MODERNIST AND POSTMODERN ELEMENTS IN DORIS LESSING'S THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK

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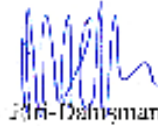
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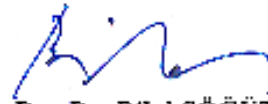
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To my brother, Tufan Doğu TANIYAN

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ABSTRACT

MODERNIST AND POSTMODERN ELEMENTS IN DORIS LESSING'S <u>THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK</u>

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Modernist and postmodern elements found in Doris Lessing's <u>The Golden Notebook</u> is the main topic of this study. With its transition period work quality, <u>The Golden Notebook</u> poses questions to critics concerning categorization since its first publication in 1962. Even though the fragmented narrative of the novel has the potential risk of impetuous categorization as modernist, the novel moves closer to postmodernist domain since the fragmented narrative denies unity and integrity and acknowledge the fragments.

Chapter one presents a general panorama of the twentieth-century by providing background information about modernism and postmodernism. Chapter two distinguishes between modernist and postmodernist perceptions of fragmentation and its reflection on the novel. Chapter three deals with how subject is constructed in the novel. Chapter four discusses the use of parody amid the battle for authority and subjectivity.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze postmodern and modernist characteristics in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook in terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody amid the battle for authority and subjectivity. Another question that will also be raised in the study is that whether Doris Lessing's honesty as a writer had an influence upon the way the book was shaped. This study puts forward how <u>The Golden Notebook</u> moves away from its modernist predecessors towards postmodern domain through its fragmented narrative with an honest tone.

Key Words: Modernism, postmodern, Doris Lessing, <u>The Golden Notebook</u>, honesty, fragmentation

ÖZET

DORIS LESSING'İN <u>ALTIN DEFTER</u> ADLI ROMANINDA MODERNİST VE POSTMODERN ÖĞELER

Tanıyan, Baysar
Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı ABD
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Bu çalışmanın ana konusu Doris Lessing'in <u>Altın Defter</u> romanında bulunan modernist ve postmodern öğelerdir. <u>Altın Defter</u>, geçiş dönemi eseri olma özelliği nedeniyle, ilk yayınlandığı yıl olan 1962'den beri sınıflandırma konusunda eleştirmenlerin tartışma odağını oluşturmuştur. Romanın parçacıklı anlatısının romanı tereddütsüz modernist olarak sınıflandırma riski taşımasına rağmen, parçacıklı anlatı, bütünlüğü ve ahengi reddedip fragmanları tanıdığı için adı geçen roman postmodern alana daha çok yakınlaşır.

Birinci bölüm modernizm ve postmodernizm hakkında artalan bilgisi vererek yirminci yüzyılın genel görünüşünü sunmaktadır. İkinci bölüm parçacıklılığın postmodernist ve modernist algılanış şeklini ayırıp bunun roman üzerindeki yansımasını tartışmaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm romandaki özne kurulumunu ele almıştır. Dördüncü bölüm otorite ve öznellik mücadelesi arasında parodi kullanımını incelemektedir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, anlatı stratejileri, özne kurulumu ve parodinin kullanım şekli açısından Doris Lessing'in <u>Altın Defter</u> adlı romanındaki modernist ve postmodernist öğelerin incelenmesidir. Bu çalışmada ileri sürülecek diğer bir soru da bir yazar olarak Doris Lessing'in dürüstlüğünün romanın şekillenmesinde bir etkisi olup olmadığıdır. Bu çalışma Altın Defter'in, dürüst bir tona sahip parçacıklı anlatı yoluyla, modernist seleflerinden uzaklaşıp postmodern alana doğru yaklaştığını ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modernizm, postmodern, Doris Lessing, Altın Defter, dürüstlük, parçacıklılık.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature has witnessed the fragmented narratives and multi-layered structures particularly after the Second World War. This quality has not only prepared the ground for fresh techniques but has also enabled the modernist traditions to extend to date. As an exemplary novel and as a work of transition period between modernism and postmodern, <u>The Golden Notebook</u> shelters all these qualities within its fragmented structure. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to analyse postmodern and modernist characteristics in Doris Lessing's <u>The Golden Notebook</u> in terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody amid the battle for authority and subjectivity. Another question that will also be raised in the study is that whether Doris Lessing's honesty as a writer had an influence upon the way the book was shaped – concerning both its formal structure and its content – or it was just the necessity or fashion of its period. Due to the fact that <u>The Golden Notebook</u> was written by Doris Lessing in the beginning of 1960s – a period that is considered by prominent theoreticians to have waved goodbye to modernism and begun to pave way for postmodernism with its problematics (Jameson, 1992: 166; Best and Kellner, 1997: 7) – the book poses a question to critics concerning the problem of locating the book whether in modernist tradition or postmodernism, its offspring (Krouse, 2006; Michael, 1994). This ongoing discussion regarding categorization and the ambivalent nature of the book is the most important determinant in topic choice.

The career of the novelist, which is now more than half a century, also demonstrates a fluctuating mode. Doris Lessing was born in Persia, then with her family, especially with the desire of her father who had followed the hope of getting rich through farming, moved to Rhodesia, a British colony at the time, now Zimbabwe. She was self-educated as she left school at the age of fourteen "in surge of rebellion" to her mother who had tried to raise her daughter in Victorian style, which also meant that "she was severing ties to a dependent childhood" (Klein, 2000: 48). In 1950s, when Lessing came to London she seemed unable to cut her ties to free herself from

mainstream realist tradition as her debut novel, <u>Grass is Singing</u> (1952) was located in this tradition. "Lessing had already become established as both a popular and serious writer by the time <u>The Golden Notebook</u> came out", says Jenny Taylor and she argues that Lessing's reputation "rested primarily on her status as a radical white Rhodesian exile and a committed realist writer" (Taylor, 1982: 2). In 1950s, then, Lessing was categorized as a social realist writer, who had a colonialist perspective inherent in her blood, not to forget that she is a woman who is writing about woman. As a matter of fact, this mixture of qualities that Lessing represents creates ambivalence in locating her within a certain tradition. By the publication of <u>The Golden Notebook</u> this ambivalence further enhanced as Lessing announced that she was leaving the tranquil and secure shores of her beloved great realists and ready to dive into the deep, nasty and restless sea of experimentation.

"As a well-established professional writer, Lessing has gained a space to write experimentally, and to speculate on the origins of creativity, traditions and individual talents. A brave leap into the unknown? Or a retreat to innocence? An exploration and subversion of mythology? Or a relapse into superstition, a search for a lost order?" (Taylor, 1982: 7)

In this courageous "leap into the unknown", Lessing does not refrain from challenging and parodying the conventions of novel writing and tries to come up with new models to communicate the female experience truthfully. Jean Tobin, in her article "On Creativity: Woolf's <u>The Waves</u> and Lessing's <u>The Golden Notebook</u>", argues that each novelist "broke 'the mould' of the novel" claiming "nothing like either of these novels had been seen before; each was a unique and extraordinary achievement" (Tobin, 1982: 160). Then, it is obvious that <u>The Golden Notebook</u> was something new when considered in its first publication date. However, there are certain traits of or allusion to modernist tradition that may lead to an impetuous categorization of <u>The Golden Notebook</u> as a modernist text. Claiming that "<u>The Golden Notebook</u> compels readers to look backward at modernism and forward to postmodernism", Tonya Krouse suggests that:

"In its emphasis on forward-backward-looking, <u>The Golden Notebook</u> is both a prejudiced text, which carries with it high modernism's aesthetic reverence for unity, and a prescient text, which envisions the possibility for unities within a text that are not predicated upon the self-expression of a unified subject" (Krouse, 2006: 40).

Krouse bases her assertion on the conceptions of subject in the novel, which she believes, alluding both modernist and postmodernist conceptualizations of subject in its refusal to and insistence on to simply "define the subject in one way or the other" (Krouse, 2006: 40). Moreover, in The Golden Notebook, there are further allusions, and sometimes direct references, to modernist novelists or their novels. For instance, the name of the protagonist of the novel, Anna Wulf, directly recalls Virginia Woolf, not in spelling but in pronunciation. However, it is not for the sake of reverence for a foremother, but Woolf is taken by Lessing as an "angel in the house" who "must [be killed] in order to free her own writing" (Krouse, 2006: 50). When compared to Woolf's character, Mrs. Dalloway, Anna is distinguished with her free manners concerning sexuality and relations with man and is also separated from other Woolfian characters with her ability not to surrender but overcome madness. Lessing also refers implicitly to D. H. Lawrence in her portrayal of sexuality, especially in the scenes where Anna mediates on the differences between vaginal and clitoral orgasms (199) and also it is striking that Anna calls herself a "woman in love" (492).

Lessing also alludes in many instances to James Joyce and this allusion is the most explicit one when compared to the abovementioned allusions. Lessing's choice of name for her characters is noteworthy as Anna is the namesake of Anna Livia Plurabelle in Finnegans Wake and Molly, a central character in The Golden Notebook, shares her name with Molly Bloom in Joyce's *Ulysses*. Moreover, in The Golden Notebook, there are direct references to Ulysses, when Anna attempts to record her menstruation parodically through stream of consciousness (304) and references to Finnegans Wake, when Anna comments that "words lose their meaning suddenly" (272). On the other hand, language – its adequacy and reliability – is one of the most important themes evaluated in The Golden Notebook. For Joyce, and many other modernists, language was the sole weapon to fight chaotic world and this weapon could be controlled by the author. In her novel, Lessing challenges this modernist assumption as she constantly refers to language as "thinning … against the density of our experience" (273). Then, all these allusions do not necessarily place The Golden Notebook among the canonical texts of modernist tradition. On the contrary, in The Golden Notebook, Lessing challenges her modernist predecessors and provides the reader with something new. It is certain that Lessing, through such allusions, makes reader look backward modernism but at the same time makes him blink at postmodernism. This question of locating

Lessing's ambivalent novel whether among the texts of modernist tradition or among a newly developing tradition, that is postmodernism, will be evaluated in the thesis.

Another question that will be sought for an answer in the study is whether it is Lessing's honesty that gave shape to the novel. As mentioned above, The Golden Notebook was something new and this newness also includes structural and formal play. Certainly, the shape of the novel is against well-established forms of conventional novel and Lessing pays great attention to the shape of the novel as she mentions the matter in the very first instance, on the first page of her preface to novel. For her, out of the fragments of the novel, "can come something new" (7). Rather than producing a work that would be in accordance with the common fashion, Lessing undertakes the risk of a new model that had the potential danger of disapproval or dislike. Moreover, Anna, the protagonist, is aware that "the straight, simple, formless account would not have been a 'novel', and would not have got published", but she "was genuinely not interested in 'being a writer' or even making money" (77).

Michel de Montaigne, in his magnificent and influential Essays (1580), devotes a part to the discussion of honesty and profit. In the part, entitled "Of Profit and Honesty", Montaigne cites cases from history in which certain figures were in dilemma to choose honesty at the cost of profitable, or choose profitable at the cost of honesty and sincerity. This is what Lessing does. With the publication of The Golden Notebook, Lessing "[quits] the profitable for the honest" (Montaigne, 1903: 370). Her honesty in terms of content and style is also noticed by many critics. Reviewing the book in *Sunday Times* just after its first publication, Jeremy Brooks appraises Lessing's honesty and courage:

"Miss Lessing is struggling towards complete honesty through a thicket of stock reactions and counter reactions, political, emotional and artistic. … In doing so she achieves precisely that 'intellectual and moral passion' that Anna named as the prerequisite of the only sort of fiction worth writing, and her fiction proves her to be, in my opinion, not only the best *woman* novelist we have, but one of the most serious and intelligent and honest writers of the whole post-war generations" (qtd. in Taylor, 1982: 1).

Lessing's "leap into the unknown" also involved pronouncing what has been unpronounceable. Many critics and scholars celebrated The Golden Notebook regarding

its honest and earnest quality, including Jean Tobin who believed that "Lessing was one of the first to write frankly and matter-of-factly about menstruation, women's sexual pleasure and passion, and childbirth" (Tobin, 1982: 150) and Rachel Brownstein who observes that the book "articulates certain facts that had previously been unmentionable" (qtd. Rowe, 1994: 41). In the novel, as Lessing mediates on physical experiences, such as sexual intercourse and menstruation, she one by one destroys the taboos impeding women writers to write about the previously silenced issues. Margaret Moan Rowe insists that what Lessing achieved was a thing that "gets close to what Woolf said she and no other woman writer had been able to do: 'telling the truth about my experiences as a body'" (Rowe, 1994: 42).

Lessing, as an honest writer, explores woman sexuality, indulges in subjects never mentioned before and in order to communicate this and real woman experience as accurately as she can, tries to come with a new model. This model is not shaped by the requirements and necessity of the previously established standards of conventional novel but, with the assistance of the honesty of a writer, is shaped through a newly developing sensibility – postmodern. The study will be devoted to analyze narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody in terms of postmodernism by pointing out the differences between postmodernism and modernism and by touching upon the role of writer's honesty in the formation of the novel.

The present study includes two parts: the theoretical and analytical. In the theoretical part, some background information about modernism and postmodernism will be given in detail which, then, will be employed in the analytical part. The analytical part is composed of three chapters in which the novel will be analyzed in terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody. Thus, the study is composed of four chapters.

Chapter One is a general overview on modernism and postmodernism. In the chapter, the differences between the terms, modernism and postmodernism, will be given in detail starting from the beginning of modernist tradition and its characteristics. Then, the rise of postmodern, postmodern condition and its effects on literature, mainly on novel, will be discussed. In Chapter Two, the fragmented nature of the novel's narrative will be analyzed. By distinguishing modernist and postmodernist

conceptualizations and perceptions of fragmentation this chapter will evaluate the multi-faceted structure of the twentieth-century which found its reflection in the narrative strategies of the novel. In Chapter Three, the problem of subject in *The Golden Notebook* will be discussed by giving a brief history of perception of subject and by differentiating postmodern and modernist conceptualizations and perceptions of subject. Then, the question that how subject is constructed in the novel will be examined. In Chapter Four, narratorial voices will be analyzed and the problem of authority will be clarified through a search for authorial voice, if it exists. Secondly, the use of parody will be handled on social, political and literary levels. In the chapter, lastly, the theme of subjectivity will be scrutinized by putting it side by side with the attitudes of a committed writer.

The Golden Notebook was penned by Lessing in a transition period between modernism and postmodernism. Almost all transition period works are influenced by the previous and the coming movements; and The Golden Notebook is not an exception. In the study, these peculiarities of the novel will be searched. After its first publication in 1962, the book invoked mixed criticism and varied interpretations. For instance, one of these interpretations was that the book is a feminist text. However, Lessing in her preface to later edition of the novel discarded such ideas (10). Similarly, this study will ignore the discussion whether The Golden Notebook is a feminist text or not since the issue itself deserves a lengthy study. The scope of the study, thus, will be limited to discussions on narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody in terms of modernism and postmodernism.

CHAPTER I

FROM MODERNISM TO POSTMODERNISM

1.1 MODERNISM

1.1.1 The Turn of the Century

> "An epoch is collapsing. A culture which has lasted for a millennium is collapsing. There are no pillars and supports, no foundations any longer which have not been blown to smithereens… A transvaluation of all values came about."
> Hugo Ball (qtd. Sheppard, 1993: 13).

Culture, which, as Ball declares, is collapsing, is the culture of Western Europe and this collapse, taking place gradually, reaches its peak at the time when the culture in question completed its thousands of years of existence at the turn of the century circa. Foundation of culture which has been blown to "smithereens" had been laid by Aristotle, its heyday was Enlightenment period, its "pillars and supports" had been philosophers and scholars like Locke and Kant who had advocated reason over anything. In other terms, at the turn of the twentieth-century, "European culture was experiencing the subversion of the most fundamental assumptions and conceptual models on which the liberal humanist epoch had been based" (Sheppard, 1993: 13).

One of the most important assumptions of the liberal humanist approach is its belief in the possibility of attaining the absolute truth. This approach also supported the idea that the world and nature can be taken under the control of mankind and can be pictured and represented adequately. Scientific advancements and man's increasing understanding of his surrounding were its major standpoints. Reflection of liberal humanist understanding on the literary domain is described best by Peter Barry in his Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory (1995). Barry

discerns ten tenets, in the first place pointing out that "good literature is of timeless significance" and as "the literary text contains its own meaning within itself" in order to understand the text it must be "detached from … contexts and studied in isolation" (Barry, 1995: 17-18). Contexts were ignored due to the belief that "human nature is essentially unchanging" as "the same passions … are seen again and again throughout human history" (Barry, 1995: 18). Besides, liberal humanism believes in "the transcendent subject" which is "antecedent to, or transcends, the forces of society, experience, and language" (Barry, 1995: 18). Obliged to be "sincere", a literary work, where "form and content fused in an organic way", should serve to enhance life and propagandize human values (Barry, 1995: 19). While a literary work should show rather than explain and demonstrate, a critic, whose task is to interpret the text, should work as a mediator between the text and the reader.

But what might have caused the subversion of this liberal humanist epoch? What might have proved its positivistic dreams a failure? Possible answers to these questions and also many other questions related to the same topic are embedded in the social, political, philosophical and artistic scenes of the twentieth century, a time when certain principles of the liberal humanist tradition and modernization were put into question. Even though the influential figures in this challenge, like Marx and Darwin, had been already dead – not to forget Freud who was still alive – their ideas shattered the fortresses of the liberal humanist tradition and established institutions of modernization. However, many Victorians, especially Mathew Arnold, had a great faith in Modernization and for him "the modern element was a repose, confidence, tolerance, the free activity of the mind winning new ideas in the conditions of the material of well-being; it involved the willingness to judge by reason and search for the laws of the things" (Bradbury, McFarlane, 1991: 20). In other words, reason is placed at the centre of the modern, proving Derrida's claim which takes place in his seminal essay, "Structure, Sign and Play" that man has always sought for the centres. This urge for an exact centre on which the whole fields of life can be based is the result of the similar urge to create an ordered world. These sentences echo liberal humanists' perception of the world as fundamentally fixed and their stress on universality and historically fixed subject (Barry, 1995: 18). However, as Peter Faulkner describes, the world of twentieth-century was "much more complex than the world as it had been known before,

especially more complex than the orderly world that had been presented to the reader in Victorian literature" (Faulkner, 1977: 14).

Modernity, which was the reason of this complexity, was in fact an attempt to place humanity and human reason at the centre of everything. It portrays "the rise of capitalism, of social study and state regulation, of a belief in progress and productivity leading to mass systems of industry, institutionalization, administration and surveillance" (Childs, 2000: 16). However, there were also opposite ideas which put forward that modernity by employing the reason and the knowledge, invented new methods to enslave and control people. These stressed disintegration and reformation, fragmentation and rapid change, ephemerality and insecurity, chaos and encompassing of time and space as the defining characteristics of the modernity. The opponents of the modernity were inspired basically by Karl Marx's Capital (1867) and Communist Manifesto (1848), which placed the capitalist system at the heart of crisis of the European culture. Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, which overthrew the creation myths of the holy books, shook people's faith in a divine creator, thus led to the questioning of religious dogmas. Sigmund Freud's psychological innovations, especially his mapping of unconsciousness, announced that the self was not fixed and stable but evolving, fluid, discontinuous and fragmented. Einstein's theory of relativity undermined the claims to know anything absolutely about the material universe and described reality as fluctuating, ephemeral, mysterious. Ferdinand de Saussure characterized language as arbitrary and difference-based. Finally, Nietzsche's nihilism diagnosed the modern society as sick, abandoned by God in an incomprehensible universe. That is to say, figures from varying fields, from economist and philosopher Marx to naturalist Darwin, from psychologist Freud to physicist Einstein, and from linguist Saussure to philosopher Nietzsche, all gave way to an unsympathetic sense of modernity.

The fact that the dominance of reason and science led to technological achievement or material benefit is indisputable. However, modernity could not find the cure for the wounded spirits of people or any substitute for religion which had been declining since the Enlightenment and reduced humans "merely to rational animals who are increasingly perceived as more complex and consequently more emotionally, psychologically and technologically dependent" (Childs, 2000: 17). Finally, the last

stroke came from the World War I, causing devastation on such scale that "it became absurd to celebrate noble ideas like human dignity in art, or blithely to assert a belief in human progress" (Childs, 2000: 21). As Nietzsche claimed, a revaluation of all values was inevitable.

1.1.2 Modernist Fiction

> "Modernism is our art: it is the one art that responds to the scenario of our chaos. Modernism is then the art of modernization."
> Bradbury & McFarlane (1991: 27)

The abovementioned conditions of modernity which had come about after the demise of many institutions and assumptions – like liberalism, nationality, family, religion, humanism – contrarily, gave birth to one of the most brilliant and elegant literary movements – perhaps the most productive and fertile one – called as Modernism, "which has expressed our modern consciousness, created in its works the nature of modern experience at its fullest" (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1991: 28). Due to this fact, Bradbury and McFarlane describe it as "our art", as the art:

" … of the destruction of civilization and reason in the First World War, of the world changed and reinterpreted by Marx, Freud and Darwin, of constant capitalism and constant industrial acceleration, of existential exposure to meaninglessness or absurdity. It is the literature of technology. It is the art consequent on the dis-establishing of communal reality and conventional causality, on the destruction of traditional notions of the wholeness of the individual character, on the linguistic chaos that ensues when public notions of language have been discredited and when all realities become subjective fictions. Modernism is then the art of modernization – however stark the separation of artist from society may have been, however oblique the artistic gesture he has made" (Bradbury and McFarlane: 1991: 25).

The condition of modernity distanced or banished art from the society, or, in Michael Levenson's words, "sent it into opportune exile". (Levenson, 1986: 56) This fertile literary period, however, provided critics with enough questions, even with riddles hard to answer. "Few ages have been more multiple, more promiscuous in artistic style; to distil from the multiplicity an overall style or mannerism is a difficult perhaps even an impossible, task" (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1991: 20). In fact, the difficulty, or fertility and abundance, concealed, as Bradbury and McFarlane strongly

stress, within the radical break of Modernist practitioners from the past and literary tradition. Modernist practitioners created such texts which "were independent of any kind of historical background just flourishing breaking apart with the established conventions, traditions" and to which there were "no historical parallel when compared" (Bradbury and McFarlane, 1991: 20). The originality and the innovatory nature of Modernism complicated the job of the critics.

The problem starts, in the first place, in periodization of Modernism. What is generally accepted by critics is that, as a cultural and artistic movement, Modernism started in 1890 and lasted till 1940. However, attempts to constrict Modernist movement into exact dates are considered to be hazardous since, in a way, some novelists, flourished before or after these years, have still been discussed whether to be labeled as Modernists or not, just as in the case of Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy, an eighteenth-century novel which bears in itself the very characteristics of the Modernist Fiction. Generally, however, majority of the critics and literary historians agree that the last decade of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century witnessed the dominance of Modernism.

