
Literary analysis of Doris Lessing's works: "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen"

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- Annotation** *Doris Lessing (1919–2013) was a distinguished British writer whose works portray the transformations and conflicts of the twentieth century. A central theme in her writing is the depiction of social and economic inequalities. In her first novel, The Grass is Singing, the character of Mary embodies cultural and social clashes shaped by colonial and gendered hierarchies. In contrast, her short story To Room Nineteen explores the inner conflict of Susan, an intellectual woman constrained by domestic roles, whose struggle with psychological pressure ends tragically. This research aims to examine these two works comparatively, focusing on the author's worldview, the psychological depth of her characters, and the recurring motifs of personal freedom and oppression. Consideration is given to the historical context, literary environment, and socio-political influences that shaped Lessing's creativity. The analysis employs sociological, biographical, comparative, and psychological methods. Findings suggest that both works incorporate bildungsroman elements, reflecting characters' inner quests for identity.*
- Keywords** *Internal conflict, social problems, human experience, cultural conflicts, self-awareness, moral psychological, colonialism, identity*

Литературный анализ тем в произведениях Дорис Лессинг: «Когда поет трава» и «В комнату девятнадцать»

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- Аннотация** *Дорис Лессинг (1919–2013) – выдающаяся британская писательница, чьи произведения глубоко и многогранно отражают трансформации, кризисы и конфликты двадцатого века. Центральной темой её творчества неизменно является изображение социальных и экономических неравенств, а также поиск личной свободы в условиях жёстких общественных структур. В своём первом романе «Трава поёт» образ Мэри воплощает культурные и социальные столкновения, сформированные колониальными, расовыми и гендерными иерархиями. В противоположность этому, в её известном рассказе «В комнату номер девятнадцать» раскрывается внутренний конфликт Сьюзан –интеллектуальной, образованной женщины, ограниченной рамками домашней роли и традиционного брака, чья борьба с психологическим давлением и духовной изоляцией завершается трагически. Данное исследование направлено на сравнительное рассмотрение этих двух произведений, акцентируя внимание на мировоззрении автора,*

психологической глубине персонажей и повторяющихся мотивах личной свободы, угнетения и поиска идентичности. В центре внимания также находятся исторический контекст, литературная среда и социально-политические влияния, которые в значительной степени сформировали творческую эволюцию Лессинг. В проведённом анализе применяются социологический, биографический, сравнительный и психологический методы. Результаты исследования показывают, что оба произведения содержат элементы *bildungsroman*, отражающие внутренний поиск героями своей идентичности и смысла жизни в условиях противоречивой действительности.

Ключевые слова Внутренний конфликт, социальные проблемы, человеческий опыт, культурные конфликты, самосознание, морально-психологический аспект, колониализм, идентичность

Doris lessing asarlarining adabiy tahlili: “maysalar kuylaganda” va “o’n to’qizza honaga”

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Ingliz tili amaliy fanlar kafedrasida o'qituvchisi

Annotatsiya Doris Lessing (1919-2013) – yigirmanchi asrning keskin o'zgarishlari, murakkab jarayonlari va chuqur ziddiyatlarini yoritgan mashhur va nufuzli britaniyalik yozuvchi hisoblanadi. Uning ijodida markaziy mavzu sifatida ijtimoiy va iqtisodiy tengsizliklarning, erkinlik uchun kurashning va insoniy qadriyatlarining aks ettirilishi alohida ahamiyat kasb etadi. Ilk romani «Chopiq o'tlar kuylaydi» asarida Meri obrazi mustamlakachilik, irqiy tafovut va gender iyerarxiyalari shakllantirgan madaniy va ijtimoiy to'qnashuvlarning yorqin timsoli sifatida namoyon bo'ladi. Aksincha, «O'n to'qqizinchi xonaga» nomli mashhur hikoyasida intellektual va ma'rifatli ayol – Syuzanning ichki iztiroblari, uyning an'anaviy vazifalari bilan chegaralanganligi hamda ruhiy bosim va yolg'izlik ostida kechgan kurashi fojeali yakun topishi tasvirlanadi. Ushbu tadqiqot mazkur ikki asarni qiyosiy jihatdan tahlil qilishni maqsad qilib, muallifning dunyoqarashi, qahramonlarning psixologik chuqurligi va shaxsiy erkinlik hamda zulm motivlarining takroriy ifodalanishini chuqur o'rganadi. Shuningdek, Lessing ijodini shakllantirgan tarixiy kontekst, adabiy muhit va ijtimoiy-siyosiy omillar ham alohida hisobga olinadi. Tadqiqot jarayonida sotsiologik, biografik, qiyosiy va psixologik metodlardan foydalaniladi. Olingan natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, har ikkala asarda ham qahramonlarning o'zlikni izlash, ma'naviy uyg'onish va hayot mazmunini anglash jarayonini ifodalovchi *bildungsroman* elementlari mavjud.

