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#### Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to examine Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* in depth. The novel begins and closes with passages dealing with liberated women. The four journals were created for this liberated lady, we learn. The *Golden Note Book* is an attempt to reveal the emotions of a lady who desires to be "free." This research is an attempt to investigate Kamala's *My Story*. The women whom society frequently regards as perplexing. Kamala Das is who she claims to be. A well-known Indian poet, memoirist, and short story writer whose work was recognized for its openness. Every person on the planet wears a mask over his or her face. He only shows his true face at particular times. However, in the case of authors, this mask play is a bit more complicated. This is because the actual persona frequently merges with the imaginary environment they construct, leaving readers unsure whether what they are reading is autobiographical or fake.

**Keywords** - domestic issues, depression, oppression, suppression

The life purpose of each and every human being is to realize the self hence Kamala Das says, "only the one, who has decided to travel inwards, will realize that his route has no end. But at twenty, I was ignorant of these facts" (Das 87). Both Doris Lessing and Kamala Das in their Middle Ages they look back into their past as if they are watching a film. And in their introspection, they add new meaning to the incidents of the past with the new knowledge. This paper deals about the journey of Anna in *The Golden Notebook* and Das's journey from the narrow world of reality to reach the world of truth. Finally, they conclude, that peace can be attained from within. The two protagonists are converted from selfish individuals to broad minded personalities. It is through the world of illusion they realize themselves. Hence Anna says that she cries out in her dreams. This makes her to shed her ego. Similarly, Das, only when she falls sick during her middle age she looks at the world around her and feels pity for it. She ironically says, Calcutta gifted me with beautiful sights which built for me the sad poems that I used to write in my diary in those days. It was at Calcutta that I saw a prostitute, gaudily painted like a cheap bazaar toy. (Das 125)

Thus, she looks around her only during the latter part of her life. In the beginning we can see her giving importance to her children and her pleasures alone. Hence, she is vexed. But later when she tries it as a diversion from family stress, she says:

Poets, even most insignificant of them from other people. They cannot close their shops like shop men and return home. Their shop is their mind and as long as they carry it with them, they feel the pressures and the torments. A Poet's raw material is not stone or clay; it is her personality. I could not escape from my predicament even for a moment (Das 124).

Eventhough Das says a poet's raw material is only her personality, she has given a false identify about herself in her autobiography. Similarly, Anna of *The Golden Notebook* too looks calm and stable outside but her inner self is full of commotion. She is not able to organize her life as one whole. Hence, she maintains four different notebooks to record different aspects of her life. Tommy talks about her dishonesty after reading her books secretly. Tommy asks, "why the four notebooks? What would happen if you had one big book without all those divisions and brackets and special writing?" (Lessing 247). Anna replies "chaos". He blames her for looking sane, as follows,

you look such a neat little thing and look at what you write... Don't put me off Anna. Are you afraid of being chaotic?... Then it is dishonest. After all, you take your stand on something, don't you? Yes you do - you despise people like my father. You sit here writing and writing, but not one can see it - that's arrogant... And you aren't even honest enough to let yourself be what you are -



everything's divided off and split up. But that's egotism, it is being good. We aren't any better than the animals, we just pretend to be. We don't really care about each other at all (Lessing 247-48). Tommy tries to understand Anna clearly and blames her for being selfish. He says she is dishonest for she blames people like Richard, Tommy's father for being contented with so little. And for not aspiring for something great to be done to the welfare of the humanity. But she herself in person is sitting aloof in her room writing about her own self in order to escape chaos. Then he enquires about the philosophy on which she believes. Anna replies that there is a sort of "act of faith" (Lessing 1972:248). She feels that well of faith will engulf one country or the other and thereby finally it will occupy in the whole world. Hence the ugliness and cruelty will vanish. Hence, they have to imagine in "goodness" and "Kindness" (Lessing 248), which are going to be "The end of being animals" (Lessing 248). She finally says that "there'll always be new people without paralysis of the will" (Lessing 248). Thus, Anna starts realizing about herself because of Tommy. And she finds no words to explain it. She feels that she is still unable to accept the words are faulty by nature. And then she asks to her inner self "If I thought they were capable of expressing the truth I wouldn't keep journals which I refuse to let anyone see" (Lessing 565). On realizing words are unable to express truth she decides to tear all the wall clippings. She also decides not to paste any more clippings. But when she tries to tear, she is unable to do. Osho in the third chapter of his book Dhammapadham gives some tips to attain the true joy, love and pity. He says:

in order to understand oneself one has to try to understand people around him. He has to observe people around him. He has to concentrate on their language and body language. Osho feels language is highly deceptive, it is only through eye contact and body language we can understand others fully. Once when we understand others then we can apply the same concept to ourself. We have to listen to the voice of our own self and observe our language. Then we can decide how true we are and can restrict ourself to truth alone. When we attain this stage, we can realize happiness which will lead to love and feel pity for humanity as such (Osho 87).

