this train station, Jansen meets two sisters, Lilla and Marie. Lilla, the elder one is a prostitute and Marie, the innocent one is orientated towards acting like her sister. Interestingly enough, since their father is a railway ganger, the place where they used to live is composed of "frail little shacks along the railway lines, miles from any

place, where the washing flapped whitely on the lines over patches of garden, and the children ran out to wave to the train that passed shrieking from one wonderful fabled town to the next" (Lessing 139). Thus, their sense of home does not seem to be a stable place as it is near the railway, which suggests temporariness because of the passing trains. In addition to the material description of the house and its surrounding, because the girls cannot connect to other people in such a remote place, those cities or towns create the impression of an imaginary or mythical place in their minds, which might have led them to leave home and start a life in the city. As the narrator explains, Jansen sees "the lonely girl in the little house by the railway lines, helping with the chickens and the cooking, staring hopelessly at the fashion papers, watching the trains pass, too old now to run out and wave and shout, but staring at the fortunate people at the windows" (Lessing 139). However, how they conceive those cities and towns as places promising ostentatious life contradicts with the perceptual reality and its concomitants.

The two sisters take Jansen to their house, "a two-roomed flat in a suburb" (Lessing 140). When Lilla and a young man go out to spend the night at a hotel, Marie tries to please Jansen by offering brandy and wearing Lilla's red dress and black high heel shoes. Her behaviours can be interpreted as a performative act since she replicates Lilla's way of dressing, sitting and talking like a prostitute. Different from Lilla, though, Marie has an imaginary world of her own in which she thinks her sister and her boyfriend go to the pictures at nights. For Jansen and Marie hotel rooms have a different conception: while Jansen considers hotel rooms as transitory places, for Marie hotels are "something lovely on the cinema screen" (Lessing 142). She does not figure out how her future life would be in hotels with strangers. In relation to her love of bioscopes, pictures and cinema screens, Marie seems to have created an imaginary space and does not want Jansen to destroy it. The secondspace perspective of the hotels represented by Jansen cannot shatter Marie's imaginary space, and likewise, his attempt to send Marie to her house does not work, and she surrenders to "the joyous streets of the city" (Lessing 143) like her sister.

### 3.4. Closed Space

The last category of stories – "The New Man," "Lucy Grange," "The Words He Said" and "Getting off the Altitude" – illustrate how gender relations and conflicts are revealed through the configuration of closed space. "The New Man" tells the story

of a poor and lonely man, Mr Rooyen, who buys the manager's house in Rich Mitchell's farm. Since that part of the farm is "badly watered and poorish soil," (Lessing 189) Mr Mitchell is criticised for selling it to a poor man. Rather than putting emphasis on the opposition between closed and open space, this story takes place in the house and focuses on the thoughts of the daughter of a neighbouring family, the Grants. Although in their first meeting, the girl does not like Mr Rooyen because of his attempts to abuse her while she is sitting on his lap in her father's car, she visits him in his house, and describes the place in what follows:

> The house was two small rooms, side by side under corrugated iron, with a lean-to kitchen behind. In front was a narrow brick veranda with pillars. . . . [The first room] had two leather armchairs, a sideboard with a mirror that reflected trees and blue sky and long grass from the low window, and an eating table. The second room had an iron bed and a chest-of-drawers. . . . [The tiny kitchen] had an iron Carron Dover stove, where the fire was out. A wooden table had some cold meat on it with a piece of gauze over it. The meat smelled sourish. Flies buzzed. Up the legs of the table small black ants trickled. (Lessing 192)

Such a physical description of the house (firstspace) with iron and brick materials, rotten meat, flies and ants show Mr Rooyen's disinterest in his house. While he tries to satisfy his "lonely hunger" (Lessing 194) with the girl in his house, she learns his affair with a woman, named Maureen, and imagines being in place of her and looking after Mr Rooyen. When Mr Rooyen marries Miss Betty Blunt, a governess from England, the girl politely refuses to attend their marriage ceremony in order to protect her imaginary position from the intrusions of the adults, including her parents and Mr Rooyen because it is only possible for her to ignore the fact that Mr Rooyen is interested in mature women rather than a young girl. This story illustrates the perceived reality of Mr Rooyen's poor house as a place to inhabit and the alternative perspective of it as a place where the girl acts as Mr Rooyen's wife.

"Lucy Grange" discloses the solitary life of a settler's wife in Africa. Lucy and her husband, George, live in a farm which "was fifty miles from the nearest town, in a maize growing district" (Lessing 98). Like all the settlers, George is a farmer and spends his time outside, whereas Lucy is busy with "new recipes of pumpkin and green mealies and chicken," constructs "attractive nursery furniture out of packing cases" (Lessing 99) and takes care of her children. Lucy is so lonely on this isolated farm that when one day a city man, dressed in city clothes, appears in front of her

door, she takes him in. The man reveals the fact that he comes not to see her husband but to meet her, about whom people are talking in the district. The city man understands that Lucy needs someone to talk to in order to cope with her solitary life and her husband's indifference. When he talks about London, Lucy feels like "provincial" (Lessing 101) in this exile because it has been a long time that she has not been to her home country.

Her welcoming a city man who comes merely for her, and taking him to her bedroom where they give solace to each other might exceed the established limits imposed upon women by the society. Thus, her bedroom is attributed new meanings and filled with lived experiences through their friendly engagement, confessions and sexual affair. She continuously takes him in and lets him go, which also lessens her isolation. Such liberating and comforting lived experiences seem to be possible only within the thirdspace perspective because Lucy and George's bedroom conceived as a place of a husband and wife's privacy, gains an alternative meaning, replacing this privacy with an exciting affair with a stranger.

The third story "The Words He Said" revolves around a white couple, the Hughes, with their two daughters, Moira and the unnamed narrator. They represent a traditional family structure with the father ruling the household and working at the railway station and the mother, responsible for the household chores, busy with cooking and preparing barbecue parties, known as "braavleis" (Lessing 84). One of the farmers in the district allows the settlers to throw parties and socialize in the open air in his farm. His farm is situated at "a high place at the end of a vlei, where it rose into a small hill full of big boulders" (Lessing 93). The mention of the vlei, boulders, hill, "the moon," "the river, and the trees on either side" (Lessing 94) display how the farms and the houses are mingled with the wild and open space of Africa. Indeed, these parties form a platform for interaction between the settlers. For instance, Greg Jackson loves Moira but cannot marry her since he is a medical student at Cape and has five years to complete his education. Moira also loves him but because of the expectations of marriage imposed upon her, she feels uneasy and struggles against such restrictive views. It is at the braavleis that Greg reveals his personal feelings and thoughts to Moira. He says, "it isn't right to bind you when we're so young" (Lessing 97) in order to explain why he cannot marry her but she thinks he is a fool, who fails to understand what a woman wants. Although Greg and Moira do not understand each

other's expectations, the only space they can reveal their thoughts and feelings, and act comfortably is the farmer's place, which has become a social space of interaction and contestation. Hence, it becomes an alternative space because of new meanings based on the lived experiences of people.

"Getting off the Altitude," like "Old John's Place" in the first volume and "Lucy Grange" in the second, shows the complicated relationship between space and gender. There are similarities between the stories in the sense that closed space is configured in an alternative way beyond their physical and socially conceived characteristics, which prepares the ground for gender performativity. The story is about three white settler families living in the same district but particularly focuses on the lived experiences of Mrs Slatter and the narrator. Similar to Lucy's opening up her bedroom to a stranger and finding solace with him in "Lucy Grange," for instance, in "Getting off the Altitude," both Mrs Slatter and the narrator make use of Mrs Slatter's bedroom as an alternative space where they can escape to. Mrs Slatter does not allow her husband and her lover to enter into her bedroom and keeps it as a private space and the narrator also hides in the same room in order to think and question gender relations. Hence, the bedroom becomes more than a private space of the husband and the wife like Lucy's bedroom because it is not shared by the married couple, but extends beyond that usual meaning and function, and becomes a lived space for both women. Like the braavleis organised in one of the farmer's land in "The Words He Said," the Slatters's house is used as a space of parties where people come together, dance and drink in "Getting off the Altitude". Both stories display the transformation of a closed space into a social sphere.

In the analysis of "Getting off the Altitude," my purpose will be to reveal how a white settler community in Central Africa deals with the problems of alienation. The enclosed structure of the society on one hand, preserves the social norms and values but at the same time leads to new and alternative relationships between the genders as well as adults and children. The impact of the altitude is also observed in the way the society is structured and gender relations are performed. Like all the other stories in the second volume, this one also shows how space is perceived as a physical reality where everyday life takes place and how it is conceived as a space of thoughts which defines relations and confines people into certain places. What differentiates "Getting off the Altitude" from the other ones is related to the multiplicity of male and female

characters and their lived experiences, which pave the way for different modes of thinking about space and its transformation from restrictive conceptualisations to alternative ones.

**Part II: Transformation of Home into Social Space in "Getting off the Altitude"**

Lessing's story "Getting off the Altitude" from her collection *The Sun Between Their Feet* recounts the story of three white settler families in Central Africa – the Slatters, the Pritts and the Farquars – living in the same district through the narration of the Farquars's daughter. The story predominantly focuses on gender relations in an enclosed society which determines the lifestyle of people ranging from adolescents to adults. It is an initiation story about the narrator's own observation of social relations in the district and her specific experience with the Slatters, while she undergoes a process of transformation, which culminates in a moment of self-realization in the mirror. Unlike the discussion of how the female characters configure domestic space and connect to the natural surrounding in terms of alternative spatial possibilities in the previous story, "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange," this one deals with how both genders transform the private house of the Slatters into a social space of interaction and contestation as well as how the two female characters – Mrs Slatter and the narrator – make use of Mrs Slatter's bedroom as a private space of their own. Hence, I will respectively focus on the geographical features of Central Africa, the social structure of the society, gender relations and gender performativity in the district in order to reveal how closed spaces like the Slatters's house and Mrs Slatter's bedroom can be appropriated and configured as thirdspace.

**Central Africa**

Central Africa is a landlocked area where people rely on subsistence farming. Apart from being surrounded by the land and the hills, it "is located in the middle of the African tectonic plate" (Cuviello, "Central Africa" 51) where "rivers are abundant . . . . They are the lifeline of the region and are sustained by high amounts of precipitation" ("Central Africa" 51). As a result of heavy rainfall, as Cuviello mentions "communication is hindered" ("Central Africa" 53) in the area. The geographical feature of the district eventually shapes the behaviours and the mood of the characters. As Laurel J. Hummel notes, "the physical environment – climates and landforms, vegetation patterns and stream channels – as well as the processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement on that environment" (*Understanding*

*Africa* xv) provide an insight into how the physical features of a place affect its inhabitants. The two rivers in Lessing's story separate the farms and the houses and function as a border between them. The Slatters' house, for instance, is "twelve miles off" (Lessing 126) from the Pritts' and is located "across the miles of country" (Lessing 121). The frequent rain in the district causes the rivers to rise and they become "impassable for hours," (Lessing 126) which does not allow people, particularly Mr Slatter, to leave his house to meet his lover, Mrs Pritt.

The title of the story reveals the relationship between the characters and their environment. The primary meaning of "get off" refers to "an escape from potentially unpleasant consequences" and "leave," (vocabulary.com)[38] and "altitude" indicates "the height of an object or point in relation to sea level or ground level" (OED).[39] The change in altitude affects people: "As altitude rises, air pressure drops. In other words, if the indicated altitude is high, the air pressure is low. . . . Decreased air pressure means that less oxygen is available for breathing" (nationalgeographic.org). It means that high altitude causes serious symptoms of altitude sickness such as headache, dizziness and lung damage. The combination of the two words, "get off" and "altitude," in the title, then, might show how the characters of the story are affected by the geographical features of their dwelling. As the narrator describes, since Central Africa is "high, nearly four thousand feet" (Lessing 128) its inhabitants feel fatigue, and want "a rest from the altitude in the air at sea level" (Lessing 128) from time to time, so they go down the hill to recover. Despite its geographically enclosed structure with patriarchal values as the white settler farmer being the head of the family, high altitude, low air pressure and the rivers impeding travelling from one house to another lead to the constitution of an alternative lifestyle with married couples having extra marital affairs.

There are approximately fourty families on the farm living together "over a hundred square miles or so," therefore, "nothing happen[s] privately" (Lessing 124). The nature of an enclosed district due to the geographical features of Central Africa brings about a forced close interaction between these family members in the form of parties, as they do not have an alternative life outside the place. A hierarchically

[38] All vocabulary.com references are taken from site https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/ accessed on 29 April, 2017.
[39] All OED references are taken from site https://en.oxforddictionaries.com accessed on 29 April, 2017.

structured family is observed in the story with the father ruling over the household, and the relations between the two genders are of primary importance. The Farquars, for instance, are "conventional and religious people" (Lessing 124): Mr Farquar is a farmer doing business with the other farmers in the district and a domestic husband who spends time with his family, while Mrs Farquar is a stereotypical housewife who deals with household chores. From the focalisation of their daughter, they sometimes "disagreed and perhaps raised their voices and then afterwards laughed and kissed each other" (Lessing 127). For the narrator, they are one of the role models for "married people" who "quarell but that doesn't mean they aren't happy together" (Lessing 127). The Pritts have a distanced husband-and-wife relationship, unlike the Farquars. Mrs Pritt keeps company with another man from the district, Mr Slatter, and her husband is an insignificant character with no existence in the story. The Slatters, on the other hand, with whom the narrator spends time staying in their house, play an effective role in her initiation into adulthood, because the narrator as an observer of the neighbours becomes a witness to Mr Slatter's oppression of his wife, Mrs Slatter's submission to her husband and conversion of their four boys into "tough and indifferent" (Lessing 124) male figures like their father.

Apart from these families, the assistants from different farms as well as the children and adolescents are a part of this enclosed society, which is governed by social norms. As Butler argues in "The Question of Social Transformation," norms are necessary in order to live well and "to know in what direction to transform our social world" (3) but also norms constrain our lives for the purpose of social justice which "brings about opposition and resistance" (3). The depiction of different family structures with distinct individual gender relations from the perspective of a young female in Lessing's story demonstrates how social structures are produced and reproduced through the practice of multiple masculinities and femininities, which problematises the order and creates a kind of heterotopia.[40] Among the emplacement

[40] In contrast to homogeneity and harmony in space, Foucault introduces heterotopia as alternative space to activate struggle and contestation and to challenge hegemony. By doing so, unlike the consolidating aspect of utopia, he provides a heterogeneous space that is "disturbing" (*The Order* xviii). Kevin Hetherington elaborates on Foucault's heterotopology that helps to explain the spatial arrangements of social life in modernity. Like Foucault, he suggests that heterotopias "are spaces in which a new way of ordering emerges that stands in

of heterotopias such as streets, cafes, beaches etc., including a web of relations, what attracts Foucault are the ones that "suspend, neutralize, or reverse the set of relations that are designated, reflected, or represented [*reflechis*] by them" ("The Different Spaces" 178). To this end, Foucault focuses on the real space of individuals who are somehow incompatible with the norms and values of the dominant order. In that respect, the district in the story is a patriarchal heterotopia in which there are people in a state of crisis, such as "adolescents" ("The Different Spaces" 24) like the narrator and people "whose behaviour is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm" ("The Different Spaces" 25) like the Slatters and the Pritts. Either in the form of crisis or deviation, these people show their resistance to the dominant social order and transgress their limits by means of having flexible relations. Their moving down to the sea level to recover from the negative effects of the altitude on their bodies could also be related to an escape from the heterotopic disorder in the altitude to a way of normalisation within the confinements of patriarchal ideology, which might provide them a sense of peacefulness.

The power relations between men and women in the district reflect the multifarious gender practices, which in one way or another, give insight into how their society is socially and culturally shaped. The attitudes of male characters such as Mr Slatter, Mr Pritt, Mr Farquar and Mrs Slatter's lover, Mr Andrews, towards women – despite differences in personality, occupation and social relations – might represent the social structure of the society. For Raewyn Connell, "the construction of masculinity in everyday life, the importance of economic and institutional structures, the significance of differences among masculinities and the contradictory and dynamic character of gender" (*Masculinities* 35) suggest that gender is not fixed, but constantly evolving through interaction and conflict in everyday life. According to Connell, the contradictory and complicated nature of gender can be explained in relation to "three-fold model of the structure of gender, distinguishing relations of (a) power, (b) production and (c) cathexis (emotional attachment)" (*Masculinities* 73-74). The power relations impose the dominance of men and subordination of women, in patriarchy. The production relations (agrarian in this story) show how the economic

contrast to the taken-for-granted mundane idea of social order that exists within society" (*The Badlands* 40).

system is controlled by men rather than women and cathexis indicates heterosexuality as a naturally accepted gender order. Such gender relations can also be explained with reference to Antonio Gramsci's hegemony to understand operations of power. As Gramsci puts it, rather than "direct domination" ("The Formation of the Intellectuals" 1142) exercised through the State, hegemony is "spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" ("The Formation of the Intellectuals" 1143). In that case, not only the male but also the female characters contribute to the naturalisation of dominant order whose values and norms become acceptable and applicable to all. Hegemony is, what Gramsci calls "manufactured consent" ("The Formation of the Intellectuals" 1137) given by people and maintained through the male authority in conjunction with the consent of women to the existing social order.

In order to reveal how the order in the district works in terms of manufactured consent and how it is problematised through individual gender practices, Connell's theory of multiple masculinities helps to understand male ideology. Among Connell's four types of masculinities, the first one is "hegemonic masculinity" (*Masculinities* 76) that "occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (*Masculinities* 76). It is "a configuration of gender practice . . . . which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (*Masculinities* 77). Mr Slatter represents hegemonic masculinity not only as the strongest and most frightening man of the district but also as the embodiment of gendered social structure of the society. As the narrator describes, he is "a square fair man," (Lessing 123) the word "square" referring to "a person considered to be old-fashioned or boringly conventional in attitude and behaviour" (OED) might show his conservative personality. Because he is a farmer, his "puffed cracked lips" (Lessing 123) suggest the hardwork on the farm. He has a terrifying presence for almost everybody in the district even for his own boys.

The narrator portrays him as a brutal man who carries a whip with him, which is a symbol not only of his masculine dominance over women and children but also of white male power in Central Africa. She remembers:

> Most people were frightened of Mr Slatter. There were four Slatter boys, and when the old man was in a temper and waving the whip he always had with him, they ran off into the bush and stayed there until he had cooled down. All the natives on their

> farm were afraid of him. Once when he knew their houseboy had stolen some soap he tied him to a tree in the garden without food and water all of one day, and then through the night, and beat him with his whip every time he went past, until the boy confessed. (Lessing 122)

In relation to his abusive attitude towards the natives, he is a cruel coloniser, cultivating the land, exploiting nature and people. His physical power is also reinforced through his wife's repetition of the fact that Mr Slatter "doesn't know his own strength" (Lessing 123, 125, 132). On one occasion, to illustrate, when he comes up, he takes "a handful of tow-hair from the heads of whichever of his sons were nearest," (Lessing 123) grins at his wife, Molly and "stamp[s] off in his big farm boots into the house" (Lessing 123). That means, he walks with heavy and forceful steps, which suggests his physical impact on the people around him. In response to his actions, the boys tighten their fists, "their eyes fill[ing] slowly," (Lessing 123) do not say a word and grin back to Mr Slatter, which shows their fear and feeling under pressure. In relation to his dominating personality and physical strength, for the narrator and Mr Farquar, Mr Slatter is "a tough customer," (Lessing 122) a difficult person with whom one has to deal. Mr Slatter's addressing his wife through a series of nicknames, all of which relate to her physical appearance might also be exemplary of his oppression. The flower imagery,[41] such as the bluebell[42] and the primrose,[43] for instance, is used to mock Mrs Slatter's certain physical and personality traits through the lens of her husband. He does not sleep with his wife yet has an affair with Mrs Pritt. He goes to see her when the rivers are passable and spends "every weekend from

[41] As Michael Ferber notes "Flowers, first of all, are girls. Their beauty, their beauty's brevity, their vulnerability to males who wish to pluck them – these features and others have made flowers, in many cultures, symbolic of maidens, at least to the males who have set those cultures' terms" (*A Dictionary of Literary Symbols* 74).

[42] The first flower that Mrs Slatter is associated with is the bluebell. When Mr Slatter sees her "struggling with [a petticoat which is too small for her] in front of the mirror," he says, "What size do you think *you* are Bluebell?" (Lessing 125). The bluebell with its bell-like shape is meant to refer symbolically to her physical appearance, namely her wasp waist and large hips. In response to her husband's degrading address objectifying her, she accepts the fact that she has put on more weight than she knew.

[43] The second flower that is identified with Mrs Slatter is the primrose which derives from the Latin *prima rosa* meaning, 'first rose' of the year, despite not being a member of the rose family. Coming home, Mr Slatter says "What have you been doing with your lily-white hands today, Primrose?," (Lessing 125) refering to her daily activities. "Lily-white" suggests purity and is also used as an adjective to mean irreproachable," (www.etymonline.com) and in this context connotes Mr Slatter's sarcasm about his wife because for him, Mrs Slatter is an ineligible woman who sexually rejects her husband.

Friday night to Monday morning and nearly every night from after supper until morning" (Lessing 128) with her. His going between the two farms is directly associated with the movement of the rivers going up and down, which signifies their sexual intercourse. When "the rivers are down" Mr Slatter is "off" having sex with Mrs Pritt and when the rivers are on, he is having a non-consensual sexual intercourse with Mrs Slatter. In either case, he is active and making use of women. His frequent visits to Mrs Pritt might be a replacement for what is lacking in his relationship with his wife, which also sheds light on their separate bedrooms.

The second type of masculinity is related to the subordination of some men who do not fit into the heterosexual standards of living. Although there are no implications of homosexuality in the story, Mr Prittt about whom none of the other characters know much, might evoke an indirect feeling of subordination in terms of occupation and physical characteristics. Mr Pritt is an accountant and does not have a relation to farming, so it is Mr Slatter helping Mrs Pritt to run their farm. As the narrator explains, Mr Pritt is "an ordinary man, not like a farmer . . . . who could do anything; he might have been anybody, or an office person" (Lessing 128). Unlike Mr Slatter's physical strength and dominating personality, he is also "ordinary in height, thinnish, with his pale hair leaving his narrow forehead high and bony" (Lessing 128). Mr Pritt seems to be an insignificant character suggested with the repetition of "ordinary," "anything" and "anybody" in both of the above mentioned quotes, which might imply his inferior position compared to Mr Slatter. Moreover, Mr Pritt presumably does not have a sense of belonging to his house or family, because he spends most of his time outside his farm, sometimes "at neighbouring farms doing their accounts," sometimes "at the station, or at gymkhanas" (Lessing 128). He has no other social, spatial or emotional presence in the story, but in fact, his spending time out of his house like Mr Slatter might support the indifference of the couple to one another.

The third type of masculinity refers to men who are complicit "in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without tensions or risks of being the frontline troops of patriarchy" (Connell 79). As Connell argues, such men "respect their wives, and mothers, are never violent towards women, do their accustomed share of the housework, bring home the family wage" (*Masculinities* 80). Mr Farquar seems to fit in the description of complicit masculinity because he is apparently a gentleman

showing respect to women. Although Mr Farquar seems to have an understanding and sympathy towards women, in fact, he is one of the conventional men representing the male view of gender relations. Thereupon the discussion on the sexual liaison, he justifies the idea that there is "obviously" (Lessing 124) an affair between Mr Slatter and Mrs Pritt because of their flamboyant intimacy and similar personal characteristics. What makes Mr Farquar a stereotypical man is not related to his claim but to his view that "it depends on how Molly takes it. Because if she doesn't take it the right way, she could make it hell for herself" (Lessing 124). The repetition of the phrase "take it the right way" by Mrs Farquar with a questioning manner and "protesting eyes" (Lessing 124) puts more emphasis and criticism on male view of such an extra marital affair. For him, Mrs Slatter is supposed to take it as it is and accept it as a part of family life, otherwise she would be unhappy. In relation to this liaison, Mr Farquar states that Mr Slatter "was taking things a bit far," (Lessing 128) because Mr Slatter "might be as strong as a herd of bulls but . . . . should have a sense of proportion" (Lessing 128). Mr Slatter's engagement in sexually energetic pursuits is emphasised by the "bull" metaphor which, for Mr Farquar, needs to be balanced rather than avoided. Hence, as the representative of complicit masculinity, like hegemonic masculinity, Mr Farquar upholds male dominance.

Finally, Mr Andrews (George) who joins the society as the assistant of Mr Slatter is a young and single man who could be associated with the last type of masculinity, named as "marginalization" (Connell 80) because of racial and class relations in the gender order. As the narrator states, based on Mrs Slatter's words, Mr Andrews is "a gentleman. He had been educated at Cambridge in England. He came of a hard-up family, though, for he had only a few hundred pounds of capital of his own. He would be an assistant for two years and then start his own farm" (Lessing 128). Both his educational background and class make him a marginalised man in the district. However, his Cambridge background does not protect him from being influenced by the geographical features of Central Africa, because "he was already brown, and his clothes were loosened up and easy, as our men's clothes were" (Lessing 129). In addition to his English background and changing physical appearance, the narrator emphasises his "pink and wettish" (Lessing 129) mouth and lips which she dislikes. The emphasis put on the colour of the mouth and lips of the assistant might provide a deeper meaning related to his personality. Pink is "a variant

of red" – a colour of passion – and "an unnatural colour that symbolizes romance, love, and gentle feelings" (Cerrato 22) and also "denotes feminine qualities and passiveness" (Cerrato 17). His pink mouth and lips paradoxically do not evoke such comforting and calming feelings but when it is used to define wettish lips, pink can conjure up sexual imagery and emotional energies. As Connell notes, these categories of masculinity do not serve for the purpose of fixing male characters but "configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships" (*Masculinities* 81). The deployment of masculinities in terms of alternative gender practices and relations subverts the "heterosexual hegemony" (Butler 119)[44] by destabilising the superior position of hegemonic masculinity as the legitimate and normative one against which all others are compared.

In such a traditional society where the dynamics of social structure are shaped by power relations between the two genders, even within the same gender, through individual and collective practices, the women of the district are depicted in a variety of ways from the focalisation of the narrator who is in the process of becoming. Like Connell's theory of masculinities, Butler's gender performativity provides a useful way to destabilise the hegemonic masculinity and femininity as fixed and "coherent gender[s]" ("Gender as Performance" 119) as well as the social and spatial practices attached to each. Mrs Farquar, for instance, is a traditional woman, acting in accordance with the social values of the society and thus, her gender identity is "instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*" ("Performative Acts" 519). Her first name is never mentioned because she defines herself only in relation to her husband. She is such a conformist woman that she cannot understand how it is possible for Mr Slatter and Mrs Pritt to have an affair. Even she uttters "the word, affair, with difficulty" (Lessing 124) in an argument with her husband because "it was not her language" (Lessing 124). She is the representative of a conventional viewpoint and makes judgement about the way the other women dress or behave. Her focus is on Mrs Slatter, since Mr Farquar has a close and caring relationship with her. She takes the social constructions like gender roles and relations for granted, which provides a

[44] In an interview by Peter Osborne and Lynne Segal, Butler explains that "The heterosexual matrix became a kind of totalizing symbolic, and that's why I changed the term in *Bodies That Matter* to heterosexual hegemony. This opens the possibility that this is a matrix which is open to rearticulation, which has a kind of malleability" ("Gender as Performance" 119).

feeling of belonging to and being a part of society and "the illusion of an abiding gendered self" ("Performative Acts" 519).

Viewed from the perspective of the narrator, Mrs Pritt is "a thin wiry tall woman with black short jumpy hair. She had a sharp knowing face and a sudden laugh like the scream of a hen caught by the leg. Her voice was always loud, and she laughed a great deal" (Lessing 123-24). The metaphorical use of the "hen" might indicate her domesticity, sexuality as well as gossipy personality. Her "sharp knowing face" can be related to her experience and reckless personality. The narrator thinks Mr Slatter and Mrs Pritt fit one another because of their "tough" behaviours and extremism in their reactions like flirting with each other publicly regardless of what other people think or feel. While Mrs Slatter and the boys are sitting and waiting in the car, in one occasion, Mr Slatter comes out of the bar with Mrs Pritt and keeps talking on the store veranda with her for half an hour. Their body language is really important to reveal how they make sexual advances to each other. Mr Slatter "stood before her, legs apart, in his way of standing, head back on his shoulders, eyes narrowed, grinning, red fists loose at his sides" (Lessing 123). His legs apart, partly closed eyes, broad smile and loose fists evoke his relaxed position and sexual posturing. In a similar way, Mrs Pritt, in her short and "tight shrill green dress," "let her weight slump on to one hip and lolled in front of him" (Lessing 123). Her extravagantly showy dress and hanging her body loosely also suggest how she is playful and sexually attracted to him. Unlike Mrs Farquar's conformity to socially and culturally constructed gender roles as a submissive woman, Mrs Pritt's different enactments of gender, gestures and movements can be interpreted as the "subversive repetition of that style" ("Performative Acts" 520) practiced by Mrs Farquar.

Molly Slatter, on the other hand, is a center of attention because of her married life with Mr Slatter and secret affair with Mr Andrews. At the beginning of the story, she is depicted as a submissive woman, busy with cooking, sewing, gardening, taking care of children and complying with her husband's wishes and commands, and by doing so, gives her consent to the maintenance of social order. Like Mrs Farquar, she performs gendered norms prescribed by hegemonic society without question and reproduces the given social structure where roles for each gender are fixed and gender hierarchies are maintained. The practice of such acts which are, as Butler argues, "*performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to

express are *fabrications* manufactured" (*Gender Trouble* 173). Gender performativity not only refers to the repetition of social rituals, but also depends on individual subversion of them because it is an interplay between giving manufactured consent to and contesting these norms in individual ways.

What differentiates Mrs Slatter from the other submissive women, however, is that she engages in "a close imitation of the socially approved roles, but in such a way as to call them into question," (Digeser 660) because she has the power to problematise that structure by constituting her gender not as a woman of passive performer but a woman in the process of performativity. Mrs Slatter's relation to Mr Andrews and expressing her desire as she wishes can be interpreted as a performative act disrupting the normalised and naturalised way of living for women in the district. Despite conforming to her gender role as housewife, Mrs Slatter shows her resistance to her husband's sexual attempts, saying "leave me alone" and "*I won't let you make use of me*" (Lessing 126) and locking her bedroom to avoid his entry. As another example for her individual gender enactment, she follows her desire, has an affair with Mr Andrews and breaks up with him when she thinks it needs to end. Hence, the analysis of various male and female characters authenticates gender as instability, performativity and fluidity.

The Slatter's house displays how social and gender relations are revealed, because it becomes the center of the district due to its large spatial structure and serves as a place for dance, wedding and Christmas parties. Hence, it is more than a simple private sphere of the Slatter family and is imbued with multiple layers of meaning and function in accordance with the lived experience of the other people. From the focalisation of the narrator, the Slatters's house

> was a big house, rooms sprawling everywhere. The boys had two rooms and a playroom off at one end of long stone passage. Dairies and larders and kitchen opened off the passage. Then a dining-room and some offices and a study. Then the living-room. And another passage off at an angle, with the room where I slept and beside it Mrs Slatter's big bedroom with the double bed and after that a room they called the workroom, but it was an ordinary room and Mr Slatter's things were in it, with a bed. (Lessing 126-27)

This physical representation of the house, with the organisation of rooms and the kitchen, constitutes the perceived space or firstspace which is, in Soja's terms,

"directly sensible and open, within limits, to accurate measurement and description" (*Thirdspace* 66). There are two corridors in the house: one is a "long stone passage" like a straight line on which the boys's rooms, their playroom and the spaces for storage of food and drinks, namely dairies, larders and the kitchen open to. The dining-room, the living-room, offices and the study-room also open to the long stone corridor, because they are used as the common areas of the house.

The other corridor which is "at an angle" evokes an isolated space opening to the private rooms of the house. Room, as Juan Eduardo Cirlot notes, "is a symbol of individuality – of private thoughts," (*A Dictionary of Symbols* 262) and thus, the corridor and its connection to private rooms might have various connotations other than their seclusion, and give clues about the relations in the house. The fact that Mrs Slatter has a big bedroom with a double bed, and Mr Slatter has an ordinary workroom with a bed and his stuff, for instance, might evoke separate world of their own. The use of the adverb "off" to describe the location of corridors and rooms might also signify the distance between the parents's bedrooms and the rest of the house and its grandeur. Corridors are in-between spaces which might be perceived as boundaries that both connect and separate. In a way, they suggest the connection between the separated parts of the house. In addition to its variety of rooms, the house has a veranda where Mrs Slatter, the narrator and the boys spend time together.

This house becomes a socially lived space during the parties in Lefebvre's terms because it is the only house in the district that is open to all people, including different age groups like the children, the young and the adults as well as different classes like that of the farm owners and assistants. As Lefebvre argues there is a mutual relationship between bodies and spaces they occupy because each body has the capacity to develop social relations in space and so produces that space. In that respect, the Slatters's house is not only produced by people in multiple ways but also each individual is affected by the socio-spatial aspect of the house. As an example, while for the children the house is nothing more than a playground, it offers a possibility for the adolescents to show themselves to the opposite sex by producing themselves as bodies in the social dimension of the house and attributing meaning to that space. For the adults (married and single), on the other hand, the meaning of the house varies in relation to their gender, class, age, sexual preference or lifestyle. Like Lefebvre's social space, the house includes and depends on the spatial trialectics,

which cannot successfully be comprehended in isolation. For instance, the material conditions of the house (the placement of the rooms and their usage) and how it is conceived as the domestic/private space of the Slatter family is combined with its social function and lived experience of all people. Unlike the reductionist conceptualisation of the house as perceived and conceived (Lefebvre's terms) or firstspace and secondspace (Soja's terms), the Slatter's house as a social center provides a different way of thinking about space because only then it is possible to understand the complexity of social relations, gender identities and individual experiences. Configuring space is both related to what is or is not appropriate to do and to how it is reproduced in new and alternative contexts as in the example of the Slatters's house. The everyday activities and the behaviours of the Slatter family in the house can be considered as part of the spatial practices observed within the dimension of physical space; however, the act of joining together in the parties enable people to show their potential to constitute a new social space and transform them from being passive recipients to active producers in space in relation to their lived experiences.

In addition to being a social space, the Slatter's house can also be regarded as thirdspace not only because of its social openness but also of being a liminal space between the oppositions like the private and the public. By building upon Lefebvre's criticism of dualistic relationship in thinking about space, Soja suggests thirdspace perspective, which emphasises the importance of differences and embraces a combination of oppositions in new contexts. In that respect, the Slatters's house creates alternative zones to enable mutual interaction among men and women, boys and girls, adults and adolescents or owners and assistants rather than forming a sharp distinction between them. The fact that spaces in the house like the rooms, passages, the living-room, the dining-room or the veranda may be defined as both public and private makes the house embedded with new meanings. On the one hand, the Slatters' house, which is expected to be private physically and functionally, becomes a public space by alternative forms of use. The living-room and the veranda, for example, used for everyday spatial practices by the Slatter family members are now produced as a social space where people drink, dance and have fun together. It is the Slatters's house that is produced and reproduced regularly by a variety of people and their lived

experiences in that particular space, which differentiates it from the other houses of the district.

When the narrator is fifteen years old, at a transition age, getting ready to move into adulthood, she describes the dance party as follows: "the married people sat in the living-room and danced in it, and we were on the verandas" (Lessing 129-30). After a year at Christmas party, the narrator, in her first long dress and having her first dance, gives a more detailed description of the living-room from which "came the sound of singing, a noise like howling, because people were drunk, or part-drunk, and it had the melancholy savage sound of people singing when they are drunk. An awful sound, like animals, howling" (Lessing 133). This reminds the narrator "when dogs howl at the full moon" (Lessing 120). When it is full moon, there is light at night, which enables the dogs, like wolves, to communicate with each other and hunt their preys easily. In relation to the comparison of people to the dogs and their singing to howling, the flirtatious and playful tendencies between men and women could be interpreted as hunter and prey relationship. As it is obvious, the living-room is transformed from being a part of the domestic sphere to a public and social one where meaning is produced constantly through the relations between both genders. As another example, Mrs Slatter and Mr Andrews have sex in the corridors and turn them into alternative spaces. From the viewpoint of the narrator, after having sex, the way they appear from the two ends of the corridors like performing artists also evoke some kind of a play on stage. Their making use of corridors for such a purpose causes a restriction for the narrator for a while, because she cannot go out of the room she hides in and watches them. Actually, the passages can no longer be classified as public and private sites due to their temporary and changing function. Because of its multiple uses, in the Slatter's house, giving fixed understanding of space is not possible and the distinctions between the public and the private are blurred because the house becomes an alternative space.

Although the Slatters' house is depicted on the surface as a space for social interaction that may cause relaxation and entertainment, it is actually a space of contradiction and contestation because of differences between people and their lived experiences. The Slatters' house is a location for liberation from the repression of social norms as well as control through social criticism, or it is both at the same time. Viewed from the perspective of the narrator, for instance, the veranda of the house

where children dance becomes a space of self-expression and readiness for her first kiss. Now a grown-up girl of sixteen or seventeen, in her first long dress, she wants the assistant whom she loves to reflect his desire for her as a sexually attractive woman because heretofore, "he had never seen [her] at all" (Lessing 133) at the station or gymkhanas. Thus, the long dress which can only be worn at a party like the one at the Slatters' house enables the narrator to show her bodily presence in a socially produced space. However, when the assistant kisses her, she slaps on the face. Because he was drunk like so many people in the party, "the way he kissed [her] was not at all what [she] had been thinking" (Lessing 133). Considering the distinct responses of the two to their first intimacy might also reveal the differences between the genders because while the assistant takes it something as usual and ordinary, the narrator assigns meanings to that experience. Her disappointing experience with the kiss causes the narrator to reconstitute the veranda as a space of confrontation with the opposite sex.

