

POSTMODERN SKEPTICISM TOWARDS METANARRATIVE OF SALVATION: DE-CENTERING MARXIST COMMUNISM AS A MESSIANIC DISCOURSE IN LESSING'S THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK

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ABSTRACT

Metanarratives refer to the ideological constructs of history which tend to universalize human knowledge and experience on the basis of unified epistemological grounds. Postmodernism, in recent years, has de-centered the unification of Salvationist discourses of history in order to bring out their implicit totalizing hegemonies. The present study deals with dismantling Marxist Communism as a Salvationist discourse through pointing out the patterns of its fascist anarchy worldwide. Lessing explicates the study of Marxist Communism as hegemonic ideological construct which tends to oppress the voices from intelligentsia through its anarchical discursive strategies and hence problematizes the issue of regarding Marxist Communism as a messianic discourse. Moreover, the study engages itself with the representation of identity crisis in the postmodern era as a result of disillusionment with Marxist Communism as a redemptive discourse. Also, the study hinges on the idea of postmodern skepticism towards language as a unified idiom to define Marxist Communism as a liberatory discourse and thus, contesting the idea of unified reality through its emphasis on the metonymic representation(s) of Marxist Communism.

Keywords: Met-narrative; Postmodernism; Metonymy; Skepticism; Epistemology; Communism.

INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to contest Marxist Communism through Lessing's engagement with Marxist Communist narrative in order to deconstruct its salvationist epistemological construct in terms of bringing justice to the oppressed classes worldwide. First, I take as my starting points, the analysis of Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* (1962) as the emblem of postmodern skepticism towards the hegemonic discourses of history, particularly through the analysis of Marxist Communism as anarchical and totalitarian ideological construct. Second, my purpose here is to unveil the metonymical representation(s) of Marxist Communism in Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* along with the identification of implicit facets of identity crisis as one of the possible consequence of Communist totalitarianism. I first give a brief overview of the key ideas used in my analysis of Lessing's work, followed by my analysis with illustrations from her work, and finally I argue that Marxist Communism as a unified and universalistic discourse needs to be questioned revisited and redefined giving way to Postmodern multiple representation(s) of Marxist Communism.

POSTMODERNISM AND MARXIST COMMUNISM

Postmodernism, for Lyotard (1984) refers to “incredulity towards metanarratives” which signifies de-historicizing the legitimized narratives of the past, particularly the ideologies embedded in the historical narratives which claim universal liberation and emancipation for humanity. Lyotard, while identifying the major kinds of metanarratives, tends to deconstruct the epistemological hegemony of absolutistic constructions of speculative and emancipatory metanarratives which claim universal speculation in terms of knowledge and emancipation in terms of freedom from oppression (Malpas, 2003). Moreover, in order to contest absolutistic constructions of knowledge, Lyotard questions the emancipatory unification of liberatory discourses like Marxist Communism as reality itself is multiple and dual, which for Baudrillard signifies the “death sentence of every reference” (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 6) in the Postmodern era. Lyotard (1988) in this context, insists on keeping Marxist Communism as a discourse free from the unified totality of epistemological constructions in order to give voice to silenced narratives at the margins. Lyotard further explicates Postmodern ambivalence towards reality in terms of metonymical representations of Kantian sublime, which according to Lyotard, “carries with it both pleasure and pain...pleasure derives from pain”(Lyotard,1984, p.77). Lyotard, further talks about the reason behind this Postmodern ‘sublime sentiment’ as a result of the “conflict between the faculties of a subject, the faculty to conceive of something and the faculty to “present” something”(Lyotard,1984, p.77). For Lyotard, unified representations are illusive in the postmodern era. Globus (1995) in this context, works on the common semantic grounds of dreaming and Postmodernism in terms of the metonymical representations of reality. For Globus, “dream is deeply emblematic of the Postmodern” (Globus, 1995, p.120) as it blurs the boundaries of real and imaginary. According to him, dream is that particular kind of discourse where the various texts can be appropriated, giving way to the silenced narratives. He also talks about postmodern fragmentation in terms of “thrownness” as according to him, “Dreams highlight our postmodern thrownness. Nothing throws us better than the dream work” (Globus, 1995, p.123).

