Conclusion

The thesis is an attempt to study selected texts of J. M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer in the light of the political developments in post-apartheid South Africa. The texts help to highlight the culture of violence that is the legacy of colonization and apartheid. Violence is not specific to race but violence begets violence. The prevalence of violence is an informing component in contemporary South Africa. Apartheid happens to be only one manifestation of violence in South Africa. Violence in South Africa is a direct consequence of apartheid which was a policy of racial segregation. It has the ideological underpinnings of racial politics related to colour. During Apartheid, whites have dominated over blacks, and shattered their identity. Thus, violence has been done to the consciousness of the blacks. Violence has contoured the structures of domination and apartheid; post-apartheid South Africa continues to exhibit violence as an ideology of counter-domination and reverse colonization. The blacks in post-apartheid era react with violence seeking revenge but there is a new consciousness which promises to let go off past hurt and trauma.

Politics is the structure through which power functions; violence on the other hand, is an extreme manifestation of power. Violence and politics are discourses in themselves, in the sense that both have power operating as its motivating force. The hierarchy of power is always bound with violence. When power hierarchies are reversed, the one who becomes powerful as a consequence of power-reversal not only replicates but intensifies violence. There is no radical change in the nature of violence, violence seems to continue. There is no real emancipation and there is no real end to violence.

Post-apartheid South Africa appears to be traumatized by the power-reversal. There appears to be no radical change in the nature of violence as a result of decolonization. Coetzee and Gordimer have represented colonial violence, apartheid violence and post-apartheid violence through their novels. While Coetzee’s Waiting for the Barbarians and In the Heart of the Country, and Nadine Gordimer’s Burger’s Daughter emphasize the politics of violence in the context of
Colonization and Apartheid in South Africa; Coetzee’s Disgrace and Gordimer’s July’s People bring out the fact that there is no radical change in the nature of violence as a consequence of power-reversal and power-reversal just intensifies the violence. Gordimer’s July’s People and Coetzee’s Disgrace analyze the theme of violence in terms of power-reversal. July’s People represents an imagined post-apartheid future whereas Disgrace focuses on the realities of a post-apartheid South Africa. Both the novels focus on the reversal of power so far as the blacks and the whites are concerned in South Africa. Decolonization may have resulted in power-reversal and role-reversal but reversal in power hierarchies can neither lead to real emancipation nor can it put an end to violence by bringing out any radical change in the nature of violence. True decolonization means decolonizing the mind, becoming truly democratic and non-violent. As Gandhi says, “You want the tiger’s nature, but not the tiger ... it will be called not Hindustan but Englistan” (Hind Swaraj 30). Non-violence appears to be the only means of negating vengeance. One has to put an end to violence. According to Gandhi, “An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.” One should not respond to violence with violence because it won’t achieve anything and will just end up breeding more violence. Revenge is just one immense cycle of never-ending violence. Vengeance never solves anything, and just brings suffering to all.

Coetzee and Gordimer have represented South Africa as a ‘state of exception’ where racial oppression has been practiced for centuries and empathy for people has been prevented. The ‘state of exception’ is a phrase used by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in his Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life. Derived from the operations of ancient Roman law, a state of exception in one in which the rule of law is suspended and a state of exception created within a state of law. Though used in the specific context of the Jewish persecution in the Nazi era and conceptually borrowed from Hannah Arendt’s writings, this phrase has gained enormous critical acceptance, and come to be applied to any situation such as the state of Emergency in India (under the rule of the Congress), the suspension of civil rights of Blacks in USA prior to the 1970s, or the state of apartheid in South Africa prior to its liberation. State legitimized violence is
normalized in such situations as a group is marginalized and its persecution legitimized by the state. The world is witnessing a multiplication of such ‘states’ and the dispersal and normalization of violence within such states. Gordimer and Coetzee are powerful voices that point towards and protest against the normalizing of violence in such ‘states.’ As violence is still prevalent in post-apartheid South Africa, these authors are searching for answers to break the vicious cycle of violence in order to promote peaceful coexistence of black and white population in contemporary South Africa.

The novels of Coetzee focus on direct and allegorical treatment of apartheid as a manifestation of violence in its many forms. To make the voice of a black man heard is a significant theme of Foe. Friday in the novel represents the voiceless black community; Friday in the novel is a victim of colonial and racial violence. Age of Iron focuses on the apartheid violence inflicted on the black revolutionaries (children). Colonial violence is a dominant theme in Waiting for the Barbarians and the novel depicts torture as a political weapon at the hands of the Empire. Life and Times of Michael K focuses on the sufferings of a coloured man because of the civil war. He has a dense style, fusing allusions from European literature and the writers he is fond of. The title of Waiting for the Barbarians is taken from the poem of a Greek poet Cavafy. There are many quotations from Blake, Kafka and Beckett in In the Heart of the Country. The novels of Coetzee have allegorical dimensions and he favours postmodern allegorical style. In In the Heart of the Country the spinsterhood of Magda reflects the isolation of South Africa. In Waiting for the Barbarians the nameless Empire has parallels with the apartheid regime of South Africa. In Foe the lost tongue of Friday represents the voiceless black community. Coetzee’s novels are characterized by intertextuality. In Foe Coetzee reworks Daniel Defoe’s Robinson Crusoe and the famous genre of the pastoral novel is revised in In the Heart of the Country. His novels are intertextual and self-reflexive, and deconstruct the binary oppositions thereby bringing margins to the centre. He employs the postmodern concepts to address the realities of South Africa. Coetzee’s novels do not have a clear ending.
The novels of Coetzee not only focus on the binary division of black and white but also emphasize the psyche of the oppressor as well as oppressed. His novels emphasize the physical and psychological trauma generated by *apartheid*, through his characters who are brutally victimized. Friday in *Foe* loses his tongue because of colonial violence and the barbarian girl in *Waiting for the Barbarians* is handicapped because of the torture inflicted on her by the men of Empire. The politics of exclusion is also emphasized in the novels of Coetzee. In *Foe* Friday suffers mutilation and the barbarian girl in *Waiting for the Barbarians* become handicapped because of the torture inflicted on her by the men of Empire. In *Life and Times of Michael K* Michael K has a harelip and he is cut off from the mainstream of society because of his upbringing in a school for handicapped children.