Kalit so'zlar Ichki tug'yon, ijtimoiy muammolar, insoniy tajriba, madaniy nizolar, o'zini anglash, axloqiy psixologik, mustamlakachilik, o'ziga xoslik

Introduction

Doris Lessing, a famous literary figure and Nobel Prize laureate, is celebrated for her captivating narratives that describes the feeling of the human experience. One of the most noteworthy awards presented to Doris Lessing was the prestigious David Cohen Prize in 2001, a testament to her contributions to the sphere of British literature. In 2008, The Times ranked her fifth on the list of "The 50 finest British writers since 1945", emphasizing her profound impact on the literary landscape. The most successful point of her career came with the honor of receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2007, a prestigious recognition of her literary knowledge. Moreover, Doris Lessing was hailed by the Swedish Academy as an epic chronicler of the female experience, her autobiographical works have captivated readers across the globe, offering a lens into the complexities of human existence with skepticism, passion, and enthusiasm. Sprague claimed that Lessing started her career writing short stories like many others. What makes her different is that even after becoming a successful novelist, she continued to write short stories for a long time (Sprague, 1989; 349). Through her extensive body of work encompassing fiction, plays, nonfiction, and autobiography, she has left a mark on the literary world, inspiring readers and writers alike with her insights and unwavering commitment to artistic excellence.

In this article, the multifaceted themes are explored embedded within Doris Lessing's renowned novel "The Grass is Singing" and her short story "To Room Nineteen". These literary works serve as profound reflections on societal norms, individual identity, and the landscapes of human relationships. "The Grass is Singing" confronts readers with a contrast portrayal of race relations, power dynamics, and the effect of colonialism that echoes through the nuanced interactions of its characters. Rowe and Margaret Moan commented that Schreiner and Lessing were both authors who criticized

the colonial societies of their times, in nineteenth-century South Africa and twentieth-century Rhodesia, respectively. They started their writing careers in England. Their debut novels, "The Story of an African Farm" and "The Grass is Singing," were well-received and brought them fame and financial success. These novels portrayed exotic settings to the predominantly British audience, focusing on white settlements in distant colonies. Both stories highlight a woman's struggles against societal expectations enforced by colonial powers. "The Grass is Singing" has been interpreted in various ways, such as social critique, romance, and detective story (Rowe, Margaret, 1994; 2). Her acclaimed novel "The Grass is Singing," set in 1940s Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* inspired the title of this outstanding book. The lines in this title comprise the following:

*In this decayed hole among the mountains
In the faint moonlight, The Grass is Singing
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home
It has no windows, and the door swings
Dry bones can harm (Eliot, 1971; 385)*

In this novel, the protagonist, Mary, symbolizes a modern woman grappling with independence and societal pressures, incorporating a portrayal of femininity and opposition of traditional gender roles. Through her extensive body of work encompassing fiction, plays, nonfiction, and autobiography, she has left a mark on the literary world, inspiring readers and writers alike with her insights and unwavering commitment to artistic excellence.

