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*Space and Self in
Doris Lessing's Major Fiction*

空间与自我

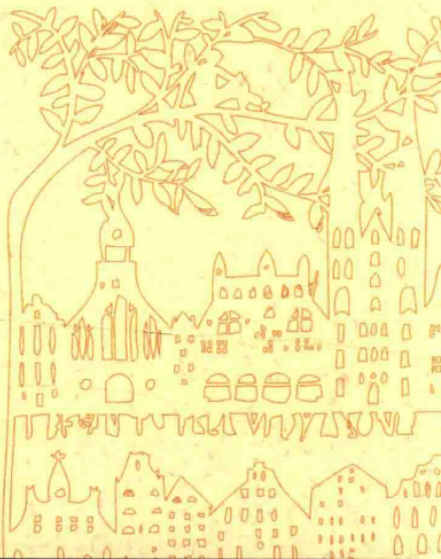
——多丽丝·莱辛小说研究

(英文版)

姜仁凤◎著



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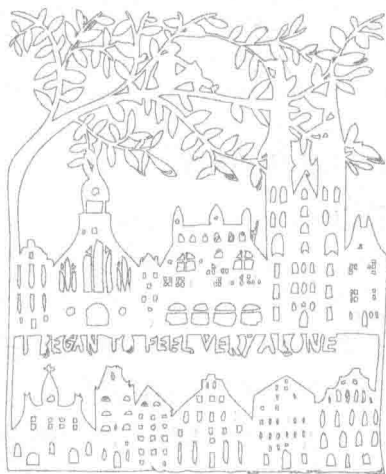
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内容提要

本书旨在对莱辛的三部主要小说《野草在歌唱》《金色笔记》和《四门城》中的空间问题与自我相联系进行系统研究。在这三部小说中莱辛突出关注的是社会空间和住所——蕴含着成为个人空间潜能的房子。本书意欲联系个体自我在这两种空间中的状态及发展对三部小说中这两种空间的性质进行考察以发现莱辛对空间与自我的思考。另外,本书试图发现三部小说所揭示出来的空间与自我、社会空间与个人空间、社会自我与真正自我之间关系的演变并尝试提出莱辛三部小说中两种主要空间性质的延续与演变植根于莱辛不断发展的人生哲学与信仰。本书适合英文专业学者及相关研究人员阅读。

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前言

多丽丝·莱辛是当代英国最优秀的女作家之一。她的作品一直备受评论界关注,对其作品的研究成果诸多。但是长期以来,她作品中的空间问题没有得到充分的讨论。本书旨在对莱辛三部主要小说《野草在歌唱》《金色笔记》和《四门城》中的空间问题与自我相联系进行系统研究。在这三部小说中莱辛突出关注的是社会空间和住所——蕴含着成为个人空间潜能的房子。本书意欲联系个体自我在这两种空间中的状态及发展对三部小说中这两种空间的性质进行考察,以揭示莱辛对空间与自我的思考。另外,本书试图分析三部小说所揭示出来的空间与自我、社会空间与个人空间、社会自我与真正自我之间关系的演变,并尝试提出新的观点,即莱辛三部小说中两种主要空间性质的延续与演变植根于她不断发展的人生哲学与信仰。

本书的主要理论框架由列斐伏尔、福柯、索亚和科特的空间理论构成。其空间概念采用列斐伏尔的“空间是产物”,这一概念强调空间的社会性,与莱辛小说中空间的内涵最为贴近,而福柯强调空间的权力性。“监视社会”正是权力通过操控空间以确保其运行的结果。列斐伏尔空间的社会性和福柯空间的权力性都表明居支配地位的社会空间因其占有性和控制性而不利于个体独特自我的发展,因此两者的空间理论都蕴含着对差异空间的诉求。索亚创造性地提出第三空间,该空间的特征在于它激进的、异乎寻常的开放性。第三空间概念的重要性在于它强调发展、突破和无尽的可能性。莱辛三部小说中的房子蕴含着索亚所说的第三空间的可能性。莱辛的第三空间主要表现为真正的个人空间。关于个人空间,本书参考科特的解释,在这一空间里个体摆脱社会范畴及身份构建的规定得以完成自我发现。

