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The Journey of search towards self identity in Doris Lessing's the Golden Notebook

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Doris Lessing has been awarded by Nobel Prize in 2007 for her fiction. She can at one and same line be a woman writer, politician, socialist and keen observer of society and explores the stage and status of woman in society. She sees through mythology, psychology, mysticism, feminism and post-modern its societies and strips them of their pretences and defence mechanism by means of irony and prophecy.

The writing of Lessing is as per the post modernist features. There are sometimes first persons or third person narrative technique, the story is divided in fragmentation. And a female protagonist projected another female protagonist. It means fiction is in fiction. Lessing throws light in this fiction on many issues which were her contemporary facts. She puts date wise diary and political upheavals which are immensely realistic and effective to understand present circumstances and woman's economic, political, literary and social status. It opens the layers of all political parties revolution and comments that these are never real revolution. The real revolution is women against men. As a woman novelist, Lessing is placed an ambiguous situation, which results in a characteristics complex of feeling in his attitude to human experience. As a woman writer, she has effectively predicted the role of woman and their journey of search towards self-identity as a beloved, wife, mother and an intellectual women. It explores the male ideology of supremacy sublimation, oppression and patriarch society. Whatever the issues of contemporary feminist writers have been discussed all these features was kept with very artistic mind. The issues of post-modern feminist Simon de Beau, Spivak, Derrida, Edward Said, and Michal Faulk. The protagonist Anna's Journey has been started from a divorced alone woman to independent woman, lesbian, journalist, writer, political, activist, socialist and once again is called a woman who is without shoulder of man.

Lessing has determinately and strongly kept her attitude towards life that her women characters subvert the philosophy of man centred and think as a human being. Her female characters present freedom of contemporary women and open layer's of woman strength, ability, power and strong desire. Though these issues are contemporary, but they deal with universal problems of human beings. So the present paper study's aims to show the Journey of search towards self-identity in the writing of Doris Lessing.

The supreme example of the divided woman is fragmented between her emotional needs and her intellect. Anna Wulf is the protagonist of Lessing's most

psychologically complex novel, *The Golden Notebook* (1962), with long recollection of Rhodesia during world war two. Lessing tells the story of a woman's breakdown, fragmentation and healing into unity. As Drain puts it, "Book is about the terrors of destruction and stress of reconstruction"¹.

The form of this novel is very complicated and very carefully worked out. *Free Women* is a short realistic novel. It is divided into five parts. The sections of this novel interspersed are in four extracts. It is from four different colored notebooks. Anna is the heroine of *Free Women*. She is also a writer of *Black Notebook*. Anna Wulf makes stories out of her experiences in a *Red Notebook*. In the *Yellow Notebook* Anna fictionalizes herself in Ella. And the *Blue Notebook* which tries to be diary and at the last the *Golden Notebook*.

Lessing's protagonist Anna is divorced woman who has a daughter Janet and her friend Molly Tommy and Richard. It almostly sees that the first theme of breakdown and Anna's experience of *Journeys* suggest this from following sentences.

"As far as I can see, everything's cracking up"².

When Anna and Marion discuss about marriage somewhat clears the attitudes of Anna which comes out.

"Marion winked, horribly, and said with drunken roguishness: Oh but I think I have come because I'm envious, you are what I want to be - you're free, and you have, lovers and you do you like, 'I am not free said Anna: heard the dryness in her tone and understood she must banish it. She said: 'Marion, I'd like to be married. I don't like living this"³.

Lessing has shown here how woman is systematically victimized by society. Even though Anna tells Marion that she doesn't feel free, and would in fact like to be married again, Marion persists in the conventional perceptions of Anna's life. She argues to Anna as she free because she has only one child and now she is free from her husband's ban. Contracting these simplistic views, Anna explores the complexities of the relations between man and women. But she strictly opposes the homosexual relationship.