The main female character, Mary Turner, whose life takes a tragic turn early in the novel. In stark contrast, "To Room Nineteen" unravels a tale of isolation, social conformity, and the silent struggles for personal autonomy within the confines of societal norms. Through the character of Susan Rawlings, Lessing skilfully

navigates the treacherous waters of individual desires clashing with societal expectations, delving into the depths of existential crises and the fragility of mental well-being in a world rife with expectations. By looking closely at the themes that appear in Lessing's books, we want to understand the deep thoughts she shares about human life and the complex mix of feelings, who we are, and how we fit into society that influence our stories together. A touching journey through the ideas in Lessing's stories, she encourages readers to think and look inside themselves about the complicated emotions of humans.

Literature Review

There are many articles and dissertations which have been written on the literary works of Doris Lessing. In the works, she deals with issues of race, power dynamics, and the impact of colonialism on human relationships. For example, the novel "The Grass is Singing" looks into racial prejudice, the complexity of identity, and how societal expectations can be harmful. She shows characters struggling with their inner battles and the pressure from a biased society, creating a touching story that makes readers think about human interactions. However, "To Room Nineteen" explores themes of isolation, fitting into society, and the fight for personal freedom. As Victorian era, women did not have freedom as today they have. An unusual feature of Victorian English culture demonstrates how women's options were restricted throughout the whole era. During her 1960s studies of English society, British historian Heiena Wotjszak observed that women from all working-class backgrounds and the lower classes were split into distinct groups (Wotjszak, 2003; 253). Kh. Muhammedova mentioned that in those days, a woman's responsibilities and rights were established by her husband in England after she became a married woman. The wife would have some inheritance and rights once her husband passed away.

Victorian customs prevented women from rising to higher social positions, so

didactic literature presents women as submissive and powerless, but fiction takes a slightly different tack when it comes to portraying female characters. Several methods are used to analyze the authors' prose in Victorian English literature. The term "Victorian Renaissance" refers to the significant consideration given by English writers in the second half of the nineteenth century in British cultural life (Mukhammedova, 2022; 7270). According to K.J. Milton in "Women Writers: Their Works and Ways," there is a belief that women should be content and fulfilled within the household. This idea makes it hard for people to see that women are capable of doing more and should not be restricted to just family duties. To challenge this narrow view, women started fighting not only for their rights but also to showcase their significance in society (Milton, 2012; 269). Lessing tells a story that reflects the challenges of modern life, focusing on a woman caught in competitive societal norms. Through Susan Rawlings, Lessing shows the crisis people face when torn between inner desires and outside pressures, making readers consider the cost of meeting societal expectations on mental well-being. Another writer Simone de Beauvoir agreed with the above statements and expressed the following opinions: Women are not born; rather, they are gradually developed. In physiology, psychology, or economy, no fate can dictate the social image of a woman (Beauvoir, 1998; 53). Nowadays, "The Yellow Wallpaper" is frequently interpreted as a commentary on and a mirror of women's position in nineteenth-century America which was written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. The themes of story "To Room Nineteen" and the novella "The Yellow Wallpaper" are exactly the same. "The Yellow Wallpaper" tells the story of a woman's mental decline during a summer stay at a countryside estate where she goes on a "rest cure" with her family. The woman becomes fixated on the yellow wallpaper in her room, signaling her slide into madness from her initial sadness. The narrator, who moves to

the estate with her husband who is also her doctor, is supposed to recover from her "illness" – described as nervous depression post-baby. Despite her husband's belief that rest will heal her, she finds solace in writing, but he discourages her. She often mentions her baby, even though a nurse cares for the child as the narrator is too anxious to do so herself. Jansen, S.L. described two important stories, "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman and "To Room Nineteen" by Doris Lessing, which represent key moments in women's history.

Gilman's tale from 1892 reflects the first-wave feminist movement's struggles for women's rights like legal equality and voting. Lessing's story from 1963 corresponds to the second-wave feminist era initiated by Betty Friedan's book which critiqued traditional gender roles. Both stories depict women fighting against societal expectations of being perfect wives and mothers. While Gilman's work highlights the challenges of women in the 1800s, Lessing's story shows a modern woman still grappling with similar issues. The narratives focus on women feeling confined by societal norms, just like the characters being restricted to a single room, representing their struggles against oppressive expectations (Jansen, 2011; 89). Critics and reviewers studied not only literary works of Doris Lessing, but also her writing style. Various voices in the literary community have expressed worry about Lessing's science fiction since the beginning (Zhu, Dong, Mei, Gao, Wang, Zhao, 2020; 55). Although Lessing's early writing career had some commendable features, literary critics like Tylets, V.G., have stated that her writing over the previous fifteen years is not readable. It's all science fiction of the fourth order. (Tylets, Krasnyanskaya, 2020; 193). But some critics praise Lessing for her keen observations of human behavior, character development, and negative criticism of society. They admire her description of complex emotions and relationships, her comments on gender roles and societal restrictions, and her deep