Lyotard(1988) talks about Differends as “phrases in dispute” which signify the inadequacy of language as a unified system and hence, unable to do justice due to the lack of stable signifiers in language. “Phrases”, according to Lyotard, are not merely linguistic in nature as they signify the disputable events for being “unpresentable” due to the multiplicity of political genres like Communism. Lyotard, by emphasizing on finding “unpresentable” idiom to define Differends, asserts on considering language as plural and thus, calls on the need to consider political discourses like Communism as multiple and negates the possibility to approach Communism as a unified political construct.

Derrida (1976) has discussed the concept of deconstruction to dismantle the hegemonic metanarratives in the form of various institutions, beliefs and norms. Derrida talks about the futility of the search or quest for an origin or foundation in truth, reason, or the logos in the context of “logocentric metaphysics”. Derrida, like Lyotard, emphasizes on the free association of thought through the notion of “difference”, which signifies the intellectual openness to speculative epistemologies. According to Derrida, difference is “what comes or will come, to the event” (Choat, 2010, p.71) and hence, signifies events to remain undecidable throughout. Moreover, Derrida (1994) talks about the hegemony of Marxism as a messianic discourse which claims unified justice and universal solutions for the emancipation of the entire humanity. He further calls Marxism as “messianic without messianism” which entails his skeptic attitude towards Marxism as an emancipatory discourse having preconceived notions of justice and emancipation.

Foucault (1977) has significantly pointed out the role of genealogical analysis in the context of Postmodern approach towards historical studies which is important as it signifies the loss of the search for “origins” which Hutcheon (1998) calls “historiographic metafiction” as it refers to “self-awareness of history and fiction as human constructs” (Hutcheon, 1998, p.5). Foucault defines the genealogical studies as the negation of the pursuit of utopian ideal and explains the role of the genealogist who brings out the fabricated patterns of history. Also, Foucault has extended his skepticism towards the traditional notion of progress, as according to him, the escape from one form of subjugation, subsequently leads towards another form of subjugation, under the normative hegemony of law and its rules.

Lessing’s Incredulity towards Marxist Communism in the Golden Notebook

Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook* is emblematic of Postmodernist skepticism towards the unified notion of reason and enlightenment. The novel’s protagonist is a writer and a communist who keeps four diaries of various colors, intermixed with fragments from *Free Women*, in order to signify the plurality and chaos inherent in her existence. Moreover, the diaries signify her disillusionment with the various ideological constructs of her existence. The *Black Notebooks* are the expression of her disenchantment with intelligentsia for curbing the individuality of the writers. The *Red Notebooks* entail her disappointment with Marxist Communism for its hegemony and anarchy. The *Yellow Notebooks* are the emblem of her emotional crisis and the corrosion of her identity in the form of the failure of her relationship with various men. The *Blue Notebooks* record her daily life anxieties and pressures, both inside and outside.

Lessing in *The Golden Notebook*, while calling on the need to consider Marxist Communism as a plural epistemology, significantly depicts Marxist Communism as a totalitarian discourse with its seemingly utopian claims to bring justice to the oppressed classes worldwide. Communism emerged as an emancipatory epistemology in order to subvert bourgeoisie of its capitalist anarchy. But, eventually Communism itself became hegemonic as it tended to universalize the notion of human oppression on the basis of marginalization at the levels of class and race and then, it tried to abolish the capitalist oppression on the basis of a certain unified economic ideology, consequently resulting in the subjugation of intelligentsia and identity crisis of Communists as depicted by Lessing in *The Golden Notebook*. Moreover, Lessing contests Communism as a unified political discourse mainly through questioning reality as a unified entity and hence, brings into play the pluralistic metonymical representation(s) of Marxist Communism. Also, Lessing brings out the patterns of Communist fascism mainly in the form of subjugation of intelligentsia which subsequently, leads the Communist comrades towards identity crisis.

Lessing talks about the failure of Communism in terms of conforming itself to Marxism as a theory, which in turn, seeks speculative unity (Lyotard, 1988a) without the consideration of multiplicity in Communism in the form of Stalinism, Trotskyism, and Maoism. Lessing proposes the free association of thought with Marxism as a theory, regarding the liberty of thought within interpretative practices as no unified epistemology is possible in the postmodern era, where everything is marked by pluralism. Lessing, in the Preface to *The Golden Notebook* has talked about the disintegration within Communism in order to point the failure of Marxist Communism as a revolution.