For M. H. Abrams, the term modernism "involves a deliberate radical break with the traditional bases both of Western culture and Western art and that the precursors of this break are thinkers who questioned the certainties that had hitherto provided a support to social organization, religion, morality and the conception of the human self" (Brooks, 1990: 120). This break with tradition is crucially important in the attempts to define Modernism. Similarly, Astradur Eysteinsson claims it "must be seen as the hallmark of modernism, the one feature that seems capable of lending the concept a critical coherence" (Eysteinsson, 1990: 52). Thus, it is not impossible to extend backward or forward these years. Basically, the last decade of nineteenth-century and the first decades of the following century were the years that most of the sparkling writers of Modernist Fiction, like Joyce, Woolf and Lawrence, had appeared.

Periodization is not the sole problem awaiting solution by the critics of Modernism. Still, the problem of categorization revolves in the critics' mind. In his attempt, David Brooks divides modernism into two parts: the first includes subdivisions as realism, naturalism, symbolism, futurism, Dadaism, surrealism and he labels the

second as High modernism, "quite strictly limited to certain figures significant or emerging in the period immediately surrounding the First World War and so, as a literary phenomenon, to a small group who share some particular and conceptual characteristics" (Brooks, 1990: 119). In Brooks's terms, this "High Modernist" movement finds its voice at peak in the novel genre within the texts of the novelists like E. M. Forster, Joseph Conrad, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce. These modernist novelists reexamined the techniques of fiction writing and accommodated their style in order to depict the chaotic and complex vision of the world which they believed covered in spiritual crisis which leads to the creation of disintegrated and fragmented society, alienated, soulless and senseless, mechanized and psychologically distorted individuals.

1.1.3 Mutation of the Novel

In the second half of the nineteenth-century, in Allen Walter's term, there appeared a mutation in the novel, a mutation which he dates the publication of George Eliot's <u>Adam Bede</u> and Meredith's <u>The Ordeal of Richard Feveral</u> as the starting point. This mutation, in fact, is the result of the modification of the end the novelists had assumed. Through this mutation, the English novelist gradually had got rid of the Victorian role of the novelist as preacher or reformer and equipped himself with the rights and the privileges of the poet. With this mutation the novel achieved the seriousness absent in the Victorian novel (Allen, 1958: 218-219). Within the last two decades of the nineteenth-century the mutation became dominant, a mutation which would eventually give birth to the Modernist English fiction. The fiction, now described as "sacred office" by Henry James, was valued as it had never been.

To achieve this status, the novel had to save itself from the ramshackle of Victorian sense of moral responsibility since "the world has become too chaotic, and issues too complex, for any moral pontificating" (Levenson, 1986: 54). Besides, the chief characteristic of the Victorian art as aspiration towards moral preeminence was antagonistic to the artistic creation and was limiting the artist. Moreover, the novel also had to free itself from the manacle of Classical Realism. Hence, Modernist novel, broadly speaking, is seen as a reaction against the hegemony of Realism. Realist novel,

dominant mode in the nineteenth-century, is the novel with "reliable narrators who deal with representative characters immersed in contemporary social problems and delimited by a shared yet varied essential humanity" (Childs, 2000: 74). It includes characters who are recognizable and reflective of reader's images; the events are told by reliable narrator using ordinary speech with linear plots and extensive use of free indirect discourse. Challenging many of these conventions, Modernist novel, due to its innovatory nature, attempted to create its own techniques in terms of narratology, character portrayal and linearity.

All these developments made the restriction of Modernist novelist's attention to the novel itself possible, and gave way to the releasing of the novel from extra-artistic responsibilities. Thus, Modernist novelist concentrated solely on his novel which turned the Modernist novel into an introverted one, "the effect of which was a radical revolution in the technique and a vastly greater stress upon form" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 394). Hence formalism and autonomy became the key features in the Modern Novel. It is the formal plays of writers that had created the masterpieces of Modernist literature, like Ulysses or The Waste Land. On the other hand, this formal play or frame-up is one of the sources of notorious difficulty of Modernist texts. Through their formal plays, "modernist writers plunge the reader into a confusing and difficult mental landscape which cannot be immediately understood, but which must be moved through and mapped by the reader in order to understand its limits and meanings" (Childs, 2000: 4). Modernist novels do not let the reader feel himself at home; constantly invites him to join the play, take an active role and figure out the meaning. In this context, Modernist novel is categorized, in Barthes's terms, as *scriptable* (writerly) while the Realist novel is described as *lisible* (readerly) (qtd. in Selden et al, 1997: 159).

Modernist novelists through their formal plays, tried to create an order what was lacking in the modern world. In a world disordered and crisis ridden, they sought to create order in their work to set "form over life, pattern and myth over the contingencies of history" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 394). This search for order or aesthetic wholeness required discarding of the techniques of previous period and creating fresh ones in order to depict the modern world. The conventions of the Realist fiction had to be given away since there had occurred a change in the conception of reality. The real

of the twentieth-century was not the real of its predecessors. The modernist writer had a developed sense that reality is not reality as perceived and structured by the Western Bourgeois consciousness. The real was not one-dimensional but multi-dimensional behind which "lies a realm full of dynamic energies whose patterns are alien to liberal humanist or classical notions of order" (Sheppard, 1993: 17). Having escaped from the conventions of story-telling and fact-giving, thus, the Modernist novel, freed from its dependence on the material world, was now able to "probe more freely and intensely the fact of life and the orders of modern consciousness" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 408). This was not the consciousness of a stereo-typed, fixed and established subject of Western Bourgeois Culture, but the split consciousness of the modern individual sundered by Freud and Nietzsche.

To articulate the varied meta-worlds of the distorted modern individual, Modernist novelists broke the linear sequentiality, destroyed the omniscient and reliable narrators, disturbed conventionally fixed modes of narrative relations through which their nineteenth-century predecessors comfortably communicated their stable and secure world. Thus, quintessentially, Modernist novelists experimented with techniques including distortions of linear casual/temporal order; they employed narrators whose perspective is limited, peculiar or unreliable; using multi-perspectivism they created polyphonic novels; established elastic or elusive relationships between author, narrator and protagonist (Sheppard: 1993, 18). The distortion of linear temporal order was due to the fact that the modernist novelist's sense of time was different from his nineteenth-century predecessors. For a novelist of the nineteenth-century time was progressive and linear, flowing in dialectical manner. Kantian notion of time was devastated with modernist sense of apocalypse, flux and decentring and the time for modernist writer "ceases to be a regular and common-sense process in which a precise but fixed gap, the present, separates the past from the future – a kind of simultaneity in which past, present and future merges into one" (Sheppard, 1993: 29). Thus, Modernist novelist gave up chronological plot construction; instead disturbed the sequence of the events constantly by shifts of time either from present to future or from present to past. For instance, in Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway, the reader is often taken from the present to the past, then back to the present, with flashbacks, in the course of the action which relates a single day of the middle-aged woman, Clarissa Dalloway.

Moreover, as modernist writers prefer to deal more with the contents of the unconscious of their character, the notion of time becomes more flexible as Freud claimed that the processes of unconscious is timeless or has no relation with time as normally understood. This focus on the consciousness of the characters foreshadows awaiting extensive development in the narratorial style of the twentieth-century Modernist fiction, namely the stream of consciousness. This style, of which Joyce and Woolf were one of the commonest practitioners, is a special form of interior monologue which seeks to portray an individual's point of view by giving the written account of the character's thought processes. For Modernist novelists, since the individual always perceives reality through his own consciousness, the contents and structure of consciousness represent the only accessible reality. In other words, subjective human experience of an individual is the reality of modernist novel writers.

Another innovation in the narratorial strategies of Modernist novel was the use of unreliable and limited narrators, or multi-perspectivism. For instance, Joseph Conrad in his most celebrated novels, like <u>Heart of Darkness</u> and <u>Lord Jim</u>, creates an imaginary narrator, Marlow, to relate the events. In <u>Lord Jim</u>, as Conrad shifts the narrative viewpoint several times he destroys the narratorial authority. Conrad prefers to relate the story using three different voices. A third-person omniscient opens the story and after few chapters Marlow begins his dramatized account when he relates the tale to a group of sailors. The third sound is account of Marlow's letter sent to one of the listeners. The use of these kinds of mixed narrative perspectives does not give the reader the comforting security of a guiding voice which is the commonest peculiarity of the Realist narratology.

With all these fresh techniques, the reader is taken from his safe coach of the nineteenth-century and is cast into the disordered modern world. As Richard Sheppard claims, all these techniques, in fact, evoke the effect of "defamiliarization" by which Modernist artists try to destroy the hegemony over their readers' minds of "conventionalized, nineteenth-century mode of perception; compel their audience to confront an alternative 'meta-world' whose nature transcends the conventional reality principle" (Sheppard, 1993: 18). The reader is constantly threatened and challenged to put his values into question. "The world of art becomes strangely dangerous world, a

world of perceptions and illusions generated by powers capable of coming under suspicion" (Bradbury and Fletcher, 1991: 407).

This challenge does not only include the use of fresh techniques, but also the employment of particular themes. In modernist novels content and form become inseparable and the thematic structure goes hand in hand with the stylistic structure. One of the most commonly repeated themes that are seen in modernist novels is the alienation and isolation of man. The characters in novels, like Lawrence's <u>Women in Love</u> and Forster's <u>Howards End</u>, grave for any human contact and they suffer from utter loneliness which they struggle to break. Another popular theme that modernist novelists handle is the senseless and mechanized life which is seen as the result of capitalist system. Another dominant theme handled in most of the modernist novels is the traumatic and distorted psychology of the man due to the First World War. This traumatic man finds its very embodiment with Woolf's characterization of the war veteran Septimus Smith in <u>Mrs. Dalloway</u>. For Demeester, the works written after the war constitutes a "literature of trauma: their forms often replicate the damaged psyche of a trauma survivor and their contents often portray his characteristic disorientation and despair" (Demeester, 1998: 649). Trauma that man experiences destroys all the faith man has had about himself and his world surrounding him and the traumatic man tries to find new ideologies to give order and meaning to his life. During the war Septimus saw human nature stripped of its civility and he witnessed the primitive nature of man with its potential for evil and destruction. Due to this fact modernist artists also preferred to cut all his ties with the humanity or anything related to human culture. As humanity collapses, the artist tries to stand on his own. The liberation of the artist also becomes one of the commonest themes of the modern novel.

Modernist fiction by detaching itself from the conventional and traditional mainstream fiction, which had still been practiced by some novelists like H. G. Wells and George Orwell, created its own methodology and style. It produced its own devices like the use of poetical language that included unorthodox images and metaphors or repetitions. They fought against the complexity of their world with the complexity of their style. Out of this complexity and obscurity they presented the richest and the deepest samples of fiction. However, it did not completely dominate the first half of the twentieth-century, but as David Lodge asserts, it existed with, what Lodge calls

antimodernism, with alternating phases of dominance. The last decade of the nineteenth-century was dominated by Modernism thanks to the figures like Henry James, Yeats and Conrad, while the first two decades of the following century witnessed the rise of antimodernist movement with Kipling and Hardy. After 1915s, together with the impact of Ezra Pound in literary circles and the World War I in social field, modernism claimed its dominance with appearance of such masterpieces as Waste Land, Women in Love, Ulysses and Mrs. Dalloway. Yet again in 1930s, with the appearance of politically committed writers like Auden, Greene and Orwell, the pendulum swung back to antimodernism. After the Second World War, the pointer again turned to modernism, notably with the poetry of Dylan Thomas, yet then again, in the middle of 1950s, was dethroned by "Angry Young Men", a group which was antagonistic to the experimental writing (Lodge, 1986: 8). As Lodge also adds, there is another movement or attitude in the modern period which is called postmodernism which would dominate the last half of the twentieth-century.

1.2 POSTMODERNISM

1.2.1 The Decline Of Modernism, The Rise Of The New Sensibility

Within 1950s, there appeared transformations in the function of art. In the past, Horace, then Sir Philip Sidney, had asserted that art should teach and delight; with Romanticism, art had become the healer of the corrupted spirits; the reputed practitioners of Realist fiction used their medium, the novel, as a place to discuss serious things. However, the emergence of modernist trends in art and literature signalled a departure from the world. Hence, modernism is often described with, and also criticized for, its non-commitment, detachment and radical elitism. This was the de-humanization of art best embodied in the Stephen Dedalus of Joyce's A Portrait of The Artist as A Young Man. Yet, the new sensibility, aroused together with the emergence of postmodernism, called art back to the world and in this call, it was required from art to extend "its medium and means into the world of science and technology, into the popular, and does away with the old distinctions" (Wasson, 1974: 1190).

The basic distinction was the distinction of high and low class. The old culture of Liberal Humanism was a class culture. This culture, strongly advocated by Mathew Arnold, was organized in accordance with the needs of the ruling elite. According to Wasson, "Arnold turned culture into a kind of sacred absolute divorced from the realities of a class society and emphasized the role of learning and knowing in the cloister over the doing and acting in the community" (Wasson, 1974: 1193). However, Arnold, skipping the class-based organization of the society, believed that everyone through his *best self* could unite against anarchy. For him, if ordinary selves are assumed the appearance of individual class interests are very likely. From this point of view, Arnold asserts that "by our best self, we are united, impersonal, at harmony; our best self inspires faith, and is capable of affording a serious principle of authority" (qtd. Levenson, 1986: 26). What Arnold offers is to get rid of all personal aspirations and desires in order to provide the harmony in the society. Commenting on these statements of him, Michael Levenson mentions that "in one stroke Arnold has abandoned the class character of capitalist society" (Levenson, 1986: 27). As there are apparent gaps between classes, the harmony that would be achieved through the model Arnold presents seems utopic. Richard Wasson also criticizes Arnold for believing that "literary culture was general and available to man when he was acting and thinking in accordance with his best self" (Wasson, 1974: 1190). The two Great World Wars, Nazism, Holocaust, rapid technological developments, decolonization, and Civil Right movements created new experiences which are impossible for the best self to regulate and accommodate. The man of culture, then, had to save himself from the role of "defensive prig concerned with cultural purity" (Wasson, 1974: 1192). Quoting Hamilton's model, Richard Wasson describes the situation as a "passage from the cloister to the world" (Wasson, 1974: 1191). It means that previously in Modernism, man of culture resided in a secure, protected church. Now, it was time to land back "to the bustling middle-class world of the new university, of politics, princes and peasants" (Wasson, 1974: 1191). Unlike Modernist attitude which had lamented and mourned for the chaos and for the loss of order, this new sensibility embraced all chaotic elements, differences, excluded voices and ex-centric.

The rise of the new sensibility and the decline of modernism can be associated with the emergence of postmodernism which contains in itself diverse reactions. While some celebrate the new era as "as a new era of job and profit possibilities, with exciting

new forms of culture and communication, promising a technological utopia", the others, on the other hand, emphasize "in apocalyptic fashion the collapse of the old modern society in a new postmodern scene of 'panic', 'spasm', and 'crash'" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 16). Owing to this fact, there is no single postmodern theory, but diverse postmodern theories of opponents and defenders.

There are also diverse ideas concerning the move from Modernism to Postmodernism. For some theoreticians there occurred a break "described by postmodernists as the transition from modernity to postmodernity, by Marxists as the restructuring of global capitalism … and by sociological theorist as the move to a postindustrial or information society" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 30). It is certain that important changes occurred that rendered old modern theories inadequate to interpret the contemporary society, culture and art.

"Whereas the modern era swept in unprecedented forces of secularization, rationalization, commodification, individualization, urbanization, nationalism, bureaucratization, and massification, since the 1960s we have seen the decline of the nation-state, a tumultuous process of decolonization, explosions of ethnicity and fundamentalism, cultural fragmentation and the erosion of the belief in progress, and Enlightenment values" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 30).

Against this radical break theory, there is another which perceives the postmodern as an extension and intensification of certain characteristics of modernism. For instance, Linda Hutcheon believes that there is a direct link between postmodernism and modernism. For Hutcheon, "the modern is ineluctably embedded in the postmodern, but the relationship is a complex one of consequence, difference, and dependence (Hutcheon, 1995: 38). The link is contradictory since it signals both dependence and independence as the name itself suggests. For Brian McHale, the use of the term postmodernism is a solecism. McHale insists that if "modern means pertaining to present then postmodern can only mean pertaining to the future", and therefore, for McHale, postmodernism is an intensified form of modernism (McHale, 1987: 4).

There is also an additional problem concerning the different forms of the term – postmodern, postmodernity, and postmodernism. Raman Selden, Peter Widdowson and Peter Brooker, in their common work, mention the problem and express that these terms are used "interchangeably." Instead, they propose to use the term postmodern or

postmodernity in order to map general "post-war developments in advanced media societies and capitalist economies" and to use the term postmodernism in order to refer to "developments in culture and arts" (Selden et al, 1997: 201). To understand postmodernism, then, requires a complete understanding of postmodernity or the condition of postmodern.

1.2.2 Postmodern Condition

> "The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us much terror as we can take. We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience."
>
> Jean-François Lyotard (1984: 81)

Many critical texts concerning modernism, stereotypically, start by expressing an immense change in social, political and economic life taking place in the last half of the nineteenth century and continuing in the twentieth century. On the other hand, many critical texts tackling the issue of postmodernity also tend to start the issue mentioning with the implications of a change. The range of the second change that has been talked about and said to have started since the Second World War is wide covering all of the societies of the world. Some argue that it transforms them into a consumer society, some claim a media society, for some a computerized society and yet another group claims a bureaucratic society. Postmodernity, however, is the favoured term that embraces all these disparate descriptions. Then, what are these changes that have transformed the present age into postmodern? The major and also the most important event of the said period was the Second World War, killing millions of people and presenting to the world its nightmare of Atomic Bomb. With the increasing nuclear threat and with the rising Cold War tension, social turmoil mounted leaving world at unease. On the other hand, domestic tensions like Civil Right Movement, Women's Movement and Environmentalism gave shape to what may be called the postmodern condition. All these put the fundamental assumptions of Enlightenment project of modernity into question like objectivity, authority, authencity, universal truth and grand or metanarratives that aspire to wholeness. Thus postmodernism is often

characterized as a critique of Modernism and the project of modernity. It is a cultural shift or turn in science, philosophy and arts.

Jean-François Lyotard, indisputably the most prominent critique of postmodernism, describes postmodernity as "incredulity toward metanarratives" and he believes "the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal" (Lyotard, 1984: p xxv.). These meta-narratives had been produced by the project of modernity such as the knowability of everything by science, Marx's narrative of future emancipation and the possibility of absolute freedom or democracy. However, Lyotard expresses that those meta-narratives lost their power to lead people towards a unified belief. "The decline of the unifying and legitimating power of the grand narratives of speculation and emancipation can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War, which has shifted emphasis from the ends of action to its means" (Sarup, 1988: 123). Hence, there has appeared a great disbelief in universal philosophies of Marx and Hegel. These narratives had no power anymore to legitimize or compel a consensus since society had already been fragmented as "totality of life" had been "splintered into independent specialties which were left to the narrow competence of experts" with the institutionalization of morality, art and science (Lyotard, 1984: 72). Consequently, the gap widens between the culture of experts and that of the larger public. Thus, according to Habermas, "what accrues to culture through specialized treatment and reflection does not immediately and necessarily become the property of everyday praxis" (Habermas, 1992: 132). No one is able to understand what is going as a whole. Interestingly, Lyotard expresses that there are, for artists, "invitations to suspend aesthetic experimentation, an identical call for order, a desire for unity, for identity, for security" and demands urgently to "liquidate the heritage of the avant-gardes" and to return back into the bosom of society (Lyotard, 1984: 73). However, capitalism easily strips such roles of its power and "possesses the power to derealize familiar objects, social roles, and institutions to such a degree that the so-called realistic representations can no longer evoke reality except as nostalgia or mockery, as an occasion for suffering rather than for satisfaction" (Lyotard, 1984: 74).

In Fredric Jameson's arguments concerning postmodernity, capitalism – late capitalism, as he categorizes – plays the central role. For Jameson, "the emergence of

postmodernism is closely related to the emergence of this new moment of late, consumer or multinational capitalism" (Jameson, 1992: 179). In this multinational capitalism, nation-states lose power to multinational corporations and it becomes nearly impossible to talk about a single society dwelling in its nation-state, but multinational societies invading these nation-states. Consequently, cultures merge into each other creating a new type of man who "listens to reggae, watches a western, eats McDonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and "retro" clothes in Hong Kong" (Lyotard, 1984: 76). Similarly, Jameson claims that there has been a radical shift in our surrounding material world and the ways in which it works.

Fredric Jameson stresses "the death of the subject; effacement of boundaries between high and low culture" as some of the prominent features of postmodernity. Jameson, claiming that the notion of "individualism or a personal identity is a thing of the past", puts forward two perspectives concerning the death of the subject, first of which asserts that "in the classic age of competitive capitalism, in the emergence of the bourgeoisie as the hegemonic social class, there was such a thing as individualism, as individual subjects" (Jameson, 1992: 168). This perspective acknowledges that the bourgeois individual subject of the past no longer exists. The second perspective, however, labels it as a myth, assumes that it had never existed at all. Rather, this perspective perceives the subject as a construct, as "merely a philosophical and cultural mystification which sought to persuade people that they 'had' individual subjects and possessed this unique personal identity" (Jameson, 1992: 168). To put it another way, the individual subject is just one of the grand narratives to be devaluated by postmodern condition.

Jameson states that the effacement of some key boundaries in society is one of the prominent features of postmodernity. With the advent of postmodernism, the gap between high and low culture have become narrower. For him, this erosion of the boundaries is the most saddening development for academic circles which:

"has traditionally had a vested interest in preserving a realm of high or elite culture against the surrounding environment of philistinism, of schlock and kitsch, of TV series and Readers Digest culture, and in transmitting difficult and complex skills of reading, listening and seeing to its initiates." (Jameson, 1992: 165).

Jameson, on the other hand, employs this feature as a periodizing concept which displays emergence of a new type of social life that requires, in turn, new formal features in culture. It is also a signal of emergence of "a new economic order-what is often euphemistically called modernization, postindustrial or consumer society, the society of the media or the spectacle, or multinational capitalism" (Jameson, 1992: 165). For this new moment, Jameson sees 1960s as the key transitional period.

Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, in their common work, The Postmodern Turn (1997), also stress the importance of 1960s as the turning point towards postmodernism expressing that "there was a turn away from modern discourse of truth, certainty, universality, essence and system and a rejection of grand historical narratives of liberation and revolution" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 7). 1960s, for them, provided for a group of intellectuals, including Foucault, Derrida and Lyotard, an experience "what they believed to be a decisive break with modern society and culture" which caused the replacement of "core tenets of modern theory with strong emphases on difference and multiplicity themes, later advocated by postmodern theorists" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 4-5). This mood of change, dissolution of old paradigms of modernism, hand in hand with the social and political turmoil of 1960s which would later create new forms of culture, society and technology gave way to the production of the postmodern condition.