exploration of characters' inner lives with sensitivity. Despite being one of the few gifted English-language authors of this century, Lessing's science fiction has left her devoted followers confused and frustrated. Why did she keep writing it? It is thought that people missed the realistic Lessing's concern for society and mankind and could not learn lessons on his world. Several academics stated that their initial thought upon learning of the Lessing Literature Prize's award on the fourth day following the Nobel Prize Literature Committee's announcement was, "This is a victory for science fiction!" Canopus: The Archives contributed to science fiction's acceptance as a mainstream literary genre (Benedetti, 2021; 274). From the 1970s to the 1980s, Lessing was a significant science fiction author. Canopus in the Southern Ship Galaxy: The Archives series of novels, according to Gacheva, highlights the significance of modern science fiction elements (Gacheva, 2020; 333). The findings of their study significantly aided global Lessing research and established the groundwork for Lessing research conducted domestically (Espín-León, Jimeno-Morenilla, Pertegal-Felices, Azorin-Lopez, 2020; 24). Another aim of the article is to compare "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen" to explore the recurring themes of mental pressure, isolation and personal freedom in Lessing's works. By analyzing the shared and different themes in these texts, this article seeks to enhance our understanding of Lessing's examination of the human condition and her enduring significance in modern literature. In summary, Doris Lessing's "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen" shows her talent, providing deep insights into human experiences.

Methods and materials

Doris Lessing's literary works: "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen," a structured methodology was employed to analyze the intricate thematic elements woven into the narratives. This section outlines the methods and materials used in our thematic

exploration, aiming to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the underlying themes.

1. **Biographical method**

The study was carried out biographically, the stories and novels of the writer in the context of her life path. The personality of the author is reflected in her works and therefore some of the elements are clarified in the context of the author's biography. Accordingly, the biographical method is the leading guild in the analysis of Doris Lessings works. In fact, in her novels and stories many characters are not characters, they are contemporaries, friends and Doris Lessing herself (in her novel "The grass is singing" the character Mary had conflicts with parents and started to work early before her marriage like Doris Lessing).

2. **Psychological method**

Along with the biographical method, psychological and psychoanalytical methods using the environment of the authors's childhood, education and work, in a word, concrete factual materials about his life, as well as small details were not neglected (for example, one of the factors that motivated Doris Lessing to become a feminist writer was childhood that she grew up coming across with difficulties and injustices as a woman).

The thematic analysis of "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen" was conducted through a systematic approach that involved identifying key themes, motifs, and symbols present in the texts. By closely reading the works and engaging in comparative analysis, I sought to uncover the underlying messages, social critiques, and psychological depths that Lessing carefully weaves into her storytelling.

Central to our thematic exploration was an in-depth character study of the protagonists in each work. Mary Turner in "The Grass is Singing" and Susan Rawlings in "To Room Nineteen" served as center points for analyzing themes of gender, coolness, identity, stability, isolation, and personal factor. All of which are involved in individual factors

3. **Sociological method**

An essential component of our method involved situating the themes within the societal contexts described in the novels and story. Drawing on historical and cultural analysis, we examined the impact of colonialism, racial prejudices, gender roles, and societal norms on the characters' experiences and choices. This contextual content provided a broader understanding of how Lessing's themes resonate with broader socio-political realities.

For example: In her preface to "the Grass is singing", Lessing experiences these cruelties as: And the cruelties of the white man towards the black man are among the heaviest counts in the indictment against humanity, colour prejudice is not our original fault, but only one aspect of the atrophy of the imagination that prevents us from seeing ourselves in every creature that breathes under the sun.

