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Female Identity Crisis in Doris Lessing's
The Golden Notebook

A Dissertation submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for a Master degree in English language, literature and civilization.

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Dedication

**I would like to dedicate this work for all those women who fought for women's
emancipation**

For all those women who refused to live as shadows for men

For all those women who defied patriarchy

For all those women who fought to educate themselves.

In the memorial of all those women buried alive.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the assistance which was given to me by the teachers of Literature and Civilization, of the English Department who have made my learning an extremely creative and gratifying experience.

A special gratefulness to Mrs. Ounissa Chioukh, whose wonderful pedagogical style and literary commitment in teaching greatly influenced my critical evolvement.

I would like to express my sincere acknowledgement to Mr. Hicham Lassouani for his literary inspiration and his sense of criticism.

Deepest and sincere gratitude to Mrs. Siham Saibi, I really and sincerely regret for not have been your student since my integration to the field of Literature and Civilization.

I have the honour to express my earnest and everlasting thanks for my supervisor and second reader Mrs. Assia Mohdeb, thank you for your valuable criticism, for your excellent academic guidance and encouragement during the research and writing of this thesis. I acknowledge your provided commitment, generosity, and enthusiasm to share both your time and resources will always be remembered.

Thanks for all the abovementioned for having accepted to examine my research paper and for the excellent questions and feedbacks during the research paper examination, and for your continued supports.

A special thanks for Miss Slimi, for her insight listening and advice thank you for your encouragements.

I wish to take this occasion to thank my parents; first of all I would like to thank my mother, my supervisor in life, who encouraged me in every step, in every examination, in every important event. Then I would like to thank my father, the faithful proud man of his girl, thank you for believing in me. To my sisters Baya and Nadia thank you for the coffee parts we shared, for those giggling, for all the best and bad moments dear sisters. To my

brothers Tahar, Hamid, Boudjemaa and Nacer, thank you for your indulgence and being here for my pleasure. I would like also to thank my sisters in law Nassima and Hassina, my nephews; Nadir, Khaled, Aziz and Idir, and my dear cousin Sissa. Thank you for your beings. Special acknowledgement to my little niece Maelys.

Without forgetting a special thank to Noredine Baouche for his valuable help thank you for your contribution.

To my best friends Souhila and Sabrina, to my class mates, Chahra, Noria, Naima, Dalila, Fatiha, Sara, and all those who shared with me the performance of *A Woman of No Importance*. A thanks for all my roommates; Khalissa, Salma, Kahina and Souhila especially Zahia.

I would like to express my deepest gratefulness to Dalil Akrou, for his encouragement and advice, for helping me to keep my perspective on what is important in life, for his insights suggestions and questions which have contributed to push my borders of thinking.

For all those who contributed so far in the realisation of this thesis, and those who will take it as a starting point for a further research.

Abstract

This dissertation studies female identity crisis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* by relying on feminist as well as postmodern ideas as theoretical framework. It investigates the refraction or the division surfacing within the identity of female protagonist amid the plethora of experiences she undergoes but looks for alternative choices out to liberation and self-definition. In this sense, the research foregrounds the impediments that impacted on the identity formation of the protagonist including, the complications of being raised in Southern Africa and being at the same time a woman, a lover, a mother, an artist as well as a political activist. The research also clearly elucidates and highlights the fragmentation within the identity of the protagonist in the novel by discussing not only the various episodes and aspects in her life but also by relating it to the different episodes or divisions in the structure of the novel.

Key words: Doris Lessing, *The Golden Notebook*, Late twentieth century England, refraction, Postmodernism, Feminism, Identity

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General Conclusion

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General Introduction

The subject of this present research is Identity Crisis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*. One point of focus in this dissertation is the investigation of the different identities that form together the constructed self of the protagonist, Anna Wulf, in Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*. Indeed, Anna Wulf, throughout the novel oscillates between four different worlds mapped out in the four different notebooks making up the whole novel, *the Golden Notebook*. This includes the black, the red, the yellow and the blue one. These different notebooks with a different name colour reflect the fraction within the self of the protagonist but also the fragmentation and the chaos of the world where she lives.

I took the decision to write about female identity and the different refractions it experiences amid the social, political and individual circumstances in which it is born and steeped. The decision also entails the investigation of the feminist writing, or what Kate Millet calls genotext, as a healing power for female wounds but also the experimentation with writing to map out the theme intended or the experience lived. In the creative mess of women's writings, I have taken a selective approach, which eventually brought me to Doris Lessing and her novel *The Golden Notebook* (1962). My choice falls upon the author and her book not only because she won the Nobel Prize in Literature in December 2007, but because of my passion for her style of writing, her concern with feminist issues, and her experimentation with the postmodern narrative techniques am fond of.

Retrospectively, Women, throughout history have been considered as second-class citizens and have assumed lower positions. They have, as the London feminist group puts it, "not just been hidden from history. They have been deliberately oppressed" (qtd. in Rose 10) Even in literature, women discovered "the limited, often secondary roles assumed by the majority of traditional female fictional characters as the majority of novelists were white men" (Brackett, 4). As such, women started to question their status in society, and their rights for education and work. Aiming to make a change in the cultural sphere, women succeeded to

establish a literature of their own which emerged under the umbrella term of feminism. Female voices which speak of oppression, victimization and sufferings have been uttered in literature and heard everywhere in the world. As Brackett suggests:

By the mid-twentieth century, a plethora of long fiction by women began to appear, with realistic female characters. Women's fiction transformed from products of imitation of a male aesthetic to protests against that aesthetic, eventually becoming self-defining works of literature. (4)

Indeed, by the mid twentieth century, such influential feminist voices as that of Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Rosario Castellanos, Kaye Gibbons, Marilyn French are heard everywhere in the world, and such theoretical works as Simon De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1950), Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* and Marry Elman' *Thinking about Woman* (1968) address women's issues and bother about what Betty Friedan calls "the problem that has no name"(15). The period has been a watershed in the history of feminism as it has witnessed a burst in the feminist scholarly and artistic traditions, all of which responding to the liberal feminist voices of the seventies.

In Britain, as elsewhere in the world, a breakthrough and a concern with feminism appeared with the birth of second-wave feminism and emergence of such pillars as T.S. Byatt, Monica Ali, and among them Doris Lessing was the epitome. Expressed in a variety of genres, plays, poems, autobiography, memoirs, polemical and occasional essays, fiction, as well as librettos and sketches, Doris's writing remains connected to a universal scope both in theme and technique. Dealing with Lessing as a feminist author and her works as by product of feminist writing, there is certain indistinctness and sometimes hesitation in relating a feminist theory to her work as she herself has repetitively confronted feminist approaches to her work. Nevertheless, Lessing's work shows reviews on gender relations and revises disturbing

postmodern thoughts and hypotheses as regards to women's position. To put it differently, there are pressures between woman and writer, male and female, body and mind, and the personal and political. In doing so, Lessing dares to change these binary oppositions to challenge twenty-first-century philosophy. The author investigates the replacement of these binaries for the benefit of women.

Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* is believed to be the epitome of feminist writing though Lessing keeps denying it. The text remarkably is concerned with feminist issues such as motherhood, sisterhood, marriage, divorce, identity, empowerment and writing as healing. Though many issues, in addition to the abovementioned ones, surface in the novel, it remarkably succeeds in portraying the relational problems between men and women and the formation of the female identity in the light of a plethora of circumstances. Indeed, Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* holds gender's confrontations in the light of the problems raised in Southern Rhodesia, cold war, the emergence of second wave feminism and British Communist Party. Accordingly, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* demonstrates its persistent application to a variety of contemporary themes.

The Golden Notebook revolves around the life of the protagonist Anna Wulf and her mission as a writer. The plot describes a set of episodes in the life of the protagonist including her youth years in Central Africa and her bitter firsthand experience with racism, her marriage and love affairs, her deception with the British Communist party, and her experience with writing. Yet, the too obsessive thematic concern is fragmentation or refraction within the life and identity of the protagonist which is clearly echoed in the structural and formal characteristic of the novel.

Accordingly, over this thesis, I will focus upon the manner in which Anna constructs her identity in her life writings. How much is it interesting to observe the manner in which she

has conceptualized her identity throughout *The Golden Notebook* from when she was in Africa where she begins thinking and challenging her early identity and constructing her own versions of the self. It should be emphasised that *The Golden Notebook* , not only maps the life of Anna Wulf, but provide us with interesting examples of the manner in which female individuals in general, and artists in particular struggle with defining themselves, especially those who faced difficult and challenging environments.

From the time of its publication, *The Golden Notebook* has been an authentic scope for discussion. It challenges the ethics of the conventional novel, limited by boundaries of predictable authority. Yet, Doris Lessing, throughout her novel, breaks the sequences set by unconventional monarchies. Indeed, Lessing oscillates between tradition and modernity but above all champions experimentation and innovation through the use of postmodern techniques such as metafiction, pastiche and fragmentation to clearly identify the postmodern subjective experience. The novel is just a portrayal of the twentieth century situation in politics, economics, and society, so Lessing spreads reality throughout her novel in order to knock at the human consciousness. Further, the gender's war is at that period still flourishing and knowing a great mental disorder. As well as reality and subjectivity are taken into consideration, the characteristics of narrative are to be counted in the novel which is typically subjective, where the air of feminism is of high presence.

When I started my research and collected the necessary reading material, I discovered that Lessing has a most peculiar opinion about studies that try to provide a critical approach to her literary work. Lessing has ever encouraged innovative researches saying that:

If you have yourself chosen my work as your subject, and if you do have to write a thesis -and believe me I am very grateful that what I've written is being found useful by you- then why don't you read what I have written and make up your own

mind about what you think, testing it against your own life, your own experience.
Never mind about Professors White and Black. (Qtd in Van Butsel, 7)

Clearly, Lessing encourages her readers to make use of their imaginative powers to bring necessary interpretation and feedback in the understanding of her work. Yet, it is still necessary to base this thesis on other people's criticism and analyses. Indeed, *The Golden Notebook* has been read from different perspectives, since it is a melting pot of different subjects which are interrelated, the thing that Lessing has ever encouraged; to investigate her novel throughout politics, British Communist Party, South Africa Apartheid (Zimbabwe), Algeria, cold war, Nuclear arms (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), and in terms of social studies, the male and female everlasting confrontations, the liberation of women's sexuality, the independence of women economically. Without doubt, Lessing's novel is a fertile land in which the readers would cultivate their own grains. Lessing's aim is to see her critics cultivating different approaches.

In her research paper entitled '*Writer's Block in The Golden Notebook Cause and Solution*', Camilla Torstensson studies Anna Wulf difficulties in representing reality as it is. According to Camilla Torstensson, Anna in her novel seems to face some difficulties in reflecting reality. Each time Anna has to re-read her writings to be sure of her objectiveness, but often she finds that it displays nostalgia, and she herself is too implicated in her writings. Consequently, Anna affirms that she has the same trouble in trying to relate other parts of her life. This breakdown conducts Anna to the conclusion that "Literature is analysis after the event" (5). Hence, reflecting reality after being involved in an event is challenging, because of the fact of being involved stimulate self commitment while writing. However, Anna's persistence to reflect reality is in large part caused by the British Communist Party of which Anna was a member. Communists' views about the artist were already condemned. At the time when Anna was a member of the Communist Party, 1950's, Socialist Realism¹ was

the one supported by the Soviet Union. Torstensson explains that the hymn of Socialist Realism is to mirror life in a positive objectivity. Consequently the obsession of Anna to reflect reality comes from the impact of the Socialist Realism on the Communist Party and thus on Lessing. According to Socialist Realism, a given writer is supposed to write in a positive and optimistic way. This clarifies why Anna does not want anyone to read what she writes in her recordings because her thoughts about the world and society are far from being optimistic. In Torstensson's viewpoint, Anna realises that objectivity is multiple in the world and there is not only one truth but many; it depends of everyone experiences of the world differently. (1-15)

In line with this idea, Watkins in her book *Twentieth-century Women novelists – Feminist Theory into Practice*, explains that the reason for Anna's writer's block is due to the fact that "she feels that anything she could write would be pointless when there is such horror in the world because it would merely create an untruthful version of reality" (qtd in Torstensson, 15). Accordingly, we understand that Anna suffers from writing block caused by the feeling that art is pointless when the world is covered by violence and misery, in addition to her need of portraying reality objectively. Therefore, Anna is intimidated to expose her real feeling and negative thoughts in front of the Communist Party.

Moreover, Ana Halbach in her *Sex War, Communism and Mental Illness: The Problem of Communication in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook*, points out another issue in the novel which is the problem of communication. Doris Lessing states in her second edition that "Other themes went into the making of this book, which was a crucial time for me: thoughts and themes I had been holding in my mind for years came together" (qtd in Halbach, 153). Among those concerns neglected by both readers and critics is the one dealing with the crisis of communication. According to Ana, the fact of choosing the writer as a

central character of the book, this dilemma of communication, can be translated as the problem of fictionalization.

Still, Dr. Pedram Lalbakhsh and Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya in their article entitled *The Subversive Feminine: Sexual Oppression and Sexual Identity in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook*, highlights women's oppression and subjugation in pure patriarchal and capitalist world where women's identity is merely defined by men. The paper tackles the novel in the light of the socialist feminist ideals to solve the intimidation inflicted on women by patriarchy and society. Certainly, the investigation shows that the most shining proofs of women's oppression and exploitation in the novel are their sexuality. It exposes the extra-marital relationship into which the male characters in the novel such as Richard, enter. According to the two researchers, "Men's exploitative view of women's sexuality is a universal and omnipresent phenomenon in the whole story." In fact, "they look at women as assets they buy in the market, like the lands they colonize. After one piece is conquered and colonized they need to move to another piece of land and do the same thing again, no matter what happens to the previous one"(94) . Indeed, as the study shows, all male characters, after having their affairs, come to the need of new sexual explorations with new women, they are soon bored.