Some of the white characters in the novels of Coetzee show an urge to do some good for the “Other.” In *Foe* Susan Barton risks her life in order to ensure safe journey of Friday to Africa. In *Waiting for the Barbarians* the Magistrate also undertakes a precarious journey to restore the barbarian girl to her people. In *Age of Iron* Mrs. Curren gives shelter to the homeless Vercueil. In *Disgrace* Lucy does not lodge a complaint to the police against her rapists. She embraces the role of scapegoat and realizes that she is paying a price for living in post-*apartheid* South Africa. In order to exist in post-*apartheid* South Africa Lucy gives up her white privilege and gives away the rights to her land by sharing it with her black assistant Petrus.

The novels of Coetzee highlight the violence in relation to the politics of writing, race and gender. In *In the Heart of the Country* Magda’s madness is the result of patriarchal constraints. She wishes to write her own text. Likewise in *Foe* Susan Barton finds her creativity stifled by Foe who does not allow her to find her voice. The two novels emphasize the difficulties faced by a woman writer. In *Foe* Susan Barton has to struggle to tell her story and fight against patriarchal stereotypes. Susan is not allowed to articulate the truth as she is made to feel convinced that truth will not sell. Lucy in *Disgrace* and Magda in *In the Heart of*
the Country feel frustrated in their attempt to become friendly and bond with the black men namely Petrus in Disgrace and Hendrik in In the Heart of the Country. Both Lucy as well as Magda become victims of sexual violence at the hands of black men.

Coetzee’s Disgrace portrays the struggle and guilt of the whites to cope with power-reversal in post-apartheid South Africa. It also depicts the need of rectifying humiliation and injustice suffered by the blacks during apartheid era. Lucy believes that the solution is to promote coexistence between the two races in pessimistic post-apartheid South Africa through compromise, silence and giving up of power. The silence of Lucy is a result of her understanding of her situation in post-apartheid South Africa, a place in which she has no control and power over her circumstances. She feels that if she is to stay in contemporary South Africa, she must surrender her white privilege and keep silence and choose not to report her gang rape to the police. Lurie understands the drawbacks of the law and the police and says, “The best is, you save yourself, because the police are not going to save you, not any more, you can be sure” (D 100). Lucy recognizes that white privilege has no place in post-apartheid South Africa, she understands that in order for a white woman to stay in contemporary South Africa on her land, she must become a part of the patriarchal institution that will position her as inferior, even if that means she has to, “Start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity .... Like a dog” (D 205). Here, humiliation is equated with being like a dog. To “start with nothing” can be understood with regard to history. Although history of Apartheid cannot be erased, it should not have a determining effect on the present. To “start with nothing,” thus, alludes to a start from ground zero without inscriptions of history or predefined positions.

Lurie does not agree with the decision of Lucy to marry Petrus, Lucy, however, understands that she must marry Petrus and exchange her land to him for her safety and in order to survive in post-apartheid South Africa. As far as post-apartheid South Africa is concerned Petrus represents the political transformation
of South Africa. Earlier a care-taker, Petrus ascends from his position and becomes a landowner and a protector of Lucy as well as an owner of her land. Lucy recognizes that she must sacrifice her land and give up her power to Petrus, the new power-holder of post-apartheid South Africa. This reversal of power and property from the whites to the blacks is an example of what Nadine Gordimer states in her lecture “Living in the Interregnum,” that for the new South Africa to emerge whites must stand back and let backs rebuild the country on their own. In “Living in the Interregnum,” Gordimer states that “Struggle must be firmly in black hands. They must determine what will be the priorities … whites must be willing to follow” (378). As far as the situation of Lucy is concerned she is willing to follow and surrender to the will of Petrus. When Lucy gives up her land to Petrus, the transaction, “highlights the end of white privilege over the land” (Lopez 927). The whites no longer have a place or power in contemporary South Africa.

Lucy understands that she must lose all privilege to find a place in contemporary South Africa. Lucy surrenders to the patriarchy by becoming the wife of Petrus. Lucy gives back her land in order to move forward. She compromises in order to survive in contemporary South Africa. Sue Kossew states that “It is Lucy’s acknowledgement, too, of her having to share the land, to make compromises, that enables her to take tentative steps towards overcoming her disgrace and finding a way to live in a future South Africa that would not entail just guilt and punishment” (161). Lucy adopts the new attitude of guilt and shame of being white and she compromises in order to find a new existence in post-apartheid South Africa.