It went wrong, could not prevent itself from dividing and sub-dividing, like all the other religions, into smaller and smaller chapels, sects and creeds. But it was an attempt (Lessing, 1962, p.14).

Lessing, in order to deconstruct the metanarrative of Communism, has contested the notion of 'real' through the Postmodernist approach towards reality or truth. Lessing de-centers the concept of 'real' through the Baudrillard's notion of simulation which according to him, "corresponds to a short circuit of reality and its duplication through signs" (Baudrillard, 1994, p.28). Lessing talks about the simulated reality in *The Golden Notebook* where everything is dual and multiple in relation to Communism.

Do you realize how many of the things we say are just echoes? That remark you've just made is an echo from Communist Party criticism (Lessing, 1962, p.57).

Lessing talks about the fabrication in traditional historical representations which seek to undermine the revolutionary change against oppressive systems. In this context, Foucault claims a different way to approach historical representations which, according to Foucault, "demonstrate how things which appear most evident are in fact fragile and...rest upon particular circumstances. The goal is to render us free to effect possible transformations (Choat, 2010, p.106)). Lessing in *The Golden Notebook* de-centers the traditional historical representations through the significant use of postmodern genre of 'Historiographic metafiction'. Lessing has re-conceptualized history through the self-reflexive parody of stereotypical representations of history. For this purpose, Lessing has mocked the futility of hegemonic systems which claim to provide the emancipatory solutions to the entire humanity. Anna Wulf, while talking to Molly, almost in the beginning of the novel, satirizes such emancipatory discourses in a half-mocking way.

There is nothing new under the sun', said Anna, in an attempt at a German accent. Molly irritated- she spoke half a dozen languages well- said: 'There's nothing new under the sun', in a perfect reproduction of a shrewd old woman's voice, German accented (Lessing, 1962, p.26).

Communist Fascism

Lessing, like Foucault, calls for 'the insurrection of the subjugated knowledges' against the totalitarian system of Communism which demands the submission of all the deviant forces and thus, subjugates the revolutionary voices (Choat, 2010). For this purpose, Anna Wulf, being a communist, relates her subjective experiences as well as the experiences of the other Communists to dismantle the false impression of the Communists as a savior of the entire humanity. Anna, in *The Black Notebook*, recollects her experiences as a Comrade in Africa in the form of the novel "Frontiers of War". Talking about "Frontiers of War", Anna suggests the multiple causes behind writing that novel, mainly the 'color bar': a form of knowledge oppressed by the Colonizers.

The novel is 'about' a color problem... But the emotion it came out of was something frightening, the unhealthy, feverish, illicit excitement of wartime, a lying nostalgia, a longing for license, for freedom, for the jungle, for formlessness (Lessing, 1962, p.77).

Anna further narrates the reasons behind the disillusionment of the Communists from Communism as a system, in order to expose its overarching claims to emancipate humanity from fascism. Lessing has significantly exposed the implicit fascist structures in the garb of Communism, present worldwide which Lyotard refers to giving voice to the marginalized "uncomfortable little stories" (Choat, 2010) and hence, calls on the need to deconstruct the metanarrative of emancipation in the form of Communism. Lessing, in this context, talks about the marginalization of the narratives, particularly the narratives against the hegemony of the Communist regime. Moreover, for this purpose, Lessing narrates the stories related to

mass murder during the Communist regime, ironically through the Comrades like American Communist Nelson, in order to shackle the Communist myth of emancipation.

He talked of Spain, of the war. He was condemning himself, as he had at the meeting, breast-beating, hysterical, for taking part in the Communist Party betrayals. He said that innocent people had been shot, through him, though he had not believed at the time they were innocent (Lessing, 1962, p.424).

Lessing, in *The Golden Notebook*, has deconstructed the Communist ideology to bring salvation to the entire humanity, through the universalistic doctrine of Marxism which Derrida calls “messianic without messianism” (Derrida, 1994, p.59). Lessing has significantly pointed out the miseries, brought by Communist regime, before the death of Stalin. Harry, a Jewish Comrade, narrates the horrors of the “Black Years”, to his fellow communists or ex-communists who “were being tortured with instruments taken from museums” (Lessing, 1962, p.422). Moreover, Lessing has decentered the Marxist messianism through the depiction of brutalities of the Communist regime on intelligentsia. Anna Wulf mocks the pursuit of justice with the help of Marxist doctrines through the portrayal of British Communist Party as anarchical and totalitarian, particularly for its intellectual silencing.