As the article shows, the case is more delicate when concerned with the beautiful women simply because they are viewed as machines for men's pleasure and entertainment, George's words in the novel well describe the situation saying "All the beautiful women there are in the world, and we only have two of them here, it makes me want to cry" (112)². In this sense, the novel's world can be seen as a terrorizing, intimidating and insecure place for half of its population, indeed for women, because of their bodies and sexuality; they are often in threat of being raped, harassed, exploited, and oppressed. However despite all oppression,

they experience, Lessing's female characters turn the situation into their favour, by enjoying freedom in sexuality and succeed in using it in a subversive way.

Furthermore, Adamu Pangmeshi in his article, *Female Emancipation and the Crisis of Authority in the Postcolonial Context in Doris Lessing's The Grass Is Singing And The Golden Notebook*, investigates the process of metamorphosis of female self-definition in both novels, *The Grass is Singing* and *The Golden Notebook*.. According to Adamu, Lessing succeeded in redefining her female characters in a way that she will not be just seen but heard, to be not passive but to be active in their decision making. Metamorphosis, according to Lessing, says Pangmeshi, should be held as an opposition to "stigmatised identity they were given by male, The Holy Bible and the colonised world" (4). Indeed, the connotation the author, Pangmeshi, wants to stress is that women "have been held down by patriarchy, tradition, the Bible, and the colonial ideologies" (4). Certainly, Pangmeshi suggests, Lessing attempts to break those traditional views on women and by doing so she tries to bring women from "the margin to the centre" (4). Indeed, she has succeeded in reawakening the feminist movement by its female characters with the publication of *The Golden Notebook* and this by giving voices to women socially, economically and politically. In society "women have taken a metaphoric growth" (5) by moving from the era where man was the only dictator. The revolution attained in Lessing's novel is that women are no longer in the obligation to hide behind man protection, definitely marriage is no longer an institution of giving birth, and women are no longer semi apparent individuals. (8)

Still, Bülent Cercis Tanritanir and Hasan Boynukara in *Letter-Writing as Voice of Women in Doris Lessing's the Golden Notebook (2011)* convey that Doris Lessing exercises an immense influence in the world in the concept of how she solves the conditions of the oppressed women. As a great accomplishment, Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* has been categorised as a canonical work of feminism. The novel demonstrates 'letter-writing' to

emphasize and to assert the voice of women. According to the two researchers, *The Golden Notebook* takes part in the status of women in their specific contexts, and contributes in an analysis of a woman as a writer in her respective time and place. In fact, the novel suits the shape of epistolary and diary form. Its respective protagonist, Anna, debates the women's cause, in a way of how her femininity and female identity is reconstructed through letter-writing. Still, the tenets such as marriage, female sexuality, that have been viewed before as taboos, make the gist of the novel simply to reinforce and demonstrate how powerful the epistolary or letter-writing is to divulge female identities. The whole book is turning around the orbit of the protagonist Anna Wulf. (294-94)

In the same context, Bülent Cercis Tanritanir and Hasan Boynukara's suggest that Anna Wulf, the protagonist and the story teller, is a single woman, who lives with her young daughter in a flat. In an attempt to fight against her writing block, comes the immense success of her autobiographical first appearance novel about the Communists in colonial Africa. Indeed, Anna makes great efforts to pave the way to integrate the versatility of selves that fragment her character and make her existence breaking into chaos. (293)

Magali Cornier Michael in her book entitled *Feminism and the Postmodern Impulse: Post-World War II Fiction*, devotes her eighth chapter to *Madness and Narrative Disruption in Doris Lessing The Golden Notebook*. This chapter scales Lessing's novel to the colossal interrogation of the western ideologies that have dominated the world since the Second World War. In the same way the previous literature did, Cornier Michael suggests, *The Golden Notebook* reveals the crimes committed against humanity and the mental illness increased in the world. It also seeks to indentify the female situation and its relegation in the world, with multiple choices of subjects so as to locate connection between reality and literature. In fact, the novel as a whole is about a women self definition attempt both as a writer and as a subject, all this fused with a numeral postmodern aesthetic strategies. (79-108)

It is apparent from this review that Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* has drawn the attention of a great deal of critics who studied it from different perspectives. Yet, it is more surprising that, up to my knowledge, none of the studies reviewed the female identity crisis in the novel in an independent single study. As such, it will be my task in this thesis to fill the gap and to trace the patterns or the strategies through which female identity crisis has been represented.

Even though feminist issues such as victimization, empowerment, feminist writings and others as a subject are exhausted in Doris Lessing's novels, I have opted for *The Golden Notebook*, as a case study novel, given its up-to-datedness and richness in terms of language, structure and theme. The contribution of this thesis lies in studying the different angles of identity crisis surfacing within the protagonist of the novel. It studies in details how Doris Lessing maps the different roles the protagonist performs—woman, a mother, a lover, a writer, a political activist—and the plethora of divisions or refractions in her life and which all together impact on her identity and her self-definition. It is concerned with foregrounding the fact that fragmentation, and division within the life of the protagonist was necessary for self definition. Only by allowing fragmentation, or more precisely inhering from postmodernism, only by celebrating chaos, directly reflected in the dissolution and division in her the novel itself, the protagonist, Anna, becomes an artist and had a strong hold on the self.

In terms of structure, this research paper is divided into an introduction, three chapters and a conclusion. The introduction reads as preamble into Doris Lessing's World as a writer, her novels and in specific *The Golden Notebook*, and her major themes. The first chapter entitled *The Golden Notebook in contexts*, provides the biography of the author and a summary of *The Golden Notebook*. It is also concerned with the literary and historical background surrounding the novel and its publication. As far as the historical background is concerned, it entails issues such as the effects of the cold war on author's inspiration, and

investigate the different political and economic issues such as the cold war, the rise of capitalism and the fall of communism, Thatcherism, that may have influenced the authors' writing and ideology. On the other hand, the literary background situates the novel within the period in which it was weaved, I mean postmodernism and the emergence of postmodern literature, and the different thematic and stylistic techniques that may have also impacted on the author's imaginative powers.

The second Chapter entitled "Feminism; Theory into Practice" studies in detail the feminist theory. It gives an overview of the feminist theory, its emergence, beginning, its different waves and trends. The third chapter entitled "Identity Crisis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*," discloses the identity crisis of the protagonist, Anna Wulf in the four notebooks, both as a woman and as a writer. My research paper looks into the different angles from which this identity crisis is represented both thematically and structurally.

Chapter one

The Golden Notebook in contexts.

Introduction

This chapter entitled “Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook* in Contexts” is devoted to the study of the historical and literary contexts surrounding the publication of Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook*. It looks into the major historical events or issues of which the text is conscious, but also situates the novel in its literary contexts by referring to its genre and the literary techniques it uses.

1. Historical Context

1.1. Political Background

The twentieth century was a watershed in the history of Britain. Despite the different crises and hardships that stroke the nation after Second World War, a plethora of high social and political changes were characteristic of the nation in that age. Politically, Britain witnessed for the first time in its history the supremacy of the Labour Party. Indeed, the introduction of the Labour Party into power was a turning point in the history of the socio-economic policy in Britain as it led to the creation of the Welfare State which was introduced to help the needy lower classes. The Labour Party policy consisted heavily of bridging the gulf between the insolent wealth and the oppressive poverty through the welfare state. Every citizen would be guaranteed minimum requirement of life as a result of unemployment, old age sickness and retirement. In general, the extent of the Welfare State concerned social security, national health services, and nationalization of some areas of economy. However, the sweeping success of the Welfare State was not enough to be considered as an ideal socio-economic form since many objections were registered. Many people claimed that the welfare state made people lazy and irresponsible about their own lives.

The days of the complete control of the Welfare State over the socio-economic policy did not extend further than 1951. The Labour Party had been defeated by the Conservatives in the elections of 1951. The defeat of the Labour Party was due to an interaction and interplay of a set of conditions. Among the most important conditions was the fact that Britain was by the means of international scene, almost surrounded by Capitalist countries. Furthermore, people felt strongly the need to elect a Capitalist Party. That election would ensure a respected economic position for Britain amidst a continent where all its powerful states found dominated by the common market and Capitalist ideals (McDowall, 169-70).

The Conservative Party remained in office for the next 13 years and the introduction of the Affluent society was the salient aspect that characterized the conservative rule. The concept of affluent society aimed at offsetting the Welfare State and introducing more laissez-faire principals. Broadly, the concept consisted of full economic growth and full employment. The concept of Affluent society focused on raising the living standards in Britain. That is to say, a lot of money in pocket and more ability to buy all what would guarantee comfortable life. Despite claims that the Affluent society created economic prosperity and expansion, one should consider that the affluent society had widened social inequalities. The affluent society minimized the extent of the Welfare State which was providing the lower classes with free education, free hospitalization, and old aged pensions.

Still, the 1970s were a momentum in the history of Britain as great changes were remarkably seen and felt with the election of Margaret Thatcher, the iron lady, in 1979. In general, Thatcher stood for a limited, firm government; the rolling back of the Welfare State; the end of consensus politics; and a staunchly anti-federalist approach to the European Union (McDowall, 179-82). These policy tenets became the foundation of a new British political ideology, popularly labelled “Thatcherism.”

Thatcher's government was growing drastically unpopular largely due to the policy she adopted by shrinking the extent of the Welfare State. Thatcher moved with a great determination to privatize public services, to reduce public expenditure, particularly expenditure on the Welfare State and to challenge the power of trade unions. In general, Thatcherism contributed to the break-up of the close links between trade unions and government, and promoted the privatization of government-owned public services and industry. Above all, her period in office inculcated in the British mind a more free-market attitudes.

1.2. Social Background

Socially, post war British society underwent deep and significant changes. In general, the earliest patterns of change were closely associated with the Affluentionisation of the population, a process that had been launched in the fifties and shaped classless society (Heyck, 224-34). This led to the establishment of new social order. Most British people became a middle class in their social status and enjoyed a highly elevated wages and more comfortable conditions of life.

Nevertheless, Post war British society is characterized by a widespread triumph of working class values over those of the middle and upper classes. Although most of the British people gets access to the standards of the middle classes in term of job and comfort, but a grip is tightly held on the working class culture. The working class mood, tendencies, tastes and life style had been firmly rooted and became the social and the cultural labels of the British society of post Second World War. Actually, the dominant accent, dress, food and music are those strongly manifested by the ordinary or working class people. In brief, the working class of the Post-World War was seen growing confident and powerful (McDowall, 234-38).

Moreover, in the 1960s and 1970s, nearly all aspects of the dominant pre-war culture were subject to reforms with the emergence of the new generation of society known as youth generation. The Wild subversion of the widely accepted values, ethics and ideals had accelerated the emergence of new social order embodying new social patterns. Consequently, an enormous normalization of a set of practices that were strictly censured by religion and tradition took place. These include issues such as love affairs, sex, pornography, and homosexuality, a set of practices that was unaccepted before in terms of traditions and religion.

Furthermore, another important characteristic of the British society of Post-World War is its ethnic diversity. Broadly, migration is considered the most important factor of the ethnic diversity in Britain. In addition to the French Huguenots, Irish, Jews who escaped from Russia and Polish in the interlude of first and second world wars, a new waves of immigration swept Britain in post-world war and consisted mainly of immigrants from commonwealth countries :Eastern Africa, Indies, Pakistan and Bangladesh (McDowall, 176-79) . Indeed, immigration brought about a multi-ethnic society composed of different races, religions and cultures. Ethnically, Britain is seen the home of coexistence between Africans, Asian Britons or Asians: Indians, Pakistanieese, Banguieese, Chineese from china and other minor ethnic groups. Religiously, British religious map contains multi-religious institutions, backgrounds and beliefs.

Still, British society proved highly advanced standards of a cosmopolitan society. Innumerable ethnics and religious groups coexist harmoniously and seen regulated by a fairly rule of law. British cosmopolitanism emanates mainly from the liberal mood and the democratic line that is perused by the British institutions. Furthermore, the nature of British nationalism had been largely influential on the formation of a British cosmopolitan society after the Second World War. Deeply speaking, the British citizenship was/is not limited to an

originally British or Saxon descents. That is to say, the British citizenship is not a faculty of any ethno-biological considerations. Technically speaking, British nationalism proved to be purely politico-civic as it is essentially regulated and monitored by the will to join. That is to say, if a person cultivates a wish to join the British nation, the process is a subject of considerations that are determined by the political bureaucracy. Actually, the process does not incorporate any ethno-biological criterion (McDowall, 176-79).

1.3. The Emergence of Feminism

In addition to all practices mentioned above, the British society was affected by the rigidly accentuated tone of feminism. The first root of feminism in Britain goes very remotely back to 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published a work entitled *vindication of the rights of women*. Actually, the work is considered as the pioneering attempts to ingrain the idea of equality between man and women in the British society. Officially, London's society of women's suffrage (born in 1857), was an association with the purpose to promote women's right to vote. From then on, the right to vote became increasingly crucial for all the feminist associations and movements that came after 1857. All the feminist movements made a consensus over the crystallization of the right to vote as the corner stone of the feminist cause. In 1918, the representation of the people act had been passed through parliament giving women aged over thirteen years the right to vote. As time progresses, feminism grew different in answer to the socio-economic and socio-cultural shifts that had been undergone by the British society. From 1960s onwards, feminism struggled to make law that would promote feminist cause does coincide with the new socio-cultural order as well to respond to the new emerging feminist needs and challenges.

Post War British feminism grew radically different from that of the pre-second world war. There was a transformation from a politically focused cause and a demand of relative

freedom to a larger target that engulfs almost everything by the claim of equality under all possible circumstances. Feminism worked to carry women out of the traditional world. That is to say, a totally independent woman. This was achieved through an arsenal of laws that had been passed by parliament.