第一章考察《野草在歌唱》中的监视空间和压抑的自我。以男权为中心和殖民社会的种族主义以普遍存在的监控性凝视生产并不断巩固着禁闭空间。该章第一部分探讨小说中的人物在南非小镇的商店、城镇以及大草原上的农场的行为及自我表现,揭示社会空间的禁闭性质以及此类空间中自我的扭曲。第二部分聚焦房子这一狭小空间,以及社会自我与本真自我在其间的紧张冲突直至主体毁灭。内在化的监视使得房子失去了其应有的隐私和独立,剥夺了它暂时“例外”于社会的权利,也因此失去了成为真正个人空间的潜在性。绝对强大的社会空间决定了社会自我对真正自我的压制和统治,进而导致自我意识的缺失,房子因居住者的努力

而变为有利于自我整合的个人空间的可能性消失。因此,房子始终是从属性的他者空间,暴露于社会的监视之下。该章认为监视在社会空间和房子中的普遍存在使得有利于自我平衡的个人空间在两种空间里都不可能存在。大一统的监视空间没有改变,压抑的自我无处得到释放。

第二章集中分析《金色笔记》里现代日常生活中的异化空间和分裂的自我。第一部分通过考察人物在社会空间的主要构成因素——工作场所、政治空间和性别空间——中的自我表现来揭示社会空间是一种移位空间以及自我在其中的碎片化。通过社会参与进行自我整合的结果是更加严重的自我分裂,在社会空间中创建个人空间的可能性不存在。该章第二部分探讨了小说中最重要的空间形象——公寓,揭示出公寓空间的复杂性质。自由女性的公寓最重要的目的是为自我整合提供个人空间。为此,居住者费尽心机将自我进行分类,具体体现为代表不同自我的四本笔记。分类恰恰是造成自我分裂的社会空间的普遍行为模式。居住者在公寓里自我整合的种种努力使得公寓成为分类空间的化身,成为社会空间的延续以至于更加隐秘的梦空间和性空间也无法成为实现自我统一的个人空间。社会空间的强大性、异化的深重性和彻底性使得公寓沦为居住者自我崩溃的场所,但这也包含着它有利于自我统一成为个人空间的可能性:居住者正是通过自我崩溃窥见了自我的真相从而走向自我整合。

第三章主要论述《四门城》中的第三空间以及自我的消解与还原。该章第一部分关注颓败的城市物理空间、等级弥漫的小餐馆和饭店等公共场所以及同质化得以实现的心理咨询室和精神病医院。这些空间力图消除个体的独特性,消解个体对真正自我的坚持。整个社会空间与个体的自我发展极不相容,个体的自我遭到贬抑。第二部分主要讨论玛莎住过的三所住宅。三所房子均以差异空间显著区别于同一化的社会空间,表现出明显的第三空间特征:容纳并坚持差异;瓦解二元论;作为抵抗之所。住所作为差异空间为居住者发现真正的个人空间提供了可能,自我得以复原。另外,该章考察了空间与自我、社会空间与住所、社会自我与真正自我、自我消解与自我还原之间的互动与相互依赖。

结论部分对本书主要思想及每章主要论点进行了回顾和总结。通过对分散于三部小说中的空间与自我相联系进行系统考察可以看出莱辛思想在空间问题上的传承与转变。莱辛小说中的空间弥漫着她对个体自我在强势社会压力下的生存状态给予的人文主义关怀,是一种自我空间。她笔下的社会空间总的来说造成个体自我的压抑、分裂和贬损,而住所空间对自我的关系则呈现出动态变化。结论部分还总结了空间与自我、社会空间与住所、社会自我与真正自我之间关系在三部小说中的演变,指出作者对空间和自我的思考及其在三部小说中的变与不变根源于她不断发展的哲学思想。

Preface

Doris Lessing is acclaimed as one of the best British women writers of her age. Her novels have drawn continuous critical attention, and brought a wide range of scholarly comments of critics from home and abroad. But for a long time, the space issue in her works has not been sufficiently discussed. This book is meant to make a systematic study of space in relation with self in Lessing's three major novels; *The Grass Is Singing*, *The Golden Notebook* and *The Four-Gated City*. It attempts to examine the nature and quality of the space, subcategorized into the social space incarnated into various particular spaces and the recurring house in all the three novels embedded with the potentiality for a real personal space, in relation with the state and growth of the individual's self. It is intended to find the consistence and variation in Lessing's observation of space in its relation with self. The other intention is to discover the change in the relation between space and self, the social space and the house, the social self and the true self revealed in her three novels. Finally, the book tentatively suggests a correspondence between the features of Lessing's concern about space and self and the development in her thought and philosophy.