Last week, Molly came up at midnight to say that the Party members had been circulated with a form, asking for their history as members, and there was a section asking them to detail their ‘doubts and confusions’... She seemed upset with herself. ‘What is it I want a confessional? Anyway since I’ve written it, I’m going to send it in.’ I told her she was mad. I said: ‘Supposing the British Communist Party ever gets into power, that document will be in the files, and if they want evidence to hang you, they’ve got it thousands of times over’ (Lessing, 1962, p.150).

Intelligentsia and the Anarchical Communist Discursive Strategies

Lessing talks about the hegemonic structures of Communist discursive strategies which propagate the principle of unification in Marxist ideology of salvation. Talking about hegemonic ideological doctrine of Marxist Communism, Lessing insists on the absence of free play of mind in order to contest its hegemonic totalitarianism. Lessing, in the preface to the novel, has clearly stated the dilemma of the artists, particularly of the writers under the Communist regime, being condemned for their subjectivities. For this purpose, Lessing has given the reference of the Russian critics like Belinsky, who condemned the notion of ‘Art for Art’s sake’ in literature.

‘Bothering about your stupid personal concerns when Rome is burning’ (Lessing, 1962, p.12).

Anna Wulf, being a communist, narrates the causes of “intellectual collapse” of Communism and contests the anarchy of Communist regime which fails to allow the freedom of voice and hence, articulates the wrongs done by Marxist Communist regime. The Communist regime has been significantly compared with Catholic Church which ultimately got collapsed due to its intellectual hegemony, oppressing the voices at the margins, as according to her: “the intellectual collapse [of Communism] is probably final” (Lessing, 1962, p. 306).

Lessing, throughout the novel, has talked about the fascism of the Communist Party in terms of its relation with the intelligentsia of that age. Comrade Bill, during an interview with Anna Wulf, shows his contempt for the entire intelligentsia, for their resistance against the oppression of the Communist Party. Comrade Bill shows his apprehension for the intellectuals like Anna Wulf who tend to deviate from the dogmas of Marxist Communism through exposing the atrocities of Communist regime particularly through “writing articles in

the capitalist press” exposing Communists as “monsters”. But Anna Wulf shatters this “myth” of confining the notion of deviance for the intellectuals as the other “classes and groups” were equally disconcerted with the intellectual hegemony of Communist regime. Anna Wulf, in this context, ironically relates the lack of intelligentsia to conform to the dead dogmas of Communism for its centralized ideological anarchy.

All the communists I know that is, the ones of any intelligence, have the same attitude towards ‘the centre’ that the Party has been saddled with a group of dead bureaucrats who run it, and that the real work gets done in spite of ‘the centre’ (Lessing, 1962, p.152).

Communism and Identity Crisis

Lessing in *The Golden Notebook* has also talked about the disillusionments as a consequence of the identity crisis of Communists in terms of “the history of the present” (Foucault, 1977). Lessing has considered the dilemmas of the Post war world as a product of the loss of faith in the epistemological representations of emancipation. Anna, in order to overcome the dilemma of identity crisis, became a part of the Communist Party. But later on, she discovered that her ‘self’ has been divided into more pieces and fragments as a result of the inadequacies of the Communist Party.

Yet joining the Party intensified the split—not the business of belonging to an organization that’s every tenet, on paper, anyway, contradicts the ideas of the society we live in; but something much deeper than that (Lessing, 1962, p.157).

Lessing further captivates the notion of identity crisis through the character of Tommy. Anna points out one of the significant reason behind the identity crisis of Tommy which both according to Anna and Molly is the transference of skepticism towards Communism to the next generation mainly given by the Comrades who are a part of the Communist Party but they mainly intend to leave it.

It hasn’t occurred to you that the real trouble with Tommy is that he’s been surrounded half his life with communists or so-called communists most of the people he’s known have been mixed up in one way and another. And now they’re leaving the Party, or have left don’t you think it might have had some effect?’ ‘Well, obviously,’ said Molly (Lessing, 1962, p.40).