In general, feminism succeeded in pushing politicians to legalize contraception (the pill 1961), the abortion act of 1967 which legalized abortion, divorce reform act of 1969 which gave divorce the possibility to be pronounced only by the motif that marriage is simply going bad, and the sex discrimination act of 1975 that made inequality between women and men forbidden. Actually, feminism cannot be viewed historically as independent from the socio-economic, socio-cultural and the philosophical mood that dominated the period. All these considerations were always lying behind the nature of the feminist cause.

2. Literary Context

2.1. Biography of Doris Lessing

Doris Lessing is Nobel laureate whose impressive works have inspired readers for decades. She was raised in South Rhodesia, Zimbabwe now. Although she moved physically away, she remains mentally attached in her writings to this continent. When Lessing is asked if she found it strange that she was still associated with Africa, she points out that “No, because it seems to me I belong to both places really. I certainly think I am returning to southern Africa when I write” (Lessing and Daymond, 239). The misery, the suffering she has seen growing up has inspired her in her artistic efforts. Doris Lessing has written both realistic and space fiction novels. Her works assemble a remarkable resourcefulness and cover a wide range of themes. From her first novel *The Grass is Singing* (1950) in which she portrays life on an African farm to the meta-fictional experimentation novel, *The Golden Notebook* (1962), in which she deals with the theme of breakdown and compartmentalization,

to space fictions in such works as *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, (1974), *Shikasta*, (1979) and *Mara and Dann* (1999). Reading her novels one could not help but be impressed by the range of themes and concerns that stem from her experiential life and imagination. (Krasniqi, 1)

Doris Lessing in full Doris May Taylor was born in Persia (now Iran) on October 22, 1919 and died in November 17, 2013 in London, England; British writer whose novels and short stories are mainly involved with people engaged in the social and political commotion of the twentieth century. Both Lessing's parents were British: her father, who had lost a leg during his service in the First World War and her mother, Emily Maude Taylor, a nurse, at the Royal Free Hospital. Alfred Taylor moved his family to Persia (now Iran), in order to take up a job as a clerk for the Imperial Bank of Persia and it was there that Doris was born in 1919. The family then moved to the British colony of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1925, to farm maize, at the time when her father purchased around one thousand acres of bush. The farm was not successful and failed to deliver the wealth the Taylors had expected.

The author has portrayed her childhood as a diverse mixture of pleasure and pain. Her mother, obsessed with raising a proper daughter, enforced a rigid system of rules and hygiene at home and signed up a girl of seven for a Roman Catholic convent, where nuns terrified their students with stories of hell and damnation. Later Doris integrated with all-girls in high school in Salisbury from which she soon escaped. She was only about fourteen and this was the end of her formal education. She was frightened of her mother, and at the age of fifteen she left home and started to work as a nursemaid. It was about this time that Doris started herself education, while her employer handed to her materials about politics and sociology. She embarked on writing about this time. In the coming years, she worked as a nanny, telephonist, office worker, stenographer and journalist and had several short stories published. In 1937, she married her first husband, Frank Wisdom, with whom she had two children, a son John and a daughter Jean, before the marriage ended in 1943. After her divorce, Lessing

was drawn to the Communist Left Book Club; a Marxist group mainly concerned with race issues and it was there that she met her second husband, Gottfried Lessing, a German-Jewish emigrant. They were married shortly after she joined the club, and had a son Peter. Before the marriage also ended up in a divorce in 1949. Gottfried Lessing was sent to Uganda, where he became the East German ambassador, and was murdered in the 1979. Because of her commitment in the campaign against nuclear arms and South African apartheid, Doris Lessing was banned from that country and from Rhodesia for many years. Therefore, she moved to London with her youngest son, in 1949. Between 1952 and 1956, she became member of the British communist party and was mainly active against nuclear weapons. The banishment of Lessing from Southern Rhodesia was in part caused by fervent criticism of the Southern African regime (Apartheid), thus she was prohibited to enter that country from 1956 to 1995.

Lessing published her first novel, *The Grass is Singing* (1950) in London, and began her career as a professional writer, shortly after she wrote the *Children of Violence series* (1951- 1959), a semi autobiographical, properly conformist novel about education. In the coming years she wrote *A Proper Marriage* 1954 and *A Ripple From The Strom* (1958). She also wrote the novel which made her become famous, *The Golden Notebook*, published in 1962. In the 1971, she also published *Briefing for a Descent Into Hell*, a science fiction work about higher plans of existence. Novels such as *The Good Terrorist* and *The Fifth Child* successively came in 1985 and 1988. In *African Laughter: Four Visits to Zimbabwe* (1992), she recounts her going back to 1982 to the country where she had grown up. Her book, *Under My Skin*: volume one of her autobiography, appeared in 1995 and received the “James Tait Black Prize” for best biography. Doris Lessing also writes under the penname of Jane Somers.

The Golden Notebook (1962) was Doris Lessing’s masterwork. The growing Feminist movement considers it as a pioneering work and surely it belongs to the books that inform the twentieth century opinion about the male-female relationship. This novel was built upon a

very complex style of writing and a meticulous narrative technique through which she revealed how political and emotion conflicts are interrelated. Anna Wulf, the protagonist of the novel, interferes five notebooks for her denunciation about Africa, politics and the communist party, her relationship to men and sex. This shows the complexity in the mind of Doris Lessing retracing from her childhood to her unsatisfied adulthood. ("Doris Lessing." 2012)

2.2. *The Golden Notebook: A Summary*

The Golden Notebook is about a British Communist, writer and “free woman” named Anna Wulf and is set in the 1950s. The novel, in its multifaceted narratorial nuances and depths, represents the familial, social and political aspects of a single mother Anna and brings into the light the fragmented subjectivities of individuals with respect to Communism, Art and Gender roles; one of these aspects focuses on the position of women in England during the first half of twentieth century where the patriarchal structures were being challenged and subverted by women. Summarizing the novel in a few words, one can say that it is: “Bold and illuminating, fusing sex, politics, madness and motherhood, 'The Golden Notebook' is at once a wry and perceptive portrait of the intellectual and moral climate of the 1950s – a society on the brink of feminism”(qtd in. Milikic, 6)

The novel preludes to us a divorced single mother Anna Wulf who is a promoted novelist in 1950s London. Anna believes that her awful experiences and relationships with wrong men are going to drive her life into chaos. This worrying and feeling of disgust, makes her trace her life and experiences in four altered notebooks. The most central notebook is the fifth one, *The Golden Notebook*, where all her experiences are connected and she starts to understand her own life and her search for a personal and political identity.

The novel opens with Anna and Molly, two liberated (free) women with a common political (Communist) concern, both facing problems related to their love life and mainly motherhood. Anna has written a successful novel, *Frontiers of War*, of which she still receives benefits and is free to do volunteer work for the Party, whereas Molly is a minor actress in the theatre. Both are divorced and concentrated on the education of their children Janet and Tommy respectively. After a year of separation, the two women meet with each other, soon it becomes clear that Tommy is a troublesome teenager and that Anna is dealing with a writer's block. Anna Wulf, experiences a mental breakdown mostly as a response to the falling world that surrounded her starting from her childhood; she asserts that her reaction is typically natural and normal. Anna tries to take control of her life and resolve her writer's obstruct by writing in four different notebooks, precisely not all in one but she insists on the fact that, out of fear of chaos, she has to separate things. She writes a red notebook dealing with the communist politics; a black notebook as a memorial of her life in Africa in the 1940s; a blue one is a kind of personal journal in which she records her personal life and the yellow one which contains a partial manuscript of a novel as well as ideas for other short stories and novels and also can be defined as a fictional alter-ego between Ella for Paul and Julia for Molly.

The four notebooks cover the period from 1950 to 1957 and are written specifically in the first person. In addition, *The Golden Notebook* appears in 1957 and illustrates the events happening in that year. Moreover, there are five sections entitled Free Women, written in the first person and which cover the year 1957 and the events of that summer, written in an objective manner, and where Anna is the central consciousness. The novel opens with a Free Women section, followed by entries of the black, the red, the yellow and the blue notebook, four times repeated alternatively. The end of the novel is a combination of Anna's blue diary and a final Free Women section. (Sukenick, 515-35)

2.3. Postmodernism: Concept and Theory

Modernism is an extensive word for the emergence of new styles and inclinations in art during the first half of the twentieth century. One of the problems in dealing with postmodernism is in distinguishing it from modernism. In consequence, the concept postmodernism, like the other concepts encloses two parts at the same time: firstly a historical period, secondly a term for a state of mind, progression of social and cultural tendencies (Dhuldhur, 10). Modernism maintains the yearning for a constant identity through place and time. Modernity coated everyday life from the modern art to the incursion of new technologies, and new means of transportations and communication. In many ways, postmodern artists and theorists continue the sorts of experimentation that we can also find in modernist works, including the use of self-consciousness, parody, irony, fragmentation, generic mixing, ambiguity, simultaneity, and the breakdown between high and low forms of expression.

Before defining the critical theory of postmodernism, it is necessary to understand in advance the meaning of 'post' in the term postmodernism. According to Lyotard, Post in postmodernism at the origin denotes the extension process of the modernists' works 'avant-garde painters, writers and thinkers (Picasso, Joyce, Freud), the way of thinking's analysis. Without doubt, post in the words, post-modernism, post-feminism, post-colonialism and post-industrialism, shows an engagement with the modernist period rather than its collapse. But this period of post-modernization goes further than modernism. In any case, it expands to the period of romanticism. Even so, Lyotard does not recognize postmodernism as "comeback, flashback or feedback" but a continuation of the missing analysis. (47-50)

Remarkably, in postmodern literature, writers deliberately approve intentional intertextuality and often depart to pastiche, which is regarded habitually as an offense to the

authorship. In addition, postmodern sphere is devoted to empirical thinking which concentrates on fragmentations, incomplete dimensions of a given object, from intellectual critics to urbanization. In term of economics, postmodernism is identified as being a generator of consumer's growth into a more technological identity. Post-modernism is a critical and philosophical approach that has influenced visual art, architecture and literature from 1950's. Certainly postmodernism as defined by Brian McHale is "the shift of dominant from problems of knowing to problems of modes of being [...] from an epistemological dominant to an ontological one" (Qtd in Wakchaure, 3). Postmodernism liberates a clear rejection of general philosophical perspectives that were highly defended during the 18th century enlightenment. It denies any unifying theory that is presumed to put in plain words everything. In fact, most of the theories associated to the postmodernism hold the rejection of the scientific canon, of the idea there can be a single coherent rationality or that reality has a unitary nature that can be definitively observed or understood. It believes that human knowledge is always fragmentary and limited (qtd in Wakchaure , 3).

After the WWII, a new chapter starts in literature. The British writers shared a common desire for change and a movement of recreation against political systems (Communism). Undeniably, it was only in 1977 that the notion of postmodernism knew its glory and considered as a part of the public innovations. However, Robert Barsky emphasises the origins of postmodernism saying:

Derived from the etymologically battling combination of "post" (after) and "modo" (just now) and with attributes which can be traced through the *history* of modern thought but which take present shape after the Second World War post-modernity now loosely encompasses or relates to a series of movements sometimes incompatible, that emerged in affluent countries in Europe and of European descent in art, architecture, literature, music, the social sciences and the humanities... Its rise has spawned whole

new approaches such as *cultural studies*, feminist studies (such as Heckman), *Women's studies*, *gay and lesbian studies*, *gender studies*, *queer theory*, science studies, and *postcolonial theory*, although it has now become the dominant paradigm which is its of being questioned for its limiting practices (qtd in. Wakchaure, 2)

The clash between modern and traditional writing had already existed in modernism, the new literature 'Neo-modernist or Postmodernist' react against its principles and its historical orientation. Postmodernism pretends to bring refresh and newness in literature. It holds on the separation of the present and the future from the past and this by the inclusion of new methods. Postmodern writing has been narrowly receptive to 'deconstruction'. A certain narrow-mindedness categorized much post-war English fiction, and also to constitute a distinct period in English fiction too. Moreover, it is a style of art, principally in the 1980s, which uses a remarkable mixing of old and new figures. As considered by the philosopher Jean Francois Lyotard: "there were no Grand Narratives left on which thinkers or writers, could depend; simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward meta-narratives"(qtd in Cuprins, 283). The Postmodernists departed in deep to the direction of a more radical reformation of literature. The most prominent facet in postmodernism is indeterminacy. There is no assertion, nothing is certain. Thus this indeterminacy is evolved sense of fragmentation. The world is fragmented; the society is fragmented; the family is fragmented; the process of fragmentation is an on-going process. The nuance of fragmentation is finely present in the contravention of forms which is the application of pastiche or hotchpotch and integration of genres in an unexpected way (284).