The discussion is conducted mainly with recourse to the spatial theories of Henry Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Edward Soja and Wesley Kort. The book adopts Lefebvre's definition of space: space is a product. This definition, with the emphasis on the social character of space, is the most approximate to the implications of the space in the fiction of Lessing, an intensely socially committed writer. Michel Foucault foregrounds the power aspect of space. Society of surveillance is a result of ensuring the operation of power through the control of space. Both Lefebvre's social character and Foucault's power aspect of space suggest a dominant social space with inclination to possess and control, unfavorable to the development of the individual's particular self. Therefore both of their theories are embedded with a call for a space of difference, Lefebvre's lived space and Foucault's heterotopias. This call for a differential space is extended and

systematized by Soja into his thirdspace, an invisible space which accentuates a radical openness. The significance of the thirdspace lies particularly in its emphasis on the ongoing process, the implication of the incessant breakthrough and an embrace of endless possibilities. The house in the three major novels of Lessing conceives a potentiality for Soja's thirdspace in the form of the real personal space. This book uses it to mean a space of self-discovery with reference to Kort's explanation of it as a space where one can be free from the determinations of social categories and identity constructions.

The first chapter explores the space of surveillance and the repressed self in *The Grass Is Singing* with recourse to Foucault's theory of the panoptic mechanism in the society of surveillance. The omnipresent surveillant gaze of patriarchy and colonial racism produces and constantly strengthens the social space of confinement. By examining the store in the dorps, the town with its surveillance in the form of gossip, and the farm in the veld, with the analysis of the characters' action and response in these spaces, this chapter demonstrates the confining quality of the social space and the various distortion of self. It finds the space of confinement so fortified that the house is pervaded with the internalized faceless gaze which dispossesses the house of its privacy and independence, its right as an exception and thus the potential for a real personal space. Such a strong social space with its unswerving demand for conformity decides the subjugation of the individual's social self over his unique true self as well as his lack of consciousness which deprives his ability to take positive action to transform the house into a real personal place for his self-integration. Thus, the house remains a space of subordinate other exposed to the surveillance of society, witnessing the increasingly approaching destruction of its dweller's self. The ubiquitous presence of the surveillance both in the social space and the house divests the individual of his possibility to discover a real personal space for the rebalance of his distorted self in either, and leaves a monolithic space of surveillance inhabited by a population with their repressed self.

The second chapter is focused on the analysis of the space of alienation of everyday life in its relation with the divided self in *The Golden Notebook*. By analyzing the main elements of the social space of modern everyday life, the workplace, the political site and the gender space, this chapter reveals the displacing property of the social space with people suffering from the fragmentation of self. All the efforts to reintegrate the divided self in these particular spaces only bring a more severe division. In a space of rampant alienation, there is faint possibility to discover a real personal place in the social space. The flat as a

potential for self-integration in this novel bears complex quality. The intended personal space is consciously made into a space of compartmentalization, symbolically expressed by Anna's compartmentalization of her self into four notebooks, which is the very prevalent mode in the social space that results in the fragmentary self. Consequently, it is acted not as an initiation into the reaffirmation of self but as a rite-of-passage into the disintegration of self. Thus, the flat is built into the reproduction of the social space of displacement, where even the more private dream space and the intimate sexuality are divested the possibility for a real personal space in which the dweller can transcend alienation and reintegrate division. However, despite the general negative nature, the flat takes on positive quality in that it is tinted with the spirit of freedom, independence and self-assertion of its dwellers. And more importantly, its positive property lies, paradoxically, in its participation in driving the dweller into the disintegration of self, through which the dweller obtains a glimpse of the truth of the self with the collapse of various dichotomies.

