a new habitation, beyond the wall. In the novel, The Good Terrorist, It is Alice Mellings who takes up responsibility of the black unemployed youth, Jim. Alice gets him a job in her father’s printing firm. Alice helps Philip, the “weakling” in the job of painting the building when she realizes that the job is beyond his physical capacity. She fights with his employer who cheated him of his rightful remuneration. Alice bullies him into getting him the square deal. Lessing’s women appear like the cosmic mother or universal mother or what in Indian Mythology one calls as Adi-Shakti, gifted with a deep sense of responsibility or commitment emanating from the undying spring of empathy to fight injustice.

It can also be observed that in the patriarchal set up, women feel responsible for women. They are not jealous of the ex-wives and ex-girl friends of their husbands. One can observe what the feminists call as sisterhood in Lessing’s novels. In the novel, The Golden Note Book, it is Molly, who helps Anna establish herself as a writer in Britain in the post war period after she comes from central Africa in 1950. She supports her by providing her with an accommodation in her own flat and looking after her daughter Janet. Though Molly has been the ex-wife of Michael, it is Molly and her friend Anna who help Marion the tortured wife of Michael obtain divorce from him. One can discern a warm relationship among the women characters in some of her works. In Memoirs of a Survivor, the relationship between Emily and June is full of bonhomie, though both the girls are loved by the same man, Gerald.

One can also observe that marginalized take up responsibility of the marginalized members. In the novel, The Good Terrorist, It is the “weakling” Philip who feels responsible for the black boy Jim and he makes sure that Jim is accommodated in the squat 43. Philip helps Alice in resuscitating Faye a lesbian girl who has had a battered childhood, after she attempts suicide. It is the boy on the pavement, Gerald, in the novel, Memoirs of a Survivor, who helps the abandoned children and subsequently, he takes up the responsibility of the “poor Kids” the small children who evince the atavistic tendency. In The novel, The Fifth Child, it is the garden boy who boosts the moral of the mentally and physically different Ben. In the same novel, Ben, who has been a misfit in the upper middle class family of the Lovatts fits into the society of the have-nots who are empathetic to him. In the novel, Ben in the World, the adult misfit Ben, is supported by men and women who themselves are marginalized. It is the old woman, the widow encumbered with the
responsibility of her idle brothers and the prostitute and later, the illiterate and poor girl, Teresa, who had lived in utter squalor in Brazil who looks after the “different” Ben. In the novel, The Golden Notebook, it is Saul Green a victim of psychic divide who rescues Anna from her emotional and cultural paralysis.

Commitment to the cause is seen as a key to the solution to the problem of marginalization. Lessing sees hope in the people, who are committed and are willing to take up responsibility of the marginalized individuals or groups. In the nouvella, The Ant Heap, the white boy Tommy shows hundred percent commitment to solving the problem confronted by the coloured boy, Dirk in the colonial Africa. Tommy wants his white father to acknowledge him as his son; he wants Dirk to be sent to the engineering college, which would ensure symbolically the progress of the natives of Africa through education and the enlightenment, actualizing due to knowledge. Tommy persists in his endeavour till the goal of sending Dirk to the engineering college is accomplished.

But, in the story, A Home for the Highland Cattle, the woman protagonist, Marina Giles is enthusiastic and is fascinated by the idea of helping the black natives of Africa but she lacks hundred percent commitment to the cause. As soon as the natives turn away from her sight they are thrown out of mind and therefore the black natives end up in the police custody for the crime which they haven’t committed.

As a committed writer, one can discern that Lessing tries to bring about a change in the attitude of the oppressor. In the novel, The Grass is Singing, Mary Turner who meted out an ill treatment to Moses, the black native of Africa, in the state of madness becomes empathetic towards him and treats him humanely, in the nouvella, The Ant Heap, the white man, the gold miner, who refuses to acknowledge his coloured son, Dirk, at the end of the story, changes his attitude and agrees to sending the coloured boy to the desired academic institution. In the patriarchal set up, Saul Green, who is jealous of the woman protagonist for her professional success, subsequently, empathizes with her and it is Saul and Anna together, who write in the inner golden notebook. In the novel, The Cleft, men, in the prehistoric times, who ridiculed women, and tried to abandon them, come back to them and both forge a new life, in a new locale with a newly dawned understanding of their being interdependent. In the capitalist set up, Mr. Mellings is willing to reinstate the black youth, Jim, whom he had falsely accused of theft, and had thrown out
of the job. As a post-colonial writer, Lessing offers a sense of assurance of the new beginnings in the oppressor-oppressed relationship.