What differentiates postmodernism from other literary movements is the explosion of art or well known as decanonization and the distinction between 'high art' and 'low art'. Brian McHale suggests that "Postmodernism is characterized by the collapse of hierarchical distinctions between high and low art, between 'official' high culture and popular or mass

culture” (qtd in Wakchaure, 5). Though this post modernisation builds its principles upon reality as linguistically constructed; it means that the meaning cannot depict reality without language issues. Although objectivity exceeds the language, reality and objectivity refute the idea how the language describe this reality but what this language tends to express. Yet, many cognitive researches arose arguing that language extremely figures the way people think and perceive the world. This movement, the same as other movements, is shaded with tenant characteristics such as decanonization, emphasis on language; reality as linguistically constructed, meta-fiction; self-reflexivity, indeterminacy, fragmentation, collage style/pastiche, Surface/images over reality; simulacra, and irony. Indeed, according to many theorists, postmodernist cultural movements, which often fused with new political tendencies and social movements in contemporary society, are particularly associated with the increasing importance of new class fractions, for example, ‘expressive professions’ within the service class. Lyotard, for example, speaks especially of the replacement of any grand narrative [les grands recits] by more local ‘accounts’ of reality as distinctive of postmodernism and postmodernity. Baudrillard talks of the ‘triumph of signifying culture.’ Postmodernist analysis is often marked by forms of writing that are more literary, certainly more self-reflexive than is in common and critical writing - the critic as self-conscious creator of new meanings upon the ground of the object of study, showing that object no special respect. It foregrounds montage to perspective, intertextuality to referentiality and delights in excess, play, and asymmetry. (Wakchaure, 1-8)

So far as the basic framework of post-modernism is concerned, two names such as J. F. Lyotard and J. Baudrillard are linked with it. Lyotard claims that all what truth needs is an affirmed agreement, to provide human history with micronarratives; real truth, despite the fact that there is no single objective truth. For Lyotard, grand narratives are unsustainable and tyrannical. In support of Lyotard grand narratives set boundaries between the truth and the

readers with restricted discourse to marginalize voices that do not suit the dominant group. Jean François Lyotard in his *Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism?* starts by a *demand* in which he states in a clear tone that the period was a “slackening” period, and an urgent movement should be set in order to prevent experimentations in cultural production mainly in art. So, *the Postmodern Condition* outlines the project of the neoconservative: to liberate the incomplete project of modernity, compared to Habermas who draws a negative aspect in neglecting the Enlightenment ideologies.

While Baudrillard reports that nowadays reality is transmitted via media in a more realistic and authentic way, which makes distinction between the real and the imagination, the fact and the fiction (Somatkar, 66). Baudrillard was an element of the French tradition testing traditional sociological thinking. He refers to France as a “consumer society” (151). The civilization of advertising takes a great part in our modes of reflexion so the truth is inundated in the world of media and exchange, Baudrillard adds that "our society thinks itself and speaks itself as a consumer society. As much as it consumes anything, it consumes itself as consumer society, as idea. Again Baudrillard is faithful to his concepts Simulacra and simulation, clarifies how our perceptions of the real have immersed the real truth in the postmodern societies. He describes that postmodern societies are submerged by Simulacra and simulation and decreases into the phase of hyper real society: a kind of fragmentation, to acquire life for one's own purpose shadowed with symbolic exchange. In other words, he supposed that mass media are so influential that they have created a culture replaced by another reality. Baudrillard distrusts media because it simplifies reality so as to be more consumed. Similarly, all aspects of postmodernism dissimulate reality and create an ambiguous mirror that does reflect the truth. (151-62)

2.4. Metafiction: Postmodern Impulse.

Metafiction is a complicated term that has various definitions and most of them remain inadequate to confront its complexity. Metafiction affirms that a literary work refers to itself and to the principles of its assumption by using a variety of techniques and narrative devices. In any case, the simplest understanding of metafiction is a “fiction about fiction.”

Patricia Waugh defined metafiction as a “term given to fictional writing which self consciously and systematically draw attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose question about the relationship about reality and fiction” (2). Critics say that metafictional writings do not only treat the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also negotiate the probable ‘fictionality’ of the life out of the literary contexts. Contemporary writings contain proportions of self-reflexivity and prescribed uncertainty. Emphasizing on these definitions, metafiction implies itself not with the “‘creation’ of a new narrative but with the ‘re-creation’ or ‘re-presentation’ of an additional/convention narrative, with its principal objective being to “explore a theory of writing through the practice of writing” (Waugh, 5).

Reviewers of postmodern metafiction assert that it marks the death or exhaustion of the novel as a genre, while believers maintain that it symbolises rebirth of the novel. Devotees note that other genres remarkably have testified the identical critical self-reflexivity and in contrast the definition of the novel itself “notoriously defies definition” (Waugh, 5). Still, Patricia Waugh remarks that “contemporary metafictional writing is both a response and a contribution to an even more thoroughgoing sense that reality or history are provisional: no longer a world of external verities but a series of constructions, artifices, impermanent structures” (7). The direct application of metafictional technique, as Waugh considers it, comes from modernist theorising of consciousness and reality. Furthermore, self conscious, introspective, introverted, narcissistic or auto-representational are concepts representing

contemporary metafictional writings. Indeed, other critics believe that using the term “metafiction” refers to moderns works which are fundamentally self-reflexive, including as well the works that contain only few lines of self-reflection merely to create an atmosphere of ambiguity and uncertainty. With the use of metafictional rudiments, the postmodern authors propose a distinction between reality and its linguistic representation and they prove the fact that a language operates on diverse aspects than reality. Meanwhile, the applications of metafictional aspects maintain the fictionality of fiction, engage a reader in a recreation of meaning of the literary text, this in the same way correspond to the demarcation between the past and contemporary forms of art. (Waugh, 6-7)

In line with metafiction, the term “historiographic metafiction” was introduced and coined by Linda Hutcheon in her essay “*Beginning to Theorize the Postmodern*” in 1987 and then further developed in her seminal study *A Poetics of Postmodernism (1988)* to describe “those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages. Accordingly, Linda Hutcheon coined the concept “historiographic metafiction” to define postmodern novels that “are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages” (5).

The nineteenth century, symbolizes “scientific history,” literature and history coexisted as branches of the same learning’s field. But this alienation knew a separation that formed two distinctive disciplines; literary and historical studies nowadays, even though the realist novel and historicism allocated several analogous beliefs about the opportunity of writing exactly about reality. However, this partition of the literary and the historical is in fact, now challenged in postmodern theory, of both history and fiction have centred more on what they share rather than on how they differ. These are the applied instructions of historiographic metafiction which made the grounds for rethinking and reworking of the

forms and contents of the past. This recent theory of both history and fiction, demands to repeal history and fiction as historical terms and that their descriptions and cohesions are historically predominated. (Hutcheon, 105)

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the socio-historical background of the late twentieth century; the era in which *The Golden Notebook* has been published spotting the light on the major events that could influence the course of its realization. Indeed, the novel was introduced to the postmodern philosophical trend, detaining its most influential techniques ranging from refraction to pastiche. As a matter of fact, this chapter gives an overview of the social, political and philosophical perspective in which *The Golden Notebook* has been brought up.

Chapter Two

Feminism Theory into Practice

Introduction

Feminist beliefs have existed since ever, but they reached their peak only in the mid 1800s. Women have been regarded as inferior as and less important than men. People used to judge that women's right place was at home as desperate housewives, tending their husbands and caring about their children. At that time, law was not less exigent and apparently shares public opinion in regards of women. As a matter of fact, women were barred by law from voting in elections. Similarly, working and making professional careers were definitely closed to women.

Before the birth of "feminism," women were satisfied with their faiths; Man occupied the place of the chief of the house and worked to feed his family, whereas, the woman stayed at home to please her family. It worked out well all around. Married women were seen as chained by men's chain. There is no alternative to escape from this ruffle constitution (marriage). However, it appears at that period some women, especially if they were single, used to work outside the parental home. Women's job opportunities were restricted to only certain areas.

Despite the fact that it faced strong resistance, 'feminism' gained authority during the 1800s and 1900s and succeeded in obtaining new rights for women. During the mid 1900s, a rising number of women joined the work forces. Women understood that they were prevented from what they were allowed to do and accomplish. Particularly, this incident gave rebirth to the feminist movement during the 1960s. Thus, organizations such as NOW (National Organization for Women) were established and are still fighting for the women's rights.

It is only at the end of the nineteenth century that the term 'feminism' did appear, firstly in France during the 1890's, and soon after taken up in the rest of Europe and then in America. The concept of 'feminism' emerged from the multiple movements for female

emancipation settled in the nineteenth century: right movements to vote, to access education and professions: movements for married women to own property and have charge of their children, and for the abolitions of law about female prostitution. Accordingly, most of the prominent philosophical defences of women's liberation in this period were indeed written by people involved in politics, for example John Stuart Mill, the author of *The Subjection of Women*. Also, Emily Davies, the author of *The Higher Education of Women*, founded the Girton College, Cambridge.

In this respect, works that were resolving women's oppression are bound to be considered as works of feminism and later serve as orientation in feminist perspectives. Although these authors did not intend to integrate feminists rate; but because they used a description and analysis of women subordination, it is roughly enough to identify them as feminist writers. Therefore, researchers select their material according to the type of feminism they would study.

1. Feminism: Etymology and Definition

While trying to give an appropriate definition to 'feminism', I resolved to focus on the applied definition given by Bell Hooks when she contends that "feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (1). Hooks' approach of feminism is the clarification of the conventional term of sexism as a synonym of 'radical feminism'. Even though, feminism is a natural or legitimate women struggle to be equal to men. Constantly, feminism is a policy intended to change existing control relatives between women and men in society. These controls of power, expands to all areas of life; family, education, employment, politics, and culture.

The etymology of 'feminism' is extracted from the Latin word, '*femina*' which means woman, formerly understood that is to acquire the qualities of a female. However, the term

feminism started to be used with allusion to sexual equality and women's rights movement in the 1890s. Dictionaries define it as the advocacy of women's rights based on the belief in the equality of the sexes, and in its broadest use, the word refers to everyone who is aware of, and seeking to end, women's subordination to man. (Arun, 4)

Donna Hawxhurst and Sue Morrow suggest that the word feminism "has only working definitions, since it is a dynamic, constantly changing ideology with many aspects including the personal, political and philosophical. It can never be simply a belief system. Without action, feminism is merely empty rhetoric which cancels itself out" (4). Still, According to Charlotte Bunch, feminism is about changing of the society's percussion, because everything concerns women, every matter is a woman's concern, and thus, there is a feminism perception on every issue (Hooks, 145). Moreover, Barbara Berg asserts that feminism is "a broad movement embracing numerous phases of women's emancipation. It is the freedom from sex-determined role freedom from society's oppressive restrictions, freedom to express her thought fully and to convert them freely into actions" (qtd in Hooks, 145).

2. Waves of Feminism

It has been considered that feminism has evolved through three apparent phases or waves. The First Wave Feminism began in almost 1800 and ended in 1930s, was concerned with gaining equal rights for women and men. Whereas the Second Wave Feminism began in the late 1960s, it carried First Wave Feminism's fighting for egalitarianism between men and women but unexpectedly developed theories and approaches that sustain the women's subordination and put emphasis on the specific needs of women. However these two waves paved the way for recent development which could be considered as the Third Wave Feminism. Nonetheless, each wave is identified through its feminist's leaders and its characteristics.

2.1. First-wave feminism

The first wave feminism emerged in Europe and the United States of America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It thrived in the context of industrial society was linked to both The Women's Rights and Women's Suffrage Movements, with their emphasis on political and social reforms, which emerged in the United State of America and Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century. The earliest form of feminism was concerned with equal rights for women and men: equal standing as citizens in public life and, to some extent, equal legal status at home. These ideas appeared in reaction to the French Revolution and the American War of Independence, both of which supported the importance of liberty and equality. Feminists in France claimed that the Revolution's values of liberty, equality, and fraternity should be applied to both men and women, while in America, women activists called for an extension of the beliefs of the American Declaration of Independence to women, including rights to citizenship and property. The demand of this wave was to give opportunities for women with a focus on women suffrage and rights. The first-wave officially began at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, when 300 men and women assembled to the foundation of equality for women; the new movement's ideology and political strategies. Discussions about the vote and women's participation in politics led to an examination of the differences between men and women as they were then viewed. Some claimed that women were morally superior to men, and so their presence in the civic sphere would improve public behaviour and the political process.

By the late 19th and early 20th century, women were actively campaigning for their rights in United Kingdom and United States of America. Women were then more specific in local issues; they focused on white women's education and marriage law. In Britain, "Militant political action among women began in 1903 with the formation of the Women's Social and

Political Union (WSPU) for the right to vote, under the leadership of Emmeline Pankhurst. Mary Wollstonecraft, Lucy Stone were the renowned feminists at that time. And this wave ended with the passage of the 19th amendment to US constitution in 1919, granting women the rights to vote in all states.

In the early 19th century, an activist group of middle-class women in the United Kingdom started to appeal for improved education, better legal rights, specifically married women, employment opportunities, and the right to vote. John Stuart Mill gave theoretical justification for women's struggle for equal rights in *The Subjection of Women* 1869, Mill was entirely influenced by his wife Harriet Taylor. From the 1850s onward, the movement for equal rights for women became centralized on winning the right to vote (women's suffrage).

By the end of the 19th century, the term feminism in the English speaking world generally indicated the advocacy of women's rights. Most probably, the first feminist work was Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of Women's Rights* (1792), written in the wake of the French revolution. The book was the first to subject an open appeal to middle-class women, in particular mothers, as most important pillars of the society. Wollstonecraft demanded equality and better education for women, and made the first sustained critique of the social system which relegated women to an inferior position. Wollstonecraft is far from being a radical feminist, but she wants to integrate women as individuals equal to men into society. Therefore, Wollstonecraft is principally involved with the conservative methods upon which society builds femininity, mainly its misleading education of young girls. Despite the fact that, she supports the women being wives and mothers, she shows the importance of women's education considering their huge influence on society as being the first schools (Sanders, 117-20).

By the late nineteenth century, feminists began to shift their attention from questions of equality between women and men to issues which mainly concerned women, for example, calling for improved welfare provision for mothers and children. These factors would pave the way for second wave feminism (Sanders, 16-24).