The living-room also turns into a space of social pressure felt through the critical gaze of the others when "Mr Slatter was dancing with Emmy Pritt, and sometimes with another woman, and Mrs Slatter was busy being hostess and dancing with George Andrews" (Lessing 130). Since they are married people and having intimate connections with others, they become the focus of attention and are exposed to social criticism in this room. The Slatters' house with its various aspects provides not only the production of social space and social relations but also acts of confrontation. Soja's thirdspace, as is reflected in the Slatters' house, is a flexible concept that welcomes "a multiplicity of perspectives" (*Thirdspace* 5) and change in terms of identities, relations and spaces, and thus, is a dynamic and open location for the people who attempt to enhance social interactions and perform transgressive practices. That is why the Slatters's house as the reflection of the enclosed district in Central Africa could also be interpreted in terms of Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopias. Foucault, by introducing a heterogeneous space to activate struggle and contestation, creates not consolidating but "disturbing" (*The Order of Things* xviii) heterotopias where "an alternative social ordering is performed" (Hetherington 40). The Slatters' house as an alternative space embracing a network of relations and people's lived epxeriences unsettles the private/public dichotomy and thus, lays bare for gender performativity.

The Slatters' house as a public and social place also serves for the interplay between the body and the gaze as is observed in the dresses worn by Mrs Slatter and the narrator as well as the nicknames used by Mr Slatter for his wife. Clothing, which displays social and cultural values, plays an expressive and transformative role in relation to the dresses women wear in the district. Mrs Slatter and the narrator, like all other women, are expected to conform to the conventional dresscode which is taught by the society. Early in the story, when the narrator was ten or eleven years old, Mrs Slatter, for instance, "used to make her own dresses, cotton prints and pastel linens . . . . Once she made herself a petticoat that was too small for her to get into . . . ." (Lessing 124-25). Although the origin of "petticoat" refers to "a small coat" worn by men under armor, it turned into a garment worn by women and children, and thus, became a symbol of female sex (OED), and as an appropriate dress it is worn by women in the district. When the narrator was fifteen, she was "still in a short dress and unhappy," (Lessing 130) which prevents her from being recognized by the opposite sex. The narrator's association of the long dress with recognition is also an illusion, because her desire for that dress does not derive from her own preference but is rooted in an internalised and naturalised way of dressing. In that respect, the petticoat and the short dress worn by Mrs Slatter and the narrator are not their free choices but socially imposed dresscode of the district.

Mrs Slatter's capacity to arouse interest in others brings about the importance of the gaze which not only has an impact on the perception and sense of one's self but also indicates a hierarchical relationship between the subject who looks at and the objectified other who is looked at. The necessity of dressing up appropriately for women is also related to the patriarchal ideology that sees women as passive objects (the gazed) and men as active subjects (the gazer). John Berger, who studies visual representations of culture in Western art in *Ways of Seeing*, claims that "the social presence of woman is different in kind from that of man" (37). While man's physical, social, and economic presence is felt through his exercise of power over the others, "a woman's presence expresses her own attitude to herself, and defines what can and cannot be done to her. Her presence is manifest in her gestures, voice, opinions, expressions, clothes, chosen surroundings, taste" (*Ways of Seeing* 37). For the narrator, wearing a long dress is the dress code her role models, like her mother and other women, convince her to follow.

Mrs Slatter exhibits her difference from other women with her party dresses.[45] At the same party when the narrator wears her first long dress, she is depicted in "her red satin dress" (Lessing 120) with "its criss-cross of narrow sweat-darkened straps over the aging white back," (Lessing 121) which draws attention and criticism of the Farquars. Although there is an implication of growing old in relation to her "aging white back," Mrs Slatter, in her choice of such an eye-catching and revealing dress with red colour, reveals her beauty. While Mrs Farquar heavily criticises her evening dresses because they "look like a cheap night-club," (Lessing 121) Mr Farquar temperately expresses his opinion of the dress: "It's a – pretty colour. But . . . . There's not much *to* that dress" (Lessing 121). Mrs Farquar's comparison of them to cheap night-club dresses might be a sign of her jealousy as well as her participation in her husband's critique of Mrs Slatter from a male perspective. Although Mr Farquar appreciates her attractive appearance with reference to the dress's "pretty colour," he implies his disapproval. Within the socially constructed order, the image of a woman is controlled by patriarchy through the exercise of gazing as a way of pleasure and of criticism. Like Berger's analysis of the gaze in terms of a hierarchy between the male gazer and the female gazed, Laura Mulvey[46] by renaming male as "the bearer of the look of the spectator" and female as "the spectacle," ("Visual Pleasure" 437) criticises male gaze "in which man can live out his fantasies and obssessions" ("Visual Pleasure" 433). This gaze is also supported by women who look through a male perspective. In this sense, the couple – Mr and Mrs Farquar – represent the male and female voice and gaze of patriarchal social structure, respectively.

[45] For example, the "electric blue crepe dress with diamonds on the straps and in flower patterns on the hips" with "a deep V in front which showed her breasts swinging loose under the crepe" and "the back cut down to the waist" (Lessing 131) which she wore at the narrator's first dance party sharply contrasts with her petticoat. She is aware of her beauty and makes use of the dress as a means of appearing to others in the party. For her, that dress might be a way for creating a sense of perception and expression that liberates herself from the restrained social presence of women. Electric blue is a vivid and bright colour. The crepe dress is composed of lightweight fabric such as cotton or silk with a fine crinkled or ringed surface. Diamonds as the hardest and most valuable of precious stones and the flower patterns on the hips also add beauty to the spectacular dress. Daring decolettes both in the front and at the back are also suggestive of sexuality. Considering all these details, Mrs Slatter's preference of such a dress presumably has a symbolic value in her attempt to get rid of her fears and release her desires.

[46] Laura Mulvey, in her article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" discusses the influence of the male gaze, particularly in Hollywood movies, from a feminist perspective.

What is common about Mrs Slatter's evening dresses is their bright colour, attractive decolettes and fine quality fabrics. Because of her choice of such dresses, she seems to be "the active controller of the look" ("Visual Pleasure" 438) and enjoying the gaze. Contrary to social expectations of a married woman in proper dresses – petticoats in this case – Mrs Slatter makes use of her bodily beauty and sexuality as a means of self-expression and blurs the limits of gender definition. The evening dresses worn by Mrs Slatter have the potential to be a powerful tool of self-transformation from being a submissive housewife into a flirtatious woman enjoying the gaze, but only if they can be successfully separated from the limiting and confining understanding of proper clothing as is reflected in the Farquars's critical utterances. Especially the analysis of Mrs Slatter's stance in the society with her distinct dresses and her relations to men might provide an alternative way of looking at the image of woman and as Mulvey puts it, "analyzing pleasure, or beauty, destroys [the patriarchal image of women]" ("Visual Pleasure" 434). In addition, the two women's attempt to express their desire by wearing these dresses takes place not in the domestic sphere of their houses but in the lived space of the Slatters's house, which invites alternative modes of thinking about gender performativity taking place in a social space.

Apart from nicknaming Mrs Slatter by the flower imagery in private space, the other labels Mr Slatter uses for his wife during the parties are "Lady Godiva" and "Sister Theresa"[47] (Lessing 132). Labeling her with the names of popular figures in the social space of the Slatters' house is another aspect of the gaze and can be interpreted as a deliberate attack on her sexual aloofness. The allusion to Lady

[47] Contrary to Mr Slatter's assumption of Sister Theresa as a lonely figure living in a world of fantasy, Meg Greene, in the Preface to *Mother Teresa A Biography*, claims that "[o]n the surface, she appears almost one-dimensional, living a simple life devoted to her calling and her faith. Closer inspection, however, reveals a personality so rife with contradictions that it is difficult to explain her motives and purposes" (ıx). Sister Theresa is criticised for becoming a popular figure because her devotion to the poor children of Calcutta contradicts with this popularity. In a similar way, Mrs Slatter's devotion to her husband and children contradicts with her temporal affair with the assistant and acceptance of her husband's liasion. Despite the simplicity of their lives, while Sister Theresa has a huge impact on the world, Mrs Slatter has a more effective influence on the young narrator than the other women in the district including Mrs Farquar. "Although [Sister Teresa] appeared indifferent to the attention, she was aware of it and, for example, allowed the media to publish poignant photographs of her working among the poor and the dying to illustrate their plight" (Greene xi). Similarly, the way Mrs Slatter dresses, her beauty, married life and affair, whether she divorces or not, everything she does becomes a subject for public consumption and social criticism.

Godiva[48] is an important one, as it suggests issues of the feminine and the masculine. According to the legend, Lady Godiva was married to Leofric, the Lord of Mercia who ruled Anglo-Saxon England for years. Despite being a wealthy, privileged and devout noblewoman, she is remembered for a naked ride on a horse through the town of Coventry to convince her husband to remit the burdensome tax on the people of Coventry. Mr Slatter's calling his wife forth to the living room "Come here, Lady Godiva . . . . Give us a kiss" (Lessing 132) recalls the legend of Lady Godiva and the use of "us" evokes a group of people in the party. Not naked like Lady Godiva, the way she dresses distinct from the other women in the party, also suggests her sexual beauty and attractiveness. Unlike Leofric, who banned gazing at Lady Godiva as she rode naked through the streets of Coventry, Mr Slatter, by drawing attention to his wife, exposes her to the party people and invites voyeurism. Her identification with Lady Godiva evokes the idea that Mrs Slatter might have crossed the social boundary in terms of gender relations in order to meet her desires.

Despite being married to the strongest man with high social status of the district, Mrs Slatter has an affair with her husband's assistant inferior to him. They secretly keep company with each other, which provides both of them a sense of security needed to indulge in their individual sexual preferences. However, when their affair becomes public, it is Mrs Slatter who is accused of having indiscreet connection to the assistant. Despite being under the critical gaze of the district, she lets her desire flow, and transgresses her role as a housewife. In response to Mr Slatter's twisting her arm and holding her steady within his hips and legs, Mrs Slatter's sick face and half scream suggest her despair, but her shut eyes rather than returning the gaze to the people in the living room or her husband might be a kind of compliance with his authority under pressure. However, she is not a vulnerable object of gaze but a self-ordained woman who has her own sexual desire and personal decisions, and cannot stand the male oppression and oversimplification of her body. The allusion to Lady Godiva also brings into question hegemonic masculinity traits represented by Mr Slatter. By exposing his wife to the people in the party, he, in fact, represents himself to the gaze of others in the living room as a cuckolded husband, thus, the living room extends beyond its established conceptualisation as a private space of the house and

[48] The name "Godiva" is the Latin version of the Old English "Godgifu" meaning "God's gift" or "Good gift" (The Godiva Gazette, Vol. 1 Issue 1, 2013-2014).

takes on a new meaning as the space of contestation. This could also be interpreted as the reversal of the subject and object position of the gazer and the gazed, as he becomes the gazed as well as his wife.

Unlike the rest of the house, the only private space is Mrs Slatter's bedroom where she allows neither her husband nor her lover to enter into her space without her consent. As an example, for Mr Slatter, his wife has "bloody pride," (Lessing 132) never gives up withstanding the repression of men in her own way, which she demonstrates through her "bloody locked door" (Lessing 132) and stabilises both men outside the alternative space of her own. On one occasion, the bedroom becomes a place of violence, when Mr Slatter has to stay at home one day because of the impassable rivers. The narrator in the next room overhears Mrs Slatter's pleading voice, because her husband forces her into sexual intercourse without her consent. Although Mrs Slatter cannot avoid it, she does not allow him to have a fulfillment of mutual satisfaction and a feeling of possession of his wife, because she insists on her resistance to her husband's sexual violence by making use of it as a threshold of resistance. The narrator also notices how Mrs Slatter and Mr Andrews manage to have sex secretly without being noticed by the children and the husband in the same house but never in her bedroom, except for once. Mrs Slatter's having an affair with a young man in the corridors and in different rooms as well as her exclusion of both – Mr Andrews and Mr Slatter – from her own locked bedroom shows her determination to keep a space of her own, which can be interpreted as a socio-spatial reaction against the male oppression. By all means, Mrs Slatter becomes a threat against male dominance of women by problematising gender relations and social conventions.

Although Mrs Slatter keeps her bedroom door locked and assumes it to be her own space, the narrator also configures the room as an alternative space of privacy, unbeknown to Mrs Slatter. The bedroom is more than a private space of the husband and the wife because it is not shared by the married couple and extends beyond that usual meaning and function, and becomes a lived space for the narrator. Different from the noisy and crowded atmosphere of the living room, this bedroom is "quiet" (Lessing 133) and twilit. The low lamp light and the silence in the bedroom provides a gloomy atmosphere and a sense of isolation for the two women who escape from the other people in the party and hide in the bedroom with the thought of being alone. In that respect, the thirdspace perspective created in the bedroom shows how it can

be, in Soja's terms, enlarged to involve different perspectives, as is seen in both women's appropriation and configuration of the bedroom. The narrator makes use of the room as a hidden space of refuge where she can be on her own.

Since the whole story is narrated through the lens of the Farquar's daughter, her initiation from childhood to adolescence displays the social dynamics of the society on gender. Throughout the story, she functions not only as the narrator of the story reflecting her own views and letting the characters speak for themselves but also as observer of the events and relations among the characters. Meanwhile, she changes from an innocent girl who sees Mrs Slatter as a role model into a young adult with critical views on both genders. As a child, she describes Mrs Slatter as a nice and dignified woman who tolerates her husband's and four boys's insensitive remarks; however, when she grows older and witnesses Mrs Slatter's affair with Mr Andrews, her views start to change. At first, she thinks that Mrs Slatter is to have a feeling of shame because of this affair as she is a woman "who called men Mister" and "blushed when [her husband] used bad language" (Lessing 131). Her view of sexual relations influenced by her father, Mr Farquar, alters after Mr Andrews's disdaining attitude towards Mrs Slatter when their affair is over. He calls her "old girl" and leaves the place thanking "for the nice interlude" (Lessing 133) meaning "a temporary amusement or diversion that contrasts with what goes before or after" (OED). The narrator develops empathy towards Mrs Slatter at last and "could feel what he said hurting [her]" (Lessing 133) because of his objectification of Mrs Slatter and underestimation of their experience. Upon eavesdropping the dry talk between them, the narrator overhears Mrs Slatter's voice crying, "Oh God, make me old soon, make me old. I can't stand this, I can't stand this any longer," (Lessing 134) which might show her reproach against both her husband and lover because of their maltreatment of her. Thus, the narrator perceives how Mrs Slatter cannot realize her hopes and expectations of love and how her husband and lover manipulate Mrs Slatter, and make her feel insignificant.

The narrator's attempt to understand multiple gender practices and her search for the other, which she particulary associates with Mrs Slatter, finally culminates in the mirror with no reflection of her own image. The notion of the other or Mrs Slatter as the other and the mirror in the bedroom can be regarded as parts of her transformation and processual identity formation. After her experience of the conflicts

between the two genders and acceptance of her changing attitudes towards gender relations, the narrator tries to reconstitute her sense of self as an independent subject. When she looks in the mirror and sees nothing, saying "My face, that night in the mirror, dusted yellow from the lamplight, with the dark watery spaces of the glass behind, was smooth and enquiring, with the pert flattered look of a girl in her first long dress and dancing with the young people for the first time. There was nothing in it, a girl's face, empty" (Lessing 120). She depicts her face with nothing written on it because she has not adapted the images the masculine hegemony assigns to her and she cannot identify with Mrs Slatter any longer. Mrs Slatter's presence enables the narrator to question not only the prescribed gender roles but also deviant behaviours because Mrs Slatter is the role model she has identified with throughout her transformation. However, Mrs Slatter can be the false projection of the narrator and this is why she cannot see anything on her face, which is also reinforced by the use of words such as "dusted" and "yellow" to describe her face connoting fragmentation rather than wholeness. The former word refers to "consisting of tiny particles" and the latter is an intermediate colour between green and orange which also means "a subtractive colour complementary to blue" (OED). Her unstable understanding of gender relations and unclearly described face might imply her nomadic potential because of "a multilayered consciousness of complexity" (*Nomadic* 38). She appears to exemplify a fragmented self which unsettles the established notion of gender but is hold together by compliance with the social norms.

The narrator takes a step further in becoming a nomadic subject as well because she stops playing the roles that substitute for gender identity and her empty face in the mirror can be interpreted as a "nomadic intervention" (*Nomadic* 9) which disrupts the established understanding of the imaginary reflection of the self. Thus, her identity formation seems to be not connected to "an oppositional mode of negation" (*Nomadic* 13) like Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity. Instead of producing a representative other for her self, her reflection or image in the mirror is just a blank sheet, which discloses her unsettled identity. As Braidotti argues, differences between men and women, among women and within each woman cannot be conceptualised "in a Hegelian framework of dialectical opposition and mutual consumption of self and other" (*Nomadic* 17) but can be engaged in interconnections with multiple becomings. The narrator's transformation from childhood to adolescence in which she

passes through an identification process with other women, particularly with Mrs Slatter, does not end in an exploration of false image of the self. Rather, she is involved in connections with other children, young girls and boys and her parents, and in her small trips between her house and the Slatters' experiences nomadic moves which leaves her with an empty face in the mirror.

The empty face can imply a journey of discovering gender identity and sexuality which is not determined by male hegemony. Besides, it reflects a subject who is unable to notice a fixed identity for her. In front of the mirror, the narrator discovers her unstability, which is, as Braidotti puts it in an interview with Butler, "fractured, and constituted over intersecting levels of experience. This multiple identity is relational, in that it requires a bond to the 'Other'; it is retrospective, in that it rests on a set of imaginary identifications, that is to say unconscious internalized images" ("Feminism by Any Other Name" 42). The narrator still has a hold onto the social norms but also welcomes her nomadic shifts in order to protect herself from the hierarchically structured and fixed notions of gender identities.

## CHAPTER IV

## The First Volume of European Stories: *To Room Nineteen*

Lessing's first volume of stories set in mainly in England involves eighteen stories, respectively "The Habit of Loving," "The Woman," "Through the Tunnel," "Pleasure," "The Day Stalin Died," "Wine," "He," "The Other Woman," "The Eye of God in Paradise," "One off the Short List," "A Woman on a Roof," "How I Finally Lost My Heart," "A Man and Two Women," "A Room," "England versus England," "Two Potters," "Between Men," and "To Room Nineteen," which is the title of this collection. Apart from "Through the Tunnel," "The Day Stalin Died," "The Eye of God in Paradise" and "Two Potters," all the other stories focus on issues related to gender with respect to space. Part I displays the classification of the stories into five categories: narratives which take place in transitory spaces including hotels, parks, beaches, streets, taxis, cafes and pubs; those in closed spaces such as houses, flats and rooms; the ones that are set in both; one story about imaginary space; and finally, one set in a semi-open space, on a roof. The discussion of these stories within the framework of space and gender will then be followed by a detailed analysis of "A Woman on a Roof" in Part II.

### Part I: Classification of Stories

### 4.1. Transitory Space

"The Habit of Loving," "The Woman," "Wine," "England versus England," "The Eye of God in Paradise," "Pleasure," "Through the Tunnel" and "The Day Stalin Died" are among the stories that are set in transitory spaces. "The Habit of Loving" recounts George Talbot's relationship with several women and his dependence on love. George is "a man of the theatre" (Lessing 8) who is known for his plays, articles and drama criticism. His marriage with Molly ends in a divorce because of his extra-marital affairs with women, as his wife lists "Philipa, Georgina, Janet *et al*" (Lessing 11). The abbreviation in italics "*et al*" implies George's multiple affairs. In the opening scene, George is about to break up with his latest lover, Myra who does not "like the English climate any longer" (Lessing 7). When George enlists in the army

to go to war, Myra sets up a new life with her children in Australia and becomes "used to missing London. Also, presumably, to missing George Talbot" (Lessing 7). She wants to leave George with whom she associates with London, saying both of which "very probably, played out" (Lessing 7) for Myra.

The last place George meets Myra is the airport, a transitory place that suggests their separation. After that, George starts wandering in the parks of London going from St James's Park to Green Park. "Then, he walked into Hyde Park and through to Kensington Gardens. When the dark came and they closed the great gates of the park he took a taxi home" (Lessing 7). The parks George passes through are also open transitory places that isolate and insulate him from the external world for a while because these parks give a temporal relief from his suffering. Like Freud's comparison of parks with the mental realm of fantasy, which is a reservation from the encroachments of the reality principle, George wants to forget Myra's decision of breaking up and continue his affair in his imagination. The gates in the parks might symbolise the connection between the fantasy world and the real world or the passage from the external space to the inner one. It seems possible for George to have a sense of alienation from his sorrow within the protected borders of the parks, but the closing gates disrupt his concentration on thoughts of Myra.

Although George tries to make himself busy with his job by producing plays and writing articles, he cannot get rid of "heartache" (Lessing 9) which is not a disease or physical pain but "a heart that ached around with him day and night" (Lessing 9) because of loneliness and lovelessness. Since he does not know how to deal with this emptiness in his heart, he goes to see his ex-wife, Molly. When George wants her to remarry him, he learns that she is getting married with a young man in a short time. Having been rejected by the two women of his life, George again throws himself to the parks of the city to escape from the unwelcome reality that he faces: no emotional fulfillment. While walking through the parks, he feels "his heart swollen and painful in his side. When the gates shut, he walked through the lighted streets he had lived in for fifty years of his life, and he was remembering Myra and Molly, as if they were one woman, merging into each other, a shape of warm easy intimacy, a shape of happiness walking beside him" (Lessing 11). Unlike the parks with green areas which provide a sense of detachment from city life, the network of streets in London have spatial patterns that are parallel to or cross each other showing the complexity of city

life. Despite the difference between the two places in terms of providing isolation and connection, George makes use of both the parks and the streets to recollect memories. Similar to his previous walking through the parks where he enters into his imaginary space, he creates a woman in his imagination which has the characteristics of both Myra and Molly to assuage his need for love.

It is not only the parks and streets of London that provide a recreational public space for George, but also his move from the flat where he used to live with Myra "near Marble Arch" (Lessing 7) into a new one "near Covent Garden" (Lessing 7) might show his need to escape from memories. Marble Arch was designed as a gateway to Buckingham Palace yet now is used just as a passage between the neighbourhoods. Covent Garden is a district famous for its shopping, entertainment, restaurants, theatres and museums. While the flat near Covent Garden might enable George to meet and socialise with new people, the previous flat might remind him of the old days with Myra and maintain his connection to the past.

When one day George gets sick and needs nursing, Molly sends him a girl, Bobby Tippett, who is looking for a job and does not mind looking after George for a few weeks. Despite her young age, she is also a strong woman like Myra and Molly. However, George sees her "as a small, brave child, a waif against London" (Lessing 12) because from a male perspective the city might raise difficulties for a young girl like Bobby. This also implies the gendered structure of the city which indicates the public sphere as a place of danger for women, especially connected to sexual violence. Bobby's obedient manners like a child and her charm attract George, so he proposes her because he feels Bobby will replace the emptiness in his heart. Hence, their marriage is based on the substitution of a feeling that George feels as heartache in his heart rather than love.

On their honeymoon, they go to a village in Normandy. Their hotel room is comfortable with a double bed and its windows open to the cherry trees, which symbolise spring and revival of nature. The metaphorical meaning of the cherry trees suggesting new beginnings contradicts with the emotional ties of the newly-wed couple because the way they share the bed might imply the weak ties between them. After making love, to illustrate, they sleep as if they are strangers in the same bed. Bobby's sleep is "unsharable" and so, she turns away from him to "the extreme edge of the bed" (Lessing 16) and does not allow George to hold her in his arms. Unlike

the beginning of their relationship "when quite serious illness had been no obstacle to the sharing of the dark," (Lessing 17) because of George's having cough after the cold spring night, Bobby asks for another bed which she places "in the corner of the room" (Lessing 16). The edge of the double bed and the corner of the room might show Bobby's accustomed individuality and the lack of love in their marriage. A young girl's determination to have a space of her own even within the same bed, and later in another bed can also be interpreted as a performative act which disrupts the conception of a honeymoon room with intimacy and love.

When they are back home, George starts to question their marriage: "This isn't marriage; this isn't love" (Lessing 18). In response, Bobby "recoil[s] from him to the edge of bed," (Lessing 18) sleeps "in a citadel" (Lessing 19) because she does not "like sleeping beside someone very much" (Lessing 20). Bobby's metaphorical use of "citadel" rather than room might show her need for strength and safety. She criticises George for his desire to have somebody in his arms, and perhaps, Bobby tries to avoid being one of those women. Both George and Bobby are lonely because there is not a real communication or sharing between them. What differentiates George from Bobby is that while Bobby has "the capacity for being by herself for hours," (Lessing 20) George cannot survive without the love and care of a woman because of his "habit of loving". In order not to confront the shared unhappiness and loneliness, both George and Bobby go to Italy, travel "from place to place, never stopping anywhere longer than a day" (Lessing 27) because they do not want to have a feeling of attachment to a place or to a person. Despite their need for distance, they end up with returning "to the comfortable old flat in London" (Lessing 27) which does not provide a new beginning for them. The narrator depicts George as "an old pursy man" and Bobby as a middle-aged woman of forty whose "grace and charm submerged into heavy tweed, her hair dragged back, without make-up" (Lessing 28). While Bobby seems to have accepted her ageing, George feels pain in his body due to losing love and energy of their life.

The following three stories, "The Woman," "Wine," and "England versus England" are set in hotels, cafes, pubs and roads which are characterised by transitoriness because of continuous guests and visitors. "The Woman" is about two elderly gentlemen, Herr Scholts and Captain Forster, staying in a hotel in Switzerland. The tension and enmity between the two men due to the First World War and their

nations – the former being German and the latter English – is disclosed through their behaviours and spaces they occupy. Although the hotel is empty in the fall season, their rooms are "opposite each other at the end of a long corridor" (Lessing 31). Whether it is by coincidence or not, the enmity between the German and the English is observed in the way they are given rooms in an empty hotel. Rosa, the waitress, seems to be the buffer zone between them because she is "kept busy until the midday meal" (Lessing 31) by arranging everything for their comfort. The two doors, for instance, open gently at the same moment and Rosa passes smiling through the corridor, "midway between them," (Lessing 31) which causes the men to give each other "contemptuous looks after she had passed" (Lessing 31) and to slam the doors. The closing doors show their reaction towards each other. Since they are "men of weight", "men of substance", and "men who expected deference," (Lessing 32) they observe "the social scene of flirtations and failures and successes with the calm authority" (Lessing 32). The hotel is conceived as a transitory place for Herr Schlotz and Captain Forster but for Rosa, it is a work place where she welcomes the guests and serves them.

Their enmity is also evident when they sit in the terrace and use their newspapers like screens by lifting them up: while Herr Scholtz orders wine from the edge of the newspaper, Captain Forster orders tea with milk from the shelter of it. The use of words such as "screen," "edge," and "shelter" (Lessing 30) might suggest the barrier they put between one another. Despite their conflict, "civilization demanded they should speak" (Lessing 31) and the first subject to talk about is Rosa.

Their hatred towards each other is gradually replaced by a friendly conversation in the empty terrace where they push "the table forward into the last well of golden sunlight" (Lessing 33). The golden sunlight might evoke a sense of reconciliation between the two men. Herr Schlotz feels no longer "a suppliant" (Lessing 33) and in need of Rosa's attention and care. Unlike his previous attempts to draw her attention, "Master to servant, a man who habitually employed labour, he ordered wine without looking at her once" (Lessing 33). As the narrator reveals, the change in their attitudes is obvious: "they were so deep in good fellowship they might have been saying aloud how foolish it was to allow the sound companionship of men to be spoiled, even for a week, on account of the silly charm of women" (Lessing 33). The relationship between Herr Schlotz and Rosa is defined as master and slave or the

verbs the narrator uses to describe his commands to Rosa like “despatch” and “arrest” also imply the male feeling of superiority over the woman. Both men recall the past historical events (the First World War) and decide to fight side by side “against the only possible foe for either . . .” (Lessing 34). They direct the tension between them to Rosa, as is reflected in these three dots, which might also suggest their shared enmity towards the women. As Miller puts it, “[t]hey use her in their game of one-upmanship, having little care or thought for her feelings” because they consider her “as a ‘sexual playmate’ categorised because of her social position, age and occupation” (44).

Rosa, on the other hand, does not care what they talk about or what they do since she is attracted to a handsome young man in the street waiting for her. She passes through the terrace where the two elderly men sit, lean against the balustrade and look down into the street to see the young man. Her leaning against the balustrade evokes a sense of enclosure in the terrace because it has bars that prevent her from going outside. Although the two men tend to show their superiority to Rosa, they feel “succumbed to that fatal attraction and glanced towards the end of the terrace” (Lessing 35) where Rosa is. In order to draw her attention whose back is turned against them, they make up stories about a woman they had a relationship with in the past when they were young. However, Rosa laughs at them and leaves the terrace with a smile, showing her disregard for the two men.

Similar to the two elderly gentlemen’s experience in a hotel room, “Wine” displays the problems of a couple in a cafe. After “days of laziness” (Lessing 75) in a hotel room, they walk towards the boulevard, and then sit in a cafe where there is “the glass-walled space that [is] thrust forward into the street” (Lessing 75). The glass-walled cafe might suggest the unseen barriers they are confined into in their relationship, which prevent them from understanding each other. Unlike the other people in the cafe who are having good time, they exchange glances without communication and laugh “with an affectation of guilt” (Lessing 75) suggesting the pretended feelings of self-reproach. They look at each other steadily and remain still: the woman is filled with “sadness” while the man with “the flicker of cruelty” (Lessing 75). During this period, the woman notices the flow of life surrounding her but prefers the static sadness, and remembers fifteen years ago when she was alone “in blazing tropical moonlight, strecthing her arms to a landscape that offered her

nothing but silence" (Lessing 76). She travels to the past in her imagination where she feels lonely, which is reflected through the silent landscape. The man, on the other hand, remembers an old day when he met a girl with whom he studied all summer. At the time, the man and his friends used to have no money, stand on the pavements and sleep in the barn. Both the pavement and the barn are not places structured for people to stay and sleep, and this might suggest the man and his friends's vagabond life. He takes the woman to that day in the past and talks about his affair with another girl. The man and the woman seem to be drifted away from each other and have lost their passion and love in their relationship. They even cannot talk about daily things or current events or dream about the future, but just remember the past. Like their enclosure to the hotel and the cafe without a sign of liveliness, the disconnection between the woman and the man might show "an acknowledgement of the separateness of those two people in each of them" (Lessing 76).

Unlike the previous story regarding gender relations, "England versus England" predominantly focuses on class differences and socio-economic inequality, which is reflected through Charlie's home village and Oxford. The story starts with the description of a scene at the door opening to the yard of the Thorntons' house in South Yorkshire in a coal mining area. Charlie is about to leave the house for Oxford to continue his education from his home village. Since the door can be interpreted as a threshold opening to new worlds/places/dimensions, it might signify Charlie's departure for a new and different world because his home village and Oxford are completely contrasting places in terms of social and economic conditions. The village is a mining site and offers employment opportunity to working-class people living in poverty, whereas Oxford is the center of education and is a business district in which middle-class or upper-class people live. In the village the houses are "exactly alike, with identical patches of carefully tended front garden, and busy back yards. Nearly every house had a television aerial. From every chimney poured black smoke" (Lessing 264). The identical houses evoke a sense of vapidity in the village and the black smoke from chimneys create a gloomy working-class atmosphere.

Unlike the conception of a house as a family place (secondspace), Charlie's house has "*an atmosphere of trade union meetings*" (Lessing 271) since it is used as an alternative space for labour relations by his father, Mr Thornton, who is a miner. The house, far from being simply the unquestionable backdrop to everyday life of a

family, is open to business discussions. When Charlie is about to leave the house for Oxford, for example, Mr Thornton comes in with his three miner friends to discuss business in the living room. His mother, on the other hand, is a traditional woman committed to serving for her husband and children. Charlie criticises his mother's performing gender roles like "a bloody servant" (Lessing 268) with no attention to her needs and wants. Unlike Mr Thornton's presence in the mines, in the city pubs and in the house, Mrs Thornton's only depiction in the kitchen gives clues about how domestic space is attributed to women.

Whereever he goes, Charlie is exposed to the clash of cultures. To illustrate, on the train to Oxford, "there was no solitude," (Lessing 275) so he chooses a compartment with one person, a pretty girl from upper-class. Then, two other people from the village, a man and his wife "dressed in their best for London" (Lessing 275) settle in the compartment and start arguing about things. Despite their working-class background, the couple's effort to look like well-off Londoners disturbs Charlie. As is reflected in the title of the story "England versus England," Charlie's thoughts revolve around class issues.

Similar to class and gender conflicts reflected in space in "England versus England," "The Eye of God in Paradise" displays the opposition between nations in open and closed space. The story revolves around the holiday experiences of a British couple, Hamish Anderson and Mary Parrish, in a small German village, called O which is depicted in a state of flux mirroring the effects of the Second World War. In their previous visits the couple prefered to spend time in this place because of its quite and peaceful atmosphere, but after the war it has become "a pleasure resort" (Lessing 141) with a lot of tourists. This might mean that the village generated different meanings for its people in the past. Despite its "mask concealing the fact that this village had no existence apart from its flux of visitors," (Lessing 141) the couple feels uneasy because of "something weighed on them," (Lessing 141) which might be related to traces of war in the village. Mary and Hamish observe "the great powerful cars, rocking fast and dangerously up over the slippery snow" belonging to the American soldiers, which illustrates the difficulty of preserving "the illusion of an unspoiled mountain village" (Lessing 142). They prefer looking at the mountains, peaks and forests to feel nature and its beauty, and recall the time when they were in this village and "there was nothing of *that*" (Lessing 144). The use of pronoun "*that*"

in italics might suggest not only the perceptual changes in the physical description of the village (firstspace) but also how it was and how it is conceived by its inhabitants and visitors (secondspace) at the present. The structure of the village seems to be modified, repaired, redesigned, and the hotels, the streets, the cafes and the ski slopes are in a process of being rejigged, which shows the ceaseless production of space.

Tourists visit O in the expectation that they can find attractions of the two countries – Austria and Germany – because of its inhabitants and connection to Germany. As the narrator points out, the local people have a belief that "Austria is at least their spiritual home" (Lessing 140) giving a feeling of comfort for them. Also, the geographical location of the village surrounded by the "wall of mountains is in fact the reason why O____ is German, and has always been German" (Lessing 140) since Germany is the only country providing supplies for the village. That is why the tourists enjoy an amalgamation of the two cultures reflected in the atmosphere of O.

Whereever the couple looks; they see the change in the village not only in the way people treat each other but also in the spaces they occupy. For example, they observe the indifference of people to a "queer hopping figure" (Lessing 145) who turns out to be a war veteran, begging in the street. Another example is related to different spatial constructions: the American soldiers and their families stay in newly-built hotels, the wealthy Germans in "a big, brown, solid-looking hotel called the Lion's Head" (Lessign 146) but "the impoverished British in the cheap guest houses," (Lessing 157) and they all have critical views about one another.

Since Mary and Hamish feel disturbed by the changes in this village, they move from one village to the other travelling by train, and finally arrive in "the city of Z ____, where they [find] a small room in a cheap hotel" (Lessing 173). Like the name of the previous village, the name of this city is abbreviated to suggest that it could be anywhere. Due to being tired of heavy talks about the war in the village, Mary and Hamish feel happy and relaxed in this city where there are ordinary people. They take short walks through the streets of the city, make up stories about the people surrounding them and indulge in intimate relations with ordinary people. However, "conversations with three workmen (on buses), two housewives (in cafes), a businessman (on a train), two waitresses and two maids (at the hotel) had left them dissatisfied" (Lessing 174) because what they talk about is the same as the talks in the village O.

Hamish decides to visit Dr Kroll in the city of S so, they leave the hotel to find the right bus stop and observe the fact that "behind the ruined buildings rose the shapes and outlines of the city that had been destroyed and the outlines of the city that would be rebuilt. It was as if they stood solid among the ruins and ghosts of dead cities and cities not yet [been] born" (Lessing 178). Through the material description of urban space (firstspace), the narrator reveals the conflicting feelings of the couple about the city which was bombed and is reborn out of its ashes and ruins. Vieved from the past, it is a dead city which carries the traces of war, whereas from the present it is like an infant one to be built by new experiences (secondspace). As the narrator puts it, in the inhabitants's "eyes was the shadow from the great marching jackbooted feet, and beside each of them, beside every one of them, their dead, the invisible, swarming, memoried dead" (Lessing 179); yet they do not give up rebuilding the city.

When they finally reach Dr Kroll's hospital, they are welcomed by the doctor who is a respectable person in the city. The hospital consists of "a dozen or more dark, straight buildings set at regular angles to each other, like the arrangement of the sheds in the concentration camps of the war" (Lessing 179). The comparison of the hospital to concentration camps draws attention to the relationship between space and people because the past events (wars, political conflicts) have a big impact on how the city is shaped, and in turn, how space shapes the physical and mental health of its people by giving back the same sense of tension and depression.

