Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The history of mankind, inspite of certain golden periods in which great humans beings like Buddha (India), Jesus Christ (the West) and Prophet Mohammed (the Islamic World) and such noble souls made sacrifices to free humanity from its perpetual suffering by establishing great religions, social reforms and self-sacrifices; still abounds in the darkest periods full of torture, large scale genocide, wide-spread exploitation and unending human misery. A host of other similar personalities and leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, and preachers and teachers like Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, have devoted their lives to teach people to shun parochial, provincial and other narrow sentiments for the welfare of the entire humanity. However, men at large choose to remain the same---entertaining their atavistic, barbarian and selfish motives, causing a large scale loss of life and property to suite their narrow-minded, parochial claims and hunger for power.

It is not known much about the history of man during the Dark Ages and the Medieval Times until the Renaissance in the West which marked the beginning of a new era in human history from 1493 onwards. Prior to this golden period in the West, one can understand that the European nations were busily pre-occupied with religious wars called Crusades and with civil wars and wars with other nations to expand their national territories. It is an irony in the annals of humanity that a worst plunderer and dacoit, the Greek or the Macedonian ruler, Alexander, has been glorified with the title, Alexander, The Great. This shows the hypocrisy and self-deceit of human culture, especially of the Western historians. One can have similar accounts of Zenghiskhan and Timur the Lame, the Mangolian dacoits who had massacred large sections of humanity in other nations of the world to expand their political power and territorial boundaries. In recent history, one can have the glaring examples of Hitler and Mussolini who ruthlessly killed their fellow human beings driven by selfish and parochial sentiments. The havoc and colossal devastation caused by the two great World Wars is an open fact.

Thus, a large portion of the pages of human history has been besmirched with blood-shed, afflicting debasement, genocide and exploitation. It is in this context that
one should consider three worst systems that pestered mankind worse than large scale plague, famine, draught or pestilence i.e. the system of Slavery in the West, that of Untouchability in India and the institution of Apartheid in South Africa. Ironically these inhuman practices are still prevalent in these global regions in some form or the other.

1.1.1. **SLAVERY: As the Oxford English Reference Dictionary defines:**

Slavery is the condition of a slave, exhausting labour, drudgery; and the custom of having slaves.

*Note:* “Slavery was a widespread institution in the classical world, on which the economy was dependent. The island of Delos served as the main slave market in the Aegean; in both the Greek and Roman periods the main source of slaves was the enslavement of prisoners of war. Major slave revolts occurred during the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C., but the practice did not begin to diminish until the spread of Christianity and the decline of the Roman Empire in the 3rd to 5th centuries A.D.

The transportation of slaves from Africa to the Americas by European traders began in the 16th and 17th centuries, and although slavery became illegal in Britain in 1772, it remained an important feature of the economy of the British Empire until the 19th century; the slave-trade was abolished in 1807 and slavery itself throughout the empire in 1833. In the American South slavery was an integral part of the cotton-based economy, and the abolition campaign waged during the first half of the 19th century eventually led to the American Civil War and to final emancipation. In some of parts of the world chattel slavery, the ownership of one person by another continues to exist. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* a novel written by Harriet Beach reflects the atrocities of slavery in the Southern States of America.

1.1.2 **UNTOUCHABILITY:**

The same source (i.e., The Oxford English Reference Dictionary) defines an untouchable as “a member of a hereditary Hindu group held to defile members of higher castes on contact.” And this source notes further, that untouchability as a “term and social restrictions accompanying it, were declared illegal under the Constitution of India in 1949 and of Pakistan in 1953, although members of the group still suffer from discrimination. The term Harijan introduced and popularized by Mahatma Gandhi, is preferred today, although some members of the group refer to themselves as Dalits (‘depressed classes’).
1.1.3 APARTHEID

The main focus of the present study is South African apartheid. Therefore, in the following pages, a detailed account of the apartheid in South Africa from racial, economic, political and social perspectives is presented. It may be noted here all the four novels written in English by South African Writers selected for the present study deal with Apartheid. Hence the detailed account below:

In South Africa, racism which reflects the ideology of white supremacy and black inferiority was started by white settlers who invaded South Africa in the seventeenth century. South Africa was colonized by the English and the Dutch. The English domination of the Dutch descendants (known as Boers or Afrikaners) resulted in the Dutch establishing the new colonies of Orange Free State and Transvaal. The policy of incursions, fraud, theft and aggression was carried out by the whites against the people of South Africa in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Discovery of Diamonds in 1867 and Gold in 1884 in the interior encouraged economic growth and immigration but this laid the foundation for racial discrimination in industry. This intensified the European-South African subjugation of the indigenous people. The struggle to control these important economic resources was a factor between Europeans and the indigenous population, and also between the Boers and the British. The original skilled workers in the mines were whites who came from Europe and the Africans were employed in the more arduous labour as unskilled workers. This system came with huge profit to mine owners as well as to all capital in South Africa. The Mining Industry is also a marriage between international capital and local feudalism.

The Boer Republics successfully resisted British encroachments during the First Boer War (1880-1881) using guerilla warfare tactics but the British returned with greater numbers, more experience and more suitable tactics in the Second Boer War (1899-1902) which was won by the British. During the Dutch colonial years, racial segregation was mostly informal, though some legislation was enacted to control the settlement and movement of native people. After four years of negotiating, on 31st May, 1910, exactly eight years after the end of the Second Boer War, the Union of South Africa was created from the Cape, Natal colonies, the republics of Orange Free State and Transvaal. The newly created Union of South Africa was a dominion of the British Empire and the legal cornerstone of racism in South Africa.
was laid when British vested all the political power in the hands of the white minority in 1910.

Superficially the country was ruled by white South Africans. However, the power rested with the South African monopolists and the international consortium of imperialism. The combination of racialism, capitalism and international imperialism had made South Africa a colony of a special type. The non-whites were subjected to the worst forms of colonial subjection; they were neither free nor independent. They were landless, and compelled to provide cheap labour to produce the fabulous wealth which was bargained for in the stock markets of Johannesburg, London and New York. Racism and capitalism, simultaneously, in South Africa had not merely created conditions similar to colonialism within South Africa, but they had reached a stage where the economic and political forces look beyond the borders for new fields of exploitation.

In 1931, the Union of South Africa was effectively granted independence from the British. In 1934, the South African Party and National Party merged to form the United Party, seeking reconciliation between Afrikaners and English – speaking “Whites”. In 1939, the party split over the entry of the Union into World War II as an ally of the United Kingdom, a move which the National Party followers strongly opposed. But in 1948, the National Party was elected to power. It intensified the implementation of racial segregation began under Dutch and British colonial rule, and subsequent South African governments since the Union was formed. Racism existed in South Africa during colonial rule, but in 1948, racial discrimination was institutionalized. Many segregation laws were already existed in South Africa for instance, the Native Location Act of 1919 and the Native’s Land Act of 1913, but in 1948, the Nationalist Government systematized existing laws. The white minority controlled the black majority. The system of segregation was collectively known as “apartheid”.

1.2 APARTHEID: A POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL POLICY OF THE WHITE GOVERNMENT- ITS CONSEQUENCES

“Apartheid” is an Afrikaans term meaning ‘separation’, used in South Africa for the policy initiated by the nationalist Government after 1948. It literally means “apartness” the state of being a part, “separation” or “separateness”, and in the South African context means racial distinction. According to the political correspondent of
the Nationalist newspaper *Die Burger*, Afrikaner writing under the pseudonym “Dowie”, on 26th March 1943, the word “apartheid” was used for the first time in a leading article in *Die Burger*. In this article, reference was made to the “Nationalists’ policy of apartheid. The next use of the term was again in an article in *Die Burger* on 9th September, 1943, in which mention was made of “the recognized Afrikaner standpoint of apartheid”. The first use of the term “apartheid” in Parliament was made on 25th January, 1944 when Dr. Malan in his republican motion described the nature of the republic which he envisaged *inter alia* as follows: “To ensure the safety of the white race and of Christian civilization by the honest maintenance of the principles of apartheid and guardianship.” Dawie said that the word gained currency slowly, but shortly after the war the word became generally used, especially because it was taken over untranslated into English political terminology. Naturally this created a stir. There is no reason why a translation, such as, ‘separation’ could not have been used, but the intention was most probably to suggest, by the use of a foreign word in the English language, something foreign and ominous, something so bad that there was no word in English for it! Dawie attributes the adoption of the word apartheid to some sort of hostile motivation by “the English”, naturally regarded as unsympathetic to Afrikaner aspirations. But today, like “Boer” and “trek”, apartheid has become an international word and these words “Boer” and “trek” have been found to be untranslatable in most languages because they have a specific South African or Afrikaans connotation. The word “apartheid” has no single specific meaning and this could be the one of the reasons why it has been found to be untranslatable. In fact, to this day, there has been no agreement as to what apartheid does mean exactly. To Dr. Malan, who first used it, it obviously meant something which in the first place would presume “the safety of the white race and of Christian civilization”. And it was by putting this principle first that the Nationalist Party persuaded the overwhelmingly white electorate to vote it into power in the 1948 elections. The adumbration of the apartheid policy was the work of a special commission which has been appointed by the Nationalist Party and whose conclusions were embodied in a Pamphlet of 1947 issued by the Head office of the Nationalist Party shortly before the end of 1947. It said that the policy of our country should encourage total apartheid as the ultimate goal of a natural process of separate development. According to the Nationalist Party, the policy of apartheid was for the welfare of South Africa, and to promote the happiness and well-being of its citizens, non-whites as well as whites. Realizing that
such a task can best be accomplished by preserving and safeguarding the white race, the Nationalist Party professed this as the “fundamental guiding principle of its policy”. The policy of apartheid was also applied to the coloured people, while the Indians were offered only the prospect of repatriation to India. At that time the Nationalist Party regarded the Indians as an unassailable element in South Africa. The Party leaders again stressed that separation is not the same thing as discrimination and every national group is entitled to the basic right of self determination and they felt that South African population is not and can never be an integrated whole and separation or apartheid is a must in order for the development of the nation.