Of all the feminist activists of the first wave, Virginia Woolf and Simone de Beauvoir were the epitomes. Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), in addition to her novels, wrote two detonating works which soon contributed to the spectrum of feminism: *Three Guineas* in 1938, in which she divulges the male dominance and the occupation of the major professions by men. Woolf was among the first to defend that gender is not ‘predetermined’ but is socially constructed and obviously can be changed. Though, Woolf she preferred to set equilibrium between men and women so as to avoid this chaotic confrontations. Woolf believed in the women’s artistic abilities, and judged necessary to ‘establish social and economic equality with men’. Woolf second contribution was through her the introduction of the notion of woman's own voice and writing in her *A Room of One’s Own* (1929) it was a work with much more an evaluation of the women’s writer social situations. According to Woolf, women’s writing should imperatively include female experience and not only showing the social inequalities in men dominated society. (Carter, 92)

Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), is well-known as being a feminist writer and an enthusiastic devotee of abortion. Her *The Second Sex* published in 1949 was her most influential book. This book was merely an outline of the existing differences between men and women and above all it was a crucial critique about male dominance. According to De Beauvoir, women, throughout history and even in the bible, were regarded as ‘other’. Most influential cultural fields departing from law, religion, philosophy, science to literature and other arts were detained by men. De Beauvoir draws a perfect scheme in which she distinguishes between ‘sex’ and ‘genre’, in her famous sentence: ‘One is not born, but rather

becomes, a woman.' De Beauvoir speaks about the processes of associating, or better "Othering," women as second class citizens (the second sex) in patriarchal societies (Carter, 93).

2.2. Second-wave Feminism

As far as second wave feminism is concerned, it emerged in the 1960s in post-war Western societies where other groups such as blacks and homosexuals were being oppressed. The campaign was backed by leftist movements including the student protests, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the lesbian and gay movements, and the civil rights and black power movements. These movements criticized "capitalism" and "imperialism" and focused on the notion and interests of the "oppressed" groups, including the working classes, Blacks, and in the vanguard, women.

In America, the publication of Betty Friedan *The Feminine Mystique* in 1962 marked the beginning of the second wave movement. This publication is a revelation since, it demarked the frustration of white heterosexuality, middle class American women exclusively to put feminism on the national agenda. In Britain, the perspective in which 'second wave' feminism created was demarked in a way. Absolutely, the 1960s saw the emergence of Equal Rights activists, notorious in the industrial militancy of working-class women like the sewing machinists at Fords in Dagenham, who in 1968 departed on strike for equal pay. The great deal, was the British Women's Liberation Movement caused by the women belong to radical left-wing politics. This wave unfolded in the context of the anti-Vietnam War and civil rights movements and the growing self-consciousness of a variety of minority groups around the world (Thornham, 25-6).

The second-wave feminism came as a result of the liberationist movement of the mid to late 1960's. However, it defends women's insertion into society throughout seven demands

established between 1970 and 1978. These were equal pay, equal education and job opportunities, free contraception and abortion on demand, free 24h nurseries, financial and legal independence, an end to all discrimination against lesbians and a woman's right to define her own sexuality, freedom from intimidation by threat or use of violence or sexual coercion, regardless of marital status and an end to all laws, assumptions and institutions which perpetuate male dominance and men's aggression towards women.

Despite the fact that the second-wave movement continued to fight in the light of the first-wave principals, however, it took a slight divergence to the politics of reproduction, to women's experience, to sexual difference. Moreover, five major facets are involved within second-wave feminism: sexual difference, biology, experience, discourse, unconscious and social and economic condition. The majority of arguments upholding biology in a critical tone are used to replace women in a less important position than they should be. Even though, some radical feminist celebrate women's biological attributes as sources of superiority. Indeed the work of Elaine Showalter undertakes the impact of sexual differences in women's writing's orientation. Seemingly, it illustrates the interference of experience in women's emotional life. In addition, discourse played a crucial tenant in feminist attention. Dale Spender's *Man Made Language* (1980) theorises the man dominated language and shows that women's truth depends on male truth. Jack Lacan and Julia Kristeva have paved the way for the emergence of unconscious which supports that women are out of the man's reach. This psychoanalytic theory valorises the autonomous movement of women. Further, the Marxist feminist compared the social and economic reversal with the changing balance of superiority between the sexes. The most apparent themes in the second wave feminism are the omnipresence of patriarchy, the inadequacy for women of the existing political organization, and the celebration of women's difference as central to the cultural politics of liberation. Thus

subjects are remarkably presented in the work of Germaine Greer *The Female Eunuch* (1970). (Sanders, 120-23)

Kate Millett, in *Sexual Politics* (1970), an important second –wave publication, analyses the influence of the patriarchy and the manners in which it repeated itself through the family and culture, outstandingly in literature. Hence, Second Wave Feminism determines the psychological and physical differences that lay between men and women. Several feminists assessed traditional psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Sigmund Freud, for arguing that all people are, or should be, like men. They became concerned with ways in which women’s perceptions were determined by the particular nature of the female body and the female roles in reproduction and childbearing. This strand of feminism, which became known as cultural or radical feminism, focused on distinctions between women and men that they believed make women superior to men, and advocated female forms of culture (Sanders 28-9)

2.3. Third-wave feminism

Third-wave feminism manifests itself in "grrl" rhetoric stretching out from the mid-1990s onward, and finding ferment soil and voice in the context of contemporary informational age, globalization and new world order. Third wave feminists generally see themselves as capable, strong, and assertive social agents. The specific American term for the third-wave feminism is “grrl feminism”, and in Europe is known as “new feminism”, also known under the connotation of; Girlie feminism, riot grrl feminism, cybergrrl feminism, or transfeminism, feminism is breathing and beating.

The new ‘new feminism’ is characterized by local, national and transnational activism. Third Wave Feminism is inspired by larger theoretical discourses about race and sexuality that have continued to put a greater emphasis to establish multiracial alliances among women, owing to enlarge the parameters of feminism. Its resurrection is due to the privileges of the

first- and second-wave feminists, however, third-wave feminists generally distinguish themselves astoundingly as ‘free’ women, irrepressible, mainly independent from men. New feminism gave women the opportunity to abuse of their voices and artistic expressions. To demonstrate with Kathleen Hannah a famous American singer who founded the band of *riot grrrl Bikini Kill* (1990- 1998), says in one of her songs “*I won’t stop talking. I’m a grrrl you have no control over. There is not a gag big enough to handle this mouth*” (Krolokke, 18).

The third-wave feminism thrived in 1990s and was upheld by post-colonial and post-modern thinking. Among the most significant that has contributed in the coming out of the third-wave are; Judith Butler in her books *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993) through which she concretizes the appearance of new movements such as queer and transgender politics. A further important contributors to the third-wave feminism is Donna Haraway’s (1987-1991) “cyborg,” from which also emerges ‘cyberfeminism’. Haraway’s main objective is to prove the effect of globalization and the arbitrariness of natural classification. Another outstanding British contributor to the third-wave feminism is Nira Yuval-Davis, the author of *Gender and Nation* (1997), who had instigated the notion of ‘transversal politics’; it consists of the breaking national, ethnic, and religious boundaries between women and to open exchange of ideas between them. (Krolokke, 15-20)

3. Major Feminist perspectives

There are three majors’ theoretical perspectives which are identifiable in feminist framework. These include liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism

3.1. Liberal feminism

Liberal feminists consider that biologically men and women are not so different and their shared humanity surpasses their procreative distinctions. This perception function under

the emblem that if men and women are not different, they should be differentiated by law. In this respect, women have the right to claim the same men's various opportunities. Liberal feminism intent to exterminate the origins of women's oppression, to fight for the egalitarianism of the civil rights, and equivalent opportunities to both men and women. Liberal feminism just supports the idea that biological difference is accidental and it does not have any repercussion on the role of women in the society. It also believes that women are naturally born with the same abilities than men, and it should not have been existed such discrimination. Liberal feminism underlines social and legal reformation through policies established to construct equal opportunities for women to implement their individual civil rights so as no one would be prevented from his right to access social and economic system regarding his sex, race, or class. The most successful pattern of Liberal feminism is to defend women from a modern society which has cruelly put them into the margin. It has remarkably proved that even if women are different from men, they are human and citizen having the right to live under gender egalitarianism (Lorber, 9-10).

3.2. Socialist and Marxist Feminism

Before nineteenth century, Capitalist system ignored the existence of women, and does not have any occasion to give women neither social status nor economic position. Indeed, married women in Capitalist countries; as Lorber suggests "are not allowed to own properties in their own name their profits from any businesses they ran and their wages belonged to their husband" (10). In Lorber view, the origins of women's oppression lies in their economic dependence on their husband (10- 12).

Marxist and Social Feminists relate gender discrimination and women's oppression to the capitalist system of production and the distraction of labour consistent with this system. Socialist feminism comes as a result of women's apartheid in the integration of the capitalist

structure founded on hierarchical differences, adding to that the patriarchal gender discrimination. Consequently, this interference shows that women are subordinated and exploited in the course of an abuse of their economic status, intolerably underpaid in marketplace and not paid at all for their house working. The reality is based on an unequal stratification reinforced by sexist attitudes and practices. In this respect, Socialist feminist tends to abolish both capitalism and male dominance in the purpose to suppress women's oppression.

Socialist feminism accentuates the necessity for social revolution to end the opened unequal division of power. What characterizes socialist feminist is that it calls for the alignment with other oppressed groups so as to find common points of oppression and to oppose women's subordination in the marketplace and in the home. There are six main principles in this perspective: capitalism/class, revolution, patriarchy, psychoanalysis, subjectivity and difference. Surely, socialist feminism has been extremely influenced by Marxism and therefore, Marxist theories of class and capitalism originally motivated socialist feminists.

While Socialist feminism tries to incorporate women in their class struggle and integrate women's issues in their opponent resistance against capitalism, Marxist feminists placed the women's liberation in the large question of the revolution of the mode of production, economically over and above culturally.

3.3. Radical Feminism

Radical feminism was the outcome after the failed disillusionment of Marxist and socialist feminism. Radicalists suggest that it is not the Capitalist system that should be revolutionized but patriarchal ideologies. However it encourages women 'to escape from the cages of forced motherhood and sexual slavery'. Radical feminism had its beginning in small women groups, solving the daily troubles that women had faced; housework, granting men's emotional and sexual needs, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause. This means that women are not only marginalized by men but also not privileged by nature.

Radical feminist establishes that women's oppression comes as a result of the patriarchal control of female sexuality and fertility. Radicalism locates the male dominance of women and that patriarchal roots play an arbitrary role to determine women's isolation and subordination. These views proclaim against physical and mental violence, against rape and murder, in the memorial of all those women who could not or had not the chance to protest this abuse. This growing ideology led women to become men haters because of the way they were perceived like pieces of meat and sex object by the mass media.

The main goal of Radicalism is that women succeed to re-possess the control of their bodies and thus their sexualities. It reveals that socially women are discriminated and oppressed and above all exploited sexually in relation to men and in all corners of life. This oppression is defined by male culture as a personal issue rather than political. Radical feminism finds an essential strategy for ending with women's oppression in the launching of women culture isolated from the lives of men, thus redefining social relations and overthrowing or undermining the present dominant patriarchy. Consequently, Radical feminists see men as their major enemy, because the more they enjoy privileges of patriarchy the more they tend to marginalise women's identity. For Radical feminists, every chaos is

related to men, they bring misfortune and violence, looking only for their own satisfaction. Without a doubt, Radical feminists concentrate on the unfair disequilibrium pronounced by patriarchy. (Lorber, 16-9)

3.4. Psychoanalytic Feminism

Another significant perspective beating for feminism during 1970 and 1980 was a subsequent re-reading of Freud and the French feminists Lacan, Derrida and Foucault. Freud establishes a theory concerning the development of personality in relation to the Oedipus complex; in other words, ‘the detachment from the mother.’ In Freud’s theory of sexuality, he examines how gendered subjects, boys and girls, are produced, on the basis of anatomical distinction between the sexes, as reflected,

Psychoanalytic feminism argues that the origin of men’s desire to possess women comes from their unconscious binary need for women’s emotionality and refutation of them as probable male haters. Whereas women give allegiance to men due to their unconscious desires for emotional connectedness. Though, these two-sided personalities are the results of the Oedipus complex or the detachment from the mother. Obviously women are the primary parents; children become attached to their mother. However, boys have to detach from their mothers and recognize themselves with their fathers in order to construct their manliness. Men have the potentiality to develop a great capacity for independent deeds, and consequently women are a menace to their liberation and masculine sexuality. In the other hand, girls tend to be more sensitive as they grow up identifying with their mothers and become more empathic and emotional. This identification with mothers makes those young girls to subsequently become excellent mothers and essentially maintain them open to men’s emotional requirements.

Moreover, French psychoanalytic feminism emphasizes the manners that cultural innovations including novels, drama, art, opera, music, and movies identifies and portrays the masculine fear of castration and being genderless. So in French feminist psychoanalysis theory, patriarchal culture is the holiness of man's infant desire for their mother. In the other hand women are not very different from their mothers and do not have this fear of castration, so they can't contribute in the foundation of culture. Women have always this desire to give birth to a son; it represents their inner identification and desire towards their father. This is the representation of women in '*phallic*' culture. The role that women reincarnate for men in this culture is 'desired sexualized objects'. However, in order to contest this idea that men's centre, French feminism supported women write from their own experience and their bodies; about menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and sexuality (Lorber, 19-21).

In regard to *The Golden Notebook*, it is steeped in the ideas of the women's liberation movement of the seventies (second-wave feminism) as it reveals many of the issues discussed by this movement including, ideas about female empowerment mainly through sisterhood (the friendship between Anna Wulf and her friend Molly), the importance of writing as a healing power for the female wounds, and the impact of colour, race, and social status within feminism as a whole. Thus, the thesis will explore the ideas of such feminist writers such as Patricia Hill Collins, Betty Friedan, ate Millet and on women's experiences and exposure to the confines of race, gender and class and the alternatives they develop to disrupt and encounter them.

