



The Golden Notebook: The Intervention Communism Into Feminism.

Jhalak Chauhan, Dr. Shuchi Agrawal

Student of Ma English, Professor

Amity University, Noida

INTRODUCTION

The Golden Notebook is the famous novel of famous British Zimbabwean Novelist Doris Lessing. The novel was set in 1950 but it was published later in 1962. Around 1960's the second wave of feminism took place that focused on issues related to equality and discrimination, it focused on the economic rights, social rights and the top priority was financial independence, domestic violence etc. The novel revolves around the duration of 1950s. The novel is also set on the global orders of World War 2 giving way to the Cold War and colonised world taking independence from Europe.

The Golden Notebook is famous for its feminist work and the novel was highly criticised and was considered to be an 'Anti Men', for sexuality and social inequities. Many critics believe that the novel draws negative reviews and criticism the novel was also called 'feminist Bible' other names were also given to the novel such as 'Man hater' or 'ball breaker' which basically meant to show the attitude of women that this novel represents. The main causes of such criticism was because the Golden Notebook was written at the particular time when women were not fully allowed to write or seen as even a writer women in literature were found unnecessary or somewhat their contribution was less appreciated it was believed that around 1950s the quality of writing and the ability to write was only given to men. The novel instead of giving negative review it focuses on influencing its readers in a positive way regardless of gender or sex.

The Golden Notebook is about a writer and a single mother Anna Wulf who is negotiating her life in Britain around 1950s.

Through Anna Wulf, the novel deals with different thoughts, feelings, beliefs and emotions of a woman that are present throughout her life. She keeps four notebooks to record different aspects of her life. The novel explores themes such as feminism, politics, mental health, and the creative process. Through Anna's experiences, the book delves into the complexities of identity, relationships, and societal pressures.

Doris Lessing is considered to be an unusual kind of feminist she has focused on the position of women in society and improving their role. The other feminist writers focus on the equality between genders, Doris Lessing is concerned with the social pressure that women go through in the society and defending women in

every manner. After world war II the second wave of feminism focused on the equal rights on the workplace, family, reproduction etc. Second wave of feminism is a continuation of the earlier wave but the addition of focusing on the issues of equality such as discrimination. *The Golden notebook* comes under the second wave of feminism, the novel narration, themes, characters, structure serves well for the aim of interpreting feminism. The novel is concerned with independence awareness of women and their living conditions.

Communism

Communism means a political system in which a government or state controls and owns all the factories, lands or machinery and the people share the wealth the government has created. The Golden notebook consist of different Notebooks that contains different aspect of the protagonist Anna Wulf, One of the book is Red Notebook that contains the experience being the political activist. Lessing has mirrored her ideology of communism through Anna. Anna becomes the member of the party, work for it and she decides to leave the party because of its reluctant and indecisive existence in the modern society. Anna was fast to learn and understand that the party was losing its core and its principles.

Anna disappointment is shared by Molly and other two female characters by offering a criticism on the party and its shifting ideas. However, Anna still tries to understand her own apathy towards the party and comes to the conclusion the party is losing its own grip. The separation with the party becomes even more apparent when Anna critique her own political ideology and allegiance. Her self doubt is the one that help her to create such awareness. She understands that the party has static principles and that it is incapable of any change. Through this Anna is able to gain her own perspective of societal politics. Anna realises that her own comrades or other party members are trapped in their own political fantasies where they fail to have their strong matches and comprehend them.

Anna record all of her political and party experience in the red notebook and certainly the notebook becomes the chronicle of the gradual decline of the communist party and its ideology.

Anna simply started to become disillusioned because the party and communism has begin to fail her, disappoint her. It became even more obvious because of the involvement of Soviet union in England. In between 1930's and 1950's the soviet union leader executed many communist party members. Anna notices that communism states to believe in equality but turn out that the party ended up becoming anti-egalitarian, because they demanded central power.

Anna and Molly criticises the party for their orthodox support towards the Soviet Union as it is full of secrets, strict hierarchy, low standards etc.

Anna realizes that the member of the party are not political at all, they are lonely and just seeking community. Anna decides in the end *Free Women* campaign to campaign for labour and to teach children, she priorities practical acts of service rather than having blind faith, hope, endless and circular discussions of communist party.

Conclusion

Even when Anna leaves the party and Molly got married they never stopped fighting for justice. Whether Anna and Molly believed in communist revolution or not they never confused their faith with realistic expectations. Unlikely of many political situations both. Believed in the continuation of doing what needs to be done in the world for its improvement and betterment.

Anna in the final stances of free women will she was still disappointed with the death of communist hope for the society and its transformation.

But still despite of disappointment, radical changes, disillusionment Anna still found some limited ways of realistic expectations to effect changes in the world.

Lessing through the red notebook insisted that she is descriptive, her only motive was to capture the time when communist party thought and realised that their projects are not practicable in the west, most importantly well before the world started seeing it.

References

- Lessing, Doris. *The Golden notebook*. Harper Perennial, 1962.
- Lessing, Doris. *The Golden notebook*. Fourth estate ltd, 2022.
- Singh, Priyanka (December 2018) *The study on Waves of feminism*. JETIR.
- King Smith, sue (November December 2007) *I am Anna Wulf*. LINQ.
- <http://www.all.s.aiac.org.au/the-Female-identity-in-The-Golden-Notebook>.
- <http://www.researchgate.net/Communism>.