Apartheid had always been a device for separating and dividing the people of South Africa in order to facilitate the domination and exploitation of the majority by the minority. The system of apartheid comprised of several laws which were made in order to spread the domination of the white race and the superiority of the Whites over the Blacks. The suppression was done sometimes hegemonically and sometimes by force. Many laws were existed during apartheid in South Africa which totally destroyed the freedom, human rights of black South Africans and reduced their position to worse than that of slaves.

Totally, there were 317 apartheid laws, which centered on separating races on a large scale, by compelling people to live in separate places defined by race. Racial segregation in South Africa began in the colonial times, but apartheid as an official policy was introduced following the general election of 1948. New legislation classified inhabitants into racial groups: “black”, “white”, “colored” and “Indian” and residential areas were segregated, sometimes by means of forced removals. From 1958, black people were deprived of their citizenship; legally becoming citizens of one of ten tribally based self governing home land called Bantustans, four of which became nominally independent states. The government segregated education, medical care and other public services and provided black people with services inferior to those of white people. The British colonial rulers introduced a system of Pass Laws in the Cape Colony and Colony of Natal during 19th century. This stemmed from the regulation of black people’s movement from the tribal regions to those occupied by white and coloured people, ruled by the British. Laws were passed not only to restrict the movement of black people into these areas, but also to prohibit their movement from one district to another without a signed pass. Black people were not allowed into
the streets of the towns in the Cape Colony and Natal after dark and had to carry their passes at all times. *The Franchise and Ballot Act (1892)* was an act of the Cape Colony Parliament, driven by the Prime Minister Cecil Rhodes. This Act raised the property franchise qualification, thus disfranchising a large proportion of the Cape’s non-white voters and a number of poor white voters. The Cape colony had a system of franchise that was open to men of all races and under this system; the right to vote was based on £25 property franchise regardless of race. This Act raised the franchise qualifications from £25 to £75, which effectively disfranchised non-whites in significant numbers to make their voting power negligible, although a proportion of poor whites were disfranchised too. *The Natal Legislative Assembly Bill of 1984* deprived Indians of the right to vote in Natal. This Bill was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi who submitted a petition signed by 10,000 Indians to the Natal government. Mahatma Gandhi was unsuccessful to prevent the bill from being passed and this bill led him to establish the Natal Indian Congress in order to protect the rights of Indians in South Africa. This created awareness of racial discrimination towards Indians in South Africa. *The Asiatic Registration Act of 1906* required all Asians to get registered and carry passes. It was an extension of the pass laws specifically aimed at Asians (Indians and Chinese). Under this act, every Asian man, woman and child above eight years of age, entitled to reside in the Transvaal, was required to register his or her name with the Registrar of Asiatic Affairs and produce on demand a thumb printed certificate of identity. Unregistered persons and prohibited immigrants could be deported without a right of appeal or fined on the spot if they failed to comply with the Act. The applicants had to surrender their old permits and had to write in their applications, their name, residence, caste, age, nationality etc., their thumb and finger impressions were also taken for the certificate along with their marks of identification. *The South Africa Act of 1910* enfranchised whites, giving them complete political control over all other race groups and removed the right of blacks to sit in Parliament. It was an act of the British Parliament which created the Union of South Africa from the British colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Orange River Colony, Natal and Transvaal. This Act also made provisions for admitting Rhodesia as a fifth province of the Union of South Africa. This act was the third major piece of legislation passed by the United Kingdom with the intent of uniting various British colonies and granting them a degree of autonomy. *The Native Land Act of 1913* (subsequently renamed *Bantu Land Act, 1913* and *Black Land Act, 1913*) aimed at regulating the
acquisition of land by “natives”, i.e., black people. It prevented all blacks, except those in the Cape, from buying land outside “reserves”. The Act declared that only certain areas of the country could be owned by natives and this Act also restricted the amount of land available to black farmers only to 13% of the entire land mass of the Union. The Act formed an important part of the system of Apartheid and it was the first major piece of segregation legislation passed by the Union Parliament, and remained a cornerstone of Apartheid until the 1990s. The Act also created a system of land tenure that deprived the majority of South African inhabitants of the right to own land in their own country. Because of the Pass Laws and the Native Land Act, the natives or the original people of South Africa had become alien in their own country. The Natives in Urban Areas Bill of 1918 was designed to force blacks into “locations”. The Urban Area Act of 1923 introduced residential segregation for the blacks. Under this Act, local urban authorities established separate locations for “natives”, and they exercised control over the native immigration into urban areas. This Act empowered local authorities to grant trading licenses to African location residents. It forbade the further granting of freehold property rights to Africans.