1960s attacks on racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice created fresh postmodern discourses. Through these discourses, margins, differences, excluded voices of and new subjects of revolt sharpened their weapons against the discourse of the fixed, white, Western European male subject constructed by Liberal humanist tradition. Thanks to the intellectuals of 60s, it is commonly accepted that this liberal assumption of centre is just a fiction. Then, the postmodern condition, as in Linda Hutcheon's renowned remarks, is a "hail to the edges" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58). Unlike the monolithic discourses of the project of modernity, postmodern discourses of previously marginalized blacks, feminists, gay, natives, and Third World countries produced a counter-culture of multiplicity which demolished modernist "otherness" (alienation) in favour of postmodernist "differences." Moving from "otherness" to "differences," postmodern discourses challenge the notion of centre which "used to function as the pivot between binary opposites which always privileged one half:

white/black, male/female, self/other, intellect/body, west/east, objectivity/subjectivity" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58). Hutcheon appreciates the ex-centric and, unlike Jameson, is rather content since "thanks to the ex-centric, both postmodern theory and art have managed to break down the barrier between academic discourse and contemporary art. (Hutcheon, 1995: 71)

It was in 1970s and 1980s that these postmodern discourses enhanced their effectiveness. Up to 1980s, postmodern discourses were affected by the social, political and theoretical experiences of 1960s and 1970s. However, last decades – described as Generation X – had different cultural experiences with new technological developments that changed the pattern of everyday life. Steven Best and Douglas Kellner accuse this Generation X of imitating postmodern discourses without being aware what "modernism" is and without even reading Voltaire, Diderot, Hegel and Marx.

"They therefore, unavoidably construct superficial, stereotyped, and totalizing models of modern theory and the Enlightenment, setting up straw targets to blow over with an enthusiastic gush of hot air. Ignorance of the modern tradition inevitably entails abuse of postmodern theory itself, since it leads to exaggerating the novelty of postmodern breaks with earlier theories and fails to see how a legion of modern theorists themselves challenged ahistorical" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 12).

Expanding media technologies present new virtual worlds into people's homes which reorder space and time "erasing firm distinctions between reality and artificiality and dramatically changing fields as disparate as philosophy, architecture, science, war and law" (Best, Kellner: 1997, 13). Transformations in global capitalist postmodern economy were followed by an expanding global marketplace with novel forms of division of labour and capital, together with increasing ratio of immigration which caused class restructuring. Moreover, emergence of transnational organizations the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the World Bank gradually took away "some of the prerogatives of the nation-state, which was a major institution of modernity" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 13). On the other hand, there occurred reactions to these attempts of homogenization and commodification of a globalized economy and culture from subcultures which have tried to preserve their specific cultural forms. However, immense migrations to the big cities of capitalism have produced new cultures with hybrid identities. "Cumulatively,

the enormous transformations in the economy, politics, society, culture, and everyday life have nourished a sense that a rupture with the past has occurred, which in turn feed the production and circulation of postmodern discourse" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 15).

These postmodern discourses illuminate the contemporary realities. Important forces behind these discourses, like media, global and transnational economy and capitalism, are still at work today. The postmodern world is the contemporary world and it is an ongoing process. Thus, as these forces will continue to produce new forms of society, new theories, necessarily, will be required to interpret these developments.

1.2.3 Postmodernist Fiction

As mentioned above, postmodernist literature is the product of the condition of postmodernity that covered the second half of the twentieth-century and still continues today. If attempts to frame this condition are controversial, then, it is certainly impossible to expect a collective idea shared by literary critics concerning the literature it had given birth to. Moreover, when some scholars were already preparing to write their theoretical concerns on the issue, some scholars, like Barry Chabot, blamed those due to their impatience.

Writing in 1988, Chabot, in his provocative essay titled "The Problem of Postmodern" initially puts forward that it is our lack of adequate description of modernism and widely accepted misunderstanding of literary modernism that renders postmodern plausible at first (Chabot, 1988: 1). Then he emphasizes that the literature labelled under the name of postmodernism has strong ties with earlier writers of modernism. After a long discussion on Hassan's, Klinkowitz's and Wilde's accounts of postmodernism, he reminds that modernism is a periodizing concept which "is likely to be surpassed or replaced only by a concept of the same kind and with comparable reach" (Chabot, 1988: 10). In this respect, emergence of surrealism, for instance, does not provide an alternative for modernism but adds a new dimension to it as did Dadaism, symbolism etc. He also discards Jameson since Jameson builds his ideas on postmodern with respect to architecture. For Chabot, it is wrong to associate a development that takes place in architecture with literature since they are in different realms. According to him, it is "at least equally plausible that what some are calling

postmodernism is actually a late development or mutation within modernism itself " and finally scratches out the term postmodern as "empty marker" (Chabot, 1988: 18).

Alan Wilde, in "Postmodernism and the Missionary Position" literally responds to accusations of Chabot as he mentions Chabot in the very first sentence. Wilde also admits that as modernism still continues to be a hot debate being discussed "it would seem quixotic to expect a more settled view of its still developing offspring" (Wilde, 1988: 30). Nevertheless, he insists that "by now the postmodern has in fact taken the complex characteristics of a movement, identifiable not by a series of categorical rules for the writing of fiction but by precisely the qualities" (Wilde, 1988: 29). Wilde emphasizes changes of perception of reality and of world. As modernism attempts to recapture some essential truths and impose order on fragmented world "postmodernism represents the perception and acceptance of a world whose disarray exceeds and defies resolution" (Wilde, 1988: 28). According to Wilde, this is the reason why postmodern writers abandon modernist depth, essentialism, distance, transcendence and spatial form and begin to practice new technical adjustments of character, structure and language.

When it comes to the question of continuity Wilde calls Hutcheon's remark for help. For Hutcheon, the relationship between modernism and postmodernism "marks neither a simple and radical break from it nor a straightforward continuity with it: it is both and neither" (Hutcheon, 1987: 23). Admitting the link between postmodernism and modernism, Hutcheon states that "the modern is ineluctably embedded in the postmodern, but the relationship is a complex one of consequence, difference, and dependence" (Hutcheon, 1995: 38). However, Hutcheon also states that postmodernism is "a definable cultural phenomenon worthy of an articulated poetics" and she attempts to provide the poetics for this cultural phenomenon (Hutcheon, 1995: 38). Hutcheon mainly bases her poetics of postmodernism fundamentally on contradictory nature of it.

"Postmodernism is a fundamentally contradictory enterprise: its art forms (and its theory) at once use and abuse, install and then destabilize convention in parodic ways, self-consciously pointing both to their own inherent paradoxes and provisionality and, of course, to their critical or ironic re-reading of the art of the past" (Hutcheon, 1995: 23).

Hutcheon counters the idea of the loss of history in a postmodern text. Moreover, she categorizes postmodernist fiction as historiographic metafiction. She believes that it is narrative in fiction, in history and in theory which is the major concern of most of critical works concerning postmodernism and it is historiographic metafiction that incorporates all these areas of concern (Hutcheon, 1987: 12). The postmodernist fiction's concern with history may seem like a return to Realist fiction, but postmodernist fiction, or historiographic metafiction, problematizes history in order to question the relationship between history and reality, then between reality and language.

"In challenging the seamless quality of the history/ fiction (or world/art) join implied by realist narrative, postmodern fiction does not, however, disconnect itself from history or the world. It foregrounds and thus contests the conventionality and unacknowledged ideology of that assumption of seamlessness and asks its readers to question the processes by which we represent our selves and our world to ourselves and to become aware of the means by which we make sense of and construct order out of experience in our particular culture" (Hutcheon, 1989: 53-54).

These remarks remind of Lodge's famous analysis that novelists of the period stood "at crossroads" between "experiment" and "realism" (Lodge, 1986: 10). Yet, according to Hutcheon, fiction cannot reflect or reproduce reality and she gives no place to mimesis in historiographic metafiction. "Instead, fiction is offered as another of the discourses by which we construct our versions of reality, and both construction and the need for it are what are foregrounded in the post-modernist novel" (Hutcheon, 1995: 40). In other words, fiction itself becomes a discourse which includes historical, social, aesthetic and ideological contexts. Through this re-contextualization of fiction, entire act of communication gains importance. Hutcheon describes it as "the revenge of parole" over langue (Hutcheon, 1995: 82). In other words, in postmodernist fiction, it is stressed that through this emphasis on context, language can have any meaning. Enunciating entity gains more and more importance. Roland Barthes, in "The Death of the Author" (1968), also challenges the notion of originating author who provides a fixed meaning. According to Barthes, "linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing, just as I is nothing other than the instance saying I" (Barthes, 2001: 1467). The subject of the langue is "empty outside of the very enunciation which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together'" (Barthes, 2001: 1467). Then, it is the reader who activates the meaning of the text. Otherwise, if the meaning was

acquired merely through the author, it would necessarily mean "to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing" (Barthes, 2001: 1469).

Hutcheon, however, does not disdain the process of production while stressing the role of the receiver because the process of production itself is encoded in the act of enunciation. The originating, authorial author may be destroyed but "simultaneous with a general dethroning of suspect authority and of centred and totalized thought, we are witnessing a renewed aesthetic and theoretical interest in the interactive powers involved in the production and reception of texts" (Hutcheon, 1995: 77). Then, postmodernist texts force the reader to consider the language in use, or parole in Saussurean division of language. In the light of structuralist focus on *langue* and on the arbitrary but stable relationship between the signifier and the signified, postmodernism might be called "revenge of *parole*" (Hutcheon, 1995: 82).

Brian McHale, a prominent theoretician of postmodern fiction, makes use of Bakhtin's term "dominant" in his account of postmodernist fiction. For McHale, the dominant of modernist fiction is epistemological since they ask questions like "Which world is this?" or "What is to be done in it?" The dominant of postmodernist fiction, on the other hand, is ontological as they address these questions: "What is a world?; What kinds of world are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ?; What happens when different kinds of worlds are violated? etc. (McHale, 1987: 10). An ontology, McHale remarks, may be a description of any universe, or potentially plurality of universes not *the* universe (McHale, 1987: 27). Reminding the old analogy between author and god, in which the author had to suppress himself backward for the sake of the validity of the created universe, McHale asserts that postmodernist artist "now makes his freedom visible by thrusting himself into the foreground of his work" (McHale, 1987: 30). This foregrounding is actualized through irony, a prominent feature of postmodernist fiction.

The visible stance of the postmodernist artist in the text is closely associated with self-reflexive nature of postmodernist fiction. Through his appearance, postmodernist artist draws attention to the artificial nature of the text. Due to this fact, postmodernist fiction is often associated with metafiction by critics. For instance, Patricia Waugh asserts that "nearly all contemporary experimental writing displays

some explicitly metafictional strategies" (Waugh, 1984: 22). Accepting that metafiction is as old as novel itself, Waugh believes that as the writers have become more and more aware of theoretical issues by exploring "a theory of fiction through the practice of writing", they have produced novels which "embody dimensions of self-reflexivity and formal uncertainty" (Waugh, 1984: 2) Framing, Waugh suggests, is an important issue in metafiction as it suggests where the real world finishes and the fiction starts. According to Waugh, contemporary metafiction poses problems concerning frame-breaking as it examines the construction of the frame that separates the real world from fiction. For Waugh, "contemporary metafiction draws attention to the fact that life, as well as novels, is constructed through frames, and that it is finally impossible to know where one frame ends and another begins" (Waugh, 1984: 29). Thus, postmodern metafictions disturb conventional beginnings and endings or they present readers novels in the form of Chinese boxes or stories in stories. Thus, ontological levels of fiction constantly shift, replace or overlap. Waugh again admits that this frame-breaking does not merely belong to postmodernist fiction. She refers to George Eliot's Adam Bede as an example of frame-breaking in previous literary epochs. However, George Eliot's breaking of the illusion aims to give moralistic commentary or interpretation. The disturbance of the illusion in the case of George Eliot is in fact to "*reinforce* the connection between the real and the fictional world, reinforce the reader's sense that one is a continuation of the other" (Waugh, 1984: 32). On the other hand, in postmodernist metafiction, these intrusions work to "expose the ontological distinctness of the real and the fictional world, expose the literary conventions that disguise this distinctness" (Waugh, 1984: 32). Thus, postmodernist fiction self-consciously questions the relationship between fact and fiction.

Likewise, Hutcheon proposes that historiographic metafiction "installs and then blurs the line between fiction and history" (Hutcheon, 1995: 113). Unlike historical fiction, historiographic metafiction by playing "upon the truth and lies of the historical record" self consciously falsifies "certain known historical details" as it aims to "foreground the possible mnemonic failure" (Hutcheon, 1995: 114). Again, contrary to historical fiction, which "incorporates and assimilates" historical data as a mean to lend credibility to the fictional world, historiographic metafiction foregrounds especially "the process of *attempting* to assimilate" these data (Hutcheon, 1995: 114). The reality of the past is paradoxical for Hutcheon, and it is accessible only through textualized

form. Hutcheon believes that "one of the postmodern ways of literally incorporating the textualized past into the text of the present is that of parody" (Hutcheon, 1995: 118).

Postmodernist fiction, in Hutcheon's terms, in ironic and parodic ways uses and abuses or installs and subverts conventions "self-consciously pointing both to their own inherent paradoxes and provisionality and, of course, to their critical or ironic re-reading of the art of the past" (Hutcheon, 1995: 23). In other words, postmodernist fiction first accommodates and then undermines its target. Due to this fact, parody and postmodernist fiction frequently go hand in hand as both of them simultaneously aim first to accommodate and then to subvert. Thus, for Hutcheon, "parody is a perfect postmodernist form in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (Hutcheon, 1987: 17). However, Jameson insists that parody is impossible in postmodern age:

"Supposing that modern art and modernism-far from being a kind of specialized aesthetic curiosity – actually anticipated social developments along these lines; supposing that in the decades since the emergence of the great modern styles society has itself begun to fragment in this way, each group coming to speak a curious private language of its own, each profession developing its private code or idiolect, and finally each individual coming to be a kind of linguistic island, separated from everyone else? But then in that case, the very possibility of any linguistic norm in terms of which one could ridicule private languages and idiosyncratic styles would vanish, and we would have nothing but stylistic diversity and heterogeneity." (Jameson, 1992: 167)

Instead of parody, Jameson believes, pastiche is one of the most prominent features of postmodernism. Pastiche is similar to parody; it is also an imitation of a particular style. However, according to Jameson, pastiche "is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something normal compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic" (Jameson, 1992: 167). Jameson states that it will be impossible for the present day artists to create new style since they have already been invented. Moreover, if the individual subject is considered to be a myth that has never really existed, it is equally impossible to talk about peculiar individual style to parody. This loss of original style, Jameson thinks, is the imprisonment of the text in the past. On the other hand, contradicting Jameson, Hutcheon puts forward that this loss is an emancipatory challenge of postmodernist artist to redefine "subjectivity and creativity that has ignored the role of history in art and thought" (Hutcheon, 1987:

17) Moreover, postmodern parody, Hutcheon underlines, also becomes the mode of the ex-centric, who had been previously excluded by a dominant ideology, because parody introduces "a perspective on the present and the past which allows an artist to speak *to* a discourse from *within* it, but without being totally recuperated by it" (Hutcheon, 1995: 35). Reminding Brecht's alienation effect (Verfremdungseffekt) and Shklovsky's renowned term defamiliarization, parody "works to distance and, at the same time, to involve both artist and audience in a participatory hermeneutic activity" through "dialogical relation between identification and distance" (Hutcheon, 1995: 35).

Parody is also abundant in postmodernist fiction due to intrinsic intertextuality, what is also a key feature of postmodernist fiction. According to Hutcheon, postmodernist fiction abandons "the notion of the work of art as a closed, self-sufficient, autonomous object deriving its unity from the formal interrelations of its parts" (Hutcheon, 1995: 125). It takes the text not to the real world but to "world of discourse, the "world" of texts and intertexts" (Hutcheon, 1995: 125). In fact, parody or any re-visiting of history is intertextual for Hutcheon, because past is textualized, and every traces of the past can be seen only in the texts. Postmodern theory and postmodernist fiction borrow these terms, text and intertextuality from Barthes's seminal essay "From Work to Text" (1971), where he posits that "the text is not to be thought of as an object that can be computed" but as "a process of demonstration" that is "held in language" (Barthes, 2006: 237). For Barthes:

"... the work itself functions as a general sign and it is normal that it should represent an institutional category of the civilization of the Sign. The Text, on the contrary, practices the infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory: its field is that of the signifier and the signifier must not be conceived of as "the first stage of meaning" ... but, in complete opposition to this, as its *deferred action*. .... The Text ... like language ... is structured but decentred, without closure." (Barthes, 2006: 238)

There is text where there is language and therefore, any linguistic production is a text. As Barthes stresses in his "Theory of The Text" (1973), while it is impossible to talk about closed-boundaries and systems it is possible to see network of texts or intertexts generating plurality of meaning.

"... any text is an intertext: other texts are present in it, at varying levels, in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of the previous and surrounding culture. Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of codes, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc. pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality is the condition of any text whatsoever ..." (Barthes, 1981: 39)

Considering ideas of Barthes it can be asserted that intertextuality is one of the most important defining characteristics of all literary periods as every literary production is "a tissue of quotations", "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (Barthes, 2001: 1468). However, intertextuality gains importance in postmodernist fiction due to the wide spread use of parody which is inherently intertextual.

There are other characteristics that McHale attributes to postmodernist fiction. Trompe-l'oeil, for instance, is confusion of levels to deliberately mislead "the reader into regarding an embedded, secondary world as the primary, diegetic world" (McHale, 1987: 115) There are strange loops or violation of the narrative levels occurring "whenever, by moving upwards or downwards through the levels of some hierarchical system, we unexpectedly find ourselves right back where we started" (McHale, 1987: 119). There are also split texts, which McHale calls the schizoid text. These schizoid texts, within the condition of simultaneity, introduce "two or more texts arranged in parallel, to be read simultaneously to the degree that that is possible" (McHale, 1987: 191)

Proper to metafictional nature of postmodernist fiction, the material aspect of the book is often foregrounded in postmodernist texts. This is done through coloured pages, blank space, short chapters or pages deliberately left blank. In Realist novels, in order to protect the representation of the reality or increase the credibility of the created world material qualities of books are constantly suppressed. However, in postmodernist texts by foregrounding the materiality of the book the reality of the projected world is disturbed. Spacing, for instance, is one of the commonly used mediums by postmodernist writers to foreground this materiality. "A trivial, superficial convention, one might think, of no real significance; but, depending upon the context in which it appears, spacing can be motivated as an act of subversion – and not just subversion of literary norms, either" (McHale, 1987: 182). By this way, the ontological disturbance is

again provided and this disturbs conventional reading activity by alerting and defamiliarizing the reader. Another technique used by postmodernist writers to invoke such shock effect is collage. The use of collage in postmodernist fiction also implies the fragmentation. Moreover, as postmodernist literature generally tends to blur the distinction between genres this disturbance that takes place in the boundaries of genres is done through collision, fragmentation and collage.

David Lodge, in <u>The Modes of Modern Writing</u>, attempts to list some possible characteristics of postmodernist fiction. Reminding Hutcheon, Lodge puts contradiction at the top. Second characteristic is permutation. Lodge asserts that metaphoric and metonymic writing requires selection and selection requires omission. However, "postmodernist writers often try to defy this law by incorporating alternative narrative lines in the same text" (Lodge, 1996: 230). For instance, a postmodernist writer may present more than one alternative ending to let the reader choose one of them. The third characteristic is discontinuity. Lodge believes that continuity is a quality that every writing is expected to have, but he also proposes that "postmodernism is suspicious of continuity" (Lodge, 1996: 231). The continuity in a postmodernist text is disturbed through shifts in tone or narration, spacing, contradiction and permutation. Lodge associates techniques used to disrupt continuity with randomness, the fourth characteristic, as he believes that postmodernist writers "compose according to a logic of the absurd" (Lodge, 1996: 235). Another characteristic, he proposes, is excess as many postmodern writers employ techniques or devices in their excess level. Lodge's last item is short circuit by which he refers to the destruction of the assumed gap between the text and the world. By, for instance, "combining in one work violently contrasting modes" a shock is given to the reader and therefore, postmodern writing attempts to save itself from being assimilated into "conventional categories of the literary" (Lodge, 1996: 240). For Brian McHale, mise-en-abyme is one of the forms of short-circuit. McHale suggests that "*mise-en-abyme* is one of the most potent devices in the postmodernist repertoire for foregrounding the ontological dimensions of recursive structures" (McHale, 1987: 124). He proposes three criteria through which "a true *mies-en-abyme*" is determined:

"… first it is nested or embedded representation, occupying a narrative level, inferior to that of the primary, diegetic narrative world; secondly, this nested representation

resembles (copies) something at the level of the primary, diegetic world; and thirdly, this "something" that it resembles must constitute some salient and continuous aspect of the primary world, salient and continuous enough that we are willing to say the nested representation *reproduces* or *duplicates* the primary representation as a whole." (McHale, 1987: 124)

Again to problematize the distinction between fact and fiction, narrative hierarchies are disturbed through the use of short-circuit.

To conclude, postmodernist fiction is first of all self-reflexive or metafictional drawing attention to its artificial nature. Postmodern novels do not tell story but deal with story telling through pastiche, parody, irony, collage. By means of collage, parody and pastiche modernist idea of fragmentation is taken a step further. However, for postmodernist fiction, fragmentation is not a thing to mourn about, but a thing to celebrate as it embraces the ex-centrics and differences. Proper to its metafictional and self-reflexive nature, postmodernist fiction plays with language and conventions of novel. It blurs the distinction between genres, shocks the reader by playing with his expectations.

CHAPTER II

THE GOLDEN MOBIUS STRIP: <u>THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK</u> AS A FRAGMENTED NARRATIVE

> A man and a woman – yes. Both at the end of their tether. Both cracking up because of a deliberate attempt to transcend their own limits. And out of the chaos, a new kind of strength. (<u>GN</u>, 411)

2.1 FRAGMENTATION

Enlightenment and industrialization which had started more than two centuries ago became the two most important determinants which shaped our contemporary cultural condition and literary scene. The process of rapid modernization, impact of which was deeply felt in technological, economic and social spheres of life, took place in the history of the world thanks to the outcomes of Enlightenment and industrialization. Modernity formed and strengthened the tenets of western culture with its emphasis on positivistic sciences and rationality. However, postmodernity, even though it was considered as the offspring of modernity or as the movement that follows modernity, challenged and shook the westernized fixation of the modern era. In a sense, postmodernity not only became its intensifier as Linda Hutcheon and Brian McHale agree, but also, by its plurality and multi-layered forms with their decentralized fixations, became an alternative rather than the successor of modernity. The present chapter, therefore, attempts to discuss the multi-faceted structure of the twentieth century which found its reflection also in the narrative strategies of the novelists as the natural outcome of what may be called the postmodern condition by giving examples from <u>The Golden Notebook</u> by Doris Lessing, one of the prominent authors who shaped both modernist and postmodernist theories.