Lucy becomes a scapegoat and sacrifices her land and power in order to survive. The silence of Lucy is a sacrifice which she is forced to bear for the actions of her white ancestors through her rape. She accepts her rape and the decision of not punishing her rapists as her destiny and her duty to atone for the violence and injustice perpetrated by the whites - people of her race, on the blacks during the colonial and apartheid era. Lucy accepts rape as her punishment and feels responsible not only for the past actions of the whites but also for the future
of South Africa. The new attitude of Lucy that she must pay and that the “debt-collectors” must collect, shows that Lucy understands that it would be useless to challenge the new order and challenging it would obstruct progress and change. The willingness of Lucy to adopt the role of scapegoat and her new attitude is depicted in the following passage:

I think they do rape. I think I am in their territory. They have marked me. They will come back for me. What if the price one has to pay for staying on? They see me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors. Why should I be allowed to live here without paying? Perhaps that is what they tell themselves. (D 158)

It is through the atonement of the crimes committed by the whites that Lucy accepts her rape in silence. Lurie, however, is not convinced that the sacrifice of Lucy can, “expiate the crimes of the past by suffering in the present” (D 112).

Apart from the violence inflicted upon the humans in the form of rape in Coetzee’s Disgrace, the violence is also inflicted upon the animals by the human beings in this novel. In addition to the attack on Lurie and the rape, the intruders also kill the dogs by shooting them. The intruders finish off those who don’t die from bullets by slashing their throats. After the incident at the farm Lurie does not want to leave Lucy alone on the farm and looks around to do something while he is living there. Lurie joins Bev Shaw, one of Lucy’s neighbours who runs an ironically titled Animal Welfare Shelter where the killing of dogs takes place, “He has a shift in inkling of the task of this ugly little woman has set herself. This bleak building is a place not of healing … but of last resort …. Bev Shaw, not a veterinarian but a priestess, full of New Age mumbo jumbo, trying, absurdly, to lighten the load of Africa’s suffering beasts” (D 144).

Bev’s abilities, which should lead to recognition of the value of lives of other species, are perverted into easing them as gently as possible into death for she has an unusual talent for calming and soothing them at the point of death. She
and Lurie argue about how animals meet death, and Bev says, “I don’t think we are ready to die, any of us, not without being escorted” (D 84). Bev devotes herself to this task, “To each, in what will be its last minutes, Bev gives her fullest attention, stroking it, talking to it, easing its passage” (D 142).

In the Animal Welfare Shelter, Bev does her best with inadequate resources to tend the animals, mostly dogs, “The dogs that are brought in suffer from distempers, from broken limbs, from infected bits, from mange, from neglect, benign or malign from old age, from malnutrition, from intestinal parasites, but most of all from their own fertility. There are simply too many of them” (D 142).

The two, dog as animal and dog as trope designate the powerful urge to possess - through the “possession” of body, through sex. Here, the sexual urge is a figurative representation for ‘greed’ and the natural sexual impulse; and dog and man are equated several times in the text.

These animals are excluded or expelled from the human social realm and found to be a burden on humanity and therefore sentenced to death. For these dogs that are no longer useful as private property, humanity provides no place in the world but the individual human being does not want to think of him or herself as condemning an animal to death. They close their eyes, as they did while the extermination of European Jews went on all around them, “When people bring a dog in they do not say straight out, “I have brought you this dog to kill,” but that is what is expected: that they will dispose of it, make it disappear, dispatch it to oblivion” (D 142).

After further experience with Bev, Lurie begins to feel ambivalent about her, “He does not dismiss the possibility that at the deepest level Bev Shaw may not be a liberating angel but a devil that beneath her show of compassion may hide a heart as leathery as a butcher’s” (D 143). Lurie believes that:

The dogs know that their time has come .... They flatten their ears, they droop their tails ... locking their legs, they have to be pulled or pushed or carried over the threshold … none look straight at the
needle in Bev’s hand, which they somehow know is going to harm them terribly. (D 143)

Lurie not only participates in the killing of the dogs but he is unable to leave them in piles and insists upon taking them to the incinerator where their final disposal takes place. Thus, the very act of killing of the dogs in the novel is symbolic of violence inflicted by the human beings on animals. On another level, ‘dog’ represents, through Lurie, the sexual urge, human passion, a natural state of life. The extermination of dogs is like a farewell to man’s innermost desires - an emasculating experience. Thus, colonial power is equated with masculinity and decolonization with sterility and death of the masculine. Violence is a masculine activity. Here Lucy’s way is a gentler, more nurturing way.

Animal tropes recur throughout Disgrace. Lurie refers to his sexual relationship with a prostitute, Soraya as “the copulation of snakes;” in his sexual encounter with Melanie, she is describes as “a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck;” and, after his hearing, the crowd that awaits Lurie at the university “circle[s] around him like hunters who have cornered a strange beast and do not know how to finish it off” (D 56). Animals, particularly dogs, gain significance in the novel when Lurie arrives at Lucy’s farm. Here Lurie is faced with episodes that haunt the human/animal divide and that consequently expand Lurie’s capacity for ethical consideration. The dogs become affiliated both with love and suffering in the novel. The also function as important symbolism in the novel, as in, for example, the troping of humans as animals, which occurs several times. Lurie envisions the rapists of Lucy as dogs while imagining Lucy’s rape, “Call your dogs! They said to her. Go on, call your dogs! No dogs? Then let us show your dogs!” (D 160).

Lurie and Petrus are also referred to as dog-men. When Lurie first meets Petrus, Petrus introduces himself as “the gardener and the dog-man” (D 64). Later in the novel this is coupled in Lurie’s thinking as he reflectson his care for the dogs; he thinks, “A dog-man, Petrus once called himself. Well, now he has become a dog-man: a dog undertaker; a dog psychopomp; a harijan. Curious that a man as
selfish as he should be offering himself to the service of dead dogs” (D 146). Here there is a radical change in Luries attitude towards animals. The word “dog-man” does not have the same negative connotation as before; instead Lurie uses the word to describe a situation for which he has no rational explanation. In other situation, though, the dogs signify abuse and violence.