4. **Comparative method**

A comparative approach was employed to highlight the thematic similarities and differences between "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen." For example: According to Lynda Scott, in both "To Room Nineteen" and "The Grass is Singing", Lessing uses symbolic images of rooms to illustrate the limitations that individuals, particularly women, experience because of the patriarchal collective (Scott, 1988; 7). By presenting the thematic elements present in both works, we aimed to draw out different insights into Lessing's exploration of universal human experiences, societal problems, and the search for personal authenticity.

Materials used:

- Copies of Doris Lessing's novel "The Grass is Singing" and short story "To Room Nineteen";
- Secondary sources including critical essays, literary analyses, and scholarly articles on Lessing's works;
- Historical and cultural references to contextualize the themes within the narratives;

- Writing materials for note-taking and analysis.

By employing a systematic approach that combines thematic analysis, character study, societal context analysis, and a comparative perspective, this study aimed to offer a comprehensive exploration of the diverse themes present in Doris Lessing's works. Through this methodological framework, we tried to pay attention to the enduring relevance and profound insights embedded within Lessing's narratives, inviting readers to engage with the complex themes that supports her literary career.

The novel opens with a newspaper report, detailing the tragic murder of Mary Turner by her black servant Moses. As the story starts, we witness the life of Mary, who dissatisfied with her miserable childhood, finds comfort in her job in Rhodesia. Despite barely knowing him, she hurriedly marries Dick Turner because of the feeling pressured by her peers, only to realize their relationship lacks warmth and understanding from the start. Nadiyah Khushboo, a researcher, identifies their marriage as a desire of fulfillment, masking emotional emptiness and reliance on each other for personal gains. Mary wants recognition, uses Dick to prove her worth, while Dick is grappling with depression, leaned on her for support. Their dysfunctional dynamic relationship mirrors societal problems and underscores their inability to break free from gendered roles and societal expectations. Mary Turner, the wife of Dick Turner, is tragically murdered, with a houseboy confessing to the crime. Their isolated life among the white settlers is disrupted when Mary's body is found, leading to investigations and the eventual trial where the houseboy, Moses, is convicted. Tony Marston, an observer in the events, speaking up about his theories regarding Mary's death but eventually leaves the area feeling conflicted about the outcome. The narrative shifts to Mary's backstory, detailing her upbringing overshadowed by her parents' troubles. After her parents' deaths, Mary embraces

independence, delaying marriage until societal pressures push her into a brief engagement. Her chance encounter with Dick, a poor farmer nicknamed "Jonah," causes a quick marriage. Mary uses her money to buy things for the house and spends her time sewing and decorating.

From the novel: With her own saved money, Mary bought flowered materials, and covered cushions and made curtains; bought a little linen, crockery, and some dress lengths. The house gradually lost its air of bleak poverty, and put on an inexpensive prettiness, with bright hangings and some pictures. (Doris, 1950; 73)

Then Mary accuses her servant of stealing and takes money from his pay despite objections from Dick. The servant leaves, and they struggle to find replacements. Mary mistreats the new servants, causing them to quit. Visitors come, but Mary rudely rejects their kindness. They suggest planting tobacco, which Dick hesitates about. Dick has financial issues, borrows money, and starts unsuccessful farming ventures with animals. Mary dislikes working at the store Dick opens on the farm and dreams of returning to her old life. She leaves but fails to find suitable work in town and returns with Dick falling ill. Mary takes charge of the farm during Dick's illness, becoming harsh towards the workers. She strikes one and withholds wages, leading some to quit. Regarding the author's writing style, Pierre Wastberg, president of the Nobel Committee for Literature, noted that "he often begins to study his characters from the inside, and then to destroy their illusions from an objective distance" (Nobel Foundation, 2007). In addition, he opposes the class he represents in real life and supports the class he hates in his book "The Fire Sings". Despite Dick's sickness, she pushes him to pursue tobacco farming to make money. After a quarrel, Dick agrees to the plan. Upon moving to Dick's farm, Mary encounters a stark environment, highlighting their contrasting perspectives. Mary's quest to learn the language of the native workers reflects her attempts to navigate her new

