

Tribhuvan University

Symbiosis of Colour and People: Critique of Ideology in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*

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By

Birendra Bahadur Chand

Roll No: 16

T.U. Reg. No.: 9-2-29-1221-2007

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled ‘Symbiosis of Colour and People: Critique of Ideology in Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook*’ submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Birendra Bahadur Chand has been approved by the following members of the research committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

.....

.....

Dr. Komal Phuyal

Internal Supervisor

.....

.....

Dr. Anju Gupta

External Supervisor

.....

.....

Dhruba Bahadur Karki, Ph. D.

Professor and Head

April 2025

Central Department of English

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work. It contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree in any institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published anywhere.

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Birendra Bahadur Chand

April 2025

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Abstract

The Golden Notebook by Doris Lessing is a highly acclaimed masterpiece in English literature. It is received and criticized in multiple ways. In other words, the analysis of *The Golden Notebook* has been multifaceted. The use of five notebooks with different colours has bolstered the presentation of the novel even more. At last, Black, Red, Yellow, Blue, and the Golden Notebook are used by Anna Wulf, the protagonist, to record her writing life, political experience, emotional and fictional sensations, everyday diary, and then acceptance of the fragmentation of life, respectively. The following study is centralized to explore the use of colour and people and its critique of ideology. The study begins with the background analysis of the study, which then leads to the main story of the novel, followed by the exploration of the use of colour and people in the novel. Similarly, reading a novel with the theory of new criticism is done along with the critique of ideology. The representations of each colour are mentioned in detail, whereas the analysis of the red colour, that is, the political life of Anna, is then highlighted in brief. Finally, the study concludes by analyzing the significance of the golden notebook in the novel.

Keywords: fragmented, compartmentalized, disillusionment, writer's block, trauma, new criticism

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Chapter I. Doris Lessing and *The Golden Notebook*

Written by Doris Lessing and published in the United Kingdom in 1962, *The Golden Notebook* is a novel comprising black, red, yellow and blue notebooks and the golden notebook. Each notebook has its representation of colour. The black is about Anna Wulf's writing career, the red is about political life, the yellow is about emotions, and the blue is about the everyday diary. Similarly, the golden is the final one with the notion of unifying fragmented ideas. The writer has fragmented the ideologies and compartmentalized the events of her life in four different colours. The complexities of unification and wholeness are presented at the novel's end.

Anna Wulf, a single mother like Doris Lessing herself, is the central figure in this novel. She is a writer who has so far written a book entitled *Frontiers of War* about her experiences in Africa; it is the same as Lessing, who wrote *Grass is Singing* earlier, and that too was about her life in Africa. Anna has recorded her feelings and emotions in four notebooks, which signify her fragmented life, state of flux, and mixture of mind and confusing thoughts. All these things concluded in a final notebook, the Golden Notebook.

The study entitled 'Symbiosis of Colour and People: Critique of Ideology in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*' mainly highlights the representation of colours and critique of ideology in the novel. The use of colour is the most significant theme of the novel, and at the same time, the novel is read along with a critique of ideology. The study deals with the representation of colour and people in all those notebooks. At the same time, the ideology in the notebooks' soul is analyzed. Then follows a brief exploration of the symbiosis of colour and people.

Doris Lessing has had multicultural experiences that made her a prolific writer. She was born in Asia and spent her adolescence and youth in Africa and later

in life in Europe. She was not formally educated but self-educated at her father's farm. In one interview in the New York Times with Lesley Hazelton in 1982, she regretted that she was not educated in school: '... but I'm glad that I was not educated in literature and history and philosophy, which means that I did not have this Euro-centered thing driven into me, which I think is the single biggest hang-up Europe has got. It's almost impossible for anyone in the West not to see the West as the God-given gift to the world' (21). This proves that Lessing was always away from the critics' perspective. Some critics regarded her as a feminist after the publication of *The Golden Notebook*, but she denied this idea. In the same interview, she stated, 'They want me to bear witness. They would like me to say, 'Ha, sisters, I stand with you side by side in her struggle toward the golden dawn where all those beastly men are no more.' Do they want people to make oversimplified statements about men and women? They do. I've come with great regret to this conclusion.' She defied the critics by saying, 'The critics slap labels on you and expect you to talk on their terms' (22).

Lessing was brought up in Africa, and she had closely observed racial discrimination. Her experience in Africa has influenced her writing as well. Drawing upon her childhood memories and engagement with politics and social concern, Lessing has written about the clash of cultures, the gross injustices of social inequality, the struggle among opposing elements within an individual's personality, and the conflict between individual conscience and collective good. Her stories and novellas set in Africa condemn the denial of black Africans by white colonials and expose the sterility of the white culture in southern Africa. In 1956, she was prohibited in Rhodesia and South Africa.

Lessing is known for her political, psychological, and Sufi writings. Critics have been surprised by her writing style. That is why she has always piqued the critics. In her initial phase of writing, she wrote about social issues where she often dealt with communism, which was seen in her short stories and her first novel. In her second writing phase, she dealt with the dark psychology of the characters as she had majorly done in her masterpiece *The Golden Notebook*. The third phase, the Sufi phase, explored her writing in science fiction about space and the universe.

Synopsis of *The Golden Notebook*

The Golden Notebook was first published in 1962. It is the story of Anna Wulf, an autobiographical character who, like Lessing, is a divorced single mother, has moved to London from Africa and has written her first book named 'Frontiers of War' as Lessing's first novel *Grass is Singing*, based on the African experience. *The Golden Notebook* is set in 1950s London, a post-war and post-colonial period, and feminism was also rising.

Anna Wulf spent her youth in colonial Africa, which she recalls as the weekends at Mashopi Hotel. She was there with a group of few white people who possess their ideology about race, colour, and politics. She has written her first book about it and has been living with the money coming from the book. Anna's best friend Molly, a single mother like herself and a minor theatre actress, lives with her young son Tommy, who is troubled by the contrasting political and economic ideologies between his father and mother. She frequently had confrontations with Richard, her ex-husband, who wanted to marry yet another young secretary, Jean, after marrying Marion. Molly wanted her son to be free from colonial beliefs, while his father, Richard, wanted him to help with his business.

First published in 1962, *The Golden Notebook* is the story of Anna Wulf, a divorced single mother and novelist labouring against writer's block in 1950s London. She recorded her experience in four notebooks: the black notebook records her writing life, the red notebook records her political views, the yellow notebook records her emotional life, and the blue notebook records everyday events. The final notebook—*The Golden Notebook*—brings the strands of her life together. This book begins with *Free Women*, where Anna and Molly's lives are discussed. It then consecutively follows with black, red, yellow, and blue notebooks.

Anna is staying at Molly's flat in London. Molly, 40, lives with her son Tommy, 18, whereas her husband Richard has left her to get married to Marion with three sons. Anna is small, thin, dark, and brittle with large black, always-on-guard eyes and a fluffy haircut (30). Her boyfriend Michael has broken up with her. They are talking about society and their relations. Richard comes shortly after and gives a lecture about making life successful by making a lot of money. Moreover, he wanted Tommy to work for him and make a career. After he left, Anna remembers that she had nearly an affair with Richard (58). On one occasion, Richard commented on Anna that she looked ten years older than she should, but she harshly replied that he would say how beautiful she would be if he invited her into bed (60). Anna and Molly had all kinds of such conversations, and finally, Anna walked off to her own flat, where she had kept four identical notebooks: black, red, yellow, and blue.

The black notebook starts with chaotic phrases written in the first paragraph. Then Anna had mentioned the central theme of her first novel- *Frontiers of War*, of which royalty she was still living. An intelligent young pilot, Peter Carey, was posted to Central Africa after WWII. He was shocked to find a go-getting, color-ridden small-town society (73) and began to like it. He stayed at an out-of-town hotel run by

Mr. Boothby and his comely wife, whose teenage daughter fell in love with Peter, while Mrs. Boothby, neglected by her hard-drinking, money-loving husband, had a secret passion for Peter. On the other hand, Peter, disgusted by the leftists' weekend orgies, secretly makes contact with the local African agitators, whose leader is the cook at the hotel. He falls in love with the cook's young wife, whom her politics-mad husband neglects. One day, Mrs. Boothby was shocked to witness the romantic relationship between Peter and the cook's wife. Raged, she informs the camp authorities, who promise to send Peter away from the Colony. Mrs. Boothby also shouts at her daughter, who had fallen sick after this incident, saying that Peter prefers a dirty black girl to her. On the last day of Peter's departure, he spends sometime in the cook's wife's arms, after which they never meet and have a different life.

The book was a best-seller, and only some tried to adapt it into a film or drama series, which Anna refused. She was overwhelmed by the passion for reading, saying, 'We read novels for information about areas of life we don't know. The novel has become a function of the fragmented society, the fragmented consciousness. Human beings are so divided and are becoming more and more divided and more subdivided in themselves (75). She continuously gets letters from film companies. Meanwhile, she is engaged with a Communist Party (C. P.) group where she gets introduced to Paul, Jimmy, and Ted. Willi Rode is another guy in the group who is more sensitive than others. However, Paul Blackenhurst was much more elegant, so Anna used his character in *'Frontiers of War'*. Anna described her relationship with all the group members. She says outside observers might have, and probably did, think the link-up was Willi and Maryrose, Paul and myself. They might have thought it was George, myself, Paul, and Maryrose at moments. Of course, the reason why these romantic,

adolescent relationships were possible was because of the relationship with Willi, which was, as I've said, almost asexual (139).

The British Communist Party (C. P.) was written across the page on 3 January 1950, as the narrator describes (150). Anna has described her political affairs in this notebook. She consistently discusses the political affairs of C.P. with Molly and rarely visits some senior members. Jack Briggs's being blamed as 'a capitalist spy' (154) depressed him, and Anna felt bad about it. Anna admits that she writes a few things in this notebook, and everything she writes is critical of the party, but still, she and Molly are in it. She felt sick about the news around the world. The Rosenbergs were executed, and Michael's three friends were hanged in Prague. He cried in sleep all night. Molly too cried in the evening. She remembers the conversation with John at dinner, 'The reason why we don't leave the party is that we can't bear to say good-bye to her ideals for a better world' (156).

She often had a bad impression of C.P. Once, she commented about wearing an expensive suit while visiting Berlin with Michael. Stalin's death (158) furthermore created a disintegration among the faces of her friends. However, they began hard talks to get votes in the election. Anna herself has described that she visited many houses asking to vote, upon which she found that no one rejected the idea but accepted that they have faith in other parties. She met many other people who had been hard workers but not political ones. She argues that 'the communist party is largely composed of people who aren't political but have a powerful sense of service. And then some are lonely, and the party is their family' (162).

Ella lived in Julia's house with her son Michael, 8. She has left her husband George with suffocation. She works for a women's magazine (163). The magazine had recently introduced a medical column written by Dr. West. Ella handled the

letters to the doctor and wrote half a dozen short stories. Julia persuaded Ella to go to the party at Dr. West's because she could only make contact with people outside, which Ella despised. Nevertheless, like many other occasions, Julia would look after Michael and Ella was set to go to the party.

Ella met Paul Tanner, a doctor, at the party. She began to like him. Soon, Paul invited Ella for a long drive, to which Ella agreed, and they had a physical relationship in a faraway place. Then after, Paul came to see Ella every night and went to work before the child woke. He spent numerous nights with Ella and went home before dawn 'for a clean shirt' (187). Their relationship continued for five years. Slowly, Ella became mostly jealous of Paul's wife, and Paul was ready to end the affair. He said, 'The real revolution is women against men' ((198). When he says that his wife depends on him for survival only, Ella argues that 'no woman in the world wants to live without love' (206). They had many disagreements. Meanwhile, Paul had to go to Nigeria for work, so he was separated from Ella. Later, once he returned to London for a few weeks, Ella wanted to see him, but she could not. She knew from Dr. West that Paul had returned to Nigeria and his wife hadn't gone with him.

In this way, the story ends, but Anna doesn't like the basic principle of this story. She argues that 'the trouble with this story is that it is written in terms of analysis of the laws of dissolution of the relationship between Paul and Ella' (210). Anna ends the notebook with a short film 'Ella slowly peeling orange, handing Paul yellow segments of the fruit, which he takes, one after another, thoughtfully, frowning: he is thinking of something else.

This part is filled with her daily entries. She had written about Tommy and his future. His father, Richard, is worried about his career, but he seems influenced by his

mother, Molly, and Anna herself. Her mental state is too much confound that she often dreams. She visited Mrs. Marks, whom they called Mother Sugar, and shared her dreams. In her conversation with Mrs. Marks, Anna refused to suffer from writer's block, and she didn't want to write another book because she no longer believed in art (214). She continuously shared her dreams with Mrs. Marks about hotel rooms in Africa, false art, caricature, illustration, and parody. She even said she was happy in Michale's arms and thanked Mrs. Marks for informing her of what she already knew. At this remark, Mrs. Marks stated that 'all self-knowledge is knowing, on deeper and deeper levels, what we knew before' (219).

She then stopped writing and continued in the form of newspaper cuttings. She pasted numerous news items dated from March 1950 to March 1954. Then, she followed up with entries describing her experience of visiting Mrs. Marks. She decides to make a last visit and describes her magical dream about her tears turning into diamonds when she sees her image as if she is looking at another person.