Conclusion

This chapter has overviewed the theory of feminism. It has spotted the light on feminism as a theory, its beginning, major waves, major activists and writers as well as major ideas and themes. The chapter has revealed that feminism has always existed and its roots go back to ancient times. However, as a foundational movement and literary theory, feminism

may be traced back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The chapter has also clarified the differences between the three waves of feminism; the first, second and third wave. The first wave was solely concerned with political issues, the right to vote; learning and education. The second wave feminism shifted the focus to sexual difference and demanded complete sexual equality with men and threw gender artefacts. The third wave, unlike the second wave, asserted women sexuality as a way to freedom and liberation and believed that women can have it all; to be writers, workers, mothers and housewives at the same time.

Chapter Three

Identity Crisis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*

Introduction

This chapter entitled “Identity Crisis in Doris Lessing’ *The Golden Notebook*” explores the theme of identity crisis as it is clearly shown in the novel. It foregrounds the protagonist’s identity falling and fractioning into four different fragments within a fragmented and disintegrated world of complete chaos, disorder, and corruption. It looks into the ambivalent identities of the protagonist, Anna Wulf, forges in the novel represented or embodied in the different conflicts she is struggling with including the fraction within her personal life, conflicts and disillusionment in terms of political tendencies, tensions about race, motherhood, marriage, writing and many other things. Still, as the chapter clearly exposes this chaos within the protagonist mind, life and consciousness, it will look for alternative choices to have strong hold on the self. It elucidates writing and confessions as alternative choices to fight against these fragmentations within the self of the protagonist.

1. Refraction through postmodern techniques

1.1. *The Golden Notebook* a metafictional novel

The publication of *The Golden Notebook* in 1962 was revolutionary. The exploration of multiple techniques to communicate the complex nature of consciousness led Doris Lessing to change the form by leaving aside or breaking free from traditional realism and the techniques associated with it and take in its place other postmodern technique to conceptualize that subject. *The Golden Notebook* shapes a wide range of perspective, and appears to be an obvious example of postmodernist writing, both thematically and in terms of the literary techniques it employs. Betsy Draine considers Lessing to be a ‘novelist utterly hostile to modernist values and achievements’ (1). Indeed, as the quotations shows, Draine implicitly refuses Lessing’s

affinities with realism and sees *The Golden Notebook* to be her critical and philosophical investigation into the nature of fiction itself and the relationship between literary form and politics.

Within the same context, *The Golden Notebook* is a metafictional work, a form of writing that is attended as fiction and functions as fiction, but at the same time shadows a critical study of the nature of fiction and the apparatus by which a novel gets across its meaning in a specific cultural environment. In her article entitled *What is Metafiction and Why Are They Saying Such awful Things About It?*, Patricia Waugh discusses the relationship between fiction and reality, between language and its ability to construct or shape reality objectively as it is without the interference of the author's subjectivity. She suggests that "if our knowledge of this world now seems to be transmitted through language, then literary fiction becomes a useful way of investigating the construction of 'reality' itself." Language, she further explains, "has the role of exploring the relationship between the world of fiction and the world outside fiction" (Georgescu, 713).

In the world of *The Golden Notebook*, the choice of Anna to make a new form of writing generates another angle on the relationship between language and the ability of language in reflecting reality. That is to say, the dim or boundary line between reality and fiction, between subjectivity and objectivity. In investigating the issue, *The Golden Notebook* represents an attempt to come closer to objective reality, but this increases suspicions and interrogations about the 'reality' of the four Notebooks. They accentuate the compartmentalization of Anna's personality; it is almost as if she was four alternative persons, embodying a character to outfit each one. As Anna's identity lacks consistence, her faith in language's aptitude to communicate meaning fails. On this issues , she confesses that "I am in a mood that gets more and more familiar: words lose their meaning suddenly. I find myself

listening to a sentence, a phrase, a group of words, as if they were a foreign language – the gap between what they are supposed to mean, and what in fact they say seems unbridgeable” (299)

Additionally, *The Golden Notebook* is fundamental to Lessing’s structure for equally thematic and formal motives. Thematically, the novel exposes, through the character of Anna, Lessing’s disappointment with the Marxist metanarrative. Indeed, Anna is persuaded that realistic novel can neither provoke nor include the chaotic nature of contemporary society. Consequently, she recovers the novel genre of the collapse of the ideology that, for her, had primarily underpinned it. This novel, which reveals a change in her fiction from a realist writer with affirmed socialist principles to an experimental writer who lost faith in politics, proves her divorce with the Marxist metanarrative not only thematically, but also structurally. Accordingly, one may say that *The Golden Notebook* goes beyond its literary concept as it divulges the breakdown of the world outlook to shadow the whole of the twentieth-century realism. According to Waugh’s definition, *The Golden Notebook* is clearly metafictional. Therefore, it combines its metafictional aspects with its political apprehensions. (Georgescu, 515)

Indeed, Lessing’s decision to divide her work into four notebooks, that is the combination of [her selves] is significant and is confronted to two paradigms: Anna’s conviction that society is such fragmented that it cannot be contained by traditional novelistic forms; and also the collapse of Marxism. These two concerns weakened Lessing reliance on realism. Indeed, the four notebooks portray the ambiguous nature of Anna’s self. Still, every chapter of *Free Women* combines four notebooks, each notebook dealing with the identical time distance, but from a distinctive position, which ensures that the compound reality depicted remains unrestricted. In the *Preface to The Golden Notebook*, Lessing states that “the essence of the book, the organization of it, everything in it, says implicitly and explicitly, that we must not divide things off, must not compartmentalize” (x). Nevertheless, Anna Wulf’s division of

her life, as Anca Georgescu suggests, has limited her development as an artist, and the breakdown she suffers from during the novel is one of boundaries which bound her (718).

1.2. Fragmentation in *the Golden Notebook*

The *Golden Notebook* is a novel about mental and literary breakthrough and breakdown. The literary breakthrough clearly reflects the mental disorder or breakdown of the female protagonist in the novel. The literary breakthrough concerns the innovation or literary experimentation with the genre of the novel; the narrative form or technique which solidifies the protagonist's identity fragmentation and compartmentalization.

The mental breakdown of the protagonist, clearly revealed in the novel form and structure, shows the identity problem and instability of the protagonist, who fails to have a fixed unified self. The protagonist of the novel, Anna Wulf, was interested in questions about writing and about mental functioning, her struggles with sex, politics, motherhood, men, society, creativity, writing, and success. Indeed, the four notebooks contained the whole novel clearly embody this plethora of concerns, these oscillations between different poles and extremities in different fields of life. In the red notebook, the tensions between the two political ideologies—Communism and capitalism—are explored; similarly, in the black notebook, the tensions between two races, the white imperialist and the black African natives come to the fore. In the yellow notebook, the tensions between male and female; and in the blue notebook, the tensions between Anna as an artist and Anna as a person. Indeed, each book or part represents a different aspect of Anna, a different fragment, a different identity.

Clearly, fragmentation, or compartmentalization or even refraction, using the word in the subtitle of the chapter, is a characteristic trait of modern and postmodern literature. Yet, the way the word is defined and interpreted in the two eras differs extremely. In the modern age at the beginning of the twentieth century, fragmentation is seen as mournful, reflecting society's

and even individual's loss of order, traditional beliefs, and the entry into the realm of chaos and disorder as alternatives. While, within postmodern literature, as it is clearly in evidence in *The Golden Notebook*, fragmentation and chaos are celebrated. This is the acceptance and welcoming of the large differences between individuals, nations, and localities as different from the process of totalization and unity.

In *The Golden Notebook*, the four separate notebooks which are concerned with episodes mapping or imaging Anna's life and which pursuit an element within her identity construction, altogether move to meet and form the whole book, *The Golden Notebook*, and these separate identities, revealed in each of these books; the red, blue, black and yellow, which society has created in her also altogether forge into one complete self identity that form the identity of the protagonist, Anna. Without the complete four identities, Anna appears to be fragmented, disintegrated and lonely, but with them together, Anna enjoys a rich emotional life that enables her to create as an artist an integrated life symbolized by *The Golden Notebook*.

Commenting on the gist issue that dominate *The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing declares in her 1971 preface to the book that "this novel was not a trumpet for women's liberation" (15). Rather, it is a compilation of "many thoughts and themes she had been holding in her mind for years" (10) and of which the theme of breakdown seems to be "the central theme" (8). It should be noted that Lessing's choice for a postmodernist novel and a metafictional narrative form goes not without explanation. The novel, *The Golden Notebook* is set in a fragmented chaotic world, containing a plethora of ambivalent views, realities, and tendencies. As such, the realist form novel seems to be unsuitable to convey all the multifaceted realities surrounding the novel, the events in it and the protagonist life. Acceptance of the fragmentation both of society and ones separate identities is the best way to survive one's crises. Saga elucidates thus:

Gradually, we realize, this filing system undermines its own purpose—each notebook spells out the same message, that putting yourself in order is the problem, not the solution. Joining the party or finding a genial Jungian analyst, or making up stories to live inside are all strategies for denying the underlying incoherence of things. Or rather, their common ground in violence and diversity. You represent the world best by letting yourself fall apart, crack up, break down. (15)

In Sage's words, *The Golden Notebook* is a novel that is made whole by the acceptance of disintegration. This incoherence or disintegration is issued from the incoherence characteristic of the external world and any attempt to deny or obliterate this external chaos seems to fail. Lessing or I would say "Anna Wulf" have insisted on the fact to interfere four notebooks [Black, Red, Yellow, and Blue] in this order, both Lessing and Wulf compartmentalised their lives to represent feminist frustration, the fact of being underestimated and marginalised. Above all, it is a reflection of the fragmentation in society.

1.2. Identity Crisis in the Four Notebooks

1.2.1. The Black Notebook

The Golden Notebook is a novel containing four separate novels; the black, red, yellow and blue notebooks. The whole story of *The Golden Notebook* revolves around the protagonist, Anna Wulf, a writer and a political activist suffering from a block and an emotional instability, and trying to document her life through different styles and perspectives. In fact, this instability touches all the areas of her life, including the memoirs of racism and segregation experienced in Africa and which constantly haunt her, her disappointment with Marxist Communism in trying to bring social welfare to women during the second wave feminism. Added to this, her problems with the process of writing and the conflict between reality and fiction, as well as her

disastrous issues with men, patriarchy, marriage and motherhood. All these aspects of Anna's life found their voices in four separate notebooks.

The first notebook, *The Black Notebook*, very specific in its shape, is merely a memory of Anna's youth in Southern Africa. It records her past experiences there, mostly her frustration both with the blacks' internal conflict and the oppressive attitudes of the whites upon them. This chapter within the novel discusses racial tensions in Africa and how the whites colonizers had become to a certain extent at home there and as a result treated the black people as second class citizens. Correspondingly, those native of the land were cooks and slaves, denigrated to the point of doing the most mind numbing jobs and the whites' group to which Anna belongs, pretends to bring this lightning justification to end racism and oppression both towards blacks and women in general.

The opening of the chapter reveals Anna Freeman Wulf as a major writer who has weaved a commercially successful novel based on her experiences as a young woman during World War II in South Central Africa, in a country called Southern Rhodesia. Now, leading a decent living in London on the royalties from this novel and cares for her thirteen-year-old daughter, Janet. Anna's opening sentences in the black notebook were very significant and have to say something about her internal torments and division within herself. It reveals the confused mind of the protagonist, the overabundance of the things populating her consciousness and mind including, the forgotten scenes from her past life, and letters from her friends in central Africa. She maps her entire intention in one sentence saying "Under the left word were fragments of sentences, scenes remembered, letters from friends in Central Africa gummed to the page" (49).

Indeed, Anna's life in London with her daughter and her past experiences in central Africa seem to be of great significance in shaping the protagonist present identity. Returning

from Africa is without indemnity and guarantee. This would change the entire identity of a person. In fact, Anna's returning is divided into two fragments; one struggling to forget this African intolerant vacuum she has felt in the past and which is still haunting her, another fragment pulls her to remember the very smooth life and experiences there.

It should be noted that the time Anna spent in Africa was a pure witness and becomes conscious of this yearning time only when she comes back to London, where she had lost her faith in the Communists. Even though, she once had trust in the Communist Party pretending to put an end to discrimination in Southern Africa, but those promises, later discovered by Anna, were in vain. For the protagonist, this exploitation of young white Communists turned to be the epithet of her identity crisis. Thus, her identity's fragmentation starts from there, where women were just treated as objects for desire and where life was so different from the life she had been accustomed with.

With this, Anna experiences what is known as the existential angst and loneliness. She used to believe that things are in order and the old structures of beliefs and tradition are too strong to be changed or to be deconstructed. Yet, suddenly, the world falls apart and refuses to cooperate with what she believes is the truth and reality principle. From here then, the starting point of Anna's gender trouble starts; she feels this duty to live 'free' from men's oppression and subordination. She confesses;

I am again falling into the wrong tone-and yet I hate that tone, and yet we all lived inside it for months and years, and it did us all, I am sure, a great deal of damage. It was self-punishing, a locking of feeling, an inability or a refusal to fit conflicting things together to make a whole; so that one can live inside it, no matter how terrible. The refusal means one can neither change nor destroy; the refusal means ultimately either death or impoverishment of the individual. (54)

For years, Anna had been in Southern Africa, occupying the role of the ideal wife and mother. In fact, this central character gets married in the black notebook with a man she did not care for. As shown in the black notebook, Anna also reflects the very educated and independent woman living from the payments of her first novel as she herself affirms “I am living off the royalties from *Frontiers of War*” (208) and the basic theme of the novel. In her understanding, the colour bar refers to degraded situation of women in that country. That is how women were perceived and treated and how Anna integrated this much colonised society.