The starting date of the project of modernity is generally accepted as the eighteenth-century corresponding with the Enlightenment Period. This period is marked

with a strong belief in rationality and progress in which science became the new religion which was just setting the foundations for the industrial revolution. For the ideology of modernity, the key to discover the exact truth about the world is the rational thought or the man himself. Thus, it was believed that the man could understand his universe and could have better control over the nature thanks to the scientific developments. In accordance with the ideology of modernity, liberal humanist tendency was produced in the interests of the bourgeois class which promoted universal values such as freedom, equality and proposed the notion of free, unconstrained, unified, autonomous subject who had the freedom of choice.

However, as a period that included the speediest changes in the world history, the chaotic twentieth-century did not welcome these simple ideas of progress, liberalisation and individualism. The two great World Wars, especially Atomic Bombs – which are also called as "A-Bombs" by Anna in the novel (228) – which destroyed two Japanese cities, Holocaust and the Cold War tension brought up questions concerning the ideas of progress and rationality. Moreover; the unified and autonomous liberal humanist subject was understood to be the white, male, western European subject. While man was placed in the centre, woman was off-centred. The case was not different with blacks, homosexuals or anyone out of the domain of the white world. Thus, the twentieth-century did not turn out to be a world of total harmony and comfort once dreamed. Rather, it became a much more chaotic place characterized by fragmentation, dissolution, alienation and breakdown. All these undermined the fundamental assumptions of Enlightenment project of modernity like objectivity, authority, universal truth and grand or meta-narratives that aspire to wholeness.

Thus postmodernism is often characterized as a critique of Modernism and the project of modernity. It is a cultural shift or turn in science, philosophy and arts. For instance, as Fredric Jameson argued in his much-cited article "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," supposedly fixed and individual liberal bourgeois subject was taken under scrutiny and claimed to be dead as an ideological construct of the past, or even claimed to be a myth that had never existed at all (Jameson, 1992: 168). In the chaotic and disordered world of the twentieth century, fixed subject could not find its respectable place and previously excluded female, ethnics and blacks were crowned. As Linda Hutcheon remarks, "the different and the paradoxical fascinate postmodern"

(Hutcheon, 1995: 47). Hutcheon prefers and employs "the multi-ringed circus" as "the pluralized and paradoxical metaphor for a decentred world where there is only ex-centricity (Hutcheon, 1995: 61). This "multi-ringed circus" is the portrait of the fragmented society in which differences, plurality and contrasts are abundant. In other words, fragments of the society – the marginal, the decentred, and the excluded – took on new significance.

While the twentieth-century reflected fragmentation, dissolution, alienation and breakdown, two different perceptions of these themes stand out in Modernist and Postmodernist domains, should the century be divided into two periods. The first perception is the mournful one by the Modernist authors who lamented the loss of order in society and who feared chaos. Thus, they sought for unity, order and wholeness in their texts. In this struggle, it was language that they relied on. In Howards End, E. M Forster made the phrase "only connect" his epigram and related the attempts of a woman, Margaret Wilcox, trying to connect two different families, a materialistic bourgeois family and an aristocratic intellectual family. T. S. Eliot, in his influential article entitled "Tradition and Individual Talent," suggested writers to make concessions on private and personal issues for the sake of a unified, great tradition. Hence, for Michael Levenson, it was Eliot who assumed "the painful task of unifying" (Levenson, 1986: 186). Levenson believes that what makes Eliot one of the most prominent critics of Modernism are his critical efforts which aimed to "restore equilibrium, to effect a satisfactory poise among competing aesthetic demands, to achieve, in Eliot's phrase, 'a moment of stasis'" (Levenson, 1986: 186). Very much inspired by anthropology, Eliot proposes the mythic method and in his article, "Ulysses, Order and Myth" appreciates parallel structure of Joyce's Ulysses. For him, Joyce builds a "continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity" which "other must pursue after him" (Eliot, 1986: 101). Eliot describes this mythic method as "a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Eliot, 1986: 101). The desire for unity, order and wholeness is, then, indisputable.

The second approach, the postmodern one, neither seeks nor desires for totality, unity or wholeness. Instead, there is an acceptance of fragmentation. Moreover postmodernism celebrates fragmentation by welcoming differences, localities and it

denies totalization. Being indisputably one of the most prominent theoreticians of postmodern thought, Jean-François Lyotard also asserts that the organic wholeness of the society has ceased to be valid as "the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal" (Lyotard, 1984: xxv.). Totalizing grand narratives like Marxism, Christianity or Liberalism, for Lyotard, also lost their credibility in the society which had witnessed the failure of these totalizing narratives in the cases of Soviet Russia or in so called liberal democracies of Western Europe. Lyotard also classifies the project of modernity or the Enlightenment project, which was supported and promoted by German philosopher Habermas, under the label of totalizing grand narrative. For him, it is also another attempt of authoritization.

Linda Hutcheon admits that these meta-narratives or master narratives "are indeed attractive, perhaps even necessary" and she does not, however, deny their illusory nature (Hutcheon, 1987: 13). For Hutcheon, postmodernism challenges but does not deny "the increasing tendency towards uniformity in mass culture" as one of the totalizing forces (Hutcheon, 1987: 13). Postmodernism directly challenges the notion of centre and believes that it is just a fiction. If centre is fiction, then order or wholeness is a dream. In order for a system or an order to hold it necessarily desires a centre. Hutcheon claims that postmodern fiction is generally criticized on the basis of "a humanist belief in the universal human urge to generate systems to order experience, the fiction itself challenges such critical assumptions" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58). Postmodern fiction is there to assert and defend differences over the concept of otherness. Thus, the previously excluded voices of the ex-centric are heard aloud in postmodern fiction. Gays, lesbians, feminists and ethnics come fore front. However, Hutcheon stresses that their "counter-culture do not form monolithic movements, but constitute a multiplicity of responses to a commonly perceived situation of marginality and ex-centricity" (Hutcheon, 1995: 62). The centre, which cannot hold anymore, used to support binary oppositions like male – female, white – black, west – east which had always privileged one and oppressed the other. Postmodern theory and fiction reject and bear a great urge to destroy assumed hierarchies of these binary oppositions "in favour of more plural and deprivileging concept of difference and the ex-centric" (Hutcheon, 1995: 65).

Postmodern thought, contrary to the project of modernity, questions, criticizes and deconstructs grand narratives and concludes that any attempt to create order or

unity inevitably results in disorder, fragmentation or dissolution. Due to this fact, Lyotard calls for local, regional or provisional mini narratives rather than employing grand narrative. He even goes further to cry out that "we have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience." Then he proposes to declare "a war on totality" in order to "activate the differences and save the honour of the name" (Lyotard, 1984: 81).

Postmodern literature, then, embraces the fragments of society by acknowledging their existence. Postmodernist novelists handled issues of fragmentation and made this subject their major thematic concern. The thematic concern in fragmentation echoed in the formal and stylistic aspects of many postmodern novels. Hutcheon, for instance, claims that "narrators in fiction become either disconcertingly multiple and hard to locate or resolutely provisional and limited – often undermining their own seeming omniscience" (Hutcheon, 1987: 17). Postmodern literature, for Hutcheon, questions and challlenges all totalizing and homogenizing systems and "postmodern provisionality and heterogeneity contaminate any neat attempts at unifying coherence – formal or thematic" (Hutcheon, 1987: 17).

Postmodernism is, then, the interrogation of generally accepted values of society concerning coherence, unity and order. However, Hutcheon admits that "[postmodernism] acknowledges the human urge to make order, while pointing out that the orders we create are just that: human constructs, not natural or given entities" (Hutcheon, 1995: 41). Another idea concerning the differentiation of narrative in postmodern literature is connected with "the knowledgeable, newly formidable, often condescending reader" (Danziger, 1996: 4). Confronted not only with a vision of an enigmatic and chaotic world, but also with this new reader, and conscious of the idea that there is no underlying reality, postmodern novelist suffers a decrease in his power to recreate the world. Thus, Danziger puts forward that the "haunted" postmodern novelists "resort to a desperate shifting from one narrative mode to another to avoid looking too naïve or too positivistic or too committed to the sheer joy of conventional storytelling" (Danziger, 1996: 4). Postmodern novelist, conscious of the fact that the truth value of her story would certainly be questioned, experiences a "manic urge to test all paradigms without commitment", and thus the narrator is led to "de-center her

perspective and to focus on the possibilities of escape across an alien border" (Danziger, 1996: 8-10). This supports the plurality and multiplicity of postmodern perspectives. Modifications in narrative strategies may bear resemblance to "a conciliatory palimpsest effect" which is "the superimposition of (at least) two contradictory perspectives" (Danziger, 1996: 11) or through constant shift in narrative to "TV zapping" (McHale, 1992: 125-133). In this respect, the Nobel Prize winner Doris Lessing's masterpiece The Golden Notebook is quintessential as it displays thematic, formal and also stylistic fragmentations. Fragmentation is the basic theme handled in the novel almost in an obsessive manner. Due to this fact, the theme of fragmentation is well reflected in the structure of the novel with its disaggregated nature. The reflection of obsessive fragmentation in the form also generates a fragmented narrative strategy which in turn nourishes the formal and thematic fragmentation.

2.2 A FRAGMENTED NARRATIVE

British novelist, Doris Lessing as the "epicist of the female experience, who with scepticism, fire and visionary power has subjected a divided civilisation to scrutiny"[1] was honoured with Nobel Literature Prize in 2007 at the age of 88, after a career of more than 50 years. However, it is an incontestable fact that her masterpiece, in other words what makes her the "epicist of the female experience" is The Golden Notebook, a novel talking through its form. Published in 1962, The Golden Notebook was an outstanding achievement as it is considered to be one of the first examples of postmodern British fiction. In the collected work, Notebooks/Memoirs/Archives Reading and Rereading Doris Lessing, Jean McCrindle and Elizabeth Wilson express their first reactions as women in 1960s and then their rereading the text at later ages. For McCrindle, The Golden Notebook was "the most courageous book [she] had ever read – both in its structure – keeping the different parts separate and connected in order to express and avoid chaos – and in its honesty of content" (McCrindle, 1982: 44). In the following chapter of the said collection, Elizabeth Wilson brings Lessing and De Beauvoir together and comments that "in the strange cultural landscape of 1960 they loomed up, Cassandras of women's experience, an experience that was everywhere

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[1] NobelPrize.org, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2007/index.html, Retrieved on 2008-09-11.

silenced, concealed and denied" (Wilson, 1982: 57). The book was controversial as it has inspired different interpretations and critical receptions since its first publication. As Lessing would later negate in her much-cited preface to 1972 edition of The Golden Notebook, while the novel was perceived as a text handling the issue of sex war or as a feminist manuscript by some, others interpreted it as a strongly political text reflecting the historical and cultural climate of the moment. However, in the direct contradiction, Lessing, in the Preface to 1972 edition of The Golden Notebook, rejects especially the claims that define The Golden Notebook as a feminist text and points out her intention clearly: "My major aim was to shape a book which would make its own comment a wordless statement: to talk through the way it was shaped" (13). However, the Doris Lessing of the 1950s presents a writer committed and strictly adherent to realist tradition and she declares her commitment obviously in her article "The Small Personal Voice" at a time when the issue of the role of the writer and the intellectual was a hot debate:

"For me the highest point of literature was the novel of the nineteenth century, the work of Tolstoy, Stendhal, Dostoevsky, Balzac, Turgenev, Chekhov; the work of the great realists. I define realism as art which springs so naturally from a strongly-held, though not necessarily intellectually-defined, view of life, that it absorbs symbolism. I hold the view that the realist novel, the realist story, is the highest form of prose writing; higher than and out of reach of any comparison with expressionism, impressionism, symbolism, naturalism, or any other ism." (qtd. in Taylor, 1982: 18)

These opinions of Lessing were also reflected in her following novels Going Home (1957) and In Pursuit of English (1960). However, five years after the appearance of "The Small Personal Voice", Lessing published The Golden Notebook (1962) with its encyclopaedic size. The book provided an antithesis to what Lessing had previously claimed as it displayed structural play and astonishing formal experimentation. Besides, it was in The Golden Notebook that Doris Lessing tried her hand more boldly regarding the female experience. Moreover, it was not just this thematic indulgence with the female experience that made this novel a major achievement of her career. It was the structural play that gave its shape to the novel which consequently made it a novel written before its time. In other words, Lessing in this novel, without hesitation plays with the traditional novel form and explores, accommodates and comes up with new models to communicate the epic of the female experience in the postmodern fragmented world.

The Golden Notebook was widely praised and became one of the influential novels of post-war English literature. Obviously not a "little novel about emotions" (57), The Golden Notebook has invoked mixed interpretations. In the Preface to 1972 edition, after negating ideas which had put forward that she "had written a tract about the sex war," Lessing makes it clear 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" (10). Moreover, in one of the Red notebook entries, Anna Wulf, the protagonist, also declares that "humanism stands for the whole person, the whole individual, striving to become as conscious and responsible as possible about everything in the universe" (320). In these statements, there is an apparent stress on integration, wholeness and affirmation of humanist aesthetics which are against the fashion of experimental fiction of 1960s. However, unlike what Lessing states, The Golden Notebook is not put in an order or presents wholeness in the sense that Classical Realism asks for. In other words, as Molly Hite remarks in her article "Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook and The Four-Gated City: Ideology, Coherence, and Possibility" (1988), The Golden Notebook is "about coherence" while it is "by realist conventions" incoherent (Hite, 1988: 17). However, The Golden Notebook bears in itself a kind of unity, a unity which:

" … is made up of contradictory strands of narration that seem to resolve into ontological levels but end up resisting strategies of naturalization, and it deals with the political perils of assuming that there is a coherent, explicable universe and a "real story" that adequately reflects it." (Hite, 1989: 62)

For Danziger, The Golden Notebook is "ultimately a novel about our ongoing need to impose patterns upon the mess of experience – despite the ultimate falseness of those necessary patterns or paradigms" (Danziger, 1996: 55). It is true that there is a universal human desire to produce systems in order to give shape and order experience. However, postmodern fiction itself challenges such assumptions by establishing, differentiating, and then dispersing "stable narrative voices" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58-118). In other words, The Golden Notebook is the embodiment of Lessing's dissatisfaction with established conventions of realist tradition and also modernist fiction. Lessing in fact searches for new models to communicate experiences of a blocked woman writer, who spent her youth in Africa, became first an active then a disappointed communist,

who was a politically committed writer, a mother, a wife – or mistress sometimes – a woman. These disparate identities of Anna Wulf and the complex articulation of experience show itself on a number of different ontological levels. However, Anna Wulf suffers from disability to describe "the real experience":

"Words. Words. I play with words, hoping that some combination, even a chance combination, will say what I want. … The fact is, the real experience can't be described. I think, bitterly, that a row of asterisks like an old-fashioned novel, might be better. Or a symbol of some kind, a circle perhaps, or a square. Anything at all, but not words. The people who have been there, in the place in themselves where words, patterns, order, dissolve, will know what I mean and the others won't." (549)

As Anna believes that "there are whole areas of [her] made by the kind of experience women haven't had before" and as she wants "to be able to separate in [herself] what is old and cyclic, the recurring history, the myth, from what is new" the difficulty and complexity of articulation of experience gets harder and harder (414-415). Moreover, Anna Wulf, as an artist, loses her faith in the power of language to convey meaning. In the novel there is a constant emphasis on dissolution and thinning of language. Words are not anymore reliable as they "lose their meaning suddenly" and for Anna, "the gap between what [words] are supposed to mean, and what in fact they say seems unbridgeable" (272). Besides, stories which are mere products of language also suffer from this anxiety since a story may be read as parody, irony or seriously. For Anna, this fact is "another expression of the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked with what [she feels] to be true about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience" (273). Thus, The Golden Notebook becomes an arena in which the density of experience tries to find its way for articulation. In this troublesome way, necessarily there are fragments, gaps, lapses, shifts and multiplicity in the narration which is the very characteristics of postmodern literature.

Lessing, then, experiments with innovative narrative strategies to reflect and stress the complexity of experience. The book's obsessive thematic concern on fragmentation, that is breakdown of a blocked writer, is well echoed in the structural and formal characteristics. Lessing divides her book into parts, each associated with a different colour. The first part is titled as Free Women which, in Lessing's words "is a conventional short novel, about 60.000 words long, and which could stand by itself" (7).

This short novel or novella is divided in itself with four different notebooks – Black, Red, Yellow, Blue – ensuing each Free Women section. There are five Free Women sections each followed by these notebooks. Following these coloured notebooks The Golden Notebook appears which is also followed by the last Free Women section which operates, physically speaking, like a conclusion part. The protagonist of the novel is Anna Wulf who is a blocked writer. Her 'realist' novel, <u>The Frontiers of War</u>, was a success which provided her with an income sufficient to make her living. However, she believes that this novel was just a "lying nostalgia, a longing for licence, for freedom, for the jungle, for formlessness" (63). Owing to this dissatisfaction with her first novel which took its place in the traditional stream with its realist bearings, she is in a desperate search for new models to relate her experience in a more truthful manner. Yet, Anna is obsessed with fragmentation. Her attempts to come up with a suitable and reliable method in order to achieve a kind of wholeness constantly results with frustration. As a matter of fact it is Anna's attempts to recover from the block that render the book so fragmented and divided. She wants to impose order upon the chaos of her life. She admits that the only kind of the book which interests her is "a book powered with an intellectual or moral passion strong enough to create order, to create a new way of looking at life" (76). However, her attempts only prove that the reality that she struggles to reflect is itself split.

Free Women is written in third person omniscient narrative; sections have objective and authoritarian voice. Its rational voice and ordered structure can be associated with the elements of conventional realist novel. For instance, Free Women achieves an ending unlike notebooks. In a sense Free Women is a parody in its flatness and orderliness when compared to chaotic and fragmented notebooks. This comparison also emphasizes and stresses fragmented nature of the notebooks. Free Women sections are crucial for the text since it provides the reader with the necessary information and function as the skeleton for the structure of the novel. However, there are differences between notebooks and Free Women sections. For instance, when compared to highly subjective first person account of notebooks, Free Women sections give the sense of a highly controlled narrator with a tight formal structure. Yet, Free Women sections appear dissatisfactory with the lack of tension and suspense which characterize notebooks. The first Free Women section starts with the sentence: "The two women were alone in the London flat" (25). However, in the inner Golden Notebook, it is

realized that this sentence is offered by Saul Green to Anna, to make it the first sentence of the next novel (554). Then, unlike the apparent idea, it is clear that Free Women is born out of the notebooks. In other words, Free Women is the fictionalized version of the notebooks. Thus, the narration turns back where it started, a situation which Molly Hite likens to a "mobius strip" (Hite, 1988: 22). The narrative indeed resembles to mobius strip as the content of the novel folds back in on itself as the end of the novel takes the reader back to the beginning.

Free Women Sections
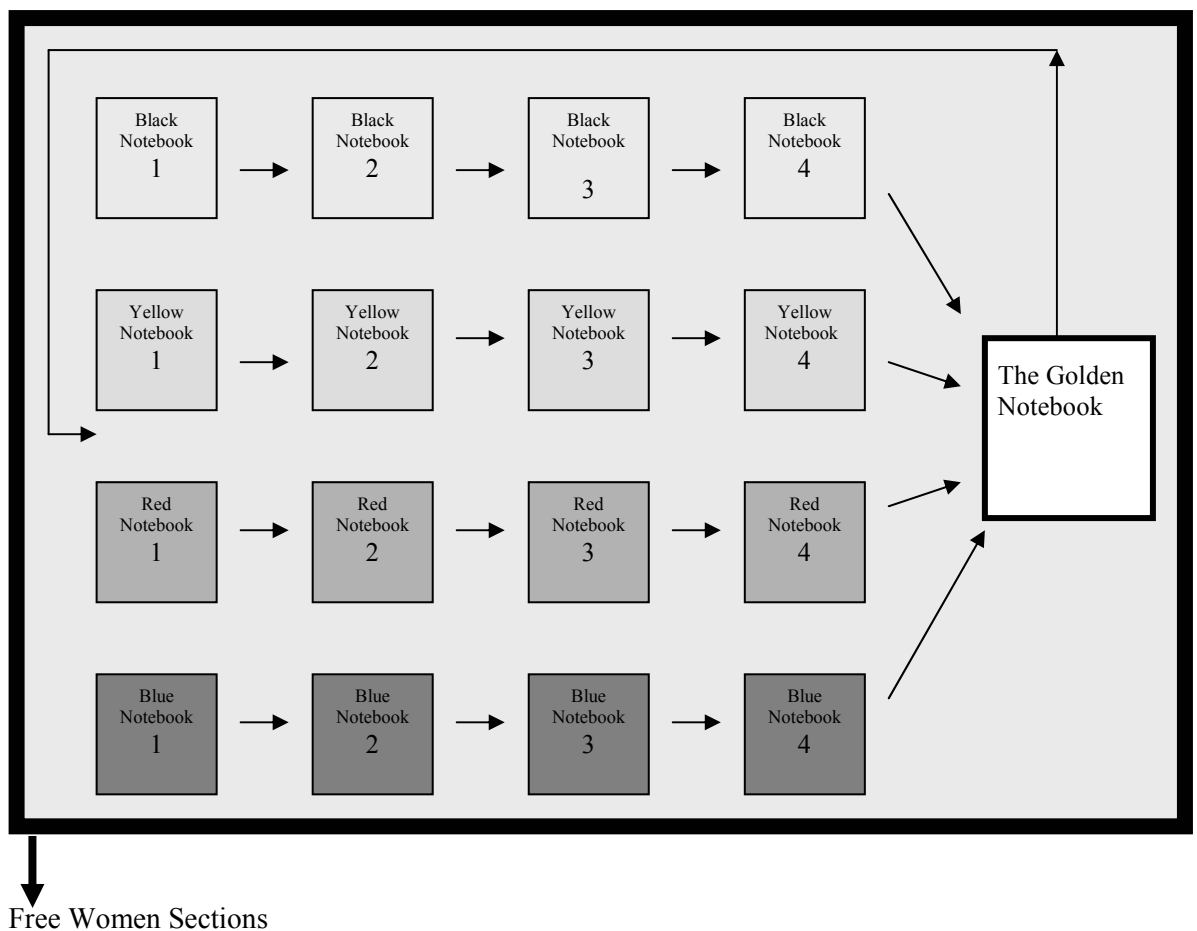
Figure 2. 1. Narrative Scheme[2]

In the notebooks, Anna attempts to examine her life in disparate styles and perspectives. The memoirs from Africa constantly haunt her; communism disappoints her; as a woman she is still dependent on man and is defined in terms of male discourse; as a writer she is dissatisfied with the common models and suffers from writer's block. All of these aspects of Anna found their voices in the separate notebooks. The Black Notebook is divided into two columns, headed 'Source' and 'Money' and written in the

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[2] Tables are designed by the author

first person. In it, Anna deals with her past experiences in Africa, mostly her frustration both in the African blacks' internal conflict and the oppressive attitude of the whites upon them. Due to her block, the notebook ends with pastiche and copied materials. In the red notebook Anna relates her experience with the British Communist Party. Day by day Anna's unease with the party grows and finally she decides to leave the party. Again this notebook ends with newspaper cuttings about violence. In The Yellow notebook Anna writes a novel called 'The Shadow of the Third,' which is in fact her fictionalized life. It also bears her comments on the process of writing it. The narration is third person omniscient. The Blue notebook consists of Anna's diary writings. It is in fact an obvious attempt to keep a factual account of what happens rather than fictionalized version. Mainly, it deals with Anna's mental break-down, her block and sessions with psychotherapist. Yet, she cannot unify these disparate perspectives of her life in a single piece.