Molly called Anna and asked if Tommy was there. He wasn't there. He had been to Richards, and from there, he went to see Marion, who was drunk as usual, and the children acted unnoticed. Later, very soon, Tommy came to Anna's flat, and they had a profound conversation. Tommy saw Anna's notebook and asked why she had not kept a notebook and why four (240). She replied that it happened unintentionally and let him read her notebooks. They talked about phases of life, but Tommy disagreed with Anna. As he had been from Richards, Tommy is influenced by his lectures as he said, 'a hundred things to do, but only one thing to be' (244). They spent some of the time talking about writing as well. Tommy consistently asks why she writes absurd things, and Anna, on the other hand, needs to be more knowledgeable about her writing.

After Tommy left, Anna informed him about his arrival, and Molly and Marion entered her flat. As Molly was drunk, Anna wanted her to sleep upstairs with Janet, but she wanted to talk. Marion says that ‘men are stupid’ (252), and Anna is happy living alone with no man. In the middle of their conversation, Molly telephoned Anna and told her that Tommy had killed himself with a gunshot (253). When Anna reached the hospital, Tommy was not dead, but he was expected to die before morning. It started with Anna’s idea to leave the party. She had said this to Molly, and later Michael said it. She also had the opportunity to discuss this in the writer’s group meeting. There, they decided to experience communism by visiting the Soviet Union. While in the Soviet Union, they had an opportunity to visit Stalin, who had a habit of working late at night. On their visit, he asked for advice about European policies (274). On this occasion, Anna suggested that the traditions of the Soviet Union differed from those of Britain, and these differences had not been considered. They bid farewell with good feelings.

Significance of this Study

This study will analyze the relationship between colours and people in *The Golden Notebook*, which will be an additional finding in the field of research. It further explores using colours to criticize the ideologies mentioned in the text. Colours are pivotal in this text and have been studied in this research. Hues have been popular metaphors in literature since they are closely connected with her emotions and feelings. The writers, too, tend to use them for some particular reasons. This is explored in this study, and it can also be significant for literature review.

Chapter II. Review of Related Literature

The Golden Notebook has been read widely across different countries. At the same time, it has its own importance in English Literature. It is appreciated both in academic and non-academic fields. This chapter deals with the review of related literature. In other words, it discusses the opinions of various researchers and authors about *The Golden Notebook*. Lessing has included many aspects of human life in *The Golden Notebook*. Different colours of the notebook represent different aspects of life.

This is not just a life of Anna Wulf; it tells the story of most women in the twentieth century. As Carnie writes in her article, Lessing recalls an encounter with a Swedish actress in the sixties who declared, 'It's not her book, it's mine, I never read anything but the Blue Notebook, and never will till I die' (14). Lessing has written the stories of men and women through coloured notebooks. Gautam and Jadaun, in their article, write about Anna's alienation caused by social and political changes in post-war London. Lessing writes that the world's greatest empire is gradually collapsing, and nobody knows what is happening next. People have strange views about the downfall of the Soviet Union. The way she writes her diaries reflects the changes in contemporary society. Her dare to name a new experience is an essential step towards understanding it, and the need to find a new terminology for one's new social existence is an essential emphasis of the novel. Gautam and Jadaun writes:

This novel is about the kind of political rift they are seeing. It tracks Anna Wolf's inner and outer life as a novelist and member of the British Communist Party (C.P.) through the final years of Stalin, the condemnation of Krushchev, and the domination of Hungarians. (491)

Anna is a new type of existence and is the best example of the subtle transfer of Mrs. Lessing's allegiance to communism in the novel. Hence, Anna and most of the other

communists mentioned in the novel undergo a thoughtful disenchantment, bitterly commented by Anna: ‘Only a few months ago we believed that the world was going to change and everything was going to be beautiful and now we know it won’t’ (132).

In one of her dreams, Anna herself tells of a particularly apocalyptic vision in which she ends the communist system for herself. Thus, the communist characters depicted in *The Golden Notebook* are either disillusioned or hopeless, like Anna and Maryrose or Willi Rode, who became part of the post-war East German bureaucracy. Anna hates the deception of official party truths. As a C.P. member, one of her duties in the party office for John Butte, a communist publisher, is to decide whether to publish certain manuscripts, politically correct but artistically poor, as the committee is well aware. However, they consider it a healthy art. Thus, she realized the mode of such distortion. The publishing world joined the C.P., but soon, she learned that the truth in communist publishing is not a very expensive service. She is aware of her discrepancy in dismissing her imagination as unhealthy and rejecting what she sees as healthy art. She is unsatisfied with the party’s decision to publish such materials, which are artistically very poor and have less authentic value. She wants to give her clear decision to John as Anna replies to John Butte:

What you’ve said sums up everything that is wrong with the party. It’s a crystallization of the intellectual rottenness of the party that the cry of nineteenth-century humanism, the charge against odds, truth against lies, should be used now to defend the publication of a lousy lying book by a communist firm which will risk nothing at all by publishing it, not even a reputation for integrity. (310)

With this declaration to John Butte, Anna expresses her anger and dissatisfaction towards the C.P. and leaves the party. This process describes her fluctuating political

ideology. First, she joined the C.P., served in the party for about four years, and then made a mindset to leave the party and quit it later.

Freedom was one of the significant issues Anna was after. To be freer or, in other words, with the desire for freedom, Anna joined the political movement and C.P. with great ambitions of changing society. However, she was entangled within the C.P. and realized that she did not have much right to speak and that freedom was nothing but fantasy, as Qinghua quotes in the article (50). In the end, Anna leaves the party, ruining the pursuit of freedom. The section 'Free Women' was ironic as Lessing accepted the fact in her 1982 interview. Anna has revealed her sociopolitical experiences and ideologies. The red book is the second one. The narrative is a first-person account where Anna's disillusioning experiences with British CP, global violence, and especially the traceable Soviet-American war are clipped along. The red notebook ends with an account of her friend and fellow ex-Communist Harry Mathews, who settled into bourgeois marriage, paternity and school teaching. This also proves the changing political scenarios in London. Anna herself experienced people's belief in communism when she was on an election campaign run by the party. Her job was to visit houses and ask for votes in the upcoming elections. During her visit, she found many women were at home, and they depended on their husbands for the right to vote. Most of them gave positive remarks but were not sure about voting C.P.

As Joseph Hynes states in his article, 'When she has written out a few of these painful splits between the need to adhere to rigid doctrine, and the private acknowledgement by intelligent Communists that the doctrines are often ludicrous and destructive of their avowed ends, she has done all she need do to remind herself of the desperate hope that drove her into membership and the painful need to sever

connections with several good persons who remain somehow capable of seeing what she saw but also of staying with the cause' (108). He further critiques the construction of the novel that is connected with the political ideology of Anna:

As the red book ends, she still clings to the faith that her exertion 'matters,' but the sense that the lessons learned by herself and her mirror-friend Molly will likely be ignored by Molly's son, Tommy (and by Anna's daughter, Janet, Tommy's mirror), together with her detailed knowledge of international violence in 1956-57, forces her back to news clipping. (108)

In this historical context of the mid-century, *The Golden Notebook* questions the role in the mid-fifties' communist milieu. It celebrates the subjectivity against reductionist commitment by giving a powerful anti-Stalinist message (Baglama).

In the novel, as the Stalinist atrocities, Anna becomes disillusioned with the practices and questions the pressure on writers about the developments in Soviet Russia that have contributed to her writer's block: 'I am back inside a nightmare which it seems I've been locked in for years ... it cancels all creative emotion' (308). Anna's personal experiences in the party, reminding the readers of the fossilized hierarchical structure of the Stalin era, unfold as a strained and skewed interrelationship of political commitment, artistic integrity and a preoccupation with the revelation of truth. In an episode in the Blue Notebook, Anna meets Jack, a kind of administrator' (306), in the publishing house of the party, and John Butte, an elderly man who has been set over Jack by the party in order to report on two books. Although Anna knows that the final decisions about what will be published have already been made in the Party H.Q. and that the Daily Worker will praise it as 'an honest novel of the party life' (309), they discuss whether the book, named For Peace

and Happiness, written by a young worker, should be published at all by the party. Anna points out that the style of the book is terrible and ‘lifeless’ and that the book does not touch upon reality because it describes all the cities of Britain as if they are all locked in deep poverty, unemployment and brutality and gives the impression that all the workers of Britain are communist and recognize the C.P. as their leader. She observes how the content is a very accurate recreation of the self-deceptive myths of the C.P. (309). Feeling challenged by Anna, Comrade Butte remarks that the book is a good one – and will be published – by lifting his fist and suddenly crashing it on Jack’s desk: ‘Publish and be damned’ (310).

The incident after which Anna decides to leave the party symbolizes the crystallization of the intellectual rottenness of the communist bureaucracy, which defends the publication of ‘a lousy lying book by a communist firm’ (310) and explicates how the authoritarian tendencies within the party might either absorb fresh young revolutionaries or turn them into a group of hardened men with dead and dry thoughts (309). Bentley argues that ‘To fully understand Lessing’s engagement with the ideology of literary forms as explored in *The Golden Notebook*, it is necessary to discuss some of the debates circulating during the period it was produced. As is well known, Lessing was part of the New Left political-cultural habitus in Britain during most of the 1950s and early 1960s, which was heavily influenced by Marxist interpretations of literature (45). Among all notebooks, the red notebook comprises the political ideologies of Anna Wulf, and those ideas are the product of the contemporary sociopolitical context that Lessing herself experienced.

Politics, madness, and women’s roles are the common themes of *The Golden Notebook*. However, the structure of the book is new and different from others. Whittaker states in the book, ‘In *The Golden Notebook* that Mrs. Lessing reconsiders

the colonial material she used in her earlier novels, but this time, the focus has shifted because she examines the process of turning that material into fiction. She also looks at Marxism again through Anna's involvement with the British Communist Party. And through her characters, she discusses the role of women in the mid-century' (61). The characters in the book. *The Golden Notebook* tells the stories of women. It has become popular among both men and women. Margaret Moan Rowe states, 'Despite Lessing's statements, the most recent American paperback edition of *The Golden Notebook* underscores the novel's power over women readers when quoting Elizabeth Hardwick's review for The New York Times. Hardwick, '*The Golden Notebook* is Doris Lessing's most important work and has left its mark upon the ideas and feelings of a whole generation of women' (36). It is thus understood that *The Golden Notebook* describes the feelings, emotions, and ideologies in contemporary society.

Julie Cairnie's article advocates *The Golden Notebook* as a book about racial and gender issues. She concludes that 'Reviews and criticism of *The Golden Notebook* need to engage with its complex racial and gender politics in order to accent its relevance to readers, writers, and critics who continue to avoid it' (27). According to her, *The Golden Notebook* is a historical book that contains racial and social issues. *The Golden Notebook* is about dreams. Anna shares all her dreams with her psychiatrist, and there are a lot of hidden signs in her dreams. They represent the confused state of Anna and the torture that she had been born with. Cornelius Collins writes:

Geopolitics is one of the thematic areas in *The Golden Notebook*—
 apart from its exploration of psychic, emotional, or mystical states—
 where dreams emerge as meaningful visionary texts. For 'the dream' is
 a figure of the communist discourse with which Anna is imbued: cited

often in the novel, this dream vision is, I suggest, the inner core or ground note of her usually tortured attraction to communism. (59)

Anna's attraction to C.P. is called tortured because her opinion about it has fluctuated. Once, she thought of sticking with the party because of its principles and social issues; then, she was fed up with its consequences and decided to leave.

The British political context is significantly picturized in *The Golden Notebook*. Anna is one of the main characters who wants to be free, but she is not, and at the same time, she is traumatized by her relationship with the people around her. Anna revolves around her split personality in the context of her social and political relations. In this context, Sandra Singer states:

The Golden Notebook can be viewed as the creative production of Anna Wulf, depicting the postmodern self-committed to having a sociopolitical impact, including but not restricted to writing. A significant context for *The Golden Notebook's* totalizing emphasis that has not so far been adequately addressed in the criticism is the phenomenon of the British New Left—a historical upswell of politicized awareness that aimed to separate itself from the established fifties British Labour Party and the British Communist Party. The New Left is part of Lessing's experience and *The Golden Notebook's* story world. (74)

Anna Wulf is divided within herself in *The Golden Notebook*. She keeps four diaries, but she is not clear about their purpose. Sometimes, she keeps newspaper cuts, and sometimes, she writes imaginary diaries. *The Golden Notebook* is about experiencing communism and believing in political illusions; Anna Wulf incarnates Lessing's subjective/objective views about the communist phase she went through.

Lessing herself agrees that *The Golden Notebook* is rather a historical and political than a work of literature. In 2007, Lessing wrote about the production of *The Golden Notebook*; ‘I knew this was an extraordinary time; I was watching extraordinary events. I wanted to record them... I like hearing that *The Golden Notebook* is on reading lists for political and history classes. The reason for its continued vitality is, I feel, not literary’ (17). Lessing’s assertion that the text’s value is more political and historical than literary reveals how much she must have been inculcated into the genre norms of the mid-century, even while she broke them. Interestingly, as mentioned by Rowena Kennedy-Epstein, ‘... she echoes many of the first reviews, as documented by Gayle Green, that asserted that the novel’s merits were not artistic but sociological, confining the text to particularly masculinist new critical orthodoxies that often devalued women writers’ desire to communicate both political, historical and aesthetic aims (Green, 93–7). Of course, all forms carry political meaning, and it is usually those that insist they have no design towards that end which have proved to be the most insidious. *The Golden Notebook* is exemplary for showing the importance of how literary form and historical and political thought are structured and dependent upon each other (59).