As it is clearly revealed in the black notebook, one of the apparent reasons of Anna’s identity crisis is obviously the lack of mother guidance. In an attempt to come to terms with this null, the fact of being motherless, and the fact of being deprived from the mother guidance, Anna tries to grapple with alienation and have a strong hold on the self by leading a happy life through marriage and bearing a child. Certainly, it explains why the protagonist of *The Golden Notebook* remains psychologically disturbed, and constantly looking for redemption. Betty Friedan devoted a chapter where she tries to find an answer to a given identity crisis, suggesting:

In my generation, many of us knew that we did not want to be like our mothers, even when we loved them. We could not help but see their disappointment. Did we understand, or only resent, the sadness, the emptiness, that made them hold too fast to us, try to live our lives, run our fathers' lives, spend their days shopping or yearning for things that never seemed to satisfy them, no matter how much money they cost? Strangely, many mothers who loved their daughters—and mine was one—did not want their daughters to grow up like them either. They knew we needed something more. But even if they urged, insisted, fought to help us educate ourselves, even if they talked with yearning of careers that were not open to them, they could not give us an image of what

we could be. They could only tell us that their lives were too empty, tied to home; that children, cooking, clothes, bridge, and charities were not enough. A mother might tell her daughter, spell it out, "Don't be just a housewife like me." But that daughter, sensing that her mother was too frustrated to savor the love of her husband and children, might feel: "I will succeed where my mother failed, I will fulfil myself as a woman," and never read the lesson of her mother's life. (127)

Consequently, this is the missing puzzle in Anna's identity. That is, to have a mother to alarm her about life and its frivolous secrets, a mother who could be as a psychoanalyst and sister and friend all at the same time. Hence, Anna feels this obligation to reverse the situation by looking for other alternatives. Indeed, Anna, in fulfilling g her aim, enters into love relationships with various men, making a career out of writing, founding a family through marriage and bearing a child. All these factors, in a way or another, had a significant role in impacting on her identity formation of the protagonist.

Still, the feminist preoccupations and pursuits of Anna does not stop at this level, but she further alienates a sort of worries towards what happens around her in the world, and accuses men, for being always behind violence and cruelty that air in the world. Therefore, Anna feminist obsession portrays the very emancipated women during the second wave feminism.

Still, the black notebook is the protagonist's venture to deal with her writings' career in the light of the success of her novel. Anna considers it as a memorial of the time she had been in Africa. Hence, she was much affected by what happened there, and she returns to London with aftermath traumas which deteriorated her identity as a writer and as a woman. Even so, writing this notebook was for Anna a way of defragmenting her identity as a process of curing. According to her, the publication of her novel prominently brings shame and disillusionment

upon her, she is not much proud of herself. While writing the black one, she declares being ashamed of what she had produced:

When I think back to that time, those weekends spent at the Mashopi Hotel, with that group of people, I have to first switch something off in me; now, writing about it, I have to switch it off, or 'a story' would begin to emerge, a novel, and not the truth. It is like remembering a particularly intense love affair, or a sexual obsession. And it is extraordinary how, as the nostalgia deepens, the excitement 'stories' begin to form, to breed like cells under a microscope. And yet it is so powerful, that nostalgia, that I can only write this, a few sentences at a time. Nothing is more powerful than this nihilism, an angry readiness to throw everything overboard, a willingness, a longing to become part of dissolution. This emotion is one of the strongest reasons why wars continue. And the people who read *Frontiers of War* will have had fed in them this emotion, even though they were not conscious of it. That is why I am ashamed, and why I feel continually as if I had committed a crime. (53)

Apparently, the black notebook highlights two further parts; the success of Anna's novel, and the resources from which the novel is inspired. The second part concerns her solicitation by the media, particularly related to the success of her novel and all likely practical matters connected with its publication including meetings, reviews, media adaptations, TV shows...etc. From the correlation of the two sides appears the feeling of Anna's need to adapt experience through writing. Obviously, when a journalist wrote to Anna showing her appreciations concerning *Frontiers of War* which must be adapted to the media suggests:

From Reginald Tarbrucke to Miss Wulf: What a pity there are not more writers with your delightful integrity! I do promise you that I would not have written to you if we were not desperately searching for real creative talent. Television needs the real thing!

Please join me for lunch next Monday at the White Tower. I think we need time for a really long, quiet talk. Very sincerely yours. (207)

Furthermore, it should be noted that Anna, as she appears in the black notebook, tries to restore the function of society or more precisely the function of women in society—the inability to integrate the very real life balancing between politics and housekeeping. In fact, Anna did it with brilliant success; she creates an atmosphere of liberation ethically and socially, and represents the ideal woman of the late twentieth century educated and mainly rebellious against discrimination and marginalisation.

In the same manner, Betty Friedan, in her book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) which revolves around the frustrations of white, heterosexual, middle-class American women trapped in domesticity, challenges the old presentation of women and rejects what she calls the feminine mystique—the stupidity of being imprisoned at home and enjoying life as housewives, mothers and good wives, repudiating work and education in the process. In Betty Friedan's words, these female characters “do not want careers, higher education, and political rights, "but want to be perfect wives and good mothers (16). She carries on saying:

Their only dream was to be perfect wives and mothers; their highest ambition to have five children and a beautiful house, their only fight to get and keep their husbands. They had no thought for the unfeminine problems of the world outside the home. They glorified in their role as women, and wrote proudly on the census blank: occupation: housewife. (18)

Friedan as well as Lessing and Anna, in *The Golden Notebook*, revolt against this marginalization and opt for the integration of women in society as individuals and not as wives

and mothers. They believe that women can have it all; to be good mothers, housewives, writers, lovers and workers at the same time.

1.2.2. The Red Notebook

As the first notebook, the black one, is concerned with Anna's past experiences with bigotry, racial segregation that she has firsthand experienced in Central Africa during her youth, the second notebook, the red notebook, is concerned with Anna's disappointment and deception with the communist party, its failure to live up to the people's expectation, and its domination and anarchy in England. It should be noted that the red in "the red notebook" signifies blood, revolution and struggle. It is also a direct reference to the Russian communist fighters known as the Reds. As it clearly revealed in the red notebook, Anna first calls on the hegemony of the definition of the communist party and believes that Marxist Communism to be a plural epistemology. Nevertheless, later, Anna foregrounds a fissure within the Marxist Communism ideology which fails to bring about social welfare and make the utopian promises come true.

In the preface to *The Golden Notebook*, Lessing has talked about the disintegration within Communism in order to point the failure of Marxist Communism as a revolution. It was merely a critical assignment formulated by Anna: "I write very little in this book. Why? I see that everything I write is critical of the party. Yet I am still in it. Molly too" (119). In fact, it was the smallest part that Anna wrote and she utterly shows a kind of ironic disgust toward this party saying:

Last week, Molly came up at midnight to say that the party members had been circulated with a form, asking for their history as members, and there was a section asking them to detail their 'doubts and confusions...She seemed upset with herself.

What is it I want-a confessional? Anyway, since I've written it, I'm going to send it in.'

I told her she was mad. I said: 'Supposing the British Communist Party ever gets into power, that document will be in the files, and if they want evidence to hang you, they've got it thousands of times over. (115)

In an ironic tone, Anna denounces the abusive politics of the Communist party as everything seems to function in the favour of the nation but who could defy the authority. This antipathy sustains the dislocation of Anna's identity first as a communist member and second as its most avid opponent. In the vanguard, Anna feels a certain comfort joining the party for it procures protectiveness, and if she did not join the party she would be suspected being involved within the enemy. Indeed, as Anna suggests, "the protected glass gave me two feelings-one of fear; the world of violence. The other, a feeling of protectiveness-the need to protect an organisation that people throw stones at" (16).

It should be noted that this situation applies not only to Anna, but it is the totalitarian circumstance for all the British people; they try to ignore or simply close their eyes in order to not to see the hegemony of the Communist Party, and also they know that the reality is something they could not fulfil. Anna explains "how many people have joined the British C. P. Because, in England, it is difficult to remember the realities of power, of violence; the C. P. represents to them the realities of naked power that are cloaked in England itself?" (16). The British, in fact, do know the extensive oppression of the Communist Party and its undergone interests but as a leading power they could not proclaim. The British Communist Party was the frightening terrorist of the 1950s as it exercises both a political influence and a social paradigm.

While writing the red notebook, Anna recognises that it is not in the fancy of being member but as decentralization to the British Communist Party. The most curious thing is that Anna does not like very much to talk about politics, so as to avoid confrontation and also being

suspected to conspire against the British Communist Party, She declares “It’s as I foresaw, the only discussions I have about politics where I say what I think is with people who have been in the Party and have now left. Their attitudes towards me frankly tolerate a minor aberration, that I joined” (118). When it is something to say or to divulgate about politics, it is better to keep it for our own intellect, because once it is spread it may create subjugations and crucially death:

Three of Michael’s friend hanged yesterday in Prague. He spent the evening talking to me or rather to himself. He was explaining, first, why it was impossible that these men could be traitors to communism. Then he explained, with much political subtlety, why it was impossible that Party should frame and hang innocent people; and that these three had perhaps got themselves, without meaning to, into ‘objectively’ anti revolutionary position. (119)

In other words, Anna believed in a Party which has been very busy to oppress the individual ideology then to procure sanity to the nation. These critical assignments have been written by this female writer typically submerged by the patriarchal judgements. Feminists do believe that world’s chaos is related to men’s violence and hatred, controlled by inadequate political organization. In fact, this is clearly affirmed by Anna as her joining the party was merely a fancy for improving women’s condition in the society.

Germaine Greer in her book *Female Eunuch* asserts that the categories of women who rebel are those who are caution and conscious of their oppression and consider themselves being at the same level with men. She claims that “the women who are most conscious of the disabilities which afflict women are those who are educated to the point of demanding and deserving the same kind of advancement as men” (331). Thus, the point Anna wants to reach is revolution; she revolts throughout her writing and understands that revolution must be an

emblem of peace and high education. As stated by Germaine Greer “Reaction is not revolution. It is not a sign of revolution when the oppressed adopt the manners of the oppressors and practise oppression on their own behalf. Neither is it a sign of revolution when women ape men, and men women” (351). Indeed, women who involve with politics are often overwhelmed by the feeling of dissatisfaction because men exercise a controlling power on them. The fact of being engaged within the Communist Party proves that Anna and Molly set certain equilibrium. Anna reflects much more the dissolution of the British Communist Party left by its major devotees. This is the end of the Party related with Stalin’s collapse, the feeling of betrayal invade its most honest members, clearly declared by Anna:

People are reeling off from the C. P. in dozens, broken hearted. The irony is that they are broken-hearted and cynical to the degree that they were loyal and innocent before. People like myself who had few illusions (we all had some illusions-mine was that anti-Semitism was 'impossible') remain calm and ready to start again, accepting the fact that the British C. P. will probably slowly degenerate into a tiny little sect. The new phrase in the air is 're-think the socialist position. (229)

You may ask this question: what does politics have to do with feminism and identity? I would utterly say that politics is society and patriarchy, everyone is involved in it, even women they do have the right to constitute their society departing from being housekeepers to householders. Therefore, patriarchy is the first designer of identity, it steals rights from women, to offer power to men, this is the reversal which Anna wants to demonstrate through the Red Notebook. Indeed, Kate Millet in her *Sexual Politics* would join my investigation by saying:

If one take patriarchal government to be the institution whereby that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male, the principles of patriarchy appear to be twofold: male shall dominate female, elder male shall dominate

younger, However, just as any human institution, there is frequently a distance between the real and the ideal; contradictions and exceptions do exist with the system. While patriarchy as an institution is a social constant so deeply entrenched as to run through all other political, social, or economic forms. (25)

Anna Wulf wrote a red notebook in the 1950's, a revolution in terms of politics. Correspondingly, the Red Notebook was written in a time where the feminist scope had not been fully developed. Anna goes beyond this statement, proclaiming that she is a "free woman" regarding her political status and her economic independence. As a female writer, she has been distinguished from male writing; if it had been written by a man, he would certainly emphasize much more on political events rather than his disappointment and his mental breakdown, as Kate Millet affirms: "because of our social circumstances, male and female are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly different" (31). It is amongst the outstanding of Anna's perspective to annihilate this man made language. Literature as many other fields, used to be detained by men. Women at that stage remain on the margin. However the emergence of the Second Wave Feminist brought a new kind of literature which breaks from the traditional novels, this idea is defended by Lauret Maria in her book *Liberating Literature*:

Women's Liberation writers consciously chose to challenge the literary standards and representational strategies which they had encountered as 'the dominant' in American culture. Not only did writing promise freedom of self-definition in the search for a female authenticity, not only would feminist writing liberate its readers to recognise the real conditions of their existence, but it might also serve to liberate literature itself from its restrictive and prescriptive male-determined standards of good and serious writing. (77)

1.4. Writing as a Way of Healing in the Yellow Notebook

Anna's title of this notebook is "The Shadow of the Third", coloured yellow but very yielding in its structure; a novel within a novel within a novel. Doris Lessing writes about a protagonist 'Anna' who writes a yellow notebook and inside this notebook comes Ella, the alter ego of Anna, writing another novel in her turn about suicide. Compared with other notebooks, the yellow holds a very submissive writings about a woman falling in love and surprisingly overwhelmed with emotions. Obviously, Ella expresses direct passion towards her new lover through writing:

But after she had been with Paul Tanner for only a short time, she would say, with the utmost simplicity: 'Of course, I never loved George.' As if there were nothing more to be said about it. And as far as she was concerned, there was nothing more to be said.