surroundings. Dick constructed the tobacco barns, but due to a period of dry weather in January, the tobacco crop went bad. To avoid bankruptcy, Dick had to take out a loan as he couldn't cover the expenses. Mary's health worsened, and she pleaded with Dick for a child, but he declined citing their financial struggles. This led to Mary's deepening despair, which also affected Dick, causing him to turn to chain-smoking. The gap between the two individuals continues to grow, leading them to feel like unfulfilled and bewildered individuals in their isolated residence (Charles and Liebetraut, 1978; 24). This quote symbolizes the increasing distance and emotional disconnect between them, highlighting their sense of emptiness and lack of satisfaction within their home. The statement suggests a profound sensation of isolation and dissatisfaction experienced by both parties in their domestic environment due to the widening emotional gap between them. With their household short-staffed, Moses had to be moved from the field to assist Mary as no one else was available. Mary developed an interest in Moses, observing him closely as he worked. This caught Moses's attention, leading to an uncomfortable moment between them. Mary, feeling rejected, burdened Moses with unnecessary tasks. Despite her request, Dick refused to dismiss Moses. As time passed, Mary's mental state deteriorated further. When Moses expressed his intention to leave, Mary broke down, imploring him to stay. A shift occurred in their relationship, with Moses becoming more supportive, and Mary feeling increasingly dependent. Mary began experiencing distressing nightmares, while Dick fell ill with malaria. Rumours circulated among their neighbours, prompting Charlie to advise Dick to sell the farm. Observing the interactions between Mary and Moses during dinner, Charlie insisted they leave. Tony, working on Dick's farm, concluded that Mary needed psychological help. Witnessing a moment between Moses and Mary, Tony considered the possibility of an affair and contemplated

informing Dick to dismiss Moses. Two nights before their leave, Mary, in a disturbed state, wandered the house in a state of suspicion, fearing Moses would harm her. Upon meeting Moses at the store, she panicked, seeking comfort from Tony's suggestion to see a doctor. That evening, Mary's behavior became increasingly unpredictable, culminating in a tragic conflict where Moses fatally stabbed her. Mary's useless attempts to escape her past limitations through marriage only reveal a deeper sense of entrapment within her own insecurities. As their marriage deteriorates, Mary's realization of Dick's inability on their farm worsens their relationship. Her rejection of assistance from well-off neighbors due to pride deepens the stark contrast between their poverty and the perfect surroundings they leave. Doris Lessing's own background in colonial Rhodesia shapes her critical ideas on societal norms, echoing in Mary's intensive hatred for the native workers and her struggles with racial biases. The narrative finishes with Mary's tragic death at the hands of Moses, the servant she had previously abused in anger. This final act of violence serves as a climax to a story steeped in themes of isolation, inequality, and the human tendency to exploit others for personal gain. In summary, Bahlaq claims that despite her admission that she does not experience this kind of oppression, Mary believes that a woman would normally suffer from the male power in society (Bahlaq, 2011; 55). The collection "A Man and Two Women," which marked Doris Lessing's emergence as a prominent short story writer, introduced "To Room Nineteen" for the first time. (Smith, 2002; 45) stated that the story is portrayed as an exemplar of sophisticated literary communication. It depicts the narrative of a highly educated, happily married woman who meets her demise due to her inability to fulfill her inner desires. She perceives these desires as an illness and a force working against the family and home she has built. These desires symbolize her abandoned self, lost through the sacrifices she made for her family. "To Room