Finally, in the golden-coloured notebook, Anna synthesizes the various experiences kept separate in the other books, so that they approximate to a kind of wholeness. And attaining this integration enables her to begin to write again. Anna's major motive in separating aspects of her life is to impose a certain order on chaos. However, in the final part, Anna realizes that by allowing the chaos in she could create something as an artist. She abandons her notebooks and records events solely in the Golden notebook which in itself welcomes dissolution and break-down. The reader is also taken back to the beginning as it is understood that the beginning sentence of Free Women would be the first sentence of Anna's next novel. Thus, in a cyclical manner Anna turns back to fragmented beginning.

Linda Hutcheon remarks in A Poetics of Postmodernism that "there are only *truths* in the plural, and never one Truth" (Hutcheon, 1995: 109). Thus, every perspective is as correct as the other. As there is no ultimate correct perspective, no perspective presented in The Golden Notebook can be privileged over the other. Due to this fact, The Golden Notebook refuses to resolve into a single 'real' story." (Hite, 1989: 101) Anna, thus, admits that she had attempted to melt all her perspectives in a pot:

"The material [her past] had been ordered by me to fit what I know, and that was why it was false." (538)

What was false is her search for wholeness and unification and what she knows is the established conventions of storytelling. That is classical realist tradition through the guidance of which Anna shaped her first novel, <u>The Frontiers of War</u>.

Very much akin to the formal and thematic characteristics of the novel, Lessing employs multiple narratives which also show that the novel is stylistically fragmented. The novel contains multiple narratives. Narratorial voice of Free Women sections of the novel is third person omniscient. On the other hand, the Black, the Red, the Blue and the Golden Notebooks are all related in the first person. Apart from these, in the Yellow Notebook Lessing again switches to the third person as Anna Wulf narrates the story of Ella. What is striking in the multiple narratives of <u>The Golden Notebook</u> is that even if the voice of the narrator changes it still belongs again, in a way, to the same character. At the end of the novel it is realized that the opening sentence of Free Women section was proposed to Anna by Saul Green. Due to this fact it is not wrong to claim that there is one narrator in <u>The Golden Notebook</u>. However, this single narrator is multiplied in herself in order to produce multiple narratives. Moreover, in the Yellow Notebook where Anna relates the story of Ella, her fictitious character, there is mixing of narration. Ella is an artist like Anna Wulf or Doris Lessing is. The fictitious Ella writes a story in which a man is portrayed on the verge of suicide. However, it is the fictitious Anna narrating the fiction of her fictitious character. Thus, by mixing narrations and stories the impact of multiple narratives is intensified.

Lessing seems well aware that in the fragmented world employing a disintegrated and multiple narratives is the best way to articulate the fragmentation of the protagonist. Each notebook of the novel is attributed to the fragmented identities of Anna Wulf, who is, in fact, in quest of a unified identity. Anna herself explains the reason of her effort to keep four separate notebooks to her therapist, Mother Sugar:

"I keep four notebooks, a black notebook, which is to do with Anna Wulf the writer; a red notebook, concerned with politics; a yellow notebook, in which I make stories out of my experience; and a blue notebook which tries to be a diary." (418)

Apart from the abovementioned roles – the writer, the communist – Anna has to carry in herself roles of a mother and a lover and finally the role of Free Woman. Anna's identity crisis traces a fluctuating mood. Sometimes it is her motherhood that turns the scale, but sometimes it is her role as a lover to Michael that dominates the crisis.

After writing notebooks of four different colours each symbolizing her different and fragmented identities, Anna Wulf writes the Golden notebook in which she sums and accommodates the voices admitting that "it's been necessary to split myself up, but from now on I shall be using one only" (521). However, as mentioned above, the final part of the novel takes the reader back to the beginning which also points out that the best and the final solution for Anna Wulf is to accept fragmentary nature of her life and the surrounding world. Then it can be asserted that this device of multiple narratives functions as a structuring mechanism of the plot and through the use of multiple narratives, the fragmentary nature of the novel is again emphasized. For Molly Hite, there are two considerations which connect the novel with the narrative ruptures of postmodern:

"First, the pervasive rhetoric of psychic integrity, unity of vision, and narrative coherence is repeatedly aligned with the orthodox Marxism that Anna finally repudiates. Second, this rhetoric resounds through a work that ultimately breaks down its major characters without even making a gesture at reassembling them, and that bifurcates its plot to the point where two separate and irreconcilable versions of a story jostle uneasily for ontological supremacy – for the status of being the account of what 'really' happened." (Hite, 1988: 16)

The major aspect of Anna's break down is essentially her fictional creation Ella. The assonance in the names and two double letters in the middle obviously suggest the connection between Ella and Anna. However, in the course of the Yellow notebook, the narrative of Ella gets so complex and mature that Ella becomes a separate character free from Anna. It is also noteworthy that in the narrative of Ella, neither communism, nor Africa is mentioned. The account of Ella is strictly devoted to the relationship between man and woman. As if she acknowledges this idea, Anna writes:

"I see Ella, walking slowly about a big room, thinking, waiting. I, Anna, see Ella. Who is, of course, Anna. But that is the point, for she is not. The moment I, Anna, write: Ella rings up Julia to announce, etc., then Ella floats away from me and becomes someone

else. I don't understand what happens at the moment Ella separates herself from me and becomes Ella. No one does. It's enough to call her Ella, instead of Anna." (404)

Surprisingly the account of Ella, or "The Shadow of the Third" is left incomplete by Anna. Ella does not suffer from self-division unlike Anna who experiences this self-division and expresses it through separate notebooks. Even though Ella does not shatter or fall into pieces the Yellow Notebook does break down in its narration. The last part of the Yellow Notebook is full of short stories or short pieces of writing entitled "A Short Novel" or "Romantic Tough School of Writing" (466-474). In other words, in spite of Ella, the narrative is broken down and fragmented into tiny pieces.

For Molly Hite, there are two main narratives in The Golden Notebook – the narrative of Free Women sections and the narrative of the notebooks. In both two narratives the protagonist's name is Anna who tries to overcome a psychological break down in assistance with an American man – Saul Greene in the notebooks and Milt in Free Women. There is a single story but two different versions of expression and these versions are irreconcilable. The process of psychological breakdown of Anna reaches its peak in the fourth installment of the Blue notebook and in the Golden notebook, whereas it corresponds to last sections of Free Women. When compared with "the long, intense first-person account in the Blue and Golden notebooks", the narrative of Free Women is "shorter, more dispassionate" with its third person account (Hite, 1989: 92). Their endings are also different. Free Women presents a conciliatory ending in which two women kiss and separate – Molly is married and Anna decides to devote herself to social concerns. This ending recalls traditional realism. The inner Golden Notebook also ends with separation – this time Anna and Saul separates. However, this separation will give birth to The Golden Notebook thanks to the assistance of Saul Green.

The Golden Notebook, in fact, has no real ending, in the sense that traditional realism asks for. Moreover, in the course of narratives, or in the struggle of truth that takes place between the notebooks and Free Women, Lessing does not privilege one narrative over the other. Neither of these narratives provides the reader with the satisfaction of a realist ending. In other words, Lessing diagnoses the problem as fragmentation, breakdown or disintegration. Yet, she does not show the exact cure for it.

The Golden Notebook does not give resolution to the problems that it points out. It may be that, rather than showing the way towards wholeness, The Golden Notebook stresses the option of acknowledging multiplicity. Anna claims in a conversation with the therapist:

"I've reached the stage where I look at people and say – he or she, they are whole at all because they've chosen to block off at this stage or that. People stay sane by blocking off, by limiting themselves." (413)

Possessing a coherent identity is then limitation. Lessing implies that blocking off certain aspects of identity does not necessarily provide total harmony, integrity or unity. In contrast, blocking off presents limitation and reduction into a single fragment. Then, blocking off is not the right way to avoid fragmentation or chaos. Acceptance of fragmentation – multiple identities in other words – is suggested by Lessing in order to form a kind of unity that comprises of fragments.

In all these ways and methods, Doris Lessing in The Golden Notebook scatters not only characters or plot, but also she disperses the narrative line. As mentioned above, even though the novel is about coherence, it does not display coherence in its form in the standards of classical realism. Moreover, despite Lessing's attack against compartmentalization that takes place in the Preface, the novel denies the possibility of a holistic vision which would include ultimate reality. Instead of a holistic vision, there are multiple perspectives in the novel which observe and relate separate experiences of a woman with several socially constructed identities. Anna Wulf first keeps her accounts in separate notebooks; by keeping them apart, in a sense, she blocks or limits them. Conscious of impossibility of attaining a precise order, Anna acknowledges her fragmented nature. Thus, the narrative, with its mobius strip design, takes the reader back to the beginning of the novel where fragments welcome reader.

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM OF SUBJECT IN <u>THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK</u>

> She was thinking: If someone cracks up, what does that mean? At what point does a person about to fall to pieces say: I'm cracking up? And if I were to crack up, what form would it take? (GN, 344)

3.1 HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT

The problem of "subject" has had a long history since Aristotle who perceived "subject" as the physical realization of any of God's creatures. At the end of the dark ages, when Aristotle's works were translated from Greek to Latin, "subject" was reconsidered by the scholars of Christian church and was bestowed no privileges as it was conceived to be sinful. In the mediaeval monarchs, "subject" was generally described as the asset of the monarch and "subject" was subjected to this power. However, thanks to the appearances of figures like Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), as it gradually saved itself from the dogmas of the Church and hegemony of monarchs "subject" began to gain new descriptions and new responsibilities, that is it became less subject *to* monarch but rather a *subject* on its own. The main revolution starts when Rene Descartes formulated his "Cartesian subject" with the maxim: "cogito: ergo sum" (I think, therefore I am) (Descartes, 1990: 127). English Empiricists, like Thomas Hobbe (1588-1679), Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and John Locke (1632-1704), developed the idea and paved the way for Enlightenment "subject" which is claimed to be unified, fixed and stable. This belief in the new Enlightenment subject promoted individualism. There appeared a great belief in essential human nature which was accepted as constant and fixed and with the rapid scientific developments an apparent rise in and demand of objectivity was witnessed. However, the unified Enlightenment subject proved to be too feeble to survive the complexities of the twentieth-century.

The immense scientific and philosophical developments gradually destroyed the idea of the unified subject. It was Freud who gave the first blow as he announced the division of the self as conscious and unconscious. The major and shattering blow, however, came from Derrida when he delivered his paper "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" in 1966 at John Hopkins University. In the paper, Derrida questions the basic metaphysical assumptions of Western World and claims that centre of a structure is nothing more than a fiction and is just a function:

"… the centre could not be thought in the form of a being-present, that the centre had no natural locus but a function, a sort of non-locus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play. This moment was that in which language invaded the universal problematic; that in the absence of a centre or origin, everything became a discourse." (Derrida, 1989: 961)

Foucault, Althusser and Lacan are the other important figures who strongly influenced the understanding of the subject in the twentieth-century. While Foucault points that subject is produced within discourses (Selden et al, 1997: 184-7), Althusser expresses his claim that it is ideology, which is also produced by discourses, constitutes and positions the subject (Eagleton, 1996: 149). On the other hand, Lacan gives fresh psychoanalytic insights about formation of the subject as he explores it through development of the infant (Eagleton, 1996: 142-8). As mentioned earlier, Fredric Jameson also contributes to discussion as he stresses two opinions in his article "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"; the first emphasizes that individual bourgeois subject is dead and the second labels it as a myth that has never existed (Jameson, 1992: 167-9). In other words, while pre-twentieth-century conceptions of the subject render it as a given entity, the twentieth-century conception of the terms claims it to be a construct within or of discourse, or power relations.

It was only the school of phenomenology which, in Eagleton's words, tried to restore "the transcendental subject to its rightful throne" and define the subject "as the source and origin of all meaning" (Eagleton, 1996: 50). As phenomenology "secured a knowable world" with phenomenological reduction it also "established the centrality of the human subject" (Eagleton, 1996: 50). Phenomenological criticism is the application of phenomenology to literary texts and this criticism aims at immanent reading of the

text ignoring its author, process of production and historical context. (Eagleton, 1996: 51) However, in the field of phenomenology, reflection, that is to say narration of an experience, is problematic. Husserl accepts that reflection "alters the original subjective process", so that it "loses its original mode, 'straightforward', by the very fact that reflection makes an objective out of what was previously a subjective process but not objective" (qtd. in Cerbone, 2006: 76).

In the twentieth-century world, there were attempts to restore human subject to its throne. However, general consensus was that subject is not a given entity, but a construct. In the construction of subject many forces are believed to be at work. While psychoanalysts pointed infantile period as a crucial time for the construction of subject, many other post-structuralist theoreticians emphasized power relations and cultural forces as determinants in the construction of human subject.

3.2 MODERNIST AND POSTMODERNIST SUBJECTS

As it is broadly evaluated in the first chapter, modernist literature is a reaction against realism and the dominant genre of the realist tradition is novel. The major goal of a realist novel is to reflect life as it is, objectively. This attitude is associated with the rationalist and scientific spirit of the nineteenth-century. It can be asserted that there was a deep trust in the ability of language – the sole medium of the novelists – to convey everyday reality without any distortion, just like a mirror. On the other hand, this insistence on objectivity also requires Cartesian understanding of a unified, fixed and stable human subject promoted by Descartes. However, this simple notion about language and subject proved to be inadequate and insufficient in the complexities of the twentieth-century. Peter Childs associates modernist novel "with attempts to render human subjectivity in ways more real than realism" by making use of "interior monologue, stream of consciousness, tunnelling, defamiliarisation" (Childs, 2000: 3). According to him, in modernist writing, there is scepticism towards the idea of a centred human subject, and a sustained inquiry into the uncertainty of reality (Childs, 2000: 31). However, in modernist writing, there is a shift from the third-person narration, which is used by realist tradition, to the first-person narration. In other words

the protagonists of the novels are transformed into narrators or vice versa. Then, there is a risk of extreme subjectivism of unreliable narrators as Lewis Pericles discusses:

"By transforming the individual protagonist into the narrator (or, to look at it another way, by making the narrator into a character), the modernists at once show the extreme conflict between the sociological and ethical perspectives on action and attempt to reconcile this conflict. The narrator … borrows the perceptions and categories of a particular character. … Firstly, the modernists allow the possibility of "rising" from the position of character to that of narrator, of transforming purely subjective impressions into a sort of objective knowledge. Crucial to this process is the notion of self-consciousness, the individual's becoming aware of being both a subject and an object of historical processes. Secondly, the modernists do not begin with, or anywhere offer, an unproblematically "objective" account of human actions." (Pericles, 2000: 213)

Through this type of attempt to reflect human actions in an objective manner, modernist authors emphasize the laborious effort to achieve a collective reality. "It is in the development of new techniques for representing this difficulty that the modernists fundamentally changed the way novels were written" (Pericles, 2000: 213). Modernist author tries to develop methods in order to create a narrator which uses first person narration but also which comes close to the objectivity of the third person narration. However, as Pericles concedes, modernist authors were aware of the impossibility of this endeavour. Thus they had to "develop a variety of techniques for showing multiple consciousnesses focused on single series of events" (Pericles, 2000: 214). This case is most apparent in writings of Virginia Woolf, especially in Mrs. Dalloway as the reader is taken from one consciousness of a character to another.

After all, modernist authors were sceptic toward the notion of shared external world and were aware that as any knowledge that is said to be objective necessarily spread from a subjective position in the first place and could not remain untainted by subjectivity (Pericles, 2000: 215). The only knowledge left that could be reliable was the individual consciousness itself. Levenson also stresses the flight from scientific materialism to the shelter of the individual subject as it "became the refuge for threatened values" (Levenson, 1986: 61). In the twentieth-century, it was no longer acceptable and reasonable:

"to insist that the lay individual consciousness was capable of expert scientific generalization. In the face of working-class militancy, religious and philosophic skepticism, scientific technology and the popular press, there was a tendency to

withdraw into individual subjectivity as a refuge for threatened values." (Levenson, 1986: 68)

In sum, in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries novels, the novelists had godlike powers in their creation. David Harvey, on the other hand, puts forward that even though there appeared drastic changes in the Enlightenment thought, the modernist novelist tried to maintain this godlike possessing (qtd. Danziger, 1994: 2). In other words, the modernist novelist was aware of the impossibility of the reflecting the world but also carried a hope in this pursuit as David Harvey clarifies:

"Modernism … took on multiple perspectivism and relativism as its epistemology for revealing what it still took to be true nature of a unified, though complex, underlying reality." (qtd. in Danziger, 1994: 2)

In other words, there was a belief that eventually the novelist would find the way out. Hutcheon also claims that "where modernism investigated the grounding of experience in the self, its focus was on the self seeking integration amid fragmentation" (Hutcheon, 1989: 108). But with the postmodern era, there was a "dramatic diminishment of this aesthetic optimism" which Danziger considers as "one of the signs of the onset of the postmodern era" (Danziger, 1994: 2). The dominant consensus of the period is that all stories are highly subjective and, hence, limited.

As postmodern challenges many aspects of modernism, it also puts modernist subjectivity in question. According to Hutcheon, postmodern both employs and criticizes "staples of our humanist tradition as the coherent subject and the accessible historical referent" which, she believes, puts Jameson and Eagleton in a temper (Hutcheon, 1995: 46). Eagleton's following critique on formalism and naturalism in favour of realism, which deserves a lengthy quotation, justifies Hutcheon:

"In the alienated words of Kafka, Musil, Joyce, Beckett, Camus, man is stripped of his history and has no reality beyond the self; … objective reality reduced to unintelligible chaos (formalism). As with naturalism, the dialectical unity between inner and outer worlds is destroyed and both individual and society consequently emptied of meaning. Individuals are gripped by despair and *angst*, robbed of social relations and so of authentic selfhood; history becomes pointless or cyclical, dwindled to mere duration. Objects lack significance and become merely contingent; and so symbolism gives way to allegory, which rejects the idea of immanent meaning. If naturalism is a kind of abstract objectivity, formalism is an abstract subjectivity; both diverge from that

genuinely dialectical art-form (realism) whose form mediates between concrete and general, essence and existence, type and individual." (Eagleton, 2002: 29)

However, defending postmodernism, Hutcheon asserts that postmodernism's "historicizing of the subject and of its customary (centring) anchors radically problematizes the entire notion of subjectivity, pointing directly to its dramatized contradictions" (Hutcheon, 1995: 159). There are, of course, differences between postmodern and modernist subjectivities. Both question the traditional humanist subject despite the fact that modernists "tend to view the subject as always working toward a recentring" (Michael, 1994: 39). Modernists support the illusion of the coherent subject unlike postmodern understanding which perceives the subject in division. For instance, in modernist novels like A Portrait of the Artist as A Young Man and in Mrs. Dalloway, characters are in the search of unified self or consciousness. In contrast, after the impacts of Derrida and Foucault, postmodernist subject is left centreless and perceived as a socially and politically constructed entity. Postmodernism does not deny the existence of the subject, but "calls into question the traditional humanist notion of the centred, rational, self-determining subject by situating the subject *within* culture and as a construction of culture" (Michael, 1994: 40). This postmodernist idea of the subject also paved way for emergence of feminist, queer and gay-lesbian theories. Hutcheon also states that postmodernism displays recognition of differences of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and acknowledgment of "the ideology of the subject and … alternative notions of subjectivity" (Hutcheon, 1995: 159).

In postmodernism, one of the alternative notions of subject and subjectivity is that subject is perceived as dynamic and in a transformational mode. Hutcheon stresses that in historiographic metafiction "subjectivity is represented as something in process, never as fixed and never as autonomous, outside history" (Hutcheon, 1989: 40). Postmodern subjectivity is socially, politically, historically and sexually conditioned and positioned. Magali Cornier Michael also insists that postmodern subject "is not a static object but rather is always in process as it continuously moves toward a 'becoming-other' than itself" (Michael, 1994: 39). This notion of subject, then, carries great potential for feminist theories.

Patricia Waugh proposes that feminist fiction and postmodernism share many concerns as they both examine "the absence of a strong sense of stable subjectivity" (Waugh, 1989: 6). It is also striking that postmodernism and feminist movement are simultaneous in history. In the post-war period, in a time when the death of the subject was announced by Jameson, women writers began "for the first time in history, to construct an identity out of the recognition that women need to discover, and must fight for, a sense of unified selfhood, a rational, coherent identity" (Waugh, 1989: 6). In other words, women writers began to enjoy subjectivities of their own that would provide them personal autonomy which had always been a privilege of man. Waugh criticizes that traditional subjectivities has been constituted by taking into consideration man as the "I" and woman as the "Other". She argues that even postmodern theory in the beginning displaced woman and "with a search for *a coherent and unified feminine subject*, began the deconstruction of the myth of woman as absolute Other and its exposure as a position within masculine discourse" (Waugh, 1989: 9).

As in many aspects of postmodernism, subjectivity is also problematic. In postmodernist fiction the reader can face with multiple points of view or a controlling narrator. Yet, the postmodern novels, historiographic metafictions especially, lack the confident narrator or characters who can manage to relate his or her past with any certainty. This situation creates, according to Danziger, a tension and a sensation akin to shame (Danziger, 1996: 3). Due to this fact, carrying this tension, postmodernist novelists' presentation of subject and their construction of subjectivities are always problematic.