In the last segment the *Golden Notebook*, Anna describes her search for suggesting that her breakdown. Later integration have enabled her to contain the fluidity of her consciousness in a more condensed and less fragmented. She has also stopped waiting for the man who will create her by occupying by the empty space in her personality this is real beginning of Anna's life as a free woman. It means she breaks the centre of male society.

Lessing has used suggestive technique to explore women character or search of self-identity. Anna's friend Molly. She has been shown a boyish and more world-wise, portrait as a superiority of talent. She also tends her views and path towards a new type of woman. It shows she is more modern in the sense of accepting new thinking and her husband is father's friend son. After all this her marriage were broken the reason husband isn't given enough time to them. And nothing new under the sun.

On the Other hand, Lessing shows the relationship between Marion and her step child Molly. She has used suggestive technique and strictly commented on it. According to Lessing free means it isn't to live without men in a relationship. It means free from financial pressures, domestic ones, the blindly accepted restrictions of conventional morality traditional

class-definition, in articulateness, ignorance and stupidly. Anna thinks her freedom is thus a means of her victimization.

Lessing has strongly rejected the centre as per Derrida's theory a sign refer to another sign to explain the meaning. It means Lessing of has shaken the belief as a post-modern novelist, she puts.

'We've always refused to live by the book and the rule, but then why start worrying because the world doesn't treat us by rule? That's what it amounts to'⁴.

Lessing's protagonist has explored the double standard. On the one hand the world want to follow the centre or rule, but on the same hand the world never treat woman as the centre or rule suggest them. Lessing has strongly objected this double standard. As Earnest Becker has pointed out, sexuality is the central expression of the existential paradox of human nature.

"The person is both self and a body, and from the beginning there is confusion about where 'he' really is in the symbolic inner self or in the physical body. Each phenomenological realism is different. The inner self represents the freedom of thought, imagination and the infinite reach of symbolism. The body represents determinism and boundless"⁵.

Lessing's major and minor female characters are ready to rebel against existential patriarchal system. They make their mind by inertly and outerly strong to face and struggle whatever problems and difficulties come in their journey. They express and discuss with each other about their ideas of freedom, independence, marriage, and the relationship with a man. Lessing has depicted the clashes between her inner and outer mind. She speaks about independent freedom or about centre but these things are only of embodies not of actively following in today's life.

Lessing's protagonist Anna, as a political activist, expresses her disillusionment while she met to Stalin who is dictator in Russia during the 1950 to 1957, who was once a hero for her.

Lessing's protagonist is Anna. She shows disbelief in books and rules. As a post-modern thinker, Derrida, who subverts and rejects the centralism of Europe. He also rejects final truth and stability of books As a Derrida puts it:

"A text can be read as saying quite different from what it appears to be saying... I may be read as carrying a plurality significance or as a saying many different things which are fundamentally at variance with, contradictory to and subversive of what may be seen by criticism as a single stable meaning. Thus a text may betray itself"⁶.

Anna rejects and subverts the central philosophy of books and rules and exposes suspicion over it. Lessing has depicted how the books and laws create women as a subalter or stereotyped. Her attitudes towards wars is also different. It is destructed not only countries but also human beings. It only imposes frightening and unhealthy relationship.

Lessing's protagonist Anna projects herself in Ella. She is a minor actress. There is Paul who ideals her to make relationship. But Ella is a very conventional views of the

relationship between man and women, preferring not to think, when searching for happiness with a man.

Lessing has directed the new way to feminist writer. She shows a new way to women to think beyond cast, creed, culture, economic and social status. She depicts a negative attitudes towards the revolution of the world. According to her.

“The Russian revolution, the Chinese revolution - they are nothing at all. The real revolution is , women against men.”⁷

It shows the strongest desire of Lessing about equality , justice and freedom which has been dead-locked by men. The notebook also broke ground in its open discussion of female sexuality from the point of view of a woman writer. Ella compares the vaginal and clitoral organs and insists that former is possible only with a man. She loves but she indicates her strongest desire about revolution. The Russian revolution has destroyed the world and created new philosophy. But the women revolution against man is powerful rather than any revolution in the world. She wants to revolt against men dominancy through the revolution of women against men.