During the attack, the dogs in Lucy’s kennel are killed. While the sexual violation of Lucy is not described, the brutal killing of the caged dogs is described at length. Staging these violations of the body together, the novel links human and animal suffering, drawing attention to a shared vulnerability. Afterwards, when Lurie buries the dogs, he reflects on how it must have been for the men, “Like shooting fish in a barrel, he thinks. Contemptible, yet exhilarating, probably in a country where dogs are bred to snarl at the mere smell of a black man. A satisfying afternoon’s work, heady, like all revenge” (D 110). With this, attention is brought to the history of racism and oppression in South Africa, since dogs, as Lurie asserts, are associated with the apartheid regime. This troping of dogs points to how the human/animal divide maintains the possibility of placing humans in a hierarchy: during the apartheid era, those considered less valuable were conjoined with animals.

At the outset of the novel, Lurie has little concern for the animals. When Lucy contends that the dogs “are part of the furniture, part of the alarm system. They do us the honour of treating us like gods, and we respond to treating them like things” (D 78). However, to please Lucy, Lurie agrees to help out at the clinic, assisting Bev in what turns out to be her main occupation: the killing of unwanted dogs. After the attack, Lurie gradually begins to develop a sense of engagement with the animals. For instance, Lurie begins to feel a bond with the two sheep Petrus has tethered on the bare ground beside the stable, and asks Petrus to tie them somewhere where they can graze. Lurie also considers buying the sheep, even while he assets to Lucy that he has not changed his ideas, “I still don’t believe that animals have properly individual lives. Which among them get to live, which get to die, is not, as far as I am concerned, worth agonizing over. Nevertheless ....
Nevertheless? Nevertheless, in this case I am disturbed. I can’t say why?” (D 126-127). It is for the first time that Lurie is able to imaginatively sympathize with the animals.

Lurie’s growing sensibility towards animal life is reflected in how he eventually begins to think of animals as having souls, “The business of dog-killing is over for the day, the black bags are piled at the door, each with a body and a soul inside” (D 161). At the end of the novel, Lurie is at work at the clinic with Bev, “He has learned by now, from her, to concentrate all his attention on animal they are killing, giving it what he no longer has difficulty in calling by its proper name: love” (D 219). Lurie and Bev are finishing their work, and only one dog remains, Driepoot, the young dog that likes music, the one that Lurie “has come to feel a particular fondness for” (D 214-215):

He can save the young dog, if he wishes, for another week. But a time must come, it cannot be evaded, when he will have to bring him to Bev Shaw in her operating room (perhaps he will carry him in his arms, perhaps he will do that for him) and caress him and brush back the fur so that the needle can find the vein, and whisper to him and support him in the moment when ... sniffs his face, licks his cheeks, his lips, his ears. He does nothing to stop it. ‘Come.’ Bearing him in his arms like a lamb, he re-enters the surgery. ‘I thought you would save him for another week,’ says Bev Shaw. ‘Are you giving him up?’ ‘Yes, I am giving him up.’ (D 219-220).

This reflects Lurie’s sentiments of deep concern and compassion for the dog. The juxtaposition of the killing, which by nature is brutal, and wording like “he will carry him in his arms;” “caress him and brush back the fur;” “whisper to him and support him,” likewise the description of the young dog that “sniffs his face, licks his cheeks, his lips, his ears” (D 219) have a powerful effect. This final paragraph of the novel comprises significant ethical implications with an emphasis on interdependence, cross-species relationship, and compassion.
Godimer’s *July’s People* also makes use of animal imagery. The novel depicts the resistance through the portrait of Maureen’s world. The novel makes use of animal imagery by describing through flashback the elements that define and constitute childhood experience of Maureen. The animals in Maureen’s menagerie include the elephant, bulldog, rabbit and gnats. The novel shows the sense of strength and predatoriness usually associated with these animals by placing them in an order. The elephant and bulldog symbolize the association of strength and predatoriness. Maureen’s world is associated with these symbolic features of the animals. A reduction from strength and forcefulness to timidity and death is represented by the descent from the elephant and bulldog to the rabbit and gnats. The novel brings out the fact that the world of Maureen is a glass menagerie of animals, lifeless and fragile. The elephant is deformed, it has a broken trunk, and the bulldog is made of pottery. A contrast between appearance and reality is presented for while the elephant and bulldog can be ferocious and predatory, the reality as it is provided in Maureen’s world is that Maureen’s word is easily shattered as a result of black revolution. The white regime and its structures have collapsed as a result of power-reversal because of the black revolution. The inability of Maureen to handle this sense of loss and disintegration, which her flights towards the helicopter at the end of the novel suggests, is justification of an unsuccessful attempt at integration, a possibility that the Smales’ escape to July’s village offers.

The novel makes use of animal imagery in order to reveal the incompatibility between Maureen and July’s world. Like the world of Maureen, July’s world, is defined by two sets of contrasting animals: the domestic comprising of hens and chickens; and the pests comprising of mice, rats and flies. These animals have a symbolic significance. The rats and flies represent the impoverished nature of the village where life and living is carried out on the basis of coexistence with pests. The injustice of apartheid system that allowed such a dehumanizing form of existence is called into question. The novel exposes associating black experience with dirt and filth as a basis to categorize blacks as an inferior race, a view that was reinforced by *apartheid*.
The domestic animals in the novel are representative of life-giving forces. The “hoe” and “primus stove” represent productivity in July’s village. This sense of life and survival contrasts with the image of the superficial, sterile and life-denying forces inherent in Maureen’s world. The impracticability of fusion of both worlds is pointed out by this juxtaposition of the life-giving and life-denying forces. Thus, the novel depicts the attempt to negotiate life and death, the fantasy and the real, is fraught with difficulties and challenges in the era of transition and power-reversal.