3.3 CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECT IN <u>THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK</u>

Due to its publication date, 1962, a time which signals the end of modernism and welcomes postmodernism, it is not surprising to come across with both modernist and postmodern elements in The Golden Notebook. This is also what Magali Cornier Michael suggests in her essay entitled "Woolf's Between the Acts and Lessing's The Golden Notebook: From Modern to Postmodern Subjectivity." According to her, Lessing's The Golden Notebook can be located between modernism and postmodernism since while the text displays "the traditional agenda of telling an

individual's story", with "its modes of questioning and its attempt to find new notions of the subject", it also "shows clear signs of a movement towards postmodern" (Michael, 1994: 52-53). This paradox makes it very difficult for the critics who evaluate and try to locate The Golden Notebook along with canonical texts of either modernism or postmodernism, or feminism. However, Michael believes that The Golden Notebook stays closer to postmodernism and feminism rather than modernism or realism since the presentation of the subject in the text "steps decisively beyond realism and modernism as it opens up the way for and seeks to create new forms of female subjectivity" (Michael, 1994: 42).

Even though Lessing denies the feminist characteristic of the novel, for Michael, the postmodern subjectivity of the text displays a feminist strategy. The novel, as a matter of fact, appeared at a time when the dominant ideology of Western liberal humanism was being challenged and contested amid atom bombs, cold war, increasing threat of violence, terror and chaos. "Within this disturbing context," for Michael, The Golden Notebook undertakes the project of redefining "a new female subject", a task which "necessarily questions and problematizes the existing Western system of thought and values" (Michael, 1994: 47). Tonya Krouse also believes that to understand the conception of subject is crucial in locating the text into one of the periodical movements of the twentieth century. Krouse stresses the importance of the consideration of freedom in this context. There are two ways that define freedom in the novel:

"On the one hand "freedom" might signify a unified, integrated subject's refusal to live according to social conventions, a coming into her "true" identity; on the other, "freedom" might signify the chaos or "cracking up" that accompanies the breakdown of social conventions and the disintegration of individual subjectivities." (Krouse, 2006: 40)

As Krouse also mentions, the first paragraph of the novel immediately attaches priority to the second definition as Anna says to Molly, "the point is, that as far as I can see, everything's cracking up" (25). Therefore, Anna undermines the first definition of freedom which was in fact one of the major target of the feminist theory of 1960s. Patricia Waugh clarifies that as the feminist theory of 60s felt the necessity of "women to become 'real' subjects" and in order to emphasize "the ideological production of

'femininity' as the 'other' of patriarchy", it was compulsory that feminists should come up with a *"coherent and unified feminine subject"* (Waugh, 1989: 9). As the feminist theory of 60s tried to operate "the practice of conscious raising, which aimed precisely at the forging of an individual and collective sense of identity and subjecthood", it distanced itself from postmodernism (Waugh, 1989: 9). Then, it is fair to say that the opening paragraph of <u>The Golden Notebook</u> denies the modernist and feminist conceptions of subject which still support the illusion of the probability of a unified subject. Rather, the paragraph suggests that the text will perceive subject as fragmented and compartmentalized. However, Anna's wry remark, which takes place only one page later, that "they still define us in terms of relationship with men, even the best of them" (26) helps inadvertently those who would like to label the text as feminist. Still if the novel's overall evaluation of the handling of the presentation of subject is considered and Lessing's caution not to perceive the novel as a battle of sexes is remembered, it is certain that the novel is postmodern rather than feminist.

Moreover, there are many instances in the novel that stresses the fragmentary nature of the subject and the impossibility of a unified self. First of all, Anna keeps four different notebooks and when Tommy wonders why she keeps four separate notebooks instead of a single big notebook her answer is "chaos" (247). By separating notebooks she in fact separates her multiple-selves as each notebook points out one of her roles, positions or functions in the society; the writer Anna, the mother Anna, the woman Anna, the communist Anna. In other words, the novel does not present a unified character called Anna, but rather numerous versions of Anna:

"This multiplicity of Annas on various levels calls into question not only conventional notions of character but also the humanist concept of the whole, unified, integrated self. There exists no essential Anna in <u>The Golden Notebook</u>; instead the novel offer many versions of Anna on several narrative levels, so that the name "Anna" can at best refer to a composite of various roles, functions, and representations." (Michael, 1994: 47-48)

Anna, herself, also throughout her narrative implies her multiple identities of her own as "the Anna who is listless and frightened" (476), or as "the Anna of that time" who is "like an enemy, or an old friend" (150) to "this Anna of now" (137), and as other Annas, "the snubbed woman in love, cold and miserable" or "a curious detached sardonic Anna." (492), "this new frightened vulnerable Anna" (358), or Ella

as her alter-ego. However, this is not a case that Anna complains about. Rather, she is surely at home with her multiple roles and selves. Anna rejects holistic illusion of the unified self and reminding Fredric Jameson's assertion, the idea of a unified self is for Anna is to live in myth and in dreams:

"… the essence of living now, fully, not blocking off to what goes on, is conflict in fact. I've reached the stage where I look at people and say – he or she, they are whole at all because they've chosen to block off at this stage or that. People stay sane by blocking off, by limiting themselves. … I'm afraid of being better at the *cost* of living inside myth and dreams." (413)

Claire Sprague also asserts that the consciousness in The Golden Notebook is not unitary as the events and the past are conveyed through many selves of Anna. According to her, plural Annas are "only weakly united by the common name all her selves bear" and applies the metaphor of 'clothes' as "they can so easily be put on or taken off" (Sprague, 1994: 5). Approving that it is only the name Anna that unifies these various selves and roles, Michael claims that through the construction of multiple subject "Lessing is moving toward a postmodern notion of the subject as a socially and culturally constructed position" (Michael: 1994, 48).

As Hutcheon (1989: 40) and Michael (1994: 39) also agree, postmodernist fiction presents subject in a constant transformational mode and process, never fixed, stable, autonomous and never out of history. This is also what the reader of The Golden Notebook witnesses in the text. There are oscillations of selves of Anna. For instance, the great effort of Anna to keep her notebooks separate is noteworthy in this respect. Up to the inner 'Golden Notebook' part, Anna is decisive in keeping them apart due to her fear of "chaos." In a sense, however, by keeping her notebooks – or her roles – apart she retains a kind of unity that can be experienced in each of her roles. Anna's discussion with Jack on "being split, alienation" also complicates already paradoxical understanding of the subject in the novel as she frowns on Jack's acceptance of the impossibility of being whole:

"'Alienation. Being split'. It's the moral side, so to speak, of the communist message. And suddenly you shrug your shoulders and say because the mechanical basis of our lives is getting complicated, we must be content to not even try to understand things as a whole. … but now you sit there, quite calmly, and as a humanist you say that due to

the complexity of scientific achievement the human being must never expect to be whole, he must always be fragmented." (320)

However, oscillation continues as just after twenty pages, Anna begins to mediate on "if [she] were to crack up, what form would it take?" (344) Nevertheless, social constraints are still at work and as a parenting woman, she decides that she "can't be ill or give away, because of Janet", her daughter (344). Then she realizes and recognizes the fact that to stay sane means blocking off or limiting. In Molly Hite's words, "to be whole by present-day societal standards is not to have resisted fragmentation but to have been reduced to a single fragment" (Hite, 1989: 65). It is like putting on masks in order to limit one's own preferences and accommodating his/her life into a shape imposed on by the chaotic world. Anna slowly understands that old models, patterns and paradigms are not sufficient enough to define her self and she desires to be able to "separate in [herself] what is old and cyclic, the recurring history, the myth, from what is new, what [she feels] or [thinks] that might be new … (416) Subject construction continues then with defying and challenging already established patterns of Western Ideology. She knows the following stage in this process is surely "to leave the safety of the myth" (414). By myth, Anna means the existing and ruling paradigms of society which are now incapable of giving a possible and adequate definition to who or what is Anna:

"Because I'm convinced that there are whole areas of me made by the kind of experience women haven't had before …They didn't look at themselves as I do. They didn't feel as I do. How could they?" (415)

They could not. Anna needs new mediums, rather than the previous medium – language – to define the process she is in. She cannot fit herself into the existing mosaic, and this existing mosaic was established through the institution of language and discourses which belonged to the patriarchy:

"It occurs to me that what is happening is a breakdown of me, Anna, and this is how I am becoming aware of it. For words are form, and if I am at a pitch where shape, form, expression are nothing, then I am nothing." (419)

As soon as Anna understands that words are nothing but forms she also understands that she is in the middle of a breakdown. When she checks her notebooks

she recognizes that she "remains Anna because of a certain kind of intelligence" (419), an intelligence which now dissolves and frightens her. The intelligence that had kept Anna in form is language. Words – or language – have hitherto categorized or labelled selves of Anna as a writer, a mother, a communist, an intellectual, a mistress, or as a woman – the Other.

In this very moment of breakdown and crisis Saul Green arrives and rents one of the rooms of Anna's house. His arrival coincides with Janet's departure for school. Janet's departure also symbolizes Anna's release from her societal bonds. "An Anna is coming to life that died when Janet was born" (480). She admits that she was "a woman terribly vulnerable, critical, using femaleness as a sort of standard or yardstick to measure and discard men" (421). Gradually, she develops a consciousness through which she will leave old Anna behind her and Anna manages it as she enters into madness of Saul Green. According to Marie Danziger, Saul is "a microcosm of the entire novel" since he is "mentally and emotionally unstable" who "rebels against wholeness or oneness by escaping into multiplicity" (Danziger, 1996: 64). He is an American writer who is leading a bohemian life style. In their dialectic breakdown, Saul "provokes her to participate actively in the struggle to ward off the disintegration of personality that is always imminent in his company" (Danziger, 1996: 65). Saul is multipersonal figure just like Anna is:

"What was strange was, that the man who said No, defending his freedom, and the man who said, pleading, It doesn't mean anything, were two men, I couldn't connect them. I was silent, in the grip of apprehension again and then a third man said, brotherly and affectionate: 'Go to sleep now.' … I went to sleep, in obedience to this third friendly man, conscious of two other Annas, separate from the obedient child – Anna, the snubbed woman in love, cold and miserable in some corner of myself, and a curious detached sardonic Anna, looking on and saying: 'Well, well!'" (492)

Anna is a woman who needs to be defined and she is happy since she realizes that Saul has a "quick insight into a woman" (482) and she was pleased "being '*named*' on such a high level" (483, my italics). Anna understands that through this troubled relationship she can define herself or she can come up with a new Anna. Due to this fact, the relationship between Anna and Saul, in Molly Hite's words, is an "educational

process." (Hite, 1989: 93) Thanks to him, she decides to give up the security of keeping notebooks – or roles, selves – apart as she comes to understand that Saul and she "are both people whose personalities … are large enough to include all sorts of things, politics and literature and art" (521). When Saul asks why she has four notebooks her response to the question even surprises herself:

"He said: 'Why do you have four notebooks?' I said: 'Obviously, because it's been necessary to split myself up, but from now on I shall be using one only.' I was interested to hear myself saying this, because until then I hadn't known it." (521)

Supporting the claim that process of the mutual breakdown of Anna and Saul is an educational one, Danziger's contention is that "Saul teaches Anna to feel deeply, but ultimately to control her emotions in the interest of her survival" (Danziger: 1996, 65) In other words, by the very example of Saul's illness Anna learns to cope with her fragmented selves. Similarly, in A Small Personal Voice (1994), Lessing herself interprets the process of the relationship in terms of personal development and self-recognition:

"Anna and Saul Green, the American, break down … into each other, into other people, break through the false patterns they have made of their pasts; the patterns and formulas they have made to shore up themselves and each other, dissolve. They hear each other's thoughts, recognize each other in themselves." (qtd. in Danziger, 1996: 65)

In the inner 'The Golden Notebook', Saul's importance increases as he becomes the projectionist that plays the film in Anna's dreams in which she encounters with fragments of her past. With this new role, Saul becomes "a sort of inner conscience or critic" (539). In these dreams, Saul as the projectionist shows Anna that what she had invented out of her past – her notebooks – was different from what she had known. The falsity, Anna understand, lies in the fact that "the material had been ordered by [her] to fit what [she] knew" (538). The powerful moments of the second dream teaches Anna a lesson that "will be part of how [she] will experience life" that despite the fact that "the real experience can't be described" by words, she will anyway "play with words, hoping that some combination, even a chance combination, will say what [she] wants"

(549). Then, Anna is ready to write her next fiction and Saul gives Anna the first sentence of her next fiction: "There are *the two women you are,* Anna. The two women were alone in the London flat" (554, my italics). The sentence also stresses multiplicity of the subject Anna.

What, then in The Golden Notebook, does Lessing propose for the final frame of the subject or what will be the form of it? Molly Hite claims that "Lessing is concerned to create the conditions that allow the future to make an appearance, not to indicate what shape it might take (Hite, 1989: 101). Anna, on the other hand, in the second dream accepts that "we have to preserve the forms." She also displays her awareness that "on the day Janet came home from school, she would become Anna, Anna the responsible, and the obsession would go away" (564). Furthermore, in the last page of the novel, Molly acknowledges that Anna and she are "both going to be integrated with British life at its roots" (576). Then, the dynamic formation and transformation of the subject result within the boundaries of societal standards. While Molly marries and assumes the role of the wife, with the arrival of Janet, Anna turns back to parenting and joins again the Labour Party.

CHAPTER IV

AUTHORITY, PARODY AND SUBJECTIVITY VS. COMMITMENT

> I longed to be free of my own ordering, commenting memory. I felt my sense of identity fade. My stomach clenched and my back began to hurt. (GN, 510)

4.1 AUTHORITY

"What difference does it make who is speaking?" This is the closing question of Foucault's essay, "What is An Author?" (1969) in which he analyses author-function in literary texts. The same issue is also handled by Roland Barthes, in his influential essay, "The Death of the Author" (1968). It is fair to say that the two poststructuralist theoreticians agree in many points. For instance, both believe that author functions like a barricade and impedes multiple interpretations. Foucault stresses that, even in modern literary criticism, the author is "the basis for explaining not only the presence of certain events in a work, but also their transformations" and is also "the principle of a certain unity of writing" in which he/she "serves to neutralize the contradictions that may emerge in a series of text" (Foucault, 1989: 984). It is, he believes, an accustomed attitude to perceive the author as "the genial creator of a work in which he deposits … an inexhaustible world of significations" (Foucault, 1989: 988). Countering this habitual idea and stripping of the transcendent characteristic of the author, Foucault adduces that "the author is not an indefinite source of signification", but rather "a certain functional principle … by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free position, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction" (Foucault, 1989: 988). Similarly, Barthes also asserts that "the author is the product of modern time" and tyrannically "the explanation of a work is always sought in the man who produced it" (Barthes, 2001: 1466). Approving Foucault, he also believes "the

notion or the existence of an author means the limitation of the text or to close a writing with a final signified" (Barthes, 2001: 1469).

Barthes admits that it is impossible to answer the question "who is speaking in a text?" since "writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin" (Barthes, 2001: 1466). As soon as narration starts "the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins" (Barthes, 2001: 1466). Foucault affirms that "today's writing has freed itself from the dimension of expression" and the author is sacrificed for the sake of free play and manipulation:

"Writing has become linked to sacrifice, even to the sacrifice of life: it is now a voluntary effacement … The work, which once had the duty of providing immortality, now possesses the right to kill, to be its author's murderer … This relationship between writing and death is also manifested in the effacement of the writing subject's individual characteristics … The mark of the writer is reduced to nothing more than the singularity of his absence; he must assume the role of the dead man in the game of writing." (Foucault, 1989: 978-979)

Barthes's substitute for the dead author is "modern scriptor" (Barthes, 2001: 1468) and he heralds "the birth of the reader" even "at the cost of the death of the Author" (Barthes, 2001: 1470). It is the reader, Barthes believes, who has the key to activate the text and generate meaning out of it. Agreeing the fact that author as a source of ultimate meaning may well be dead, Hutcheon, however, contests Barthes as declaring that the discursive authority, the author, still lives since "it is encoded into the enunciative act itself" (Hutcheon, 1995: 77). With the increasing importance of the enunciative act, postmodernist theory does not totally turn its back on the author since the author is right there in the process of production.

"If art is seen as historical production and as social practice, then the position of the producer cannot be ignored, for there exists a set of social relation between producer (inferred and real) and audience that can potentially be revolutionized by a change in the forces of production that might turn the reader into a collaborator instead of a consumer." (Hutcheon, 1995: 80)

Brian McHale also asserts that postmodernist fiction brought the author back to power. According to him, it was the modernists who tried to efface themselves from their writing and produced narratorless text, which, paradoxically, "made their presence conspicuous" (McHale, 1987: 199). Furthermore, in postmodernist fiction, the author is

frequently inserted into the text and thus another level of fiction is created. This is done through "metafictional gesture of frame breaking" and this lets the author create his own superior-reality against all other levels of fiction. However, McHale also warns that it is a risky business since it may relativize reality and the revelation of the ontological status of the author in fiction necessarily makes the author just another character of his fiction (McHale, 1987: 197). Then, in postmodernist fiction, the author becomes one of the ontologies of fiction.

This is what McHale calls "the postmodernist *topos* of the writer at his desk" (McHale, 1987: 198). The author makes himself visible by foregrounding his existence in the text and displays the act of writing itself, which McHale believes the author's "prerogative" (McHale, 1987: 30). By this way, the author increases his superiority over the fictional world as "the *real* artist always occupies an ontological superior to that of his projected, fictional self" (McHale, 1987: 30). This is also what the reader of The Golden Notebook confronts – a writer writing about a writer who is writing a novel about a writer who also writes another novel about a man on the verge of suicide. Then, there are four different ontological levels present in the novel:

The Extra-diegetic level (the real writer, Doris Lessing)

> The diegetic level (fictitious writer, Anna Wulf,)

>> The hypo-diegetic level (fictitious writer, Ella)

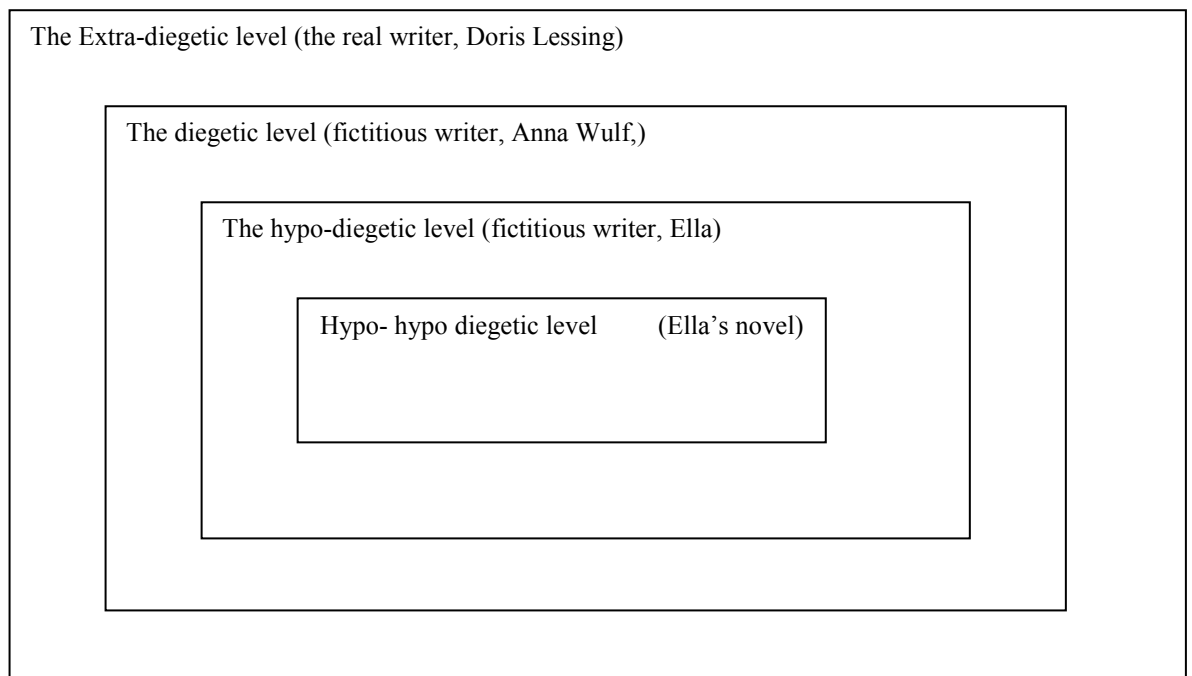>>> Hypo- hypo diegetic level   (Ella's novel)

Figure 3. 1. Diegetic Levels[3]

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[3] Tables are designed by the author.

The diagram above can also be detailed further as the diegetic level can be divided into four separate hypo-diegetic levels if four notebooks are taken into consideration. Then, there are three writers/authors in The Golden Notebook, who occupy their own ontological levels. This multiplicity of writer/author creates multiple perspectives.

This abundance of writers/authors in the text necessarily generates questions: Is it possible to find a reliable narrator among them? Does Lessing enjoy a definite authority over her fictitious narrators? If so how can she achieve this? It is certain that among these multiple voices it is hard to discern the voice of Lessing. Claire Sprague believes that Lessing hides her voice and tries to "obliterate the author" (Sprague, 1994: 9). However, a reader who reads the novel after 1972, that is to say after the publication of oft-quoted Preface, cannot escape the induction of Lessing. In the Preface, Lessing explicitly denounces previous interpretations of the text which label it as "a tract about the sex war" (10). Rather she defines the essence of the book with the idea that "we must not divide things off, must not compartmentalize" (10). However, just after few pages, contradictorily, Lessing expresses that it is "childish" of a writer "to want readers to see what he sees – his wanting this means that he has not understood a most fundamental point" (20-21). The contradiction is that Lessing first criticizes the reader who appreciates the text as a sex war, then she puts forward that it is not acceptable of a writer to induce the reader towards a definite meaning. This may prove W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, forerunners of New Critics, true as they believe that the meaning that is intended by the author of a literary work may be deceptive. For them, "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable for judging the success of a work of literary art" (Wimsatt and Beardsley, 1989: 1383). Due to this fact in the process of close reading fashion of New Critics the author is disregarded in order to focus on the words on page.

As mentioned above, in postmodern theory, however, the author is again brought back to its throne despite the fact that the authority of him is taken under scrutiny. It is true that when compared to great realists of the nineteenth-century – who Lessing admires most – the postmodern novelists experiences a loss of power since all stories are seen to be highly subjective. Thus, the postmodern novelists "test all paradigms without commitment, playing no favorites, but with a particular fascination

for the contradictory" (Danziger, 1996: 8); but this case damages the reliability of the novelists. Likewise, Lessing tests and tries to come up with new models in order to frame the disparate perspectives of her text and presents alternatives to the established notions of reliability. Reliability of an author, in common sense, is associated with the norms of the author, his attitude towards his work and ethics. In other words, it has to do with the exteriority of a work. Linda E. Chown, in her "Revisiting Reliable Narration and the Politics of Perspective" (2005) claims that the reliability question moved from exteriority of a work to "include matters of language, honesty, and dialectical spontaneity" and asserts that The Golden Notebook "enacts and tests alternative reliability 'models' and unsettles stale conceptions of truth, self, telling" (Chown, 2005: 17).