Paul Schlueter argues that *The Golden Notebook* is a copy of Lessing’s political life. It is in Anna Wulf that Mrs. Lessing’s subtle shifting of loyalty to communism is best illustrated, not only because of the later date of composition of *The Golden Notebook* but also because of the complete character portrayal we have of Anna than of earlier characters. He further states that since *The Golden Notebook* is concerned most directly with the later stages in the political metamorphosis of Anna Wulf, we are given far more to support a person’s leaving the party than his joining it (37-8). Anna once reflects that intelligent communists believe the party ‘has been

saddled with a group of dead bureaucrats who run it, and that real work gets done despite the centre' (137).

Louise Yelin argues that *The Golden Notebook* represents the existence of the British Empire in the post-colonial period. At the same time, it is a book about communism in Britain. She further writes:

The representation of Anna's life in the Communist Party exemplifies rupture, division, and doubleness. Like Anna, each member of the Mashopi group experiences an ambivalence that undermines her or his politics. The internal disintegration of the group members and the external pressures that fracture the group prefigure the psychic breakdowns of particular Communists and the fragmentation of the Communist Left in London in 1950s. (79)

In Shadia S. Fahim's words, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* operates on two principal modes: the outer and inner action. Towards the end of *The Golden Notebook* section, that 'false' dichotomy is resolved as Anna participates in practical life by negotiating with an inner voice (84). The novel consequently requires both linear and non-linear reading. The reader must use his or her analytic faculties to compare and elucidate different parts. The reader should also suspend the rational mode to perceive the underlying balance with the emerging mystical dimension, which does not pertain to the laws of time and space.

Anna has compiled her writings and everyday stuff in those four notebooks; the final one is Golden Notebook, which is the book's title. *The Golden Notebook*, on the other hand, reverberates the utmost confusion of Anna's life and her intimate relationship with other men. She is desperate to end this confusion and wants to clear off her head. This part of the book is almost the concluding point of her life.

However, her agonies about society and politics remain the same. The study has emphasized the differences between Anna's expectations and her realities. When she was young and educated, she had a huge expectation of a positive society through political campaigns. She even took part in them. She and Molly had expected the utopian society pledged by the political agendas. However, as time flies, she realizes that politics cannot be the foundation to survive; rather, people become slaves to time, and as time moves on, they come across multiple realities.

Critical Perspectives

In order to interpret the text, I applied new historicism, mostly taking references from Michel Foucault and Stephen Greenblatt. New historicism is a literary theory and critical approach that emerged in the 1980s as a response to the formalist and structuralist methodologies that dominated literary studies in the mid-twentieth century. Lois Tyson writes,

From a new historical perspective, no discourse can adequately explain the complex cultural dynamics of social power. No monolithic, single or unified universal spirit of an age exists, and no adequate totalizing explanation of history. There is, instead, a dynamic, unstable interplay among discourses. They are always. In a state of flux, overlapping and competing with one another. In any number of ways at any given point in time. (285)

Unlike these earlier approaches, which often treated literary texts as self-contained artefacts, new historicism seeks to understand literature within its historical and cultural contexts. It emphasizes the relationship between literature and history, arguing that texts are influenced by the historical context in which they are produced and that the interpretation of a text should consider not only its literary elements but

also the broader cultural, political, and historical circumstances surrounding its creation.

Similarly, this approach is deeply interdisciplinary, drawing on history, anthropology, sociology, and political science to explore the complex interplay between texts and the societies that produce them. Anna's life, too, is full of interdisciplinary circumstances. She is a mother, a divorced wife, a lover, and a friend. She has struggled hard to surpass those emotions in all situations she has encountered in human life. Several intellectual traditions, including Marxism, post-structuralism, and cultural anthropology, influenced new historicism. From Marxism, it inherits a concern with power dynamics and the ways literature reflects and reinforces social hierarchies. Postmodernism contributes the idea that meaning is not fixed but instead constructed through language and discourse, particularly the work of Clifford Geertz, which provides new historicism with its emphasis on 'thick description,' a method of interpreting cultural phenomena by situating them within their broader social and historical contexts.

One of the key theoretical premises of new historicism is that literature is not a mere reflection of history but is a form of historical discourse. In other words, literary texts are not passive mirrors of their times but active participants in producing cultural meaning. This perspective challenges the traditional distinction between literature and history, suggesting that both are forms of narrative that shape her understanding of the past. For most traditional historians, history is a series of events with a linear, causal relationship: one event caused another, another event caused further another, and so on. Furthermore, they believe we are competent, through objective analysis, in uncovering the facts about historical events, and those facts can sometimes reveal the

spirit of the age, that is, the worldview held by the culture to which those facts refer.

About this concept of new historicism, Gallagher and Greenblatt write,

The notion of authenticity seemed and continues to seem misplaced, for new historicism is not a coherent, closeknit school in which one might be enrolled or from which one might be expelled. The term has been applied to an extraordinary assortment of critical practices, many of which bear little resemblance to our own. (2)

Indeed, some of the most popular traditional historical accounts offer a key concept that explains the worldview of a given historical population. Traditional historians generally believe that history is progressive and that the human species is improving and advancing in moral, cultural, and technological accomplishments.

On the other hand, new historicists do not believe we have clear access to any but the most basic facts of history. Furthermore, they believe there is no such thing as presenting facts; there is only interpretation. They argue that reliable interpretations are challenging to produce for several reasons. The first and most important reason for this difficulty is the impossibility of objective analysis. Like all human beings, Tyson writes, historians live in a particular time and place, and their views of current and past events are influenced in innumerable conscious and unconscious ways by their own experiences within their culture (283). Historians may believe they are objective, but their views of right and wrong, civilized and uncivilized, what is important and unimportant, and the like will strongly influence how they interpret events.

Another reason for the difficulty in producing reliable interpretations of history is its complexity. For new historicists, history cannot be understood simply as a linear progression of events. At any given point in history, any given culture may progress in some areas and regress in others. And any two historians may disagree

about what constitutes progress and what doesn't, for these terms are a matter of definition. History is not an orderly parade into a continually improving future, as many traditional historians have believed. It's more like an improvised dance consisting of an infinitive variety of steps, following any new route at any given moment and having no particular goal or destination. Individuals and groups may have goals, but human history does not. Jameson argues, in this context,

New historicism seems to offer something of a paradigm for some future method of symbolic analysis, by their extraordinary variety of objects of study, which include witchcraft, mystical discourse, early travel narratives, psychoanalysis, contemporary daily and urban life, and historiography. (349)

New historicism's claim that historical analysis is unavoidably subjective is not an attempt to legitimize a self-indulgent attitude toward the writing of history. Rather, the inevitability of personal bias makes it imperative that new historicists be as aware of and as forthright as possible about their own psychological and ideological positions relative to the material they analyze so that their readers can have some idea of the human lens through which they are viewing the historical issues at hand. Tyson writes, 'This practice is called self-positioning' (289).

From a new historical perspective, no discourse can adequately explain social power's complex cultural dynamics. Society and culture have grown so complicated that it is almost impossible to remain unbiased while interpreting history. A central concern of new historicism is the role of power and ideology in shaping literature and history. It draws on Michel Foucault's theories to analyze how power operates through discourse and how literary texts participate in the circulation of power. As Foucault writes, 'For a long time ordinary individuality – the everyday individuality

of everybody – remained below the threshold of description. To be looked at, observed, described in detail, followed from day to day by an uninterrupted writing was a privilege' (191). Literature is part of a broader ideological discourse supporting or challenging dominant power structures. For new historical literary critics, the text interprets history by representing human experience at a given time and place. As such, the literary text maps the discourses circulating when it was written and is itself one of those discourses. The literary text shaped and was shaped by the discourses circulating in the culture in which it was produced. Likewise, her interpretations of literature are shaped by the culture in which we live.

Overall, new historicism is a tool for interpreting literary and historical texts. Stephen Greenblatt and Michel Foucault's ideology of new historicism is applied here to interpret *The Golden Notebook*. The text is history because it describes the various aspects of Anna's life compared to four colours. These colours represent the aspects of life and feelings we get in different life situations. By examining literary works about their cultural, political, and social contexts, new historicism opens up new ways of understanding the texts and the societies that produced them. However, it also raises important questions about the nature of historical knowledge, the role of ideology in interpretation, and the place of literature within broader cultural studies. Emphasizing the interconnectedness of texts and their historical contexts has provided a richer, more nuanced understanding of the cultural and political forces that shape literary production.

Chapter III. Symbiosis of Colour and People

The Golden Notebook by Doris Lessing is a rich and complex novel that delves into themes such as identity, fragmentation, and the interplay of the personal and political. Lessing employs colour throughout the novel to represent emotional states, societal structures, and the multiplicity of experiences. The title, *The Golden Notebook*, highlights the key aspect of this symbiosis. The various notebooks in this story serve as metaphors for different facets of the protagonist, Anna Wulf's life. Each colour embodies a distinct sphere of her identity and experiences.

The black notebook represents her experiences as a writer, capturing the intersection between creativity and the commercial aspects of her work. The red notebook focused on politics and her association with the Communist Party. It also symbolizes her ideological struggles and the fervour of political commitment. The yellow notebook portrays her emotional and psychological vulnerabilities, with the yellow suggesting both caution and intensity. The blue notebook functions as a diary, a raw and introspective exploration of Anna's personal emotions and quest for self-understanding.

The golden notebook, which unites the fragmented narratives of these individual notebooks, symbolizes wholeness and reconciliation. It becomes a metaphor for synthesizing the fragmented self, illustrating the human struggle for coherence in a chaotic world.

Colours also permeate the personal relationships in the novel, serving as an extension of characters, emotions and interactions. For instance, Lessing uses visual and sensory descriptions to evoke Anna's vibrant yet fraught connections with others, including her lovers and friends. The interplay between colour and people underscores the

tension between individuality and the larger social and political frameworks they navigate.

The symbiosis between color and people in *The Golden Notebook* ultimately reflects lessons about how human experiences are simultaneously fragmented and interconnected. Colours operate as symbolic language imbibed in the narrative, with layers of meaning that resonate with the novel's broader themes of unity and disunity.

In Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, colour is profoundly symbolic and intricately tied to the themes of fragmentation, identity, and the interconnectedness of human experiences. The novel's structure, divided into sections marked by different-coloured notebooks, reflects the protagonist, Anna Wulf's attempt to compartmentalize her life. These colours also symbolize how people, ideas, and experiences are interconnected, even when they appear separate. The four notebooks, black, red, yellow, and blue, represent Anna's attempt to organize her life into distinct categories: her past in Africa, her political life, her creative work, and her diary. Each colour symbolizes a different aspect of her identity and experience, reflecting her sense of fragmentation and her struggle to reconcile these separate parts of life.

Black Notebook

Black notebook deals with Anna's experiences in southern Africa, symbolizing her colonial past and awareness of racial and social injustices. It reflects her connection to the people she met in Africa and the moral dilemmas she faced there. She has described her experiences of writing her first novel, *Frontiers of War*, and talked much about it. As it is written,

Nothing is more powerful than this nihilism, an angry readiness to throw everything overboard, a willingness, a longing to become part of the solution. This notion is one of the strongest reasons why wars

continue. The people who read *Frontiers of War* will have fed this emotion, even though they were unaware of it. That is why I am ashamed and why I feel continually as if I had committed a crime. (78)

Black notebook mainly explores Anna's writing life. As she wrote the novel, she talked about its background and reception. Nevertheless, it demonstrates Anna's shattered feelings about life. She doesn't feel emotionally balanced while writing the black notebook.

This notebook delves into Anna's identity as a writer and her relationship with her readers and the literary world. It reflects how her creative process is influenced by societal expectations and her complex relationships with publishers and critics.

The notebook captures Anna's relationship with her past as a successful writer, and it connects her to her interactions with her editors and publishers. After making many visits to the critics and publishers, Anna feels even more dissatisfied. She writes,

As for me, I go home thinking that despite everything, the moment when I broke the comfortable surface of our acquaintances was the only honest moment in the evening. Yet I think ashamed and dissatisfied and depressed, just as I did after the night talking to the Russian. (268)

She develops relations with various people involved in literature work. These relationships are often transactional and highlight the tension between artistic integrity and commercial demands. The people in her literary circle contribute to her struggle with the commodification of art, which is a key theme in this notebook.

Red Notebook

Red notebook focuses on her political life and symbolizes her commitment to Communism and her disillusionment with its failures. It reflects her relationships with fellow activists and her critique of ideological dogmatism. She has also written about the critique of Stalin,

Like a real communist leader, he is prepared to take advice from even rank-and-file party caterers like myself. 'I'd be grateful, comrade, if you would outline for me what a policy ought to be in Great Britain. I realize that your traditions are very different from ours, and our policy has not considered these traditions.' Now, I felt at ease to begin. I told him. I often feel that there were many errors and mistakes in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's policy as it affected Great Britain. I felt this was due to the isolation imposed on the Soviet Union due to the hatred of the capitalist powers for the budding communist country. (275)

Anna has described Stalin's choice to respect the difference. However, she experienced a gulf between the theories and practice of Communism, and thus, she reached a stage of disillusionment, which detached her from active involvement in politics.