Laws had been made by South African Government in order to spread discrimination and to suppress black people sometimes hegemonically and sometimes by force. The Color Bar Act of 1926 prevented any black from practicing skilled trades. This Act is also known as the Mines and Work Act and it was enacted to establish the duties and responsibilities of workers in mines and works in South Africa. The term Colour Bar, however, usually refers to a group of labour practices, informal trade union practices, government regulations, and legislation, all of which were developed over time to prevent blacks from competing for certain categories of jobs monopolized by whites. The Native Administration Act of 1927 subsequently renamed the Bantu Administration Act and the Black Administration Act made the British Crown, rather than paramount’s chiefs, the supreme head over all African affairs. This Act set up a separate legal system for the administration of African law and made the proclaimed Black areas subject to separate political regime from the remainder of the country, ultimately subject only to rule by proclamation, not parliament. This Act provided a better control and management of native affairs. The Native Land and Trust Act of 1936 or the Bantu Land and Trust Act of 1936 or the Development Land and Trust Act of 1936 passed a law that served as the
reorganization of its agricultural structures. This Act also made further provisions as to the acquisition and occupation of land by natives. This Act complemented *the 1913 Native Land Act*. The *Representation of Natives Act of 1936* further reduced the rights of blacks. It removed previous black voters from the Cape Voter’s roll. This Act had made special provision for the representation of natives in Parliament and in the provincial council of the Province of the Cape of Good Hope. It removed blacks to a separate roll and halted the right to run for office. *The Asiatic Land Tenure Bill of 1946* sought to confine Asian ownership and occupation of land to certain clearly defined areas of towns. It also prohibited Asians from owning or occupying property without a permit when such property had not been owned or occupied by Asians before 1946. It also granted Indians in the Natal and the Transvaal the right to elect whites to represent them in Parliament and Natal Indians to represent them in the Natal Provincial Council. *The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949* prohibited marriages between people of different races. It also prohibited interracial marriages of South African citizens who were contracted in other countries. *The Immorality Act of 1950* made sexual relations with a person of different race a criminal offence. It prohibited, among other things, sexual relations between white people and people of other races. *The First Immorality Act of 1927*, prohibited sex between whites and blacks, and this Act was amended in 1950 which prohibited sex between whites and all non-whites. *The Second Immorality Act of 1957* continued this prohibition and also dealt with many other sexual offences. The ban on interracial sex was lifted in 1985, but certain sections of the 1957 Act dealing with prostitution remain in force as the “Sexual Offence Act, 1957”. *The Population Registration Act of 1950* required that each inhabitant of South Africa be classified and registered in accordance with their racial characteristics. This Act formalized racial classification and introduced an identity card for all persons above eighteen, specifying their racial group. Economic status, social rights, political rights and educational opportunities were largely determined by the group to which an individual belonged. There were three basic classifications under the law – Black, White and Coloured (mixed). Classification into these groups was carried out using criteria such as outer appearance, general acceptance and social standing. Official teams were established to come to an ultimate conclusion on those people whose race was unclear. This caused difficulty, especially for coloured people because it separated their families as members were allocated different races. *The Group Areas Act of 1950* assigned racial groups to different
residential and business sections in urban areas in a system of urban apartheid until
1950, most settlements had people of different races living side by side. This Act
determined where one had to live according to race and put an end to diverse areas.
Each race was allotted its own area, which was used in later years as a basis of forced
removal. As an effect, the non-whites were prohibited in the developed areas which
were assigned to “whites” only. The law led non-whites being forcibly removed from
“wrong” areas. Because of this many non-whites had to cover large distances from
their home in order to work. The non-white majority were given much smaller areas
to live in than the white minority who owned most of the country. Non-whites were
required to carry pass books in order to enter a non-white area. These pass books were
similar to passports that carried information regarding name, race, homeland etc. of
the blacks. The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 formally banned the
Communist Party of South Africa proscribing any party or group subscribing to the
ideology of communism. According to this Act, communism encouraged feelings of
hostility between Europeans and non-Europeans. The Bantu Building Workers Act of
1951 legalized the training of blacks in skilled labour in the construction industry but
limited the places in which they were permitted to work. The Separate Representation
of Voters Act of 1951 removed all non-white people from the voters’ roll and revoked
the Cape Qualified Franchise System. The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951
authorized the forcible removal of squatting communities. It allowed eviction and
destruction of homes of squatters of landowner’s local authorities and government
officials. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 created the legal basis for the deportation
of blacks into designated homeland reserve areas and established tribal, regional and
territorial authorities. The Natives Laws Act of 1952 was an amendment in the Group
Areas Act and it limited the category of blacks who had the right to permanent
residence in urban areas. The Pass Laws Act of 1952 was a system designed to
segregate the population. Passes were a form of passports carried by the non-
Europeans. They carried information like name, age, sex, race etc., and non-
Europeans had to carry it with them all the time when they were out of their
homelands. Non-Europeans kept their passes in order and they were permitted to
work only if their passes were stamped with a work permit. This was a passport of
their existence. The black population was required to carry these pass books with
them when outside their designated area. Failure to produce a pass book often resulted
in the person being arrested. Any white person could ask a black to produce his or her
pass. *The Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act of 1953* provided for the prevention and settlement of native labour disputes. The effect of the law was to prohibit strike action by Africans. *The Bantu Education Act of 1953* enforced racially separated education facilities. According to this act, blacks were not allowed to hold certain positions in society and so education for such positions was not deemed necessary. *The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953* legalized the racial segregation of public premises, vehicles and services. Only public roads and streets were excluded from the Act. This Act imposed segregation for taxis, ambulances, hearses, buses, trains, elevators, benches, lavatories, parks, church halls, town halls, cinemas, theaters etc. Signboards such as “white only” applied to public areas, even including park benches. Black people were provided services greatly inferior to those to whites, and to a lesser extent, to those of Indians and coloured people. *The Natives Resettlement Act of 1954* permitted the removal of blacks from any area within and next to the district of Johannesburg by the South African government. *The Group Area Development Act of 1954* excluded non-whites from living in the most developed area, which were restricted to whites. *The Natives (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act of 1956* deprived Africans of the right to appeal in the courts by means of an interdict or any legal process against forced removals. *The Bantu Investment Corporation Act of 1959* enabled the government to set up and capitalize individual entrepreneurs and a Development Corporation in each of the Bantu Homelands. *The Extension of University Education Act of 1959* made a criminal offence for a non-white student to register at a formerly open university without the written permission of the Minister of Internal Affairs. *The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959* allowed the transformation of reserves into “fully fledged independent Bantustans”. *The Coloured Persons Communal Reserves Act of 1961* was exacted to apply the *Mission Stations and Communal Reserves Act of 1909*, of the Cape of Good Hope, to coloured person settlement area. *The Preservation of Coloured Areas Act of 1961* preserved the settlements of the colored people in South Africa. *The Urban Bantu Councils of 1961* created black councils in urban areas that were supposed to be tied to the authorities running the related ethnic homeland. *The Terrorism Act of 1967* allowed for indefinite detention without trial and established BOSS (The Bureau of State Security) which was responsible for the internal security of South Africa.
1.2.1 WOMEN DURING APARTHEID

Apartheid and Colonialism had a major impact on women since they suffered both racial and gender discrimination. Oppression against African women was different from discrimination against men. They had very few or no legal rights, no right to own property and no access to education. They found it very difficult to get a job but many African women worked as agricultural or domestic workers though wages were extremely low. Mortality rates were very high. Children suffered from diseases caused by malnutrition and sanitary problems. The controlled movement of African workers within the country and the pass laws separated family members as men usually worked in urban areas, while women were forced to stay in rural areas. Marriage laws and births were also controlled by the government. Chinese South Africans who were descendants of migrant workers were classified as “Other Asian” and hence “non-white”, whereas immigrants from Japan and Taiwan, with which South Africa maintained diplomatic and economic relations, were considered “honorary whites” with the same privileges as normal whites.

1.2.2 EFFECTS OF APARTHEID ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA

At the core of South Africa’s system of apartheid lies the need for a cheap and constant supply of labour in order to ensure the continued exploitation of and profit from, the country’s great mineral wealth. Gold, diamonds, uranium, copper, manganese, platinum and vanadium lie in critical qualities beneath its soil, making South Africa vitally important to most of the industrialized countries of the world. The labour force used to extract these resources has been found within the African population, and in order to maintain it, the South African regime has found it necessary to exert considerable control over its black population. The list of inequities suffered by black South Africans is a lengthy one. Whites, for example, consume 60 percent of the nation’s income, occupy 86.5 percent of its land, are eligible for free and compulsory education, enjoy extremely good health and live, for the most part, in luxurious homes with the service of poorly paid domestic workers. Africans, on the other hand, do not have free or compulsory education. A limited number of schools cater to only a small percentage of the African population and follow a different and grossly inferior syllabus. The pupil-teacher ratio is roughly 50 to 1 for Africans and 20 to 1 for whites. The housing provided for Africans in the towns is inadequate,
lacking running water or electricity. The overcrowded and sparse conditions add to the hardships of town life in general. Poverty causes extensive malnutrition and disease. The medical service provided in the towns is inadequate, while that provided for the rural population is extremely limited. The effect of this situation is reflected in the high infant mortality rate, which is estimated at five times that of the white population.

Although the policies of apartheid are detrimental to the whole black population, it is the women who are most affected. While men constitute the majority of the cheap labour force, women are relegated to a shadowy position, expected to remain in the reserves and to support their families without the help of their men folk. This creates special problems for women, who already suffer discrimination based on their sex.

1.2.3 THE EFFECT OF APARTHEID ON WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

African women in South Africa, being both black and female, suffer a triple oppression. As Africans – which for the most part defines their class position – they have to contend with the restrictive and repressive apartheid legislation, which ensures alien control over all facets of their lives. In addition, as women, they have to contend with the fact that they are regarded as dependents on and as inferior to men; as such, they are even further discriminated against within the framework of apartheid.

1.2.4 THE RESERVES OR BANTUSTANS

The rapid deterioration of the economic and social role of women since the establishment of apartheid has increased their workload to inhuman proportions as they try to produce enough from the land to feed their families. With the men off working as migrant labourers, the women face an arduous existence, working at their daily chores in the home and in the field. The system of apartheid has therefore evolved, with its extensive laws, in order to establish control over every facet of the lives of the African members of the population. The fundamental characteristic of this system is that its legal structure, as well as its political and economic structure, is firmly based on racial discrimination. The ideology of racism provides justification for, and reinforces, the extreme inequality that persists in South Africa.

The population figures for South Africa give some indication of the extent of this inequality. In mid-1977 the South African Government estimated the population
at 26,946,000 comprising four official population groups: 19,369,500 Africans, 4,379,000 Whites, 2,432,000 Coloured and 765,000 Asians. Of these, only the whites are permitted to elect the Government, which is entirely white, and the whites alone promulgate the laws.

Two of the most far-reaching aspects of apartheid are the system of migrant labour and the establishment of Bantustans, or reserves, for blacks, based on the premise that Africans can live in a white urban or rural area only in order to sell their labour. When they are no longer considered economically productive, they are expected to return to the reserves to live with their families, who are not allowed to accompany them to the white areas but must remain in the reserves, subsisting on the land. The reserves are enclaves located in various parts of the country; together they constitute only 13.5 percent of the territory.

Because it is impossible to live off the land, which is generally non-arable, and because of heavy taxation, African men have been forced to seek work in the white areas. This need is backed by laws that require every adult male to register for work with a labour bureau. Those African men who have permanent residential status in the urban areas represent a small minority and must, in general, live without their families, since their wives are seldom given permission to join them.

Every African, male or female, must carry a “pass” from the age of 16. This document must be kept in his or her possession at all times, since it indicates whether or not the bearer is lawfully in a particular area. If not, he or she is subject to immediate arrest. The pass laws enable the Government to regulate the flow of Africans into the white areas. Africans are not permitted in those areas without a pass unless born there or unless they have worked there continuously.

The absence of men from the rural areas when they are “on contract,” working as poorly paid migrant labourers, has an extremely adverse effect on the women left behind in the reserves. One of the rationales for paying such extremely low wages to African migrant workers is the assumption that the wives and children of these so-called migrants remain in the reserves and secure their families’ subsistence from the land. The employers are able to get away with these low wages, which are consistently below the Poverty Datum Line – that is, not enough for basic subsistence – because the wives and children of the workers live in the reserves and are expected to provide for their own subsistence.
However, it is impossible for the four million women, children and old people who live on the reserves – which constitute only 13.5 percent of the total area of South Africa – to subsist on them. Land hunger is chronic in these areas, with the result that agricultural production has stagnated or declined over the years. In addition, women’s work has been extended to include all of the work involved in cultivation, as well as such tasks as preparing mud for hut walls and thatch for roofs and raising cattle, a time consuming task, since, in addition to milking the cows twice a day, the cattle need to be taken out to graze every morning, brought back at sunset and closed in byres at night.