Chown discerns three ways to define Lessing's politics of perspective, in which Lessing, in Chown's words, "restructs" new narrative styles which "signals both the act of giving shape to and of testing out unknown narrative areas. Firstly, Chown claims that "Lessing's developing characterization precludes unified selfhood" (Chown, 2005: 17). From the very beginning, Anna, for instance, keeps separate notebooks in which she gives the accounts of her disparate selves. Moreover, in the course of narrative, Anna is often mentioned with different personalities; "the Anna of that time" (150), "this Anna of now" (137), "a curious detached sardonic Anna." (492), "this new frightened vulnerable Anna" (358). For Chown, in this situation there is "a constant internal seesaw" regarding authority. Secondly, Lessing etches an intricate internal layering, which replicates novels with no single ethical core. For instance, Anna says:

"I was myself, yet knowing what I thought and dreamed, so there was a personality apart from the Anna who lay asleep, yet who that person is I do not know." (534)

Thirdly, Lessing merges these different perspectives of Anna. But how can a resolution occur among those varied and multiple perspectives abundant in the novel? The key to the resolution is expressed by Anna in the inner Golden Notebook:

"The film was beyond my experience, beyond Ella's, beyond the notebooks, because there was a fusion, and instead of seeing separate scenes. People, faces, movements, glances, they were al together." (551)

This merging of perspectives is what gives Anna the power to achieve "a simultaneous knowledge of vastness and of smallness" in "the game" she plays (480). This knowledge, for Chown, undermines the former reliability studies. It denies the notion that the reliability consists of an "external accord" between literary character and the assumed values of a writer; rather, the reliability "resides most likely in an inward turning, an intransitive trust and, more importantly, *honesty*" (Chown, 2005: 18).

This approach does not consider the author as the projection of the writer and similarly denies the idea that the reliability of an author is strictly connected with the way that the narrator in the text reflects the values of the writer. Rather, Chown proposes an alternative narrator model, which is intransitive. "A narrator grows from a writer's desire to examine a recognition, a way of knowing a piece of living" (Chown, 2005: 18). However, writers would not easily give up their authority and control over their texts. They would prefer narrators that they could control. Chown, instead, proposes that "writers may engender 'narrator authority', in which the narrator becomes free to explore, to remember and recount introspectively without intrusive authorial over-direction" (Chown, 2005: 18). Chown, then, takes the issue of reliability from exterior and makes it an internal issue between the narrator and the writer. Honesty of the writer plays its role here as he should not impediment the course of narrative with his instinctual urge to have absolute authority. Lessing's honesty is apparent as she experiments with the points of view; an experiment in which she amasses disparate perspective without privileging one over another and finally takes them to a certain resolution. In a way, this type of egalitarian distribution of power among narrative voices makes those voices, as Carol Franko suggests, "often confident – sometimes intrusively so, sometimes snootily so" (Franko, 1995: 255).

Carol Franko, in his article titled "Authority, Truthtelling, and Parody: Doris Lessing and 'the Book'" (1995), expresses that The Golden Notebook is about "narrative authority and truthtelling in conflict with 'the Book (s)' of powerful discourses" (Franko, 1995: 264). By the phrase "Doris Lessing and the Book", Franko means "the written word, with all of its associations with religious, legal, and other institutional authorities, and the intertextuality that Lessing, like all writers, must negotiate" (Franko, 1995: 256). The book is the authority of the established notions

which tell how a proper novel can be written. That is also what Lessing evaluates in the novel. Moving from this idea, Franko observes a paradox in the novel. While the text that the reader faces is the private discourse of Anna Wulf, Anna's comments to herself become, for readers other than Anna, authorial and authoritative voices that shape our responses to her text (Franko, 1995: 265). Anna criticizes, parodies, reads, comments and reviews her own text. For instance, the flow of the narrative is frequently broken by Anna; "I see I am falling into the self-punishing, cynical tone again. Yet how comforting this tone is, like a sort of poultice on a wound" (99); "A good man, one says; a good woman; a nice man, a nice woman. Only in talk of course, these are not words you'd use in a novel. I'd be careful not to use them" (114); "… I've written the word film. … Am I saying that the certainty I'm clinging to belongs to the visual art, and not to the novel, not to the novel at all, which has been claimed by the disintegration and the collapse" (115). In this self-critique, Anna develops her reliability and credibility and, to use Shklovsky's term, the defamiliarized reader is made aware how the responses to the text are shaped. However, Franko suggests that "the earnest tone of Lessing's novel" and "Anna's painfully honest introspection … makes it hard to keep 'her' fragmented fictionality in mind" (Franko, 1995: 265). Reminding the multiple selves of Anna, Franko believes that this Anna is "the voice of a negative narrative authority, the writer who is also the master reader" who explains "aesthetic and moral failings" of the text. Interestingly, at the end of the first Free Women section, while Anna faces her notebooks Lessing portrays her "as if she were a general on the top of a mountain, watching her armies deploy in the valley below" (68).

The question to be asked is, then, why does Lessing bestow such powers on her protagonist at the expense of her authority? Why does Lessing need to equip her with the advantages of being reader, writer, observer and critic? According to David Harvey, because of the intertextual nature of texts, the meaning of any text is beyond the control of the writer and it is vain to try to master it (qtd. in Danziger, 1996: 3). Thus, reader is free to combine any elements in order to guess the meaning. "If consumers feel free to recombine the elements of a text in any way they wish", then "the postmodern novelist tries to second guess reader reactions and to incorporate them into her narrative" (Danziger, 1996: 3).

In other words, the writer assumes the roles of reader and writer at the same time and by this way tries to build control, not an absolute one, but to some degree. In a time, when all the stories are believed to be highly subjective, the writer tries to defer the disapproval of the reader as much as he can. Especially in the postmodern context, it is highly possible that, the reader may question the validity, honesty and accuracy of the text. Of course it is a case, as Danziger also agrees, that can be experienced by an earnest and honest narrator who fears the disapproval of the reader. For Danziger, in order to cancel or delay the possible refusal of the reader:

"[Lessing] incorporates disapproval into the structure of [her] novel. It may be the narrators themselves who criticize their own work, one or more of the characters can do the job, or disapproval might take the form of belittling the story line by such narrative device as fragmentation and contradiction – so long as the criticism is internalized and becomes an integral part of the story that unfolds." (Danziger, 1996: 7)

In other words, the author tries to become the reader and by this way she avoids the possible criticism of the reader and creates certain authority. And to do this she creates a metalevel which normally belongs to the reader. In this metalevel the author assumes the role of the reader and can criticize and comment on her fiction. In The Golden Notebook these levels are strikingly present. For instance, the Anna of the notebooks is superior to the Anna of the Free Women or the Anna of the inner Golden Notebook is superior to the both Annas (see diegetic levels above). Then, the presence of what Danziger calls the Other (reader) is always felt in the novel. Danziger believes that Lessing counteracts the presence of the Other with creating a counter-text. The text of The Golden Notebook is, then, Free Women sections and counter-text is the coloured notebooks. Danziger defines the counter-text as "not just a different perspective on some character or event", but as a secondary text which "diminishes the power and credibility of an existing text or manuscript by negating its naïve and embarrassing perspective" (Danziger, 1996: 12). Danziger further points out that due to fear of risk the author multiplies her "options by diffusing the direction and power of their story lines" which, in turn, creates "a narrative that zigzags between multiple versions" at the expense of destroying "the illusions of reality that most readers tend to crave" (Danziger, 1996: 11). However, Lessing in The Golden Notebook does not literally want to create an illusion of reality. Rather, by constructing her text in this way, she wants to stress that language or discourses which have great power do not tell

the truth. The language may have the power to create identities, but it is inadequate to convey the real experience. By bringing together her raw material (notebooks) with the fiction (Free Women Sections) that is produced out of this raw material, Lessing shows explicitly what real experience is and what form it takes after it is conveyed through the medium of language. That is also why Anna frequently breaks the flow of the narrative and comments on event as a model reader. What is also interesting that it is through self-critique and what Franko calls "dramatic self-censorship" that Anna closes all her four notebooks. Franko also suggests that Anna "uses her negative narrative authority to reject one mode of writing after another" which eventually leads to the closure of her four notebooks (Franko, 1995: 269). For instance, the Black Notebook closes with Anna's acceptance that what she remembered "was probably untrue" (462). The closure of the Yellow Notebook is more striking and explicit as Anna admits: "If I've gone back to pastiche, then it's time to stop" (474).

In fact, this is the evidence of Lessing's honesty and the result of her earnest tone. As Franko also accepts, in The Golden Notebook, Lessing explicitly bears a great desire to write truthfully (Franko, 1995: 256). However, the sole medium language becomes the biggest impediment in her pursuit to write truthfully:

"The fact is, the real experience can't be described. I think, bitterly, that a row of astericks, like an old-fashioned novel, might be better. Or a symbol of some kind, a circle, perhaps, or a square. Anything at all but not words. The people who have been … in the place in themselves where words, patterns, order, dissolve, will know what I mean and the other won't." (549)

Then, as an honest and earnest writer, Lessing wants to make it explicit to her readers or even wants to apologize that through the medium of language she cannot convey what she really desires to since when the experience finds itself in the language it cannot escape the contamination. That is why Anna is portrayed as a writer with a block and the language becomes one of the most important themes of the novel.

Due to her honesty, Lessing, in this novel, by laying bare the techniques of how to write a novel and most importantly by presenting the raw material that would give birth to a fiction in a way make concession concerning her authority. She shows explicitly how flawed it is to transform an experience into a pattern by using language

and how inadequate language is to give the exact sensation of an experience. She wants the reader to acknowledge the difficulty of a writer to convey the real sensation. As Lessing undertakes this mission, she, in fact, parodies the writers' struggle in their search for truth.

4.2 THE USE OF PARODY

Parody is a literary form which has shown itself in various shapes and functions in literary history and which has often been associated with the novel genre since it flourished with <u>Don Quixote</u>. However, up to the twentieth century parody had been assumed as an unimportant and trivial form and little attention was paid to it even in the eighteenth-century despite the abundant existence of satiric and parodic works like <u>Modest Proposal</u>, <u>Tom Jones</u> and <u>Shamela</u> produced by eminent authors like Jonathan Swift and Henry Fielding. Thanks to the Russian Formalists' attempts to develop a literary theory to analyze literary text scientifically and systematically, parody as a literary form began to gain importance in the twentieth-century. In this pursuit it is important that Shklovsky, one of the eminent Russian formalists, put forward the term "defamiliarization" which describes the basic principle of literary language which could render the literary language different from the ordinary language:

"What was specific to literary language, what distinguished it from other forms of discourse, was that it 'deformed' ordinary language in various ways. Under the pressure of literary devices, ordinary language was intensified, condensed, twisted, telescoped, drawn out, turned on its head. It was language 'made strange'; and because of this estrangement, the everyday world was also suddenly made unfamiliar. In the routines of everyday speech, our perceptions of and responses to reality become stale, blunted, or, as the Formalists would say, 'automatized'. Literature, by forcing us into a dramatic awareness of language, refreshes these habitual responses and renders objects more 'perceptible'" (Eagleton, 1996: 3).

As Hutcheon expresses, in the theory of Russian Formalists, "parody was seen as a dialectic substitution of formal elements whose functions have become mechanized or automatic" and through this dialectic substitution mechanized and automatic elements are "refunctionalized" in order to develop a new form out of old but "without really destroying it" (Hutcheon, 2000: 35-36). Thus, parody occupies a crucial place in

the literary theory of Russian Formalist as it aids to give insights to defamiliarization, their key concept.

In the twentieth-century, apart from the Russian Formalists, it was the theoretician Mikhail Bakhtin who had contributed much to the understanding of parody which, he believes, is "one of the most ancient and widespread forms for representing the direct word of another" (Bakhtin, 1992: 51). Parody is also a crucial concept for Bakhtin since parodic forms "prepared the ground for the novel" and also "paved way for a new literary and linguistic consciousness, as well as for the great Renaissance novel", a genre which he also highly favours (Bakhtin, 1992: 60-71). Besides, Bakhtin's interest generally lies in dialogism and polyphony, that is meeting of different voices in order to interact with each other in a literary text. Novel is the perfect medium in this sense where distinct discourses can have their say. Bakhtin stresses throughout his work that through dialogism old monologic literary forms had been transformed by various literary devices, parody being the most important:

"It is our conviction that there never was a single strictly straightforward genre, no single type of direct discourse – artistic, rhetorical, philosophical, religious, ordinary everyday – that did not have its own parodying and travestying double, its own comic-ironic *contre-partie*. What is more, these parodic doubles and laughing reflections of the direct word were, in some cases, just as sanctioned by tradition ... as their elevated models." (Bakhtin, 1992: 53)

In order to make clear what is distinctive about parody, Bakhtin takes the example of the parodic sonnets of Don Quixote. Bakhtin first states that these sonnets should not be assigned to the sonnet genre:

"In a parodied sonnet, the sonnet form is not a genre at all; that is, it is not the form of a whole but is rather *the object of representation*: the sonnet here is the *hero of the parody*. In a parody on the sonnet, we must first of all recognize a sonnet, recognize its form, its specific style, its manner of seeing, its manner of selecting from and evaluating the world – the world view of the sonnet, as it were." (Bakhtin, 1992: 51)

In a sense, Bakhtin puts forward that a parody on sonnet has to "lay bare" the devices of the genre of sonnet, reflect its production process or its status as a literary product. If self-reflexivity is a term used to denote texts which explicitly displays its fictional status, its construction process and its self-recognition as an artefact, then, it is

fair to say that parody, as described by Bakhtin above, contributes to the self-reflexive nature of postmodern novel. It is closely related with metafictional postmodern novels which simulate the writer at his desk, thereby, laying bare how a novel is written and its construction of process. Thus, the act of writing is parodied as well.

Linda Hutcheon believes that an important characteristic which distinguishes postmodernism from modernism is that postmodernism "takes the form of self-consciousness, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement" (Hutcheon, 1989: 1). The use of parody develops this contradictory statement. Parody, asserts Hutcheon, "is a perfect postmodernist form in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (Hutcheon, 1987:7). Reacting against the abhorrence of modernist literature toward historicism and its "parthenogenetic" pretension, postmodernism embraced history and parody. (Hutcheon, 1995: 26). In the postmodern era, even though parody has evoked different conceptions and understanding in theoreticians, there is, however, a consensus that parody – pastiche, ironic quotation, intertextuality, no matter how it is termed – is at the centre of postmodernism. (Hutcheon, 1989: 93). For instance, Fredric Jameson believes that parody is impossible in postmodern age and replaces parody with pastiche that is also an imitation of a particular style. Yet, pastiche lacks "parody's ulterior motive", it is "without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something normal compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic" (Jameson, 1992: 167). However, Hutcheon discards the idea that parody is basically an imitation:

"What I mean by "parody" here is *not* the ridiculing imitation of the standard theories and definitions that are rooted in 18th century theories of wit. The collective weight of parodic *practice* suggests a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of the similarity." (Hutcheon, 1995: 26)

Contradicting Jameson's notion of parody which asserts the loss of connection with the past, Hutcheon argues that "through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference" (Hutcheon, 1989: 93). In Hutcheon's terms, postmodern parody does not necessarily aim to destroy past,

neither it neglects the context of the past. For her, "to parody is not to destroy the past; in fact to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it" (Hutcheon, 1995: 126). In the case of historiographic metafiction, "postmodern parody is a kind of contesting revision or rereading of the past that both confirms and subverts the power of the representations of history" (Hutcheon, 1989: 95). Postmodern parody is critical and ironic and it is both "deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representations in any medium" (Hutcheon, 1989: 98).

In a way, Hutcheon celebrates postmodern parody as it bears an ironic stance on representation, genre and politics and as it questions and challenges all ideological positions and claims to ultimate truth. In political terms, postmodern parody, according to Hutcheon, is "doubly coded as it both legitimizes and subverts that which it parodies" (Hutcheon, 1989: 101). Postmodern parody parodies the established discourses or cultural representations. Due to this fact, it is the feminist artists or ex-centrics, to use Hutcheon's term, who often use postmodern parodic strategies in order to "point to the history and historical power of those cultural representations, while ironically contextualizing both in such a way as to deconstruct them (Hutcheon, 1989: 102). Then, it can be asserted that postmodern parody also criticizes and questions the postmodern world.

The Golden Notebook, which can be defined as compilation of various literary devices, forms and techniques with its encyclopedic size, provides the reader with literary, social and political levels of parody. Through the use of these varied parodies, Lessing attacks institutions, authorities, establishments and assumptions. Literary conventions are constantly kept under attack as Anna Wulf tries to heal herself from her writer-block. It would not be wrong to say that there are few literary techniques that Lessing does not employ in her text. She produces a realist novel through "Free Women" sections; she exploits diary form in Anna's four notebooks; she employs the modernists' – especially Virginia Woolf's – favourite technique, stream of consciousness; there are letters providing the quality of epistolary novel; there is pastiche of newspaper cuttings. The major aim of these attempts is to parody these and the other literary techniques since Lessing desires to display their inadequacy to represent the real experience of postmodern world accurately.

The major parody of Lessing's novel is the parody on the model of the conventional novel. Throughout the novel, the incapacity of the conventional novel to represent accurately the real experience is emphasized and Lessing parodies it throughout five "Free Women" sections, which frames the notebooks embedded in it. It is also noteworthy that while Lessing criticizes the established rules of the conventional novel, in fact, she also parodies what she celebrated in "The Small Personal Voice". In the realist tradition, the theory of mimesis is crucially important and writers are expected to be faithful to the imitated object. In order to strengthen her parody on conventional novel, Lessing also provides the reader with the represented object or with the "raw material". Anna's notebook accounts are all the raw material that emerges as fiction in "Free Women" sections. In other words, the notebook accounts are the recorded "facts" and their presentations in "Free Women" sections are their fictionalized forms. It may be assumed that "Free Women" is an objective account of what actually happened related through the perspective of an omniscient narrator (in that case Lessing probably) until it is understood that it was also written by Anna herself. However, if analyzed carefully, there emerge discrepancies while Anna moves these facts into their fictionalized version. Noting that there is an impression that "facts" of notebooks are represented in the objective ordering of experience in "Free Women" sections, John L. Carey catches some of these "curious discrepancies" in his article, "Art and Reality in The Golden Notebook":

"A casual reading may leave the impression that the "Free Women" sections represent the objective ordering of experience by Lessing herself. After she has presented Anna Wulf's subjective version of the events in the notebooks, it seems that in the "Free Women" sections Lessing gives us the real "truth" of these events, "truth" which only an omniscient author could know. If this impression is correct, however, then we must wonder why in 1957, in the first "Free Women" section, Tommy is twenty years old (GN, p. 13) and in a notebook written in 1950 he is seventeen (GN, p. 197). Why, too, at the end of the "Free Women" sections are we told that Tommy goes off to Sicily with Marion, Richard's second wife (GN, p. 554) while in the notebooks he marries a young girl (GN, p. 468)? Why are Molly, Anna, Richard, and Tommy referred to by the same names in the notebooks as well as the "Free Women" sections and Saul Green, Anna's lover in the notebooks, called "Milt" in the "Free Women" sections? Why is the account of Saul's relationship with Anna so much less developed in the final "Free Women" section than in the notebooks?" (Carey, 1973: 439)

The question, then, to be asked is why the reader is confronted with these discrepancies? Can it be attributed to the carelessness of Lessing? However, the best way to approach the case is to perceive it as Lessing's emphasis on how real experiences of real life can be distorted, reshaped, falsified or changed during their transmission into a conventional novel which necessarily employs referential and reverencial language. A conventional novel strives to create the illusion of reality by which it can capture the reader and build omniscient power over him. Captivated by this illusion, the reader is thrust into a land of complete authority sustained and ruled by the author. In terms of mimetic theory, the reader does not have the access to achieve what is reflected or imitated. Rather, he is only in touch with the imitation or reflection. Just like a member of an audience watching the show of a magician, he is astonished when the rabbit pops out of the hat or the model is sliced into two in a magical box; he does not wonder or does not want to question the underlying trick. Ignoring the big table under the hat, in which the rabbit waits to be pulled out, he enjoys the show and the magician enjoys his ultimate authority over the audience as he goes on to take another rabbit out of the hat.

However, Lessing, in The Golden Notebook, literally shows what is there in the table under the hat. She brings close together the imitation or the reflection with the imitated or reflected. In this sense, while notebooks are the imitated or reflected, "Free Women" sections are the imitation or reflection. Thereby, Lessing displays what form the imitated object takes after the imitation. However, if the magician showed how he pulls rabbits one by one from the table under the hat, then, the audience would necessarily frown at him and the show would be ruined and the booed magician would be stripped off his authority. On the contrary, Lessing's show is not ruined and her book becomes one of the most influential texts of postmodern English literature. Her power does not decrease; rather the book becomes more and more powerful and it can be argued that it is due to Lessing's *honesty* as a writer and the honest and earnest tone of the book. By this way, Lessing shatters the illusion of what may be called falsified and distorted reality and parodic power of "Free Women" sections stems from this demonstration of its falsity and distortion.