The red notebook explores Anna's political connections primarily through her involvement with the Communist Party. Her comrades and political associates, such as her lover Michael, play significant roles in shaping her ideological identity. However, the red notebook also illustrates her disillusionment and alienation as political loyalties, Waver, and personal betrayals undermine her idealistic beliefs. The

red colour, symbolizing passion and intensity, underscores the volatile nature of these relationships.

Red notebook examines her political affiliations, especially her involvement with the Communist Party. It reveals Anna's ideological ties with people who share her beliefs and the conflicts and disillusionments that arise from political betrayals and shifting alliances.

Yellow Notebook

The yellow notebook, dedicated to her creative work, symbolizes her struggles as a writer and her exploration of fictional narratives. It reflects her interactions with other artists and her attempts to make sense of her experiences through storytelling. She has revealed her unhappy experiences towards people and relationships. She seems truly dissatisfied with her current state of affairs, as she writes,

I am unhappy because I have lost some kind of independence, some freedom, but my being 'free' has nothing to do with writing a novel. It has to do with my attitude towards a man, and that has been proved dishonest because I am in pieces. The truth is that my happiness with Paul was more important to me than anything and where has that landed me? Alone, frightened to be alone, without resources, running from an exciting city because I haven't the moral energy to ring up anyone of a dozen people who'd be pleased if I did, or at least might turn out to be pleased. (283)

Anna is depressed with what she has been undergoing, and she feels much more fragmented and departed. That is why her yellow notebook possesses a detachment from reality.

Yellow notebook fictionalizes her personal life, especially her relationships with her lovers. Yellow captures the intensity of passion, jealousy, and emotional pain that characterize her romantic entanglements.

The notebook fictionalizes aspects of Anna's personal life, particularly her romantic relationships. Through this fictionalized lens, Anna examines her emotional vulnerabilities and dynamics with lovers like Max and Soul. These men represent different facets of her emotional world, and the yellow colour captures these entanglements' caution, fragility, and brightness. Relationships in this notebook are tinged with both hope and disillusionment, mirroring the emotional turmoil she experiences. Decoding her feelings, Anna says, 'I can't understand how anyone can see what's happening to this country and not hate it. On the surface, everything is fine, quiet, tame, and suburban. But underneath it's poisonous. It's full of hatred and envy and lonely people' (178).

Blue Notebook

Blue notebook, her diary, symbolizes her inner life and emotional struggles. It reflects her relationships with friends, lovers and family and her search for personal meaning. It is, moreover, a daily diary where she talks about her traumatic experiences to her psychologist. As she writes on this day,

January 31st, 1950. I took dozens of dreams to Mrs. Marks today. All dreamed over the last three days. They all had the same quality: false art, caricature, illustration, parody. All the dreams were in a marvellous, fresh, vivid colour that greatly pleased me. (216)

She has talked a lot about her dreams, symbolizing her emotional state. Because of her dreams, she feels happy and sad and excited and anxious. She shares her dreams

with Mrs. Marks and expects some interpretations. Besides this, Anna has written about some of the remarkable events during her time,

July 13th, 50. There were tears in Congress today when Mr. Lloyd Benson, democrat. Urged that President Truman should tell the North Koreans to withdraw within a week or their towns would be atom bombed. *Express*.

July 29th, 50. Britain's decision to spend £100 million more on Defence means, as Mr. Attlee has made clear, that hoped-for improvements in living standards and social services must be postponed. *New Statesman*. (219-20)

Such events are recorded in blue notebook for a few more pages onwards. These events are newspaper cuts bearing the main news of the time. According to new historicism, this, too, is simply not a record of the events but also demonstrates how they shaped contemporary society.

The blue notebook is a diary focusing on Anna's self-reflection and internal dialogue. It reveals her most intimate thoughts and her attempts to make sense of her interactions with those closest to her, including her daughter and friends.

Similarly, this notebook is Anna's most private space, and the people who appear here, such as her daughter Janet and her close friend Molly, are those with whom she shares her deepest, most authentic connections. Anna feels loneliness, as she writes,

And as I think this, that there is no right, no wrong, simply a process or will turning, I become frightened because everything in me cries out against such a view of life and I'm back inside a nightmare which it seems I have been locked in four years, whenever I'm off guard. (308)

The blue colour evokes a sense of introspection and emotion, reflecting Anna's attempts to make sense of her relationships and find meaning amid the chaos of her life.

Golden Notebook

The golden notebook, which emerges at the novel's end, symbolizes the integration of these fragmented parts of Anna's life. It represents her attempt to synthesize her experiences and to find a sense of wholeness and coherence. Furthermore, it is about happiness and cooperation. In this notebook, Anna attempts to take her feelings to the positive side as she writes, 'it seems to me that the warm strength of my body's happiness was enough to drive away all the fear in the world' (531). The golden notebook is not tied to a single colour or theme. Instead, it transcends these divisions, reflecting the interconnectedness of her identity. *The Golden Notebook* embodies the symbiosis of colours and the people they represent. It reflects Anna's recognition of her experiences in Africa. Her political activism, creative work and relationships are interconnected and interdependent.

Similarly, this notebook symbolizes an attempt to unify the fragmented aspects of Anna's life. It represents the potentiality of genuine connection both within herself and with others. It suggests that despite the chaos and fragmentation of modern life, there is hope for meaningful relationships.

The Golden Notebook also reflects Anna's integration of the people in her life. It captures her understanding that her relationships with others, whether in Africa, the Communist Party, the literary world, or her personal life, are all part of a larger interconnected whole. The *Golden Notebook's* use of colour reflects the complexity and multiplicity of human experience. Just as colours blend and overlap, so do the experiences and identities of the people in Anna's life. The novel challenges the idea

that people or experiences can be neatly categorized and separated, emphasizing instead their interconnectedness and fluidity. The colours in the novel blur the boundaries between different aspects of Anna's life, reflecting how her experiences and relationships overlap and influence one another. For example, her political activism in red notebook is deeply intertwined with her personal relationships in blue notebook and her creative work in yellow notebook.

This notebook unites all these fragmented experiences and represents Anna's efforts to reconcile the conflicting aspects of her identity. The people who inhabit this notebook are seen as part of the larger tapestry of her life, contributing to her search for coherence and unity. Saul, in particular, plays a pivotal role here, as his influence helps Anna confront her fragmented self and move toward a sense of wholeness.

The notebook, which gives Doris Lessing's novel its title, is the final and most significant section of *The Golden Notebook*. It represents the culmination of Anna Wulf's journey toward integration and self-understanding and the novel's broader exploration of fragmentation, creativity, and identity. It is where Anna attempts to synthesize the disparate parts of her life, which she had previously compartmentalized into four coloured notebooks: black, red, yellow and blue. As the last chapter and titular notebook in Doris Lessing's novel, it symbolizes the culmination of Anna Wulf's journey of self-discovery, fragmentation, and ultimate integration. Lessing writes,

She saw herself, Anna, seated on the music stool, writing, making an entry in one book, then ruling it off or crossing it out; she saw the pages patterned with different kinds of writing: divided, bracketed, broken. - She felt swaying nausea; then she saw Tommy, not herself,

standing with his lips pursed in concentration, turning the pages of her orderly notebooks. (344)

Because of her fragmented attitude, Anna was suffering from trauma. In this chapter, Anna attempts to combine the various fragmented aspects of her itinerary, recorded in the black, red, yellow, and blue notebooks, coherently. This final chapter has profound thematic, structural, and psychological significance.

This notebook serves as a metaphor for wholeness and unity. Throughout the novel, Anna compartmentalizes her life into different notebooks, each reflecting distinct aspects of her psyche: politics - red; personal relationships - blue; creativity - yellow; and her past - black. This fragmentation reflects a struggle with identity and her sense of disconnection from the world. In this notebook, Anna attempts to confront this fragmentation and reconcile the disparate elements of her life. It is a space where she seeks to integrate her experiences into a single cohesive narrative, symbolizing her desire for psychological and emotional wholeness. It symbolizes wholeness and integration in Anna's personal life and the novel's structure.

Throughout the book, Anna has divided her experiences into separate notebooks, each representing a different aspect of her identity. The black notebook is for her post in Africa, the red notebook is for her political life, the yellow notebook is for her creative work, and the blue notebook is for her diary. This compartmentalization reflects her sense of fragmentation and her struggle to reconcile the different parts of herself.

It represents Anna's attempt to break down the barriers between these different aspects of her life. She also tries to understand the people as a whole. She writes,

Paul Tanner and Ella, Michael and Anna, Julia and Ella, Molly and Anna, Mother Sugar, Tommy, Richard, Dr. West - these people appeared briefly, distorted with speed, and vanished again. Then the film broke off, or instead ran down, with a jarring dislocation. (537)

By integrating the experiences into a single narrative, she seeks to achieve a sense of coherence and unity. Similarly, the golden notebook rejects the fragmentation that has characterized Anna's life up to this point. It reflects her desire to move beyond the limitations of compartmentalization and embrace the complexity and interconnectedness of her experiences.

The notebook was written during Anna's crisis. She has risked a breaking point, grappling with her disillusionment with politics, creative struggles, and emotional turmoil. This breakdown is necessary for her eventual renewal and reintegration. Lessing uses it to explore the idea that breakdowns can lead to breakthroughs. By confronting her pain and confusion, Anna moves toward a deeper understanding of herself and her place in the world.

This particular notebook has also a meta-literary quality as it reflects on the act of writing itself. Anna's attempts to write in this notebook mirror Lessing's writing process. The chapter blurs the line between fiction and reality, emphasizing the interplay between life and art. This meta-literary aspect reinforces one of the novel's central questions. How can writers convey the truth of human experience? The golden notebook becomes a space for Anna to grapple with this question as she searches for an authentic way to express her fragmented reality. It is also a space for creative experimentation and artistic freedom. Anna and Saul write the golden notebook in order to bring harmony. They also suggest the first line of their novel to

each other. Anna writes the one with the same line, and so does Saul. Here, Anna writes,

Saul says, ... There are a few of us around in this world, we rely on each other, even though we don't know each other's names. But we rely on each other all the time. We are a team, we are the ones who haven't given in, who will go on fighting. I tell you, Anna, sometimes I pick up a book and I say: Well, so you have written it first, have you? Good for you. OK, then I won't have to write it. (556)

Unlike other notebooks, which are constrained by their specific teams and purposes, the golden notebook allows Anna to explore new forms of expression and the boundaries of traditional narrative. It contains meta-fictional elements blurring the lines between fiction and reality. Anna uses it to write about her writing process, creating a self-referential narrative that challenges conventional notions of authorship and storytelling. It reflects Anna's experimentation with different literary forms, including stream of consciousness, fragmented narratives, and multiple perspectives. This experimentation mirrors the novel's broader exploration of the relationship between form and content.

The notebook marks the beginning of Anna's psychological healing. By integrating the fragmented parts of her life, she confronts her fears, insecurities, and unresolved emotions. This process is deeply cathartic and symbolizes her journey toward self-acceptance and empowerment. It emerges in response to a personal and existential crisis in Anna's life. By the time she begins writing the notebook, she has raised a point of profound disillusionment with her political beliefs, her creative work and her relationships. Anna writes, 'That was about courage, but not the sort of courage I have ever understood. It's a small, painful sort of courage which is at the

root of every life because injustice and cruelty are at the root of life' (551). The notebook represents her attempt to make sense of this crisis and to find a way forward. Writing in the golden notebook is a catharsis for Anna, allowing her to process her emotions and experiences. It becomes a space for healing and self-discovery as she confronts the contradictions and complexities of her life. It also represents Anna's reclaiming of agency and autonomy. By taking control of her narrative and integrating the different parts of her life, she asserts her ability to shape her identity and destiny.

The colours also reflect Anna's and the people in her life's fluid identity. As colours can change and blend, so too can people's identities and relationships evolve. The colours in *The Golden Notebook* are not just symbolic of Anna's experiences, they also reflect her relationships with others. Each colour represents a different network of relationships, and the interplay between the colours reflects the interconnectedness of these relationships. The black and red notebooks, which deal with Anna's experiences in Africa and her political activism, reflect her relationships with people who share her commitment to social justice. These relationships are marked not only by a sense of solidarity and shared purpose but also by tension and disillusionment. The yellow and blue notebooks, which focus on Anna's creative work and personal life, reflect her relationships with artists, writers, lovers, and friends. These relationships are more intimate and personal, but the broader social and political context also shapes them.

This notebook reflects the integration of these relationships, capturing Anna's understanding that her connections with others are all part of a larger, interconnected whole. Ultimately, the golden notebook's symbiosis of colour and people serves as a metaphor for wholeness and integration. The novel suggests that proper understanding

and self-awareness come from recognizing the interconnectedness of all aspects of life rather than trying to compartmentalize or separate them. The golden notebook represents Anna's rejection of fragmentation and her embrace of a more holistic understanding of herself and the world. It reflects her recognition that the colours and the people they represent are all part of a larger interconnectedness. It celebrates the complexity and richness of human experience, emphasizing how people and experience are interconnected and interdependent. The colours, while distinct, are not isolated. They blend and overlap, reflecting the interconnectedness of all aspects of life.