Nineteen" blends gender, political, and psychological elements, stemming from a shared social context. Susan, a smart woman, managed everything wisely. She fell in love with Matthew, her current husband, and decided to be a full-time housewife when she became pregnant with their four children. Despite her husband's unfaithfulness, they moved on together, grateful for their past happiness. As time passed, Susan started feeling lost in her role as a devoted wife and mother, realizing she had sacrificed her identity for her family. They are described as being on an equal footing and having respectable jobs. According to Harry Blamires, they have four healthy children and a large suburban home that embodies middle-class solidity. Up till now, Lessing has produced a sort of "golden pair," yet the reader is aware that this is an ideal that will not last. The couple's usual order of birth was a boy first, followed by a daughter, and then twins. Everything that was proper, fitting, and, if given the option, what everyone would want (Harry, 1982; 79). After some time, Susan started to seek independence and rediscover herself by renting a room in Fred's Hotel, where she felt free from her domestic burdens and found joy again. Initially, the story painted a picture of a happy family, but underneath, a subtle dissatisfaction was brewing. Over time, Susan began questioning her choices and the dynamics of her marriage, realizing that unforeseen changes were occurring. She grew increasingly isolated, spending her days waiting for her children, engaging with the maid, and tending to domestic chores. Faced with a deep sense of emptiness and dissatisfaction, finally she started to distance herself from Matthew, who then engaged in an extramarital affair. Seeking comfort and a sense of self-discovery.

Aware of the difference between her emotional turmoil and her husband's logical perspective, Susan struggled to articulate her inner struggles. In realization of her isolation from the environment and despair, she returned "To room Nineteen" the following day

and tragically took her own life. The narrative carefully captures Susan's inner dissatisfaction and the tragic consequences of societal expectations and emotional disconnect within her marriage.

Results and discussion

In "The Grass is Singing," Doris Lessing explores women's emotional struggles through marriage, motherhood, work, and societal injustices. She explores the challenges faced by women in relationships, the challenges of balancing career and family, the emptiness of societal norms, and the underlying discontent within marriages. Lessing describes her female characters in diverse social settings, offering multifaceted perspectives on gender dynamics. In Wang's view, the complicated relationship between the white main character, Mary Turner, and her black servant, Moses, in the story helps white people deal with their feelings of guilt after colonialism. The story's violence is connected to South Africa's past struggles with racism and apartheid, making Mary feel responsible for the harm done, as Judith Butler suggests in her theories. While Mary's guilt makes her deeply sad, it also gives her a powerful sense of control over her actions. Mary's mental health decline is compared to apartheid's madness, symbolizing a critique of how white guilt can be restrictive and exclusive. Critics note that Lessing's work aims to mobilize feminist discourse by challenging patriarchal structures through her narratives. Additionally, she skilfully describes the mimetic relationship between Mose and Mary. (Keramatfar, 2002; 106) noted that in the story, Moses ends up killing his white mistress after she decides to leave him. This act is explained using Girardian analysis, where Moses becomes obsessed with the idea of the white woman as a way to fulfill his desires. When she becomes unattainable to him by leaving the farm, he reacts by committing murder. The novel seems to highlight how racism distorts relationships between people of different races, showing how systemic racism can lead to tragic outcomes. Susan is a member of the middle

class, thus she has to spend a lot of money and effort buying and maintaining a large suburban home. Her contacts in the neighborhood are limited to individuals with other middle-class homes and their personal aides, according to (Bloom, 1986; 221). However, (Booth, Wayne, 1961; 310) contended that although Susan admitted that she and Matthew had everything they had hoped and prepared for, she soon feels constrained and flat. (Fishburn, Katherine, 1985; 201) said that Without freedom, Susan's existence is compromised, as freedom is a fundamental human need.

It would be unreasonable to deny this essential requirement, which Susan has neglected for an extended period. Thus, her insistence on reclaiming her right to experience and fulfill this need is a rational choice. The interaction between sanity and insanity is most evident in the final sections of the narrative. Susan crafts a "reasonable" explanation for her prolonged stays in Room Nineteen to protect the independence she has discovered within its walls. She recognizes Matthew's need for a believable rationale for her absences, a behaviour that reflects and somewhat justifies his own unfaithfulness. Susan's acknowledgment of the absurdity of her situation within the room adds depth to the irony unfolding. (Mukhammedova, 2022; 7270) noted that women's initial obligations and responsibilities at home kept her from being creative. One of the main barriers to women's widespread inventiveness was this kind of thinking. Susan's decision to end her life is portrayed as a transformative dream that embraces her internally, akin to the flow of her blood. The tragic irony lies in Susan's misconception that suicide is the sole path to attaining complete self-awareness and liberation, leading her to drift into the dark embrace of death.