As a humanist, Lessing pays a special attention to the conservation of Nature. In the novel, *The Grass is Singing* it is Dick Turner, the male protagonist, who is compassionate towards the black natives of Africa also cares for the conservation of the African soil, he plants hundred acres of gum trees on his vast African farm. It is this piece of land which offers him a succor in his state of depression. In the novel, *Ben in the World*, the different Ben, talks with elements in nature and finds a way out of his loneliness. In the novel, *A Briefing for a Descent into the Hell*, Lessing calls the planet Earth a “hell” due to the loss of Nature. The insane professor in his divine journey through the ocean, the woods and later through the space becomes wiser as he realizes the human folly of polluting the environment. The sight of the dead whales, with their bellies, bottom up, serve as an eye opener, for the entire mankind. Lessing holds the industrial authorities and their irresponsible policies responsible for the destruction of environment. Lessing deals with the theme of pollution and destruction of the world in the novels, *The Memoirs of the Survivor*, *The Four Gated City*, *Shikata*, and *The making of the representative for Planet 8*, where the entire humanity is buried under the vast tongues of glaciers. Lessing’s Ifrik novels, *Mara and Dann* and *The Story of General Dann and Mara’s Daughter*, *Griot and the Snow Dog* can be treated as purely eco-critical works, where Lessing depicts the aftermath of environmental destruction and the civilization being reverted to the medieval times. Lessing’s eco-critical works call for a deeper attention. In Lessing’s non-fictional work, *The Wind Blows Away our Word*, Lessing cautions mankind to conserve the environment and not repeat the lapses committed by civilization in the past. Lessing performs the role of the mythical “Cassandra” in cautioning the world of the impending catastrophe.

Nature appears in diverse forms in Lessing’s African fiction. It appears oppressive, enlightening and at the same time indifferent, in Lessing’s African works. Nature is seen as oppressive which adds to the loneliness and a sense of fear in Mary Turner, the woman protagonist, in the novel, *The Grass is Singing*. As a humanist, Lessing takes cognizance of the impact of nature which added to the loneliness of the white women on the vast African farm. In *Martha quest*, the adolescent Martha experiences a spiritual moment in the African nature which convinces of the unity
of all beings. The vast African nature appears indifferent to the protagonist in the short story, *A Sunrise on the Veld*.

It can be discerned that Lessing has a futuristic vision, what E.M Forster identifies as the element of prophecy. The tragedy that occurred due to radio-activity at Chernobyl, in Russia in 1987, and Lessing as a futuristic writer, could predict the death of the world due to radio-activity in her novel, *The Four Gated City*. The world described by Nadine Gordimer in her post-Apartheid novel, *The July’s People*, where the blacks dominate the white and a similar situation can be seen in Coetzee’s novel *Disgrace*, Lessing could see the future of Africa in her nouvella, *The Ant Heap* written in (1952) where the white boy Tommy tries to bring justice to the coloured boy Dirk. After their mission is accomplished, Lessing drops a cautionary hint. Lessing comments,“The victory was entirely theirs, but now they had to begin again, in the long and the difficult struggle to understand what they had won and how they would use it.”

In coping with marginalization Lessing expects mankind to be more imaginative and resourceful. Lessing’s resourceful characters use their ingenuity in dealing with marginalization. In the nouvella, *The Ant Heap*, central character, Tommy, the white boy uses his talent for wood carving and toy making very imaginatively. He uses the art of wood carving to cope with his loneliness, and at the same time he uses it as a gesture to befriend the coloured boy, and to boost his moral. He also uses his Art of wood carving to prod the conscience of the white Gold miner, Mr. Mackintosh, who refuses to acknowledge his coloured son, Dirk, in central Africa. In the novel, *The Good Terrorist*, the woman protagonist, Alice Mellings uses the plumber’s tape to stop the bleeding of Faye’s slit wrist. Alice thus, saves Faye, the lesbian girl from being taken to the hospital and subsequently being handed over to the police. In the novel, *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, the male character, Gerald shows tremendous resourcefulness in coping with the problem of food crisis. He uses the small plot of land very imaginatively to produce herbs and vegetables and feeds the abandoned children; he also manufactures fresh air using the obsolete gadgets, when the dying city is surrounded by the polluted air. In Lessing’s preface to the collection of short stories published in 1974, Lessing comments that it is not merely imperialism which is the cause of indictment against the white civilization, it is to be attributed to the atrophy of imagination.
Just as Art appears as a technique of coping with marginality in Lessing’s fiction, similarly, music also plays a role. It is Anna Wulf’s American lover, Saul Green, who plays the jazz tunes to rescue Anna from her psychological paralysis. It is the black boy Jim, in the novel The Good Terrorist, who finds company and solution to his loneliness in the midst of his “family of drums.”