The hospital has "a heavy iron gate" (Lessing 180) which might suggest an opening to an imprisoned realm where mentally sick people are kept. The "high and square" (Lessing 180) entrance of the main building illustrates how it is solidly designed to define limits and create boundaries for the patients. Moreover, there are "several staircases" and "many corridors" (Lessing 180) connecting one part to another like passageways. The shape of staircases and corridors, particularly the ascending and descending staircases, might have complicated meanings, yet the ones in the story are not depicted in detail. The walls are "covered by bright pictures" (Lessing 180) creating a peaceful atmosphere inside the building. The couple perceives the contrast between the appearance of the building giving "bleak impression" and the inside of it "banishing bleakness" (Lessing 180). The dreary outer appearance of the building contradicts with the doctors' quarters with "human and pleasant corridors" (Lessing 180) displaying flowers.

Similar to the contrast between the outside of the building and the inside of the administrative block in white and blue colours, the patients's blocks differ from that of the doctors. While the patients's blocks "had achieved the ultimate in reducing several hundred human beings into complete identity with each other," (Lessing 187) the administrative one offers variety in terms of colours and pictures. Regardless of their social and cultural background, the patients are supposed to wear white uniforms, which creates a sense of sameness. In addition to their complete identity in white uniforms, these patients are also similarised according to their gender and age, and are grouped into different sections in the hospital. For instance, men and women are placed in different parts of the building in order to avoid their interaction and the arousal of sexual desire because Dr Kroll thinks that "sex is a force destructive enough even when kept locked up" (Lessing 187). The children are placed in a separate block in which they are forced to wear straightjacket. The disidentification of the patients is reflected in the compartmentalisation of the spaces they occupy in the hospital.

Dr Kroll shows the couple different parts of the hospital and invites them into a room "beyond the glass panel" (Lessing 182) which might evoke an unseen barrier between his space and that of the patients. They enter into an inner drawing room where Mary notices a picture on the wall above the desk:

> it was a gay fresh picture of a cornfield painted from root-vision, or field-mouse view. The sheaves of corn rose startlingly up, bright and strong, mingled with cornflowers and red poppies, as if one were crouching in the very center of a field. But as one walked towards the picture it vanished, it became a confusion of bright paint. It was finger-painted. The surface of the canvas was as rough as ploughed field. (Lessing 183)

The positive feelings evoked by the painting changes into complicated and uncertain feelings because of its finger-painted style as one moves closer. Like the division of the hospital into two distinct parts and the glass panel which divides Dr Kroll's room from the others, the painting also gives the sense of two-sidedness: the difference between the seen and the unseen or the perceived and the conceived upon which the whole story depends. Not only this painting but also the other paintings

> separated themselves into two categories. There were those, like the cornfield, done in bright clear colours, very fresh and lyrical. Then there were those which, close up, showed grim rutted surfaces of dirty black, grey, white, a sullen green and – a dark,

> lightless, rusty red like old blood. These pictures were all extraordinary and macabre, of graveyards and skulls and corpses, of war scenes and bombed buildings and screaming women and houses on fire with people falling from burning windows like ants into flames. (Lessing 183)

These pictures are among the many exhibited in the rooms of the hospital, which are visual reflections of the war and its effects through the lens of Dr Kroll. He shows what happens to people and their surrounding during the war in the context of his paintings. The juxtaposition of the cornfield-like paintings in bright colours and the battle pieces show the indissociable reality of life for Dr Kroll. By illustrating these pictures on the walls of the rooms, he actually appropriates the hospital, which enables him to deal with war.

At the end of their trip in the hospital, Dr Kroll wants to give a gift to Mary for remembrance of their friendship and visit. This picture is different from the previous one in the sense that it gives positive feelings because he drew it when he was not under depression. That is why the picture called "*The Eye of God in Paradise*" (Lessing 191) is "a very large picture, done in clear blues and greens, the picture of a forest – an imaginary forest with clear streams running through it, a forest where impossibly brilliant birds flew, and full of plants and trees created in Dr Kroll's mind" (Lessing 191). Because the perceived and conceived reality of everyday life is depressive, Dr Kroll seems to have created an alternative space in his mind which is later reflected in the picture he painted. What he imagines in life and attributes to the picture is "full of joy, and tranquility and light" (Lessing 191); however, his depressive mood and the misery he witnesses in the hospital is depicted in the picture with "a large black eye" which is "condemnatory, judging eye" (Lessing 191). That is God's eye watching, criticising and chastising people. Like all the other contradictions in the story between the different nationalities as is reflected in the cities, villages, hotels, the hospital and the paintings, this picture which has the same name as the title of the story reveals the production of space under the impact of war.

Both "Pleasure" and "Through the Tunnel" are set in hotels, particularly on the beach, and foreground the conflicts – the former between men-women and the latter between adult-child – through individual interpretations of such transitory spaces. Similar to the British couple's vacation in a touristic resort in "The Eye of God in Paradise," "Pleasure" is about a British couple, Mary and Tommy Rogers, who

are planning to go on a vacation in France. Like Mary and Hamish's observation of the alterations in the village and the city after years, Mary and Tommy reflect upon the places they have stayed on their honeymoon. The Plaza, for instance, is the hotel they felt "at home" (Lessing 53) at the time, but now, it is turned into "an imposing [building], surrounded by gay awnings and striped umbrellas" instead of "a modest [one]" (Lessing 53). The villa is another place they stayed on past vacations, which has also changed in years like the Plaza. Upon their arrival, Mary cannot see the villa "alone on its hill above the sea" (Lessing 52) because the hill is now covered with "little white villas, green-shuttered, red-roofed in the warm southern green" (Lessing 52). The physical descriptions of the two places (firstspace) suggest that nothing has remained untouched, rather the area has turned into a touristic place characterised by a variety of accomodation and crowds of people. As the narrator reveals, in addition to the spread of villas everywhere "there was a long platform now, and a proper station building. And gazing down towards the sea, they saw a cluster of shops and casinos and cafes" (Lessing 52) as opposed to its simple spatial structure composed of "a single shop, a restaurant, and a couple of hotels" (Lessing 52) in the past. Similar to the alterations due to the effects of war in the German village O in the previous story, in "Pleasure" the surrounding nature and spatial structures are updated and constructed probably through socio-economic reasons in ways that alter the general view of the area, and cause disappointment in Mary and Tommy.

The increase in the hotel prices is another result of this change and the couple cannot afford to stay at the Plaza. On their past vacations staying at the Plaza, they used to "[feel] superior to the Belle Vue" (Lessing 53) which is across the street, but now, even the Belle Vue is fully booked up and they cannot find a room for themselves to stay. They are left with no choice but to stay in "one room vacant in a villa on the hillside," which is "a small one, at the bottom of a big villa, stone-floored, uncarpeted; with a single large bed" (Lessing 54). The room in a villa rather than a hotel room, which is also "stone-floored" and "uncarpeted" might suggest a cold and uncomfortable atmosphere. They also have to heat water in a saucepan on the stove and cook in the kitchen. Although Mary and Tommy have a room of their own, they do not have a sense of belonging to it because of its weak facilities. Despite their dislike of the hotel, they also keep in mind that they are in the south of France "the

prettiest place in Europe" where "the sea was blue, blue and sparkling. And the sunshine was hot and golden" (Lessing 55).

Their first disappointment with the alterations at the Plaza and its surrounding continues with the changes on the beach, which is occupied with "umbrellas stretched six deep, edge to edge. . . . Bodies lay stretched out, baking in the sun, hundreds to the acre, a perfect bed of heated brown flesh" (Lessing 55). The physical description of the beach composed of umbrellas under which there are "baking" and "brown" bodies might evoke a sense of dislike for the view because people on the beach are not described as lying and having sunbath with positive expressions. When Mary and Tommy return to their room for lunch, they find out "swarms of small black ants" which "infested their cold meats" (Lessing 55). The invasion of their room and food by black ants is another way of expressing negation. Under such circumstances, they cannot find a place for intimacy because after "indispensable measures of hygiene, they retired to the much-too-narrow bed, shrinking away from any chance of contact with each other" (Lessing 56). The passionless relation between Mary and Tommy is observed in their inability to adapt themselves to new and unexpected spatial conditions during their holiday.

Despite being crowded, the beach is the only space they want to spend time lying under the sun, swimming and watching the people around since it is a "seaside holiday with a vengeance" (Lessing 57). The phrase "with a vengeance" is used to emphasise the degree to which something occurs or is true (OED), so the seaside holiday "with a vengeance" suggests an open public place where people can meet and socialise with others, have good time and relax. As an illustration, Mary meets a young woman called Betty Clarke, whose husband spends most of his time diving and fishing like Tommy. The two men go to "the other sea" (Lessing 58) which means that there are two different places to swim: one appeals to ordinary people like parents and children, the other is more suitable for adventurous men. Parts of nature are defined according to how people relate to them. The men conceive the other sea as a place to explore the "undersea world, with great valleys and boulders, all wavering green in the sun-dappled water. . . . delicate whitey-brown flowers and stars, bubbled silver with air" (Lessing 58). The women are also fascinated by the wild sea. However, when Mary hears the men killing an octupus, she repels wild nature and retreats into her safe and known space, the safe beach. While Mary prefers to be alone on the beach,

Betty seems to have a tendency to be in close contact with nature. Beach is a transitory place for interactions between people and for experiences concerning nature, human and gender relations and so on. For Mary, to illustrate, it functions as a means to question herself in relation to another woman, Betty and to her husband. She understands that she cannot become friends with Betty whereas Betty is more comfortable with new experiences on the beach, and for the two men, however, it is just a place to discover and entertain themselves.

As it is mentioned at the beginning of the story, there are two "great feasts, or turning points" (Lessing 51) in Mary's life. One of them is her preparation for Christmas, an implication of her attachment to the traditions and routines of life in England and the other is revisiting the holiday resort in France. This dependence on established values or habits is also observed in her insistence on staying at the Plaza and her inability to adapt herself to new spaces she occupies such as the small room in poor conditions and the wild sea. She also fails to spend time together with her husband. Mary cannot exceed the perceived and conceived boundaries surrounding her and create an alternative perspective in her life.

In a similar way "Through the Tunnel" predominantly takes place on the beach displaying a young boy's, Jerry's experience with nature and foregrounds not only the conflict between mother and child but also the boy's transformation from childhood to adolescence. There are physical descriptions of the place where Jerry and his widow mother spend their holiday. For instance, the story begins with the portrayal of two distinct geographical areas: Jerry "at a turning of the path and looked down at a wild and rocky bay, and then over the crowded beach he knew so well from other years" (Lessing 42). On the one hand, there is a wild bay which is unknown to the boy; on the other hand, there is a beach which he is familiar with for years. In relation to the firstspace perspective of the place as wild bay and safe beach, Jerry's transformation seems to be from innocence to experience as well as from dependence to independence since he will try to explore the unknown by himself and have new experiences in life.

Getting the permission of his mother, Jerry goes to the wild and rock bay where he sees "an edge of white surf and the shallow, luminous movements of water over white sand, and, beyond that, a solid heavy blue" (Lessing 43). The line or border in the wild sea is drawn by the white foams formed by the bright waves over white sand.

The repetition of white colour might suggest Jerry's state of innocence, which is juxtaposed with the solid heavy blue sea beyond implying hard but significant experiences in his life. Although Jerry is curious about the rocky and dark blue seas and goes there to swim, he cannot completely isolate himself from his mother, so he perceives his mother as a tiny spot and a small figure in the distance like many other people. He might be going between his accustomed life dependent on his mother's will and his adventurous spirit in the process of becoming an adolescent. The emphasis on distinction between the wild sea and the beach might show the conflict between the mother and the child.

During his visits to the wild sea, Jerry notices the native boys on "a loose scatter of rocks" (Lessing 43). As opposed to the neatly designed umbrellas on the beach, the rocks are loosely formed in the wild sea. These native boys dive again and again from "a high point into a well of blue sea between rough, point rocks" (Lessing 44) because they are experienced enough to explore the wild sea. When the biggest boy does not come up from the sea for a while, Jerry feels uneasy, and later understands that he might swim "through some gap or hole in [the rock]," (Lessing 44) the hole representing the unknown for Jerry. Although the beach is conceived as safe and the bay as dangerous, for Jerry, the tunnel and the act of passing through it becomes more than what is perceived and conceived about it. The tunnel is like a passage which might connect Jerry to another place or dimension. It is a tool for him to materialise his experience of transition from a childhood into adolescence. That is why Jerry attributes meaning to this place and makes it an alternative one for himself which helps him grow up. After several attempts of trial, Jerry succeeds in passing through the tunnel by never giving up and following the light. This can be interpreted as a turning point in his life: that is his becoming a big and experienced boy like the native ones. At the end of the story, he does not argue with his mother about diving into the deep sea and holding his breath for seconds because "it was no longer of the least importance to go to the bay" (Lessing 50) for Jerry with the knowledge of himself as a grown-up. This story illustrates how a young boy's feelings and emotions contribute to making sense of an unknown place like the tunnell in the sea.

The only narrative which is based mainly on the dialogues between people about daily matters and current political issues, like the speculations about Stalin's death rather than an emphasis on space or gender relations is "The Day Stalin Died".

The story is about the female narrator's daily hassle, which demonstrates her connection to a few people around her such as her cousin Jessie, aunt Emma and her two friends, Billy and Beatrice. The narrator is always on the move from one place to another, and thus, the dialogues take place in transitory spaces like a taxi, a train and streets. Since there are no physical descriptions and no implications of what is conceived or lived in these spaces, it is not very possible to focus on the relations between space and people in this story.

**4.2. Closed Space**

The stories analysed in this part, namely "He," "Between Men," "The Other Woman," "A Room" and "A Man and Two Women" differ from those discussed in the previous part in terms of spaces the characters occupy because they are set in closed ones such as houses, flats and rooms, and display the interconnection between space and gender.

In "He" two friends, Mary Brooke and Annie Blake, discuss Annie's ex-husband, Rob Blake and his new lover. Since Mary's flat is in the same building as that of Rob and his lover's flat, Mary hears their arguments and disagreements, mainly related to the lover's dirtiness and untidiness. Annie, contrary to Rob's lover, is obsessed with order and cleanliness. Entering Mary's flat, the first thing Annie does, for instance, is to inspect the kitchen where she notices an unwashed dish in the sink.

During the two women's conversation in Mary's flat, the narrator focuses on the characters' relation to the door, either in the kitchen or in the room. When Mary leaves the flat to have Rob and Annie talk in private, for example, she stands "[a]t the door" (Lessing 82). The door in that sense serves as both an entrance and an exit to the flat. Rob comes in to give Annie her alimony and stoops "loosely in the doorway for a moment," (Lessing 82) which might show his respect and need for a welcome or might suggest his in-betweenness. It might be related to his intention to abandon his new lover and embrace his ex-wife. Annie and Rob talk about the old days when he felt dissatisfied because of Annie's fussiness and lack of affection and when Annie was "nothing to him but a convenience" (Lessing 85). Although they did not make each other very happy, they were a family with three sons. Then, Mary's return to the flat is emphasised by "a loud knock" (Lessing 85) at the door, which intrudes their conversation. Despite Annie's anger at and resistance against Rob, she accepts the fact that life without him is meaningless and this is stronger than the "feeling of

injustice" (Lessing 86) done to her. Her dilemma is foregrounded through her "watching the door tensely" (Lessing 85) because Mary goes out of the door to talk to Rob for a second chance. In this sense, the door opening to a new world might suggest Annie's decision to go further or stay behind, and it is a point of allowing Rob to walk into her life again. Annie's inability to stand neither on her own nor with her husband is revealed through an emphasis on Annie's passive position in the kitchen, watching Mary's and Rob's movements through the door. It is only the door that might have multiple connotations related to the inner space of the characters other than its conceived understanding opening to the world outside. Depending on Annie's and Rob's sorrows, memories, needs and desires, the door is attributed a variety of meanings, showing their ties to each other. In addition to the specific focus on the door, Mary's flat also serves as a place of interaction and contestation for Mary and Rob because they appropriate the flat to resolve the conflicts in their relationship.

Similar to the dialogue between the two women in "He," in "Between Men" the conversation between Maureen Jeffries and Peggy Bayley is about Maureen's ex-lover and Peggy's husband, Tom Bayley. Maureen is a painter who has had many lovers in different places such as Italy, France and England. This might be read as her independence, but in fact, she depends on men to find a good job and have network relations. Hence, in her conversation with Peggy, she confesses how she has spent "twenty years of [her] life, eighteen hours a day, bolstering up some man's ambition" (Lessing 302). Maureen lives in Tom's "luxurious flat," (Lessing 296) which he left to her, and the story takes place here. Rather than focusing on her talent of painting, she attaches more importance to the career of her lovers. Not only Tom Bayley but also her last lover, Jack Boles, a film director, patronised Maureen by making her cook and deal with the housework, and did not allow her to work on her paintings. As a result of performing gender roles in acordance with her lover's demands, she has become a lonely and unemployed woman.

Peggy, on the other hand, is Tom's wife at present, but in fact, he has "ditched" (Lessing 296) her as well for a younger intellectual school girl. Like Maureen, Peggy has also given up her career as a minor actress. Maureen wants Peggy to "ask Tom to use his influence to get her a job of the kind that would enable her to meet the right sort of man" (Lessing 296) because Tom is a well-known professor. Maureen's dependence on a man's power is evident in her intention to meet Peggy. Both women

being abandoned by their partners and having lost their job decide to start a new life from scratch by opening a dress shop, which they will never give up even if they find a new lover.

Even though Maureen lays claim to Tom's flat, she does not make any changes and never plans to appropriate it for her desires. When the two women get drunk through the end of the day, "the room was full of shadow, its white walls fading into blue heights; the glossy chairs, tables, rugs, sending out deep gleams of light" (Lessing 301) but Maureen does not turn on the light. The low light of the room, fading white walls and rolling shadows might suggest their loneliness and desperation and not a job to earn a living. Whether they will actualise their plan to a dress shop or not is left uncertain at the end of the story because they discuss this plan when they are drunk.

"The Other Woman" focuses on Rose's attachment to her parents's basement flat during the war. What differs from the previous two stories is that there are more physical descriptions of the flat affecting the way Rose views life. She "like[s] to be independent," (Lessing 94) and thus, makes her own living and takes care of her parents. However, she has conflicts with her mother and has to "fight to become independent of that efficient and possessive woman. . . . it had been instilled into her ever since she could remember, that women must look after themselves," (Lessing 95) and thus, puts money into the bank to guarantee her future. Although she has been engaged to George for three years and is about to marry and move to their new two-room flat upstairs, Rose shows no interest but just complains about the stairs. Her insistence on the basement flat and rejection of upstairs is significant because it might give a glimpse about her view of life. She has lived in "a deep basement" from which she perceives "the rubbish-can and railings showing dirty black against the damp, grey houses opposite" (Lessing 93) all her life. The colours "black" and "grey" might suggest the ruinous city because of war and the physical description of the flat (firstspace) creates a gloomy atmosphere because of its location in the basement and the window from which she stares at the fences and houses. The effects of war also play a big role in her attachment to her basement flat as a shelter or protection from war, because for Rose "it seemed as if the war was a long, black, noisome tunnel from which they would never emerge" (Lessing 97).

Immediately after her mother dies in a car accident, Rose configures the basement flat in her own way and throws away some of the furniture that would

remind her of her mother. For example, she takes "the picture down. It was a battleship in a stormy sea, and she hated it. She put it away in a cupboard. Then the white empty square on the wall troubled her, and she replaced it by a calender with yellow roses on it" (Lessing 88). The battleship refers to wooden warships originated in the late 18th century (OED) and its fighting with the storm and the waves in the sea might suggest Rose's struggle during the war. Since her mother can no longer interfere in Rose's life, her quick and active attempt to replace the painting with a calender with yellow roses might show her act of appropriation, replacing the effects of war with a colourful atmosphere. It is not only the painting that she removes but other things as well like the place of the towel-rail. To illustrate, she moves "everything to suit herself" and sits down opposite Jem, her father "in her mother's chair" (Lessing 94). By appropriating the basement flat and breaking off her relation to George after the tragic death of her mother, Rose demonstrates her determination to "have her own way" (Lessing 94).

When one day, however, she returns from work to prepare supper for her father, she notices that their basement flat has been bombed and her father died. "There was a crack across the ceiling and dust was still settling through the air" (Lessing 100) and it is dangerous for her to stay in the flat, but she stays there for days until a man named Jimmie tries to convince her to leave the flat. The bombing of her basement flat and the death of her father shatter her sense of attachment, which she directs towards Jimmie. Although they differ in personality and lifestyle, Rose maintains her relation to Jimmie. However, she cannot adapt herself to the new flat which is at "the top of an old house," looking to the "trees from Battersea Park over the tops of the buildings opposite" (Lessing 109). There are "[t]wo rooms and a kitchen, a cupboard for the coal, hot and cold water, and a share of the bathroom downstairs" (Lessing 109). Despite all her efforts to appropriate the new flat by arranging it like her old basement flat with its calender with yellow roses hung on the wall, she cannot create a sense of home. Unlike her basement flat providing "the promise of protection," (Lessing 109) this one makes her feel unsafe.

The story reveals the tensions between the characters through their relation to the space they occupy. Particularly, Rose exemplifies how space affects the way she feels as is reflected in her preference of the basement flat (safe) rather than the one upstairs (unsafe). Moreover, her attempts to appropriate each flat might suggest her

configuration of a space of her own with a feeling of home. The ending of the story also contributes to Rose's connection to space in terms of displaying her identification with the basement flat. After learning Jimmie's marriage to Mrs Pearson, Rose makes up her mind and accepts Mrs Pearson's offer to share her flat and start a business together. What is interesting is that Mrs Pearson's flat is a basement with three rooms and a kitchen. This might show not only Rose's eventual return to the space where she feels safe and home but also female bonding.

Like the two previous stories taking place in closed space, "A Room," as is reflected in the title, predominantly focuses on the description of a room and recounts the story of a solitary woman who tries to deal with her loneliness in a newly-rented flat in London. Like old John's house in the second volume of African stories, this flat has no permanent owners but continuously changing its tenants. As the protagonist narrator unfolds, Angus Ferguson, the Maitlands, Mrs Dowland, the young Caitsbys lived in this flat and "departed leaving nothing behind" (Lessing 257) including the last tenants, the two girls. This might show how the flat was not laid claim by its temporary owners, which has become a tradition in time. The only traces from the two girls are the carpet with holes, the walls decorated with travel posters and what the woman upstairs says about their parties that lasted all night. The limited time these tenants lived in this flat and their lack of connection to it can be explained in relation to a lack of a sense of home.

Contrary to all the previous owners, the new tenant appropriates the flat and describes the room as a place where "[she] feel[s] [she] live[s]," (Lessing 257) which demonstrates her sense of home and feeling of belonging. She redecorates the flat which has "a fanciful pink and blue paper," a fireplace wall, "dark purple, almost black" woodwork (Lessing 257) by replacing the blue curtains with the grey ones and paints "a panel from the ceiling downwards in the dark plum colour, so that the fireplace and the small thick shelf over it would be absorbed" (Lessing 257). However, no matter what she does to alter the walls, it "doesn't work, it fails to come off" (Lessing 258). In her attempt to appropriate the flat, the narrator deals with its borders, including the walls and the ceiling. Another wall that disturbs her is the one beside her bed which is "deformed" (Lessing 258) like the fireplace wall because the previous tenants replaced "falling plaster and made a hash of it" (Lessing 258). Despite its ragged appearance, "this wall gives [her] pleasure" because "it reminds

[her] of the irregular white washed walls of another house [she] lived once" (Lessing 258). That is why she paints it white to revive "the whitewashed lumpy walls of that early house" (Lessing 258). Like the wall, the ceiling is also "has a plaster border . . . as if it might fall off easily" (Lessing 258). The building has a strong appearance with its solid look, but in fact, it is made of cheap material: the walls are as if they are "of loose sand held together by wallpaper," (Lessing 258) which might collapse suddenly.

It is not only its structural weakness but also its inadequacy to separate the lives of people, since the narrator can hear "anything that goes on over [her] head, where the old woman who likes to hear a bit of life lives with her husband" (Lessing 258). The opposite flat belongs to a married couple, the Swedish woman and her husband and it has "a vision of neatness and order" (Lessing 258) and is protected by a door with "four heavy, specially fitted locks inside, as well as bolts and bars" (Lessing 258). The fact that the Swedish woman spends all day cleaning and arranging the flat and opening the door timidly might suggest her paranoid state of mind. While the Swedish woman and her husband lead a steady life, starting and ending the day at certain times, the narrator's life is with "no outward order" (Lessing 259) because she has irregular sleep patterns. The narrator's afternoon sleeps making her more productive and creative in writing might also illustrate her disorderly life unlike her neighbours.

Unlike the Swedish woman who apparently has a happy married life, the narrator, having no one to talk to or feel an attachment to, attempts to overcome her loneliness by writing about her ideas and feelings in her room. For the narrator "afternoon sleep is more interesting than night sleep" (Lessing 259) because of the possible dreams which she regards as "a long journey into the unknown" (Lessing 259). The dreams provide the necessary source for her writing. In order to preserve the mood and have dreams in her sleep, she prepares the room by darkening and shutting all the doors, and by doing so, cuts off her connection to the outside world. Her dream, which is not very inspiring to write about, reminds the narrator her childhood days during the war because she relates the cheap red army blanket on the bed to the war at the time. Since the dream reminds the narrator "the frightened little child," (Lessing 261) the room "seemed much larger" (Lessing 260) from the child's perspective. The detailed physical description of the rooms which consist of adjectives like "brownish," "yellowish" and "largish" (Lessing 260) might show the uncertainty

in the dream. The child might be the narrator herself who "was desolate with a loneliness that felt it would never be assuaged, no one would ever come to comfort [her]" (Lessing 260) in the dream like her present situation in the room. The unexpected ending of the story with questions like "that . . . that what? And why?" (Lessing 261) might suggest the narrator's incomplete dream in which she cannot find a solution for her loneliness. The narrator makes use of her room as an alternative space where she can set for a long journey in her dreams, and reflect her experiences through writing.

Finally, "A Man and Two Women" mainly focuses on gender relations through the depiction of two couples, namely, Stella and Philip and the Bradfords (Dorothy and Jack). Stella and Philip are married for years and have their own child from former marriages. Since Philip is a TV journalist travelling a lot, he is not involved in the events much and Stella is an artist designing wallpapers and materials. The other couple, Dorothy and Jack are both artists. Dorothy has "delicate drawings" (Lessing 240) and Jack is "a great success" (Lessing 240) in painting. The difference between the husbands and wives due to their performance in their career causes "strain" (Lessing 240) in their marriage. For instance, for Stella her marriage has become something "to take for granted" and "exhausting" (Lessing 240) yet, through her friendship with Dorothy and Jack, she understands that she has "no marital miseries; nothing of (what they saw so often in friends) one partner in a marriage victim to the other, resenting the other; no claiming of outsiders as sympathizers or allies in an unequal battle" (Lessing 240-241). Such an explanation by the narrator about gender relations in marriage foreshadows the problems in Stella, Dorothy and Jack's relationship.

The Bradfords are a nomadic couple because they do not stay in one place for so long; rather they travel from one place to another around the Mediterranean. Their relation to England is a kind of "needing, hating, loving," (Lessing 239) and thus, they turn back to England very often. When they have a baby one day, they settle in "a cheap cottage in Essex for the summer" (Lessing 239). Their new house is "surrounded by green grass" and there are "two little rooms downstairs, but they had been knocked into one fine low-ceilinged room, stone-floored, white-washed" where they "adjusted the heaters and arranged themselves so they could admire the English country-side through glass" (Lessing 245). The use of "knock into" is significant

because of its meaning that the barriers between two rooms are removed and merged into a larger one. This might exemplify the appropriation of the rooms by the previous owners of the cottage. There are also "four sparkling windows" (Lessing 244) shining brightly and connecting the couple to the outside world. In contrast to their nomadic lifestyle, after they settle in this place, they become observers of the landscape.

When Stella visits them in their new place, Jack refers to the cottage as "mansion," (Lessing 250) which is ironic as the meaning of the word actually contradicts with its small size. Next to the cottage is "a greenhouse" with "[a] long, glass-roofed shed," (Lessing 244) which was used to grow tomatoes by the previous owners. As an artist couple, Jack and Dorothy have made use of "huts, sheds, any suitable building all around the Mediterranean" (Lessing 244) to work side by side, and hence, Jack appropriates the greenhouse as a studio for their paintings and drawings. However, the place is "partly one," (Lessing 244) not complete because Dorothy has not recovered from the effects of childbearing, and can neither involve in the configuration of the greenhouse nor in the production of her drawings. Thus, she has no relation to the greenhouse or the landscape but only to the room where she takes care of the baby. The story ends with Dorothy depressed and drunk in the room, while Tom is accompanying Stella departing from the cottage.

**4.3. Transitory and Closed Space**

There are three stories in this part such as "One off the Short List," "To Room Nineteen" and "How I Finally Losy My Heart". "One off the Short List" is the first story to be analysed in terms of the characters' relation to transitory and closed spaces such as the theatre, the pub, the house and the room. The story focuses on gender relations not from a traditional perspective foregrounding male hegemony but female empowerment. On one hand, Graham Spence, is depicted as a failed journalist whose marriage has also become "stable" (Lessing 196). Barbara Coles, on the other hand, is an independent woman whose professional life is emphasised rather than her role as a wife and mother, though she has a husband and children. She is a well-known and respected stage designer with "the signature of success" (Lessing 194) in professional life. Unlike the other female characters in the previous stories who are defined in relation to their male partners and closed spaces they occupy, Barbara is "spoken of in terms of her friends, her work, her house, a party she had given, a job she had found someone" (Lessing 197). She has a respectable network of relations.

The theatre is the place where she comfortably works with her colleagues such as the director James Poynter, a well-known, good-looking young and intelligent man, and the three young stagehands. Her professional connection to the theatre and close relations with her colleagues might show her autonomy and power as a businesswoman. While the theatre is a transitory and public place to entertain people, for Barbara, it is a means of defining herself through her profession.

In order to overcome his failure as a journalist, Graham decides to sleep with Barbara as a proof of his masculinity and dominance over such a successful and independent woman. As Frances M. Clements posits, Graham "must acquire his sense of identity from his sex role; he has no other means to self-realization" (107). In the name of interviewing Barbara for a radio programme, Graham takes her to a pub which is far away from the one Barbara and her friends always go to. While he tries to impress Barbara by "looking at her, seeing himself look at her, *a man gazing in calm appreciation at a woman*: waiting for her to feel it and respond," (Lessing 201) Barbara examines the pub to find a place to sit. For Graham the pub serves as a place to draw Barbara's attention with "the impression of being settled, dependable: the husband and father" which most women find "reassuring" (Lessing 202). However, for Barbara, it is just a place to drink and socialise. Meanwhile, Graham becomes obsessed with the idea of sleeping with her.

In addition to their different connections to transitory places including the theatre and the pub, Barbara's house and room disclose the reversal of gender relations in this story: "It was a small house, in a terrace of small and not very pretty houses. Inside a little, bright intimate hall" (Lessing 208). The words used to describe the house such as "small," "pretty," "little," "bright" and "intimate" have positive connotations which create a sense of coziness and warmth in family life. Barbara has a space of her own which is "a long, very tidy white room, that had a narrow bed in one corner, a table covered with drawings, sketches, pencils. Tacked to the walls with drawing pins were swatches of coloured stuffs. Two small chairs stood near a low round table: an area of comfort in the working room" (Lessing 208). The way this room is described with drawings on walls and the table displays how she configures a private space for her studies, together with a suggestion of comfort. Also, this room is a place Graham thinks not suitable for his own wife: "I wouldn't like it if my wife

had a room like this" (Lessing 208) because it shows a woman's autonomous power to have a space of her own.

Barbara shows her need to sleep and rejects Graham's insistent sexual attempts. As the narrator reveals, "it was a sheer contest of wills, nothing else" because for Graham "it's only a really masculine woman who wouldn't have given in by now out of sheer decency of the flesh!" (Lessing 212). After a series of unsuccessful attempts to have sex, Barbara takes the control, arouses him sexually, consoles him "like a bored, skilled wife" (Lessing 214) or "like a prostitute" (Lessing 215). She seems to perform her roles not only because she is too tired to get rid of him but also because having sex with a man is not important for her. She neither allows Graham to have pleasure from her body nor her room as a space to be invaded. She sleeps "upstairs, in [her own] bed" (Lessing 216) rather than letting him lie beside him in the same place, and by doing so, shows her individuality by keeping her private room to herself.

"To Room Nineteen," the title of this collection, is the second story in this part set in both transitory and closed spaces. Unlike Barbara Coles in "One off the Short List," Susan Rawlings performs her conventional role as a wife and mother by quitting her job in advertisement after having four children. On the surface, she seems to have a perfect family life but as is suggested in what follows both genders perform duties expected from them as husband and wife: "Matthew's job for the sake of Susan, children, house and the garden – which caravanserai needed a well-paid job to maintain it. And Susan's practical intelligence for the sake of Matthew, the children, the house and the garden – which unit would have collapsed in a week without her" (Lessing 306). Although "they did fall in love" (Lessing 305) at the beginning of their affair, their marriage turns out to be based on "intelligence" (Lessing 305) after years. As Burkom puts it, "Susan and her husband Matthew have substituted the head for the heart" (60). However, Susan gradually loses her capacity of living by intelligence. She suffers from having no other life on her own outside her family, and lack of communication with Matthew, which makes her pass through a few stages in her search for an authentic self.

They live in a big house in the country with a garden in which there is "the big civilised bedroom overlooking the wild sullied river" (Lessing 310). The physical description of the bedroom as civilised is juxtaposed with the wild river. Since the

river symbolises the flow of life and passing of time, its wildness might suggest the liveliness and excitement of life outside as opposed to the ordered and monotonous life in the bedroom. Being emotionally disturbed not only because of having no freedom in her family life but also because of Matthew's liaison with Myra Jenkins, Susan starts to question her individuality and recalls her old independent days when she did not have to carry the burden of the house and the children. Following Virginia Woolf's footsteps, she dreams "of having a room or a place, anywhere, where she could go and sit, by herself, no one knowing where she was," (Lessing 319) and thus, makes use of different places.

In order to be free when the children are at school, for instance, Susan arranges the Mother's Room in the house; however, "she felt even more caged there than in her bedroom" (Lessing 318) because everybody in the house including the children and Mrs Parkes, the maid, knows where she is and bother her in this room. Although the garden is an open place with a view of the river, it does not provide a feeling of comfort for Susan but a sense of abandonment in her. She does not like being in the garden at all "because of the closeness there of the enemy – irritation, restlessness, emptiness" which is "waiting to invade her" (Lessing 313). Unable to free her mind from being occupied with the household duties and responsibilities, she creates an imaginary man in the garden with "a reddish complexion, and ginger hair" which evokes "some sort of demon" (Lessing 318) trying to possess her. As Rula Quawas puts it, "she is trapped in her own house and feels like a long-term prisoner, living out a 'prison sentence,'" (115) and cannot cope with the emptiness in her inner world, which appears in the form of a demon. Within the boundaries of the house, it is not possible for Susan to solve her problems, and thus, she decides to have a room of her own, which she finds "at Victoria" (Lessing 320). This "ordinary and anonymous" (Lessing 320) room belonging to Mrs Townsend has "a dingy armchair" and "a dingy window" where Susan feels "alone" (Lessing 320) at last. Nevertheless, due to Mrs Townsend's intrusion into Susan's private life by asking questions, she leaves the room "defeated" (Lessing 320).

After her attempts to have a space of her own in the house, in the garden and in Mrs Townsend's hotel room which culminate in disappointment, Susan goes off "a walking holiday in Wales" (Lessing 322). Similar to her previous experiences, she cannot isolate herself from her children, her husband, and even from Mrs Parkes, who

telephone her every morning. Despite the view of the mountains, the valleys and running water which generally evoke a sense of freedom and relaxation, Susan perceives them as "too low, too small, with the sky pressing down too close" and sees "nothing but her devil" (Lessing 322). She is unable to create an alternative space for herself and seems to be imprisoned in her fears.

The last place she expects to find solace and discover her individuality is room nineteen in Fred's hotel which is "hideous" with "a single window, with thin green brocade curtains, a three-quarter bed that has a cheap green satin bedspread on it, a fireplace with a gas fire and a shilling meter by it, a chest of drawers, and a green wicker armchair" (Lessing 326). The repetition of the green colour symbolising "new life, resurrection, hope" (Nozedar 62) might be linked to Susan's hope for a new beginning. What differentiates this from other spaces she occupies is Susan's ability to gain a different identity; she introduces herself as Mrs Jones and keeps this place secret from the household. As the narrator reveals

> [s]he was no longer Susan Rawlings, mother of four, wife of Matthew, employer of Mrs Parkes and of Sophie Traub [the baby-sitter], with these and those relations with friends, schoolteachers, tradesmen. She no longer was mistress of the big white house and garden, owning clothes suitable for this and that activity or occasion. She was Mrs Jones, and she was alone, and she had no past and no future. (Lessing 327)

The room serves for her solitude and makes her feel independent for the first time. As Kun Zhao asserts, it is "a shelter from housework, children and unfaithful husband that obsessed with her all day and all night. Only in room nineteen could she feel she was a complete, happy, and confident individual" ("An Analysis of Three Images" 1654). She does not appropriate the room but enjoys sitting on the chair with a blank mind, looking into the street, the buildings, the sky and watching people as if she had never seen before. However, it is not that simple because being alone in the physical reality of a room which does not belong to her might not enable Susan to overcome her problems. When her husband discovers her shelter, she sees the same demon in this room as well. Having realized the fact that there is no material space for Susan to be by herself as an independent woman, she imagines one where there is no demon, no husband and no children, and turns on the gas to buy "her freedom" (Lessing 335). She feels "quite content lying there, listening to the faint soft hiss of the gas that poured into the room, into her lungs, into her brain, as she drifted off into the dark

river" (Lessing 336). She could not involve herself in the flow of life but manages to get into the dark river in her imagination by celebrating her death. Linda H. Halisky defines this new space as "the dark, inexplicable, but potentially redemptive spaces of mythic truth" ("Redeeming the Irrational" 54) which might have the potential to heal the wounds of women like Susan Rawlings. As Ellen Brown puts it, death is "the ultimate removal from, rejection of, a world into which one does not fit" ("In Search of" 15). So for a while Susan turns the hotel room used for temporary accomodation into an alternative place of retreat.