While it is not possible to survive solely off the land, neither are the wages paid the migrant workers sufficient to supplement the reserve incomes. In order to set aside a portion of their hard-earned wages to send home, migrants have to make a considerable personal sacrifice. Even with the best of intentions, these contributions cannot do much to alleviate the harsh conditions of those remaining behind. The supplements are generally erratic and of varying amounts; some simply never arrive. Large numbers of families are forced to subsist without them, and no rural community is exempt from the problems caused by lack of financial support from male relatives working on contract.

The effect of migrant labour on women and their families does not stop at economic hardship. Women also experience considerable emotional stress in living apart from their men folk and having to bring up their children alone.

The disruption of family life is one of the cruelest aspects of apartheid. Men are forced to stay away for months on end, at best returning for a few weeks a year, but often not seeing their family for years at a time. They become alienated and set up a new life in the towns, while their wives wait month after month hoping for a letter and for money.

Despite the suffering that women must undergo through the break-up of their families, many understand that it is not their husbands but the social conditions resulting from the apartheid laws that are responsible.

The men suffer too. Not all those living in the towns break ties with their families in the rural areas. Then there are large numbers of migrant workers who never see the urban centers. As they are shunted from the reserves to mining
compounds, where they have little contact with women, they experience great loneliness and count the days when they can return home even for a short visit.

1.2.5 RESETTLEMENT CAMPS

One of the most inhuman expressions of the policies of the apartheid regime is the programme of resettlement, under which over two million people have been removed to remote, undeveloped areas of the reserves. This is done by the Government to eliminate so called “black spots”, pockets of land owned by Africans in areas declared “white” by the Government or areas considered too close to white-owned farms or towns. Forced removals also take place under influx control laws, in order to reduce the number of Africans living in white urban areas. “Non-productive” Africans must leave, and if such individuals have no homes or families, the only alternative is a resettlement camp.

It has been estimated that the resettlement villages or camps will eventually hold close to four million people. Once again, it is the women who have been hardest hit by these policies. Considered fundamentally non-productive, they constitute the majority of those being expelled from the urban areas. When communities are uprooted, the already small male population is further diminished as men leave to seek work because of the increased level of poverty.

1.2.6 THE EFFECT OF APARTHEID ON WOMEN IN URBAN AREAS

Permission for an African to reside in a “prescribed” urban area in South Africa has to be granted; it is not a right. An African must be there for one specific purpose – namely, to provide labour for the industrial sector. This fact gives direction to much of the apartheid law, with the result that three million so-called “superfluous” Africans have been expelled from the urban areas since 1970. The majority of these people, judged to have no useful purpose, are women.

Every effort is made to keep African women out of the urban or prescribed areas. The laws and regulations governing their movement in the urban areas are so extensive, pervasive and intricate and are so arbitrarily and indifferently carried out by the government officials that only a small proportion of women can be considered settled “urban dwellers”. The rest are confronted with the daily possibility of being “endorsed out” and sent back to the area in which they were born, even if they have lost all ties with that area, or of being considered “displaced” and sent to resettlement camps.
The key to legal residency in the urban areas is to be a “section tenner,” that is, to qualify under section 10 of the Bantu (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1925, as amended by the Bantu Laws Amendment Act of 1964. Section 10 governs the right of an African to be in a prescribed area, and sets down the conditions under which he or she may remain there. While under “Section 10” an African is permitted to be in a white urban area, his or her status is not necessarily permanent or secure. The subdivisions to Section 10 of the Act dictate the level of permanence:

*Section 10 (a)* covers those who were born in the urban area and have lived there continuously since birth. There are cases of children losing their 10(a) status because they were sent to relatives in the reserves while their mother was working;

*Section 10 (b)* covers those who have worked for 10 years continuously for the same employer or who have lived lawfully and continuously for 15 years in such an area. A term of imprisonment exceeding six months will rescind this status;

*Section 10 (c)* covers wives of men who qualify under Section 10(a) or 10(b) and entered the area legally and “ordinarily reside” with their husbands.

Because of the embargo on the entry of women into the urban areas, it is extremely difficult for a man to bring his wife from outside the area to live legally with him. In addition, the phrase “ordinarily resides” implies that a wife is living with her lawful husband in quarters that are considered suitable for married people. She cannot claim this if he is an officially resident in a hostel or in authorized accommodation on his employer’s premises.

It is not difficult to appreciate how insecure even those who appear to have every reason to remain in the city must feel, for the legal status of a woman may be rescinded in a moment on a large variety of pretexts. She can retain her legality only as long as her husband does not divorce her, desert her or die, and as long as she does not lose her job and is not classified as “idle”. Strict enforcement of Section 10 regulations results in greater hardships for women than for men.

For instance, women have not been lawfully able to enter an urban area for more than 72 hours in over a decade. A woman might therefore have remained in the area for any number of years without problem and suddenly be forced out if discovered. Few women are able to qualify under Section 10(a) or (b) of the Urban
Areas Act. Many have spent disqualifying periods away from the area, and employment opportunities are very limited for women. Marriage to a qualified African does not legalize her status, regardless of how many years she has been married, if her first entry was unlawful. Marriage can in fact have the reverse effect for women who qualify in terms of their fathers’ status. Unless she qualifies in her own right, a woman will lose that status if she marries an unqualified man. If her husband lives in a different urban area and she goes to live with him there, she will lose any qualifications she may have under Section 10(a) or (b) without necessarily gaining a new one under section 10 (c).

In addition, the Government’s ability to declare an individual as an “idle” person provides a convenient catch-all for declaring many more people—especially women—unqualified. It is possible to be declared “idle” or “undesirable” for a wide range of reasons, for example, if a person who is over the age of 15 and under the age of 60 (for a woman) or 65 (for a man) and is capable of working is normally unemployed.

Since it is legally the responsibility of the persons declared idle to prove that they have a right to be in a particular area, officials have considerable latitude and power in applying the law and are thus able to undermine the already fragile hold that Africans, particularly women, have on remaining in a prescribed area.

The lives of women living both legally and illegally in the urban areas are further complicated by the chronic shortage of housing for Africans in urban areas. Since June 1968, it has been impossible for an African to buy a house in an urban area. Africans have only been able to rent their houses, and houses bought in accordance with prior regulations could only be sold to the local authorities; they could not be inherited by members of the owner’s family. There are also numerous restrictions limiting the number of people able to apply for a house. Only male heads of family over the age of 21 are entitled to a house, and they must have dependents that are lawfully in the area.

If all the conditions and documentation required for the application for a house are fulfilled, the family then has to wait for four to five years or, maybe longer, for the actual allocation of a house. In the meanwhile, they will live as lodgers, again with the appropriate permits, in the homes of others (who themselves must have permits to take on lodgers). The overcrowded conditions for all concerned, place a strain on daily life.
The allocation of a house, however, does not mean that a family is automatically reunited. The clue to who lives in a house lies with the names listed on the original application. If children were away at school, for instance, at the time their parents applied for a house, their names would not be included on the house permit. Others might have been living with relatives in the rural areas. Once parents are finally given their house, permission to have their children with them is very often refused.

Unless a woman is qualified to be a resident of an urban area in her own right, she will find herself without a roof over head should she be deserted, divorced or widowed. Unqualified women are not allowed to remain in their homes, even if they have dependent children and are able to pay the rent. If a woman has an adult son residing with her, she may be permitted to take over the tenancy. If he is not, the family will either be allowed to stay and seek lodgings or will be “endorsed out” to a reserve area at the discretion of petty government officials.

A divorced woman may be given permission to stay on in her home only if she was not the guilty party in the divorce suit and has been granted custody of her children, if she qualifies in her own right to remain in town, if she can pay the rent and if her former husband has agreed to vacate the house. If he has remarried immediately, he may choose to remain in the house with his new wife.

For those who do not qualify for family housing the choice is between living as registered lodgers in other people’s already overcrowded houses or in singles quarters, where available.

As children cannot live with their mothers as lodgers, they must be sent “back” to the reserves, even if they have no contact with people there. African women living illegally with their children are in constant fear that they will be found out. To make matters worse, in order to register a child for school, parents must obtain a “pink card,” which is issued only for children listed on a residential permit and which is impossible to procure if the mother is living illegally in the urban areas.