Professor William Kerwin acknowledges the novel's strength in portraying a farmer's wife's psychological breakdown while living with an inadequate husband on a desolate South African farm. The depiction is described

as profoundly engaging, blending the depth of a full-length novel with the clarity of a well-crafted short story. In a powerful declaration, Lessing expressed solidarity with women in their struggle for a future without oppressive males. Through the character of Mary Turner, the central protagonist, Lessing beautifully portrayed the essence of feminism. Another significant topic explored in the novel is the conflict within marriage. The story describes the intellectual and marital inability between Mary, who is educated and judgmental, and Dick is simple-minded. They only have each other for companionship. Mary's confrontation with Moses, who later becomes the houseboy, represents her breaking free from the confines of her white domestic world. Mose's physical presence in their home offers Mary a hidden means of escaping the limitations of her relationship with Dick. The main theme of the story revolves around marriage and family, focusing on the exploration of identity within the context of societal norms. In contrast, Lessing portrays Matthew and Susan in "To room nineteen" as an ideal couple who marry later than their peers, presenting a picture of middle-class family with a large home and four children. The conformity and restriction emerge as another primary theme in the narrative, as Susan struggles with societal expectations and the constraints imposed by her social status, gender, and environment. Despite seemingly having achieved the ideal life everyone desires. Susan experiences a profound sense of emptiness as she realizes the sacrifices she has made for her family. Her journey reflects a conflict between societal expectations and her own need for personal fulfillment beyond the confines of conventional norms. As she questions her predefined roles and responsibilities. Through a comparative analysis of these works by critics, it becomes evident that Lessing's thematic explorations go beyond storytelling, serving as profound critiques of societal structures and cultural norms. So, both works by Doris Lessing can be

considered as bildungsroman. Bildungsroman is a type of novel that depicts and explores the manner in which the protagonist develops morally and psychologically. "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen" include not only new types of heroines seek self-realization and independence morally and psychologically. The importance of Doris Lessing's stories was partially explored in the research. The study unveiled the unique features of the author's creativity in the context of historical circumstances, literary environment, and literary trends, amid socio-political perspectives. The author analyzed the reflection of realistic events in her works and examined the details that reveal the characters' traits in the narrative from a literary perspective.

Conclusion

Studying the themes in "The Grass is Singing" and "To Room Nineteen" gives deep insights into why Lessing's works are still important and widely relatable. By exploring race, power, gender, loneliness, and personal freedom, readers are asked to think about timeless issues like who we are, being true to ourselves, and the complexities of human connections. While learning Lessing's detailed stories, learners can learn important truths about people and our never-ending journey to find ourselves and be genuine in the midst of life's challenges. Looking closely at Lessing's themes makes individuals face their own ideas, prejudices, and how society shapes them, encouraging them to look inside and learn more about themselves in the broad range of human emotions and experiences.

Lessing represents feminist differences through Mary's character, highlighting the intricacies of feminism and the conflicts embedded within marriage. The narrative shows a marriage without affection or love, founded solely on the necessity of both partners. Dick uses Mary to alleviate his depression, while Mary's yearning for escape supports the dysfunctional dynamics of their relationship. "To Room Nineteen," She describes the societal constraints that troubled women in the conservative early 1960s, hindering their ability to imagine a future defined by personal fulfillment. The novel carefully explores the conflict between intellect and instinct, mind and heart, within the context of 1960s London, showing the harsh boundaries imposed on women during that era. Through Susan's journey towards self-authenticity, Lessing reveals the societal norms on women's mental well-being, culminating in her tragic death. The novel illustrates the struggles faced by modern women within a male-dominated society, where opportunities for independent exploration and intellectual growth are stifled. In this research, the unique features of the author's creativity in the context of historical circumstances, literary environment, and literary trends, amidst socio-political perspectives, were revealed. Through the study of Doris Lessing's stories, special attention is paid to the characters, their positive and negative aspects, and the symbolic-literary means related to the characters. The author examines the characters' actions, behaviors, and elements that shape their personalities in the stories.

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