In *The Golden Notebook*, the symbiosis of colour and people reflects the interconnectedness of human experiences and the complexity of identity. The coloured notebooks symbolize the different aspects of Anna's life. However, they also reflect that these aspects are interconnected and interdependent. This notebook, which integrates all four colours, represents an edge journey toward wholeness and self-understanding and the novel's broader exploration of fragmentation and integration of colour. This notebook challenges readers to think critically about how we categorize and compartmentalize our experiences and impress the complexity and interconnectedness of human life. The novel is a powerful reminder that proper understanding comes from recognizing the symbiosis of all aspects of life and embracing the human experience's richness and complexity.

In *The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing uses colours to bridge the protagonist, Anna Wulf's inner life and relationships with others. The colours are deeply interconnected with people and their interactions. Each notebook's colour represents a specific aspect of Anna's experiences, reflecting her connections with those around her.

The colours extend beyond Anna to reflect the broader social, emotional, and political dynamics of the people she interacts with. They symbolize the different roles people play in her life and their diverse influences on her psyche. Colours, with specific aspects of Anna's life lesson, illustrate how people are multidimensional, shaped by a mosaic of personal, political, and emotional experiences. It is a vivid reminder that relationships, like colours, are complex, nuanced, and capable of profound meaning. The colours in *The Golden Notebook* resonate with Anna Wulf and the people in her life. They reflect their roles in her journey and how they influence the fragmented aspects of her identity.

In her notebooks, Anna examines and critiques various belief systems, including communism, gender roles, and creative structures. By the time she reaches the talden notebook, she has rejected the confines of these ideologies. The notebook represents her attempt to transcend these systems and find a more authentic, individualized understanding of herself and the world. It reflects Anna's critique of ideological absolutism and her rejection of rigid political and social frameworks. Throughout the novel, Anna struggles with the limitations of communism, feminism, and other ideologies and fails to account for the complexity of human experience. It represents Anna's move beyond ideology, and she seeks to embrace a more nuanced and holistic understanding of the world. It reflects her rejection of dogmatism and commitment to questioning and challenging established norms. It captures Anna's recognition of the complexity and contradictions of life. It reflects her willingness to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty rather than seeking easy answers or definitive solutions.

The notebook explores the relationship between art and reality and how fiction can eliminate and transform lived experience. Anna uses the notebook to reflect on

her creative process and to explore the boundaries between fiction and reality. The notebook reflects Anna's belief in the transformative power of art. Through her writing, she seeks to make sense of her experiences and to create meaning out of chaos. It blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality, challenging readers to question their assumptions about narrative and representation. It reflects the novel's broader engagement with meta-fiction and postmodern literacy techniques. While the notebook represents integration and healing, it does not provide a definitive resolution. Lessing leaves room for ambiguity, reflecting the complexities of human experience. The open-ended nature of the chapter invites readers to interpret Anna's journey in their way.

From a structural perspective, the golden notebook ties the novel together. It serves as both a literal and a metaphorical centre, combining the themes and narratives explored in the previous chapters. The novel's fragmented structure reflects Anna's fragmented identity, and it provides a resolution by offering a space for integration.

The colour gold is often associated with purity, enlightenment, and transformation. The golden notebook symbolizes Anna's quest for clarity and her desire to distil the chaos of her life into something meaningful. It represents her journey toward a higher understanding of herself and her world.

The notebook is not just a reflection of Anna's journey, it is a reflection of Doris Lessing's vision as a writer and thinker. Lessing uses it to explore her concerns about fragmentation, creativity, and identity and challenge conventional notions of narrative and representation. It reflects Lessing's intent to create a novel that is as complex and multifaceted as the experiences it seeks to portray. It captures her commitment to pushing the boundaries of literary form and exploring new ways of

telling stories. It is a testament to the enduring relevance of *The Golden Notebook* as a work of literature. It reflects the novel's ability to capture human experiences' complexities and challenge waiters to think critically about the world around them.

Furthermore, the golden notebook is a call to action, urging readers to engage with the world more thoughtfully and critically through a new journey. Lessing challenges readers to question their assumptions, embrace complexity, and seek new ways to understand and engage with the world. It reflects the power of writing as a tool for empowerment and self-discovery. It encourages readers to use writing to explore their own experiences and create meaning in their lives. It also reflects a commitment to social and political change. It captures Anna's belief in challenging injustice and working toward a more equitable and inclusive world.

This notebook is the heart of *The Golden Notebook*, both structurally and thematically. It represents Anna Wulf's journey toward integration and self-understanding and the novel's broader exploration of fragmentation, creativity and identity. Through the notebook, Doris Lessing offers a powerful meditation on the complexities of human experience and the challenges of navigating a fragmented world. Ultimately, the golden notebook is a testament to the enduring power of literature to eliminate and transform her understanding of ourselves and the world around us. It is a reminder of the importance of embracing complexity, challenging assumptions, and seeking out new ways of seeing and being in the world.

The final chapter of *The Golden Notebook* is a powerful and multifaceted exploration of identity fragmentation and the search for wholeness. It symbolizes Anna's attempt to reconcile the disparate elements of her life, offering us space for integration, healing, and self-discovery. Through this chapter, Lessing challenges

readers to reflect on their own struggles with fragmentation and the complexities of human conditions.

Chapter IV: Critique of Ideology in *The Golden Notebook*

The Golden Notebook is a compilation of Anna's experience under four coloured notebooks. New historicism emphasizes the interplay between literature and history, focusing on how texts reflect and shape their time's power structures, ideologies, and social conditions. The text is a rich text that lends itself to such analysis, as it explores themes of personal identity, political upheaval, and gender. It consists of several issues. Among them is the time of the Cold War. The ideological conflict between capitalism and Communism shaped global politics during the mid-twentieth century. Lessing, a former communist, explores the disillusionment with leftist politics through the character of Anna Wulf, who grapples with the failures of Communism and the oppressive nature of Stalinism. This book further reflects the fragmentation of ideological and political beliefs of the time. Anna Wulf, the protagonist, struggles with her own fractured sense of self, which mirrors the fragmentation in society during the post-war period. The novel critiques the political ideologies of the time, particularly Communism and socialism, as Anna grapples with her disillusionment with these movements. Her experience with leftist politics in the 1940s and 1950s, particularly her relationships with fellow intellectuals and activists, shows the disillusionment of many intellectuals with the Communist Party's ideals and the failure of these movements to bring about genuine change in people and society.

The historical context of the novel—particularly post-war period, decline of imperialism, and rise of feminist movements—critiques limitations of political ideologies in achieving personal liberation or societal transformation. The political disillusionment reflected in Anna's life also represents a broader shift in Western intellectual circles away from the optimism of pre-war leftist thought. The 1950s and

1960s were a time of shifting gender roles as women began challenging traditional domesticity and subservience expectations. *The Golden Notebook* is often regarded as a feminist text, as it delves into issues of female autonomy, sexuality and struggles of women in a patriarchal society. The novel critiques the patriarchal structures that limit women's autonomy. Anna's relationships with men, her struggle as a single mother, and exploration of her sexuality reveal how power operates in personal and social spheres.

One of the *Golden Notebook*'s most significant aspects is its exploration of gender roles, sexual politics, and feminist themes. New historicism asks us to examine how literature engages with social and cultural issues of its time, including gender and power dynamics. In this case, the 1960s were a crucial moment for the feminist movement, which sought to challenge traditional gender roles, expand women's rights, and question the patriarchal structures that govern society. Anna's struggle to reconcile her identity as a woman with the roles she is expected to play in society (lover, mother, political participant, writer) reflects the feminist concerns of the time. New historicism would encourage an analysis of how *The Golden Notebook* speaks to the historical and cultural conditions that shape gendered experience. For instance, the novel's portrayal of female sexuality, especially Anna's complex relationships with men, challenges traditional gender roles and critiques the double standards imposed on women.

Moreover, Anna's decision to write in multiple notebooks – each representing a different aspect of her life – can be seen as an attempt to break free from the constraints of traditional identity. From a new historicist perspective, the form and structure of the novel itself could be read as a reflection of the changing roles of women in society during the mid-twentieth century, when women were increasingly

rejecting traditional roles and exploring multiple facets of their identity. New historicism rejects the idea of a single, authoritative historical narrative, emphasizing on the contingency and multiplicity of historical events. *The Golden Notebook* embodies this principle through its fragmented structure and its exploration of conflicting perspectives. Anna's identity is not fixed but is shaped by her roles as a writer, mother, lover, and political activist. The novel suggests that identity is contingent on historical and social circumstances. Similarly, the novel presents a range of ideological perspectives, from Communism to feminism to psychoanalysis, without privileging any single viewpoint. This reflects the complexity and contradictions of historical moments.

In addition to political and gender contexts, *The Golden Notebook* also explores Anna's personal history, which is deeply shaped by her experiences with trauma, emotional distress, and psychological breakdown. New historicism often encourages readers to see literature as a product of personal and collective histories, where the author's experiences and the broader historical forces at play are inextricably linked. For Anna, her psychological fragmentation is not only a personal struggle but also a reflection of the more significant social fragmentation of her time. The novel delves into the internal chaos of an individual who has lived through a turbulent era – World War II, the rise and fall of political ideologies, the pressures of gender expectations, and the challenges of self-identity. Her psychological disintegration and the format of the divided notebooks symbolize how historical and personal traumas intersect and complicate the individual's sense of self.

New historicism would argue that Anna's struggle is not merely personal but reflective of a broader historical crisis in which people, particularly women, struggled to make sense of their place in a rapidly changing world. The internal battles she faces

mirror the external ones in the socio-political sphere. This duality suggests that the personal breakdown in the novel is not just psychological but also a product of the historical moment. New historicism also concerns how power and ideology shape history and literature. In *The Golden Notebook*, ideology significantly shapes the characters' lives, particularly Anna. Anna's relationship with various men, as well as her involvement in socialist and communist politics, are deeply influenced by the ideologies of the time. However, her experience shows the limits of these ideologies – especially as she becomes disillusioned with the political movements she once supported.

The novel also critiques the ideological power structures shaping personal and political life. The social expectations placed on Anna, as a woman and a writer, are tied to the dominant ideologies of the time that shape the roles women were allowed to inhabit. As a new historicist reading might suggest, Lessing's exploration of Anna's disillusionment with political and social ideologies reveals how these forces are not merely abstract concepts but tangible, lived experiences that shape and limit individuals. Lessing writes,

It is only two years since President Truman gave the word 'Go' on the H-bomb programme. Forthwith a billion dollar-dollar plant was put under construction at Savannah River, South Carolina, to produce tritium (triple-atom-hydrogen); by the end of 1951, the H-bomb industry had become an industrial undertaking comparable only with US Steel and General Motors. (225)

In a new historical reading, *The Golden Notebook* itself can be considered a cultural artefact of the 1960s, reflecting the concerns, contradictions, and tensions of that time. The novel's structure, themes, and characters are embedded within the cultural and

historical context of post-war Western intellectualism, political radicalism, and the emerging feminist movement. Examining the text in relation to these larger cultural movements, a new historicist approach uncovers how literature reflects and participates in creating historical knowledge.

The novel also interrogates the role of the writer within society. Anna's identity as a writer is shaped by the political and cultural contexts in which she writes, and her struggle to maintain artistic integrity while engaging with political and personal ideologies reflects the struggles of many authors in the mid-twentieth century. This tension between personal and political, subjective and objective, is key to understanding the novel's critique of historical and cultural forces. Applying new historicism to *The Golden Notebook* reveals the novel's deep engagement with its time's historical, cultural, and political forces. Anna's trauma fills her body and she writes,

The tears we shed in our sleep are the only genuine tears we shed in our lives. The waking tears are self-pity. (219)

This utterly proves how Anna has been feeling about the personal and political matters around her. Lessing's exploration of themes such as Communism, feminism, colonization, and mental health reflects the complexities and contradictions of the mid-twentieth century. By situating the novel within its historical context, new historicism allows us to appreciate how *The Golden Notebook* reflects and shapes the cultural discourses of its era.

Through its fragmented structure, intertextuality, and focus on power and ideology, *The Golden Notebook* exemplifies the principles of new historicism, offering a rich and nuanced portrayal of the interplay between literature and history. Similarly, this novel explores how historical ideologies, particularly socialism and

feminism, shape individual lives, particularly for women. Lessing writes all the matters connected to women,

As I push the stained sheet into the linen-basket I notice a stain of blood. But surely it's not time yet for my period? I hastily check dates, and realize yes, it's today. Suddenly I feel tired and irritable, because these feelings accompany my periods. (I wondered if it would be better not to choose today to write down everything I felt; then decided to go ahead. It was not planned; I had forgotten about the period. I decided that the instinctive feeling of shame and modesty was dishonest: no emotion for a writer.) I stuff my vagina with the tampon of cotton wool, and am already on my way downstairs, when I remember I've forgotten to take a supply of tampons with me. (303)

From this explanation we can understand the feelings of any woman in a deeper level. By analyzing the historical, cultural, and political forces that influence Anna's identity and experiences, we understand the novel as both a personal story and a reflection of broader historical struggles. Through the lens of new historicism, *The Golden Book* critiques the limitations of political ideologies, gender expectations, and personal fragmentation in a rapidly changing world.

In Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, the different coloured notebooks – black, red, yellow, and blue – represent distinct aspects of the protagonist Anna Wulf's life and consciousness. Each notebook serves as a fragmented record of her experiences, thoughts, and struggles, reflecting the novel's exploration of identity, ideology, and the complexity of human experience. While the red notebook explicitly deals with politics and ideology, the black, blue, and yellow notebooks also carry ideological undertones, though they focus on different dimensions of Anna's life.

Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* is a groundbreaking novel that experiments with form and structure to reflect the fragmented nature of human consciousness and the complexity of lived experiences. The different coloured notebooks symbolize the various facets of Anna Wulf's life, each representing a distinct but interconnected aspect of her identity. At the same time, the use of different colours in Notebook plays a central role in both narrative structure and thematic exploration of the novel. The fragmented structure of the notebooks mirrors Anna's fragmented identity and her attempts to reconcile with disparate parts of herself.

One of the most significant reasons why Lessing uses different coloured notebooks is to symbolize the distinct yet interconnected aspects of Anna's life. Each notebook represents a different domain of her existence – political, emotional, psychological and social. This method allows Lessing to illustrate the complexity of Anna's character and the difficulty of integrating these different aspects into a cohesive whole. Using coloured notebooks allows Lessing to compartmentalize Anna's experiences, showing how different aspects of her identity are often in conflict or tension. 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' (55). The notebooks represent the fractured nature of Anna's selfhood in a world that demands individuals to conform to various, often contradictory, ideologies and social roles. Another central theme of *The Golden Notebook* is the fragmentation of identity, and the coloured notebooks are a narrative technique that illustrates this fragmentation. As Anna's life is divided into different domains: personal, political, sexual, and creative, and these domains often conflict with one another. By compartmentalizing her life into separate notebooks,

Anna attempts to make sense of her experiences and reconcile the contradictions within herself. When talking about her experiences in Africa, she writes,

A group of farm labourers were passing on the track a few hundred yards off. We watched them in silence. They had been talking and laughing until they saw us, but now they, too, were silent and went past with averted faces as if, in this way, they might avert any possible evil that might come from us, the white people. (378)

In the novel, Anna's fragmented sense of self mirrors the fragmentation of the world around her. The post-war era was marked by political upheaval, social change, and ideological crises. For many intellectuals and artists, the era was characterized by disillusionment, confusion, and a rejection of previously held beliefs. Anna's notebooks embody this sense of fragmentation, each reflecting a different piece of her fractured identity.

Through these notebooks, Lessing illustrates the fragmentation of Anna's identity and the broader fragmentation of the social and political world. Anna's attempts to compartmentalize her life reflect her struggles to make sense of the contradictions within herself and the world around her. The coloured notebooks are a visual and narrative representation of this struggle. The 1960s was a time of immense political and social change, and the coloured notebooks in *The Golden Notebook* also reflect the cultural climate of the time. The rise of feminist movements, this counterculture, and growing disillusionment with traditional political ideologies marked the era. Lessing's use of coloured notebooks reflects the complexity of the intellectual and political landscape of the time, where individuals were wrestling with competing ideologies and searching for personal meaning in a rapidly changing world.

While the coloured notebooks serve as a separate space for Anna Wulf's different experiences, they also represent her ongoing struggle to integrate these different aspects of her identity into a cohesive whole. Anna's attempt to bring together the fragmented pieces of her life into a single golden notebook reflects her desire for self-coherence and personal integration. *The Golden Notebook* becomes a symbol of Anna's search for unity in a fragmented world. Throughout the novel, Anna's struggle to merge the separate notebooks into one is a metaphor for the difficulty of integrating political, emotional, and social identities. Writing in multiple notebooks becomes a means of compartmentalizing the chaos of her life, but it also reflects the difficulty of living in a world that is itself fragmented and contradictory.

The golden notebook, introduced at the end of the novel, represents Anna's ultimate attempt to reconcile the various aspects of her identity. However, it is not a simple solution to the fragmentation; rather, it acknowledges the complexity and ambiguity of identity in a world marked by ideological conflict, personal disillusionment, and social change.

The use of different coloured notebooks in *The Golden Notebook* serves as a powerful narrative technique that allows Lessing to explore the complex, multifaceted nature of Anna's identity. The colours symbolize different aspects of Anna's life—political, emotional, personal, and gendered – and reflect the fragmented nature of her selfhood and the world around her. By compartmentalizing Anna's experiences into different notebooks, Lessing shows how the intersecting forces of history and personal experience shape identity. The notebooks also reflect the broader social and political climate of the 1960s, a time of political disillusionment, feminist awakening, and cultural change. Through the coloured notebooks, Lessing illustrates the difficulty of integrating these diverse influences into a coherent sense of self. Ultimately, *The*

Golden Notebook mediates the complexity of identity, the challenges of ideological commitment, and the search for personal coherence in a fragmented and contradictory world.

According to the story, Anna remembers her time in the Mashopi Hotel in Africa, where she and a gang of white friends went to the jungle for pigeon hunting. They, on the way, came across some black men who looked at them with shyness on their faces because they thought they were inferior. This notebook further explores the themes of power, race, and the moral ambiguities of political activism. It also highlights the tension between idealism and reality as Anna grapples with the contradictions of her position as a white settler in a colonial society. The black notebook also serves as a commentary on political disillusionment. Anna's time in Africa is marked by her involvement with a group of communists, and the black notebook records her growing disillusionment with the political ideologies she once believed in. The colour black symbolizes the darkness of political failure and the collapse of utopian ideals. Lessing uses black to evoke the oppressive and destructive nature of political systems, particularly colonialism and Communism, which Anna observes firsthand in Africa.

Anna's psychological struggles are another key aspect of the novel, and the colour black is often associated with her mental breakdown. As Anna grapples with writer's block, failed relationships, and the pressure of being a single mother, she descends into a state of existential despair. The black notebook becomes a metaphor for the darkness within her mind, where her fears, anxieties, and unresolved emotions reside. The colour black is also linked to Anna's experience of depression and alienation. Her sense of isolation is heightened by her inability to reconcile the different aspects of her life, and the black notebook serves as a visual representation

of this inner turmoil. In this sense, black symbolizes the void or the abyss that Anna fears falling into, as well as the struggle to find meaning and coherence in her life. The black notebook is a place for Anna's personal emotional turmoil and where personal and political realities intersect. Anna's relationships with men, primarily her affair with Michael, are portrayed as deeply troubled and are coloured by the larger social and political context. The frustrations of these personal relationships are intertwined with Anna's disillusionment with society. In this context, black represents the moral and existential struggles that arise when individuals attempt to reconcile personal desires with broader societal and political expectations. The colour symbolizes the darkness in relationships where love and conflict blur together in a way that is difficult to untangle.

The colour black is also associated with femininity and the oppression of women in *The Golden Notebook*. Anna's experiences as a woman in a patriarchal society are a central theme of the novel, and the colour black is often used to represent the constraints and limitations placed on women. For example, Anna's relationships with men are often marked by power imbalances and emotional violence, and the colour black is used to evoke the darkness of these experiences. The black notebook becomes a space where Anna records her frustrations with the societal expectations placed on a woman and her own struggles to assert her independence and autonomy. In this context, black symbolizes the weight of societal oppression and the struggle for self-definition. It represents the darkness of a world that denies women their full humanity and the difficulty of navigating that world as a woman.

As Anna moves through her emotional and psychological breakdown, the black Notebook becomes a place for her to chart the path of her internal struggles. The colour black in the Notebook suggests an immersion in darkness, both

emotionally and cognitively. Her feelings of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty are tied to the colour black, which also gets a sense of entrapment. Anna's descent into her darkest thoughts is echoed in her physical surroundings. She is unable to escape the oppressive weight of her memories and anxieties, and this leads her into a spiral of self-doubt. Black here is used not only to indicate the psychological and emotional darkness Anna feels but also the societal and cultural forces that contribute to her breakdown. Black can thus be understood as a visual and symbolic representation of the struggle between an individual's internal chaos and the external chaos of the world.

The red notebook represents Anna Wulf's engagement with politics, specifically her experiences and eventual disillusionment with Communism and the broader leftist ideology. It is a journal of her reflections on her political identity, the shifting political landscape, and the moral complexities she observes within her circle. The red notebook captures the initial commitment to Communism as a vision for a just and egalitarian society. It details her involvement with the Communist Party (CP) and the broader leftist movement, shedding light on her ideological passion. She writes that we do not leave the party because we can't bear to say goodbye to our ideals for a better world (156). However, through her experiences, she begins to see a dissonance between the movement's lofty ideals and its practical implementation, especially when faced with corruption, hypocrisy, and inflexible doctrines within the CP.

Anna's journey in this notebook mirrors the broader disillusionment experienced by many intellectuals and activists of the time. She struggles with the weight of ideological betrayal as she confronts the moral compromises and human weaknesses within her political comrades. This disillusionment is a central theme,

reflecting the post-World War II anxieties and the ideological polarization of the Cold War era. It arises not just from political failures but also from moral and personal discontent with the movement and its adherents.

Anna initially embraced Communism as a vision of equality, justice, and a better future for humanity. However, she confronts the stark differences between these ideals and their practical implementation over time. About this, she says, 'People are reeling off from the CP in dozens, brokenhearted. The irony is that they are brokenhearted and cynical to the degree that they were loyal and innocent before' (395). She observes corruption, hypocrisy, and rigid bureaucracy within the CP, which erodes her faith in the movement. The CP's inability to live up to its moral aspirations becomes a major source of frustration.

Anna struggles with the tension between the collective identity demanded by CP and her own individuality. The communist ideology often requires the suppression of personal beliefs and emotions to align with the collective goals. Anna finds this oppressive and feels increasingly alienated as she realizes that her autonomy and authenticity are being undermined. Like many intellectuals in the communist movement, Anna grapples with the disconnect between the party's leadership and the working-class people it claims to represent. She becomes disillusioned with the lack of genuine engagement with ordinary people's struggles and the elitism she perceives among party members. In her eyes, this disconnect undermines the party's credibility.

Anna's experience with Communism contributes to the novel's broader theme of fragmentation. As her political beliefs crumble, so does her sense of identity and purpose. She is too pessimistic about English women who are turning mad; as she writes, this country is full of women going mad all by themselves (161). The red notebook, where she records her political thoughts, becomes a space for grappling

with the loss of faith, mirroring her psychological and ideological breakdown. In essence, Anna's disillusionment with Communism critiques the ideology itself and explores the broader human tendency to corrupt and distort noble ideals. Lessing uses Anna's journey to examine the complexities of political engagement, the struggle for authenticity, and the inherent challenges of balancing personal integrity with collective action.

The red notebook also explores the tension between Anna's identity and her collective political identity. It raises critical questions about the role of personal conscience in the face of collective action. Anna grapples with her role within the CP, questioning whether the suppression of individual thought is justified in service of a broader cause. While the red notebook is primarily political, Anna's reflections are like feminist undertones. She critiques the male-dominated power structures within her political circles and examines the intersection of gender and ideology, adding an additional layer of complexity to her political and personal struggles.

The red notebook is deeply rooted in the historical and cultural context of the mid-twentieth century. It reflects the ideological conflicts of the time, including the clash between capitalism and socialism, the tensions of the Cold War and the shifting dynamics of global society. Lessing uses Anna's journey to comment on these broader historical forces. In summary, the red notebook symbolizes Anna Wulf's political ideology, her passionate engagement with subsequent disillusionment in Communism, and her critique of her time's societal and ideological structures. It is an essential component of *The Golden Notebook's* exploration of fragmentation, as it shows how Anna's political beliefs are both a source of inspiration and a cause of profound internal conflict.

Anna's idealism is reflective of the broader historical context of the 1930s and 1940s, when Communism attracted many intellectuals who were disillusioned with capitalism, and the first section of the red notebook serves as a testament to the hope and optimism that characterized the spirit at last the belief in the collective action to transform society. However, the change in beliefs starts, as seen in one of the comrades. About him, she writes,

Harry Matthews, a teacher, dropped job to fight himself in Spain. He was wounded, ten months in hospital, with a fractured leg. During this time, thought over Spain - communist dirty work, etc., read a lot and became suspicious of Stalin. Usual infight – CP, then expulsion, joined the Trotskyists. Quarrelled with them, left them. Unable to fight in the war because of the crippled leg, he trained to teach backward children.

(462)

As the red notebook progresses, Anna's faith in Communism begins to waver. She becomes increasingly critical of the Communist Party's internal dynamics, including its dogmatism, bureaucracy and authoritarian tendencies. The notebook documents her growing awareness of the gap between the parties and the ideals and practices and her frustration with its inability to address the complexities of real-world politics.

One of the key moments in the red notebook is Anna's realization that the party's rhetoric often masks a lack of genuine engagement with the issues it claims to address. This disillusionment is compounded by her awareness of the party's complexity in suppressing dissent and failing to live up to its principles. Through Anna's experiences, lesson critics, the limitations of ideological purity and the danger of hundreds of sacrificing individual autonomy for collective goals. It also highlights the tension between Anna's political commitments and her personal life. Her

involvement with the Communist Party often conflicts with relationships, her creative work, and her sense of self. The notebook reveals the emotional toll of her political activism, at least the difficulty of reconciling her deals with the realities of her everyday life.