Nor did it worry her at all that all the complicated psychological attitudes were hardly on the same level as: 'Of course I never loved him,' with its corollary that: 'I love Paul. (134)

Although we have been familiarized with a woman who does not care about love, about morals, in this book, we meet Anna in her most new identity Ella, as a woman in need of affection and protection. Paul Tanner is a psychoanalyst or a witch doctor as called by Ella, as well as her lover. Without any doubt, Ella choosing a psychoanalyst as a lover is not done haphazardly, but to continue her quest to reintegrate her different selves, and to be cured by this 'witch doctor' from coldness and depression. Because of his wide knowledge about women, Anna wishes to find inside him the so attended man replacing the father, friend and lovers. While she wrote:

Paul Tanner was saying, with reluctance: 'That's what I am, in a sense.' She knew the reluctance was because he did not want from her the obvious response. What the response was she knew because she had felt a leap inside herself of relief and interest, an uneasy interest because he was a witch-doctor, possessed of all sorts of knowledge about her. She said quickly: 'Oh, I'm not going to tell you my troubles.' After a pause during which, she knew, he was looking for the words which would discourage her from doing so, he said: 'And I never give advice at parties. (136)

In one occasion, the alter ego of Anna exasperates from climbing from one awful man to another, so as to complete her quest of identity she needs to deal within a serious love story suggesting that “ this business of not having a man around doesn't suit me” (138). Although she claims in the other notebook, that she does not look for a real man presence but only to sexual ventures in order to keep herself from frigidity.

Surprisingly, we meet the same characters in this notebook but under different names and different functions. For example, Molly is named Julia, and George is in fact Anna's former lover. As far as Anna's daughter is concerned, she had been accusing her lover in the blue notebook that if she would have had a son he will never let her but as she had a girl he did not have someone to acclimate with. This is a pure feminist attack in the novel. certainly, men in general prefer to have sons rather than girls. This alteration in the characters proves that Anna wants her characters to restructure themselves, and even she wants to bring alternation in her identity.

The life recordings of the protagonist in the yellow notebook are written under a novel form. The language faculty in this notebook is very important since it shows how important for Anna to reformulate her desires and further to find her identity trauma. The language in writing this part brings appeasement to the feminist wounding proclaimed by Anna. In the same way

Elaine Showalter defends that in feminist writings we shall concentrate on the language that portrays women ideology and bears intellectual struggles against patriarchy. (qtd in Mahajan, 62)

1.5. Confession as a Way of Healing in the Blue Notebook

Comparing to the initial intention of Anna about the blue notebook, it was purely a failure. Before its conception, the blue notebook was designed to fetch the ‘truth’ of Anna Wulf’s life. In a form of diary, she hoped this section to be more realistic than the remaining notebooks. However, she writes in the beginning of the blue notebook:

I came upstairs from the scene between Tommy and Molly and instantly began to turn it into short story. It struck me that my doing this—turning everything into fiction—must be an evasion. Why not write down, simply, what happened between Molly and her son today? Why do I never write down, simply, what happens? Why don't I keep a diary? Obviously, my changing everything into fiction is simply a means of concealing something from myself. Today it was so clear: sitting listening to Molly and Tommy at war, very disturbed by it; then coming straight upstairs and beginning to write a story without even planning to do it. I shall keep a diary. (168)

Starting by recording her daily life, she had faith to remunerate objectivity. However, the blue notebook was a divan of psychoanalysis, where Anna’s remembrance submerged and had an emotional impact on her writings. This notebook turned to be a confession on the shoulders of Mrs Marks (psychoanalyst). She firstly, goes to solve a problem of block writing, because she no longer has faith in ‘art’. Surprisingly, it appears that block writing is more than being an important trouble, though this block comes from other predicaments.

The rise of women's problem in the twentieth century is due to the feminist consciousness. After the women's liberation, there was a break in the chains that attached those women. This revolution led to the rising of women's enquiries, they felt a need to break from the traditional housewives' role, to explore new areas other than being wives and mothers. In fact, it has been much felt in the women producing scholars' revolt that women need more than sexual satisfaction, more than husband and children, but all they want is to breathe. Subsequently, Betty Friedan explores this changing prototype in her book entitled *The Feminine Mystique* an illuminating manual to women independence. Betty devoted an entire chapter "The Problem that has No Name" which is about women's hidden frustrations. She proclaims that "They were taught to pity the neurotic, unfeminine, unhappy women who wanted to be poets or physicists or presidents" (44). Over decades, women are taught how to be beautiful, how to dress, how to make up in order to please her husband, this breaking sequence dislocated most of women. After the Second World War, women lost their position in the world and gained a primitive shape. In the late twentieth century, women are evolved with a spirit of the ideal wife, dropping the women's fight during the 1920's and 1930's. Indeed, the point that Betty wants to recoat is that women of the previous decades fought for the ideal educated women. She wrote that a "century earlier, women had fought for higher education; now girls went to college to get a husband". Betty's epoch marked stagnation in terms of revolution and proclamation, according to her, women pretend to be happy with their lives: "unfeminine. "If I have only one life, let me live it as a blonde" (45)

In her book, Betty Friedan wants to denounce women's lies that they are not so happy not because they were mistreated by their husband or children but because they do not know where the problem lays. It is something awful covered by anger and despair. It is simply the fact of being unsatisfied by their lives. They did want to say it loud so it would become real. For Betty:

For over fifteen years women in America found it harder to talk about this problem than about sex. Even the psychoanalysts had no name for it. When a woman went to a psychiatrist for help, as many women did, she would say, "I'm so ashamed," or "I must be hopelessly neurotic. I don't know what's wrong with women today. (47)

Hence, women's handicap is created by patriarchal attribution; they were from childhood restricted in terms of freedom and instructions. Even so, Betty wants to underline the fact that women have great difficulty to express their emotions and feelings.

Therefore, we meet the same scene and the same scope coated with another decor in Anna Wulf's the blue notebook. She is a 'free woman'; unmarried with a little girl in her charge. Ironically, Anna suffers from emotional trouble in her life which causes her block writing; she thinks that it was the problem at the beginning. Anna writes "Mrs. Marks today [...] said: 'Why are you here?' I said: 'Because I've had experiences that should have touched me and they haven't'" (171) Even so, Anna recognises that she has a problem with her emotions, and this is very helpful to cure from any psychological trouble.

In fact, talking released her internal torments. Juliet Mitchell in her essay "*Femininity, Narrative and Psychoanalysis*" suggests that "As everybody knows, psychoanalysis is a talking cure. Obviously the analyst is male or female, the patient is male or female" (148). Similarly, Anna Wulf in her blue notebook confesses about her disappointment and worries, she talks about her experience in Southern Africa from which she never really left saying "No, I shall never write another.' She nodded. I already knew that nod, and I said: 'I'm not here because I'm suffering from a writer's block.' [...]She smiled, drily. Then: 'Why don't you want to write another book? 'Because I no longer believe in art'" (171)

This was the beginning of Anna's healing process, as she paid sessions to Mrs Marks to hear her talking about her most disturbing factors. Mrs Marks as an expert psychoanalyst soon understands that the trouble goes beyond art's faith. Among the most attracting features in this notebook is that Anna tries to clarify her dreams, what do they signify, "I tell Mrs. Marks this dream, and she asks: 'What is it about?' I reply: 'About lack of feeling.' And she gives her small wise smile which conducts our sessions like a conductor's baton. Dream: Wartime in Central Africa" (172) Absolutely, Anna has never left Africa emotionally, she often thought to the time she had been there, her relation with her ex-husband 'Max' with whom she had her little girl Janet. Anna's relation with Max was too empty and very cold as there was neither passion nor emotion between them. Their relation was merely a quest for affection. Indeed, Anna's real defiance could be depicted because she is departed from the past and the present, the problem is undefined between her love's affair failure, independence, her novel's success *The Frontiers Of War*, and being once in Africa. In fact, Anna is decentralised between the conventional ideal woman and the free new type of women. This is the problem that has no name in Anna's blue notebook. Despite the courage and the virility Anna enjoys she has a great problem with her image, she underestimate herself:

' Describe yourself as if you were describing someone else.' Anna Wulf is a small dark thin spiky woman, over-critical and on the defensive. She is thirty-three years old. She was married for a year to a man she didn't care for and has a small daughter. She is a communist.' She smiled. (173)

Even so, talking procures a certain comfort to Anna; this psychoanalyst is a mother-paid for Anna with whom she starts to become closer. Effectively, to understand Anna's breakdown and fragmentation, the reader must be a woman or understands women. This complexity in ideas and structure portrays women's psychology and their effective burden. This combination reflects much more the women's incapacity to hold their emotions;

they have been always subordinated and neglected, so their state depends on the society. Now, women are released and attempt to put a name on their problems and feelings. As, proved in Betty's sayings:

Just what was this problem that has no name? What were the words women used when they tried to express it? Sometimes a woman would say "I feel empty somehow...incomplete." Or she would say, "I feel as if I don't exist." Sometimes she blotted out the feeling with a tranquilizer. Sometimes she thought the problem was with her husband, or her children, or that what she really needed to redecorate her house, or move to a better neighbourhood, or have an affair, or another baby. (48-49)

This novella is composed out of projections. Anna projects herself to the past seeking to find any defiance in her life, entertaining various intimate relations with men usually married ready for sexual infidelity and surprisingly keen to talk about their wives with Anna. This section melted all Anna's mental breakdown starting from her time in Africa, being member of Communist Party, being involved with several failure love's affaire, writing a novel about her alter ego Ella (yellow notebook), Anna's wanted to eject herself from her body to judge in a very objective way how she could surpass her crash and prove her being as a 'free woman'. The same process is presented by Mitchell in her essay:

These writers were trying to establish what critics today call the 'subject in processes. What they were trying to do was to create a history from a state of flux, a flux in which they were feeling themselves in the process of becoming women within a new bourgeois society. They wrote novel to describe that process_ novels which said: 'Here we are: women. What are our lives to be about? Who are we? Domesticity, personal relations, personal intimacies, stories. (149)

Hence, Anna's taking a psychoanalyst proves her lack of affection despite the fact being well surrounded in terms of acquaintances. It shows that Anna needs mother's guidance, a mother to whom to talk and be carefully listened. Indeed, love chaos that touches Anna is explained by being deprived from her father's protection and affection, by whom she has been cruelly neglected.

Conclusion

All along this chapter, I have looked into the crisis that exists in Anna's identity, explained by its most reliable factors and the environmental obsession that pushed Anna to behave as a 'free woman'. I endeavoured to analyse every notebook, departed from one another, to disclose the fragmented identity of Anna and above all to understand different selves in the light of feminist principals that belong mainly to the second wave feminism, which I found relevant.

General Conclusion

Doris Lessing ranks among remarkably significant postmodern British feminist writers. Her major works align with postmodern writings but also displays this nuance of feminism seeking to prove her commitment and passion for literature. In this sense then, the author has seduced large amount of people shared by love of literature and consideration for women writings and among them myself as a passionate reader of her works. As a self educated woman, she knew how to impose herself in the court of the leaders. Even though feminism was the last of her inquiries, she was involved with all what happen in the world acceding from politics to history.

As in most of her stories, in the *Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing explores feminist issues such as quest, maturation, victimization, identity formation and identity crisis, writing and empowerment through writing. The novel, though it foregrounds many themes and issues in twentieth century Britain that has to do with the era's great socio-political changes and literary breakthrough, it also mirrors the unbearable influence of social, patriarchal and racial stereotypes inflected on women and more important than this highlights the constraints besieging a woman writer.

This thesis has discussed female identity crisis in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*. It has followed the different episodes within the life of the protagonist Anna Wulf, and has shown the different identities she forges in each stage. Throughout this dissertation, it has been shown that the turbulent identity of Anna Wulf is a result a patriarchal and societal oppression. Anna, under societal and patriarchal constraints refracts or divides into different identities—each of which stemmed or born out of certain condition and circumstances. Indeed, issues such as bigotry and racial

segregation, motherhood, marriage, passion for writing, political tendencies—all played great role in affecting the identity of the protagonist.

The Golden Notebook reveals the burden of female identity. The female identity crisis in the novel traces what the traumas of socialisation and globalization could engender. In fact, Anna Wulf ought to separate her selves in order to recognize her crisis within her selves and the impact of being brought within different civilizations. Anna Wulf, in her notebooks, worries to find solutions for her writings block and emotional instability and trying to solve her life through different styles and perspectives. Accordingly, this emotional disorder is the result of her commitment to racism and segregation experienced in Southern Africa. Indeed, as a another factor of breakdown, her disillusionment with Marxism brought suspicion and questions about trust of the world in general. Certainly, the struggle between Anna as a woman and Anna as a writer and also between fictionalized life and reality pushes her to compartmentalize her life separating emotions from politics and passion from wisdom and mainly led Anna to construct both cause and solutions in four distinct recordings of her life during the 1950s.

In the black notebook where she almost draws her starting point traumas in relation with the segregation of women and race in South Africa from which emerges her mistrust of men in general. The second cause of Anna's identity crash instituted in the red notebook, demonstrating her deception about Communism and politics in general; Anna launched a female vision indeed negative about the politics constitutions. Further, Anna writes two notebooks looking for mental peace and integration of her selves into one ultimate identity; the yellow deals with her emotional life, how so far she needs reintegration and redemption within herself and men. Whereas the blue represents the missing puzzles for Anna's healing, to finally recover from torment and excessive remembrance. Moreover, the thesis has also traced a relationship between the protagonist fragmentation and the structure of the novel itself.

Indeed, the division of the novel into four notebooks, the black, red, blue and yellow clearly conforms to the different identities thriving within Anna herself.

Endnotes

Endnotes

¹ Socialist Realism, officially sanctioned theory and method of literary composition prevalent in the Soviet Union from 1932 to the mid-1980s. For that period of history, Socialist Realism was the sole criterion for measuring literary works. Socialist Realism follows the great tradition of 19th-century Russian realism in that it purports to be a faithful and objective mirror of life. It differs from earlier realism, however, in several important respects. The realism of Leo Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov inevitably conveyed a critical picture of the society it portrayed (hence the term critical realism). The primary theme of Socialist Realism is the building of socialism and a classless society. In portraying this struggle, the writer could admit imperfections but was expected to take a positive and optimistic view of socialist society and to keep in mind its larger historical relevance. (Encyclopaedia Britannica) .

² Doris Lessing (*The Golden Notebook*, London; Harper Perennial, 2007) 112. All the subsequent references will be cited parenthetically in the text.

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