The journey of Anna upto the Golden Notebook. She represents post modern world and strictly criticizes male dominancy. On the other hand, she wants to break frame work in which women have been stereotyped. Though Anna thinks that, free women, means freeness in ‘sex’ but behind it also extreme philosophy that is what male can be affairs with chastity, while female should not be chastity. So the controversy is on gender basis, women can not do physical relationship without love while man can, this is sort of hegemony over women’s mind it represents through yellow notebook. The Notebook opens the male attitude Mr.Paul, who is already married. He established the relationship with Ella. She knows it. After all also Paul asks her how long since you slept with a man, in fact, that was her past life whom she had forgotten. It clearly shows that the two opposite poles where male has still married life but she doesn’t make doubt about him. On the other hand he does. In the novel, Lessing has opened the layers of males’ ideology and their treatment of women Lessing has broken conventional image of woman and middle class morality in her protagonist’s journey. In the blue notebook, Anna’s journey develops as a writer, communist party member, journalist post war woman and diary writer who narrates factual incidents with newspaper clippings and date.

Lessing supports to Simon De Beauvoir’s task female are always orgasm or integrate with male. On the contrary, men are always aloof orgasm with women. On the other hand, female don’t allow male without love to do sex. Lessing’s uses this task with her fictional character Ella. The images of women are stood by men as a consumption object for men need.

As Lessing’s , has remarked in an interview.

“I’m impatient with people who embrace sexual revolution. I say we should all go to bed, shut up about sexual liberation, and go on with the important matters”⁸.

The search for a ‘real man’ or right man, one who will fulfill a woman emotionally and sexually and help her find herself, is a major preoccupation of Lessing’s Female characters. They are ready to compromise and sacrifice, even overlook their lovers’

infidelities for the sake of a durable, relationship. On the one place Ella's devotional and emotional words are remarkably expresses her integration for she say's if he was promise her, sher would leave for him writing. The novel does not adovate sexual resolution and autonomy for woman but lays stress on normal, healthy men women relationships based on mutual love and respect.

Lessing's protagonist Anna expresses her thought and emotion about sex, "It seemed to me that the worm strength of my body's happiness was enough to derive away all the fear in the world"⁹.

On the contrary , however man hates her body and femaleness it was depicted by Lessing through Nelson she writes , "he said, she saw his wife as a sort of spider, all clutching arms and legs around a hairy central devouring mouth"¹⁰.

Lessing explores the self-identity of her female characters. She has found a middle way in the relationship or man and woman. She wants freedom, but that should not be on the basis of immoral , she wanted an independent which is on the basis of equality between men and women. She rejects the patriarchal dominancy and male ideology.

The novelist sees as fundamental features of modern life. The images of women portrayed which have profound biological and emotional needs, established conventions and attitudes mold the woman into patterns of behavior. They are intellect and desire for self-determination reject. A series of an implacable destiny as a woman runs counter to a longing for bold assertion as an individual. Her women frequently appear as helpless onlookers, sensitive conditions aroun them longing to act, to take control, yet compelled by their dependent natures and narrowly defined social roles to remain passive observers. There clilemma may fill them with rage and resentment, stoic resignation , or coldness and apathy.

Thus, the man-women relationship in Doris Lessing's fiction, although destructive in its conventional forms can serve as vehicle for self-knowledge for over coming one's division and enabling one to live as fully as possible. Paradoxically, Anna through becoming highly bound to another becomes liberated , her expanded consciousness. She is achived only by moving beyond the established values, roles and institutions, for these are the means by which humanity is fragmented and separated. Considerable, courage is required, involving great risk-the chance of total disintegration through experiencing the full extent of one's inner chaos and that of another.

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