Gordimer’s *Burger’s Daughter* also makes use of animal imagery. When Rosa sees the black man beating a donkey, she chooses not to intervene because she refuses to assume “the white authority” that would enable her to “deliver” the man to the police and because she puts it, she does not want to be seen, to see herself as caring more for animals than people. Rosa is aware that she could easily stop this violence because she feels that this specific instance of pain is a product of whole chain of torture and also the man’s cruelty is a translation of his own suffering and frustration produced by the *apartheid* system of South Africa. The alienation from South Africa and a desire for a personal life comes to a head during Rosa’s epiphany with the donkey. Rosa feels incredible pain at watching the donkey suffer, but her already confused ideology has no answer for the suffering of donkey. Instead it paralyzes her. Were she to act, she would get the black man in terrible trouble due to her status as a white woman. Rosa desperately wants to act as herself, to simply stop the man as Rosa Burger, but she realizes that “in Lionel’s country,” this is impossible. Here Rosa can only be “the white woman,” and she cannot simply make them stop, she can only “have their lives summed up for them officially” (*BD* 208). Rosa accepts that “If somebody’s to be brought the account, I am accountable for him, to him, as he is for the donkey. Yet the suffering - while I saw it was the sum of suffering to me” (*BD* 210). Rosa wants her own identity and tries to find it. The novel puts forth the dilemma of her mind:

Even animals have the instinct to turn from suffering. The sense to run away. Perhaps it was an illness not to be able to live one’s life
the way they did with justice defined in terms of respect for property, love in their procreations, and care only for each other. A sickness not to be able to ignore that condition of a healthy, ordinary life: other people’s suffering. (BD 8)

This is a question that gets to the heart of Rosa’s dilemma. What makes her different? She is different from other whites in the sense that she is the daughter of a communist martyr. Rosa knows what the stakes are. Rosa knows what is wrong in South Africa and in the world. She knows that things must be changed.

Violence is such a powerful presence that it overwhelms every other relationship or consideration. It alienates man from man and man from the world and ecology. The use of the metaphor of dogs, donkey and other animals by Coetzee and Gordimer shows how violence gets transmitted to all other forms of life. This includes the subjugation of animals and land creating a relationship through violence and obliterating coexistence. It is a literary metaphor but it has also a deep philosophical meaning.

Gordimer focuses on the liberal voice that adheres to the principle of humanism in its protest against apartheid. In her novels, Gordimer traces changes in the liberal attitudes from the period of passive resistance to the era of struggle against apartheid. Her characters cannot escape an intrusion from the political situation in their relationships with people across the racial spectrum. Characters such as Rosa Burger in Burger’s Daughter, Maureen in July’s People and even Harald and Claudia Lindgard in The House Gun suffer alienation and marginalization for their non-accommodating liberal attitudes and Gordimer questions the validity of their liberal values in South African society.

In Burger’s Daughter Gordimer has created the character of Bassie/Zwelinzima as a mouth piece of the Black Consciousness Movement. While portraying the spirit of black consciousness Gordimer depicts the sense of confidence of the black characters in them as with July in July’s People and Motsamai in The House Gun. In The House Gun the experience of victory by the
blacks in their struggle against *apartheid* and the confidence of the blacks in themselves is dealt with in the novel in the character of a black lawyer who defends a white man in a case of murder and helps to reduce his sentence from death to imprisonment for seven years.

Gordimer demonstrates that *apartheid* is not only oppressive to the blacks but also affects the relations of people with one another and their concept of themselves. This theme is dealt with in *Burger’s Daughter*, a novel written during the aftermath of Soweto uprising. In this novel a daughter analyzes her relationship with her father who is an anti-*apartheid* activist. The novel tells the story of Rosa Burger, daughter of an anti-*apartheid* activist Lionel Burger, who finds herself alienated in South Africa after the death of her father. She participates in the revolt of children after a long struggle to get rid of the legacy of her father and she understands the true spirit of the struggle and politics of her father after his death. In *Burger’s Daughter* the suffering of the blacks; social violence as a national experience; and elements of violence, suffering and guilt are brought forth in the name of Rosa’s ‘virtual’ brother “Zwelinzima” (Bassie). The authenticity of the role of whites in the struggle of liberation for blacks in South Africa is challenged by Bassie.