Education emerges as a coping technique in Lessing’s fiction. Dirk, the coloured boy from the novella, The Ant Heap, looks upon education as a key to the liberation of the colonized people in Africa. He reads the books supplied to him by the white boy very assiduously, subsequently, he tries to organize the natives and tries to enlighten them through the legal knowledge, he struggles against his white oppressor, and at the same time he prepares his people to struggle against the white man, Thus one can see the inspiring call for the liberation of the oppressed castes in India given by Dr B.R Ambedkar: Educate, Unite and Agitate, justified by Lessing in her literary work as a coping technique.

As a humanist, as an optimist, as a committed writer and as an idealist, Lessing discerns tremendous potential in the humane value of Love and empathy as the coping technique in her fiction. It is love and empathy felt by the white boy for the coloured boy, in the novella, The Ant Heap; empathy for the black native felt by the white woman Mary Turner, the love and empathy felt for the old, the different, the weak, the marginalized women, the diverse victims of capitalism, which emerges as the powerful means to deal with the issue of marginalization. It is love and empathy that Martha Quest realizes in the moment of epiphany, which enables her to realize the unity of all beings in nature, which has a potential to solve man made divisive issues. Lessing puts love between man and man and man and nature above all. One can observe, the new beginnings for the mankind through the love expressed by the creator for the created in Lessing’s science fiction Shikasta, which looks at the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized from a new perspective. It is the creator, the planet Canopus that empathizes with the creatures on the planet Shikasta, and ensures their safety and prosperity through the supply of the feeling of SOWF, the Substance of We Feeling, by establishing the lock, which puts an emphasis on the humanitarian value called symbiosis.
The in-depth study of Lessing’s fiction brings forth certain areas that deserve investigation in greater details. Her fiction can be probed from the perspective of stylistics, for the cogency in Lessing’s expressions calls for the attention of a linguist. The other areas of research could be Eco-criticism. Her novels, *The Grass is Singing, A Briefing for a Descent into the Hell, Memoirs of A Survivor, Shikasta, Mara and Dann, The Cleft*, can be explored as eco-critical fiction. The novels, *Canopus in Argos: Archives, A Briefing for the Descent into the Hell, The Good Terrorist, The Golden Notebook, The Cleft* can be investigated for the philosophy of Sufism. Her fiction can be studied for the genre of science fiction. Lessing’s fiction can also be perused for the theme of Heroic women. Lessing’s *Children of violence, The Golden Notebook, The Memoirs of the Survivor, The Good Terrorist, The Fifth Child*, can be investigated to probe the element of Heroism in Women.
References

Primary Sources:


-------- *The Ant Heap* (1953), *This was the Old Chief’s Country, Collected Short Stories, Volume I* (1973) Flamingo, 2003

-------- *The Home for the Highland Cattle* (1953) *This was the Old Chief’s Country, Collected Short Stories, Volume I* (1973) Flamingo, 2003

-------- *Eldorado* (1953) *This was the Old Chief’s Country, Collected Short Stories, Volume I* (1973) Flamingo, 2003


-------- *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* (1971) Flamingo, 2002


-------- *Canopus in Argos – Archives: The Re -colonized Planet 5, Shikasta*, (1979) Flamingo, 1992
Secondary Sources:

Fiction

______Martha Quest, (1952) flamingo, Hammersmith, London 1993


--------A Ripple from the Storm, (1957) Flamingo, 1994

--------Landlocked, (1965) Plume, 1966


--------Summer before the Dark,(1973)Grafton London 1990

--------The Marriages between Zones Three, Four and Five (1981)

-------- The Diaries of Jane Sommers(1984)


Non-Fiction


--------Preface to the Collection of Short Stories, 1964, This was the Old Chief’s Country, (1973) Flamingo, 2003


--------Prisons We Choose to Live Inside,(1987) Harper Perennial, 1988


----- African Laughter, Four Visits to Zimbabwe, 1992, Flamingo1993


Critical Works:


No Longer at Ease (1960), Anchor Books 1994


Alice, Ridout; Susan, Watkins. Doris Lessing, Border Crossing, 2013

Anand, Mulk Raj. The Untouchable, Hind Pocket Books, Delhi, 1970

Ambedkar, B.R. Commandments-Educate-Agitate-Organize https://dalitandtribe.wordpress.com/2011/03/03/dr-b-r-ambedkar%E2%80%99s-commandments-educate-agitate-organize/#comments

Arnold, Toynbee. The Industrial Revolution, 1884, Beacon Press Boston, 1960

Arora, Neena. NAYANTARA SAHGAL AND DORIS LESSING, A FEMINIST STUDY IN COMPARISON, Prestige, New Delhi, 1991

Ashcroft, Bill; Griffiths, Gareth; Tiffin, Helen. Key Concepts in Post Colonial Studies, Routledge 2004


Bai, Radhika, B. S. Feminist Consciousness In The Novels Of Doris Lessing. Research India Press, New Delhi, 2014

Barry, Peter. Psycho-Analytic criticism Beginning Theory, An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory Viva Books 2010, p 92,


Boschman, Robert. Ariel 25, 3 (July 1994),The University of Calgary.