The situation forces a woman into an exaggerated dependence on her husband. Many a woman finds herself prolonging an unhappy marriage and tolerating her husband’s behaviour – afraid that he might desert or divorce her – rather than risk the consequences.
As a result of these restrictions, a rapid growth in the number of squatter camps has taken place, particularly in Cape Town, which was declared a “Coloured preferential area” in 1966. Since it is even more difficult for African women to get permission to remain in this area, many have chosen to live in a constant state of insecurity as long as they can maintain some semblance of family life. Squatter camps such as Modderdam, Unibel and Crossroads have flourished, as men have left their singles quarters in nearby townships and together with their wives and children built small shacks out of whatever material was available. The first two camps were razed by government bulldozers, but Crossroads, with a population of some 20,000 still stands. The Government appears wary of the bad publicity that would ensue if it razed this one as well, and after much pressure has promised new housing for those “legally” in the area.

The people of Crossroads, while risking arrest and suffering hardships, have established a tightly knit community of families that have managed to organize most of the basic services for themselves. Crossroads’ very existence is an act of defiance, particularly on the part of the women who, more than the men, risk arrest and further dislocation.

In summary, the African women in the urban areas of South Africa are not tolerated in the towns because their labour cannot be exploited sufficiently to satisfy the needs of the white capitalist sector. Nor are they able to survive in the rural areas. An end to this dilemma will come only with an end to the repressive system that has created these restrictions.

1.2.7 WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Despite the efforts of the Government to keep the African women in South Africa out of the wage labour market, the number of employed women has been growing. Driven off the land by its inability to provide subsistence, women, like their men before them, have taken the route to the urban areas or onto white farms – more often than not, illegally.

The point has now been reached where one out of three African workers is a woman. In general, women holds the most unskilled or semiskilled jobs, and when they do the same work as men they earn considerably less. Of the 1,508,080 women workers who were employed in 1970, the majority were service workers, mainly
domestic servants, numbering 724,020, or farm workers, totaling 655,040. Both of these areas of work exclude unemployment benefits or other forms of social security and are exempt from minimum wage guidelines. Furthermore, the average earnings of African women are less than half those of African male workers and amount to only 8 per cent of the income of white males.

1.2.8 AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Farm workers are among the lowest paid of all workers in South Africa, and once again women workers receive even less than men. Whenever possible, men seek other forms of employment, but as women seldom have this option, they have increasingly been drawn to the white farms. Many of the women feel that because they are illiterate, they could not be hired as industrial workers.

Since the early 1960s “squatters” and labour tenants on white farms have been forced to move. White farms and estates have increased in size, eliminating small peasant holdings as they move towards increased mechanization. The white farms and estates need seasonal workers at harvest time and during other periods of intensive work; thus, the demand for permanent employees is decreasing. It is the fortunate few who have been able to find employment at all. Farm wages are pitiful and, on many farms, blacks are paid solely in kind, either in the form of corn meal, the staple food, or part of the crop harvested. Women constitute the majority of casual farm workers.

1.2.9 DOMESTIC SERVICE WORKERS

A considerably larger proportion of women than men are service workers in South Africa (716,700 women as compared to 295,240 men, according to the 1970 census). Women domestic workers have to carry the double burden of their own and their employer’s household chores, as well as the worry resulting from having to leave their children at home, often unattended.

As in most other areas of the economy, the number of people employed in domestic service is on the decline. With the economic squeeze that came in the 1970s, domestic workers came to be regarded as a luxury, and in many instances domestic workers have to accept lower wages or work fewer hours in order to retain their jobs and the permits needed to remain in the urban areas.

There are many restrictions placed on their lives. Women who live at the homes of employers cannot have their husbands stay over for even one night, even
though their rooms would either be separate from the main house or would have a separate entrance. Those who do so illegally run the risk of being caught in one of the regular police raids of domestic servants’ quarters. Even in situations where both husband and wife are domestic workers within the same area, and their respective employers are agreeable, it is still against the law for the couple to live together. To strengthen the intent of this law, a government proclamation now makes the employer subject to a fine, should a domestic worker’s husband or children be found with her overnight.

1.2.10 INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

During the past 30 years the composition of the industrial work-force has undergone considerable change. It was initially made up of a large number of white women who have since been replaced by skilled and semi-skilled black workers throughout the secondary industry. By 1970, only 4 percent of the production workers were white women, 50 percent were coloured women and 31.4 percent were African women. This situation is reflected in the food, beverage, liquor, tobacco, clothing and foot-wear industries. Of the total number of workers in manufacturing industries, one out of every five is a woman. However, of the 214,000 women workers, only 70,000 are Africans. Women are concentrated in certain industries, particularly, clothing, textiles, food processing and canning, and their wages are lower than those of their male counterparts. In the textile industry, women are paid 20 percent less than the industrial minimum wage. Not only is equal pay not guaranteed by law, it is against government policy, which is consistently defended by government officials.

As part of the minimal development programmes for the reserves areas, so-called “border” industries have been planned with the intention of providing work for reserve area residents just outside—one the “borders”—of the Bantustans. In fact, only a few such factories have been built, and many of the border factories that do exist have been built by employers eager to escape the wage determinations which lay down minimum wages—meager as they are—in the major industrial areas.

1.2.11 SKILLED AND PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

The small number of women professional and clerical workers reflects the basic lack of education provided to both African males and females and the very small percentage which reach University level, as well as the lack of opportunity open to those with an education.
There are two areas of professional work where women figure prominently – namely, teaching and nursing. However, as recently as 1973, there were no African women lawyers, judges, magistrates, engineers, architects, chemists, pharmacists or veterinary surgeons. Even for professional employment, women doing the same work as men receive less remuneration.

Further discrimination against women can be found in situations not related to wages. For instance, there is a regulation that prevents an African woman from continuing to be employed in the public service and at black university colleges once she marries – a condition that is not applied to male employees.

1.2.12 UNEMPLOYMENT

Whatever the field of work, both women and men are affected by the high rates of unemployment. An assessment by a South African economist of the unemployment question paints a gloomy picture:

“More than half of the black workers who have come onto the labour market since 1970 are still without work… No less than 57 percent of the increase in the African labour force between 1970 and 1976 has remained unemployed. Add to this that the unemployed are mainly the young people and that the bulk of those that are unemployed are under the age of 30, and it is clear that a situation is being created that bodes ill for the country.” (A. Jacobs, Rand Daily Mail, 19 October, 1978)

The rapidly rising unemployment rate has a spiral effect on employed women. Not only are they losing their jobs in large numbers, but women from the reserves whose husbands have lost their jobs are now seeking employment in order to alleviate the situation, thus creating even greater competition than before. In some cases, men are being hurt more than women, as factories choose to replace male workers with female workers because of the lower salary scales for the latter.

The apartheid Government’s solution to the problem of unemployment does not, as can be anticipated, lie in the transformation of the society. Government supporters, for instance, cite other solutions, such as the statement made by the General Secretary of the white-controlled Trade Union Congress, Arthur Grobbelaar: “The long-term solution is birth control.”
1.2.13 WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Social security is provided at such a negligible level in South Africa to African individuals and families that it makes little, if any, impact on the conditions of life. Only a small number of people fall within the requirements that make them eligible for such benefits. The assumption of the capitalist sector and the Government that justifies the lack of provision of such services parallels the rationale for cheap labour: the subsistence sector will provide for itself. But the poverty of the subsistence sector, as described earlier, leaves no doubt that reserve families are incapable of providing such services.

The limitations on those who qualify for unemployment insurance, for instance, are severe. Among those excluded are: (a) those earning less than 10.50 rand per week, or less than 564.34 rand per year; (b) domestic workers and agricultural workers (and hence the majority of women workers); and (c) seasonal workers and those whose earnings are calculated on a commission basis. The benefits paid amount to 45 percent of the weekly earnings, for a maximum of 26 weeks per year.

But even those Africans fortunate enough to be eligible find many obstacles in their way. In one town people have been signing up for unemployment benefits for months, some since the beginning of the previous year, without receiving any money. In Natal people were prevented from applying for unemployment insurance because the Department of Labour had run out of forms. Others have complained that they were sent on interviews for jobs for which they were unqualified or which had already been filled and that they were deliberately being kept on the move to prevent them from applying for benefits. As the rate of unemployment has increased, so have such abuses.

Old age pensions are even more restricted. As of October, 1978, the maximum monthly pension for Africans was 23.75 rand, compared to 88 rand for whites. In order to qualify for pensions in the urban areas, the applicant must prove that he or she is living there lawfully, which necessitates that his or her name is listed on a residential or lodgers’ permit. Many old people are simply not able to provide documentary proof of their age, and even when pension has been approved, an individual can find it withdrawn after a period of time because the district administrator suddenly decided that the proof was insufficient.
Because of the principle that the aged must return to the reserve areas, facilities for their care in the urban areas are totally inadequate. Official policy concerning the provision of oldie homes is that these should be built in the Bantustans, where they are the responsibility of the Bantustan “government”.

Only four homes for the elderly exist in the urban areas, and not even one home has been provided in Soweto, the largest African township in the country.

1.2.14 WOMEN AND HEALTH

The white population of South Africa enjoys an extremely high standard of health care. There are no malnutrition diseases to be found among them, there is a more than adequate supply of doctors per thousand population and the hospitals have gained a high reputation in the treatment of patients—white patients. The infant-mortality rate among South African white—20.9 per 1,000 live births in 1971—is only slightly higher than that of such countries as the United States, Canada and Great Britain.

