

CHAPTER 16

ENGLISH

Doctoral Theses

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Re-Defining Feminism : The Fiction of Doris Lessing.
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Abstract

The thesis is structured around two ideas, the first being the growth of feminism from a movement engaging with women's freedom, spaces and rights, to its current avatar today as a protean world view allowing for plurality and difference. The second idea has to do with feminism as it has been articulated, not only in theoretical formulations and in the lived reality of women's lives, but through the construction and representation of women's identities in the realm of fiction. Interweaves some representative fictional works by Doris Lessing (1919-) with the major issues that feminism has voiced in the twentieth century. Explores Lessing's articulation of feminism through a study of her characters, predominantly women. Doris Lessing has lived eighty-four extraordinary years and has creatively chronicled women's lives for well over the last fifty years. Lessing's women characters belong to the twentieth century and their journeys map the dilemmas of women's lives at the personal culture, and ideological levels. Also examines how Lessing negotiates the shifts in feminism from a predominantly white middle class movement in the first half of the twentieth century, to a more widespread and diffuse global movement.

Contents

1. Lessing and feminism. 2. The interrogation of liberal white feminism : Race and colonialism in the Grass in Singing. 3. Tracing older histories : Marking continuities in the golden notebook. 4. Science fiction : Lessing's forays into alternative space. 5. Eschewing violence : Lessing's feminist formulations of the '80s. 6. Women and ageing : The body in time. Conclusion. Bibliography.