Communism and Postmodern Disillusionment with Language

Lessing significantly points out the absence of unified idiom to define Marxist Communism through her skepticism towards language as a unified construct to define Communist revolution. Lessing takes the Poststructuralist stance for her skepticism towards the existence of a stable relationship between a signifier and a signified like Lyotard (1988) who deconstructs the stereotypical notion of a ‘phrase’ as purely linguistic in nature. Lessing deals with the significations of Communist revolution which are plural and hence, unstable as Communist revolution ironically signifies oppression and salvation both. Lessing significantly considers Communist revolution as a ‘differend’ as it exists in a web of multiple significations. Lessing, in *The Golden Notebook*, has expressed this ambivalence in language when Anna narrates her experience regarding her discussion with the other Comrades on the subject of Stalin’s notions on Linguistics and the difference between perceptions of various Comrades for Communism seems to Anna Wulf as ‘unbridgeable’. Thus, Anna shows her skepticism towards the concept of language as a stable phenomenon to define reality, and considers the relativity of possible idiom(s) in Communism like Trotskyism, Stalinism and

Maoism as one of the possible cause of un-intelligibility and failure of Communism as a revolution.

Writers' group meeting last night. Five of us- to discuss Stalin on Linguistics...I find myself listening to a sentence, a phrase, a group of words, as if they are in a foreign language—the gap between what they are supposed to mean, and what in fact they say seems unbridgeable... The fact that Stalin bothers to write a pamphlet on this subject at all is just a sign of a general uneasiness about language (Lessing, 1962, p.271-272).

Lessing, while dealing with Marxist Communism as a plural discourse, tends to approach Communism through various genres like Lyotard who believes that Politics entails “the multiplicity of genres, the diversity of ends...” (Lyotard, 1988b, p.138). Lessing, in this context, mocks the idea of approaching the political discourse of Communism through a single genre. Anna Wulf, in order to entail the lack of language to give a unified signification of Communism and also the failure of language to narrate the experiences of Comrades, talks about the blurring of the boundaries among various genres to analyze the narrative of Communism.

...I remembered a story that was sent to me last week. By a Comrade living somewhere near Leeds. When I first read it, I thought it was an exercise in irony. Then a very skillful parody of a certain attitude...But what seemed to me important was that it could be read as a parody, irony or seriously. It seems to me this fact is another expression of the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked with what I feel to be true about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience (Lessing, 1962, p.273).

Metonymical Representation(s) of Communism

Lessing in *The Golden Notebook* has dealt with the Kantian and Lyotard's postmodern sublime through the dreams of Anna Wulf, the protagonist of the novel. Lessing, through the narration of dreams, has employed the Postmodernist literary technique of fabulation, in order to deconstruct the previously defined concepts of reality, particularly the concepts of pleasure and pain. Anna, in her dream, finds herself in a dilemma to relate Communism either with pleasure or with pain. Lessing, through the collapse of the boundaries of pain and pleasure, relates Postmodernist ambivalence towards Communism, hence keeping the epistemological space relatively open for Communism. Anna termed her dream as “joy in spite” and it was “the nightmare about the principle of spite, or malice” (Lessing, 1962, p.419). Anna dreamed of a Russian wooden vase, emblematic of Communism, in terms of its appearance as narrated by Lessing.

The first time I dreamed it, the principle, or figure, took form in a certain vase I had then, a peasant wooden vase from Russia that someone had brought back. It was bulbous, rather jolly and naïve in shape, and covered with crude red and black and gilt patterns...This was when I ‘named’ the dream as about destruction. The next time I dreamed, months later, but instantly recognized it as the same dream, the principle or element took shape in an old man, almost dwarf-like, infinitely more terrifying than the vase object, because he was part human. This old man smiled and giggled and sniggered, was ugly, vital and powerful, and again, what he represented was pure spite, malice, joy in malice, joy in a destructive impulse. This was when I ‘named’ the dream as about joy in spite...It mocked and jibed and hurt, wished murder, wished death. And yet it was always vibrant with joy. (Lessing, 1962, p.419-420).

