

important for her to talk to Maria than spending some time with him. At the end the play becomes a family play where Ellie returns to Roger and Virginia to Howard. Peggy also desires Bernie to leave her house. "I am their mother. And their happiness matters a great deal to me. I can't deny that" (60). To this he replies, "I think I have to move out of here" (60). He leaves the house and again dials Elizabeth's number; finds the same answer. According to Rayson, because of the development in feminism, Australian men have developed 'a problem without a name'. "Not only was there a sense of discontent with the traditional masculine role, but a fear that, should it be expressed aloud, it might be construed as anti-feminist. After all, who could men blame? They belonged to the class of supposed oppressors," says Rayson in "Author's Note" to the play. The play also depicts that men do not like to share their personal matters with other men. They can discuss them with women. Whereas women share only with women and would not like to share anything with men. As Bernie also points out, "... "we men" don't talk to each other, you see. So, what happens inside here is anyone's guess. I haven't got a single male friend and I've never talked to any man about anything more personal than the name of a good barber" (29). In 1960s and 70s majority of women did more housework than their male counterparts. Cooking, cleaning and laundry are traditionally considered a woman's work. It was against the prestige of a man to do these works. As the principles of feminism gained a wider reach these helped to promote family-friendly working culture and also provided opportunities for women to advance. Feminists consider this shift a big achievement. Through this play Rayson wants to examine how for men are comfortable with this shift. At Peggy's home both she and Bernie share the household work like cooking, cleaning, laundry etc. Other two men Rodger and Howard also share the household work with their wives. Virginia, the feminist journalist is having a crisis in her de facto relationship with her partner Howard, over the issue about who will clean the toilet. Howard feels a bit uneasy in doing the work which is traditionally a woman's work. As Leonard Radic observes, the play presents, "men's perplexed responses to their situation, in a world where the rules of the game have changed and personal relationships had been influenced by feminism, that was the main focus of dramatic interest" (262). Howard finds it hard to accept the changed roles of man and woman in this relationship. Howard's position reflects that the males who are not successful in traditional masculine roles have accepted the changes encouraged by feminism. Those males who do not have a job and their wives are working have embraced feminism as an acceptable code out of compulsion. The conversation between Howard and Virginia elucidates the changing roles of females in family. From the office to the marital bed, many men say feminism has turned them into second class citizens. Virginia thinks, she pays the bills and brings all the money, so why should she clean the toilet? She criticizes Howard for not contributing in household expenses and for not working at home. She is not happy with him. He also complains her that she does not respect any man who is not financially independent thus expecting a stereotypical role for him despite claiming to be a

feminist. Feminist consciousness may have changed significantly Virginia's attitude towards the importance of work experience. She has entered the work place and is living independent non-traditional life. *Room to Move* portrays women's advances in the workplace, the gradual infiltration of feminist ideologies into the mainstream, which has led to some changes in man-woman relationships.

The play is about men's response to a world where personal relationships have changed because of the influence of feminism. At the end of the play Bernie says, "We want our conflicts resolved, questions answered, lessons learnt. Then we can move on. The quicker the better" (62). Bernie is a confused person and acts as a symbol of Australian males. He willingly develops physical relations with Peggy's daughter Virginia, and unwillingly with her daughter-in-law, Ellie. Still he loves Elizabeth. He does not know what he wants. He wants Virginia but loves Elizabeth. It is a crisis of uncertainty, shared by the other two men in the play as well – the solicitor and the housebound academic. Howard has lost his job and is finding it hard to adjust to the fact that his wife is now the sole breadwinner in the household. All three men are uncomfortable in their roles. They feel pained that the traditional notion of masculinity – the male as breadwinner, decision maker, initiator, family head, and preoccupied with his career and his sexual performance – is no longer appropriate or not acceptable. But "Rayson had no answer to their problem, no advice to offer her audience, no neat concluding 'message'" (Radic 263). Thus, the play presents us different images of men in their varied responses to the changing role of women under the impact of feminism either rejecting the 'feminist' challenge altogether, or trying to come to terms with it and looking at it and being confused by it. Laurie Landry raises a relevant question and then answers it also, "So who are the winners, men or women, in the sexual revolution? Perhaps everyone wins a bit, loses a bit in the confusion and upsets, but playwright Hannie Rayson in "Room to Move" sees that men even more than women have a problem in the "liberation process" (11). In *Room to Move* Rayson has been able to depict how these days men have a problem without a name.