The strain is symbolic of the broader theme of fragmentation in *The Golden Notebook*. That is why Anna's life is divided into separate notebooks. Her identity is fractured by the competing demands of politics, creativity, and personal relationships. The red notebook, with its focus on her personal life, becomes a space where she grapples with these contradictions and struggles to find a sense of coherence. It is deeply rooted in the historical context of the mid-20th century, a period marked by the rise and fall of communist regimes and the ideological battles of the Cold War. Lessing, a member of the Communist Party in her youth, draws on her own experiences to create a nuanced portrayal of the political climate of the time.

The red notebook also raises important questions about the role of the intellectual in society. Anna's involvement with the Communist Party reflects her desire to use her intellect and creativity to affect social chains. However, it is disillusioned with the party leaders there to question the efficacy of such efforts. The notebook captures her struggle to find a meaningful way to engage with the world and her frustration with the limitations of political activism. Through Anna's experiences, Lessing explores the challenges intellectuals face in navigating the tension between theory and practice and the difficulty of maintaining a sense of purpose in the face of political and social upheaval. It serves as a meditation on the responsibilities and limitations of intellectual engagement. The notebook, like the other coloured notebooks, is ultimately insufficient on its own. While it provides a valuable record of Anna's political life, it cannot capture the full complexity of her experiences. The

golden notebook, which represents Anna's attempt to integrate the disparate parts of her identity, emerges as a response to the limitations of the coloured notebooks.

The lesson of the red notebook suggests that no single ideology or perspective can fully account for the richness and complexity of human experience. The golden notebook, with its emphasis on synthesis and integration, offers a more holistic vision of realization and understanding. Therefore, the red notebook is a crucial stepping stone in Anna's journey towards wholeness. It also highlights the intersection of gender and politics in Anna's life as a woman in a male-dominated political movement; Anna faces unique challenges and contradictions. Her experiences with the Communist Party are shaped by her gender and less by her broader struggles with identity and autonomy. The notebook lessens critics' concerns about how women's voices and experiences are often marginalized within political movements and the difficulty of reconciling feminist ideals with the demands of political activism. This theme is central to the novel's broader exploration of gender and power and its critique of patriarchal structures.

The red notebook in *The Golden Notebook* is a rich and white-faced symbol that reflects Anna Wulf's engagement with Communism and her broader political struggles. It serves as a space for her to explore her idealism, disillusionment, and critique of ideological dogmatism while also highlighting the tension between the personal and the political. Through the red notebook, Doris Lessing offers a nuanced portrayal of the mid-twentieth century's ideological battles and a meditation on the challenges of intellectual and political engagement. Ultimately, the red notebook is crucial to another journey toward self-understanding and integration. It represents both the possibilities and limitations of political ideology and serves as a reminder of the importance of remaining open to complexity and contradiction. In the context of

The Golden Notebook, the red notebook is not just a record of Anna's political life but a testament to the enduring relevance of the questions about ideology, identity, and the search for meaning in a fragmented world.

Throughout the novel, Anna was once an enthusiastic supporter of socialist causes and becomes increasingly disillusioned by the failure of the communist project, particularly the brutal repression in the Soviet Union under Stalin. The novel reflects the broader betrayal that many leftist intellectuals and activists felt after the purges, the suppression of dissent, and the rise of a bureaucratic elegance of social states. The red colour, in this sense, symbolizes the revolutionary hopes that were ultimately dashed by the failures of the system. The notebook endorses lessons in *The Golden Notebook* that critically explore political ideologies, particularly Communism and its interplay with personal identity, moral compromise, and societal structures.

The red notebook begins as a testament to Anna Wulf's commitment to communist ideals. She is tempted by the ideology's promises of equality, justice, and a better world. However, her experiences reveal the fundamental tensions between these aspirations and their implementation. Lessing criticises the seductive nature of ideologies like Communism, which initially offer clarity and a purpose but often lead to disillusionment when faced with real-world complexities and flaws within the system. Anna's political engagement exposes her to how rigid ideological structures can dehumanize individuals. The Communist Party's emphasis on the collective often suppresses personal freedoms, emotions, and individuality. Anna struggles with realizing that the party's dogmas prioritize conformity and loyalty over authentic human relationships and personal conscience.

A recurring theme in the red notebook is the gap between Communism's utopian ideals and its flawed execution. Anna's observations of corruption, hypocrisy,

and authoritarianism within the party highlight the failure of ideological systems to achieve their professed goals. Lessing uses Anna's disillusionment to critique the inherent contradictions and compromises that undermine even the most well-intentioned political movements.

Anna's journey in the red notebook also explores the moral compromises required by adherence to an ideology. She grapples with questions of loyalty, trust, and ethical responsibility for Anna. The Communist Party's willingness to manipulate facts and press descent poses a significant ethical dilemma. This struggle underscores the tension between personal integrity and collective loyalty in political activism.

Lessing weaves a subtle critique of gender dynamics into the red notebook. She reflects on the male-dominated leadership of the Community Party and how women's voices and experiences are often sidelined. This greed adds depth to the novel's exploration of ideology, highlighting the intersection of politics and gender inequality. As a writer and intellectual, Anna embodies the contradictions of ideological engagement, the red notebook critiques, the intellectual elites, and detachment from the working-class people. They claim to represent Anna's disconnection from the realities of ordinary people and expose the limitations of ideological movements led by intellectuals who lack a genuine understanding of the struggles they aim to address.

The red notebook is integral to the novel's broader theme of fragmentation. Anna's political disillusionment mirrors her psychological and emotional fragmentation, reflecting the challenges of maintaining a coherent identity in the face of ideological collapse. The notebook becomes a space for Anna to process her disillusionment and attempt to reconcile her fractured beliefs and experiences. Anna Wulf's struggle with moral integrity in *The Golden Notebook* is one of the novel's

most poignant explorations of human frailty and ideological conflict. Her journey reflects the tension between adhering to her essays and conforming to the demands of a wizard political movement and the broader complexity of staying true to one's beliefs in an imperfect world.

Anna is deeply committed to the communist ideals of equality, justice and collective well-being. However, her experiences within the party reveal instances of hypocrisy, dishonesty and betrayal. For example, she witnesses leaders sacrificing moral principles for their strategic games, engaging in deceitful practices to maintain power, or silencing dissent in the name of unity. With Anna's innate sense of honesty and fairness, she questions whether the ends justify the means. Such conflict forces Anna to grapple with her complexity, whether staying silent about these flaws is a betrayal of her ethics. The Communist Party, like many political organizations, demands loyalty and conformity from its members. Anna often feels pressured to suppress her doubts and criticisms for the sake of the greater good, and this is a great internal conflict as she struggles to reconcile her commitment to the moment with her discomfort about its practices. Her moral integrity is tested as she balances her desire to remain part of the collective effort and whether it is needed to remain faithful to her conscience. This tension mirrors a broader hidden struggle account- conflict between belonging to a group and maintaining individuality.

Moral integrity is rooted in her commitment to trust as a political activist and writer. However, the Communist Party often manipulates truth for political purposes. Lessing brings this misunderstanding at the fore as Anna writes,

We met as socialists, with full trust. The discussions have slowly developed and there is now a sort of vague plan – to remove the 'dead bureaucracy' at the centre of the Party, so that the CP should be

completely changed, a genuinely British Party, without the deadly loyalty to Moscow and the obligation to tell lies, etc., a genuinely democratic Party. (394)

Whether by revising historical narratives, spreading propaganda or silencing inconvenient voices, Anna finds this profoundly troubling as it conflicts with her belief in honesty as a foundation for justice. She is caught in a moral dilemma. Should she speak out against these distortions, risking isolation and ostracism, or should she stay silent, hoping to effect change from within? This struggle reflects the broader challenge of maintaining integrity in a world that often rewards compliance over truth-telling.

Anna's moral struggles are further complicated by the interplay between her political beliefs and personal relationships. She witnesses betrayal, manipulation, and exploitation not only on a political level but also within her interpersonal relationships. For instance, she observes colleagues compromising their principles for personal gain or using ideology to justify unethical behaviour. This blurs the line between the personal and the political, making it even harder for Anna to navigate her ethical dilemmas. Her disillusionment with the party becomes intertwined with her disillusionment with human nature itself. Anna's greatest moral struggle is dealing with the weight of disillusionment. As her faith in the party erodes, she is left questioning the ideology she once believed in and her judgment and integrity. She feels betrayed by a moment she once held sacred. But she also grapples with guilt, wondering whether her idealism blinded her to the flaws she now sees. This burden of disillusionment is a central theme in *The Golden Notebook*, reflecting the emotional toll of recognizing the imperfections in one's beliefs and mentors or comrades.

The yellow notebook further explores the themes of female autonomy, creativity, and the tension between personal fulfilment and societal constraints. It also raises questions about the nature of fiction and the relationship between art and life. It primarily contains Anna Wulf's drafts and reflections on her novel 'Frontiers of War', which is set in colonial Africa. This notebook is a meta-narrative, blurring the lines between fiction and reality. Through the yellow notebook, Lessing explores the writing process and the challenges of translating personal and political experiences into art. It delves into the themes of colonialism and betrayal, central to 'Frontiers of War'. It is a novel within a novel that examines the moral ambiguities and ethical compromises in Africa. The yellow colour symbolizes Africa's harsh, sunlit landscapes and the moral decay associated with colonial exploitation. Furthermore, it reflects Anna's engagement with political ideologies, particularly her involvement with the communist party and her critique of its failures and contradictions. This novel's second section highlights the tension between personal ideals and political realities.

The yellow notebook is a space where Anna records her struggles with mental instability and psychological breakdown. The yellow colour symbolizes fragility and illness, reflecting Anna's deteriorating mental state. This notebook becomes a testament to her inner turmoil and the challenges of maintaining sanity in a fragmented world. It also represents one aspect of Anna's fragmented identity, focusing on her experiences as a writer and her struggles with mental illness. The notebook underscores the difficulty of maintaining a coherent sense of self in a complex and often contradictory world. The yellow colour symbolizes the division and disintegration of Anna's identity. It provides insight into Anna's creative process and writing challenges. It contains drafts, revisions, and reflections of 'Frontiers of

War', highlighting the difficulties of translating complex ideas into coherent narratives. Yellow symbolizes the tension between artistic inspiration and the frustrations of the creative process. In the same way, it also documents Anna's relationships and the emotional turmoil they entail. She has undergone the most challenging block, as she says,

Now, looking for the outlines of a story and finding, again and again, nothing but patterns of defeat, death, and irony, she [Ella] deliberately refuses them. She tries to force patterns of happiness or a simple life. But she fails. (411)

This notebook reflects her struggle with jealousy, betrayal, and unfulfilled desires. The yellow colour symbolizes the corrosive effects of these emotions on the human psyche and the challenges of maintaining intimate connections. The yellow notebook is a space where Anna seeks truth and authenticity in her writing and personal life. The notebook reflects her efforts to confront difficult truths about herself and the world around her. Yellow symbolizes the challenges of facing these truths and the courage required to do so. The yellow notebook blurs the lines between fiction and reality, as Anna's novel 'Frontiers of War' mirrors her experiences and observations. This meta-narrative technique allows Lessing to explore the relationship between art and life and how personal and political experiences shape creative expression.

The yellow notebook is also significant for exploring Anna's romantic and emotional struggles. Through her fiction, Anna navigates her relationships with men and the pain of love and betrayal. Writing becomes a way to articulate feelings she cannot express otherwise. At the same time, her stories reflect her fear of vulnerability and her attempt to shield herself from the emotional weight of reality. Interestingly, Lessing's use of multiple notebooks, each representing a distinct aspect of Anna's

life, reflects the novel's broader theme of fragmentation. Its position within this framework is particularly intriguing because it is both a refuge and a mirror. It reflects Anna's inner turmoil while offering her a means to escape and reinterpret it. This structural choice underscores Lessing's exploration of the fractured modern self.

In conclusion, the yellow notebook in *The Golden Notebook* is a multi-layered symbol of creativity, emotional struggle, and the blurred boundaries between life and art. It is a space where Anna both confronts and escapes her reality, offering profound insights into the nature of identity, storytelling, and psychological resilience.

The colour blue is also associated with femininity and maternal love in *The Golden Notebook*. Anna's role as a mother is an important aspect of her identity, and the blue notebook contains reflections on her relationship with her daughter, Janet. Blue, often considered a feminine colour, symbolizes Anna's character's nurturing and protective aspects. It represents the love and care she feels for her daughter, as well as the challenges and responsibilities of motherhood. In this sense, the colour blue reminds us of the complexities of Anna's identity as a woman and a mother and how these roles shape her emotional life.

The blue notebook represents Anna's search for meaning and coherence in her emotional life. Contradictions and frustration mark this search, as Anna feels torn between her desires for love, connection, and independence and the roles that others expect her to fulfil. It represents a more private, interior aspect of Anna's life – her emotional struggles, her search for self-understanding and the complexities of her relationships with others. Furthermore, it explores the themes of identity, gender roles, and the impact of societal expectations on women. It also reflects the growing awareness of mental health issues during the post-war period, as well as the influence of psychoanalysis on literature and culture.

Blue is also linked to creativity and imagination in *The Golden Notebook*. Anna is a writer, and the blue notebook is a space where she explores her creative process and the challenges of artistic expression. Blue, with its association with the sky and the sea, symbolizes the boundless possibilities of the imagination. It represents the creative energy that drives Anna's writing and the struggles she faces in trying to capture her experiences in words. The colour blue, therefore, is a reminder of the power and potential of art and the difficulties of translating lived experiences into narrative.