The above mentioned dream of Anna Wulf is the metonymic representation of the Communist regime. The “wooden vase” has been personified to signify its destructive and totalitarian nature. The “wooden vase”, which Anna Wulf dreams of as spiteful, is from Russia which signifies Communism as an anarchical revolution which has been mainly engendered by Soviet Union. Communism has been parodied by describing the wooden vase as “jolly” and “naïve” in form and also, for its claims to define liberation for the whole humanity. The “red” color signifies not only the Red Notebooks by Anna Wulf but also, the nascent anarchy and destruction inherent in Communism as a world movement. The “black” color not only signifies African race, but also Anna’s Communist experience in Africa as she has narrated her entire experience as a Comrade in Africa in her Black notebooks in the form of discussion and reviews on her novel called “Frontiers of War”. Later on, the vase is shown to acquire the form of an “old man” who is equally “terrifying” and malicious in nature. Also, he is not a pure human but rather a “part human” which signifies the brutality of the speculative paradigm of Communism. Furthermore, the dream mainly signifies the postmodern sublime which signifies the blurring of boundaries of pain and pleasure. Anna Wulf, in the above mentioned dream, fails to situate or associate Communism either with pain or pleasure. Thus, as the dream is about ‘joy in malice’ so it signifies postmodern ambivalence and disbelief in Communism as a unified epistemology.

Lessing has portrayed the Communist totalitarianism along with the fragmentation, as a result of the Communist regime, through the dreams of the protagonist. Lessing, unable to relate the fragmentation of the Communist experience of Anna Wulf, through the defined norms of language and reality, has employed the Postmodernist use of dreams, to mock the failure as well as traditional epistemological representations of Communism. Thus, Lessing appropriates Communism through the discourse of dream, to relate the sensibilities associated with Communism.

I dreamed there was an enormous web of beautiful fabric stretched out. It was incredibly beautiful, covered all over with embroidered pictures. The pictures were illustrations of the myths of mankind but they were not just pictures, they were the myths themselves, so that the soft glittering web was alive. There were many subtle and fantastic colors, but the overall feeling this expanse of fabric gave was of redness, a sort of variegated glowing red... I looked again and saw that the material was shaped liked a map of the Soviet Union. It began to grow: it spread out, lapped outwards like a soft glittering sea. It included now the countries around the Soviet Union, like Poland, Hungary, etc...And now the soft red glittering mist spread over China and it deepened over China into a hard heavy clot of scarlet...And I look and see that the red areas are being invaded by the bright different colors of the other parts of the world... The slowly turning world was slowly dissolving, disintegrating and flying off into fragments, all through space, so that all around me were weightless fragments drifting about, bouncing into each other and drifting away. The world had gone, and there was chaos. I was alone in chaos. And very clearly in my ear a small voice said: Somebody pulled a thread of the fabric and it all dissolved. I woke up, joyful and elated (Lessing, 1962, p. 269-270).

The web, in the above mentioned dream, is the metonymic representation of Communist totalitarianism as it is shown to have the form of Soviet Union’s map. The web is shown to have “embroidered pictures” and moreover, it is a “beautiful fabric” which signifies the political fabrications within Communist regime. Also, it has the trait to allure humankind with its beauty which signifies the power of Communism to allure humankind with its manipulative and speculative paradigm. Anna Wulf has personified the “myths of mankind”

as “alive”, which is the metonymic representation of the ideological anarchy of met narratives. The overarching color of the web is red which signifies destruction. Anna’s contact with the web is marked by both pain and pleasure which signifies the postmodern sublime as discussed above. The anarchy of Communism in various parts of the world has been signified through its overwhelming power to invade the entire world. The met narrative which exists within every “story of mankind” is shown to be manifested with postmodern sublimity marked by both “joy” and “pain”. The “red areas” within the map, which signify the Communist regime in various parts of the world, are shown to be invaded by other colors which signify the downfall of the Communist regime by other rebellious powers. Later on, in the dream, the world itself is shown to be fragmented into various parts and then, finally annihilated which signifies not only epistemological multiplicity but also, the epistemological nihilistic strand regarding the lack of unified epistemology in the postmodern context.

CONCLUSION

Lessing in *The Golden Notebook* has shattered the Salvationist myth of Marxist Communism as a historical construct through bringing out its atrocities worldwide particularly, in terms of keeping intelligentsia at the margins. Lessing, in this context, has significantly talked about the identity crisis and disillusionment of various characters towards Communism particularly through the character of Anna Wulf, the protagonist of the novel. Lessing, through employing postmodern narrative techniques of historiographic metafiction and Kantian sublime, not only problematizes the issue of language as an unstable phenomenon to give a unified representation of Communism but also emphasizes on the need to redefine the notion of salvation and emancipation through voicing the multiple as well as silenced and marginalized narratives of the past.

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