The last story in this category, "How I Finally Lost My Heart" is about a lonely woman in her fourties. The woman who is also the narrator of the story, mentions her "serious" (Lessing 228) love affairs, listing them in terms of letters A, B, C without giving their names. It might be related to frustrating ending of these affairs, which have left the woman with a "bruised, sullen and suspicious" (Lessing 229) heart at the end. As is suggested in the title of the story, the woman gradually comes to a point of losing her heart, which might refer to a biological or metaphorical loss. If it is a biological one, then, it would be the death of the woman. If it is a metaphorical loss, then, it would signify the liberation of the heart from its sorrows because heart is an organ associated with emotions.

The woman in "How I Finally Lost My Heart" reminds of the woman in "A Room" who is also lonely in a newly-rented flat, but with one difference. While the woman in "Room" perceives the flat as a private space of her own where she feels she lives, the woman in "How I Finally Lost My Heart" contemplates her affairs in her flat "heartbeat by heartbeat," (Lessing 233) feels the pain in her, and directs her attention to the external world. Unlike the detailed material descriptions of the flat in "A Room," this one does not focus on the firstspace perspective of the flat, rather emphasises a single part of it, that is the window, which serves as a means of connection to or separation from the outside world.

During the process of recalling memories in her flat with curtains closed for four days, the narrator realizes that her attempts to become a good partner for her lovers are futile. After "having had lunch with A, tea with B, and then looking forward to C," (Lessing 231) she realizes that it is this love formula that makes her life painful. In order to protect herself from another frustrating affair, the narrator extracts her heart from her body because there is "no pleasure in it, no feeling of achievement" (Lessing

231). Then, she wraps her heart "in tinfoil and scarf," (Lessing 233) opens the curtains and starts watching the external world from her window. The window, as a threshold, representing her need to connect to the outside world enables the woman to awaken from a fourty-year sleep and free herself from painful memories. In the scene from her window is a woman whose high hills create tapping sound. Then, she notices her walking fast "opposite [her] window" (Lessing 233) getting closer to "the corner at Great Portland Street" (Lessing 233). She observes the hurrying steps of the woman on the pavements and the movements of the pigeons in the street, and decides to go out. As Mine Özyurt Kılıç puts it, the narrator "chooses to liberate herself from the suffocating bounds of the private realm and unite with the life outside" ("Politicizing the Personal" 275).

Unlike the solitary woman in her flat in "Room," she interacts with other people and finds herself in the park, the Round Pond, and finally, in the underground at Oxford Circus. They are all transitory and public places where there are "crowds of people" (Lessing 235) passing by. On the train, she sees a poor and lonely woman whose posture strikes the narrator: "She was sitting half twisted in her seat, so that her head was turned over her left shoulder, and she was looking straight at the stomach of an elderly man next to her. But it was clear she was not seeing it: her young staring eyes were sightless, she was looking inwards" (Lessing 235). While the other people in the compartment pay attention to her bizarre voice repeating the same things and her gaze at the man's stomach "in her private drama of misery," (Lessing 236) the mad woman is completely unconscious of her surrounding because she seems to be lost in her inner world. When the elderly man gets off the train, the emptied seat is not filled by others because nobody wants to sit by her "to receive her stare" (Lessing 236). As the narrator explains, the mad woman represents "unhappiness embodied" and "the essence of some private tragedy – rather, Tragedy," (Lessing 237) which in fact, disturbs the passengers in the train. As Kılıç claims, "[a] sense of reconciliation is achieved, when the two [the narrator and the mad woman], who are complete strangers to each other, happen to interact in public" ("Politicizing the Personal" 275) on the train. While observing the mad woman's desperate situation, the narrator feels "under the scarf and the tin foil, a lightening of [her] fingers, as [her] heart rolled loose" (Lessing 237) and decides to rid of her heart by giving it to the mad woman as a gift. The mad woman replaces her sorrows with "a silver heart" (Lessing 238) and

the narrator with no heart to carry goes out "on to the platform, up the escalators, into the street, and along to the park" (Lessing 238) like a liberated and unrestrained woman. Her trip on the subway and her downward and upward movements in the escalator symbolise a kind of transformation from a closed and lonely life to an open, public and independent one. The ending of the story with the description of the woman with no heart is ironic because she is laughing and full of bliss. However, if she does not own a heart, how is it possible for her to laugh and feel happy and free? As is suggested in the title, it might be a biological loss of the heart, the death of the woman or a metaphorical one, the relieved woman.

**4.4. Imaginary Space**

"Two Potters" differs from the other stories in this volume because as Mairi Elizabeth Fulcher claims, the text has a complicated structure: "it poses such questions as: Where are the boundaries between dreaming and waking? Do they in fact, exist? and analogously, what are the boundaries between fiction and reality? and What is the status of mimesis?" (*The Short Story* 94). This story cannot be categorised in terms of transitory or closed space, since the focus is on the narrator's[49] imagination of a place, which she reflects through dreams and writing letters.

As the narrator reveals, there are two potters: the real potter, Mary Tawnish lives with her husband in a village near London. Their house is "an old farmhouse on the edge of the village. There is a great garden, with fruit trees, roses – everything" (Lessing 287). Although Mary is a traditional woman taking care of her house and three boys, she has a space of her own, "in the shed that used to be a dairy where she pots" (Lessing 287). The fictional potter lives in "a village or a settlement, not in England" but in an unknown place consisting of "a baked red-dust bareness" (Lessing 281). It is fictional since the potter exists in the narrator's dream and the fictional space created in her imagination is reflected in the letters between the narrator and Mary Tawnish. The fictional space is transfered into a textual space and the material perception of it changes in serried dreams.

What the narrator foregrounds about this fictional place in the first dream is its incomplete physical appearance: some of the houses are "roofless and others in the

[49] The narrator's gender is not clear, yet I will use the feminine form because of sytlistic reasons.

process of crumbling, and others half built" and there is "nothing finished or formed about this place" (Lessing 281). Because of the partially finished settlement, the dream is pervaded with a feeling of uncertainty. Although the place seems to be "uninhabited" like an empty space, the narrator notices the fictional old potter, called Elija, working by himself. Elija's life is set somewhere in Africa covered with "flat, dust-beaten reddish plain, ringed by very distant blue-hazed mountains," (Lessing 281) so it is a distant place away from where Mary and the narrator live.

Unlike the bare and uninhabited space in the first dream, "the settlement was now populated, indeed, teeming, and it was much bigger" (Lessing 282) in the second dream. The houses are now linked to each other as opposed to the separate ones in the first dream. All the rooms are "set at all angles to each other, so that, standing in one, it might have one, two, three doors, leading to a corresponding number of mud rooms" (Lessing 282-283). The rooms opening to others and the doors that connect one room to another enable the narrator to find the fictional old potter. Beyond the old potter there is a poor marketplace full of "listless people" and women "wearing the same sort of yellowish sacking" (Lessing 283) and beyond the marketplace extends the plain and "illusory mountains" (Lessing 283). Since it is a dream which presents a fictional space and people in the fictional framework of the story, it might also reflect the narrator's unconscious mind. In a similar vein, Rahman and Mohammad interpret the relationship between the narrator and her dream as her access to "the unconscious through dream and sees herself as potter who is moulding her desires" ("Two Potters" 19). It is the old potter that matters rather than the other people in the dreams, and thus, they are depicted as just unimportant and ordinary people. However, the narrator believes that if she had planned, "it would be set in groves of fruit trees and surrounded by whitening corn fields, with a river full of splashing brown children" (Lessing 283). Despite the narrator's own plan of the settlement, the place has more signs of life as opposed to the first dream.

In the third dream, "all the plain was populated. The mountains had come closer in, reaching up tall and blue into blue sky, circumscribing the plain" (Lessing 284). As opposed to these changes in the plain, the settlement including the houses, the natural environment and the old potter remain the same; for instance, there is "no green yet, no river" (Lessing 284) but this time, the narrator enters into the dream with

pleasure. Similar to her involvement in the story as one of the characters, she also takes part in her dream.

The next dream she wakes from is stressful because of the depression she feels. She takes one step further: after entering the dream, now she enters the potter's mind. Her movement from one dimension to another resembles her walking from one room to another in the dreams. While Mary Tawnish and the old potter are stable in their villages, the narrator is in constant motion. Inside the old potter's mind, the narrator hears his pray to God that his clay rabbit will breathe life and become "a live thing among the forms of clay" (Lessing 285). When Mary questions why the old potter makes a rabbit clay, the narrator understands that "it was because of [her] effrontery in creating that rabbit, inserting [herself] into the story" (Lessing 285). Like the old potter and his rabbit clay, the narrator wants Mary to suppose that she makes the rabbits for children to play in the garden and makes one for the potter. Mary's clay rabbit is "far more in keeping with the dried mud houses, the dusty plain, than the pretty furry rabbit [the narrator] had dreamed," (Lessing 289) which is "more likely to be *true*" (Lessing 290). By drawing attention to the act of making clay rabbits by two potters, the narrator blurs the boundaries between reality and illusion because both the old potter and Mary can be the outcome of her imagination, which she reveals through her dreams and letters. The three main characters – the narrator, the potter and Mary – of this story interact with each other through dreams and letters or perhaps they exist in imagination. Thus, instead of the material characteristics of the places, this story focuses on alternative spaces created through the imagination of the narrator.

Apart from the stories set in transitory and closed spaces and one about imaginary space in this collection, the only narrative taking place in open space is "A Woman on a Roof". The unnamed woman in this story recalls other female characters such as Barbara in "One off the Short List" and Stella in "A Man and Two Women" in the sense that they lead an independent life. Unlike Barbara and Stella whose marital status, occupation and relations with other characters are revealed, the woman in "A Woman on a Roof" is a mysterious one and depicted solely as a corporeal body sunbathing on her roof. It is not only the woman but also the three labourers enacting their routine tasks on the roofs, which provide an analysis of the relationship between space and gender in terms of Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial tripartite: the perceived

(firstspace), the conceived (secondspace) and the lived (thirdspace). I aim to demonstrate how the roof is perceived as a material part of a building, how it is conceived as a cover concealing the apparatus of power as well as to what extent both genders exceed beyond these conceptions, and configure the roofs as alternative spaces based on lived experience.

**Part II: Appropriation of a Roof as an Alternative Space in "A Woman on a Roof"**

"A Woman on a Roof" revolves around a woman's surveillance by three labourers working on a roof[50] for six days. As is suggested with the use of the article "a" in the title of the story, the woman's name is not disclosed and no information about her is provided. She might refer to any woman whose corporeal existence rather than her personal characteristics is foregrounded. Conversely, the three workmen – Harry, Stanley and Tom – are introduced as working-class people. Harry is a responsible middle-aged family man with a grown-up child; Stanley is a newly-wed young and handsome person; and Tom is an inexperienced seventeen-year old boy. They watch "married couples" sitting "side by side in deck chairs" (Lessing 221) on the rooftops of buildings, yet specifically focus on the woman sunbathing on her roof. Since the woman is not defined in relation to her personality, marital status, gender roles and domestic sphere, she remains an unstable female character, and thus, reminds of Braidotti's nomadic subject belonging nowhere and everywhere. Rather than actual travelling, the nomadic subject refers to a state of mind that resists "hegemonic, fixed, unitary, and exclusionary views of subjectivity" (*Nomadic* 58). In this sense, the woman might be regarded as a nomadic female who has the potential to subvert the set conventions through her peformative and nomadic acts on the roof.

Different from the spaces in the other narratives in this collection, the roof here as a semi-open space is not limited to its materiality (firstspace), where repetitive acts take place – the woman's sunbathing and the labourers's working – rather, it retains diverse meanings because of how it is conceived (secondspace) and lived (thirdspace) by these characters in the story. As Michael Pollan argues in his *A Place of My Own*, the roofs are "so evocative, so much more than the sum of their timbers and shingles

[50] *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* defines roof as "(1) (a) the outside upper covering of a house or other building; also the ceiling of a room or other covered part of a house, building etc.," which shows material characteristics of the roof as a shelter for a building.

and nails. . . . people have attached innumerable other meanings to roofs as well" (182). Hence, analysing the relationship between the rooftops the labourers and the woman occupy can display to what extent these characters attribute meanings and configure it in alternative ways.

Once the workmen identify her free acts, the woman gradually becomes the object of their gaze. Based on the viewpoint of the narrator and the three men, the representation of the woman on the roof as a spectacle to be looked at pervades the story in which she is defined as an object of desire and is criticised for the display of her body. She cannot escape the male gaze, but at least returns it through her looks reflecting her indifference, and later, her anger towards the workmen. There are multiple gazes involved in the narrative: (1) the narrator's gaze at the characters and their surrounding; (2) the workmen's gaze at the woman on the roof and at each other; and (3) the woman's gaze at the workmen. Thus, the concept of gazing is at the core of this story as it problematises the power relations between the gazer and the gazed.

The story begins with the narrator's description of three men working on a roof on a hot day in June, under hard conditions. The measurable aspects of perceived roof include air temperature, heat and sunlight. Because of extreme heat, they cannot touch the leads and the guttering, and feel "a bit dizzy" (Lessing 219). To avoid the sun, they seek for a shelter in the shade of a chimney from where "[t]here was a fine view across several acres of roofs" (Lessing 219). The acre refers to "a large extent of space," (OED) which implies a multitude of roofs. This is both perceptual and measurable, and demonstrates its physical parameters. The married couples's sitting and reading on deck chairs, typically used by the seaside, and the woman's lying "face down on a brown blanket," (Lessing 219) which is the color primarily associated with the earth and nature, might show their configuration of the roofs as alternative lived spaces for recreation and sunbathing. While the labourers escape from the heat and sun because they are at work, the married couples and the woman take advantage of it since they are at leisure. As Nick Yablon puts it, "[a]s a part of the building that was not designed for the tenants' use and that remained an expanse of tar interrupted only by water tanks, chimney stacks, and pigeon coops, the tenement rooftop was a blank slate that could be freely adapted to multiple activities, both sociable and solitary, public and private" ("John Sloan and the Roof Life of the Metropolis" 15). The way the married couples and the woman appropriate their roofs by sunbathing in

deckchairs and on blanket show how they turn the rooftop into a solitary and private place.

For the three workmen, it is a place where they work to repair the leads, the aerials, the chimney pots and so on. Even though they have "work to be done in the basement of the big block of flats," (Lessing 221) which is relatively cooler, they prefer the roof, as they feel "free on a different level" (Lessing 221) upstairs and do not associate themselves with the "ordinary humanity shut in the streets or the buildings" (Lessing 221). As Jason Pomeroy notes "[r]ooftops have been both forgotten spaces for the underprivileged as well as celebrated spaces of the affluent" ("Room at the Top" 413). These "underprivileged" workmen enjoy independency up on the "forgotten" roof where they perceive the comfortable life of the upper-class people in the buildings of Oxford street, so going from downstairs to upstairs has its metaphorical implications of moving up the social scale but their preference of rooftop to the basement is also related to their atrraction to the woman they watch. Rather than confining themselves to "the grey cement basement fitting pipes," they take advantage of "the holiday atmosphere of London in a heat wave," (Lessing 223) and in this way, create an alternative view of the roof as a gathering place for a group of men to watch the luxurious life of London and a half-naked woman.

The analysis of power relations in terms of gazing is based on the premise that there is an unequal relationship between the subject and the object of the gaze. This conflict can be explained by Mulvey's article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" which focuses on the gaze in the context of Hollywood movies. By drawing attention to the dichotomy between the active male and the passive female in movies, Mulvey claims that, "[t]he determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" (19). As the narrator of "A Woman on a Roof" reveals, on the first day of her sunbathing, the woman's skin is "white, flushing red" (Lessing 219). Her skin colour is in harmony with "red scarf tied around her breasts and brief red bikini pants" (Lessing 219). Not only her composure and relaxed bodily movements but also her attractive accessories draw the critical attention of the three workmen on the roof. The colour red repeated by the narrator "symbolizes passion, sexuality, fertility, and animal urges" (Nozedar

64). Thus, the woman unaware of the male gaze and criticism on the first day, arouses the workmen's instincts by tying the red scarf to cover her breasts. She is delegated to the passive role of being looked at and seems to have no other identity other than her skin colour and body movements from the male gaze. On the other hand, her bikini and scarf over her breasts might also be seen as an element in her constitution of a nomadic subject for, unlike the married women on the other roofs whose stockingless legs are depicted, the woman is so comfortable with her half-naked appearance.

The narrator focuses on a variety of reactions by the observers: while Stanley claims that he will report the woman "if she doesn't watch out," (Lessing 219) Harry, with no interest in her, goes back to work saying, "Small things amuse small minds" (Lessing 219). The former emphasises the impropriety of the half-naked female body on display like a sex object, while the latter considers the act of gaze a triviality. Stanley's attitude towards the woman's sunbathing on the roof is connected to male interference with women's issues because women are expected to comply with the social norms about gender roles and appropriate female behaviours. However, the woman acts indifferently and maintains her relaxed position and leisure activities. Harry, on the other hand, devalues the woman's presence on the roof rather insignificant. Because of the hot weather, he also makes a joke about "getting an egg from some woman in the flats under them, to poach it for their dinner" and borrowing "kitchen gloves with the eggs" (Lessing 219). This joke with references to cooking shows his understanding of gender roles according to which women are responsible for dealing with household chores. Meanwhile, the young Tom cannot hide his excitement and tries to see more of the woman's body as if he is exploring a new space. Like Connell's theory of masculinities, these men exemplify "the contradictory and dynamic character of gender" (*Masculinities* 35). The depiction of these three labourers with different years of age and various backgrounds, though they share a domineering male view of women, suggests that these men are not stable, yet are continuously changing through interaction and conflict in everyday life. Their attitudes towards the woman – aggressive and chauvinistic at the beginning – gradually alters in line with her indifference and defiance of male gaze and intrusions through the end of the story.

Because the workmen cannot see the woman properly from their roof, Stanley and Tom go to the "farthest point they could to peer at the woman" (Lessing 220).

Rather than getting closer to her, they go to a remote point to direct their gaze towards her without being seen. What they can see is just "two pink legs stretched on the blanket" (Lessing 220). As opposed to what they see in their first gaze at the woman – the top part of her body – in their second gaze from a deliberately chosen place, they see the lower part of her body – the pink legs. Their limited view from the roof helps them in their process of degradation and objectification of the woman. Her back and legs are described with hot colours such as "flushed" suggesting red, and "pink". Like the sexual connotation of red, "pink is the ultimate feminine color, being flirty, girlish, and innocent at the same time" (Nozedar 63). Her arms are spread and her legs are stretched, which suggest flexibility and relief. Despite Stanley and Tom's whistling and shouting, the woman's legs do not move. This might suggest the fragmentation of female body from a male perspective and also might show the woman's indifference to the abusive acts of men, bothering her and destroying her solitariness not only through their watch but also through their voice. Their fetishizing the woman's body, especially Tom's fondness of her can also be explained with reference to Roland Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse* in which he discusses the impact of love on the lover's mind and language. As Barthes puts it, "[c]ertain parts of the body are particularly appropriate to this *observation*: eyelashes, nails, roots of the hair, the incomplete objects. It is obvious that I am then in the process of fetishizing a corpse" (71). Because of the physical distance between the roofs, the men are able to see her legs, arms and breasts rather than her eyelashes or nails, which are also incomplete from the male gaze. In addition to the fragmentation of the female body, the woman is depicted not as a living body but a dead one whose parts are under exploration. Once the body parts are identified and the woman's social position is defined, the workmen will exercise power over her.

The narrator not only shows men's reactions towards the woman but also their reaction towards each other. Harry, for instance, disapproves Stanley's treatment of the woman as a sexual body because of "her utter indifference" (Lessing 220). When he reminds Stanley that he is married and should put himself in the shoes of his wife being treated in the same way as the woman on the roof, Stanley claims that he would never allow his wife to sunbath on their roof in this way, which makes him feel safe and secure. As Margaret Atack argues, Stanley's response to Harry's criticism demonstrates the conflict between "the two codes of woman as private possession of

the man, and woman as object of display for any man. . . ." ("Towards a Narrative Analysis" 144). Tom, on the other hand, falls in love with a representation of her and thinks that "she was more his when the other men couldn't see her" (Lessing 224). Tom's gaze of the woman's body and his love for her might be linked to Barthes's fragments of discourse among which "The Other's Body" reveals the relationship between the lover's thoughts, feelings and the loved body. Barthes notes how the lover analyses the loved body: "To *scrutinize* means *to search*: I am searching the other's body, as if I wanted to see what was inside it, as if the mechanical cause of my desire were in the adverse body" (71). Tom[51] does not tell the truth to his friends about seeing her "fully visible" body "in the act of rolling down the little red pants over her hips, till they were no more than a small triangle" (Lessing 220) because he wants to keep what he has seen only to himself, which exemplifies a possesive behaviour and also shows his desire for recognition as a different man from his friends by the woman.

Depending on the perspective of the male gaze, the woman's triangle[52] pants might have double meanings: "[w]hen it sits firmly on its base, then it is a masculine, virile symbol, representing fire. The other way up it becomes the water element, a chalice shape, emblematic of the feminine powers," (Nozedar 11) and thus, the woman's red triangle pants might foreground female power if seen not from the base but from its opposite. Both Stanley and Tom attempt to objectify the woman to satisfy their desires. Their gazing at her as a way of expressing desire can be interpreted with reference to Alexandre Kojève's essay on Hegel in which he discusses human desire for recognition. As Kojève argues "Desire is human only if the one desires, not the body, but the Desire of the other. . . that is to say, if he wants to be 'desired' or 'loved,' or, rather, 'recognized' in his human value, in his reality as a human individual" (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* 6). In respect to this argument, Stanley's desire for recognition and "for a value" (*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* 6) as a

[51] The act of watching the woman on the roof in secret echoes the forbidden gaze/voyeurism exercised by the 'Peeping Tom' upon the Lady Godiva as she rode naked through the streets of Coventry. There are a variety of stories regarding Peeping Tom's voyeurism in history, as Daniel Donoghue puts it, he is "a character who defies the edict and is consequently, mysteriously punished with blindness or death. His voyeuristic role has proved so durable because its combination of transgression and wish-fulfillment has found deep resonances in modern Western culture" (5).

[52] As Nozedar explains, "in ancient times, the triangle was considered synonymous with light, and the meanings of the triangle vary according to which way up it is" (11).

controlling male figure is so great that he maintains his excessive reactions against the woman. For Tom, their wish to be noticed by the woman in different ways can also be related to their social status; in other words, this relationship is based on not only a sexual attraction but also a class struggle of the workers to be recognized by an upper-class woman.

On the second day, the rooftop where the woman is situated illustrates the different social and economic status between her and the workmen, because "[h]er roof belonged to a different system of roofs, separated from theirs at one point by about twenty feet" (Lessing 221). Her roof being on a higher level than that of the men and on "a different system" at this stage of the story show the hierarchical structure between the woman and the men and a subversion of gender because the woman is at an upper level. In addition to her position, her defiance of male gaze and verbal harassment by not giving her consent to the workmen's attempts to create social order on the roof, the woman disturbs the power relations between the two genders. This spatial hierarchy also does not allow the men to observe the woman easily from the roof below. Since they are attracted by the woman's comfortable sunbathing "turning herself over and over," (Lessing 221) they want to see more of the woman, so they have to go to a higher roof. Like the previous cooking imagery when Harry plans to get eggs and kitchen gloves from a woman, the woman's depiction here, also has the connotation of cooking. This move upwards necessiates "a scrambling climb from one level to another, edging along parapets, clinging to chimneys, while their boots slipped and slithered, but at last they stood on a small square projecting roof looking straight down at her, close" (Lessing 221). Based on the perceived space understanding, their moving from one rooftop to another might show the measurable distance between the buildings. The "scrambling climb" being slippery in this quote shows the struggle of the workmen to reach a higher position in order to observe the woman. Parapets are low protective walls along the edge of a roof which act as borders, while the chimneys with their vertical architectural structure are symbolic of masculinity, so walking on borders and holding tightly to the chimneys reveal their efforts to assert themselves into the woman's world. According to Lefebvre's understanding of conceived space shaped by a variety of power relations in the social structure, "the arrogant verticality of skyscrapers, and especially of public and state buildings, introduces a phallic or more precisely a phallocratic element into the visual

realm; the purpose of this display, of this need to impress, is to convey an impression of authority to each spectator" (*The Production* 98). The men's connection to the vertical chimneys on their journey to a higher position might be interpreted as their expression of masculinity with respect to space. The small roof where they reach at last is "square,"[53] which is "a safe, static reference point, and a stable, unmoving shape," (Nozedar 11) and they fix their gaze on the woman looking downward to disparage her. Thus, not only the chimney but also the rooftop higher than that of the woman implies verticality embedded with power

Viewed from the small and square rooftop on the second day, the lower position of the woman's roof in which she is under observation might remind of Bentham's Panopticon, discussed by Michel Foucault in his *Discipline and Punish*. As Irene Visser argues, Foucault's discussion of the Panopticon is "extremely relevant to gaze theory since it demonstrates in detail the nature of the relation between power and visibility" ("Reading Pleasure" 278). In this architectural structure, there is "at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells. . . ." (*Discipline* 200). The material construction of the rooftop as open space differs from the cells in the panopticon but the way they are used for observation and surveillance is similar. This also shows the conceived space perspective of the roof as it is embedded with the notions of power, ideology and control by the three workmen. Lefebvre also emphasises the interconnectedness between space and power, asking, "What is an ideology without a space to which it refers, a space which it describes, whose vocabulary and links it makes use of, and whose code it [space] embodies?" (*The Production* 44). The small square rooftop makes it possible for the workers to see the woman constantly like, as Foucault names, "a perfect eye that nothing would escape and a centre towards which all gazes would be turned" (*Discipline* 173). It also enables the men to project male power through gazing and constructing an order on the roof in terms of regulating the woman's behaviours. According to Foucault, the panoptic system is "absolutely indiscreet,

[53] Temples and holy buildings are often built in the form of a square, solidly designed to align with the four points of the compass. The Ka'aba at Mecca is a fine example, as is the base of the Buddhist Stupa. Altars, too, are square. Square shapes define limits and create boundaries; to speak of someone as being "square" means that they are fixed and unchangeable (Nozedar 11).

since it is everywhere and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade and constantly supervises the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising: and absolutely 'discreet,' for it functions permanently and largely in silence" (*Discipline* 177). In the case of this story, such surveillance partially explains the power relations between the gazer and the gazed. The three workmen, for instance, show their presence on the roof indiscreetly everyday by drawing attention of the woman. They watch the woman from above and try to control her bodily movements and prevent her from lying there by whistling, yelling and shouting at her, but by gazing at them directly upon Stanley's whistle, and then looking carelessly because of the sun in her eyes, the woman becomes aware of the gazers and does not allow them to hassle her comfort on the roof. The workmen's attempt to exercise power from the panoptic rooftop works to a certain extent: it sustains not only the visibility of the woman but also of the workmen, so reduces the effect of male power over the woman. The primary aim of the panopticon is "to induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power," (*Discipline* 201) so the authoritarian gaze disciplines the individuals in a manner that renders them docile. However, the so-called panoptic power of the labourers does not have the impact of discipline on the woman's body. Unlike the docile bodies and the inmates in their cells committed to self-surveillance, the woman's bodily acts are so performative that she defies the men's disturbing watch.

Unlike Bentham's panopticon which is, as Foucault puts it, "a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad," (*Discipline* 202) the men insist on being seen by the woman and cannot control her. The woman's utter indifference on the first day is followed by her reckless manners and straight look at the men, which cause outrageous reactions in the gazers. The use of words to describe the workmen's feelings such as "annoyed," (Lessing 219) "angry," (Lessing 220) "furious" and "rage" (Lessing 221) might disclose their inability to control the woman through their gaze. Stanley, for instance, goes further by shouting and labelling the woman as "bitch" (Lessing 220). Not only through the male gaze in different forms but also through in Althusser's terms "interpallation or hailing," ("*From* Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" 1504) Stanley tries to disempower the woman. Stanley's hailing the woman as bitch has the aim of degrading and objectifying her, which she ignores like the previous attempts. Tom snickers and thinks she should ask

for their permission, and Harry, in a moralistic way, brings about her marital status: "if she's married, her old man wouldn't like that" (Lessing 220). The controlling male gaze seems to be an important characteristic of these workmen and shows their desire for power and mastery. The exercise of power over the woman can be explained with reference to Amy Allen's article "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Feminists," in which she analyses Foucault's notion of power working on two levels: the microlevel and the macrolevel. As Allen puts it, the microlevel of power "examines a specific power relation between two individuals or groups of individuals" and the macrolevel of power "examines the cultural meanings, practices, and larger structures of domination that make up the context within which a particular power relation is able to emerge" (267). For Foucault, power operates in everyday life and is evident in social relations between the individuals from different backgrounds in terms of gender, class, race, age and lifestyle, what he calls "a micro-physics of power" (*Discipline* 26). In relation to this, Allen suggests that sexual harassment is "the sort of micropractice of power that Foucault's analysis was designed to illuminate" (272) because it exemplifies a power relation "in which individual men or goups of men exercise power over individual woman or groups of women" (272). In this sense, Stanley's interpellating the woman as bitch, Tom's need for recognition as the master of the woman and Harry's critical social voice representative of patriarchy might illustrate Foucault's micropractice of power because they all try to exert power over the woman.

In addition to the exercise of gaze at the woman, Tom goes a step further in his love and desires to posses her. Being unable to dissociate himself from the other two men despite his "apologetic" (Lessing 221) look and grin towards the woman, he creates in his imagination an alternative view of her who is "tender with him" (Lessing 221) before he goes to sleep. He defines this experience as "romantic. . . . like being high on two hilltops" (Lessing 222) implying his ultimate bliss because he feels like reaching a peak with her. In his dreams, the woman is "kind and friendly," (Lessing 223) so Tom thinks: "Perhaps she would ask him down to her flat? Perhaps . . ." (Lessing 223). The repetition of perhaps and the three dots might show how his mind is filled with fantasies about the woman. It is not only the night time Tom imagines the woman but also during the day, even when he is at work, he visualises himself "on

the crane,[54] adjusting the arm to swing her over and pick her up and swing her back across the sky to drop near him" (Lessing 221) like a favourite object of play. His cranage might be symbolic in showing his desire to control and possess the woman.

On the third and fourth days of the week, the labourers work in the basement because of the heat. At the end of the third day, they go up to the square rooftop "to have fresh air," (Lessing 222) but in fact, their only concern is to check whether the woman is on the roof or not, because during the day she has not been in her routine place but "on a different patch of roof" (Lessing 222). As the narrator reveals, the woman spends her day on a small area on her roof "to hide from them," (Lessing 222) to escape from their examination. The woman's appropriation of every inch of the roof by taking with her everything she uses during her sunbath (her blanket, cigarettes, newspaper etc.,) rather than going inside can be read as her determination to protect her space from the voyeuristic intrusion of men. Meanwhile, the woman's body – sometimes visible sometimes not – remains an unreachable and unknowable site for the three men. She becomes a space herself which the labourers try to map because she is not only a sexually objectified body but also an extension of upper-class because of her being at leisure. That is why the woman becomes an object of resentment for the labourers because she does not recognize them as the master in terms of gender and class. As Braidotti puts it, "[a] nomadic vision of the body defines it as multifunctional and complex, as a transformer of flows and energies, affects, desires, and imaginings" (*Nomadic* 25). In this sense, the woman's body might be nomadic because of its potential to develop a resistant figure against the male power.

Unlike her body partially covered by a red scarf and bikini on the first two days, on the third day the men notice "a flutter of white from behind a parapet" (Lessing 222) which turns out to be the woman's "white dressing gown" (Lessing 222). However, Stanley manages to disturb her comfort by "let[ting] out a shrill derisive yell," (Lessing 222) which frightens her and causes her to drop her papers, books, cigarettes and blanket. In response to his high-pitched shout, the woman looks "straight at them, angry" and "vanish[es], frowning" (Lessing 223). Stanley's desire for recognition is disapproved by the woman, and the following day, she does not

[54] *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* defines crane "(2) as a machine for raising and lowering heavy weights; in its usual form it consists of a vertical post capable of rotation on its axis, a projecting arm. . . ." Its vertical shape, like the chimneys, might symbolize masculinity.

appear on the roof. Unable to see even a part of her body, they cannot objectify the woman and are disappointed. For instance, Tom feels that he is betrayed by the woman since up to this moment she has been the basis of his love fantasies.

Following Foucault's and Mulvey's arguments about the power relations in gazing, Visser puts forward the idea that apart from the male gaze, there are two other gendered gazes – feminist and female gaze. On the one hand, the feminist gaze is "ideologically committed to struggle, aligned with anger and resistance against the mechanism of the male gaze" ("Reading Pleasure" 285). On the other hand, the female gaze "is creative, liberatory, associative, dialogic, based on the principles of respect and pleasure" ("Reading Pleasure" 285). The woman on the roof might display some of the characteristics of both feminist and female gaze. Showing indifference towards the men on the first two days, and then, resistance to and disapproval of the male gaze by looking "gravely" (Lessing 224) at them might exemplify her feminist gaze. She is also creative in terms of appropriating the roof as a private place where she can experience a sense of freedom. She is capable of taking pleasure in sunbathing, sleeping, reading and smoking on her roof. That is why the woman, I would argue, performs the female gaze as well by inscribing individuality because what she wants is respect for her recreational activities on the roof and in this way, transforms an open space which belongs to noone to her own alternative space. In every sense, her performative acts on the roof and her daring display of her body might be interpreted as nomadic interventions that resist "settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour" (*Nomadic* 26). She is capable of disregarding the male view of women and acting as a free and independent nomadic figure.

On the fifth day of the week, the men watch "the skylight on her roof open" (Lessing 223) from which she appears "in her white gown" (Lessing 224) like a celestial female figure reflecting purity and serenity in her stance and goes to her hidden place on the roof. While the men's skins are bruised by the sun due to labouring, her skin glistens with oil and becomes brown day by day. Here, there is the juxtaposition between labour and pleasure, which is also suggested with the hot weather being unbearable for the labourers unlike the woman who enjoys the sun. Stanley compares her glistening skin to "a rhino" (Lessing 224). As Nozedar explains, "the power of the rhino is also perceived as the ultimate in male sexual energy" (24). The woman's rhino-like power might be a projection of Stanley's sexual desire onto

her body. Not only the image of a rhino but also the allusion to Lady Godiva reveal these men's perception of the woman as a sexual object. Unlike Lady Godiva's naked ride through the streets for a noble reason,[55] the woman's exposing her half-naked body just for her pleasure means crossing the social boundaries and posing a threat for male power.

For Stanley, the woman is not like Lady Godiva as she does not "give [them] a bit of a chat and a smile" (Lessing 224) like Mrs Pricthett living in one of the flats under their roof. Unlike the woman enjoying her time on the roof, Mrs Pritchett is depicted in her kitchen dealing with domestic chores. When Harry asks for a blanket to build up a shade on the roof, Mrs Pritchett not only provides the blanket but also welcomes them in her kitchen with a cup of tea and chats for an hour. In the eyes of the workmen, Mrs Pritchett is a "friendly" (Lessing 225) woman whereas the woman on the roof is "cool and remote" (Lessing 221). Harry uses the blanket to create shade because they need a rest from work whereas the woman sunbaths on it as if she is on a beach for pleasure. The difference between the two women is related not only to their personality but also to their view of space like the flat and the roof. While the unnamed woman's flat is never mentioned in the story, Mrs Pritchett is defined in relation to her flat which is "cool neat little" (Lessing 225). What is more, their view of the roof is different from one another: for the woman, the roof is an alternatively appropriated private place which she makes use of like a "beach," (Lessing 225) but for Mrs Pritchett, it is "a dirty place up there, and it's too hot" (Lessing 225). This might suggest how these women conceive space in accordance with their personal preference, the former favouring her individual desires while the latter conforming to the norms of the society. Moreover, from the men's perspective, the woman's lying half-naked on the roof is not a socially acceptable behaviour, but Mrs Pritchett's staying within the limits of her flat is an approved one. Unlike Mrs Pritchett, the woman has a nomadic consciousness, because her acts resist settling into socially established codes and norms telling what is appropriate or not. Her understanding of

[55] Lady Godiva "was sympathetic to the people's plight, and begged on more than one occasion for Leofric, her husband, to free the people of Coventry from the tax. Her husband refused, but she regularly repeated her request on the people's behalf. . . Later, she accepted Leofric's bargain and rode naked along the marketplace, and when she returned home, her astonished husband lifted the tax on his people. Thus Godiva, in the legend, is a heroine" (The Godiva Gazette, Vol 1, Issue 1).

space, for instance, is not limited to conceptual impositions that confine women in their houses, kitchens or rooms, rather, the woman transforms the roof from a conceptualisation as an open space for the tenants of the building to a private one where she experiences her individuality. Like the male characters who have diverse desires and attitudes, the comparison of the two women also reveals the contradictory nature of gender. While the woman is concerned with her own pleasure regardless of the labourers's attempts to disturb her comfort, Mrs Pritchett welcomes and serves them by offering tea in her kitchen. As is seen in their individual gender performativity, both women ilustrate the interplay between giving manufactured consent to and contesting the social code and norms.