In contrast to the chaos and fragmentation represented by other notebooks, the blue notebook is a space of relative stability and order. Here, Anna attempts to make sense of her experiences and create a coherent narrative of her life. Blue, associated with calmness and tranquillity, symbolizes the desire for stability and order amid chaos. It represents Anna's attempt to find meaning and coherence in her life, even as she grapples with the complexities and contradictions of her experiences. In this sense, blue symbolizes hope and resilience, a reminder that even amid turmoil, there is the possibility of finding peace and understanding.

The colour blue gains additional meaning when contrasted with the other notebooks in the novel. Each notebook represents a different aspect of Anna's life, as the blue one is about her personal life. The blue notebook is a space for personal reflection and emotional exploration. It is a reminder of the importance of the inner world in understanding the self and how personal experiences shape her perceptions and actions. The colour blue, therefore, serves as a counterpoint to the other notebooks, highlighting the complexity and multidimensionality of Anna's identity.

The titular golden notebook, which appears at the novel's end, represents a synthesis of the different aspects of Anna's life. However, the colour blue is still

present in the final notebook, suggesting that the personal and emotional dimensions of Anna's experiences cannot be fully separated from the other aspects of her life. The golden notebook attempts to create a unified narrative, but the presence of blue within it underscores the importance of personal reflection and emotional understanding in achieving this synthesis. In this context, symbolizing the colour blue is the enduring significance of the inner world in shaping her experiences and identities.

In *The Golden Notebook*, the colour blue is a rich and multifaceted symbol that represents personal reflection, emotional turmoil, femininity, creativity, stability, and the inner world of the self. It is a colour that evokes the depth and complexity of Anna Wulf's emotional life and the challenges and possibilities of self-understanding and artistic expression. Through the blue notebook, Lessing explores the intimate and personal dimensions of Anna's experiences, highlighting how these experiences shape her identity and understanding of the world. The colour blue, therefore, is not just a visual motif but a central element of the novel's thematic structure. It serves as a reminder of the importance of the inner world in navigating the complexities of life and the enduring power of personal reflection and emotional understanding.

Regarding ideology, the blue notebook reflects personal and existential ideologies related to the self, gender roles, and intimacy. For this, she writes, 'I woke a person whom the experience of being other people had changed. I did not care about Anna, I did not like being her. It was with a weary sense of duty I became Anna, like putting on a soiled dress' (524). Anna grapples with societal expectations of women and the limitations placed on her as a woman, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s. It also highlights the intersection of personal identity and broader cultural norms, especially as Anna tries to balance her sense of self with the ideologies of her political and social roles. The blue colour represents Anna's fragmented self, emotional

distance, love and relationships, stagnation, quest for wholeness, escape into the external world, emotional and intellectual isolation, emotional paralysis, possibility of transcendence, emotional turmoil, representation of creativity, search of authenticity, symbol of connection and disconnection, and fragmentation of identity.

Chapter V: Ideology and its Implication of Red Notebook

Anna's moral struggles are a central threat to *The Golden Notebook*, which offers profound insights into the challenges of living authentically in a world that often demands compromise. Her journey is deeply relatable as it speaks to the universal struggle of staying in oneself in the face of external pressures and internal doubts. Anna Wulf's experiences as a member of the British Communist Party and *The Golden Notebook* reveal a stark contrast between communism's ideals and the realities she encounters. This dissonance is present in the novel. Anna is initially drawn to communism for its vision of equality, justice, and solidarity. The ideology promises a world free from exploitation, where collective action can create a fearful and harmonious society for Anna. These ideals represent hope and pompousness, offering a framework to address the social and economic injustices she absorbs. However, Anna's experiences within the British Communist Party expose her to the flaws and contradictions of the movement she observes in fighting, power struggles, and a lack of genuine commitment to the principles of the party claims to uphold the wizard bureaucracy and authoritarian tendencies within the party's stifle open dialogue and critical thinking undermining the very ideals of equality and freedom.

Anna becomes increasingly aware of the moral compromises made by party members in the name of political strategy. She witnesses dishonesty, manipulation and a willingness to sacrifice ethical principles for perceived gainers. This hypocrisy deeply troubles Anna as it conflicts with her values and the moral integrity she associates with the communist vision. The party's leadership, including Anna's intellectual peers, often appears disconnected from the working-class people they claim to represent. This elitism and a lack of genuine engagement with the grassroots struggles highlight a significant gap between the party's rhetoric and actions. Anna

finds this disconnect disheartening as it undermines the movement's credibility, and I struggled with the party's demand for conformity and loyalty, which often requires suppressing personal beliefs and emotions. The collective identity promoted by the party leaves little room for individuality, creativity, and dissent. For Anna, this suppression feels oppressive and alienating, further distancing her from the ideals she once embraced.

Ultimately, Anna's experiences within the British Communist Party led to a profound disillusionment. The gap between communism's ideals and party dynamics' realities contributes to her psychological and ideological fragmentation. This disillusionment is political and deeply personal as Anna grapples with losing faith in a case that once gave her life meaning. Anna Wulf's political disillusionment, chronicled in the retinal book *The Golden Notebook*, is deeply tied to her experiences with the Communist Party and her broader observations of political systems. These disillusionments reflect her growing awareness of the gap between ideological, logical promises and the flawed realities of human behaviour and institutional structures.

In Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, the red notebook serves as a focal point for exploring various political ideologies, primarily communism, but also touching on broader themes of socialism, Marxism and the disillusionment where leftist politics. In the mid-twentieth century, the red notebook is where Anna Wulf, the protagonist, documents her political life, her involvement with the Communist Party, and her evolving relationship with these ideologies. The red notebook primarily delves into the political ideologies that Anna Wulf engages with critics and ultimately becomes disillusioned. Meanwhile, through the red notebook, Anna Wulf confides her disillusionment with the dream of CP. She came to know about the hidden problems of the CP and thus was getting away from it.

The red notebook reflects Anna's critique of capitalism, which she sees as inherently exploitative and dehumanizing. Her political activism is driven by a desire to challenge the status quo and create a more just and equitable world. Embedded within Anna's engagement with communism are broader Marxist principles, such as the focus on class struggle and the critique of capitalism. Anna discusses the ways these principles inform the party's rhetoric and actions. However, she becomes disillusioned by the lack of practical solutions offered by Marxist thought and the inability of party members to implement these ideas honestly and effectively. Communism in the red notebook is rooted in a Marxist theory, which provides the intellectual framework for Anna's political beliefs. Marxism, as articulated by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, emphasizes the struggle between the proletariat, the working class, the bourgeoisie class, and the capitalist class and advocates for the overthrow of capitalism through revolutionary means.

The red notebook highlights Anna's belief in the centrality of class struggle as the driving force of historical change. She sees the Communist Party as the vanguard of the working class, tasked with leading the revolution and dismantling the capitalist structure. Anna's political analysis is informed by Marxist dialectical materialism, which views history as a series of conflicts and contradictions that ultimately lead to societal transformation. It reflects her attempts to apply this framework to her experiences and the broader political landscape. It also explores the theme of political idealism. A utopian vision of a better society motivates Anna and her comrades. However, the notebook criticizes the dangers of blind idealism. Lessing highlights how unwavering devotion to an ideology can lead to moral compromises, hypocrisy, and a failure to acknowledge the complexity of human behaviour and societal structures.

Communism and Marxism are central to the red notebook. The reflections reveal authoritarian tendencies within the Communist Party. These tendencies include strict hierarchical structures, suppression of dissent and demand, and loyalty and conformity that stifle individuality and critical thought. This authoritarianism directly opposes the egalitarian ideals that the party claims to represent. While communism is the dominant ideology in the red notebook, it is closely tied to the broader vision of socialism, which emphasizes collective ownership of the means of production and redistribution of wealth. Socialism is a precursor to communism. It represents the ideal of a society based on cooperation, equality, and social justice. It captures Anna's utopian vision of a socialist society where economic and social inequalities are eliminated and individuals are free to realize their full potential. This vision is a sphere of hope and inspiration for her political activism.

The red notebook also documents the challenges of realizing this vision in practice. Anna's experiences with the Communist Party reveal the gap between socialist ideals and the realities of political organizing, leading to her growing disillusionment. It does not focus solely on communism but broadly criticizes institutional politics. Anna reflects on the limitations of any political system that prioritizes power and control over genuine social progress. This critique extends beyond ideology and speaks to the inherent flaws of human institutions.

Anna's disillusionment with the Communist Party leads her to explore alternative perspectives, including Trotskyism. The red notebook reflects her interest in Trotsky's criticism of Stalinism and his vision of a more democratic and revolutionary socialism. However, Anna ultimately finds Trotskyism equally flawed as it fails to address the practical challenges of political organizing and the complexities of real-world politics. It captures scepticism toward all forms of

ideological absolutism. It also reflects Anna's commitment to anticolonialism and anti-imperialism, which are closely tied to her experiences in Southern Africa. Her political activism is driven by a desire to challenge the injustices of colonialism and imperialism and to support the struggles of oppressed people worldwide. The notebook highlights her belief in the importance of global solidarity among oppressed groups, including workers, colonized people, and marginalized communities. She sees communism as a means of uniting these struggles and creating a more just and equitable world.

Anna's political analysis is informed by a critique of Western imperialism, which she sees as a manifestation of capitalist exploitation. The red notebook reflects her efforts to challenge imperialist structures and support anti-colonial movements. One of the central themes of the red notebook is Anna's disillusionment with communism and leftist politics more broadly. Her journey from idealism to scepticism mirrors the broader trajectory of many intellectuals in the mid-twentieth century, particularly in the wake of Stalinism and the Cold War. The red notebook documents Anna's crisis of faith as she grapples with the Communist Party's failures and contradictions. Her disillusionment is not just with the party itself but with the broader project of revolutionary change.

Along with her political disillusionment, Anna continues to search for alternative ways of engaging with politics and affecting social change. The red notebook reflects her ongoing struggle to reconcile her ideals with the realities of the world around her. While not the central focus of the red notebook, there are feminist undertones in Anna's criticism of the political sphere. She notes the male-dominated leadership of the Communist Party and the marginalization of women's voices within political movements, which reflects a broader intersection of gender and ideology.

Then, red notebook focuses primarily on Anna's political life. It also intersects with her struggles as a woman. Her experiences with the Communist Party reveal how gender shapes political activism and the limitations of traditional leftist politics in addressing women's issues.

The red notebook reflects Anna's criticism of patriarchal structures within the Communist Party, which marginalized women's voices and experiences. Her political activism is informed by a desire to challenge these structures and create a more inclusive and equitable movement. It highlights the intersection of the personal and political, as Anna's struggles with identity, relationships, and autonomy are deeply intertwined with their political commitments. This theme is central to the novel's broader exploration of fragmentation and integration. It conveys a scepticism. Anna comes to see that no single ideology can adequately address the complexities of human society. This realization contributes to her broader sense of fragmentation and disillusionment as the reconciliation of her idealistic hopes with the flawed realities of political systems.

Through Anna's experiences and reflections in the red notebook, Lessing criticizes not only communism but also the broader nature of ideological thinking and political systems. The notebook serves as a space for Anna to process her ideological journey from commitment and hope to disillusionment and introspection. In conclusion, we can say that the red notebook is a political mirror of Anna's life. The red notebook in *The Golden Notebook* is a rich and multifaceted exploration of political ideologies, particularly communism, Marxism and socialism. It reflects Anna Wulf's idealism, disillusionment, and critique of ideological dogmatism and her ongoing search for meaning and purpose in a fragmented world. Through the red notebook, Doris Lessing offers a nuanced portrayal of the political struggles and the

mid-twentieth century and a meditation on the challenges of intellectual and political engagement. Ultimately, the red notebook serves as a mirror for the broader ideological battles of its time, capturing both the possibilities and the limitations of political activism; it is a testament to the enduring relevance of the questions it raises about ideology, power and the search for justice in an unjust world.

The coloured notebooks don't just map Wulf's life. They act as a dynamic interplay between her identity and the ideological forces she encounters, embodied by the people around her. The colours are not static – they are active agents, symbiotically bound to the people who represent ideological currents in Anna's life. Lessing's critique lies in how this interplay exposes ideology's inadequacy: it promises structure but delivers chaos, reflected in the notebooks' escalating disorder until the golden shift. It is a rejection of dogma for something more fluid, though not necessarily resolved.

Lessing weaves the symbioses of colour and people together to create a living, breathing dynamic that drives the novel's essence. The colours of the notebooks aren't just symbolic markers; they pulse with the energy of the people Anna Wulf encounters, each pairing forming a unique relationship that shapes her fragmented world.

The golden notebook shines as a culmination, its rich hue tied to Anna and Saul's collaborative breakthrough. Gold doesn't just contain them. It fuses with them, drawing strength from their shared vulnerability and creativity. The symbioses here are transformative: Saul and Anna pour their fractured selves into the colour, and gold elevates them, turning their chaos into something whole. It's a mutual creation; they give the colour its meaning, and the colour gives them a new lens, a harmony born from their collision. The symbiosis of colour and people is the novel's heartbeat. The

colours don't exist without the people to animate them, and the people (real or invented) rely on the colours to define their role in Anna's life. It is a living system: each notebook's colour and its inhabitants feed off one another, evolving as Anna does. The result is a tapestry where neither element is static; they shift, clash, and blend, embodying her struggle to unify her world.

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