

## A Study of Crises in Doris Lessing's *The Memoirs of a Survivor*



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### **Abstract:**

*Speculative fiction has always provided a suitable ground for contesting social constructions such as strict gender roles and conventional views on sexuality. In the 1970s especially, with the influence of second wave feminism, speculative fiction authors began to depict the political struggle of women in fictional universes which presented alternative modes of subjectivity and social structures. Doris Lessing's *The Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974) and Joanna Russ's *The Female Man* (1975) make use of the historically-situated nature of speculative fiction to narrate their experiences, reflect personal as well as political struggles in fictional alternate and future worlds which are indeed reflections of*

*the here and now. Both Lessing and Russ combine autobiographical and fictional elements in their exploration of female subjectivity and experience. This preference leads to a more genuine, less generalized impression of female identity and solidarity. In *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, described as "an attempt at autobiography" by its author, Lessing integrates personal experiences from her own life into the text while exploring a post-apocalyptic, or more precisely, a post-"Crisis" world. Although the events take place in a fictional future, they are influenced by the author's past in real life*

**Key Words:** *Dystopia, communism, feminism, class, crises and stability.*



ISSN : 2584-1963

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