Throughout the story, the heat and the cool weather shape space, particularly the former defines the rooftop and the latter defines the basement and the inside of the flat. On the sixth day of the week, leaving Mrs Pritchett's cool and neat flat, the men climb up the square roof again to look at the woman and are "resentful at her ease in this punishing sun" (Lessing 225). While the woman is depicted as free from worries or problems and taking pleasure in the heat, the labourers, because of their duties on the roof, fight against the sun which seems to penalise them. The woman representing leisure from the upper-class is juxtaposed with the labourers working under the punishing sun. The sun does not disturb the woman whereas makes the labourers lose control. This conflict implies not only class issues but also the subversion of the hierarchy between the genders. Stanley revolts against the system forcing them to work under such harsh conditions swearing: "Fuck them" (Lessing 225). "Them" might refer to the employer or the wealthy people (the ones on the roof, for instance) who do not care about what the labourers are struggling with. As a result, Stanley goes "mad" and starts whistling, yelling, stamping his feet and even screaming at the woman, but she "[does] not move a muscle" (Lessing 225). It is not only Stanley who is out of control but also Harry seems to have lost his balance, sounding "aggrieved" (Lessing 226). The woman does not acknowledge their presence on the roof no matter what they do to attract her attention. Her passive lying face down and not moving a muscle gains power over the men and makes them feel insignificant. Thus, being defeated by an upper-class woman in power relations, they pack their stuff and go downstairs where the ordinary people live. Stanley goes home, Harry goes off to find

the foreman to ask for a different workplace, and Tom, caught in his fantasies, goes to the roof where the woman is lying.

The woman's need for solitariness and urge to be independent emerges clearly in the last scene when Tom visits her on her roof. She appears to keep her distance from Tom, first by "star[ing] at him in silence," then, through her words: "What do you want? (Lessing 226). Tom's stammering and "slight, scarlet-face" (Lessing 226) is juxtaposed with the woman's "serious" (Lessing 226) looks and "nearly naked" (Lessing 226) body. By asking what he wants, the woman in a way fulfills his desire for recognition at least for a moment. Although they exchange the looks and Tom receives her attention, the woman is in a powerful situation because she is the one holding and returning the look as well as having the "reasonable" (Lessing 226) voice. She ignores his words and silences him by saying "Go away" (Lessing 226). Her response to the three workmen's attempts to watch her body and control her behaviours in what follows is significant: "If you get a kick out of seeing women in bikinis, why don't you take a sixpenny bus ride to the Lido? You'd see dozens of them, without all this mountaineering" (Lessing 226-227). In her resistance to objectification, the woman tries to keep the roof to herself so she suggests in this quote that the workmen could satisfy their desires by going to a public beach where they could see a lot of women in bikinis.

"A Woman on a Roof" displays a nomadic female body in the sense that her acts are performative and unruly from male perspective. She does not fit into the patriarchal limits regarding women's bodies as obedient and their movements as appropriate in accordance with the social codes. She is juxtaposed with another woman, Mrs Pritchett, who represents docile body under the control and surveillance of male authority. Their relation to the roof and the flat also reveal their distinct conceptions of space: the former's preferences are shaped by her individual desires whereas the latter's choices suggest conformity to the norms of the society. Analysing the woman's performative and nomadic acts on the roof as well as the three workmen's repetitive acts provide the ground for a discussion on how the roof is perceived as a material part of a building where everyday activities take place – the woman and the neighbours sunbathing and the workmen's repairment of the roof – how it is conceived as a cover concealing the apparatus of power for men, and finally, how it is experienced as an alternative space particularly by the woman.

## CHAPTER V

## The Second Volume of European Stories: *The Temptation of Jack Orkney*

Lessing's second volume of stories set in Europe covers a variety of subjects, ranging from a challenge of social norms and marriage to political, class and gender issues. There are fourteen stories in this collection titled "Each Other," "Dialogue," "Not a Very Nice Story," "An Unposted Love Letter," "Side Benefits of an Honourable Profession," "Outside the Ministry," "Out of the Fountain," "Mrs Fortescue," "An Old Woman and Her Cat," "Notes for a Case History," "The Temptation of Jack Orkney," "Our Friend Judith," "Homage for Isaac Babel" and "Report on the Threatened City"; and four sketches: "The Other Garden," "Lions, Leaves, Roses...," "A Year in Regent's Park" and "Principle". While most of these narratives foreground the significance of space in relation to human beings, animals and plants, five stories deal with social and political subjects without a focus on space. Therefore, I will briefly mention their storyline, and then, move on to the analysis of other stories to illustrate to what extent they display Lefebvre's and Soja's three-dimensional understanding of space. After that, I will present a textual analysis of "An Old Woman and Her Cat" to discuss how space is constituted within three dimensions – the firstspace (the perceived), the secondspace (the conceived) and the thirdspace (the lived) – through daily routines, the state ideology and the lived experience of the old woman in this context. This story also provides a ground for a discussion on gender performativity and nomadic interventions of the old woman and her configuration of an alternative mode of thinking about various flats she lives in for a short while in London.

Among the stories that do not highlight space, "Not a Very Nice Story" focuses on marriage and the relationship between two couples, their "polygamous marriage" (Lessing 218) with no mention of space production. Similarly, "Notes for a Case History" is about two families – the Watsons and the Banners – whose young daughters Maureen and Shirley are close friends living in the same neighbourhood. There is a criticism of social norms, gender and class issues in this story through a focus on how

the young girls's behaviours are shaped by the society, but the story does not foreground the interrelatedness between the two genders and the spaces they occupy. "The Temptation of Jack Orkney" reveals Jack Orkney's state of mind and his relation to people around him in different places like his father's or his own house, but it does not focus on the interrelatedness between Jack and the spaces he occupies. "Outside the Ministry" is about four African politicians in London and their view of independence from British colonialism. Lessing considers this one as "one of [her] best stories, with implications far beyond the small events described" (*The Temptation* 2013, 4). The story takes place in public spaces of London such as Big Ben and the Ministry, but there is no emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between space and human beings. Finally, "Homage for Isaac Babel" is about a thirteen-year old young girl, Catherine, whom the narrator takes to visit Philip, a fifteen-year old boy, in a boarding school. The story takes place in transitory places such as a train where Catherine spends time reading Isaac Babel stories, on the school garden where Philip and Catherine meet, and in a cinema. The depiction of space in this story does not extend beyond setting formation as a backdrop of events in relation to Catherine's short trip. While Part I is composed of a brief analysis of the sketches in one group, and categorisation of the stories in three groups: the ones that take place in private space, those in public space and those in both private and public spaces, Part II will be alloted to the textual analysis of "An Old Woman and Her Cat".

**Part I: Classification of Stories**

**5.1. Sketches**

The first group of stories can be classified, what Lessing names in the preface to the volume, as "tales, or sketches, or impressions" (*The Temptation* 2013, 5) because of their lack of an organised plot and well-developed characters. These sketches focus on observation of nature and do not portray the involvement of characters in the production of space. That is why it is not possible to mention gender relations or class issues among the characters; but the spaces depicted in these sketches such as a garden, a park or a roadway provide a view of the relationship between space and living things, ranging from human beings, animals to plants.

As suggested in the title of the story, "The Other Garden" is composed of the narrator's description of a garden with reference to human beings and elements of nature. The perceived space discussion of the garden in this context encompasses the

parameters of the physical elements, both those considered as natural and those as human-made. The narrator refers to the environmental and cultural richness of the garden in what folows: "[a] tree will turn out to be an immigrant from Lebanon, another from Canada. Gulls come from the sea, migrating birds plane down to the many water-surfaces on their way from one continent to another" (Lessing 241). The trees and the animals are compared to immigrants reflecting the diversity of people, and the gathering of such different living things together in the garden might suggest the inclusive nature of the garden as a thirdspace for combining differences. Until s/he discovers the manipulation of nature by human beings, the narrator valorizes this richness by listing rough grass, roses, miniature waterfalls, lakes, fountains and so on. What makes the garden a thirdspace does not derive simply from an amalgamation of opposites such as nature/culture, natural/human-made elements or animals' natural habitat/human manipulation, but rather from, what Soja calls a "reconstitution of their presumed totalization producing an open alternative that is both similar and strikingly different" (*Thirdspace* 61). The "rough grass" and "roses" are similar in terms of being natural elements in the garden, yet they differ from each other since the former grow naturally without human intervention, but the latter might be planted by human beings. Similarly, "miniature waterfalls" and "fountains" are human-made architectural elements, but "lakes" and the trees might be naturally formed. In Soja's terms, thirding of a space, the garden in this context is "radically open to additional othernesses, to a continuing expansion of spatial knowledge" (*Thirdspace* 61). The diversity in the garden in this story underlines an alternative mode of spatial thinking as this site keeps changing with the interaction of all living things. Later the narrator notices how the garden reverts to its previous silent atmosphere once human beings leave nature on its own: "the place draws itself in behind you, is gathered into itself like water settling after a stone has disturbed it" (Lessing 245). If the garden is configured as open space for the recreational activities of human beings, then it functions as thirdspace, "accomodating" (Lessing 241) a variety of living beings.

Like "The Other Garden," "A Year in Regent's Park" is also a sketch about human-made nature in London. It focuses on the narrator's observation of the park in the middle of the city and recounts the relationship between human beings, animals and nature. That is why the analysis of Regent's Park is based on the constitutive components of space: the measurable aspects of the park such as amount of natural

versus artificial elements as well as the movements and behaviours of people and things that can be perceived in the park. The sketch starts with the description of the narrator's attempts to recreate one part of the park with the help of a garden boy, and during this process, the narrator and the garden boy clean "the top layer of this potential garden, which was all builder's rubble, cans, bottles, broken glass" (Lessing 110). Their finding trash in this place draws attention to how nature is destroyed and exploited by human beings. While walking in the park, the narrator also notices that human intervention into nature unfortunately disturbs the animals in the park. For instance, the water-birds retreat into "the water's edge to leave the grass and paths and trees for human" (Lessing 117). Such human violation of the animals' habitat reminds the narrator of the roles in a theatre: the animals become "stage managers, assistants, prompters, directors" (Lessing 117) and the human beings act as "the public," (Lessing 117) the audience coming to watch the performance. Unlike some animals such as goats, lions and wolves which are caged, water-hens and coots are able to make "a nest in the water of piled dead sticks" (Lessing 117). In one way or another, the animals are able to appropriate the park for their needs and "they were not aware of their audience on the bridge except as a noisy frieze which emitted lumps of food and other objects" (Lessing 121). According to the narrator's secondspace perspective of the park, it is conceived as a stage where the cast (the animals) perform their roles to entertain the audience, yet in fact, animals are owners of the park and people temporarily occupy the same space for recreational activities.

The narrator also recounts the challenging process of creating a garden in Regent's Park because of the weather conditions in London. Since the dry cold and the rain continue for a long time, it is not easy to create and maintain a human-made nature. Unlike its "wasteland" (Lessing 126) appearance at the beginning, the garden transforms into a lively space where "the roses, the thyme, geranium, clematis, were all strongly flowering, and butterflies crowded over lemon balm and hyssop" (Lessing 126). This suggests the capacity and power of nature to transform itself through human intervention. Paradoxically enough, it is the human beings that both destroy and create such natural environment.

Like the garden in the previous sketch, Regent's Park is perceived as a thirdspace, a home-like space embracing a variety of living things who learn to live together by acknowledging differences: "The park holds dozens of self-contained

dramas, human and animal, in the space of an eye-sweep" (Lessing 121-122). Viewed from the narrator's firstspace perspective, the sketch describes a detailed perception of the park with its animals, flowers and trees in different seasons as well as a description of human beings experiencing the park in various ways: the old people sitting, watching the environment and feeding the animals, the lovers in one another's arms and the children playing.

"Lions, Leaves, Roses..." also covers the observations of the narrator in Regent's Park from a firstspace perspective. The park with "no extensions to or connections with the country" (Lessing 177) provides peace and tranquility for its visitors due to its distant position from the crowd of the city. Moreover, the narrator's realization that "[l]eaves, words, people, shadows, whirled together towards autumn and the solstice" (Lessing 182) in the park suggests the interconnectedness between all living things and the human-made environment.

Although "Report on the Threatened City" is a story narrated from the perspective of an alien visiting the world in order to warn "its inhabitants of what is to come," (Lessing 183) it can be included in the group of sketches because it is written in the format of a report in parts, reflecting the alien's overview of the human race. Lessing claims "this tale is sometimes classed as space fiction, or even as science fiction, but I see it as the starkest realism, for it is about our way of opening our hearts and minds to near and immediate dangers, but ignoring equally threatening long-term disasters" (*The Temptation* 2013, 5). While writing the story, she thinks about San Francisco whose inhabitants suffer from earthquakes but continue living in the same place. In this respect, the story might be a criticism of human indifference towards the environment.

After landing on earth, the first thing the aliens discover is human beings' "war-making function" (Lessing 187) since they are involved in producing war weapons, which they keep as a secret from the inhabitants of other geographical areas. The second is their relation to the governmental authorities. When the young and the old human beings see the crafts of the aliens visiting their planet, some report it to the authorities and are labelled as mad, while others keep it to themselves. What the narrator perceives is the lack of attachment and togetherness among human beings. The whole story is, in general, a criticism of how societies are shaped by their

authorities, which is reflected in terms of the relationship between human beings and their environment.

**5.2. Private Space**

Apart from the sketches in this volume based on the observations and reflections of a narrator, the following three stories, "Each Other," "Dialogue" and "Not a Very Nice Story" are set in private spaces, including a house, a flat and a room. "Each Other," for instance, describes an incestuous relationship between Fred and his sister, Freda an eighteen-year-old young woman, newly married to Charlie. Fred is the diminutive of Frederick, meaning "peaceful ruler" and Freda is the feminine short form of Fred. Not only in their names but also in their relations, they complement each other. The affair between the brother and the sister takes place in the private sphere of Freda and Charlie, which is "a two-roomed flatlet, converted in a semi-detached house" in "a suburb of London" (Lessing 29). Fred, married to Alice, is an electrician who is "not tied to desk or office," (Lessing 30) unlike Charlie who is "a clerk-with-prospects" (Lessing 29) working in the city center; so Fred visits his sister everyday. Below their flat "on the ground floor" lives the landlady whom Charlie questions about "the comings and goings in the house and the movements of his wife" (Lessing 29). Meanwhile, Alice is absent in the story. In addition to the physical qualities of the flat, which is humble and small, the activities observed in this place by the landlady underline the perceived material characteristics of space.

When Charlie leaves home for work every morning, he questions whether Freda's brother will come or not, and in response, Freda says, "he might," (Lessing 27) which is repeated several times in their conversation. Charlie feels something disturbing and unhealthy about Freda's "obsessive care of her flesh, hair, nails, and the long hours spent in the bath" (Lessing 27). The use of "flesh" rather than body might show Charlie's view of his wife as a sexual object. However, the body, as Butler puts it, "is not merely matter but a continual and incessant materializing of possibilities" ("Performative" 521): Freda takes care of her body and uses it to satisfy her own desires by creating possibilities with her brother. Since Charlie feels how much she wants him to leave the flat as soon as possible, his "aversion" (Lessing 27) and "revulsion" (Lessing 28) for her increases. He tries to warn her through his looks and maintains "his self-respect, his masculinity, in the face of – but what?" (Lessing

28). The incomplete sentence and the question imply his suspicion about the incestuous relationship between Freda and her brother.

In contrast to her relaxed and indifferent behaviours towards Charlie, Freda feels "tensed" (Lessing 29) when she hears "the front door open, softly; and close, softly again" (Lessing 29). She is the one who is in the domestic sphere and the two men are mobile and public. They come and go while Freda welcomes them one by one. She does not appropriate the flat or the bed, but just makes use of them for her desires. Her attitude towards her brother is different from that of her husband: she interacts with Fred "without any of the pertness she used for her husband" (Lessing 29). They are jealous of each other's affairs with their partners, but try not to spoil the moment they share. This incestuous relationship between brother and sister transforms the bedroom of the husband and wife into an alternative one where "they quieted in their long silences when the hungers of the flesh were held by love on the edge of fruition so long that they burned out and up and away into a flame of identity" (Lessing 35). Their affair might be read as a means of resistance to traditional familial structure reflected within the three-dimensional understanding of space. How it is perceived as a small flat and how it is conceived as a private sphere of husband and wife extends beyond their limits and transforms into an alternative one based on the siblings' lived experiences.

Like the previous story, "Dialogue" focuses on gender relations as well and starts with the description of a building where the male character, Bill lives. It has "four identical black doors, in the same positions exactly as the four doors on the nine other floors" (Lessing 50). The indistinguishable material qualities of the building, suggested by the black colour of the doors might imply monotony and/or order. Unlike the doors opening to the outside world and connecting people in other buildings, the ones here are characterised by their closedness and "privacy" (Lessing 50). This sensuously perceptible aspect of the building directly relates to the materiality of the elements that constitute space. Bill is associated with a solitary, inactive life restrained within the borders of his flat, and his female friend, coming to visit him regularly in his place, is split between his closed space and the external world "full of promise" (Lessing 59). Not only the woman's state of going in-between the two worlds but also her namelessness is significant since she might represent any woman whose space and identity is defined in relation to man. The woman lingers in Bill's room, trying to

understand his segregated life in his flat, and experiences the conflict between her preferences and desires and his.

Bill's flat has "two rooms, one very small and always darkened by permanently drawn midnight blue curtains" (Lessing 52). For Bill, the room is a private sphere where he feels comfortable and spends most of his time, whereas it causes for the woman to feel "claustrophobia" (Lessing 52) because of its darkness. The same physical qualities of the room have a different impact on Bill and the woman because of their distinct perceptions of it. The other room is not as private as the previous one since both characters spend time there "in their usual positions" (Lessing 52). The idea of having usual places – the woman "watchful on her red blanket" and Bill "in his expensive chair" – (Lessing 52) might suggest the monotonous atmosphere of the flat. The woman wants to marry him and "to be a center of life, or warmth, with which she would fill this room," (Lessing 57) yet "in an inert, heavy way" (Lessing 57) he does not listen to her suggestion of marriage because he does not "want to become a little animal living in the fur of other people's warmth" (Lessing 54). Not only their perception of the room but also how they conceive marriage differs from each other. While Bill's view of marriage is shaped by rational thinking, the woman's is under the influence of her emotions. That is why the former is content with the cold and monotonous atmosphere of the room whereas the latter needs to constitute it with warmth. In response to Bill's over reliance on "intelligence" (Lessing 55) rather than emotions and his rejection of marriage, the woman questions her presence in his dark room: "why had she come here, why did she always come? Why had she deliberately left behind the happiness . . . she felt in the streets?," (Lessing 53) and feels closer to the external world.

The distinction between their opinions of marriage is also reflected through the spaces they occupy. For instance, Bill feels uncomfortable in the second room because of its "large, high [...] airy white walls" (Lessing 52) and particularly of one wall which is "window from knee height to ceiling" (Lessing 52) as it shows the external world in all its openness. Unlike the woman who is relieved standing "at those windows, staring straight back at sky, at wind, at cloud, at sun," (Lessing 53) to Bill the window walls are just "a terror" (Lessing 53). As Lefebvre puts it in *Writing on Cities*, the window is a means of connection to the external world – the social life

in the city and involvement in its dynamics – as long as one is able to perceive the rhythms of the city. For him,

> [t]he window on the street is not a mental place from which the interior gaze would be following abstract perspectives. A practical site, private and concrete, the window offers views that are more than spectacles. . . . Opacity and horizons, obstacles and perspectives are implicated, for they become complicated, imbricate themselves to the point of allowing the Unknown, the giant city, to be perceived or guessed at. With its diverse spaces affected by diverse temporalities – rhythms. (224)

The relation of the two characters to their surrounding displays the differences between them not only in their personality but also in their lifetsyle. The woman seems to be a sociable person enjoying the "busyness of the street" (Lessing 51) and life outside, which is implied by "the movement of her blood like a greeting to pavements" (Lessing 51). However, Bill is depicted as a cold and immobile person enclosed in his dark and gloomy flat. The juxtaposition between them through their relation to the spaces they occupy also shows a reversal of gender roles because unlike in the previous story, here it is a man who prefers a confined life in an enclosed private sphere and a woman who likes strolling in the streets. The woman's position at the window in the flat might suggest her happiness in relation to the external world since she observes people outside. When she goes out, feeling the warmth of a leaf in her palm gives her the happiness of life again saving her "from deadness" (Lessing 62) she senses in Bill's flat. The story does not reveal the configuration of an alternative space for either Bill or the woman, but demonstrates the interconnected relationship between space and human beings.

**5.3. Public Space**

This group of stories set mainly in public spaces are "An Unposted Love Letter," "Side Benefits of an Honourable Profession" and "Out of the Fountain". The first narrative in this category takes place in a theatre and displays the life of an actress. It does not have a linear organisation of events; rather it starts abruptly with the monologue of an actress, Victoria Carrington, in which she expresses the discrepancy between how she lives and how she is perceived by a conventional society. "[T]he 'beauty' [she is] known for" (Lessing 102) might be considered as the conception of an actress by the society which tells her how to look. For instance, she claims "I know exactly what is due to me and from me. I know what is fitting (not for *me*, that is not

important) but for what I stand for" (Lessing 100). Because of her profession, she is supposed to play multiple roles and look beautiful all the time. In Butler's terms, "the acts by which gender is constituted bear similarities to performative acts within theatrical contexts" ("Performative" 521). Viewed by the others (the ex-lover, his wife and people around), Carrington is depicted as artificial and pretentious since she is an actress ready "to take other guises, become other people" (Lessing 101) on stage. Hence, her playing "a thousand beautiful women" (Lessing 102) throughout her life displays how she extends beyond socially constructed female behaviours and attitudes through gender performativity, and in Butler's terms shows "what possibilities exist for the cultural transformation of gender through such acts" ("Performative" 521).

The story mainly deals with a series of thoughts disclosing Carrington's psychic space rather than the physical surrounding she occupies. However, the mention of "the auditorium" and "the dressing room" (Lessing 101) might be the perceived (physical) space of an actress where spatial practices, including everyday routines of the theatre like rehearsals, take place. Also, the production of a thirdspace or alternative space on the stage relies on the combination of the actors and actresses, the staging of a play, and the audience, which was discussed with respect to how a female stage designer makes use of theatre as a means of defining herself through her profession in "One off the Short List" in the first volume. At least for the running time of a play on stage, the participants (the cast and the audience) isolate themselves from the external world and become part of a newly created and performed representation of life.

In her letter to her ex-lover, Carrington confesses that in the past she had "lovers in imagination, but none in reality. No man in the flesh could be as good as what [she] could invent, no real lips, hands, could affect [her] as those that [she] created, like God" (Lessing 103). Such creative attempts suggest her preference of imaginary lovers to real ones. The narrator discloses her two marriages, neither of which is based on true love until the time she falls in love with her doctor. Unlike her imaginary lovers and ex-husbands, the doctor "remained himself" (Lessing 103) because the narrator cannot manipulate him and make him move as she wants. When she is abandoned, Carrington plays, for the first time, "a woman, as distinct from that fatal creature 'a charming girl', as distinct from 'the heroine'" (Lessing 104) and moves into "a new dimension of [herself]" (Lessing 104). She becomes herself, free

from her roles as a performing actress. In relation to her imaginary experiences as a young girl, her performing roles as an actress and her lived experiences as an adult woman, Carrington might be regarded as a nomad who lacks the sense of belonging to a place or a person. She displays the pain of being an actress, and how she pays a price for her independent life. The description of her inner world as infinite space in what follows is significant: "I am a great space that enlarges, that grows, that spreads with the steady lightening of the human soul . . . ." (Lessing 109). This space as herself can be interpreted as an alternative thirdspace by her experiences on stage and actual life. She seems to have no attachment because she becomes space transforming into new ones based on her lived experiences as well as her performances as an actress.

Like the previous story, "Side Benefits of an Honourable Profession" discloses the life of actors and actresses and makes use of the theatre stage as a medium of gender performativity and expression of thoughts. The narrator questions: "how can he/she bear to be someone else so entirely and devotedly every blessed night and two afternoons a week for hours at a strecth!" (Lessing 146). The exclamation mark emphasises the length of performance duration; and the idea of bearing to be someone else for such a long time shows the great effort and commitment of the actors and actresses to their profession. The story makes it clear how the artists on stage perform a variety of roles ranging from outcasts to heroes and heroines, yet when they are off stage, in real life, they are ordinary human beings with weaknesses. For this purpose, the narrator unfolds a few stories about different actors, actresses or playwrights. Since only the first story about two artists on stage has a clear connection to space, I will focus on how the components of Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial trialectic – the perceived, the conceived and the lived space – reveal ways of thinking about the relations between the theatre and the artists.

After the introduction of the honourable profession, as is suggested in the title, with an emphasis on how it is worthy of commendation to perform the same play on the stage continuously, the narrator first talks about two performers who deserve the praise rather than "the more rigorous performers, football players, or horses or dogs" (Lessing 146). What makes them significant is that they are able to configure "the bed itself a stage for – not all for the guilt-ridden and eventually murderous lusts which the play incorporated, but for innocence" (Lessing 146). The narrator calls the actor "John" and the actress "Mary" as if they are not specific people but represent all

performers on stage. Their private lives are revealed by the narrator: "He was in trouble with his marriage; and she, having been divorced, had reached that point with a possible new husband when she must decide whether to marry him or not" (Lessing 146-147). Both are depicted as "looking forward to . . . loving tranquility" (Lessing 147) in their private lives free from troubles and disturbances. They are like having two lives: the private one and the one on stage. When they are "engaged on their real business" rehearsing their roles such as "passions not their own," (Lessing 147) they isolate themselves from real life.

During their performance on stage, the bed is perceived as a physical part of the stage and is conceived as a site for revealing performative roles. Although the play involves scenes of passionate display of sexual desire on the bed between the two performers, they create a sense of innocence in the audience rather than "guilt-ridden" and "murderous" (Lessing 146) affair. This shows the success of their performance and the extent they are involved in their roles. The very same bed used as "a feature of the play" (Lessing 147) serves for other purposes after the performance is over: on one occasion, Mary cries for "what she could not have said" (Lessing 147). She seems to be in a state of mind or emotional turmoil that she cannot name or define. When she sheds tears because of unutterable emotions, Mary sees John coming towards her from the dressing-rooms. They do not need words to express themselves, only silence and sitting together on two sides of the bed is enough for them to understand each other. Unlike their physical involvement in each other's arms full of passion during the play, they remain still and apart. After that night, they meet everyday "chaste and tender, for a half-hour before returning to their tumultuous private lives" (Lessing 147). Hence, the stage gains meaning other than its technical and physical function where performances take place, other than its conception as a space for performative affairs, and finally, becomes a space of intimacy and self-expression for them. Their innocent experience for half an hour after the play, which is suggested by the expressions like "first love" and "the accidental meeting of a hand," (Lessing 147) is "filled with restoring breaths of air from lost horizons" (Lessing 147). They seem to meet on the stage every day to remember such lost feelings and moments, and thus transform the stage and the bed into an alternative space by their lived experiences. Their first kiss after the dress rehearsal is "so delicate, so exquisite" (Lessing 147) and poetic, that Mary decides not to marry her lover, and John "to disagree with his wife who was

saying that really, as responsible and adult people, they should try again" (Lessing 148). This reveals the discrepancy between the real lives and the performative lives of the artists on stage.

Finally, "Out of the Fountain" is about various people from different places (Texas, Canada, New York) waiting for their delayed flight due to fog at Paris airport. They sit around a table "drinking coffee and entertaining each other," (Lessing 82) talk about the tradition of throwing coins to the fountain in Rome for luck, and their own experiences related to it. When they see the fog "beyond the glass of the restaurant wall" (Lessing 63) and hear the announcement of "unavoidable delay," (Lessing 63) they start telling stories rather than just sitting and waiting. The stories are told in a public space, yet in each, there are references to both private and public spaces such as houses, a fountain and a square. These people make use of a transitory place, a restaurant at the airport as a site where they can move into a fictional world by telling stories, and thus, transform the public space into an alternative one temporarily.

**5.4. Private and Public Space**

The last group of stories, including "Mrs Fortescue," "Our Friend Judith," and "An Old Woman and Her Cat" are set in both private and public spaces. "Mrs Fortescue" recounts a young boy, Fred's maturation process together with his relationship with his parents (the Danderleas), his sister Jane, and Mrs Fortescue, an old prostitute. These people occupy the same building: while the Danderleas live on the first two floors above a liquor shop, the top floor belongs to Mrs Fortescue. Mrs Fortescue is an old woman living alone, but has some old women friends and an old man visiting her from time to time. Since her flat is the highest above the shop, she is not affected by the smell as much as the Danderlea family. Above the shop, the kitchen and the lounge function "as an insulating barrier against the smell" (Lessing 131). The use of word like "insulating," meaning protection against unwanted changes or unpleasant influences, might imply the fact that they do not like the smell. On the first floor where Fred lives, the smell of beer and spirits is felt the most. This description, based on physical perception and smell, shows the firstspace thinking of the flats.

When Fred walks through the streets of London one night – the Oxford Street and the narrow streets beyond – he sees Mrs Fortescue, whom he knows to be "an ordinary decent person," (Lessing 132) on the job going to Soho, which is well known

for its nightlife and sex shops. Disappointed and shocked, Fred goes to his room, and then into his sister's which were once one room, later divided by their father with a partition as the children grow up. The division of their rooms with no door might imply the beginning of a divergence in their relationship. When Fred is in her room, she does not feel comfortable and cannot get dressed in front of her. The gendered division of space corresponds with their awakening and discovery of feelings as adolescents and displays the secondspace perspective of the rooms shaped by gender and social norms. Thus, these values shaping an understanding of a particular lived experience – Fred's and Janes' in this context – might become the standard representational understanding against which spaces are reconstructed.

Fred concludes that Mrs Fortescue and her old women friends coming to her flat are "(tarts, prostitutes, *bad women*)" (Lessing 134) despite their old age. In "the waves of liquor-smell from the ground floor arising past him," (Lessing 134) he remembers "the sourish smell of the old man, and of the scented smell of the old women," (Lessing 135) associates "the stuffy reek of his room" with the one from Mrs Fortescue's room and tries to figure out what he perceives. For him, smell is an important signifier which characterises the spaces people occupy. It is not only the smell but also the sound of her movements and the sound of "water running into and then out of a basin" (Lessing 136) at the same time every night that pervades Mrs Fortescue's flat. Since he is occupied with so many questions related to the relationships between people surrounding him, particularly Mrs Fortescue and her performative life at nights, Fred visits the old woman in her room which is "crammed with furniture and objects, all of which had the same soft glossiness of her clothes" (Lessing 139) and "pink pink pink everywhere" (Lessing 144). The repetition of the pink colour and glossiness of Mrs Fortescue's stuff might symbolise her extraordinary lifestyle outside the limits of social norms as well as appropriation of her flat in an idiosyncratic way. Observing the colourful atmosphere of the room and "the dark red carpet" on the floor, Fred feels "as if the room were built of flesh" (Lessing 144) and utilized as a space of bodies interacting with each other. This story demonstrates not simply the configuration of an alternative space, but the interrelatedness between the characters and their surrounding, as well as how the relations between people and their feelings and thoughts are reflected in the spaces they occupy.

"Our Friend Judith" is about the carefree and independent life of Judith Castlewell from the viewpoint of her friends, the unnamed narrator and Betty. The whole story revolves around a series of revelatory incidents related to Judith's travels in England and Italy, her choices and confrontations. Judith is an intellectual who studied poetry and biology at Oxford and lectures on poetry at the university. She is a non-conformist and leads a self-sustained life. On the contrary, Betty is a stereotypical housewife married with three children, devoted to her family and attached to the norms and values of patriarchy. Unlike Betty's stable identity as a married woman, Judith, with her potential for transgression, is a liberal woman whose nomadic lifestyle deviates from the socially acceptable norms. Judith Kegan Gardiner analyses the story from the perspective of mothering theory and claims that it "seems a simple rebuttal of sexist condescension to unmarried women," ("Gender, Values" 119) but in fact, "shows [Judith] as an admirable new woman" ("Gender, Values" 120).

Judith leads a solitary life "in a small two-roomed flat high over a busy West London street" (Lessing 10) and does not have intimate connections with her friends. Indeed, she remains distant from her friends and sometimes spares only twenty minutes for a coffee with them. As the unnamed narrator states, "Judith did not easily come to parties. She would come after pressure . . ." (Lessing 7). In her spare time, she "goes on long walking tours, by herself, in such places as Exmoor or West Scotland [the most mountainous terrains in England]" (Lessing 11). As a nomadic subject in Braidotti's terms, Judith attempts to keep herself from the influence of others on the way she behaves and acts according to the established norms and values. She has an acute awareness of the restrictive social boundaries and structures but does not allow herself to be confined by them; rather she identifies "lines of flight, that is to say, a creative alternative space for becoming that would fall not between the mobile/immobile, the resident/the foreigner distinction, but within all these categories" (*Nomadic* 7). She enjoys moving in and out of the spaces and makes the most of her time with her readings, writings, concerts or plays and wanderings around the city. Since she is not bound to any particular space, there is not much emphasis on the interrelatedness between Judith and her surrounding.

Her desire for autonomy and liberty becomes more obvious when her lover, a married professor, asks Judith about the possibility of marriage if he divorces, yet she thinks that "the role of a mistress suited her better" (Lessing 14). Betty cannot stay

alone when her husband goes on a trip whereas Judith does not want to share her space with a man. As Betty says, "While [Judith] liked intimacy and sex and everything, she enjoyed waking up in the morning alone and *her own person*" (Lessing 184). Hence, she rejects the offer on the grounds that she prefers the role of a mistress to that of a wife and a mother.

Judith moves from a lonely life in London to a more comfortable and interactive life in Italy, from an affair with a professor in London to a new one with an Italian barber, Luigi, shifting between identities and locations. Her nomadism transgresses the borders of social norms and gender roles; she repeatedly reconstructs her own identity, being in constant mental and spatial movement. Although travelling is not necessarily a condition of nomadic becomings, not only hers but also Betty's trip from London to Italy can be nomadic routes in which they question their social relations. After Judith's trip to Florence, Betty decides to go on a holiday by herself "in order to recover her self-respect" (Lessing 15). However, she does not fit in the characteristics of a nomad because she cannot get rid of her identity as a married woman. For instance, she mopes around Milan and Venice, finds herself "on the point of starting an affair with another lonely soul" (Lessing 15) but confesses to the unnamed narrator that "once you're really married you're not fit for man nor beast" (Lessing 15). In contrast, Judith's thoughts and acts rely on what she wants to do and who she wants to become, rather than on emotional bondings or social expectations: as Gardiner puts it, the story "questions dominant assumptions about gender roles" ("Gender, Values" 119). Lessing makes use of the two mobile women in transit places like hotels in order to problematise the notion of gender and female identity. Braidotti defines such "places of transit . . . . in between zones, where all ties are suspended and time stretched to a sort of continuous present" as "spaces of detachment" (*Nomadic* 1994, 18-9). In these spaces, while Betty's experience culminates in disappointment and return to her traditional lifestyle, Judith's experience in Italy shows her process on the way to becoming a nomadic subject.

Unlike in London where Judith lives a simple and plain life away from the attention of others, on the Italian Riviera, she leads a more ostentatious life. When Betty visits Judith, she describes the place as follows: "it's so much not Judith . . . . all those palms and umbrellas and gaiety at all costs and ever such an ornamental blue sea. Judith is in an enormous stone room up on the hillside above the sea, with grape

vines all over the place" (Lessing 184-5). In contrast to her lonely life in London, she has a close relationship in Italy with the owner of the house, the widow Maria Rineiri and her brother, the barber Luigi. And her shabby home in London is replaced by a colourful hotel room. Like a nomad, she shifts in between aloof and intimate manners as well as between different spaces because as Braidotti puts it, the nomad "occupies a variety of possible subject positions, at different places (spatially) and at different time (temporally), across a multiplicity of constructions of self (relationality)" (*Nomadic* 1994, 158). Judith's differing life conditions, her move in and out of the spaces and her relations to the people surrounding her, show her potential to become a nomad. Such a nomadic outlook allows women to think through and move in between established categories and levels of experience. Judith refuses to be integrated into the established social structures and struggles against fixity and unity which she observes in her friends. Betty, on the other hand, attempts to overcome her inability to stand on her own yet fails to achieve a sense of self-sufficient identity independent of her husband. While Judith's life shows a nomadic sense of resistence, Betty leads a confined life.