Moreover, "Free Women" is a parody because it is conventional and limiting and it also offers a well-made plot. Lessing's short conventional sentences in "Free

Women" are juxtaposed against the complex mess of Anna's notebooks. When Lessing transcribes the less orderly language of conversations in "Free Women", she always marks it off with inverted commas and repeatedly uses the phrase "she said" to indicate who is speaking. Anna also presents reader in the first "Black Notebook" entry a parodic synopsis of her successful novel, Frontiers of War which she categorizes as a realist novel (72-74). However, Anna confesses her feeling that her first and only novel, Frontiers of War, falsified rather than rendering honestly her deepest emotional experiences:

"The novel (The Frontiers of War) is 'about' colour problem. I said nothing in that wasn't true. But the emotion it came out of was something frightening, the unhealthy, feverish, illicit excitement of wartime, a lying nostalgia, a longing for silence, for freedom, for the jungle, for formlessness. … It is an immoral novel because that terrible lying nostalgia lights every sentence." (77-78)

Through this parody, Lessing stresses the inadequacy of language, its limitation and incapacity to express experience. She believes that the experience is distorted and falsified as it is transmitted from the contaminated language. For instance, while she complains that as she tries to write sentences, nostalgia – her past in Africa – haunts her, the "terrible lying nostalgia" diminishes the power of every sentence and its capacity to convey the sensation of the real experience. Lessing's use of this parody also fits well into postmodern parody defined by Hutcheon. As mentioned above, postmodern parody makes the reader aware of the powers and shortcomings of representation in any given medium which has to make use of language. Thus, Anna continually criticizes discourses since it does not tell the truth even though it has sufficient power to construct identities:

"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 are in a foreign language – the gap between what they are supposed to mean, and what in fact they say seems unbridgeable. I have been thinking of the novels about the breakdown of language, like Finnegans Wake." (272)

Anna extremely suffers from the limitations of language and she believes it is one of the reasons of her block. After all, she does not abandon her major task of telling the truth and tries to convey her real experiences on paper, but she is again and again frustrated:

"The fact is, the real experience can't be described. I think, bitterly, that a row of asterisks, like an old-fashioned novel, might be better. Or a symbol of some kind, a circle, perhaps, or a square. Anything at all but not words. The people who have been … in the place in themselves where words, patterns, order, dissolve, will know what I mean and the other won't." (549)

In her influential work, <u>Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious</u>, Patricia Waugh also notices the parodic quality of the "Free Women Sections" and she approves that in <u>The Golden Notebook</u> "'reality par excellence' is represented by the misrepresentational, inauthentic language of 'Free Women' which freezes the everyday – 'British life at its roots' – into a mocking parody of itself" (Waugh, 1984: 53). Waugh also associates parody with the personal development of novelists and again she cites <u>The Golden Notebook</u>:

"Doris Lessing wrote <u>The Golden Notebook</u> … to resolve a personal crisis in her development as a writer: a 'writer's block' caused by her feeling that subjectivity is inauthentic; 'but there was no way of not being intensely subjective' (pp. 12– 13). She finally achieves, through the critical function of parody, what a lot of women writers were later to achieve through the women's movement: creative release in her realization that 'writing about oneself is writing about others" (Waugh, 1984: 72-73).

Waugh also exalts <u>The Golden Notebook</u> as "a metafictional text which draws on a whole plethora of parodistic effects, both stylistic and structural" and celebrates Lessing's use of parody which aims "both to achieve a comic effect by exposing the gap between form and content, and to reveal frustration and despair" (Waugh, 1984: 74).

Among these "plethora of parodistic effects" there are also instances when the boundary between parody and pastiche is violated. Hutcheon tries to draw the line that may operate to distinguish parody and pastiche. Acknowledging the fact that "neither parody or pastiche … can be considered as trivial game-playing" Hutcheon puts forward that while "parody does seek differentiation in its relationship to its model", pastiche, on the other hand, "operates more by similarity and correspondence" (Hutcheon, 2000: 38). Parody is flexible as it is available for adaptation or change, but pastiche is stricter in the sense that it has to copy its model target. However, Hutcheon also admits that parody can contain pastiche and pastiche can be employed for parodic

ends (Hutcheon, 2000: 38). Then, it can be said that some boundary crosses may be expected as it is also exemplified in The Golden Notebook.

Comrade Ted's story is one of the examples of such which takes place in the second "Red Notebook" part. The story is about the comrade's visit to Moscow and his confrontation with great Comrade Stalin. He was chosen to go on the teacher's delegation and felt very proud of it. Anna is perplexed when she first reads the story:

"When I first read it, I thought it was an exercise in irony. Then a very skillful parody of a certain attitude. Then I realized it was serious – it was at the moment I searched my memory and rooted out certain fantasies of my own. But what seemed to me important was that it (the story sent by a comrade) could be read as parody, irony or seriously. It seems to me this fact is another expression of the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked with what I feel to be true about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience." (273)

Seriousness of the story may be associated with faithful devotion of the comrade to Stalin. When Anna finishes the account of the comrade Ted, George comments that the story is a "good honest basic stuff". In the story it is seen that Stalin gets some advice from Ted about their policy in Europe. In a way, the story is full of clichés about a prototype of an almighty, benevolent and humble leader which means that the story can also be read as the propaganda of socialism. When analyzed through different perspectives the story shows its multi-faceted perceptions. If the comrade Ted's perspective is considered then the story should be taken into consideration seriously due to Ted's innocent and strictly committed political intentions. Another perspective is Anna's which senses irony in the story as Anna herself is communist – but a skeptic one – and most importantly a sophisticated reader. The perspective of the actual reader is the other one and has the advantage of high-angle shot, that is this perspective is superior to others as it can take previous perspectives into consideration. The reader is first aware that it is pastiche since the story is pasted in without further modification. However, the reader is also invited to interpret the story as a parody. Moreover, in order to strengthen the parodistic nature of the story, Anna ends her "Red Notebook" with a contrasting story of another comrade, Harry. Unlike the story of Ted, Harry's account is rather pessimistic. In Harry's story, there is again a journey to Moscow. Harry was a devoted communist who could speak "Russian fluently and knew inside history of every minor squabble or intrigue" (463). "The poor lunatic"

imagined a day would come when he would be summoned from the party center in Moscow to be consulted. Jimmy, who relates the story to Anna, confesses that the idea to invite Harry to the teacher's delegation had crossed from his mind on that very spot when he coincidentally encounter him and this again ridicules Harry's highly optimistic fantasy that he would be summoned from the centre to contribute to the progress of the party (465). However, his invitation was certainly a coincidence. Unfortunately, the journey for Harry becomes a nightmare as he can only transfer his accumulation to an unwilling listener who is a servant in the hotel. Harry is disillusioned as "the whole basis of his life has collapsed" (645).

When two accounts of the two communists are evaluated, there are striking similarities. They are both devoted communists and they both travel to Moscow. However, Ted's rendezvous with Stalin seems rather fantastic when compared to story of disappointed Harry. In this respect, Harry's account seems closer to reality. Nonetheless, the story of comrade Ted parodies Harry's account or vice versa. As in the story of Ted, the reader again has the advantage of overlook through the already presented perspectives in the sad story of Harry. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that these pasted stories take place in a story; hence they are stories-within-stories. Due to this fact the critical distance of the reader to the text is extended further and the perspective of the editor – i.e. Anna Wulf – interferes. The two stories of the two communists are pastiche as long as they stay in the fictitious realm of Anna. However, when they are transferred, under the gazing eye of Anna the editor, to the outer world where the reality of post-war period and collapse of Soviet socialism have been perceived well, they are not pastiches anymore, but parodies of those cultural representations. This is how the boundary between pastiche and parody is transgressed in The Golden Notebook.

Broadly speaking, these mentioned parodies operate to criticize and question certain dogmas and institutionalized ideals of communism. In other words, cultural representations are aimed at in these parodies. This is the social level of the parody used in The Golden Notebook. Likewise, Lessing parodies World War II in the "The Black Notebook":

"This war presented to us as a crusade against the evil doctrines of Hitler, against racialism, etc., yet the whole of that enormous land-mass, about half the total area of Africa, was being conducted on precisely Hitler's assumption – that some human beings are better than others because of their race. The mass of the Africans up and down the continent were sardonically amused at the sight of their white masters crusading off to fight the racialist devil – those Africans with any education at all." (78-79)

These statements are clearly the parody and irony of the war, but not in terms of Jameson's stylistic parody which "capitalizes on the uniqueness of these styles (styles of great modernist writers) and seizes on their idiosyncrasies and eccentricities to produce an imitation which mocks the original" (Jameson, 1992: 166). It is the parody of the World War II which was presented as a fight against Hitler's fascism or racialism. However, white settlers in Africa had occupied the Dark Continent exactly within the same terms. In fact the war itself is the parody. On the other hand, Anna's statement bears in itself radical irony which Ihab Hassan employs "to any statement that contains its own ironic denial" (Hassan, 2001: 35). Besides, the war, with "its enjoyable ironies" (79), presents binary opposition about war and imperialism.

Understanding the form of parody is crucial in understanding The Golden Notebook because the novel itself is a parody. Strikingly Anna notices that "something had happened in the world which made parody impossible" (389). However, parody looms large in the text almost in all pages. It is there to subvert and challenge commonly accepted notions, ideas, institutions, establishment and beliefs which are created and imposed by the discourses of prevailing ideologies. Furthermore, as quoted above from Waugh, by using the critical function of parody Lessing manages to write about others while writing about oneself and thus could save her text being contaminated or despised by highly subjective voices which is also one of the most important point scrutinized by Lessing in the novel.

4.3 SUBJECTIVITY vs. COMMITMENT

Subjectivity is one of the most important themes analyzed in the novel and understanding how subjectivity confronts commitment in The Golden Notebook is crucial to the understanding of the novel. As The Golden Notebook is about a blocked-

writer who tries to relate her past, her politics, her creativity, her sexuality, her sociality, in sum totality of her experiences, the reader expects a highly subjective account. Certainly, if this case is considered in terms of socialist realism, an irritation or abhorrence is likely to arise as it would be labelled as petty personal problems that are trivial when there are other serious problems waiting to be handled. Associating the concept of subjectivity with the concept of the artist, Doris Lessing comments on this issue in her preface:

"When I began writing there was pressure on writers not to be 'subjective'. This pressure began inside communist movements, as a development of the social literary criticism developed in Russia in the nineteenth century, by a group of remarkable talents … using the arts and particularly literature in the battle against Czarism and oppression. It spread fast everywhere, finding an echo as late as the fifties, in this country, with the theme of 'commitment'... 'Bothering about your stupid personal concerns when Rome is burning' is how it tends to get itself expressed. … Yet all the time novels, stories, art of every sort, became more and more personal." (12)

Lessing admits that "there was no way of *not* being intensely subjective" and she does not ignore the fact that one "couldn't write a book about the building of a bridge or a dam and not develop the mind and the feelings of the people who built it." (13) Her solution to this dilemma is to acknowledge that nothing is personal:

"At last I understood that the way over, or through this dilemma, the unease at writing about 'petty personal problems' was to recognize that nothing is personal, in the sense that it is uniquely one's own. Writing about oneself, one is writing about others, since your problems, pains, pleasures, emotions … can't be yours alone. The way to deal with the problem of 'subjectivity', that shocking business of being preoccupied with the tiny individual who is at the same time caught up in such an explosion of terrible and marvellous possibilities, is to see him as microcosm and in this way to break through the personal, the subjective, making the personal general, as indeed life always does, transforming a private experience … into something much larger." (13)

This is the idea obviously apparent throughout the novel as Anna is portrayed as a committed writer who experiences the same dilemma. Anna cannot strip of herself easily of her identity as a committed writer. However, she is discouraged by her first and successful novel The Frontiers of War as she perceives it as a "lying nostalgia." (78) This problem and dilemma of subjectivity and the committed writer is actualized and parodied in the intellectual discussion of Anna and Jack in the Blue Notebook. The two read periodicals and magazines published in communist countries and examine

letters and stories sent by comrades. Anna is constantly disillusioned as she keeps on reading the material:

"During the last year, reading these stories, these novels, in which there might be an occasional paragraph, a sentence, a phrase, of truth; I've been forced to acknowledge that the flashes of genuine art are all out of deep, suddenly stark, undisguisable private emotion. Even in translation there is no mistaking these lighting flashes of genuine personal feeling. And I read this dead stuff praying that just once there may be a short story, a novel, even an article, written wholly from genuine personal feeling." (311)

Paradox in the statement of Anna lies in the fact that she is disgusted with her first novel because she is "ashamed of psychological impulse that created" the book. (311). As she admits, she does not only reject her own "unhealthy art" but also rejects "healthy art". Then she recollects a lecture that she gave to a small group in which she praises "communal, unindividual" art of the Middle Ages which lacked "painful individuality of the art of the bourgeois era" and in which she cries her hope that "one day, we will leave behind the driving egoism of individual art." (312) However, she also remembers that she could not finish that course due to a stammer, a meaning of which she knows. As Lessing also remarks in preface (12), Anna has stammered because she is also aware that subjectivity is unavoidable. Nevertheless, Jack still carries on defending committed art which could be possible through the development of an individual consciousness. For Anna, it is still problematic as she is not sure:

"... who is that Anna who will read what I write? Who is this other I whose judgment I fear; or whose gaze, at least, is different from mine when I am not thinking, recording, and being conscious." (313)

Is the artist responsible for his society? Is there any mechanism that controls the product of the artist? Anna suspects that the individual conscience could be this mechanism. Moreover, this brings forward the question of freedom of the artist. In order to write directly personal feelings one has to be free in the first place. However, the individual conscience, for socialist literary theory, is always at work regulating the artist. On the other hand, if the author is considered to be dead and if his artefact does not belong to him/her after the publication but possessed by the reader, and if the stable relationship between the signifier and the signified is broken down and following this fact if the words have lost their established meanings what sort of responsibility then can the artist possibly carry? This is the paradoxical situation mentioned above by

Anna. Then, it is fair to assert that T. S. Eliot's concept of depersonalization, sacrifice of personal attitudes and feelings in order to create a great tradition, does not operate in The Golden Notebook.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to shed light on the question that whether Doris Lessing's influential work, <u>The Golden Notebook,</u> is postmodern or modernist in terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody. Moreover, another argument presented in this study is that Doris Lessing's honesty as a writer did effect the way the book was shaped. The scope of the study has been limited to these aspects of the novel. The overall idea of the study is that, in the novel, it is possible to come across with both modernist and postmodernist elements used by Lessing. However, it should not be forgotten that as the offspring of modernist novel, postmodernist novel necessarily inherits certain characteristics – like disruption time flow, experimentation and play – and as a product of the transition period between modernism and postmodernism, Doris Lessing's novel is not an exception. In terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody, the novel moves closer to postmodernism and the modernist elements that are encountered serve to challenge and subvert modernist instruments rather than revering them, which is also a postmodern tactic for novelists identified by Linda Hutcheon.

While following the argument, it is obligatory and fruitful to take into account the period in which <u>The Golden Notebook</u> was written. Lessing's career started in 1950s under the hegemony of social realist trend and her first two novels and also her article, "The Small Personal Voice" which was published in a journal supported by the group Angry Young Men, and which was devoted to the issue of the committed writer, present Lessing as a committed writer who deals with social problems like the white man's oppression over blacks and class conflicts. However, with the publication of <u>The Golden Notebook,</u> Lessing undermines what she had previously stated. Lessing bravely evaluates the tradition of novel writing, parodies the established standards of novel and asks courageous questions concerning the validity of language in the sense that realists perceived it and the distortion of real life experience when it is conveyed through language. In general, Lessing attacks at realist novel and their trust and dependence on

language which is, in postmodernist sense, a human construct and contingent, highly subjective and context-based.

As is known, 1960s, the decade when The Golden Notebook was first published, is considered to be the transition period between modernism and postmodernism. In this period many important events took place preparing the ground for the emergence and the rise of this new sensibility. Devastated by the Great War and atomic bombs, world, especially Europe, was trying to heal the injuries, while it was also struggling with the rising tension of Cold War that bipolarized the world and with terrorist activities which carried war into the heart of the cities. The failure of communism, the decrease in the power of the nation states and the increase in the power of trans-national companies and decolonization implied that a new economic and world order was required. What is more, many liberation movements including women's, gays', lesbians', blacks and ethnics demanded a new social order in which those previously oppressed and silenced majority could find their voice and place. In other words, there were great attacks against the values brought forward by the project of modernity that had started after the Enlightenment and industrialization. These challenges and attacks invoked the fear of chaos which is the common term to define the twentieth-century. Lessing, writing amid these tensions which called for profound changes in the social and the economic structure of world, reflected in her novel the panorama of the said period.

Fragmentation, which refers broadly to the absence of connection between individuals in the society, is one of the key concepts in the twentieth-century. In this century, there are two perceptions of fragmentation which can be categorized as modernist and postmodern. While modernists lamented the loss of order and fragmentation in the society and fought against fragmentation through search for unity in their highly aesthetic art, postmodernists, on the other hand, welcomed and celebrated fragmentation as for them it represented previously oppressed and silenced ex-centrics, including women, gays and ethnics. Thus, by hailing differences, postmodernists stressed the idea that any desire for unity, which had existed under the label of grand narratives, meant totality and cultural assimilation. In The Golden Notebook, Lessing also mediates on the issue of fragmentation. Her concern, according to her assertions that take place in the preface, is that she is after unity. However, the book, in its structure, denies what Lessing asserts.

The book is itself divided or fragmented into parts. There are five Free Women sections and four different coloured parts – black, red, yellow and blue – which are again divided into four in themselves and an inner Golden Notebook part. In coloured notebooks, Anna relates her fragmented identities – her African past (black), her affiliation with the communist party (red), her attempts to write fiction (yellow) and her daily life through diary form (blue). In the inner Golden Notebook, Anna attempts to combine her fragmented experiences and identities in a single notebook. In the Free Women Sections, Anna presents the fictionalized versions of what she relates in the coloured notebooks. At first glance, it seems that Lessing provides the reader with a structure which finally melts the fragments in one pot – in the inner Golden Notebook. However, in the inner Golden Notebook, when it is understood that the beginning sentence of Anna's next fiction, which is proposed to Anna by Saul Green, is also the beginning sentence of Free Women sections, the reader is taken back to the first page of the novel where fragments welcome him. While Lessing's initially announced search for unity approximates her to the modernist sense of fragmentation, Anna can only find solution to her block as she learns to accept fragmentary nature of her life. Only through this acceptance she can restart writing fiction. Regarding this fact, then, it can be asserted that Lessing's final solution is to accept and welcome fragments and this evidence marks The Golden Notebook as a postmodernist novel in terms of narrative.

Subjectification is also problematic in The Golden Notebook as it simultaneously approaches both to modernist understanding of subject and the postmodernist one. The twentieth-century witnessed the failure of fixed, stable, coherent and unified understanding of subject developed and promoted by the Enlightenment project. However, the loss of faith in subject occurred gradually as the artists of the first half of the century still carried some belief in existing collective reality which can be shared by everyone. Modernist artists were aware of the absence of a shared external world, but believed that the only knowledge that could be reliable was the individual consciousness. Thus, characters of the modernist novels are portrayed in a search for unity in the self. In the last half of the twentieth-century, thanks to ground-breaking works of Derrida, Foucault, Lacan and others, the understanding of subject changed and it was perceived to be a human construct, conditioned and shaped by external factors at work. In other words, postmodernism does not deny the existence of subject but defines

it as the construction of culture. In <u>The Golden Notebook</u>, there are many Annas with varied given roles – mother, wife, mistress, artist etc. – and this multiplicity of Annas questions the conventional understanding of subject as unified and whole. Anna keeps her identities separate as she keeps four separate notebooks. In these notebooks, Anna seems to be in a quest for unity in the self which may cause a prompt decision of labelling the text as modernist. However, the inner Golden Notebook, in which Anna attempts to melt all her identities in one pot, she passes through dissolution with the assistance of the already fragmented American Saul Green. The sentence proposed by Saul Green to Anna that would serve as the beginning sentence of her next fiction also emphasizes multiplicity of Anna: "There are the two women you are, Anna. The two women were alone in the London flat" (554). As the narrative returns to the beginning it can be inferred that the quest for a unified self is unsuccessful and acceptance of fragmented nature of subject is the only way to deal with the chaos. In terms of subjectification, then, <u>The Golden Notebook</u> moves towards postmodern understanding of subject.

Anna's multiple selves also provide multiple perspectives in the novel. Each notebook has its own perspective. Moreover, as there are three writers when the novel is considered as a whole (Doris Lessing as the real writer, Anna Wulf as the fictitious writer and Ella as the fictitious writer of the fictitious Anna) the reader is confronted with multi-layered narrative with multiple authors. By creating this abundance of authors/writers, Lessing seems in an attempt to defer the disapproval of the reader in the postmodern context who has the potential to question the validity and accuracy of the text. However, what she does in fact is to lay bare her technique and break the illusion of reality by putting the product (Free Women) side by side with the raw material (notebooks). Lessing shows how the real experience is tainted when it is conveyed through language, how it loses its original sensation. On the other hand, Anna is portrayed as a writer who is in search for fresh models to convey her experience truthfully. Then, it can be argued that Lessing parodies the writer who is after truth.

In fact, the novel itself is a parody on novel as the whole process of novel writing is shown throughout the pages of the novel. Parody is also present in the novel to challenge and subvert well-established notions and institutions. Postmodern parody, for Hutcheon, carries in itself an ironic attitude towards any kind of representation,

challenges and questions institutions and any claims to ultimate truth (Hutcheon, 1989: 101). This is also what Lessing aims at through her parodies in the novel. Moreover, Lessing writes about others while she writes about one self thus could save her text being contaminated by highly subjective tone. This idea also sheds light on how Lessing perceives subjectivity. She is sure that nothing can escape the contamination of subjectivity. Only through acknowledging that nothing is personal she is able to overcome her dilemma. In a Marxist manner, she associates the smallness with the vastness, the smaller unit with a bigger one which is emphasized by the "naming game" she plays in the novel.

When the publication date of the novel is considered, what Lessing presents with her path-breaking novel is something new. The book has the quality of being new regarding its structure, content matter and style. Lessing's tone is never hesitant and she does not avoid mentioning about even the most tabooed subjects about being woman including menstruation and sexual intercourse. Her structure is innovatory as it challenges all the standards of conventional novel genre. In a way, through this experimentation, she risks her reputation as a realist writer which was provided by her earlier two novels. In order to write what she wants she sets herself free from other impulses at work during construction of a fiction. This is her honesty as a writer and her honesty becomes a factor in both formal and thematic construction of the novel. Her honesty touches upon the every detail of the novel. Even her fictitious character, Anna is portrayed as an honest writer who stops writing as she feels that existing paradigms and models for novel writing are insufficient to convey the exact sensation of real life experience. She even despises her first novel which she believes was formed under "lying nostalgia" (77). Due to this fact, she refused all offers made to her by producers who insist on to turn her first novel, The Frontiers of War, into film or TV series (257-268). Reminding again Montaigne, she "quits the profitable for the honest" (Montaigne, 1903: 370). Then, it is fair to assert that honesty plays its role in thematic and formal construction of the novel.

To sum up, after the analysis of postmodern and modernist characteristics found in the novel in terms of narrative strategies, subjectification and use of parody amid the battle for authority and subjectivity, it is certain that The Golden Notebook, as a transition period work, bears both modernist and postmodernist features. However,

modernist elements found in the novel is there not for reverence but for challenge and they are in fact parodied. In the fragmented narrative of <u>The Golden Notebook</u> there are many direct and indirect references to modernist tradition of novel writing. However, the fragmented quality of the narrative denies any kind of unity which provides an antithesis to modernist search for unity or integrity in the fragmented world. The fragmented narrative of the novel emphasizes not a reaction but rather an acceptance of the fragments as a single solution to avoid chaos. With this quality, <u>The Golden Notebook</u> moves closer to postmodernist domain. Moreover, in the formal structure and content of the novel honesty of the writer is crucially important as this quality of the writer becomes one of the factors that give its innovatory shape to the novel.

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