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A Journey Towards Inner Space Through Outer Space Fiction in the Novels of Doris Lessing

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Abstract: The ultimate goal of every sane human in this world is harmony, which could also be called the humanitarian approach. Lessing like many of her contemporaries, wanted to change the world into the Gods kingdom. They perceived that it could be attained through communism. Though after the purge of Stalin in the 1950's the dogma started failing in the minds of communist comrades and Lessing was one of those comrades who witnessed their ideologies turning out to be void; a sham that had disheartened many who had nothing but communism to save their souls. Lessing saw the world cracking around her but instead of giving in to the force that was gripping the world in its tight clutches and suffocating the survival of the people Lessing thought of expressing herself through her novels. She understood that the ideology of equality of all had just not started with communism; it had its roots even deeper, almost from the age when human started evolving in this earth. On reading the works of Lessing one moves into the world of new exploration. The outward structure of her novels may be different but the underlying element is humanism and constant evolution of mankind, mentally, physically and spiritually.

Keywords: Space fiction, Sufism, evolution, *Canopus*, humanism, *Four Gated City*.

Sufi's believe that, expressed in one way, humanity is evolving towards a certain destiny. We are all taking part in that evolution. Organs come into being as a result of a need for specific organs in response to such need. In this age of transcending of time and space, the complex of organ is concerned with the transcending of time and space. What ordinary people regard as sporadic and occasional burst of telepathic and prophetic power are seen by the Sufi as nothing less than the first stirring of these same organs. The difference between all evolution up to date and the present need for evolution is that for the past ten thousand years or so we have been given the possibility of a conscious evolution. So essential is this more rarefied evolution that our future depends on it. - **Idreis Shah**, (*Four Gated City*, p. 466)

Doris Lessing has always enthralled her readers with her diverse writing style. She never stuck to one form of writing. With age, her style and area of interest has always taken her readers on a roller-coaster ride. Some of the critics have been very critical about this but Lessing never ceased her exploration of this world and beyond. Lessing often talks of complete submission to the supreme power who governs us. The act of human follows many question but Lessing believes that the action should be without any doubt deeming to the Divine. "To make this wall would take all our strength, all our efforts, and all our resources for a long time... We would find out, was the reply." (Planet 8, p. 12) This is very similar to the message of Lord Krishna in *Bhagwad Geeta*, where he asks his friend and disciple, Arjuna to submit to the authority of the supreme power without ever doubting the outcome of it. Lessing talks of thawing of each and

every living creature into that divine, believing that all the living creatures in this world are evolving every day. "For nothing can be static and steady and permanent, it could not possibly be that our little world would spin there in space, unfaltering, a planet of snow and ice: no, it would go on, gathering more to itself as a snowball does when come a world we could not begin to imagine, with our senses tuned as they were to Planet 8." (p. 152) Lessing has written on varied issues, pertaining to Communism, Psychology, Science Fiction, Sufism, etc. but her main concern has always been the well being of humanism. It can be said that Lessing flickered from one issue to another in search of humane cause that may help her find her true-self, as she says that 'the best way to go is inside.' Lessing was one of those communist comrades who witnessed their ideologies turning out to be void; a sham that had disheartened many who had nothing but communism to save their souls. Lessing saw the world cracking around her but instead of giving in to the force that was gripping the world in its tight clutches and suffocating the survival of the people Lessing thought of expressing herself through her novels. She understood that the ideology of equality of all had just not started with communism it had its roots even deeper. It began with Adam and Eve or almost from the age when human started evolving in this earth. On reading the works of Lessing one moves into the world of new exploration. The outward structure of her novels may be different but the underlying element is humanism and constant evolution of mankind. With her voyaging mind Lessing has travelled to another world in search of peace and harmony that she felt would take a long time to prevail in this world. Initial acclaim for the first in the *Canopus* series, *Shikasta*, turned to increasing perplexity as the novels continued to lift what Lessing called "the petty fates of planets, let alone individuals" into the realm of cosmic evolution." (Planet 8, p. 13) Critics disapproved and openly disparaged for this shift of Lessing away from traditional realism to space fiction, while Lessing defended its relevance to global events. In 1984, she wrote that, "What is happening in the world is so fantastic that it needs fantasy. ... I think that one writer can contain two worlds—the realistic and the fantastic—sometimes in the same story" (NYT, 1982). Indeed, Lessing called *Canopus* "a new world for myself." While creating universal over souls and galactic empires, the novels also drew from Lessing's own life. She spent most of her childhood on a large farm, with few friends. She and her father would stare at the night sky over the open Rhodesian veld and wonder, "here are so many worlds up there, wouldn't really matter if we did blow ourselves up—plenty more where we came from" (NYT, 1982).