Apart from the other stories set in private and public spaces in this collection, "An Old Woman and Her Cat" is set in a variety of districts which can be defined not in terms of private/public opposition, but of the relationship between the old woman, her cat, Tibby, and temporary dwellings around the city. Unlike the female characters in the other stories such as Freda in "Each Other," the unnamed woman in "Dialogue," the actresses in "An Unposted Love Letter" and "Side Benefits of an Honourable Profession" or Judith and Betty whose relation to their male counterparts is foregrounded in "Our Friend Judith," Hetty Pennefather's friendship with her cat and their interaction with space come to the fore in this story. Their active involvement in and Hetty's appropriation of temporarily occupied spaces of London provide a ground for a discussion on to what extent performative and nomadic enactments enable Hetty to continuously produce an alternative way of thinking and living in these spaces, and contribute to the reconfiguration of urban London. In addition, analysing the story in line with Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial trialectics demonstrates the material dimensions of space and social relations in London shaped by a conceptualised view of urban planning segregating the rich and the poor.

**Part II: Configuration of Transient Spaces as Shelters in "An Old Woman and Her Cat"**

As its title suggests, "An Old Woman and Her Cat" revolves around an old woman and her cat's survival under poor living circumstances, and reflects a criticism of social norms and values through their experiences in various parts of London. Hetty, the old woman, is married to Fred Pennefather, a building worker, and they have lived in a Council flat provided by the officials for thirty years with four children, who have become "all respectable people, with homes and good jobs and cars" (Lessing 160). That the Pennefathers[56] have paid their rents regularly without falling into debt, seems to be the precondition of being respectable[57] in the society.

Hetty is a nomadic figure displaying many characteristics similar to the ones, both female and male, discussed in the previous stories. Like Aunt Maud in "The Trinket Box" in *The Sun Between Their Feet*, she feels no attachment to any place as her home because she does not fix her identity to a permanent place. She has a nomadic spirit because of wandering around the streets of London, like Johnny Blackworthy moving around different parts of African land in "The Story of a Non-Marrying Man" in *The Sun Between Their Feet*. Hetty also bears a resemblance to the woman sunbathing on the roof in "A Woman on a Roof" in *To Room Nineteen Collected Stories*, since her acts resist settling into set conventions, and the places she chooses to stay in do not fit into the secondspace perspective of the city officials who tell her where she is allowed to stay. Among the nomadic figures including Aunt Maud, Johnny Blackwothy and the woman on the roof to name a few, I would argue that Hetty's social activities and her experiences in the spaces she occupies can be configured as a challenge to social norms, generating nomadism and performativity other than structured gendered roles. She constantly deploys ways to survive in the city by strolling around various neighbourhoods, trading second-hand clothes, and

[56] "Penne" might derive from "penny" (4) used as a general or vague word for a piece of money: hence, a sum of money in The *Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*. Combined with "father," the surname of the family might have a paradoxical meaning, as the father of money, because the Pennefathers eke out a living.

[57] Among several meanings of the word, in *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, "respectable" refers to (4) of persons: of good or fair social standing, and having the moral qualities naturally appropriate to this. Hence, in later use, honest and decent in character or conduct, without reference to social position, or in spite of being in humble circumstances.

changing places to sleep. From the standpoint of her children and neighbours, she is considered a disrespectful woman as a result of her preference of a nomadic life and rejection of being confined to a home.

There is not much information about Hetty's married life, yet having raised her children and taken care of the household chores for years suggest that she has performed gender roles as a mother and wife in accordance with the society's norms and values. However, she is unconventional because of her "gipsy blood" (Lessing 161) that she inherited from her mother. While she is "not respectable" and "a bit strange" (Lessing 160) for her children and neighbours, for her husband, "being different from the run of the women" (Lessing 161) is the reason why he married Hetty.

Hetty is also an autonomous woman making her own decisions regardless of what other people think. Marrying Fred and leaving her gipsy people is a case in point. She has no contact with her children except for one daughter who sends her Christmas cards, yet she does not seem to care about their aloofness. She cannot be defined only in relation to her family, gender roles and social environment, hence, recalls Bradiotti's nomadic figure belonging to nobody and nowhere as well as everybody and everywhere. Being nomadic, in Braidotti's terms, "points to the decline of unitary subjects," (*Nomadic* 10) who act in accordance with the socially constructed gender roles, and the importance of diversified ones, who appear "in complex and internally contradictory webs of social relations" (*Nomadic* 10). Hetty is a mother, a widow (after her husband's death), a homeless, a trader, an independent person, a friend, an outsider, a mad woman, and so on. Such multiple subject positions are an integral part of nomadic becoming because they cannot be explained through dichotomous thinking.

Wearing second-hand clothes like "a scarlet wool suit," "a black knitted tea-cosy on her head, and black buttoned Edwardian boots too big for her" (Lessing 165) displays not only her poverty but also her disregard for appearance. Because of her "mad clothes," (Lessing 169) Hetty is exposed to curious looks and critical remarks of the people surrounding her, yet she is comfortable with her rags. Such clothes can be seen as an element in her constitution of a nomadic figure whose characteristics do not fit into a unitary subject. According to Braidotti, "being homeless, migrant, an exile . . . are no metaphors," (*Nomadic* 10-11) but figurations able to "express different socioeconomic and symbolic locations" (*Nomadic* 11). Nomads are not characterised

by homelessness,[58] yet their capacity to produce homes everywhere without permanence is significant. In this respect, Hetty with her gipsy background, carefree life and her connection to various spaces might illustrate Braidotti's nomadic figuration in terms of levels of experience. Though not a necessity, her potential for leading a nomadic life is also related to moving from one place to another, none of which can be considered as "a properly heated place . . . a really warm home," (Lessing 170) including the Council flats[59] and the other derelict places. Hetty is a nomad not only because she dismantles fixed and unitary definitions of the subject, but also because she disregards her family and neighbours, makes friends with other traders and pet owners in the streets[60] and tries to produce a space of her own.

Through tracing the Lefebvrian triad, I would also argue that the interrelatedness between the three dimensions of space – the perceived, the conceived and the lived – in this story foregrounds how characters become a part of social space. Since space manifests itself in social life, everyday routine, knowledge and power systems and lived experience of characters, I will analyse the spaces Hetty occupies respectively. As Christian Schmid puts it, central to Lefebvre's theory of space "are human beings in their corporeality and sensuousness, with their sensitivity and imagination, their thinking and their ideologies; human beings who enter into relationships with each other through their activity and practice" ("Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space" 29). Because the relationship between space and human beings is reciprocal, Hetty's nomadic life enables her to appropriate various spaces in her own way, and the way she lives and behaves is affected by the interdependence of these three dimensions. Analysing the spaces Hetty lives in under the light of triadic space reveals an understanding of the process of urbanisation and

[58] As Peter Somerville puts it, "homelessness is distinguished by a lack of social status, invisibility or a 'problem' to others, with the homeless being seen as outcast and rejected, at the bottom of the social scale, disreputable and nichless" (534).

[59] *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* defines Council as (10) the local administrative body of a corporate town or city; also (since 1888) of an English 'administrative' county or district. In that sense, the officials might regard the Council flats like an apartment appropriated to the homeless and the poor.

[60] Hetty's wandering around the streets of London for different reasons can also be explained with reference to Michel de Certeau's spatial myths like "walking in the city" discussed in *The Practice of Everyday Life* and might establish the experience of being in the city as "an immense social experience of lacking a place" (103). However, I would argue that her connection to the streets is not because of her lack of space but of her interest in social communication and interaction.

a gradual change in the social structure of London with respect to the places occupied by the poor and the rich.

Because of its crowded and compact structure of flats adjoining one another, the first Council flat provides a forced intimacy among the dwellers. The building which is "like an estuary, with tides of people flooding in and out" (Lessing 160) suggests a fluidity of life with the comparison of the building to an estuary, the tidal mouth of a river and people's comings and goings to a tide. There is a measurable aspect of the building with reference to a number of staircases, lifts and flats as well as an everyday life of people based on the firstspace perspective. Not only this building but also the others in the neighbourhood, which are "standing up grim, grey, hideous, among many acres of little houses and gardens," (Lessing 160) will be destroyed and "replaced by more tall grey blocks" (Lessing 160). The words, "grim," "grey" and "hideous" demonstrate the physical ugliness as well as the dismal conditions of these flats. Even the little houses and gardens, despite their green space, will be replaced by tall grey blocks, which shows the transformation of the city, and reminds of Lefebvre's understanding of urbanisation.[61] As Schmid notes, for Lefebvre, urbanisation is "a reshaping and colonization of rural areas by an urban fabric as well as a fundamental transformation of historic cities" ("Henri Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space" 46) as a result of industrialisation. The physical description of the railway station including "the din, the smoke, the massed swirling people" (Lessing 160) is the characteristic of an urbanised district identified through auditory, olfactory and visual imagery. What differentiates Hetty from the members of her family and her neighbours is her love of this transitory public place which resembles "a drug" (Lessing 160) or a kind of addiction "like other people's drinking or gambling" (Lessing 160). Addiction refers to "an abnormally strong craving for something," (vocabulary.com) which makes a person happy or relaxed for a period of time. For Hetty, being in such

[61] For Lefebvre, defining the city becomes more complicated as a consequence of urbanisation processes. In *The Urban Revolution*, he claims "The concept of the city no longer corresponds to a social object. . . . However, the city has a historical existence that is impossible to ignore. . . . An image or representation of the city can perpetuate itself, survive its conditions, inspire an ideology and urbanist projects. In other words, the 'real' sociological 'object' is an image and an ideology" (57). Since the production of city space is an ongoing process, produced and reproduced in relation to urbanisation, it involves many variables such as history, politics, social relations, economics and cultural issues, thus, cannot be reduced to clear and definite explanations of what space is and how it is constructed.

public places as the railway stations is an integral component of her everyday social life.

While living in the Council flat for long years, Hetty has always been a mobile person who enjoys watching the flow of life rather than staying indoors. Her visiting "the platforms where the locomotives drew in and ground out," and seeing people "coming and going from all those foreign places [Scotland, Ireland, the North of England]" (Lessing 160) illustrate her interest in movements in the streets of the city and can be a way of embracing liveliness. The streets are one of the constitutive elements of the urban city, which are in Lefebvre's terms,

> more than just a place of movement and circulation. . . The street is disorder. All the elements of urban life, which are fixed and redundant elsewhere, are free to fill the streets and through the streets flow to the centers, where they meet and interact, torn from their fixed abode. This disorder is alive. It informs. It surprises. (*The Urban* 18-19)

For Lefebvre, the disorder in the street forms the ground for possibilities, sharing and exchanging opinions, producing meanings and experiences, which can contribute to the development of urban society as well as its inhabitants. In this respect, Hetty makes use of the streets as a means of communication with other traders and pet owners, enjoyment and opportunity for making a living as street trader. Her nomadism seems to be based on two aspects: she prefers to be outside in the intermezzo of relations, and acts according to her wishes, and she does not grieve for a sense of home where she might feel safe; rather, lets herself go with the stream of life. Hetty's nomadic acts in the city can also be explained with reference to Deleuze and Guattari's terms – smooth and striated – discussed in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. As Deleuze and Guattari put it,

> In striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another. In the smooth, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the trajectory. This was already the case among the nomads for the clothes-tent-space vector of the outside. The dwelling is subordinated to the journey; inside space conforms to outside space: tent, igloo, boat. (*A Thousand* 478)

They compare a striated space to a Cartesian space because both depend on visual coordinates and geographical representations, and function as a container of human

activities. Grid-like and hierarchical organization of societies exemplify striated spaces which govern and control the individuals. In contrast, a smooth space offers lines of flight from such restrictive societal organizations because it is not defined in relation to discipline, order and regulations, rather, it provides possibilities for new ways of thinking about the environment by focusing on human experience and relations. For Deleuze and Guattari, "the city is the striated space *par excellence*" (*A Thousand* 481) because of its spatial patterns and grid-like structures that shape the manner of its inhabitans and organise their movements in an ordered way. However, smooth spaces are also produced in the city as a result of individual movement, preference and interpretation. Hetty, for instance, moves outside the striated space of the Council flat and prefers strolling around the streets and the stations where there is continuous movement and fluidity of people.

Hetty's new life after her husband's death is characterised by "dislocation," (Lessing 160) a constant move from one temporary place to another. The first space she is placed in by the Council officials is "a small flat [on the fifth floor] in the same building" (Lessing 161). Her room is a tiny one where she does not spend much time because she does not like staying at home and prefers public life. She seems to be running away from her previous subject position. Unlike her "busy and responsible part of [her life]" (Lessing 161) as a mother and a wife, now Hetty is a lonely, middle-aged widow who has to make her own living. For a while, she works as a saleswoman, "selling food in a local store," (Lessing 161) which is a "respectable job" (Lessing 161) for other people, but for her "boring" (Lessing 161) because of its stability. When she begins "a trade in buying and selling second-hand clothes," (Lessing 161) she feels happier because she does not have to stay in one place; rather, she buys and begs clothes from householders, sells them to stalls and second-hand shops. Since she is always on the move as a nomad and in interaction with people, she does not even remember "her love of trains and travellers," (Lessing 161) which she used to be addicted to. One type of mobility is replaced by another one, enabling her to follow her "passion" (Lessing 161) in life, that is, wandering in the lively streets and meeting new people. When it comes to the social norms and values represented by her neighbours, who regard her as "queer" (Lessing 161) and "no longer decent," (Lessing 162) she gives precedence to her own feelings and continues begging and selling. Her nomadic state of mind allows Hetty not to constrict herself into socially structured

categories like the respectable and the indecent. This nomadic spirit and her vivacious personality are also observed in her room "full of bright bits of cloth . . . strips of beading, old furs, embroidery, lace" (Lessing 161) because she trades in second-hand clothes. Decorating her private space with a variety of fabrics and colours demonstrates her creation of a thirdspace, an alternative life based on her individual preferences.

Hetty's independence and her disregard for society are further highlighted when one day she takes home Tibby, "a kitten lost and trembling in a dirty corner" (Lessing 162). Like its owner who is considered to be an outcast, Tibby is "a scarred warrior with fleas, a torn ear, and a ragged look to him" (Lessing 162). He is "a multicoloured" (Lessing 162) cat who is "a long way down the scale from the delicately coloured, elegantly shaped pedigree cats" (Lessing 162). Similar to Tibby's multicoloured fur, Hetty has "a heap of multicoloured rags," (Lessing 166) which she uses to appropriate her room or dress herself. Both Hetty and Tibby's background as well as their appearance and lifestyle make them live like outsiders. For instance, according to her children, Hetty is an "old-rag trader" and a source of "embarrassment," (Lessing 162) and for people Tibby is an old filthy cat. They are sociable and independent nomads, taking pleasure in strolling in crowded places. Unlike those good-looking cats whose descendents are known, Tibby is a stray cat and cannot stand "the tinned cat food, or the bread and packet gravy," (Lessing 162) and prefers catching and eating pigeons. When one of the neighbours accidentally sees Hetty cooking the pigeon Tibby brings and sharing it with the cat, both are labeled as "savage" (Lessing 163). Hetty's statement that "decent cats don't eat dirty birds. Only those old gipsies eat wild birds" (Lessing 163) is an ironic criticism of the society which disregards the problems of such old and poor people. Her song for Tibby unveils their exclusion from the society: "You nasty old beast, filthy old cat, nobody wants you, do they Tibby, no, you're just an alley tom, just an old stealing cat, hey Tibs, Tibs, Tibs" (Lessing 162). This song with the use of words such as "nasty," "filthy," "beast" and "stealing" represents people's act of othering anyone who does not fit into the social norms or in Gramsci's terms who does not show consent. Despite the neighbours' criticism of Hetty's relation to Tibby and their so-called uncivilised life, she enjoys herself, which might be a means of gender performativity free from the socially constructed values as well.

The Council building is not only occupied by working-class people but also by numerous cats and dogs fighting each other. When the officials inform the tenants in the building that they should have their pets destroyed, Hetty decides to leave the Council flat and moves into the second place, which is "a room in a street that was a slum" (Lessing 163). As Talmadge Wright puts it, "[h]omeless persons, like all persons, exist, move, thrive, and die within urban, suburban and rural spaces, acting and reacting to imposed practices that seek to regulate their bodies" (*Out of Place* 39). That the tenants cannot keep their pets in the flats is one of these regulations shaping their behaviours, and also in Lefebvre's terms, shows the conception of a restricted life in the Council flat. Reacting against the rules, Hetty's space shifts from a flat constructed within the provided borders of the city officials to a room in a slum where she creates an alternative space for Tibby and herself with a few of her stuff like the television set, her clothes, the pram, the bed, the mattress, the chest of drawers and the saucepans. Since she has unpaid debts and a stolen television, she cannot go to the Council to renew her pension rights and identity, and from then on, continues her life unofficially.

Hetty ekes out a living and sways from one place to another without a sense of home and belonging, but seems to be content with it. No matter how poor her living conditions are, how her room is unfit for human habitation, she is able to appropriate this place, like her previous dwellings, in her own way with a multiplicity of materials and colours such as "a cretonne curtain covered with pink and red roses" (Lessing 166). Apart from its lively description, another aspect of firstspace is the pervading smell coming from the lavatory, which is out of order. When the officials visit Hetty in her space, they do not want to enter into the room because of this smell. In addition, the words "greasy" and "stink" (Lessing 166) used by the narrator to describe the furniture and the whole room displays how disgusting Hetty's space is from the perspective of the officials. In addition to the olfactory imagery, tactile imagery related to coldness is part of this firstspace. Hetty lessens "the permanent ache of cold in her bones" with Tibby's "warm purring bundle of bones and fur" (Lessing 170). The feeling of cold and warm plays a significant role not only in materialising the perception of the flat but also in Hetty's life because she lacks a properly heated and permanent space of her own. Nevertheless, wherever she moves, Hetty makes arrangements according to her own outlook of life. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms,

she reterritorialises and creates smooth spaces for Tibby and herself as they depend on "continuous variation, continuous development of form" (*A Thousand* 478) according to nomad thought which provides alternatives to the rational and unitary sense of subjectivity and movements outside the "striated" spaces of state and its ideologies.

Unlike her flat on the fifth floor in the Council building, this one is "in the ground-floor back, with a window which opened on to a derelict garden" (Lessing 164). Hetty organises this derelict place for her cat too by breaking "a back-window pane" (Lessing 168) so that Tibby can easily move in and out of the flat. Her smashing the window in order to provide Tibby a realm of freedom and in this way, avoid being noticed by the officials suggests her attempt to create a space for herself and her cat away from the surveillance of the society. Around the flat is "a canal" consisting of "dirty city-water" (Lessing 164) in which there are "islands" full of rats and birds, particularly fat London pigeons. The material qualities constituting the environment imply that it is a neglected place for people, yet for the cat, it means hunting opportunities. Tibby secures his position "in the hierarchies of the local cat population" (Lessing 164) by hunting and fathering several kittens, which suggests his appropriation of the environment by leaving his traces. When Tibby brings several pigeons to Hetty in this place, she addresses him as "a clever puss," (Lessing 168) as her "ducky" and "lovely" (Lessing 169) rather than "filthy old cat" (Lessing 162). During their stay in the previous Council flat together with the other old women, she used to see herself and her cat as "not decent" from the way society sees them yet now, she starts viewing her life from her own perspective because she gradually becomes excluded from the society not only in terms of the isolated spaces she occupies but of their solitary life, and thus her perception towards Tibby changes as well.

The "disgraceful slum" which is composed of similarly structured houses next to one another becomes "a perfect symbol of the whole area," (Lessing 165) the area referring to a district where poor people live. This detestable evaluation of the slum by the so-called "respectable" people of the city also evokes Lefebvre's view of conceptualised space constituted by symbols, systematic arrangements and representations. Similar to Lefebvre's emphasis on the production of space under the influence of dominant ideologies, Wright foregrounds the division of spaces according to social and class issues. For him, "[u]rban spaces are not 'neutral'

backdrops to individual actions of the poor, but socially produced disciplinary spaces within which one is expected to act according to a status defined by others, a status communicated by specific appearances and locations, by the visual comportment of bodies" (*Out of Place* 6). Apart from the conceived space composed of regulations and impositions, the way Hetty chooses to live her life as a nomad in various spaces indicates how the distinction between binaries such as the developed parts of the city and the slums, the rich and the poor, the respectful and the disrespectful lifestyles cannot be sustained. She constitutes her life in the intermezzo of spatial divisions including the Council flat and the stations as well as the room and the streets blurring the distinction between the private and the public spheres, occupied by the rich and the poor, that is, in a typical thirdspace, which embodies the firstspace and secondspace but goes beyond their parameters at the same time.

Focused on the perceived materiality of space, the city is divided into two parts: "half of it being fine, converted, tasteful houses, full of people who spent a lot of money, and half being dying houses tenanted by people like Hetty" (Lessing 165). Not only the well-based and designed buildings of the former are juxtaposed with the ruined houses of the latter but also the wealthy people's spending money is juxtaposed with the poor ones' suffering. The street in the shabby part of the city will be restructured for middle-class people whose needs, tastes and desire have an impact on the construction of these streets and houses, so Hetty and her friends need to evacuate their flats for new owners in two weeks' time. Their removal demonstrates the reshaping of the city space through the impositions of the authorities which echoes Soja's argument that urban space is constituted "around the trialectical nexus of space, knowledge, and power" (*Thirdspace* 236). The narrator explains the maltreatment of poor people in London in what follows: "soon this house with its cargo of poor people would be bought for improvement" (Lessing 165). By making use of state knowledge and power, the housing officers impose their spatial arrangement on the dwellings of Hetty and her friends, who are described as goods/products to be sold and moved to another place.

The reconstruction of the district can also be seen as "an ideological apparatus where the lived ideology of spatial separation becomes materialized through everyday practice" (Schmid, "Henri Lefebvre, The Right to the City" 53). Such ideologies represented by the house officials in the story generate ideas about the conceptual

view of space determining the relation of poor people to their physical and social conditions of living. As Wright puts it, the city policies "disperse homeless street populations for being 'out of place' and simultaneously attempt to contain them in institutional settings" (*Out of Place* 8). Similarly, in the story the officials segregate the old people by offering them a new shelter far away from the lively city center, but "among green fields" (Lessing 166). In his book *Writing on Cities*, Lefebvre mentions suburbanisation in France and refers to the new suburban dwellers who "are still urban even though they are unaware of it and believe themselves to be close to nature, to the sun and to greenery" (78). Like those French suburban dwellers, these women are subjected to a physical isolation and segregation in the outskirts of the city through the power of the authorities. They prefer to believe in the idea that "it will be nice to be near green fields again" for they are "not far off death" (Lessing 166). Hetty, unlike these women, struggles for "the right to the city"[62] by not conforming to the regulations of the officials. As Lefebvre puts it, this right to urban space "legitimates the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organization" (*Writing* 195). For Schmid, what Lefebvre means by the right to the city, refers to "access to the resources of the city for all segments of the population, and the possibility of experimenting with and realizing alternative ways of life" ("Henri Lefebvre, The Right to the City" 43). In the context of the story, Hetty maintains her attempts to appropriate and utilize space according to her own needs and desires as well as to live and participate in urban London by escaping from the officials who try to segregate her and her cat from social life. As a nomadic subject, she constitutes an act of resistance against the representatives of the state, which is in Braidotti's terms is a challenge "to destabilize dogmatic, hegemonic, exclusionary power at the very heart of the identity structures of the dominant subject through nomadic interventions" (*Nomadic* 9). In fact, such homeless and old people are dispossessed of their rights to the city and left on their own until their death in the secluded parts of London. This shows the secondspace understanding of such remote

[62] This term is taken from the title of a chapter "The Right to the City" in Lefebvre's book *Writing on Cities*. In this chapter, he draws attention not to the production and use of space by people who have power and capital but by those marginalised ones in terms of social status, economic, cultural and political aspects, and highlights their rights. For him "the *right to the city* is like a cry and a demand. . . [which] can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*" (158).

places from the perspective of the state ideology represented by the housing officers and their attempt to maintain the social order by keeping such people in and out of place.

Hetty's next dwelling is a deserted house where she stays with Tibby for a while. In order not to reveal her place, she spends the day in the streets and keeps "a candle glimmering low down on the floor" (Lessing 168) at nights. Her room becomes a shelter rather than a home. As Somerville notes, home "as shelter connotes the material form of home, in terms of a physical structure which affords protection to oneself, and which appears to others as at least a roof over one's head" ("Homelessness" 532). Echoing this, Hetty's shelter is perceived as a temporary place to hide from the authorities. As the narrator unfolds the story, "for the first time in her life she lived like her gipsy forebears, and did not go to bed in a room in a house like respectable people" (Lessing 167). Since the lavatory is out of order, at nights Hetty makes use of a bucket to empty to the canal, "which in the day was full of pleasure boats and people fishing" (Lessing 168). The difference between the canal during the day and at night including the everyday activities of people further suggests the discrepancy between the poor and the rich in London. Hetty's use of "piles of blankets" and "the heap of clothes" (Lessing 168) to warm herself in the cold shows the inhuman circumstances under which she tries to survive. Different from her previous appropriation of her rooms in a pattern of colourful materials, this one cannot extend beyond being "her nest" (Lessing 168) made out of rags like the birds' compilation of sticks in building a nest. Nonetheless, in line with what Soja suggests, Hetty somehow maintains her creation of an alternative space for Tibby and herself.

Once she notices the builders outside about to reconstruct the building, Hetty moves to an empty house, which is "two miles away, among the homes and gardens of amiable Hampstead," (Lessing 169) a district where the rich and famous people live. Yet the neighbourhood is surrounded by three evacuated large houses, one of which becomes Hetty's third shelter. These houses are "too tumbledown and dangerous" (Lessing 169) to stay in, even for "the armies of London's homeless" (Lessing 169). The use of "tumbledown" for the houses and "armies" for the homeless suggests the high number of such lonely outcasts who are left to live in awful conditions in a metropolis like London. A neighbourhood is not only constructed by urban planners and housing officers in Lefebvre's terms; rather, it is continuously

produced by its inhabitants. Hetty, through her appropriation of a deserted house in a rich neighbourhood, Hampstead in this context, contributes to the reconfiguration of the district and challenges the boundaries between the space occupied by the wealthy and the poor. The narrator describes the house with no glasses on the windows: "[t]he flooring at ground level was mostly gone, leaving small platforms and juts of planking over basements full of water. The ceilings were crumbling. The roofs were going. The houses were like bombed buildings" (Lessing 169). The fact that there are no windows, no steady floor, and no protection from the cold because of the damaged ceiling and roof suggests that Hetty's place is more of a wreck rather than a room. In the Council flat, as a result of financial reasons she suffered from the cold but because of her ageing and deteriorating life conditions, she cannot stand it as she used to.

Despite its ruinous structure, Hetty manages to make "her home" (Lessing 169) in a room on the second-floor, which has a great hole[63] in it similar to "a well" (Lessing 169). This evokes a gradual fall in Hetty's life from more or less human conditions at the beginning to primitive phases of human life through the end. She appropriates this room by making use of a "polythene sheet," "two blankets," "mass of clothes" and "sheets of newspaper," (Lessing 171) and doing so, creates "another nest – her last" (Lessing 171). Her efforts to create a space for Tibby and herself, to hide from the officials everyday, to make her living by trading and to survive in the cold with not enough food and sleep underline Hetty's spatial practices and lived experiences as part of her daily life. This echoes Lefebvre's argument that social space is produced through the interaction of perceived, conceived and lived experiences of its inhabitants. In this sense, through Hetty's spatial movements around the neighbourhood and appropriation of the room, the city officials can map out the environment and identify the empty houses where the poor and the old hide in. Hence, the production of space operates as a process, including all aspects of the triad dependent on and connected to each other. Without a space which is made meaningful through individual spatial practices and lived experiences, it is not possible to talk about how it is conceived. In other words, the production of knowledge about space is closely linked to constituting materiality and generating meaning.

[63] The hole seems to be ironic because "the word *hole* comes from the Old English *hol* meaning 'cave' which in prehistoric times wasn't just a dark space to hide, it was a home" (vocabulary.com).

Hetty's last nest becomes a place for death for the homeless, as indicated by the two officials' carrying a corpse from the house to a car:

> [t]here are men in London who, between the hours of two and five in the morning, when the real citizens are asleep, who should not be disturbed by such unpleasantness as the corpses of the poor, make the rounds of all the empty, rotting houses they know about, to collect the dead, and to warn the living that they ought not to be there at all, inviting them to one of the official Homes or lodgings for the homeless. (Lessing 172)

While the rich are considered as "real citizens" sleeping in their warm homes, the poor continue to live in "rotten" and cold houses and their dead bodies pose a problem or an "unpleasantness" to the rich. Collecting dead bodies and moving the old and poor ones to the so-called Homes is the business of the officials. Hetty observes the movements of light from their torches and the sound of their footsteps in her room, suggesting spatial and social surveillance and control by the authorities.

Unlike the previous discussions on the concept of home, which refer to the material condition of a place as home and to the feelings attributed to that place, the spaces occupied by Hetty in this story cannot be considered as proper homes where people have a sense of belonging; rather, they are just physical places Hetty tries to appropriate temporarily on the way without a feeling of warmth and attachment to them. Rose in "The Other Woman" and the lonely woman in "A Room" in *To Room Nineteen Collected Stories*, for instance, appropriate the spaces they occupy to have a sense of home where they feel safe. In "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" in *This was the Old Chief's Country*, Mrs Gale's concept of home is not based on a feeling of home in Rhodesia (her present house), but on a longing for her home in England years ago. Thus, her idea of home differs from that of Rose and the woman in "A Room" in terms of connecting to the past in imagination to create a mental construct of home. Hetty does not develop similar understandings of home because of her nomadic thinking. As Braiodtti puts it, "[t]he multiple differences of locations, which reflect the diversity of possible subject positions, therefore coalesce in the practice of disidentification from the familiar, estrangement from the already known" (*Nomadic* 16). The Council flat where she used to live with her family might relate to a sense of home to a certain extent as a consequence of their togetherness for thirty years, but in fact, there is no mention of such a feeling of belonging to a place. The other spaces Hetty lives in after her husband's death are transient ones, which she makes use of as

shelters rather than as homes. Her concept of home stems partially from her personal routines and preferences and partially from her poverty. In terms of the relationship between Hetty and these spaces, there is a transition from the familial to the individual, from the flat to the room, from the so-called home to the shelter and to functional concerns. The transient circumstances Hetty is in influence the way she views her last nest. After the departure of the two men taking the corpse out, for instance, she is able to look "through gaps in the fabric of the house, making out shapes and boundaries and holes and puddles and mounds of rubble" (Lessing 172) because her eyes have become "accustomed to the dark" (Lessing 172). Like the cats, which are inherently good at seeing in the dark, she learns to identify things at night, which might illustrate her resemblance to Tibby and the impact of space on human beings because she adapts herself to deteriorating conditions in her nest. When Hetty feels nearing death, she calls Tibby as her "poor cat" (Lessing 173) rather than "filthy old cat," "clever puss" or "lovely" because she worries about what will happen to him. Tibby is like an extension of Hetty in terms of the spaces they occupy, the way they live independently and come to an end in solitude.

The cold winter plays an important role in Hetty's life because as the narrator reveals, "her life, or, rather, her death, could depend on something so arbitrary as builders starting work on a house in January rather than in April" (Lessing 174). If the men had waited for the spring to work, Hetty would have more time to stay in her place and find the means of living. When Hetty dies in her last nest, Tibby goes into the bushes to hide from "the corpse-removers" (Lessing 174). The rotten room with holes, rubbles, planks and so on, is now pervaded by the smell of Hetty's dead body. In search of a new home and a friend, Tibby moves from one garden to another until he joins "a community of stray cats going wild," (Lessing 175) but is caught by an official and put to sleep because of being "too old, and smelly and battered" (Lessing 176) like Hetty. All these comparisons between Hetty and Tibby, including an independent life, an indecent background in the eyes of the society, ageing, eating pigeons, seeing well in the dark, and their death foreground how they complement one another with respect to the spaces they occupy as well.

Tracing Hetty's nomadic life place by place – the Council flat, the desolate room in the slum and the ruined house in Hampstead – provide a physical description of these spaces where old and poor people try to survive and a conceptualised view of

the state ideology allocating the homeless in defined territories away from the rich. In addition, a reading of the story based on Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial trialectics broadens the binary understanding of space in two dimensions – the firstspace and the secondspace – what Soja names "the real-and-imagined" (*Thirdspace* 84) by displaying Hetty's lived experiences in the spaces she occupies. Her indulgence in public life, lack of belonging to a place, and a sense of home enable her to free herself from the confines of the Council's systematic arrangements, which disregard Hetty's needs and segregate her from the society. Also her appropriation of the Council flat, the room in the slum and the house in Hampstead by turning these spaces into home or nest-like places temporarily might be interpreted as her attempts to create alternative spaces for herself out of the ruins. Her endeavour to produce or appropriate alternative spaces without a sense of home and her drive to maintain her life in line with her own desires and choices surpass gender and social restrictions, allow lines of nomadism to emerge and blur the boundaries between categories. Hetty, the other old and poor women, and the various houses and districts of London are social products, and thus, their interconnectedness contribute to the constitution of social space.

## CHAPTER VI

### *London Observed: Stories and Sketches*

The last volume of stories and sketches, set particularly in London, differs from the previous volumes in terms of its title and context. While the first four collections of stories that take place in Africa and Europe, derive the title of the volume from one of the stories, this one has a separate title which presents various scenes in London as a frame. Lessing wrote on the back cover of the Flamingo edition of *London Observed Stories and Sketches* in 1957: "During that first year in England, I had a vision of London I cannot recall now. . . it was a nightmare city that I lived in for a year. Then, one evening, walking across the park, the light welded buildings, trees and scarlet buses into something familiar and beautiful, and I knew myself to be at home." This quote exemplifies her interest in and acute awareness of the city and its people, which she vividly demonstrates in her last collection. There are eighteen stories and sketches in this volume: "Debbie and Julie," "Sparrows," "The Mother of the Child in Question," "Pleasures of the Park," "Womb Ward," "Principles," "D.H.S.S.," "Casualty," "In Defence of the Underground," "The New Cafe," "Romance 1988," "What Price the Truth?," "Among the Roses," "Storms," "Her," "The Pit," "Two Old Women and a Young One" and "The Real Thing" respectively. As Paulina Kupisz notes, these stories and sketches are "watchful, attentive insights into accidental occurances, places and people's lives, united in their variety and apparent randomness by London – being both a micro- and macrocosm for human existence" ("A Meddley of Images" 57). There appears a series of stories based on the lived experience of Londoners ranging from old and young to patients and immigrants. What is striking is that these people and their different viewpoints are reflected in transitory spaces such as parks, restaurants, the underground, Heathrow airport, a taxi, a street, a salon and a hospital.

Because the narratives in this volume are mainly sketches, in Part I, I classify them in one group in order to disclose to what extent transitory and public spaces serve for the portrayal of life trajectories and constitute a thirdspace where various

people move in the city and interact with each other, either in harmony or in conflict. The next group of narratives I will analyse are stories: "The Pit" and "The Mother of the Child in Question" are set in closed space, "Among the Roses" in open space and "Debbie and Julie" in both closed and open spaces. These stories deal with gender issues and mother-daughter relationship, and so, I will talk about how such issues are reflected in space. There are two stories, titled "What Price the Truth?" and "The Real Thing" that do not fit into the above categories for these narratives deal with gender issues without a focus on space. The former recounts the narrator's relationship with her ex-employer, Ceasar Stone, with whom she worked in show business for long years. Although people, including Ceasar's wife, presume that she is Ceasar's lover, in fact, the narrator never had an affair with him, but allowed everyone to think otherwise, and now attempts to reveal the truth. There is no mention of space production or interrelatedness between the characters and the spaces they occupy, but only a one-sided conversation by the narrator. The latter revolves around the complicated relationship between lovers and their ex-partners, Henry, Jody, Sebastian and Angela, who come together as foursome in a cottage and try to maintain their so-called friendly relationship. Like "What Price the Truth?," this is based on the dialogues between the couples rather than space.

The two collections of *African Stories* and *To Room Nineteen Collected Stories: Volume One* as well as *The Temptation of Jack Orkney Collected Stories: Volume Two* predominantly consist of stories whereas the last volume, as its title suggests, *London Observed: Stories and Sketches*, mainly includes sketches. Part II will be devoted to the textual analysis of a sketch, "Storms," which is based on the narrator's observations of urban space in a taxi, in order to discuss how space is produced and reproduced by its inhabitants. My purpose here will be to reveal the interrelatedness between London and Londoners, the interaction between people and their different views of the city from the perspective of Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial thinking.

**Part I: Classification of Stories and Sketches**

**6.1. Sketches**

"Pleasures of the Park" reflects the narrator's view of the park through his/her focus on an old man watching the birds, then, some children around the cage of goats and deer, and the relationship between human beings and animals. The "bird

enclosure" and "the paddock where the deer and the goats are kept" (Lessing 43) are human-made places, like cages, which function as a spectacle for human beings to observe the animals. There is a hierarchy between the male and female goats, according to which "the females, in order of their size and weight and, perhaps, even of their personalities" (Lessing 44) come after the males. Also, the relationship among the goats, bucks, deer and their offspring is similar to that between men, women and their children in terms of feelings. When a buck tries to approach a female, for instance, he is "hustled away" because of being "inferior" (Lessing 45) or when the mother deer bears a new baby, the older one becomes jealous; the narrator remarks: "Sometimes animals emanate depression as humans do" (Lessing 45). The sketch illustrates how the physical environment – the park and its enclosed structure – is perceived by the narrator as a space for observing nature and the lives of animals as well as human beings.