The fact, therefore, that the African population of South Africa suffers under some of the worst conditions of health in the world is clearly an outcome of the apartheid social order. The infant-mortality rate of this population tells the story: in 1969 the rate recorded in the Transvaal, for example, was 216 per 1,000 live births.

Among the African population of South Africa malnutrition has reached epidemic proportions. Malnutrition takes the form of kwashiorkor (a disease resulting from protein deficiency and characterized by swelling of the stomach and limbs), marasmus, pellagra and less commonly, rickets, scurvy, ben-ben and anemia. Communicable diseases play havoc with malnourished young bodies, so that a high rate of tuberculosis, typhoid, tetanus, measles, polio, diphtheria, hepatitis and pertussis is common.

As women are responsible for feeding their children and many families are without fathers, it is the women who must face the ordeal of watching their children fall ill when only minimal health services are available and there is no money to pay for such services anyway. In addition, malnutrition has extremely serious effects on the health of pregnant women and on foetal development.

But it is not only a person’s physical health that suffers so grossly under apartheid. As a World Health Organisation study noted:
“It is unthinkable that racism would be without implications for mental health. Healthy mental functioning and personality development depend on the presence and continuity of such essential experiences as the individual’s sense of security and worth, freedom for personal growth and identification with a community of equals. Racism undercuts at the roots of healthy mental life by depriving its victims of these experiences and by conditioning them into accepting the myth that the cause of their inferior status in society lies irrevocably within themselves.”

Migrant labour is the cause of much of the mental illness experienced by Africans, particularly women; the pass laws and other restrictions have maintained a high level of pressure and insecurity for the African population; and hypertension, which is usually associated with psychological stress, is extremely common among Africans living in the urban areas.

1.2.15 WOMEN AND EDUCATION

The goal of establishing a separate educational system for African children was clearly and unambiguously stated in 1954 by Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, who later became Prime Minister of South Africa.

While the position of women in relation to men in South Africa parallels that of women in other parts of the world and particularly in other parts of Africa, the process of working towards equality for women has been stultified by apartheid and racism. Apartheid permeates controls and distorts all facets of the lives of African women, making it impossible for them to benefit from even the most minimal kinds of programmes being instituted elsewhere. It is clear, therefore, that to begin to encourage the women of South Africa to play an equal role in the political, economic and social structures of their country, the present apartheid system must be abolished and replaced by a government and a social order in which women are able to participate fully. Women’s crucial and positive role in the fight to eradicate the existing oppressive regime testifies to the fact that they can continue to contribute effectively to the restructuring of a new society.

1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present study examines the nature of Apartheid in South Africa before and after the nation attained political independence in 1994. The literary texts chosen for this purpose include four novels- Alan Paton’s Cry, the Beloved Country, J.M.
Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, Zakes Mda’s *Ways of Dying* and Mark Mathabane’s *Kaffir Boy*. All these four novels selected for the study deal with the theme of South African Apartheid in a realistic manner. For the analysis of these texts of realistic fiction, semiotics has been employed. Therefore, the kind of literature on pre and post apartheid South Africa and on the four mentioned novels needs a critical attention. The scholarly literature available on apartheid in South Africa is largely focused on apartheid laws and political and social problems faced by the people of South Africa but none of them relate apartheid with semiotic codes and archetypes.

Martine Mariotti in “*Labor Markets during Apartheid in South Africa*” talks about how labour market pressure in the late 1960s/early 1970s caused a dramatic unraveling of apartheid in the workplace. Increased educational attainment among whites reduced resistance to opening semi-skilled jobs to Africans. This institutional change reflected white economic preferences rather than a relaxation of attitudes towards apartheid. This research shows that whites benefited from the relaxation of job reservation rules and this is the primary cause of black occupations advancement. Hilton Robert Kolbe in “*The South African Print Media; From Apartheid to Transformation*” talks about the role of the mainstream South African print media in perpetuating discrimination during the years of legalized racial discrimination—commonly known as apartheid. Against a historical background, this study focuses on the agenda and efforts of the mainstream metropolitan print media during the apartheid era, the build up to the first non-racial elections, and the media’s role in the immediate post-apartheid era. Writing in the same vein, Andries du Toit and David Neves in “*Informal Social Protection in Post-Apartheid Migrant Networks: Vulnerability, Social Networks and Reciprocal Exchange in the Eastern and Western Cape, South Africa,*” considers the dynamics of informal social protection in the context of chronic poverty and vulnerability in post apartheid migrant networks. This study argues that in poor and marginalized households in South Africa, the indirect impacts of social grants cannot be adequately understood by focusing simply on either individual or household decision making. Instead, the study concentrates on the central role of the elaborate and spatially extended network of reciprocal exchange within the informal social protection systems. Another paper, “*Post-Apartheid South Africa: Poverty and Distribution Trends in an Era of Globalization*”, by Servaas van der Berg, Ronelle Burger and Megan Louw deals with the problem of poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. South Africa’s transition to democracy in 1994 created new possibilities for economic policy. Economic
liberalization brought sustained, if unspectacular, growth that reversed the long
decline in per capita incomes, but left scars in much job shedding associated with
business become internationally competitive. Disappointing employment growth in
the face of an expanding labour force led rising unemployment. However, using
poverty estimates from a combination of sources, this study demonstrates that
poverty nevertheless declined quite substantially after the turn of the century. Written
in the same vein, Susan Paenell and Keith Beavon in “Urban Land Restitution in
Post-Apartheid South Africa: Questions from the Johannesburg Inner City” draws
attention to the folly of compensating property owners tenants.

There are some researches available on Alan Paton and his novel Cry, the
Beloved Country. R.W.H. Holland in “Fiction and History: Fact and Invention in
Alan Paton’s novel Cry, the Beloved Country,” talks about fact and invention and
fiction and history in Alan Paton’s novel Cry, the Beloved Country. Cry, the Beloved
Country talks about the South Africa’s infamous system of enforced racial
segregation, apartheid. The novel is fictitious but it tells about the South Africa during
apartheid. Cry, the Beloved Country is to be seen as having both social and fictional
record. Kevin R.Cox in “Urbanization in South Africa and the Changing Character of
Migrant Labor” talks about the Migrant Labour. Migrant Labour has a very long
history in South Africa, and a substantial literature has developed around it and its
socio-political significance. For at least the past century it has been a major feature of
the country’s social landscape. Although it has always been primarily an African
experience, it has certainly undergone change over that period of time. As Africans
were more and more confined to the native reserves, so it started becoming a chronic
feature of existence, indeed to the extent that many Africans began to settle
permanently in the urban areas. Among other things this promoted something of a
moral panic which features centrally in Alan Paton’s novel Cry, the Beloved Country,
written just prior to the coming to power of the National Party, the party of apartheid,
in 1948. Another paper titled “The Predicated Theme in Alan Paton’s Cry, the
Beloved Country –A Resource for Written Text”, by Maria Martinez Lirola and
Bradley Smith explores the use of predicated Themes in the novel Cry, the Beloved
Country by Alan Paton, using the systemic functional framework of analysis. This
research shows how non canonical structure helps to build the novel’s semantic
textual design. The analysis of the structural component of predicated Themes
(Theme – Rheme and Given New Structures and their interactions) will be essential to
an understanding of the functions these structures and other grammatical resources play in the novel. This is complemented by a paradigmatic view on the use of predicated Themes: that is, we view these structures as the realization of systemic options in the grammar of English, functioning as a resource for the creation of Text. This paper shows how the use of predicated Themes may be related to the discourse functions they serve and thus, ultimately, to the contest of the novel. In Maria Martinez Lirola’s, “A Systemic Functional Approximation to the Use of Cleft Sentences and Reversed Pseudo Cleft Sentences in English in a Narrative Sample Written by the South African Writer Alan Paton” one can find the different aspects of the contents of this work, such as the theoretical model: Systemic Functional Grammar. This linguistic model is characterized by the assumption that the phonological, grammatical and semantic structures of the language are determined by the functions that language performs in society. The social function of language has special importance for Systemic Functional Grammar, and for this reason analysis of text is contextual, since there is a relationship between language and society. Taking into consideration the fundamental aspect of this linguistic school, the research studies in detail, two syntactically marked structures in English: cleft sentences and reversed pseudo-clefts. These structures are studied in two novels written by the African writer Alan Paton: *Cry, the Beloved Country* and *Ah, But Your Land is Beautiful*. This research has taken a language perspective but does not consider the importance of signs or semiotics.