Gordimer’s *July’s People* does not imagine a complete post-*apartheid* South Africa but it outlines possibilities for an equal co-existence between blacks and whites. During *Apartheid* economic balance was in favour of whites, *July’s People* predicts a post-*apartheid* future where the economic differences between the whites and the blacks would be improved by the whites. The novel envisions that post-*apartheid* future belongs to blacks more than whites and whites will have to stop claiming privileges based on race and improve economic inequality by sharing their material possessions with the blacks. *July’s People* emphasizes that for whites to have claims to ownership in post-*apartheid* South Africa, the whites must be willing to let go of racial prejudices in order to pave the way for racial coexistence and harmony between the blacks and the whites.
In *July's People*, the Smales’ three children, Victor, Gina, and Royce, tolerate the trouble of a post-
apartheid South Africa. The gist of the utopian impulse that they represent lies in enacting for whites the terms of a future, more egalitarian coexistence with blacks. The relationship Gina establishes with Africans challenges the fears of racist whites of “going native,” and runs through Gordimer’s fervent appeal for post-
apartheid South Africa where whites are, “merely ordinary members of a multicolored, any-colored society, freed both of the privileges and the guilt of the white sins of our fathers” (Gordimer, *The Essential Gesture* 32). Gina metamorphoses into a black African girl, submerging herself in African language, manners, food, and perceptions, so much so that her new world has become the standard through which she perceives the rest of the world, “For Gina, who hadn’t before seen in this village was new to the world” (*JP* 140). Instead of the Afrikaner lullabies she learned from her father, she now sings lullabies, “she had learnt from her [African] companions, in their language” (*JP* 79).

Gina’s break with the old order is no more obvious in her relationship with African children. The lack of racial awareness in her attitude towards them contrasts favourably with the inequality that characterized the friendship of the young Maureen and her black servant Lydia. Although Maureen regarded Lydia as her best friend and confidante, their relations could not completely evade the hierarchy of white and black. So naturalized and deeply rooted was her sense of the entitlements of her race that Maureen questioned the propriety, the reason, and the complexion of Lydia carrying her school case on her head from school to her home. Lenta observes that, “her milieu, [Maureen] has assumed, ought as far as possible to be exclusively white, and blacks have had only a silent, servile role in it” (135). In contrast, Gina adopts the communal traditions of Africans in which the older children help raise the younger children, “She walked in with the old woman’s sciatic gait of black children who carry brothers and sisters almost as big as they are. She had a baby on her small back and wore an expression of importance” (*JP* 41). Lenta states that, “the strength of Gina’s friendship with
Nyiko, a black girl also bodes well for the future of the races in South Africa” (156-7).

The optimistic characterization of Gina is, however, counterbalanced by that of Victor. Through Victor, Gordimer shows that the transition to a post-apartheid South Africa will be tentative and fraught with challenges, and that one major part of that transition must include a new perception of ownership. She is fully aware that the induction of the white South Africa into an egalitarian economic system is not going to be unproblematic or straightforward. However, although redistribution of wealth may be the most difficult goal to accomplish, it must be envisioned. Having undercut the liberal claims of the Smales for their failures with the vision of a young generation of South Africans who would create, although by fits and starts, an equitable economic system.

Victor displays a good deal of the unduly aggressive sense of ownership that Gordimer finds objectionable in white South Africa. When he arrives in the village, he wants to impress other children with his racing-car or truck but urges his mother to, “tell them they must not touch it. I don’t want my things messed up and broken. You must tell them” (JP 14). He also reacts with vehemence to the villagers using water from the tank which his father has installed, “Everybody’s taking water! They’ve found it comes out the tap! Everybody is taking it! I told them they’re going to get hell. But they don’t understand. Come quick, dad.” Undaunted by his parents’ dismissal of his complaint, he insists, “It’s ours, it’s ours” (JP 62-3). His sense of the inalienable rights of private property, however, seems merely a persistent remnant of a dying system. Offsetting his possessiveness is a growing understanding that property can be bartered - as when he exchanges the broken model cars from his racing track for, “skeletal carts, home-made of twisted wire by the black children” (JP 39) and that acquisition can be the result of a communal effort - as when he joins the harvest for a share of peanuts. Despite his shortcomings, Victor, like Gina, represents a model for white South Africans to emulate.
*July’s People* not only depicts the reversal of master-slave relationship but forces whites to comprehend and consider blackness and otherness as inclusive and natural rather than exclusive and reactionary. In the village of July, Maureen is forced to see July closely and she realizes that her liberal attitude towards July in the city was based on a misconception and misunderstanding of July and his people. Maureen realizes that in spite of fifteen years of July’s living with them in the city, she has never seen July beyond his role as servant. Later on Maureen demolishes the image of otherness of July and reconstructs a new paradigm to come to terms with the humanity of July and to relate to him. The novel emphasizes the significance of whites, “to believe in [their] ability to find new perceptions ... and to judge [black] truth” (Gordimer, *July’s People* 266). This process of reconstruction is significant to the process of transformation and the result of its compromise represents South Africa as an emerging dystopia rather than a democratic nation. The novel presents the difficulties in finding “new perceptions” and its social and political implications for the future of South Africa. The flight of Maureen at the end of the novel depicts surrender and a realization of hopelessness on the part of whites. Maureen has no power and control to deal with her situation. The ending of the novel offers an awareness of the reversal of power as well as role that a revolution can bring about.

While depicting violence in their novels, J. M. Coetzee sympathizes mostly with the whites whereas Gordimer shows sympathy completely for the blacks. Coetzee offers a bleak representation of post-apartheid South Africa whereas Gordimer offers an optimistic depiction of post-apartheid South Africa as evident in their novels *Disgrace* and *The House Gun* respectively. The novels of Coetzee seem to emphasize particularly the voice and issues of the privileged white South Africans. At present, Coetzee is settled in Australia. His decision to leave South Africa is steeped in controversy. It is rumoured that bitter criticism of his novel *Disgrace* provoked him to take this step. Coetzee’s depiction of blacks as seeking revenge in *Disgrace* came in for sharp criticism. Coetzee’s texts have been criticized on the grounds that they voice the concern of privileged, whites.
The study thus finds that Coetzee and Gordimer have situated their narratives in the political processes of post-apartheid South Africa. South African leaders in post-apartheid South Africa took several steps to prevent future violence and promote harmony between the two races i.e. the blacks and the whites. One of the significant steps was the establishment of Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1995. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was to release South Africa from the vicious cycle of violence. It was to bring about reconciliation through a process of dialogue in order to prevent future violence in South Africa. It was just a cathartic process. It cannot provide a long term healing. J. M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer in their novels Disgrace and The House Gun respectively focus on TRC. Both the texts can be read as allegories of South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The trials of the protagonists in both the novels resonate with the public hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Both the novels focus on trial, confession, retribution and reconciliation. The TRC illumines the two texts and makes us understand them better.