The third chapter deals with Lessing's thirdspace in its relation with the dissolved and revived self in *The Four-Gated City*. As for the social space in its relation with the individual's self, the dominant quality remains uncongenial as is shown by the examination of the deteriorated physical condition of the city, the hierarchical permeation in the café and restaurant, and the homogenizing actualization in the consulting room and the mental hospital, all of which conspire to cancel the individual's particularity and dissolve his insistence on his true self and hence the final general abnegation of self. Much of this chapter is devoted to the exploration of the house as the space of difference which contributes to the rejuvenation of the self. The major three houses in this novel manifests distinct nature of the thirdspace as the space of difference, namely, to accommodate difference and strongly insist on their difference; to highlight the collapse between reason and unreason among other false dichotomies and divisions and they also take on the quality of a "site of resistance". And what they have in common is that they provide a real personal space where the dwellers approach their true self. This chapter also observes the relation between space and self, the social space and the dwelling, the social self and the true self. It finds Lessing in this novel begins to emphasize the interaction and the interdependence between these apparent oppositions and implies the idea that dissolving one's self in serving the others is part of the journey to approach one's true self.

The conclusion reviews the major arguments in each chapter. A holistic

examination of Lessing's presentation of space in its relation with self scattered in each of the three novels reveals the consistence and variation in her observation of space. The overall space in Lessing's major fiction is a space of self, saturated with her humanistic concern for the individual's self under the pressure of the strong society. Lessing is consistent in her criticism of the social space in its negative relation with the self and the house is endowed with the dynamic variation in its quality as its relation with the self manifests a gradual shift from negative to positive. The conclusion also includes the observation of the change in the relation between space and self, the social space and the house, the social self and the true self. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the trajectory of Lessing's thought and belief and suggests a correspondence between her evolving observation of space and self and the ongoing development of her philosophy and worldview.

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Introduction

I . Doris Lessing and Her Achievements

As a Nobel Prize winner in literature, Doris Lessing (1919—2013) unarguably occupies an influential position in the twentieth century British literature. She is a prolific and complex contemporary writer with a great abundance of voluminous works encompassing an assortment of genres: novels, short stories, essays, poetry, science fiction, autobiography, and drama. Her writing covers almost all the important movements and social issues in the twentieth century with such insight and vision that Margaret Drabble acclaims her as “Cassandra in a world under siege”(1986:183). With her particular concern about the individual's self in certain space, her literary achievements have exerted such an important converting influence on many generations that Drabble perceives her as “the kind of writer who changes people's lives”(1986: 183). Undoubtedly, her remarkable literary output, in terms of both its quantity and quality, has made her an outstanding writer in the history of literature, as is commended: “that epicist of the female experience, who with skepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilization to scrutiny”(http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/laureates/ 2007/).

The Grass Is Singing (1950) initiates Lessing into the literary world of Britain with its immediate success after publication as it was reprinted seven times in five months. As “the most promising novel to have appeared in England since the Second World War” (Thorpe, 1978: 11), the first novel demonstrates Lessing's initial efforts to explore the individual's self under collective pressures. *The Golden Notebook* (1962) marks the rise of an important and eminent novelist. With its profound “transformative” influence on women^①, it is lauded as “the Bible for the young” which, according to Drabble, “catches the feeling of converted emotion that she arouses”(1986:183). The novel reaches such a literary height with its

① About this Greene makes a comprehensive summary in her book *The Poetics of Change*.

perfect combination of form and content that Karl observes it as “the most considerable single work by an English author in the 1960’s” (1994:291) and even Harold Bloom, who “takes up the unhappy stance of dissenting from the judgments”(1986:vii) of many critics who applause Lessing’s works, regards it as an “undisputable achievement”(1986:4) which “should endure”(1986:7). As the other of “the two considerable achievements”(Karl, 1972:293), *The Four-Gated City* (1969), which crowns the *Children of Violence* series, represents Lessing’s new achievement. Martha Quest, together with Mary Turner and Anna Wolf stand out, beyond dispute, in the “central figures in the roll of twentieth-century female literary protagonists.”(Rubenstein, 1979:5) And Lessing, with her contribution of the characters who have “the spirit ... of the age”(Bloom, 1986:7), will remain in the history of literature and human civilization at large.