Doris Lessing herself in many of her interviews has said that she had a bent towards Sufism as she was influenced by the teaching of Idries Shah. Lessing, one of Shah's greatest defenders stated in a 1981 interview, "I found Sufism as taught by Idries Shah, which claims to be the reintroduction of an ancient teaching, suitable for this time and this place. It is not some regurgitated stuff from the East or watered-down Islam or anything like that." (Neo-Sufism, 1986) In 1996, while commenting on Shah's death in *The Daily Telegraph*, she affirmed that she met Shah because of *The Sufis*, which left an immense effect in her mind.

The Sufis was to her the most surprising book she had ever read, and a book that transformed her life. Describing Shah's œuvre as a "phenomenon like nothing else in our time", she characterized him as a many-sided man, the wittiest person she ever expected to meet, kind, generous, modest ("Don't look so much at my face, but take what is in my hand", she quotes him as saying), and her good friend and teacher for 30-odd years. (Obituary, 2008)

.....until, one after another, our faces shuttered themselves in death, and our bundles of bones settled inside the heaps of our shag-skin coats, so that as we slid away from that scene, and saw it with eyes we had not known we possessed, all we could see was what looked like a herd of beasts crouched in sleep or in death high up there on a mountaintop. (*Planet 8*, p. 156)

An acknowledgment of the transpersonal flings light on the mystic and spiritualistic experiences of Doris Lessing's midlife protagonist in *Memoirs of a Survivor* who has heightened perceptions and becomes capable of seeing the exceptional world irradiated by the face of God. "It gives insight into both the spiritual journey of Lessing's timeless male/female expository narrator, Johor in the first part of *Shikasta* and into the more limited retrospective diary of teenaged Rachel in the second half. Finally, it allows us to understand Lessing's own spiritual coming of age in *Shikasta*, where she portrays not only her own development but also that of all of humankind as a journey along a spiritual spiral." (*Adventures of the Spirit..*, 2007) The transformation from being the mere human being to the enlightened soul who move about on this earth to finally get "moksha" or the mingling of the soul with the ultimate "The Divine." Where every soul sees the other soul as a light; how they thaw into one and lose all their previous existence. The bodies lying on the ground are something in which they had been trapped. "....and seen stretching out in an interminable line of possibilities, all the variations in the genetic storehouse made visible-sometimes so similar to what I was that I could hardly tell the difference, but then more and more of me, each a variation farther away from what 'I' was- each one the possible and potential housing of this feeling of me...." (*Planet 8*, p.160) The difference of "you" and "I" vanishes and they all are amalgamated into the one who had lead them all their lives and had come to take them to another world where they are wanted. They were the chosen few from this world who were being taken. The march was tedious with many ordeals and obstacles but finally they reach the place or the portal where they shed their bodies and then begin the journey as the light. *The Four-Gated City* is considered as Doris Lessing's most important work since *The Golden Notebook*. There was a gap of almost seven years between *The Ripple from the Strom* and *Landlocked*. Lessing says that she was unable to relate herself to the time of *Landlocked* "I have to be terribly quite and preferably solitudinous and misanthropic, to write." (Bertelsen, 1986) In *landlocked* there was a strong sense of outer activity but inner calm and deadness. All through the first three novels of the *Children of Violence* series we see that Martha couldn't accept domesticity, the mothering instinct, we observe is missing, though she very much loves her children but Martha doesn't want to stay at home,