"Principles" differs from the previous sketch in terms of space where the narrator perceives everyday life because the setting is a congested roadway rather than a park. "Principle," as a word, refers to a system of belief or rule governing behaviours and attitudes (OED), thus, as suggested in the title of the sketch, the word might refer to the traffic rules. Although the narrator is one of the characters in traffic, s/he is not involved in the conversations and events contributing to the development of disputes among the drivers, but just observes and reflects on what happens on the road. The conflicts between the drivers (stemming from the congested roadway) recalls Lefebvre's mention of disarray in urban city. For Lefebvre, "[t]he invasion of the automobile . . . . [has] turned the car into a key object, parking into an obsession, traffic into a priority, harmful to urban and social life" (*The Urban* 18). In a similar way, as an observer, the narrator refers to the transformation of the road from "lanes that accomodated horses and people walking" to a road "for cars" (Lessing 60). Obeying the traffic rules and behaving tolerantly is a traffic principle, yet the drivers in the story act in the exact opposite way, and in Lefebvre's terms, cause chaos and crisis in the city.

"Two Old Women and a Young One" is set in a popular, "interestingly decorated" (Lessing 169) and luxurious restaurant where mostly publishers, agents and authors go. Since it is a public place, the restaurant provides temporarily occupied space for its visitors. In this sketch, there is neither a reference to a production of space

through social relations nor a perceived and conceived understanding of the restaurant, yet it demonstrates an everyday picture of both genders at various ages relating to each other with different viewpoints and performances in a transitory place. First, the narrator recounts his/her observation of people in the restaurant, particularly focusing on the conversations between two old women and a young publisher. These old women, Fanny Winterhome, the "silver-hair" and Kate Bisley, the "gold-head," (Lessing 172) are widows living with their pets. Despite being sisters, they prefer a solitary life. They were "theatrical agents for thirty years," (Lessing 172) worked with several famous people, and now they want to publish a book based on their memories and experiences. They act comfortably in the restaurant, drink glasses of champagne and converse with the young man. While the elder one's voice "wavered," the younger one's is "pitched to be sexy" but now "on the edge of a croak" (Lessing 169). Despite their old age, in an open public place like a restaurant, they perform their gender in personal ways, as they did in the past, by making use of their voice and comfortable behaviours.

The narrator juxtaposes these old women with two younger ones: the one who has "a long voluptuous white throat," "black hair"and "green eyes," (Lessing 174) sitting together with a New York publisher and the other, an American agent in London, talking with the publishers about her trip and young writers. They are also described in relation to their physical outlook and voice. For instance, both women's voices are "in a local pattern," (Lessing 177) which sound professional and effective in influencing the people around. Their voices have a variety of tones including "the American tough guy, the English cutie, or sweetie, or dish, or dolly-face, perfect specimens of their kind, one insisting and grinding, one chitter-chattering, and smiling . . . ." (Lessing 177-178). The narrator defines their acts as "a performance," (Lessing 175) which echoes Butler's gender performativity enabling women of all ages to act individually.

Like the previous sketch set in a restaurant, as is suggested in the title, "The New Cafe" takes place in a cafe, another transitory and public place, which is occupied for a while by a variety of people of different cultures, ages and genders. As one of the characters sitting in the cafe, the narrator[64] compares his observations to

[64] The narrator's gender is not clear, yet I will use the masculine form because of sytlistic reasons.

"real-life soap operas" (Lessing 97). Because of the wonderful weather in summer, the cafe has tables outside, which leads to a "pavement life" (Lessing 97) where the narrator observes people. He particularly focuses on the two German girls who are "attractive, uninhibitedly in search of boyfriends for their holidays" (Lessing 97) and their relation to two young men in the cafe. The narrator also mentions his friendship with one of these young men as "cafe acquaintances," (Lessing 99) and his observance of an encounter in the street between a woman with her baby in a pram and a man who seem to know each other. This gives an overview of everyday life within the perceived dimension of the cafe. As characters move about and interact with each other, they share their experiences, express their opinions about various issues and become a part of the cafe temporarily. Like the sketches set in a garden or a park in *The Temptation of Jack Orkney: Collected Stories,* embracing a diversity of people, animals and plants, "Two Old Women and a Young One" and "The New Cafe" display the inclusive nature of a restaurant and a cafe as a thirdspace combining people from different backgrounds. It is not only the temporary togetherness of people but also their reconfiguration of the restaurant and the cafe in the moment through everyday activities and social relations.

Likewise, "Sparrows" is set in a cafe which is occupied by people including two elderly women with their dog, some teenagers, a young man looking like a ballet dancer, three Japanese, a husband and a wife, namely Alfred and Hilda as well as sparrows everywhere coming to feed themselves. As Kupisz puts it, Lessing's sketches in *London Observed* have "an observing, impersonal, sometimes even voyeuristic narrator relating the current scene or situation to the reader without revealing comments or thoughts of her own" ("A Meddley of Images" 59). She illustrates this type of narration with "Sparrows" which provides a perceptive view of various people sitting in the cafe, chatting with one another and reacting to the movement of sparrows.

It is after the rain that people come to the cafe in the Heath with the intention of benefitting from the sun, trees, grass and the view of the Kenwood lake. The material qualities of the cafe perceived by the narrator are evident in its "long shapely building, a wing of Kenwood House" (Lessing 29) surrounded by a "tall brick wall with its mysterious, always closed-door, like the Secret Garden" (Lessing 29) and the garden with its trees and grass. Like the other public and transitory places, this also

hosts several people observed in the continuity of everyday life: talking, eating, watching, quarelling, resting and so on.

Because the sparrows pervade the cafe, there appears a relationship between them and those people. While the two elderly women, for instance, throw "bits of sandwich to sparrows that gathered around their feet, crowded the backs of chairs and even ventured on their table," (Lessing 27) the Japanese mother lets out "cries of angry indignation" and hits "the sparrows as if they were flies" (Lessing 28). The teenagers prefer to change their tables without bothering to take all their food to a distant one. The public notice at the end of the garden – "IN THE INTEREST OF HYGIENE PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE BIRDS" (Lessing 27) – might be regarded as the secondspace perspective of the cafe informing people about the rules.

Among the other visitors to the cafe, the narrator draws attention to Hilda and Alfred's relation to the sparrows since their attitudes, particularly towards three of them, reflect what they think about their twenty-one-year-old, grown-up daughter, who is unable to make her living. After "a lean hunting bird, grey blotched with chocolate and black, darted in, snatched [crumb], and flew off to the roof of the coach house," (Lessing 30) the other two, looking like "babies" (Lessing 30) try to feed themselves hesitantly. One of them manages to pick up the crumb, but the other sits "alone" (Lessing 31). Alfred, "full of resentment," (Lessing 32) criticises the little bird's waiting to be fed by her parents whereas Hilda shows consideration for it, saying "This is probably its first day out in the wicked world" (Lessing 32). In a similar way, unlike Alfred who is annoyed because of his daughter's incompetence in making her own way, Hilda supports her. After a while, the little bird clumsily takes the crumb and becomes "as voracious as its elders," (Lessing 34) which might suggest the natural flow of life from innocence to experience.

Like "Out of the Fountain" in *The Temptation of Jack Orkney: Collected Stories*, set in Paris airport, where various people create a fictional world by telling stories, "Romance 1988" is set in a cafeteria at Heathrow airport and deals with the relationship of two young sisters with their boyfriends. What is common to the story and the sketch is the way in which the airport as a transitory public space is turned into an alternative site through the movement and conversation of people. In "Romance 1988," the two sisters, Joan and Sybil, are "clever attractive hard-working girls who pursued their chances with skill" (Lessing 102). Joan gets a job as a

secretary in Bahrain and is planning to work there for a while, and then buy a house in London. Sybil works in different sectors in London, prefers a restless life "with friends who were always on their way through" or "on several parties," and with "a lot of different men" (Lessing 103). At the airport they prefer "the raised part, which is like a little stage" (Lessing 102) in the cafeteria where one can see a diversity of people. The two sisters talk about their boyfriends and their sexual life in a comfortable way as if they are performers on stage because Sybil, for instance, "cast[s] a glance around to make sure her audience was still rapt" (Lessing 104). Similar to the discussion of the theatre stage in "An Unposted Love Letter" and "Side Benefits of an Honourable Profession" in the previous volume, the stage in the cafeteria functions as an alternative space for the sisters to demonstrate their enactments of preferences. The thirdspace potential of the cafeteria relies on the assemblage of various people, either as performers or as spectators, giving rise to the production of social space.

"Her" is about gender in a house which is utilized as a salon to discuss politics, business, and every day matter. Like the cast and the audience in the theatre alienating themselves from the external world during the play, the guests in the house/salon isolate themselves from the formal business world and participate in a newly performed representation of life, in which they "gossip" (Lessing 134) rather than talk about politics. There appears a configuration of the house/salon as an alternative space due to a togetherness of diverse politicians regardless of their political views. However, the high population of men spread over the salon and fewer women sitting on the sofa and in chairs as if in "a little nest of females" (Lessing 136) display the gendered appropriation of space. The narrator mentions a female boss who is "tough" and has "always been attractive . . . a target" (Lessing 137) for men, but is able to disregard their verbal abuse. Women in such a male-dominated social space can survive by "keep[ing] cool" (Lessing 137) and hiding feelings. Their inability to move comfortably because of the domination of male counterparts and their dissimulation of feelings suggests the conceived space perspective regarding social and gender values, which in Soja's terms, relates to how one is situated in the physical and social space. Gender, in this context, is a fundamental factor that segregates the house into parts and isolates female politicians from the majority of male counterparts.

The narrator[65] of "In Defence of the Underground" portrays urban London with its variety of people and texture, and compares the past and present days of the city. Travelling from Mill Lane station to Charing Cross enables the narrator to perceive the diversity in London. As Kupisz notes, the story "comprises a cross-section of London society during a single journey on the Jubilee line" ("A Meddey of Images" 60). Since the station and the tube are public spaces, it is a great opportunity for her to observe how the commuters perceive and experience everyday life in London.

The sketch starts with a story regarding the disorder at the center of the metropolis: the narrator overhears an Indian talking to a young man about the crimes in London before getting on the train. In a similar fashion, she also complains about how the train station is deliberately destroyed by young people: "[t]here used to be decent lavatories, but now they are locked up because they are vandalized as soon as repaired" (Lessing 81). As Lefebvre puts it, "the city's contexture or fabric – its streets, its underground levels, its frontiers – unravel, and generate not concord but violence. Indeed, space as a whole becomes prone to sudden eruptions of violence" (*The Production* 223). What is paradoxical is that this "systematic destruction" is caused by the educated and privileged young who "make for themselves a lively and ingenious social life" (Lessing 82). Disturbing acts like occupying too much space at the door of the tube and getting off the train "in dangerous kangroo leaps, shouting abuse" (Lessing 88) illustrate such disrespectful behaviours. In addition to the unpleasant stories and scenes of London in terms of crimes, vandalism and disorderly conducts, the narrator mentions an old lady longing for the old London, where "everything was so nice and clean and people were polite. Buses were always on time and the Tube was cheap," (Lessing 83) yet now "it's just horrid, full of horrid people" (Lessing 83). She underlines the changes in a poor neighboorhood where there were fields, little streams, birds, cows as well as small buildings and shops "of a kind long since extinct, where each customer was served individually" (Lessing 81). In addition, some architectural structures like the churches, houses, flats, shops are converted into new buildings to serve for different purposes, which is evident in her house whose top

[65] The narrator's gender is not clear, yet I will use the feminine form because of sytlistic reasons.

> is a converted attic. But the attics were not converted then. There are three bedrooms on the second floor, one too small to share. Two rooms on the first floor, now one room, but then probably dining room and sitting room. A kitchen is pleasantly but inconveniently off a veranda or 'patio' – a recent addition. It was not a kitchen then. On the ground floor is one room, once two, and 'conveniences' also added recently. A garden room, most likely a nursery. In those days they had at least one servant, usually more. (Lessing 96)

The comparison between the material qualities of the house in the past and present reveal the spatial changes in addition to the way of living.

Apart from the negative sides of the metropolis, the narrator also perceives the city from a positive viewpoint, and praises London and Londoners. As María Lourdes López Ropero claims, in this story "Lessing prefers urban London, which also offers moments of pastoral bliss, when the natural and the urban world are reconciled" ("Colonial Flâneurs" 200). For instance, the narrator takes pleasure in nature while waiting for the train: "At the station you stand to wait for trains on a platform high above roofs and the tree tops are level with you. You feel thrust up into the sky. The sun, the wind, the rain, arrive unmediated by buildings. Exhilarating" (Lessing 82). The high structure of the platforms provides a direct connection with the sky, the wind and the rain, which gives a feeling of excitement. On another occasion, when she stands in front of a florist's shop, whose flowers advance beyond the borders of the shop, she describes the perceived scene as being in a "pavement garden," (Lessing 80) which resembles the "pavement life" (Lessing 97) in "The New Cafe". Despite the urbanisation of London, she emphasises the possibility of feeling nature in the city and foregrounds "its variety, its populations from everywhere in the world, its transitoriness" (Lessing 89). She mentions a Japanese girl, a black man, an Indian and a few Americans on the same train travelling to their destinations. Among these people mostly reading newspapers, she singles out three who read books such as the *Iliad*, *Moby Dick* and *Wuthering Heights*. In this sense, the underground station and the tube as transitory places can be considered a thirdspace where people from different backgrounds and with different tastes, in Soja's terms, come together and create a social space.

"Womb Ward," as its title suggests, refers to a hospital room where female patients with *g*ynaecological problems are medically treated. The material qualities of this place are "[e]ight beds in a large room, four on either side and too close to each

other. This was a shabby Victorian hospital in North London, and probably the room had not been designed as a ward. But it was decent, with pink flowery curtains at the windows, and on runners to separate the beds for moments needing privacy" (Lessing 51). The possibility of its not being designed as a ward also implies the discrepancy between its previous use and the present situation. It has acceptable standards for a hospital room and the pink flowery curtains might create a sedating and peaceful atmosphere for the patients. Nevertheless, it is a room for eight and privacy can only be achieved through runners, and this might lead to a crowd of patients and their visitors. Because of being a place constitutive of not only physical materials but also of a variety of people coming and going, the womb ward, like many hospital rooms, might be considered as a thirdspace in terms of its inclusive nature. There is one woman, Mildred Grant, about forty-five, who cries like a child and does not want her husband, Tom, to leave her in the womb ward. When the husbands leave the room, "seven women lay tense in their beds, listening to Mildred Grant" (Lessing 55). Despite the nurse's and the other women's warnings about her loud cries, it is Miss Cook, a seventy-year-old lady and a confirmed bachelor, who manages to soothe Mildred with her gentle touch and kind voice. The womb ward seems to be a social space for a short while where patients experience understanding and sharing in their conversations.

Like "Womb Ward" taking place in a hospital room, "Casualty" is set in a hospital's casualty department where approximately twenty people are waiting for examination. Unlike the place outside the glass doors of the emergency "where there was ordinariness and health," (Lessing 77) this room is occupied by different patients in need of treatment. It is a large room with hard and slippery metal chairs for the patients and "with walls an uninteresting shade of beige, bare except for the notice, 'If You Have Nothing Urgently Wrong Please Go To Your Own Doctor'" (Lessing 72). The colour "beige" and the word "bare" imply plainness and simplicity. In terms of the material qualities of the room, the only feature that attracts attention is the notice on the wall, warning the patients of what they should do. Nurse Doolan, in a manner of "stern impartiality of justice" (Lessing 72) tries to take care of the patients according to the degree of urgency. Despite the "No Admittance" (Lessing 76) notice on the door revealing the hospital rules, all patients think that their health problem is more important than the others until they see a young man in blood, being treated by

the doctor and nurses. Waiting for their turn and communicating with one another, the patients temporarily produce a social space.

The title of the sketch, "D.H.S.S.," which stands for Department of Health and Social Security, recounts how a poor young woman ekes out a living by begging in the street because the money provided by the department is cut as a result of a strike. By focusing on the interaction between an old D.H.S.S worker and the poor woman, the narrative demonstrates not only class differences but also social problems in London. It starts with the depiction of the young woman who "on the pavement's edge was facing in, not out to the street" (Lessing 64). Her inward position, indecisive movements and stubborn look suggest her reluctance because of the necessity of begging. When she begs for money from "a smartly dressed matron with a toy dog on a leash" (Lessing 64) coming out of the underground, the young woman cannot avoid feeling "resentment" (Lessing 64) for her desperate situation. The narrator's depiction of the woman as a matron with a toy dog evokes a sense of upper-class dignity and appearance. Getting a £10 note from the rich woman, she goes to the supermarket opposite the underground station to buy some groceries for her children. The juxtaposition between the rich and the poor underlines class differences reflected in the city, makes it a space of amalgamation.

The places the old D.H.S.S worker and the young poor woman interact with each other are the pavements, the surpermarket and the cafe. Following the woman, he enters into the supermarket to help her, and indeed complete her short-change at the check-out desk, which makes her angry. They quarrel on the pavement, but the man convinces her to accept his kind offer of having something to eat and drink in the cafe, then giving a lift to her house. The reason why he tries to help the poor woman is because he knows how a D.H.S.S office works and neglects the poor people's needs. However, the woman cannot understand his kindness, always looking for a bad intention because of a distrust for social workers. This sketch does not highlight the production of space in terms of configuring a thirdspace, yet shows how the street, the underground, the pavement, the supermarket and the cafe serve as public places where class differences, lack of confidence between people and poverty can be observed.

### 6.2. Stories

#### 6.2.1. Closed Space

As a symbol, the title of the story, "The Pit," has a wide variety of meanings, among which the word is reference to "a trap" or "wretched psychological state" (vocabulary.com) might best explain the relationship between male and female characters. The story is about Sarah and James, who were once married for ten years and had two children, but are now divorced, with James married to another woman, Rose, with four children. Sarah and James were a best match as wife and husband "because of their being flesh of one flesh" (Lessing 140). They were a perfect couple not only in terms of physical appearance – "[b]oth were fair [tall, slim, blond] . . . Both had very blue eyes, full of shrewd innocence" (Lessing 140) – but also of tastes and personality. However, James, for some reason, abandons Sarah, and marries Rose, who is "large, blackhaired, swarthy," (Lessing 140) the exact opposite of his ex-wife. Although Sarah and James have come together "for legal reasons and policed by solicitors, or because of children" (Lessing 139) after the divorce, this is the first time James requests for a visit "just to talk" (Lessing 139) in her flat, which is different from their previous meetings.

Following James's desertion, Sarah feels "devastated" (Lessing 141) for a while, but then recovers and becomes an independent and confident woman working "as a personal secretary in a big oil firm" (Lessing 143). Having autonomy in her new life suggests her individual way of gender peformativity different from her previous life with James. Because of her work, she has lived "in Paris, New York, various towns in England, always moving, and good at moving. She never felt she lived in one place more than another" (Lessing 142-143). Her mobility and lack of belonging to a place suggests her nomadic spirit, and her having a space of her own "free of [James]" (Lessing 143) explains how the perception and appropriation of space give a sense of freedom.

Because her children are grown-ups living in different places, Sarah lives alone in a flat whose windows open to a spring view with "a scene of back gardens, birds, trees, fences loaded with creepers, children's climbing frames, cats stretched out absorbing sunlight" (Lessing 144). She appropriates her room with "a fat white jug" full of "cherry among white lilac and yellow jonquils" (Lessing 138) placed on a small table, evoking the revival of nature outside because of James's visit. These

visual descriptions refer to the materiality of Sarah's space and give a glimpse of her "delight" (Lessing 139) springing from her feeling "that [James] had been restored to her" (Lessing 140). In addition, her decoration also illustrates the interrelatedness and the mutual impact between people and the spaces they occupy.

When James enters into her flat, after looking at her for a while, he notices the flowers on the table and senses a "[f]amily life" (Lessing 144) in the flat and its surrounding. Since he is used to large houses, he feels "confined" (Lessing 144) in such a small but vivacious atmosphere. Not knowing how to behave towards each other, they keep changing their places, moving from one chair to another. Sarah, for instance, changes her first place "posed near these flowers" to "the armchair near the gas fire" (Lessing 144). Unable to start a conversation, James points out the smallness of Sarah's flat, saying "You don't have much space up here," (Lessing 145) which sounds "like a reproach" (Lessing 145). In response to this mild criticism, Sarah claims that she does not "need much space" for her children "hardly need their own rooms any longer!," (Lessing 145) meaning she has ample space of her own.

James makes a comparison between Sarah and Rose in terms of how they relate to him. While his previous relationship with Sarah is based on mutual understanding and perfect harmony in terms of tastes and personality, his marriage to Rose is "like a wrong turn in a foreign counry" (Lessing 147) whose language he does not know. His comparison of Rose to a foreign country, a space that he is not familiar with, might suggest how he perceives a woman as a space to be explored.

These two women are opposite not only in appearance but also in relation to the way they transform their life: Rose's fourth marriage to James is based on "safety," (Lessing 165) after she has "experienced everything in the way of hunger, of cold, and the threat of death" (Lessing 155) in the concentration camps during the Second World War. Following an unsettling life, Rose decides to have a stable domestic one rather than travelling. In the past she performed a variety of gender roles, including "the petted, petulant, child-wife, mistress-wife, of adoring men who had got rid of her because she could not fit herself into being ordinary, being a wife," (Lessing 165) and now, in her marriage to James she becomes the good wife, which is "a construct, a role, just as the other[s]" (Lessing 165). Unlike Rose's final preference of a fixed role as wife and mother, Sarah enjoys being "free to walk, stop, make friends, wander, change her mind, sit all day on a mountainside" (Lessing 149) after her divorce. In

terms of the spaces they occupy and the spaces they are interested in, Rose seems to prefer a stable life while Sarah seems to have nomadic potential since she does not confine herself in set conventions and physical borders. Actually, both women display gender performativity in reverse, for they keep changing gender roles in relation to their personal preferences and interests. Rose's transformation of her life from mobility to stability is juxtaposed with Sarah's transformation from a fixed lifetsyle to a nomadic one. James's disapprobation of Sarah's always being "on the move," (Lessing 148) travelling from one country to another, belonging nowhere and everywhere like a nomad, might imply his inability to explore Sarah as a space.

In Sarah's flat, when James explains the "terrible gap" (Lessing 150) in his life, expresses his feelings for Sarah and suggests a kind of "Polygamy!," (Lessing 150) both shed tears, which are directly reflected in the atmosphere of the room: "[s]uddenly the little room dazzled and glared" (Lessing 151) implying their excitement about the possibility of a new form of relationship. To change the mood, Sarah draws the "white" and "unlined" curtains to avoid the sunlight, and this turns the walls into "a dead flat white" (Lessing 151). The impact of space on the way the characters relate to each other can be seen in the way the room is appropriated. While the brightly lit room evokes a sense of exhilaration in line with their discussion on a polygamous relationship, the lightless atmosphere because of the closed curtains ends the conversation between them.

After James departs, Sarah, in a judgemental state of mind, looks at her flowers "critically," (Lessing 152) contemplates about what might happen when Rose learns her husband's suggestion of a so-called "civilised" (Lessing 157) polygamous relationship, and is filled with sensation leading to an escape "to anywhere at all" (Lessing 157). Building upon her visualisation and consideration of the possible relations and arguments between Rose, James, the children and herself, Sarah makes up her mind, puts "her home into the hands of an estate agent" (Lessing 168) and goes to the airport to fly to Norway, to a friend of her, Greta, with whom she can go on walking trips. Once more her easy connection to any place displays her tendency to an independent life.

"The Mother of the Child in Question" is about a Pakistani family, namely the Khans, living in a district arranged for such immigrants in London. This reminds of the Council flats provided by the housing officials to the poor and the homeless in

"The Old Woman and Her Cat" in the previous volume. The neighbourhood where the Khans' house is located is composed of cement buildings: "[s]tained grey piles went up into the sky, and down below lay grey acres" (Lessing 36). The grey colour of the cement, piles and acres suggests the prevalence of concrete structures in a district without a green area. Like the social workers in "D.H.S.S," the narrator describes the environment and informs about the family from a social worker, Stephen Bentley's perspective. He has an appointment with the Khans whose four children are enrolled in a big school, whereas one daughter, Shireen, is not allowed to go to this school because of her mental health. Although her mother does not admit it, Shireen is "'subnormal' as the medical report put it" (Lessing 41). In order to talk with Mr and Mrs Khan about the education of their children, Stephen passes through "a walkway connecting two tower blocks," (Lessing 36) observes his surrounding and identifies "rows of many-coloured curtains where people kept out of sight" (Lessing 36). In addition to the grey cement and acres, the blocks and rows of flats on the walkway constitute the physical features of the district belonging to the immigrants.

Like the smelly places Hetty and Tibby occupy in "The Old Woman and Her Cat," the building is composed of "dismal, stained and smelly corridors," (Lessing 40) so the smell pervades the whole structure. Unlike the crummy and dirty physical appearance of the building, the Khans' "small room crammed with furniture was too tidy for a family, everything just so, polished, shining," which shows their "thorough preparations" (Lessing 36) for Stephen's visit. The furniture in the room including "a red plush sofa," "the oblong of a low table" full of "cups, saucers and a sugar bowl" (Lessing 36) and the "three chairs, full of shiny cushions" (Lessing 37) are in Soja's terms the measurable and sensed aspects of the perceived space. Not only the colourful sofa, cushions and the snacks on the table, but also Mrs Khan and her children's clothes such as the pink silk tunic, blue trousers, "pink gauzy scarf" and "earrings, bangles and rings" (Lessing 37) form the material qualities of the room and reflect their culture, traditional clothes and ways of entertaining a guest.

Because Mr Khan is at work, Hassan, "the oldest son who had to be here representing the father" (Lessing 39) takes the responsibility, answers Stephen's questions and mediates between him and Mrs Khan as the only English speaker in the family. As the narrator explains, although Mr Khan promises to be home to discuss Shireen's education, he does not come in order not to tell the social worker the fact

that his wife does not accept Shireen's less capacity than normal intelligence but insists on her going to the big school like the rest of children. Stephen understands the impossibility of persuading Mrs Khan and gets out of the room with a report "Father did not turn up as arranged. His presence essential" (Lessing 42) written on it. This story does not foreground the production of space in terms of configuring a thirdspace. However, the depiction of the district, the building and the room with its measurable and sensed qualities gives information about the economic conditions and cultural preferences of the Khans and shows the interrelatedness between characters and spaces they occupy.

### 6.2.2. Open Space

"Among the Roses" recounts the story of a mother, Myra and her daughter, Shirley whose relationship ended three years ago because of Shirley's carefree life, and their encounter in the park. Myra is a middle-aged woman, fond of gardening, and spends most of her time for planting and growing flowers. She is depicted in the Queen Mary's Rose Garden in Regent's Park, carrying "an expert's book on roses in her bag," (Lessing 117) an indicator of her interest in flowers. Based on Myra's perspective, the narrator explains the beauty of the garden:

> There was no greater pleasure than this, wandering through roses and deciding, I'll have you ... no, you ... no, perhaps. ... She had already made the circuit from the main gates with their flourishes of gold on an ornamental black iron, portals to pleasure, to the right past the bird-loaded lake with the willows on one side and rose beds on the other, across Queen Mary's Rose Garden itself, and around to the left through lawns and shrubs where you crossed the long path going up to the fountain, then to the left again and by the cafe, and then between the beds full of tempters to where she had started. Now she was about to make another round. (Lessing 117)

That Myra starts wandering around the roses from the main gates and ends up in the same place and the use of "circuit" suggest the tour she takes in the round-shape garden. The ornamental black iron and the fountain shows the architectural elements and the bird-loaded lake, the willows and the rose beds full of tempting flowers demonstrate the natural elements of the garden, all of which contribute to the perceived dimension of material space. Moreover, "the crowds of people strolling among the roses" (Lessing 117) and the mention of the cafe strengthens the garden's firstspace perspective as a public place for people to have a walk and rest, emphasising the everydayness.

When Myra accidentally recognizes Shirley in this place, she is surprised because her daughter has no interest in gardening. Although Myra pretends not seeing her, Shirley addresses her mother offering to forget about their disagreement in the past. The fact that Shirley is now fond of flowers, particularly roses, like her mother, and that their reconciliation take place in the rose gardens is worth considering. As Kupisz states, "gardening becomes both a bone of contention between Myra and Shirley, the mother and daughter, and simultanesouly the best way of 'letting bygones be'" ("A Meddley of Images" 65). The garden seems to be attributed multiple meanings by Myra and Shirley since what happens in their lives is reflected through their relation to roses. Their cutting the roses in Queen Mary's Rose Garden as well as planting and growing roses in their own gardens can be seen as appropriations of these places for self-expression.

### 6.2.3. Closed and Open Space

"Debbie and Julie" tells the story of how an innocent girl, Julie, escapes from her father's house in the suburbs of London to the city center in order to bear a child, how she is protected by a prostitute, Debbie and is offered a shelter in her flat, and finally, how she turns back home as a mother with an abandoned child in London. Her transformation as well as the distinction between her life in parents' house and in Debbie's flat is reflected through Julie's relation to these spaces. In her previous house, for instance, her bedroom is "pretty and pink, and her big panda sat on her pillow" (Lessing 15). She leads a conventional life with her parents whose cold relatonship is implied in the way they sit "silent and apart in their two well separated chairs" (Lessing 16). The narrator reveals the monotony in the house: "they cancelled each other out. . . They did not disagree. They never raised their voices, or argued. Each day was a pattern of cups of tea, meals, cups of coffee and biscuits, always at exactly the same times, with bedtime as the goal" (Lessing 19). Not only Julie's child-like appropriation of her bedroom and the location of her parents in separated chairs but also their daily routine and lack of communication display the monotony and stability in their lives from a firstspace perspective.

After her secret affair with a friend at school, Billy Jayson, who impregnates her, Julie finds herself "on the platform at Waterloo" (Lessing 4) in London. Since Waterloo is marked as a street where prostitutes earn their living, Julie looks like "a dummy . . . waiting, but not knowing what for" (Lessing 4). That Waterloo is a district,

which links one place to another by means of trains, buses and taxis suggests a thirdspace embracing connections between various people. When Debbie notices Julie, she protects her from "sharks" and "baddies" (Lessing 4) and welcomes Julie in her two-room flat with a living room: "the bright rackety place where people came and went, some of them frightening, but none threatening [Julie], because Debbie looked after her" (Lessing 1). Julie lives in Debbie's flat for a few months in order to eventually give birth to her child away from the criticisms of her parents. Unlike her parents' house lacking affection and intimacy, but consisting of order, rules and duties, in Debbie's flat "people shouted, kissed, hugged, argued, fought, threatened, wept, and screamed" (Lessing 19). The flat becomes an alternative space for Julie, which provides her a degree of freedom from the social and spatial conditions of being a young pregnant girl, and a chance for individual gender performativity. The relationship between Debbie's flat and "people (men) from everywhere – 'from all over the world'" (Lessing 1) as well as the other girls is a complex and dynamic exchange in which their experiences shape the way the flat is defined and lived. This creates a thirdspace view of the flat which is produced and reproduced simultaneously through the movement – the coming and going of people – their interactions and conflicts. Julie associates her parents' house with repression and order, but Debbie's flat with emancipation and disorder, which clarifies her view of these spaces:

> In this house, her home, they did not see each other naked. Her mother hadn't come in for years when she was having a bath, and she always knocked on the bedroom door. In Debbie' flat people ran about naked or half dressed and Debbie might answer the door in her satin camiknickers, those great breasts of hers lolling about. Debbie often came in when Julie was in the bath to sit on the loo and chat. . . . (Lessing 16)

Debbie's flat dissolves gender relations defined by social norms and values from a secondspace perspective and generate new and heterogeneous relations that accentuate difference and problematise the established ones.

In addition to Debbie's flat as a shelter, Julie makes use of a derelict shed as "her refuge" (Lessing 5) in order to give birth to her child. There is "filth in this shed. Tramps had used it. The dog . . . other dogs too, probably. For all she knew, other girls had given birth in it. Most sheds were garden sheds, and full of plants in pots, and locked up" (Lessing 7). The poor material conditions of the shed and Julie's secret appropriation of it with blankets, pads and towels recalls Hetty's reconfiguration of

ruined and disused places in "The Old Woman and Her Cat". Like Hetty and her stray cat Tibby, Julie is together with a stray dog in the shed accompanying each other in silence. Julie bears her baby and leaves her in a telephone box from which a couple takes it and gives it to the police. Thus, by getting rid of the baby, Julie frees herself from the limitations of social pressure and returns home. Her adventure with Billy at school, her decision to leave her house and go to London, her meeting with Debbie and staying in her flat, and finally her maternal experience in the shed, transform Julie from an innocent girl to an experienced woman, all of which happen in a diversity of spaces.

**Part II: Taxi as Mobile Space and (Re) Production of the City in "Storms"**

"Storms" revolves around the conversation between an unnamed narrator and a taxi driver, including their reflections of the storm that happened three days ago in London and their different views of everyday life in the city and its inhabitants. It opens with the narrator's arrival at London Heathrow Airport and taking a taxi to West Hamspstead where s/he lives. According to the google map directions,[66] it is 30,5 kilometres from the airport to West Hampstead and takes approximately 48 minutes depending on the traffic and the route taken. In a sense, it is relatively long to spend in a cab and feel the need to communicate. Based on this, they become active participants in the production of traffic congestion and contribute to the meaning/appropriation of the city through their observations and interpretations. In addition, from the beginning to the end of the sketch, both characters are mobile and lack a sense of attachment to a certain place or person, which might make them nomads at least for a while.

The taxi driver is "a small, squashed-looking figure" (Lessing 131) in tweeds and "seemed more like a countryman at a market than a London taxi driver" (Lessing 125). Because he does not know the fixed spatial patterns in the city to move quickly from one place to another, the narrator names him a "a phantom[67] taxi driver," (Lessing 126) who yearns for his life in town and laments living in the city center. What leads him to become a taxi driver in London is his first wife, whose father and

[66] https://www.google.com/maps/dir/heathrow+airport/West+Hampstead,+Londra

[67] According to *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, phantom refers to (1) an illusion, unreality, vanity; vain, imagination; delusion, deception, falsity. The taxi driver does not seem to be a real London taxi driver because of his lack of knowledge, regarding the streets, roads and routes in the city.

brothers were taxi drivers, and her insistence on making him one of them. However, it is not an easy task to become a taxi driver as it requires him to "learn The Knowledge," (Lessing 131) drive all over the city and pass an examination. In terms of city planning, there are patterns between the streets connecting one neighbourhood to another and each taxi driver is supposed to experience the city through spatial practices until they get the licence. This Knowledge serves to represent the city spatially in order to make sense of it and to legitimate particular spatial patterns, and in Soja's terms signifies the secondspace thinking of the city because such spatial planning in the city in terms of streets, roads, neighbourhoods etc., maintains order and control. By following certain routes and obeying the traffic rules represented by the Knowledge, Londoners experience everyday life in the city and deal with potential traffic congestion.

Conversely, no information is provided about the narrator, neither his/her name nor physical appearance and social background is dislosed. Nevertheless, there is a hint at the end of the sketch that might indicate the narrator's gender. Having been in interaction with the narrator by talking about the storm, the damages in their gardens, the traffic congestion, everyday life of Londoners, their manners and his own private life throughout the journey, the taxi driver "gripped [the narrator's hand] even tighter and leaned forward to look into [his/her face]" and "gave [him/her] wave, more like a formal, but comradely salute" (Lessing 131). Because of the long journey in the cab, sharing feelings and opinions, the taxi driver feels an instant connection and a sense of trust in the narrator, which he expresses through holding the narrator's hand closely and saluting as if showing respect to a companion. The narrator also describes his hand as "strong, and warm, a kind hand" (Lessing 130). Based on this distanced but intimate farewell as well as the narrator's emphasis on his affectionate gesture, I would argue that the narrator might be a woman.

The fact that the whole sketch takes place in a cab suggests the transitoriness of reflections and the appropriation of the cab itself as an alternative mobile space, where the narrator and the driver are in interaction and in conflict with each other. As nomadic subjects in transient, they are deterritorialised and reterritorialised in the liminal space of the cab. Their opposite views about the city, and also the changing environment, suggest the continuous production and reproduction of space, London in this context, through social relations, human intentions and individual

interpretations. According to Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, the city is a place which "has no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts. Instead, it is an amalgam of often disjointed processes and social heterogeneity, a place of near and far connections, a concatenation of rhythms; always edging in new directions" (*Cities* 8). Cities are unstable complex entities, which require new perspectives to analyse how they are socially structured and how their rhythms are observed and sensed. In a similar way, Peter Preston and Paul Simpson-Housley in *Writing the City*, claim that "[t]he city is an aggregation or accumulation, not just in demographic, economic or planning terms, but also in terms of feeling and emotion. Cities thus become more than their built environment, more than a set of class or economic relationships; they are also an experience to be lived, suffered, undergone" (1-2). The definition of the city cannot be reduced to physical and measurable qualities, rather it needs to be analysed in relation to the experience of its inhabitants. In Lefebvre's works such as *The Production of Space* (1991), *Writing on Cities* (1996) and *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life* (2004), the city plays an important role in explaining the complexities of everyday life and the interrelatedness between people and various spaces they occupy. The emphasis of this study will be not only on the reflections of perceived, conceived and lived spaces of the city from the perspective of the narrator and the taxi driver, but also on the rhythms recognized by these two characters. I will discuss to what extent they are capable of perceiving and sensing the flows in different spaces of the city. In addition to Lefebvre's and Soja's three dimensional conceptualisation of space production, I will make use of Lefebvre's notion of rhythmanalysis and explain the movement in the context of London as is reflected in the story.