Space occupies a prominent position in all of the three major novels. The individual’s self is inextricably associated with certain spaces, be it the store in the dusty dorps and conventional town with its color bar in Africa or the various spaces with distinct qualities in the greatest modern city of London, or more prominently, the houses embedded with the potentiality for a real personal space. Although there isn’t fact to show that Lessing has ever been directly influenced by any spatial theory nor has she made any systematic elucidation on space, she does affirm explicitly or implicitly the importance of space. In “Profile of Doris Lessing” produced by BBC Radio, she asserts the marvelous freedom and independence in the vast African landscape: “From my point of view the most important thing was the space,... there was practically nobody around, and I used to spend hours by myself in the bush”(Greene, 1994:9). She also implies another kind of freedom one can only find in big cities like London: “In Southern Rhodesia it is not possible to detach yourself from what is going on. This means that you spend all your time in a torment of conscientiousness. In England...you can get on with your work in peace and quiet when you choose to withdraw”(Lessing, 1974:48). These may account for the prominence of space in Lessing’s works to some extent. This book explores space in relation with self in the three representative novels by Lessing: the space of surveillance and the repressed self in *The Grass Is Singing*, the space of alienation and the divided self in *The Golden Notebook*, the thirdspace and the dissolved and revived self in *The Four-Gated City*. By a systematic analysis of the space in its relations with the state and the development of the individual’s self in the three major novels, this book attempts to make a contribution to the spatial criticism of Lessing study.

II . A Review of Spatial Criticisms of Doris Lessing

In the West, critics have noticed the importance of space in Lessing's works almost as early as they began to study Lessing. Interestingly, this even happened before the influence of "spatial turn" extended into literary criticism. That perhaps can prove from another angle the prominence of space in Lessing's works, even though there are few articles proving Lessing's conscious study of spatial theory or direct contact with the spatial theorist, nor any facts to show that the critics of the spatial elements consciously draw on spatial theory to conduct their study of Lessing's work.

Dorothy Brewster is one of those who make the earliest remarks on the spatial elements in Doris Lessing's work. In her monograph *Doris Lessing* published in 1965, the first book-length study of Lessing's fiction, she notes the prominent spatial image-the room in Lessing's works. She remarks that "Doris Lessing's marked interest in rooms is not just the novelist's usual concern with background" (1986;29). She draws people's attention to the astonishing number of rooms in Lessing's world by making a thorough list of the room image in the books already published by then.

Frederick R. Karl makes a depth analysis of the house or room image in the two important works by Lessing: *The Golden Notebook* and *The Four-Gated City*, by placing Lessing in a larger literary tradition "literature of enclosure" (1972;297) which he defines as "fiction in which breadth of space is of relatively little importance. *Space exists not as an extension but only as a volume to be enclosed* (italics, original) in a room, a house, or even a city" (1972;297). Karl associates Lessing's house or room image with the suffocating rooms of Pinter, Kafka and Proust. He holds that "the room is the place in which one can dream, where one can isolate oneself in neurosis or withdrawal symptoms, can seek refuge from external onslaughts too severe for the individual to withstand" (1972;298). Karl's emphasis on the psychological significance of the room as escapism is essentially negative. He insists that for Lessing, the room is a geometric space, not the infinite space that Eliade in *The Sacred and the Profane* sees as central to the reliving of the cosmogony. Karl successfully foregrounds the claustrophobic quality of these spatial images. Anna Wulf and Martha Quest do sometimes seek refuge in rooms and close the door to the outside world, but they always find themselves compelled to open the doors—to investigate new spaces. In consequence, the house and room image often become less claustrophobic and present more

positive qualities.

Most of the early spatial comments are remarks scattered in the discussion of the other major topics and the analysis of the spatial elements is confined to the metaphorical significance of the images of house and rooms. In *The Tree Outside the Window: Doris Lessing's Children of Violence*, Ellen Cronan Rose discusses the house image in the series as the metaphor to mark Martha's achievement of a sense of identity in her larger topic of the identity issue. Rose holds that Martha understands the house "as a model of society, whose interior somehow corresponds to her psychic configurations, and she moves easily in and through it" (1976:43). She argues that Lessing's use of the Coldridge house as a metaphor is "inadequate" (1976:55) as it is not the real world but a "protected space within society at large" (1976:55). Roberta Rubenstein also includes a depth analysis of the house as a psychological metaphor in her major discussion of the consciousness in her monograph *The Novelistic Vision of Doris Lessing: Breaking the Forms of Consciousness*. Rubenstein holds that the stratifications of the Coldridge house in *The Four-Gated City* symbolizes "the constantly shifting aspects and divisions of Martha's consciousness" (1979:138).