Coetzee’s Disgrace and Gordimer’s The House Gun can be considered as allegories of South Africa’s truth and reconciliation process. The trials of Lurie in Coetzee’s Disgrace and Duncan in Gordimer’s The House Gun bear a strong resemblance to the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Both trials are held in order to establish whether perpetrators of violence should be punished. They emphasize the need to publically disclose the truth and the demand of expression of remorse. Coetzee’s Disgrace addresses the religious character of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, its incompleteness and its willingness to grant amnesty in exchange for public confession. Gordimer’s The House Gun also reflects upon the TRC and the novel struggles to establish whether justice is possible in post-apartheid South Africa.

Truth was considered as a chaotic and problematic aspect of TRC’s hearings. Disgrace questions the need for public confession and The House Gun suggests that telling the truth is valuable, because it liberates both Duncan and his
parents. Like the TRC, both the novels agree that many voices remained unheard because a significant number of victims and perpetrators did not testify. During *apartheid* the blacks were regarded as victims and the whites as perpetrators. Both Coetzee and Gordimer address the white man’s guilt. Both of them deal with the country’s collective guilt more clearly, as they address questions of complicity and atonement. They also deal with individual guilt.

The TRC has been criticized for its religious character. Coetzee’s *Disgrace* and Gordimer’s *The House Gun* reflects upon the religious atmosphere of the TRC. *Disgrace* suggests that the University’s Committee of Inquiry is a paradigm of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission because it mixes religious rhetoric with the legal rhetoric. *Disgrace* suggests that one cannot simply convert one to Christianity, because the protagonist of the novel, Lurie fails to find redemption. *The House Gun* suggests that religion can be used as a means to establish a more positive attitude between blacks and whites, as Duncan’s black lawyer, Motsamai uses Harald’s Catholicism and Claudia’s Humanism in order to provide a better future for their son.

The TRC focused on restorative justice instead of retributive justice. The TRC embraced the concept of *Ubuntu* in order to achieve restorative justice. Perpetrators were often forgiven in the spirit of *Ubuntu*, because many South Africans believed that their community would have no future without forgiveness. In *Disgrace*, Lucy forgives her perpetrators, Petrus achieves some economic justice and Melanie’s father Mr. Isaacs also forgives Lurie. However, Lurie is unable to forgive her daughter’s rapists, which leaves us with the notion that forgiveness and achieving justice are complicated processes in post-*apartheid* South Africa. Although both the novels emphasize that a change is required and they struggle to establish whether justice is possible in contemporary South Africa. *Disgrace* and *The House Gun* discuss different notions of retribution and revenge. The gang rape of Lucy and the murder committed by Duncan can be interpreted as acts of retribution. In *Disgrace* the perpetrators get away without being prosecuted and the novel holds a negative attitude towards the future of South Africa. *The*
House Gun seems to be more positive, because Duncan is not granted amnesty but given a lenient punishment.

The TRC has not completely become successful in bringing about reconciliation. Neither Disgrace nor The House Gun suggests that South Africa has accomplished its process of truth and reconciliation. Disgrace and The House Gun suggest that violence persists in post-apartheid South Africa. As Disgrace is situated in Cape Town and in the countryside of the Eastern Cape and The House Gun is set in post-apartheid Johannesburg, it does not matter whether one lives in the city or in the countryside, one cannot escape violence in South Africa.

Conducting trials will not lead to justice; it will just lock one in a vicious circle of violence thereby breeding more violence. The justice is not in prosecuting a criminal but it is in the recognition of the wrong. The justice is in the acknowledgement of the unethical wrongness of any official policy which promotes gross violations of human rights. It is a time consuming process to bring the perpetrators of crime to justice. One has to acknowledge that wrong has been done and reconcile to the truth. J. M. Coetzee’s Disgrace and Nadine Gordimer’s The House Gun particularly focus on the legal and political aspects of contemporary South Africa. It appears that Reconciliation remains a contested term in South Africa. Reconciliation is not merely forgiveness or uneasy co-existence; it implies knowing and acknowledging the truth about the past. It has often remained at a formal level rather than being translated into policy. Although the TRC has revealed some new truths and enormous amount of information, many cases have not been resolved. Much investigative work needs to be undertaken, and so the issue of establishing a permanent organization to continue investigating the crimes of the past must be considered. This can help in engendering a culture of accountability and responsibility.