Rhythmanalysis is a useful tool for examining the everyday life in London with its diverse rhythms from the perspective of the narrator and the taxi driver. In the introduction to *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, Stuart Elden claims that "the analysis of rhythms provides a privileged insight into the question of everyday life" (viii). For Lefebvre, there is a close connection between the everyday life and rhythms, which are "[e]verywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy" (*Rhythmanalysis* 15). The cadences of the city can be perceived by individuals simultaneously through the use of senses, but only if one pays attention to the details of ongoing life. One significant aspect of rhythms is

their regular occurance and repetition, through which everyday activities manifest themselves in social life. As Lefebvre puts it, "rhythms imply repetitions and can be defined as movements and differences within repetition" (*Rhythmanalysis* 90) and are classified in two main groups: cyclical repetitions and linear repetitions. The former is grasped "if one considers days and nights – hours and months – the seasons and years. And tides! The cyclical is generally of cosmic origin" (*Rhythmanalysis* 90). In contrast, the latter "defines itself through the consecution and reproduction of the same phenomenon, almost identical, if not identical, at roughly similar intervals" (*Rhythmanalysis* 90). With respect to this, in the story while social activities and daily routines such as commuting, following a timetable, going to a concert or dinner are structured in the form of linear time, natural patterns like the storm and the floods take the form of cyclical time, and both shape social and individual manners and behaviours in space.

The narrator's description of her physical environment as soon as she gets out of the airport building foregrounds the impact of cyclical rhythms in the city. Because of the storm that "blew down so many of London's trees" (Lessing 125) and caused flooding in the streets, the sky is "pastel-tinted" and "unreliable" (Lessing 125) and the people have sorrowful expressions. There is a natural cause-and-effect relationship between the storm, the wind, the floods and the damage in nature and in the built-environment. The "small and temporary" (Lessing 125) appearance of people under the "flying skies" (Lessing 125) as well as the storm, the wind and the floods constitute the material qualities of the firstspace view of London in Soja's terms. In this sense, nature and the cyclical rhythms seem to be an integral part of the city. As Lefebvre notes, "[c]yclical repetition and the linear repetitive separate out under analysis, but in *reality* interfere with one another constantly" (*Rhythmanalysis* 8). Despite the damage by the storm and the floods in the city, everyday life flows in its usual pace in relation to the linear time and rhythms.

In addition to cyclical and linear rhythms, Lefebvre mentions the interactions between rhythms: "A rhythm is only slow or fast in relation to other rhythms with which it finds itself associated in a more or less vast unity" (*Rhythmanalysis* 89). For example, the way the taxi driver moves on the road "like grandfather" (Lessing 126) is slower and more cautious than the way other drivers move. With respect to the multiple and interactive nature of the rhythms, Lefebvre's notions of polyrhythmia,

eurhythmia and arrhythmia provide the ground for a detailed discussion of everyday life rhythms in the city. Polyrhythmia consists of a myriad of rhythms interacting with each other in cyclical and linear time of everyday life. Eurhythmia refers to the harmonious relationship when "rhythms unite with one another in the state of health, in normal . . . everydayness," (*Rhythmanalysis* 16) whereas arrhythmia is "a pathological state" (*Rhythmanalysis* 16) in which there is disruption and conflict between rhythms. The continuous flow of cars on the road suggests eurhythmia in London until it is disrupted by an unusual traffic congestion in Westway,[68] which alters the harmonious interaction of rhythms for a while, creating an arrhythmia in the city.

The fact that the taxi driver is not familiar with the "formula,[69]" (Lessing 125) which is "at once recognized by every London taxi driver" (Lessing 125-126) refers to a route to particular place in linear time. Rather than internalising the imposed linear structure of roads and streets, the taxi driver prefers "to learn other people's routes" (Lessing 126). The potential of going to a certain destination through diverse patterns and people's movements suggests the multiplicity of rhythms in the city. Although every individual is capable of recognizing the social, cultural, spatial and natural rhythms in the city, the way they perceive and interpret them differs according to their personality, gender, class, profession and activities in their daily life. The taxi driver, for instance, takes "the slow roads in, not the quick side roads drivers use who know an area," (Lessing 126) which makes the narrator think "this is one of the journeys [she is] going to be pleased to see the end of" (Lessing 126). On the one hand, the taxi driver continues down the road; on the other hand, the narrator interferes in his business by suggesting not taking the route in "Kilburn High Street[70] [which is]

[68] In the late 1960s, "London was in the process of constructing more motorways to reduce the amount of traffic because car ownership was out of control and the streets were gridlocked. Westway is one of London's most famous urban motorways built to relieve congestion at the time". https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/architecture/london-roads-to.

[69] *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* defines "formula" as (1) a set form of words in which something is defined, stated, or declared, or which is prescribed by authority or custom to be used on some ceremonial occasion. Like The Knowledge needed to drive in London, the formula can also be interpreted as the conceived (secondspace) understanding of the city since it provides a spatial route to certain destinations.

[70] "Kilburn High Street/Road is an important local town centre. The high road has lots of shops, a market, library, restaurants, pubs, and the Tricycle Theatre and Cinema. These all help to create Kilburn character; however, it is dominated by motor traffic". http://www.brnt.gov.uk/your-community/regeneration/kilburn-high-road.

always crammed" (Lessing 129-130). Although there is a conceived understanding of certain streets and roads like being crammed, quick and slow, the narrator's and the taxi driver's preferences are different. The traffic congestion on the way to the narrator's house, causing them to "slow down on Westway, and then crawl along and then [...] to stop altogether" (Lessing 128) suggests the disturbance of eurhythmia (the simultaneous flow of cars) by interferences of arrhythmia (the disorder in the streets such as the closed roads, damaged drains, electricity and gas pipes). In Lefebvre's terms, this can be seen as the inseparability of rhythms. As Andrew Barry comments "rather than seeing chaos and congestion as abnormalities perhaps we should see them as a normal feature of networks," ("The Networks" 162) and these rhythms seem to be a natural part of everyday life in London.

During their journey in the cab moving through the crowded streets of London, which indicates the linear repetition of traffic in the city, the storm that happened three nights ago is the first subject of conversation between the narrator and the taxi driver. In the course of the storm, the narrator is "at the top of the house" (Lessing 126):

> The sky kept changing completely, one minute black with the glimmer of sheet lightning far away across London, and then clear and starry, and the stars had a rinsed look because of the clear, washed air, then black again, and the temperature was changing, stuffy and warm and then suddenly cold, then warm again, while the trees, particularly the big ash at the bottom of the garden, were boiling and thrashing about and everything in the house was rattling and banging, and the roof seemed about to shake itself off. (Lessing 126-127)

The way she describes what happened during the storm, such as the changes in the colours of the sky, the temperature and the trembling house, appealing to sight, touch and hearing, respectively, refers to the perceived dimension of space. There is also a play of the sky and the stars, of the temperature and the house, which is emphasised by the repetitive use of "and," "then," "again," suggesting the cyclical rhythm of the city. Even the trees have their rhythms, which in turn are made up of several rhythms: leaves and flowers, for instance. While the narrator observes the storm and its effects on the environment as a natural phenomenon and describes the event in detail and with pleasure as if depicting a spectacle, the taxi driver briefly explains that he was asleep during the storm "at the bottom of his house" and saw "the trees down in the

street and his garden shed's roof gone" (Lessing 126) the day after. Thus, the cyclical and linear rhythms of city life seem to be inseparable from each other.

The two distinct reactions to the storm and its impact on the environment illustrate to what extent the narrator and the taxi driver are able to sense the movement in the city. As Lefebvre states, "[i]n order to grasp and analyse rhythms, it is necessary to get outside them, but not completely. . . to grasp a rhythm it is necessary to have been ***grasped*** by it" (*Rhythmanalysis* 27). In this sense, the narrator is capable of utilizing her senses to see the hidden rhythms during the storm, probably from the window of her house. Watching the storm from the window recalls Lefebvre's chapter "Seen from the Window" in *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life.* In this chapter, Lefebvre, the rhythmanalyst, observes the streets from the windows of his apartment in central Paris, which is a location providing not only rhythms and repetitions in the street but also an insight into what happens in the street: "He who walks down the street, over there, is immersed in the multiplicity of noises, murmurs, rhythms. . . . By contrast, from the window, the noises distinguish themselves, the flows separate out, rhythms respond to one another" (*Rhythmanalysis* 28). Like Lefebvre's analysis of the street from the window in Paris, the narrator is able to enjoy the cyclical rhythms in London, yet the taxi driver is not as sensitive as her. He does not recognize the flows of nature at the moment of the storm because of being in sleep, and mentions only its destructive effects in his garden.

Besides the cyclical rhythms during the storm, the narrator also pays attention to the night lights on and off in the houses. When everything is all right, the lights are on and the city sparkles, but after the storm, as a result of a power cut, the city turns into a "blacked out" (Lessing 127) one where "the candles and torches [are] glimmering in every house" (Lessing 127). As the narrator reveals, "London without its lights" (Lessing 127) is not a usual situation and echoes a past event, "the big strike[71] in the seventies" (Lessing 127). This power cut exemplifies both a kind of

[71] In Britain of the 1970s, "power cuts and lengthy blackouts became a fact of life. The country's electricity network had long been vulnerable to mechanical failure or industrial action. . . In December 1970 hospitals were forced to function on batteries and candles during a "work-to-rule" strike. Transport came to a halt, and electrical heating stopped working in many homes - anything that depended on a regular power supply was unable to function. . . After the "Winter of Discontent" in 1978-79, Margaret Thatcher took on the mining unions. This, together with the deregulation of the energy industry, and the discovery of oil and gas

arrhythmia slowing down the rhythms of the lights in the city temporarily and a recollection of a past event, the big strike of the 1970s. This reference to the blackout in the 1970s also suggests a palimpsest,[72] which can be decoded to reveal previous layers of social and cultural events; in Christine Wick Sizemore's words, "Lessing portrays the city as a palimpsest, a layered text, that shows the passage of time through its layers. This palimpsest is also a fragment of a text and reveals the fragmentary nature of any one observer's perception of the city" (*A Female Vision* 7). London in this context is portrayed as a palimpsest, a layered text built up over time, perceived and lived by the narrator and the taxi driver. When they talk about the instinctual behaviours of the cat during the storm, for instance, the driver illustrates the time of "the blitz[73]" (Lessing 127) and points to possible places the cat can hide in, such as the stairs or the beam. As the blackout and the blitz refer to the past, these two events form the layers of London's history. The city shows its presence not only in Lefebvre's cyclical and linear rhythms, but also in history, like a palimpsest.

The second subject the narrator and the taxi driver talk about in the cab is their pets: because of their protective instincts and potential to be friends, the narrator has a cat and the taxi driver used to have a dog, which he had to take to the vet a month ago. The driver overvalues the animals and says "I like animals. They are better than we are. They are kind, not cruel, like us" (Lessing 131). Expressing his feelings for the lost dog, the taxi driver's voice is "gruff and even angry" (Lessing 128). In addition to their friendliness, the driver mentions the animals's ability to make use of their instinct to avoid dangers. For instance, during the storm, the narrator's cat "tried to get [her] to move downstairs, and had gone down himself to a safe place in the heart of the house" (Lessing 127). Since animals are a part of nature and act according to their instincts, this suggests the natural rhythms of the animals interweaving the rhythms in the city.

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in the North Sea, brought an end to the widespread blackouts which had plagued Britain." https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/1525089/Decade-that-dimmed-the-strike-hit-Seventies.

[72] For more information on the literal and figurative use of the "palimpsest," see Dillon's *The Palimpsest*.

[73] "Blitz, the German word for 'lightning', was applied by the British press to the tempest of heavy and frequent bombing raids carried out over Britain in 1940 and 1941. This concentrated, direct bombing of industrial targets and civilian centres began with heavy raids on London on 7 September 1940". http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/the_blitz.

After the spatial routes and the pets are discussed, the narrator reflects on observations of the environment from the back seat of the cab:

> the fallen trees, their roots in the air like hands, that had tried to grip the soil to keep them upright, but failed. The soil packed among the roots was already being washed out. Everywhere were broken branches, and the signs of recent high water, tidemarks of rubble and leaves and twigs. It was becoming dark. October: the clocks would soon go back for the winter. (Lessing 128)

Like the storm view seen from the window of the house, the taxi window provides a view of the city in terms of what Lefebvre calls a "remarkable" harmony "between what one sees and what one hears (from the window)" (*Rhythmanalysis* 28). In this perspective, space can be understood through physical elements and material qualities such as the plants, the trees, the stone etc. The way the narrator identifies "fallen trees," "the roots," "broken branches," "tidemarks of rubble," "leaves and twigs" from the taxi window paints vivid pictures of London after the storm. The narrator personifies the roots of the trees as being like hands trying not to leave the ground, but the attempts are futile because the soil is washed away by the floods. The description of the environment under the influence of the storm evokes cyclical occurrances and at last is combined with the linear rhythm of the city, emphasised by the equinox. Not only the materiality of space but also the feeling of cyclical and linear rhythms enables the narrator to sense its changeability and continuous production.

Their journey in the cab reveals two opposite perceptions of the city through the conversation between the taxi driver and the narrator: the former hates London and its people, whom he thinks are not real Londoners but have migrated to the city. This multiplicity of people from various nations and backgrounds suggests Soja's thirdspace, an all-embracing London of interaction, contradiction and contestation among its inhabitants. Being a Londoner means for the driver to possess certain characteristics like the proper use of the English language. He complains about the everyday manners of a London youngster in a shop, for instance, because the youngster addresses him as "grandad" and hands over the newspaper, saying "There you go, then" (Lessing 128) in a casual way. In response to the narrator's comment that "It's a manner of speaking" (Lessing 129) in London, he accuses the Londoners of having "no manners at all" (Lessing 129). Lefebvre interprets such gestures and

manners as part of body rhythms which "change according to societies, eras" (*Rhythmanalysis* 38) and claims that "[t]o enter into a society, group or nationality is to accept values (that are taught), to learn a trade by following the right channels, but also to bend oneself (to be bent) to its ways. Which means to say: dressage" (*Rhythmanalysis* 39). The taxi driver, in this sense, fails to understand and adapt to the dressage of London including its spatial pattern (the quick roads), its cyclical and linear rhythms and its inhabitants. He cannot even grasp "what all these people [are] doing here at this time of the evening" because "It's past rush hour" (Lessing 130). For him, rather than going to the theatre or having supper in a restaurant at a late time in the evening, people should eat at home and save their money; he is unable to sense the social and cultural rhythms of London. The narrator recognizes "the wild dislocation that was in his voice" (Lessing 130) from the very beginning of their meeting in the cab and tries to make sense of "the mystery" in him (Lessing 129) as well as the "grief," "sorrow" (Lessing 129) and "hurt" (Lessing 130) in his voice. The reason why he hates London and cannot appreciate its rhythms is related to his profession: for him, being a taxi driver and on the move all day "numbs your mind, it dulls you, and you can't think the thoughts you ought to have in your mind" (Lessing 130). Since he had to give up music and become a taxi driver because of his first wife, he is not happy living in London

Unlike the taxi driver, the narrator has a hightened level of awareness of her surrounding and develops a positive view of everyday life[74] in London with its multiple rhythms. On the way home stuck in traffic congestion, the narrator attempts to persuade the driver to overcome his hatred for London[75] by foregrounding the spectacle of the city's advantages: "It was like a great theatre[76]" which "you could

[74] Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier claim "everyday is simultaneously the site of, the theatre for, and what is at stake in a conflict between the great indestructible rhythms and the processes imposed by the socio-economic organisation of production, consumption, circulation and habitat" (*Rhythmanalysis* 73). Like the narrator's use of the theatre metaphor for the everyday life in the city, Lefebvre and Régulier emphasise its inclusive capacity as a site and theatre to bring all elements together.

[75] Claire Sprague highlights the significance of London for Lessing in her texts: "[s]he is stubborn in her insistence on the city as the center of human interaction. The city must be confronted, accepted, altered. It is the quintessential locus of human history" (9-10). Lessing's fondness of London can be observed in the narrator's attitude towards the city as a remarkable view to be watched and involved in.

[76] Deborah Epstein-Nord in "The City as Theatre" discusses the image of theatre in urban representation of the city in the early nineteenth century because it "suggests not only

watch what went on all day . . . could sit for hours in a cafe or on a bench and just watch. Always something remarkable, or amusing" (Lessing 129). There is the subversion of the traditional idea of "all the world is a stage" by Shakespeare, which assumes a Cartesian conception of space. As is seen in the reflections of the narrator, London is not just a city, a physical entity to be filled in. Rather it is a transient metropolis, a living space where there is always movement, performance, interaction and conflict. Because the narrator compares the city to a theatre, people become both the performers on stage and the audience watching the play. In this sense, the narrator seems to be the observer, the viewer who happens to stroll around the city by taxi. Rosario Arias, in her article, "'All the world's a stage': Theatricality, Spectacle and the Flâneuse in Doris Lessing's Vision of London," comments that the narrator portrays "London as a potential space, a space of creativity, where mutual bonds are established between the flaˆneuse/spectator and the performers," (3) and reads the city as a theatre. London as a theatre stage in this context exemplifies such a metaphorical space because it is produced through relations and experiences, like a script to be performed or a text to be read through the interaction and movement of people. Arias also argues that in this story "the ideal standpoint is that of the observer, who can use her city eyes and read the city to discover that behind anonymous faces lies a tragedy, a comedy, a farce or a romance, for example" (7). Unlike the taxi driver's dislike for the city including its "noise and rush," (Lessing 129) "streets full of litter and blown leaves," (Lessing 130) closed parks and congested roads as well as his criticism of people, the narrator praises the city[77] by highlighting its parks, such as Regent's Park and Hampstead Heath. In addition to the glimmering lights at night in the city when there is a powercut, even the people's experiences in the streets and parks that the narrator observes are remarkable and amusing, as they would be in a theatre.

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entertainment and performance but also a relationship of distance and tentativeness between spectator and the action on the stage. The urban spectator of this period, whether writer or imagined subject, experienced the sights and people of the street as passing shows or as monuments to be glimpsed briefly or from afar" (152). In a similar way, the narrator takes pleasure from watching the flow of life in the city.

[77] Wick Sizemore, in her book *A Female Vision of the City*, demonstrates how Lessing embraces London, with its parts and displays a nonhierachical structure which allows the characters to appropriate the spaces they occupy and have connections to their surrounding in individual ways. In reading the city as a text, Sizemore presents spatial elements of the city with reference to Kevin Lynch's architectural structures such as landmarks, nodes, districts, paths and edges. For more information, see Lynch's *The Image of the City*.

The narrator's flâneuse position in the cab can also be explained in relation to Charles Baudelaire's idea of flâneur, which he depicts in "The Painter of Modern Life" (first published in 1863). By focusing on a poet's vision of public spaces in Paris, he writes: "The crowd is his element, as the air is that of bird's and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd" (9). The poet has the potential to get involved in public life of the city, to observe and reflect what he sees in his poems. He enjoys not only being in the city as a constituent part of it but also describing his surrounding and fluctuating relationships between people from a poet's perspective. In doing so, he is able to experience the public spaces of the city both as an inhabitant and a poet, and "be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world" (Baudelaire 9). It is not an idle act of strolling in the city but a quest for an understanding of modern life for the poet. Keith Tester, drawing upon Baudelaire's idea of flâneur and contemporary approaches[78]to the figure, posits the flânerie as "the activity of the sovereign spectator going about the city in order to find the things which will occupy his gaze and thus complete his otherwise incomplete identity; satisfy his otherwise dissatisfied existence; replace the sense of bereavement with a sense of life" (7). In this sense, the taxi driver, though driving everyday in the streets of London, is not a flâneur because he cannot make sense of his surrounding such as the cars on the roads, their hoot, cyclical and linear rhythms of the metropolis. He even fails to understand human relations and the social life in London. Instead of involving in the rapid movements of urban city, he longs for a slow and more definite space like his provincial town. In contrast, the narrator is a flâneuse[79] because she is able to move in the public realm such as the Heathrow airport and the streets of London, and insistently reflects her observations and meanings attached to the modern life in the metropolis. In fact, she is more than a flâneuse as she merges with the city through her impressions and spatializes the city. The basic difference between the two characters is their relation to spaces they wander. The former yearns for a Cartesian understanding of space that is fixed and

[78] For contemporary approaches to flânerie/flâneur and urban culture, see Tester's *The Flâneur* and Chris Jenks, *Urban Culture: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*. Vol 2.

[79] For a discussion on the relationship between gender and flânerie, see Wolff's "The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity."

measurable, which he can find in his town, whereas the latter avoids such a limiting experience of space and foregrounds the multiple ways of living in the city, thus, she is thirding the city.

In "Storms," Lessing portrays a vision of London from two different perspectives – that of the taxi driver and of the narrator – which contradict each other. While the driver has a critical view of everyday life in London including the traffic congestion, complexities of spatial patterns on the streets, social life and manners of Londoners, the narrator presents a theatrical view of the city as a remarkable scene to be watched and observed throughout the day. Due to his profession and provincial backgound, the taxi driver complains not only about other drivers in the traffic and people socialising but also the storms and the floods. Since he has to travel all day to make a living, he might not be able to enjoy being in the city and yearns for a simple town life. Unlike him, the narrator senses the human interaction with nature and spatial patterns, in Lefebvre's terms the cyclical and linear rhythms of the city, and takes pleasure in watching them. Based on their interpretations of London, it can be seen how the city is perceived through daily routines such as commuting, travelling, walking, how it is conceived as a spatially designed space in terms of streets, roads and neighbourhoods providing order for its people and how it might be produced and reproduced by Londoners from diverse backgrounds as a social space or thirdspace, because the way each person reads the layers and spatial dimensions of the city is multifaceted. What brings these two characters together and makes them share their distinct viewpoints is the necessity of travelling in the cab. Like the all-encompassing nature of the city, the cab functions as a liminal point and an alternative space where people can be in interaction and in conflict temporarily. Focusing on the rhythms of the city in this sketch, thus, offers a new mode of observing the movement and continuity of life, complementing the triadic approach, and understanding the relationship between people and spaces they occupy.

## CONCLUSION

The complicated relationship between space including those related concepts such as place, location, environment, territory, landscape, city etc., and human beings have been analysed in relation to social, economic, cultural and political aspects of life, particularly in the fields of geography, architecture, sociology, urban and regional planning. Because of a scarcity of references to specifically gender issues in these studies, some feminist geographers[80], like Linda McDowell, Joanne Sharp and Gillian Rose claim gender is the most commonly used social identity among other social variables – race, class, ethnicity, nationality – to question the established notions of space. McDowell and Sharp, in *A Feminist Glossary of Human Geography* point out the fact that Western thought is based on an inherent spatiality;

> in which the distinction of the mind from the body, reason from emotion, the public sphere from the private arena placed men on one side and relegated 'woman' as Other, to the other side. Thus, all that was 'naturally' female and feminine was located inside, in private, at the smallest spatial scale and so taken for granted and untheorized. (114)

This hierarchical spatial organisation has been socially constructed to produce a homogeneous space and to show unequal social relations. In a similar vein, Rose challenges the gendered division of space and by drawing on Teresa de Lauretis's idea of "elsewhere beyond," (*Technologies* 26) suggests an alternative one for women where they can practice multiple experiences in everyday life. As Rose puts it, "everyday routines traced by women are never unimportant because the seemingly banal and trivial events of the everyday are bound into the power structures which limit and confine women" (*Feminism* 17). Focusing on their experience in space, therefore, reveals individual ways of appropriation and transgressions beyond gendered spatial divisions.

[80] For more information about the relationship between space and gender, see Massey's *Space, Place, and Gender* and *For Space*.

Because of the symbiosis between space and gender, this dissertation attempted to explore the representations of space in Doris Lessing's short fiction studying how male and female characters connect to their surrounding. Although the way they perform gender acts and experience everyday life in spaces they occupy have common points, there are considerable differences between them in terms of the way they configure the human-made and natural environment. While the male characters' relations to such spaces remain within the limits of gendered divisions because they are on the privileged side moving freely in the public and open sphere, the female characters have multifarious connections to their surrounding either in compliance or in contradiction with imposed spatial segregation. The primary focus of this study was to discuss to what extent such gendered divisions of space are transgressed and space is transformed into an alternative one, within the framework of Lefebvre's social/lived space and/or Soja's thirdspace by female characters through performative and nomadic acts. In doing so, this study does not suggest discarding the established dualistic notions of space, but rather questions them in new ways that open up and expand the critical thinking about spatial organisations. The analysis of Lessing's stories with reference to Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial trialetics along with Butler's gender performativity and Braidotti's nomadic subjectivity suggests the interconnectedness between spatial organisations in everyday life and gender practices, and provides a multiplicity of perspectives from which a variety of spaces – from the most intimate and closed to the most public and open – can be analysed in relation to human experience and social relations. For this purpose, each chapter is devoted to the classification of stories in one collection in terms of space followed by the textual analysis of one story from that collection.

Delving into the classification and analyses of Lessing's stories, Chapter Two and Three dealt with her African stories in two collections – the first volume titled *This Was the Old Chief's Country* and the second volume *The Sun between Their Feet* – which are set in colonial Rhodesia between the 1930s and the 1940s. Because of her experiences in Rhodesia, colonial issues between the English, the Afrikaans, and the Africans in untamed natural environment as well as the colonisers' farmland form the core of her themes in these narratives. As Ruth Whittaker puts it in *Modern Novelists: Doris Lessing*, her short stories about Africa describe

> a conflict between white sensibility (or lack of it) and African culture. We are shown both the European and the African experiences of exile and alienation. The European exile causes the Africans' displacement, forcing them to leave their tribal lands, and to live apart from their families. Underlying her narratives is Mrs Lessing's implacable message that Africa belongs to the Africans, so that there is never a 'happy ending' for the settlers in the sense of unconditional acceptance. (28)

Such conflicts can be observed within the perceived[81] and conceived[82] dimensions of the African continent which is divided into two: the wild African land with its natural flora and the cultivated settler farmlands characterised by their Englishness.

In Chapter Two, including the title of the collection and the thirteen stories, there are eight references to space names such as "country," "veld," "hut," "Kloof Grange," "place," "home," "Eldorado" and "antheap". Although the other stories do not have a related word in the title, they take place in the untamed African land and bordered settler farm compounds. That is why all these stories somehow have a connection to space. The first part of the chapter attempted to classify the stories in terms of open and closed spaces. Some of these stories deal with colonial and racial issues whereas some focus on both colonial and gender relations. Since the aim of this study was to discuss the relationship between space and gender, the way male and female characters relate to their surrounding has been analysed within Lefebvre's and Soja's three dimensional understanding of space: the perceived (firstspace), the conceived (secondspace) and the lived/social (thirdspace).

Among the stories that focus on gender issues, "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" displays multiple relations between genders from two ethnic groups (the British and the Afrikaan) with different parts of closed and open spaces such as the house, the veranda, the living-room, the garden, the mountains and the river. Because of the variety of characters (male/female – English/Afrikaan) and their relation to diverse spaces in Africa, this story is chosen for textual analysis. The study presents the physical dimension of space where both genders perform their daily activities. The material constitution of the farm, the living-room and the garden, for instance, reveals

[81] Perceived space, or what Soja names as firstspace, discussions cover the parameters of physical descriptions in relation to measurable and perceptual aspects such as air, temperature, light, darkness, vastness, boundaries, etc., as well as web of social relations and everyday activities.

[82] Conceived space discussion, which corresponds with Soja's secondspace, encompasses thoughts regarding social codes and norms that shape human behaviours and social relations in space.

the different relations of Major and Mrs Gale to their surrounding. While the Major gets in touch with the present reality and enjoys being in Africa, Mrs Gale creates a mental connection to her home-country, which is reflected in her attempts to change the name of the farm, appropriate the living-room and the garden with English furniture and plants to have a sense of home. The secondspace perspective – the society's norms and values – shaping their behaviours is also observed in the way they experience everyday life: the former spends most of his time in the veld dealing with farming and the latter is confined into the borders of the farm because of gender roles and the so called potential dangers outside. Also, the study provides a ground for the discussion on to what extent gender performativity and nomadic interventions of female characters – Mrs Gale and Mrs De Wet – help to configure an alternative mode of thinking about these spaces. Mrs Gale alleviates her longing for England by creating not only a thirdspace in her imagination based on her memories but also a personal connection to the mountains whose unspecified name and location create a sense of in-betweenness for her. In contrast, Mrs De Wet's upbringing in Africa has a direct impact on how she conceives the garden as a space to be used for practical reasons and the river as a peaceful space to be in close contact with nature. In order to struggle against loneliness in Africa, both women configure these spaces as alternative orderings and transform them from restrictive conceptualisations with boundaries to places where they can escape to.

Chapter Three deals with the second collection of African stories, *The Sun between Their Feet*, which reveals not only racial conflicts and issues of gender but also effects of the Second World War, generation gap between mother and children, power of nature and insignificance of human beings. Unlike the first collection, this one including seventeen stories has no connections to space in their titles, excluding "Flavours of Exile," "Getting off the Altitude" and "A Road to the Big City". It does not mean that space is not foregrounded in these narratives; rather, they all deal with a variety of issues reflected in various spaces. Therefore, in the first part of the chapter, stories are classified in terms of open and closed space, displaying racial, adult-child and human-nature conflicts as well as imaginary and transitory spaces. Because "Getting off the Altitude" shows the complicated relationship between space and gender in multiple ways, this story is chosen for textual analysis. Like all the other stories in the second volume, this one also shows how space is perceived as a physical

reality where everyday life takes place and how it is conceived as a space of thoughts, which define social relations and spatial segregations. What differentiates "Getting off the Altitude" from the other stories is related to the variety of male and female characters and their lived experiences, which pave the way for different modes of thinking about space.

While the house in "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" is appropriated as a private space of the Gales where they perform daily routines in individual ways and welcome the De Wets temporarily for dinner to discuss business, the one in "Getting off the Altitude" displays the transformation of a closed and private space of a family into a social sphere. The study presents how the material constitution of the district through a focus on its enclosed structure, geographical features like the rivers and the mountains, and the altitude, as its title suggests, has a direct impact on the way its inhabitants practice everyday activities. Because of these physical qualities, there appears a conflict between how the social codes, norms and values are reflected in the secondspace dimension of the district and how they are practiced in line with personal preferences. There are forty families living in this place, but it is the Slatter's house, which demonstrates how social and gender relations are revealed, because it becomes the center of interaction. The daily routines of the Slatter family refer to the spatial practices observed in the firstspace dimension of the house, yet when it serves as a place for dance, wedding and Christmas parties, it is imbued with multiple layers of meaning. While the house offers a possibility for the adolescents to show themselves to the opposite sex, for the adults (married and single), its meaning changes in relation to their gender, class, age, sexual preference or lifestyle. Mrs Slatter's affair with her lover in the corridors, for instance, problematises gender relations and transforms the house into an alternative space for them. Also, the interaction between people and their various experiences, which are discussed in the chapter, disorders the private/public distinction, and lays bare for gender performativity.

In Chapter Four there are eighteen stories whose focus is on gender issues with respect to space, excluding "Through the Tunnel," "The Day Stalin Died," "The Eye of God in Paradise" and "Two Potters". The title of the collection *To Room Nineteen Collected Stories* analysed in this chapter is taken from one of the narratives "To Room Nineteen". Not only the titles of these two but also of five other stories have a word related to space, such as "tunnel," "paradise," "roof," "room" and "England".

The first part of the chapter attempted to classify those narratives in terms of transitory spaces, closed and imaginary space. Having discussed how a closed structure – the Gales's house in the first volume and the Slatter's house in the second volume of *African Stories* – is configured as an alternative and social sphere, this chapter reveals the analysis of a semi-open space in the city, the roof of a building, to figure out how it is appropriated as an alternative space for both genders based on their lived experiences in "A Woman on a Roof". Also, unlike the previous stories, this one implies how a place used for the common purposes of a building, can be turned into a home-like environment when the female character sunbathes on the roof without paying attention to the critical gaze of three workers on another roof. The labourers, on the other hand, prefer the rooftop to the basement to work despite the hot weather because they create an alternative view of the roof as a gathering place for themselves to watch the luxurious life of London and a half-naked woman. Because of the woman's indifference towards them and her performative acts on the roof, their attempts to be noticed by her in indvidual ways and changing their place to a higher one show not only a sexual attraction to the opposite sex but also a class struggle of the workers to be recognized by an upper-class woman. The roof no longer refers to a physical dimension; rather, it is conceived as a status symbol by the labourers because of its different levels between the buildings – the woman on a higher and the men on a lower level – and is configured as an alternative space where they struggle for power and control over the woman. In contrast, for the woman, its meaning never changes and remains as a private home-like space of her own which she appropriates for her desires.

Chapter Five deals with the second volume of stories set in Europe, titled *The Temptation of Jack Orkney: Collected Stories*, which covers a variety of subjects, ranging from a challenge of social norms and marriage to political, class and gender issues. What differentiates this volume from the previous ones is that it includes not only stories but also sketches, which focus on observations of nature without character development or involvement. Among the fourteen narratives in this volume, five of them have a space-related word in their titles: "ministry," "fountain," "city," "garden" and "park". The first part of the chapter attempted to discuss sketches in one group and classify the stories in three groups: the ones that take place in private, in public and in both private and public spaces. The reason why "An Old Woman and Her Cat"

is chosen for a textual analysis in the second part is related to the nomadic experiences of an old and homeless woman in various spaces, which are analysed in terms of Lefebvre's and Soja's spatial trialectics. Unlike the Gales's house as a private space in "The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange" and the Slatter's house as a social space in "Getting off the Altitude," which create a sense of home for its inhabitants, the spaces occupied by the old woman in this story cannot be considered as proper homes where people have a sense of belonging; rather, they are just material places she tries to appropriate as shelters temporarily on the way without a feeling of warmth and attachment to them. Her concept of home is partially connected to her personal routines and preferences and partially to her poverty.

The analysis of "An Old Woman and Her Cat" provides a discussion on the social norms and values, which disregard an old woman and her cat's survival under poor living conditions in a metropolis. This criticism is reflected in the transient spaces where she stays such as the Council flats, the room in the slum and the ruined flat in a wealthy neighbourhood. Her preference of the streets to the Council flat, her wanderings around the stations and her escape from the social and spatial impositions of the state make her a nomad with no fixed identity. The study reveals not only the material qualities of various spaces in London where the old woman tries to survive but also their conceived perspective which segregates the poor and the homeless from the wealthy. It also displays to what extent she configures alternative spaces for herself out of the ruins without a sense of home.

The last chapter is allocated to *London Observed: Stories and Sketches*, which differs from the other volumes, because it mainly consists of sketches which are analysed in one group and the stories are classified in three groups: those in closed, open and in both closed and open spaces. Unlike the other collections which derive their title from one of the narratives, *London Observed* directly refers to the city as a frame and provides various scenes from its streets, gardens, parks etc. Among the eighteen stories and sketches, six of them have a title which has a space name in it: "park," "womb ward," "casualty," "underground," "cafe" and "pit". While the stories deal with a variety of subjects including gender issues, mother-daughter relationship, social values and their criticism, the sketches focus on different life trajectories in transitory and public places. In addition to the classification of narratives in the first part of the chapter, this study presents the textual analysis of a sketch, "Storms" in the

second part. A sketch is chosen rather than a story because it provides a discussion not only on the production and reproduction of the city by its inhabitants (Londoners) but also on the different visions of the city – that of the taxi driver and of the narrator.

The configuration of spaces ranging from the house as a private and as a social sphere in African stories to the roof of a building, streets, several flats and rooms in the city in European stories culminates in the analysis of the whole city, London in this context, with its linear and cyclical rhythms reflected in space. "Storms" not only reveals the firstspace perspective of the city where Londoners are depicted performing their daily routines such as commuting, travelling and walking, but also the secondspace view of the city, which shows the spatial organisation of the streets, roads and neighbourhoods providing order for its people. Also, the lived dimension of London is provided by the narrator based on her interpretations. The narrator, for instance, has an acute awareness of the rhythms and movements in the city and presents a theatrical view of it as a remarkable scene to be watched and observed throughout the day whereas the taxi driver has a critical approach to everyday life in London including the traffic congestion, complexities of spatial patterns on the streets, and social life and manners of Londoners. Despite their distinct visions of the city, what they have in common is their configuration of the cab as a mobile and transient space because of their temporary togetherness during the journey from the airport to the narrator's house.

This dissertation deals with a variety of spaces from the smallest unit to the largest scale, and discusses to what extent they are recreated in new and alternative ways through the male and female characters' performative and nomadic acts. Further studies may deal with transitory and public places such as a cab, a train, a cafe, a hospital, a restaurant, an airport or streets in Lessing's stories and sketches. Because her stories and sketches take place in natural and human-made environment in Africa and England, nature and animal imagery, metaphors, symbols, and landscape descriptions might also help to understand the reciprocal relationship between characters and the spaces they occupy.

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### WORK EXPERIENCE

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### ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Güvenç, Özge. "Configuration of Alternative Spaces in Doris Lessing's 'The De Wets Come to Kloof Grange.'" *Eskişehir Osmangazi University Journal of Social Sciences* 18.2 (December 2017): 43-66.

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## ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

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Güvenç, Özge. "Configuration of Alternative Space in Doris Lessing's 'Getting off the Altitude.'" Presented at Gazi University, International English Literature Conference, Ankara, Turkey. 25-26 May, 2017.

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