There are numerous works available on J.M. Coetzee and *Disgrace*. For example, “The Fictions of J.M. Coetzee: Master of his Craft?” by Jane Poyner. The study argues that through the portrayal of a sequence of authors – as – protagonists who write from within the apartheid and post-apartheid condition, the South African novelist J.M. Coetzee engages with the ‘paradox of postcolonial authorship’. Taking account of Coetzee’s recent material and adding to ongoing debates, this research traces the non-systematic shifts and transitions in the corpus in which Coetzee rehearses and revises his understanding of the ethics of intellectualism in parallel with the emergence of the ‘new South Africa’. This thesis identifies three general tendencies in the trajectory of the work. Firstly, the early fiction is read within Coetzee’s project of ‘demythologizing history’ as a means of laying bare the ‘madness of civilization’ and thereby exposing colonialist history as another
ideologically inflected discourse. The middle phrase engages with debates about the limits of representing the racial Other. Finally, published on the cusp of regime change, and then post-apartheid, the later novels are read as confessions in which the figure of the angstridden and dislocated white writers strives for reconciliation. The writer assesses how successfully, as a member of white academic elite in South Africa, Coetzee accommodates his various roles as author, public intellectual and citizen. Laurence Wright in “David Lurie’s Learning and the Meaning of Disgrace” talks about David Lurie. One of the teasing characteristics of novels soused in literariness, like J.M. Coetzee’s, is their tendency to leak, to bleed, into vast inchoate terrains of intertextuality. The reader is constantly challenged to measure and assess their implications within or against the frail containing form of the story, much as Russian formalism taught us to keep fable in perpetual dialogue. However, it has become apparent that in the dense thickets of commentary occasioned by Coetzee’s most controversial novel, Disgrace (1999), insufficient attention has been paid to the intertextual implications of David Lurie’s learning, his scholarly preoccupations. Both these researches deals only with one or two aspect of Coetzee and his novels and there are certain limitations in them. Another research is by Marina Susan Kok, titled “An Investigation of Masculinity in J.M. Coetzee’s Disgrace”. The study of Masculinity is a fairly new phenomenon which developed as a refinement of gender studies. The Theoretical frame works on masculinity are still under development and are often severely contested. This study proposes to examine the dynamics of Masculine studies, critiquing the notion of ‘masculinity in crises’. This study aims to examine the masculine identities represented in Disgrace and to test whether they are better understood through the lens of masculine theory. Another paper is “J.M. Coetzee’s Disgrace: A Post-apartheid Perspective” by R.L. Sharma. This paper seeks to analyze J.M. Coetzee’s 1999 Booker Prize winning novel Disgrace from a post-apartheid perspective after foregrounding its political and post-colonial implications. According to him, viewed in the light of the post-apartheid era of South Africa, the term ‘post-colonial’ signifies “the post-independence period” in the history of a colonized nation as it deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. J.M. Coetzee’s novel Disgrace powerfully portrays the devastating aftermath of
colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. In the post-apartheid South Africa the blacks have started turning hostile. It is because the decolonization is not an easy process. Being “violent”, “difficult” and “ugly”, decolonization takes its toll. Disgrace highlights the brutalities of the long-oppressed blacks against the once authoritative whites. Writing in the same vein, Ajayan in “Evil, Torture and Suffering in Coetzee’s Fiction” seeks to analyze J.M. Coetzee’s various fictions such as Waiting for the Barbarians, Disgrace, In the Hearth of the Country etc. in the light of evil, torture and suffering. Coetzee has crafted a few novels which probe into the psyche of the oppressor as well as the oppressed. Explaining the workings of the mind of the powerful that delight in torturing the powerless and the inexpressible pain and suffering of their hapless victims Coetzee demonstrates the dark power of evil, the savage in all of us, the destructive element of human civilization. Like all other studies, this study has certain gaps and deals only with few thematic perspectives and does not consider language or linguistic perspective as such.

Here are some researches available on Zakes Mda and his novel Ways of Dying. Irene Visser and Heidi van den Heuvel- Discer in “Family Fictions: The family in Contemporary Postcolonial Literatures in English” talks about the condition of families in post apartheid South Africa. The family whether happy or dreadful – is a vital institution. It is the primary social unit in any community; the individual’s opening into the wider social network. As the first locus of development, the family provides nourishment to the individual and sets the condition of growth. Confronted with the individual’s desire for independence and growth, the family may be metaphorically seen as a closed door or an open door; as a prison or a gateway to freedom. This paper, pose that through the transformation of the family, personal lives find new directions and that from the transformed family, as a basic social force, will come positive change for society as a whole. In suggesting this change, it is important to note, this novel Ways of Dying by Zakes Mda, place great value on the continuation of tradition, in particular through the mysterious and potent forces of traditional art forms. Transmitted through the ancestors, these spiritual and creative forces enable the transformation of the family into a locus of renewed hope, creativity and social engagement. It also briefly explores some aspects of the concept of transformation and their implications of “family and transformation” in this novel. Another research
is by Sue-Ann Anita Foster titled, “Violence, Fantasy, Memory and Testimony in Mda’s Ways of Dying and She plays with the Darkness”. This report analyzes the representation of violence in Zakes Mda’s Ways of Dying and She plays with the Darkness. Ways of Dying questions whether social stability and democracy would be fully realize in post-apartheid South Africa as is predicted in Black South African Literature written between 1970 and 1994. Mda’s disillusionment is shown in his examination of undemocratic and violent practices committed within the liberation movement against the oppressed and of “black – on – black” violence in South Africa. For Mda, however, societies and individuals can be redeemed from violence through memory, testimony, fantasy and art. Another article is by Derek Alan Barker titled, “Escaping the Tyranny of Magic Realism? A Discussion of the Term in Relation to the Novels of Zakes Mda.” Since the demise of apartheid, Zakes Mda has published seven novels; one of them is Ways of Dying. The approaches to Mda’s novels range widely. One term which has been applied to describe his work is magic realism. This article sets out assess the term and its applications to Mda’s novels. It starts by providing an outline of the origin and definition of the term, followed by a brief discussion on some criticisms of its application to African texts, an examination of its application in criticism of Mda’s novels, an outline of oral influences, some suggestions as to why Mda does not always employ this narrative strategy and a brief comparison of Ways of Dying to Cion to illustrate the points raised, and concludes by giving a brief overview of other approaches of his novels and an assessment of the application of the term in criticism of his work. The limitation of this article is that it does not analyze or even touched upon linguistic perspective and deals only with the approach that is magic realism and its applications to Mda’s novels. M.L. Timmerman in “Progress and Preservation : Rites of Passage, Art and Gender in Zakes Mda’s Ways of Dying, She plays with the Darkness and The Heart of Redness” attempts to establish the relation between rites of passage, art and gender in Zakes Mda’s first three novels (Ways of Dying, She plays with the Darkness and The Heart of Redness). In order to establish this relation, the theories of Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner have been applied, combined with South Africa’s socio-political and art-historical background. This study has shown that Mda’s novels provide us with a possible solution to South Africa’s current problems, which is to retain and value its cultural identity and promote gender quality.
There are stray articles on Mark Mathabane and his autobiography *Kaffir Boy*. Sheila M. Poole in “*South African: Youths ignore past. Fall of apartheid taken for granted, writer says*” talks about the ignorance of younger generation about the struggle for freedom. Mathabane, the South African born author of the best seller “*Kaffir Boy*”, said the racist system instituted by the country’s white minority is like a “distant dream” to many youths. Today, black South Africans have access to schools and careers and the seats of government. And while that is promising, it’s also given many a false sense of security that they “have arrived”, he said. This article talks about how young South Africans have ignored their past which is full of struggle against the system of racial discrimination known as apartheid and now they forget their past and feel ashamed of speaking their own tribal language, which now they associate with inferiority. Another article is “*If you Assign My Book, Don’t Censor it*” by Mark Mathabane himself. The school officials at Kearsley High School in Flint, decided to censor “*Kaffir Boy*”, his own story of growing up in a South African ghetto during apartheid. In this article, Mark Mathabane advises people, not to censor his book. Another article is also by Mark Mathabane, “*Whatever happened to the ‘War on Aids’?*”. In this article, Mark Mathabane talks about the problem of AIDS in South Africa. Four out of five South Africans are black, one in four is unemployed and at least one in nine is H.I.V positive. A young South African Women could be expected to be raped twice in her life time on an average. In this article, he talks about war against AIDS and not war against terrorism. Another article is again by Mark Mathabane, “*A Black South African learns Not to Hate*”. In this article, Mark Mathabane talks about the system of racial segregation known as apartheid. According to him, people tend to view the racial divide as caused by others. Blacks blame whites for it, and whites blame blacks. Seldom do they see how their own attitudes and behaviour may contribute to the problem. It is no secret that racial oppression teaches the oppressed to hate often the hating begins in childhood, as it did in his case. But in this article, Mark Mathabane chooses forgiveness over hatred.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the present study is as follows:

1.4.1 SEMIOTICS – THE WORLD OF SIGNS/CODES

The creation of meaning is a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which one is normally unaware. Becoming aware of such codes is both inherently fascinating and intellectually empowering. Semiotics tells us that we live in a world of
signs and we have no way of understanding of anything except through signs and codes into which they are organized. To decline the study of signs is to leave to others the control of the world of meanings in which we inhabit. As Paddy Whannel wittily remarked that “semiotics tells us things we already know in a language we will never understand” (qtd. in Seiter 1992, 31). If we don’t want to accept the postmodernist stance that there is no external reality beyond sign-systems, studying semiotics can assist us to become more aware of the mediating role of signs and the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing social realities. It helps us to know that reality is wholly dependent upon human interpretation. Exploring semiotic perspectives, we may come to realize that meaning is not ‘transmitted’ to us and it is not ‘contained’ in the word or in books, but we actually create it through our signification and interpretation of signs.