Apartheid may have ended but its legacy endures in many aspects of South African society and in the lives of individual South Africans. One of the difficulties which post-apartheid South Africa has to contend with is the question of putting an end to violence and providing justice for the victims who were
subjected to atrocities during apartheid era. The vicious cycle of violence has to be broken in order to promote peace and stability in South Africa. Although putting an end to violence is a difficult process, but by following the path of Ubuntu, non-violence and forgiveness it can be reduced to some extent. The TRC aimed to achieve restorative justice instead of retributive justice. Thus, it wished to restore the balance within South African communities and prevent future violence. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission embraced the concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu, an African philosophy of humanism holds that humans should treat one another with respect because they belong to the same community. Perpetrators were often forgiven in the spirit of Ubuntu, because many South Africans believed that their community would have no future without forgiveness. The philosophy of Ubuntu is used on a daily basis to settle disputes and conflicts at different levels on the continent and is therefore central to the idea of reconciliation. The philosophy of Ubuntu is significant because it provides Africans a sense of self-identity, self-respect and achievement. It enables Africans to deal with their problems in a positive manner by drawing on the humanistic values they have inherited and perpetuated throughout history. Ubuntu is at the root of Africa philosophy and being. Ubuntu expresses oneness of being human. Reconciliation under the philosophy of Ubuntu can be followed to prevent violence and conflict in contemporary South Africa.

Ubuntu might be the essence of a justice based on the quest for human dignity and restoration of a moral order in societies previously characterized by violence and hatred. The ideas of social reconciliation and forgiveness that have emerged across the globe in recent years are not new, created by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC is just a measure to execute these long-existing ideas, drawn from the universal values of care, compassion and empathy, values that are central in our perceptions of moral humanity. Ubuntu addresses our interconnectedness, our common humanity, and the responsibility towards each other that flows from our connection. Ubuntu sees community rather than self-determination as an essential aspect of personhood. People are distinctive beings, able to recognize and acknowledge each other through mutual encounter and
cultural integration. Nelson Mandela, an icon who embodies a profound capacity for reconciliation and forgiveness has given the world the gift of seeing, fighting for, and then living out our common humanity.

The language of *Ubuntu* appears in the *Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act* as a founding principle of the TRC, “There is a need for understanding but not for vengeance, a need for reparation but not for retaliation, a need for *Ubuntu*, but not for victimization” (*Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act*). There is a parallel relationship among *Ubuntu*, understanding, and reparation. Desmond Tutu also equates *Ubuntu* with forgiveness, but the official language of the TRC does not; rather, the call for *Ubuntu* is defined over and against “victimization,” and the common good must include an end to violence (*Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act*). By merging forgiveness and *Ubuntu*, Tutu invokes not only a Christian duty to forgive, but also an imperative that goes to the very heart of victims’ African identity. Truth Commissions and the associated concept of reconciliation have brought attention to the role of forgiveness in political life. The South African TRC is used as an exemplar of a reconciliation process, just as the ending of *apartheid* is used as an exemplar of peaceful conflict transformation. In the TRC the emphasis falls on forgiveness. In the South African context, justice is significant in the transition from the *Apartheid* regime to a democratic regime. As a consequence of violence during *apartheid* regime, people who have been victimized often demand justice. Justice can be based on retribution (punishment and corrective action for wrongdoings) or restoration (emphasizing the construction of relationships between the individuals and communities).

Forgiveness is the abandonment of hatred towards one’s perpetrator. It becomes the way for achieving a fundamental transformation of both victim and perpetrator, allowing for the emergence of a new relationship between victim and perpetrator that is no longer anchored by the past. One needs to forgive and leave the past behind. In the context of post- *apartheid* South Africa, forgiveness dominates the national discourse of reconciliation. During the Human Rights
Violations Committee hearings, victims were sometimes implored to forgive even by the TRC chairperson himself, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Forgiveness was touted both for its healing potential and its religious importance. Desmond Tutu in his memoir entitled *No Future Without Forgiveness*, reflects the most famous forgiveness imperative associated with the TRC, “Without forgiveness, there is no future” (Tutu 165). Tutu asserts that the future of the “new South Africa” is dependent on the unconditional forgiveness of the victims of *apartheid* and anti-*apartheid* violence. He contends that victims must forgive the perpetrator in order to ensure the reconciliation of South Africa, because forgiveness is the only way to quell resentment and end violence. Reflecting on the end of the *apartheid* era in South Africa, Tutu posits that “forgiveness is essential not only for transforming conflict, but for all human relations from the creation of Adam and Eve to the present” (Tutu xiii).

In order to break the vicious cycle of violence and promote peaceful coexistence of black and white population in contemporary South Africa, following the path of *Ubuntu*, non-violence and forgiveness is significant. Although it is a difficult process to put an end to violence but by following the path of *Ubuntu*, non-violence and forgiveness, violence can be reduced to some extent in post-*apartheid* South Africa. Both Coetzee and Gordimer represent a case for reconciliation in contemporary South Africa. The characters such as the Lindgards from Gordimer’s *The House Gun*, Lucy and Lurie from Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, The Magistrate from Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* and Elizabeth Curren from Coetzee’s *Age of Iron* highlight the need for change of attitude at an individual level. An individual must learn the meaning of basic ethical values. Change of attitude towards other individuals can lead to setting up a new type of relationship between individuals.

The ending of Coetzee’s *Disgrace* seems to draw attention to the inevitable complexity of achieving harmony in the nation torn apart by violence, anger and sense of victimhood. Nevertheless, both the authors seem to indicate that South Africa has reached a turning point. In the near future if retributive violence could
be controlled not by law or force but by common consciences through coexistence and forgiveness, then the vicious cycle of violence can be broken in order to promote peace and stability in contemporary South Africa. Thus, in its attempt to construct a common future for the South African community, South Africa needs to focus on restorative justice instead of retributive justice. Although retribution seems to be the process of avenging past injustice but it may not be able to promote peace. Law is a limited system and it is unable to provide complete justice. It is only forgiveness which can put an end to the cycle of violence and can help in maintaining peace in post-apartheid South Africa.