Bronte, Anne. Agnes Grey Romance Classics,2001


Celine, E. Marxism in the Novels of Doris Lessing, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, July, 1998


--------- *Heart of Darkness*, Hammersworth, Harper Classic 2010, p.6


Drabble, Margaret. *Doris, Lessing: Cassandra in a World under Siege*, Ramparts 10 (February, 1972): 50-54


Dutt, Dev Raj. *An Outline of World Civilization*, Light Press, Delhi, 1970, p.283

Eliot, T. S. *The Wasteland*, (1922) Faber and Faber


Hind Swaraj (1909) Navjeevan Trust.


Gaskell, Elizabeth. *North and South*, (1854) Penguin Classics, 1994


Post- Colonial South African Fiction, Scion publications, 2014


*Occasion for Loving* (1963)Viking Press, 1963


Hawthorne, Nathaniel. The Scarlet letter, Pocket Books, 2004


Ibsen, Henrik. A Doll’s House, e-book


John, Ruskin. Unto This Last, (1860)

Jones, Ernest. The Nation 171 (23 September 1950) : 273


King, Jeannette. Doris Lessing Modern Fiction, Routledge, New York 1989, p 1


Lawrence, D.H. *Sons and Lovers*, Macmillan India Limited, 1989, p 17- 18


Martin, Green. *Doom of the Empire, Doris Lessing* Newsletter 6 (winter 1982), 6, 7, 10

Martin, Luther King Jr. as quoted in *Cultural Politics, Class Gender Race and the Post modern World*, Jordan Glenn, Weedon Chris Blackwell Publishers, USA, 1997 p 248


---------- *The Collected Works Vol 6* Ed Moscow, Progress Publishers, p506


---------- Home, Vintage, 2012


Ngugi, James. *A Grain of wheat*, HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL TRUST, IBANAN 1967

----------The River Between, HEINEMANN, Ibadan

----------Weep not the Child, HEINEMANN, Ibadan


Olaudah, Equiano. *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (1789), Penguin, 1995


----------*Nineteen Eighty Four*, e book.


Rowe, Margaret Moan. *Doris Lessing*, Macmillan, 1994

Rubenstein, Roberta. *Novelistic Vision of Doris Lessing*, University of Illinois Press, 1979, p228


256
Sahgal, Nayantara. This Time of Morning, (1965) Hind Pocket Books, Delhi, 1970

-------, Storm in Chandigarh(1969), Hind Pocket Books, Delhi, 1970


Sanders, Andrew. The Short Oxford History of English Literature, Oxford University Press, Newyork, 2000, p 611


Saraswati, Radhikananda. (Dharmalankar Swami), Dyaneshwari Once Again, Dhavale publishers, Pune, 2002.


Shakespeare William. The Tempest, Great Thoughts Edition, 1902

Shaw, G.B. Candida, e-book

Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein, Signet Classic 1978, p 95


Smith, Joans. Sunday Times, Cover page, Ben in the World, Flamingo, 2001

Snow, C.P. The Sunday Times (London) 4 Nov, 1953, 1

Spilka, Mark. Lessing and Lawrence: The Battle of the Sexes, Contemporary, Literature 16 (1975) p 218- 240


257


*The Bible, Ephesians 5:22*

Faggen, Robert. *Introduction: One Flew Over Cuckoo’s Nest*, Kasey KenPenguin, 2002, p 1


Tiger, Virginia. *The World had been Right and Necessary: Doris Lessing’s Transformations of Utopian and Dystopian Modalities in Marriages Between Zones Three Four and Five*. Style. 27, 1, (1993), 63-80

Tolstoy, Leo. *Anna Karenina*, Bantam Books, 1960


--------- *Devil on the Cross*, Heinemann, 1982 London


Walker, Alice.*The ColorPurple(1983)*Phoenix,1992


Wilson, Elizabeth. Quoted in Margaret Moan Rowe, *Doris Lessing*, Macmillan, 1994, p 37

Wole, Soyinka. *The Interpreters.*

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, 1792, p15 -17 Source Internet.