Tobin in *Semiotics and Linguistics* sees semiotics as “a general philosophical theory dealing with the production of signs and symbols as part of code systems which are used to communicate information” (6), shifting the focus from individual signs to their combination in code systems. In his own definition, Thomas Sebeok sees semiotics as “sign action the subject matter of which is communication which is concerned with the study of signification” (12-13). In the same vein, Wales sees semiotics as the “analysis of signs and sign systems and their meanings specifically those involved with communication between human in different societies and culture” (416). For Roman Jakobson, semiotics “deals with those general principles which underlie the structure of all signs whatever and with the character of their utilization within messages, as well as with the specifics of the various sign systems and of the diverse messages using those different kinds of signs” (698).

### 1.4.2 HOW MEANING IS CONSTRUCTED?

As already mentioned that we live in a world of signs and we have no way of understanding anything except through signs. However, we cannot study signs in isolation. Since, signs do not occur singly; they occur in groups. A group or set of signs is generally referred to as a code. Therefore, meaning is not transmitted to us in vacuum, but we have to create it through codes. Code, according to Chandler is defined as “a set of practices familiar to users of the medium operating within a broad cultural framework” (148). Hall rightly observes that “there is no intelligible discourse without the operation of a code” (131). The convention of codes represents
a social dimension in semiotics. Therefore, in order to interpret a text properly, the sign receiver has to read signs with reference to appropriate codes which are determined by various contextual cues provided in which they operate. Codes help to organize signs into meaningful systems which co-relate signifiers and signified. According to Eagleton, when applying a code to text, “we need to be careful because we may find that a particular code may have to be revised and transformed. In this situation, continuing to read with the same code may now produce a different text which in turn modifies the code by which we are reading and so on” (123).

- **Interpreting Codes:** Codes originate from the culture and society in general and are therefore dynamic systems that evolve over time. The primary and the most persuasive code in any society is its natural language within which there are many sub codes. However, we cannot study codes in isolation. Just as for the proper understanding of a single sign, a code is required, so as for the proper understanding of a code, a cultural context is required (a set of codes and rules for their use). No culture is made up of only a single isolated code, how complex it may be. Different culture shares different types of codes. Language, food, clothing etc. are the basic code included in every culture. A sign requires knowledge of the appropriate code for interpretation, so a code requires familiarity with the appropriate culture. Signs functions within the system of codes and codes functions within the system of cultures. Therefore, codes are historically as well as socio-culturally situated. The interpretation of any text is likely to change, as interpretive codes evolve. This is the reason the interpretation of the same text may differ from culture to culture. Consequently, a major objective of semiotic study is to seek to identify the code within which the production and interpretation of meaning in any text is achieved.

### 1.5 HYPOTHESIS

To examine the nature of Apartheid in South Africa before and after the nation attained political independence in 1994 and to explicate signs and codes embedded in culture in representational texts:
• *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948/2002) by Alan Paton;

• *Kaffir Boy* (1986) by Mark Mathabane;

• *Ways of Dying* (1991/95) by Zakes Mda; and

• *Disgrace* (1999/2000) by J.M. Coetzee

The selection of the texts is based on the following facts:

(a) These novels can be treated in accordance with the chronology of their production or publication and their being pre-Apartheid, Apartheid and post-Apartheid.

(b) The theme of South African Apartheid is dealt in a realistic manner in these texts.

(c) These texts provide a qualitative ground and potential for semiotic analysis.

Against the above backdrop the present study which deals with the issue of Apartheid in South Africa, six (6) chapters shall form the schema:

Chapter 1 which is an introduction provides the background to Apartheid in South Africa before and after the political independence attained by South Africa in 1994 and the novels selected for the present study mainly deal with this theme. It logs a diachronic account of the South African Apartheid with reference to the theoretical approach, hypothesis, aims and objectives, methodology, tools of application of the research problem and the need for study.

Chapter 2 presents the conceptual or theoretical framework evolved for an analytical study of each of the four selected novels with the approach of Semiotics. Semiotics or Semiology is a scientific study of the role of signs in society. The domain of Semiotics is quite new and its application in relation to fictional analysis of the selected texts opens new dimensions of unraveling the inherent meaning of the novels.

Chapter 3 scales a semiotic analysis of Alan Paton’s *Cry, the Beloved Country* which is a pre-Apartheid novel. A chapter wise analysis has been undertaken in order to fully understand the various codes found in the text.

Chapter 4 presents a semiotic analysis of the next two novels, viz. *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane and *Ways of Dying* by Zakes Mda. These two novels are treated
in one chapter as both of them are Apartheid novels, i.e., novels produced when Apartheid was in force in South Africa. In the analysis of Kaffir Boy, first seven chapters have taken into one chapter because in these chapters the miserable life of the blacks in Alexandra is described and then a chapter wise analysis has been done for a better understanding of the roles played by the different semiotic codes. A chapter wise analysis of Ways of Dying has been undertaken for the proper understanding of the various codes.

Chapter 5 scales a semiotic analysis of the last novel, Disgrace by J.M. Coetzee. It is studied separately in one chapter because it a post-Apartheid novel published in 1999, five years after the abolition of Apartheid in South Africa, in 1994. Of Disgrace also, a chapter wise analysis has been undertaken in the present study for the understanding of the different semiotic codes.

The concluding chapter 6 brings collectively all erstwhile findings of the research problem at hand, arrived at with the profound and in depth analysis of the selected novels from the semiotic perspective. The distribution and interpretation of codes are assimilated. Various archetypes are also computed.

1.5.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to explore the meaning potentials of the above mentioned novels as a semiotic system. This involves identifying the constituent units in the system and examining how these units interact to make meanings. The objectives of this study are articulated below:

- To identify the signs within the texts.
- To identify the codes within which the signs have meanings.
- To identify the cultural context that is required for the proper understanding of different codes.
- To identify the relationships between the various signifiers—intra textual references to other signifiers present in the texts.
- To identify the paradigm sets within the codes—inter textual references to signifiers which are absent from the texts.
- Finally, to examine the ideological functions of the signs and codes within the texts and of the texts as a whole in order to reveal the reality the texts seek to construct.
The study examines how signs work within the framework of larger systems known as codes and how codes work within the framework of larger systems known as cultures. It is not just interest to find out meanings at the two levels (the level of denotation and connotation which Barthes calls the first and second order of signification) but the third order of signification which according to Underwood is a matter of the cultural meanings of signs.

1.5.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the research problem is:

- Major signs within the texts and the codes which constitute them are identified.
- Various signs, sub-signs, codes and sub-codes that are used as an expression against the natives of South Africa are investigated.
- It identifies the codes within which these signs have meanings as a social, religious and cultural codes etc. Without these codes, meaning in the texts cannot be activated.

1.5.3 TOOLS OF APPLICATION

Coming to textual analysis, the present study has taken the levels or codes as illustrated by Roland Barthes in his analysis of a French novelette, “Sarrasine” in his S/Z (1970/1974 in English). These codes or levels of analysis proposed and illustrated by Barthes are as follows:

- **The Semic Code** which depicts a signified through some signifiers.
- **The Hermeneutic code** which introduces a secret and reveals or conceals it.
- **The Proairetic or Narrative code** which links different actions, behaviours and episodes by adopting a sequential order among them.
- **The Symbolic Code** which describes opposites without any compromise.
- **The Cultural Code** which includes descriptions of society and culture.

In addition to the five codes proposed by Roland Barthes, in the present study, the notion of ‘archetype’ as illustrated by Umberto Eco is also employed for the purpose of textual analysis that are commonly shared by the selected novels. In other words, each novel is analysed in terms of Barthean codes which conclusively is harboured with respective archetype thereof.
1.5.4 THE NEED FOR STUDY

The need for study of these novels is strongly felt because all of these texts depict situations of Apartheid in different political phases and the relations between the blacks and the whites of South Africa. If the novels of Alan Paton, Mark Mathabane and Zakes Mda are pre-independence novels, the last novel by J.M. Coetzee is a post-independence novel. Likewise the first three novels portray the atrocities perpetrated on the blacks by the whites and their consequent suffering of the former whereas the last novel depicts a process that is the reverse of the Apartheid in that blacks harass a white man and his family. In this context one may recall a novel, July’s People written by Nadine Gordimer which portrays the difficulties and problems faced by a white family because of the violence caused by the black Africans against Apartheid. The novel Disgrace by J.M. Coetzee selected for study also deals with a similar theme.

In this sense these novels deserve to be studied in depth to understand the variant dimensions of Apartheid and incorporated codes thereof. This study paves a path for a much-needed endeavour. Regarding the available literature, whether it is on pre-apartheid, apartheid and post-apartheid in South Africa and/or on the four selected novels, almost all available documents/books/articles relate either to racial discrimination or the political and social problems faced by the people of South Africa. Therefore, a study investigating codes, icons and signification of codes has been the need of the hour.