Gradually, scholars break through the limitation of the spatial concern in Lessing criticism to the house and room image. Mary Ann Singleton extends it to the city and the veld. In her dissertation "The City and the Veld: The Fiction of Doris Lessing" (1977), later published as a book, she focuses on the central images "the city" and "the veld", representing civilization and the consciousness, and nature and the unconscious experience respectively. Singleton concludes that Lessing moves toward an ideal synthesis between nature and culture as she develops a new form of consciousness. Jean Pickering is another critic who widens and deepens the exploration of the spatial images. In her *Understanding Doris Lessing*, she notices that not only the rooms, the houses, the city, the veld are all important spatial elements in Lessing's works. She is insightful in her interpretation of the house image: the rooms are its "inward divisions" and the city is its "outward extension" (1990:8). Pickering highlights the symbolic value of these spatial images. She associates the Turners' shack in *The Grass Is Singing* with the "fragility of the white settlers' inroad into the native bush" (1990:9); the state of the house with the condition of the soul in *Children of Violence* and *Summer Before the Dark*. She also pioneers in pointing out the two versions of the city in Lessing's work: "the archetypal city of the imagination, conceived in the Western tradition" and "the twentieth-century metropolis with its impoverished

slums, urban blight, and sprawling suburbs.”(1990:10) Pickering argues that the juxtaposition of the house, the city and the veld in Lessing’s work “constitute a many-voiced dialogue accommodating various philosophical concerns expressed throughout her work.” Ellen Cronan Rose focuses her attention on the city image in her article “Doris Lessing’s Citta Felice.” She says that the city is another architectural metaphor that “relates Martha to a reality that transcends the personal”(1986: 142) and she argues that the significance of the city image in *The Four-Gated City* and the later “space fiction” lies in “its ability to conflate psyche and cosmos.”(1986:142) She thus extends the critical contemplation of the spatial image in Lessing’s works from the domestic space to the city and draws the critical attention to Lessing’s “space fiction” which is much less discussed.

Perhaps the first systematic study of the various spatial images is conducted by Jacquelyn Diane Collins in her dissertation “Architectural Imagery in the Works of Doris Lessing” (1983). Collins is innovative in finding the architectural imagery in Lessing’s works as a key to her formal and thematic strategies. She holds that architectural imagery in Doris Lessing’s fiction is a dynamic metaphor which reveals the artist’s complex relationship to enclosure and mystical release. The dissertation deals with the basic architectural images such as house, room, wall, veranda and window as an important key to Lessing’s artistic and mythic quest. Collins holds that these images represent enclosure and symbolize a highly negative social and psychological environment. Correspondingly, the artistic structures of the fictions themselves are closed in by architectural imagery. Collins continues to argue that while architecture is a metaphor for enclosure, it also reveals Lessing’s movement towards a sacred, mystical world where human potential and the collective co-exist. Drawing on *The Children of Violence* Collins concludes that there is a movement away from imprisoning structures, artistic as well as social, as is symbolized by the collapsing house, a major architectural image in the series, which Collins thinks mirrors the overall movement of the series towards the collapse of the existing social structure and the basic structure of the art work itself. It’s a pity that Collins has not included *The Golden Notebook* in her study. The exclusion of such a masterpiece in a comprehensive study of Lessing’s work makes it incomplete and brings flaw to its convincingness.

Since the concept of cultural geography was introduced into Lessing study in the 1990s, scholars began to explore Lessing’s work from an interdisciplinary approach. With this shift, there are fewer dissertations focused solely on Lessing and her works. Rather, critics include her together with other writers to explore a