One can see Kamala Das and Anna of The Golden Notebook traveling through this procedure in their respective works. They are very much conscious of the society around them. They try to observe the language of people along with the cruelty in them. Thus, this analysis leads to self-analysis and finally to the state of bliss. Anna's game of naming things in her room to the universe is the symbolic representation of this analysis. Finally, with the catholic spirit both Anna of The Golden Notebook and Das start loving the fellow human beings around. Das on looking at the poor feels depressed and says:

I watch the little boys of the poor crowding the bhelpuriwala's handcart only to have the pleasure of watching the richer ones eat. I have seen their wise eyes and their lengthy contemplation. The poor are fatalists by nature and by tradition (Das 167)

In The Golden Notebook, Anna maintains a yellow notebook in which in disguise she speaks about her inner self. Later Ella in the yellow notebook vanishes to represent the death of Anna's ego. Later she proceeds the yellow notebook without any disguise. The golden notebook (the new notebook), which she maintains after her enlightenment, represents life. Similarly, Das too speaks about autumn in her life as follows in the chapter called "The Bombay Hospital",

**The Beginning of Autumn;**

**She floats in her autumn,**

**Yellowed like a leaf And free. (Das 141)**

Das here uses the season autumn to refer her middle age. During which she finds some contours being changed in her body. Along with her beauty her ego too dies. Autumn is the season of ripeness and yellowing (which shows the full growth). So, after her realization about death which is awaiting not only for her but also for all the creatures in the universe she speaks as follows:

I am at peace. I liken God to a tree which has as its parts the leaves, the bark, the fruits and the flowers each unlike the other in appearance and in texture but in each lying dissolved the essence of the tree.... Each component obeys its destiny. The flower blossom, scatter pollen and dry up. The



fruits ripen and fall. The bark peels. Each of us obey that colossal wisdom, the taproot of all wisdom and the source of all consciousness. (Das 174)

This revelation of death which is common to everyone makes her to speak about residential school based on the Gurukul system. We also have Second World War as a common criterion standing behind the texts respectively. Hence the havoc of death and the decaying society kindles the spirit of Das and Anna of The Golden Notebook to rise to the saintly status. Thus, the world within Anna and Das is corrupt because of their selfish attachment towards life Das says:

I was physically destroyed beyond resurrection. But while my body lay inert on my sick bed, my mind leapt up like a walking greyhound and became alert. It had said good bye to its sleep. All the ancient hungers that had once tormented my lithe body were fulfilled. Not even the best-looking man in the world would any longer arouse in me an appetite for love. (Das 166)

Das finally realizes the world within her (soul) which has been with her only after undergoing torments of life. She feels "knowledge is exposure to life" (Das 2004:166). Hence, she in sick bed asks:

In actuality who is he? Who am I? Who are these three boys who call themselves my children? We are burdened with perishable bodies which strike up bonds which are also unreal and perishable. The only relationship that is permanent is the one which we form with God. My mate is He. He shall come to me in myriad shapes. In many shapes shall I surrender to His desire. I shall be fondled by Him. I shall be betrayed by Him. I shall pass through all the pathways of this world, condemning none, understanding all and then become part of Him. Then for me there shall be no return journey. (Das 148)

Anna too gets the knowledge about herself only when she realizes herself. hence she says, "when I read my notebooks, I didn't recognize myself. Something strange happens when one writes about oneself" (Lessing 499). Finally, they get elevated to enjoy the status of bliss. In order keep away herself away from worldly thoughts and to keep her inner self pure Das spends her time chanting "mantras" (Das 172). Anna regarding the knowledge she has gained says:

Knowing is illumination. During the last weeks of craziness and timelessness I've had these moments of knowing one after another, yet these moments have been so powerful, like the rapid illuminations of a dream that remain with one waking, that what I have learned will be part of how I experience life until I die (Lessing 549).

Thus, Anna too realizes her world within in order to lead a peaceful life. Anna too, in order to keep her mind occupied without any disturbance says that she plays with words. Thus, they realize the world within and try to be compassionate with others. She also understands the inner self (soul) alone will enjoy eternity. Das observes the truth as follows:

The idea of our world being round and our life being a cycle has tripped us up. If we were to forget the words past, present and future and were to see life as a collage, a vast assembly of things and people and emotions we shall stop grieving for the dead stop pining for the living and stop accumulating visible wealth... What exists must exist. Only the compositions will change. Tomorrow my soul might migrate into the womb of a house-builder's woman and I might be one of the happy children squatting to see the pink Ganapati. Both happiness and unhappiness are mine to enjoy. I have no end. Nothing has an end. Instead of an end, all that we suffer is decomposition. (Das 171).

Thus, Das speaks about the cycle of life which tends to change. It's clear that she has understood the concept that nothing is permanent in this world. And it is the soul which is going to lead an everlasting life in various forms. Both Anna and Das have realized the soul within them. Hence, they are mentally prepared for death which is the ultimate reality.

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