certain theme. Peter Joseph Kalliney uses literary theory, cultural studies, and human geography to show how social space informs our understanding of narrative form in his dissertation "Cities of Affluence and Anger: Urbanism and Social Class in Twentieth Century British Literature" (2001). By reading urban fiction from the last century, the dissertation demonstrates that the modern spatial reorganization of Britain's cities has changed the social meanings attached to narrative. In the chapter concerned Lessing, Kalliney explores the interpenetration between the postmodern form and narrative structure of *The Golden Notebook* and the then large postmodern social context. Ching-Fang Tseng selects Lessing's *The Grass Is Singing* in the dissertation "The Imperial Garden: Englishness and Domestic Space in Virginia Woolf, Doris Lessing, and Tayeb Salih" (2004) to explore the space and the British imperial identity issue. The author argues that ideas of home/land are central to Englishness as the core identity of identity. Another book well worth mentioning is Louise Yelin's *From the Margins of Expiry: Christina Stead, Doris Lessing, Nadine Gordimer* (1998). According to Yelin, the three writers demonstrate three strategies for negotiating between colonial or formerly colonial "peripheries" and metropolitan "centers", while their novels "perform the cultural work of inventing or constituting identity" (1998:165). Yelin creatively defines the new "hybrid genre that grafts the political novel or novel of ideas and the family romance" represented in the three novelist the "national family romance" (1998:171-172). This genre "narrates the ways that sexual politics, including the politics of the family, intersects with the politics of race, class, and nationality: it shows us how gender cuts across, shapes, and is in turn shaped by national location" (1998:172).

Another group of spatial criticism of Lessing is characterized by its concentration on Africa. Michael Thorpe makes a brief study of Lessing's writing about Africa, providing a critical commentary on "its broad humanity, keen judgment, disciplined style and its love of the Africa" (1978:2) in *Doris Lessing's Africa*. He attempts to "explore Doris Lessing's Africa as dream and reality" (1978:10). To Thorpe, Africa is so important in Lessing's works that he defines her as a "white African writer in English". At the same time he points out that her African writing is "not limited by the word 'African'... but kept instead a clear, compassionate eye upon humanity of all she portrayed, her work transcends the relatively brief episode of white settlement and places it in firm perspective as one of the seemingly tragic histories of universal distrust and hostility between races, creeds and classes" (1978:104). The other findings in this group include Linda

Susan Beard's dissertation "Lessing's Africa: Geographical and Metaphorical Africa in the Novels and Stories of Doris Lessing" (1979), Eve Bertelsen's *Doris Lessing's Rhodesia: History into Fiction* (1984), and Eve Bertelsen's "Weltanschauung: Doris Lessing's Savage Africa" in *Modern Fiction Studies* (1991), in which *The Grass Is Singing* is discussed, and major cultural source of Rhodesian reality is examined.

In China, Lessing study didn't flourish until 2007 when Lessing won the Nobel Prize. Although started late, Chinese scholars' new perspectives to reinterpret and reassess Lessing's works are rewarding. Spatial study of Lessing is one of the new attempts. Xiao Qinghua makes analysis of various spaces in *A Home for the Highland Cattle*, *The Golden Notebook*, *The Four-Gated City*, *The Diaries of Jane Somers*, *Good Terrorist*, *The Fifth Child*, and *Love, Again* in her monograph *Urban Space and Literary Space: A Study of Doris Lessing's Fiction* (2008). With the theories of urban space and the thirdspace, Xiao attempts to catch the critical moments in the production of the urban space of London. Xiao's study is marked with a cultural stand, providing a new perspective to Lessing study. Zhao Jinghui is another scholar who studies Lessing from the spatial perspective. She focuses on the urban space and the house image in Lessing's *Children of Violence*. In her article "Existence Predicament in City Space: On Doris Lessing's Series" (2011), published in *Social Sciences in Ningxia*, she argues that in Doris Lessing's works, urban space does not only provide a setting, but is the expression of the writer's personal experience and even the construction of the writer's ideology and discourse. In "Significant Urban Spaces in Lessing's *Children of Violence*", published in *Contemporary Foreign Literature* (2011) Zhao holds that the imaginary presentation of ideal urban landscape and spatial structure, which runs through Lessing's *Children of Violence*, dominate the reconstruction and description of urbanization in line with the mainstream ideology. In "The Spatial Metaphor of House in *The Four-Gated City*" in *Masterpieces Review* (2010), Zhao argues Lessing's use of the house as a spatial metaphor provides a new perspective for people to observe the world and understand life.

From the literary review above, it can be concluded that space has always been one of the major concerns in Lessing's work as the attention to it has been constant. But at the same time, as is the reception of the ingeniously conceived structure of *The Golden Notebook* which is left ignored for ten years after its publication, the space in Lessing's works has not received sufficient critical focus it deserves as the related comments are often scattered among remarks about other