The political history of South Africa holds a lot of turmoil, bloodshed and clash of several ethnic groups. These hundred years of white rule and decade of enforced racial segregation have had an adverse effect on the lives of all native groups in South Africa. The biased attitude of the white race has led to the creation of many categories such as race, gender and class that have had deep repercussions on the personal and professional lives of individuals in organizations. The history of organizations in South Africa cannot be separated from the history of apartheid. During apartheid, blacks occupied “working class” positions such as factory workers, miners, cleaners, etc. whereas whites occupied “middle” and “upper” class positions such as managers, supervisors, and directors. In a way, organizational structure and strategy reproduced the original world of apartheid. The sinister influence of racial ideology on the work culture has been a major stumbling block in reformation process in South Africa.

South African constitution, one of the most advance constitutions in the world, prohibits discrimination through a framework of equal rights. The right to be safeguarded from racial, sexual and religious discrimination is a fundamental human right and broadly recognized as international law. But, during the era of apartheid the government of South Africa brazenly discriminated and formulated policies on the basis of race in the interests of white supremacy. The country was criticized for its policies, which led to the condemnation of racism on an international level. The National Assembly of the Promotion of Equality introduced a Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Bill which made discrimination on the basis of class, race, gender, ethnic, or social origin, colour, religion, culture, distinctions, etc. a punishable crime. The bill calls for an equitable distribution of resources but does not end the hierarchical class distinctions that are based on race and gender. South Africa, like many other colonies of the world has a long history of discrimination based on race and class. The formal implementation of apartheid in 1948 by the National party damaged the social, political and cultural set up of the country that was finally dismantled in 1994. For a long period of time South Africa was ruled by a
supremacist white minority, while those classified as ‘Asian,’ ‘Coloured,’ or ‘African’ were categorized as second-class citizens and were not included in the political, social and economic activities of the country. Hardhearted laws were framed to regulate and control ‘non-whites’ contact with ‘white’ South Africans. Another important purpose of racial segregation was to ensure a complete racial hierarchy in which ‘poor whites’ are lifted from an economic and social perspective above every non-white person.

Racial segregation in South Africa started in colonial times during Dutch rule. Apartheid legislation categorized inhabitants into four racial groups, ‘Black,’ ‘White,’ ‘Coloured,’ and ‘Indian’ with further division of Indian and coloured into many sub-classifications, from 1960 to 1983 over three million non-white South Africans were displaced from their houses. Cecil Rhodes was the first British man who formulated the first segregation law by taking away the rights of black and coloured people. In the times of slavery, slaves were required to carry passes to travel in the country for any purpose. Various laws were passed throughout the country to restrict the freedom of workers and to control the relations between races. The natives were deprived of the right to vote. In 1910 the South African Act was passed thereby enfranchising whites, giving them full political control over the rest of racial groups while taking away the right of blacks to sit in the parliament. The Native land Act of 1913 stopped the blacks from buying land outside the areas reserved for them. The Colour Bar Act of 1926 prevented blacks from carrying out skilled trade activities. The different races in South Africa were disconnected for the benefit of the white rulers. The bulk of Apartheid supporters followed the philosophy of “scientific racism”. According to them, it was not doable for the people of different races and culture to live as one. This pushiness on racial distinctiveness forms the political and legal canon of apartheid. The government adopted the strategy of dividing the races on a grand scale.

During this phase a number of laws were passed, the first striking law was the Population Registration Act of 1950, which formally declared racial classification and introduced a system of identity card for all persons over the age of 18, indicating their racial group. This law created a lot of difficulty by separating families when members were allotted different races. Another law was the Reservation of Separate Amenities of
1953, where municipal grounds were reserved for a distinct race, creating among other things, separates buses, schools, and universities. Signboards with “whites only” applied to every public place, including benches in the park. Further laws were passed with the aim of containing resistance, chiefly armed resistance, to apartheid. The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 banned any party pledging to communism. According to this Act, anyone found opposing the government policy would be considered as communist. It says that Communism’s chief aim is to disturb the harmony between different races. Under this Act several public gatherings were banned that were supposed threatening to the government. In 1951 Bantu Authorities Act led to the creation of separate government structures for blacks and whites and was the first legislation of its kind to support the government’s plan of separate development in the Bantustans. The government constricted pass laws forcing blacks to carry identity papers to stop the immigration of blacks from other countries. The racialisations of South African politics were exceedingly perilous for the proper functioning of the government that is answerable to all the races.

Apartheid was a wicked and unfair enterprise, which brought great havoc on the social organizations of South Africa. It led to the fall of various liberal values and created a moral and social vacuum, which is reflected, in the African literature as well with the incursion of a foreign culture that politically dominated the natives; the African culture was to some extent wiped out. However African people and the oral literary traditions played a significant role in preserving the uniqueness of Africa to certain extends. In a country like South Africa, where freedom is denied to the natives and writers are subjected to relentless censorship, writing about the brutality of the white rule becomes a difficult task. There exists a distinction between black and white people. Gordimer speaks that:

I don’t see any difference between black and white people. I choose the people that I like, and I have a certain standard of behavior that is general, no matter what color or creed or anything else. But, it doesn’t work in a society where, in the general framework, people are judged by the color of their skin. (Bazin and Seymour 20)
Racial segregation in South Africa during the rule of National Party sparked internal resistance and aggression, and a prolong arms and trade restriction. It led to the isolation of residential areas, which caused the removal of millions of non-white South Africans from their houses, which is one of the largest mass removals in contemporary history. Non-white’s representation in the politics was abolished in 1970, and in the same year black people were denied of their citizenship, legally becoming citizens of tribal based self-governing homeland called Bantustans. The government separated education, medical facilities, access to beaches, and other public services. Blacks were given services inferior to those of white people. Since the 1950s, a string of general rebellion and demonstrations were carried on by the anti-apartheid leaders who had to face imprisonment and opposition from the government. The state passed several laws that focused on separating races on a wider scale and compelled people to live in places defined by race. This created the black-only “townships” where blacks, were relocated to these towns. As writer Breyten Breytenbach postulates that, “the State is the daughter of apartheid-all dissidence is suppressed” (131).

The government divided South Africa into a number of states, with a purpose of developing every nation state for a distinct ethnic group. This ethnic divide is no longer between Afrikaans speaking and English speaking population, but rather white and black ethnicities. Under apartheid, only 13 percent of the land was kept for blacks that were fairly a very small amount evaluated with the total population. The land allotted to blacks was in economically infertile areas of the country. By creating separate homelands for blacks, they would no longer be considered as the citizens of South Africa. Those who work in South Africa would be regarded as foreign migrant labourers on temporary work permits. Many black South Africans who were not residing in their identified homeland were powerfully removed from the cities to the allotted homelands. The decades of 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s witnessed the government implementing a policy of “resettlement” under which the black population was again forced to move to there newly assign “group areas”. Again millions of people were pressurized to relocate. The reason cited for this relocation programme was slum clearance, labour tenants on farms owned by the white people etc. The widely advertised forced removals of the 1950s occurred in
Johannesburg, where 60,000 people were shifted to the newly created township of Soweto.

Until 1955, Sophiatown was one of the few urban areas where blacks had the permission to own land, and was gradually becoming a multiracial slum. Blacks were not allowed to run businesses or other professional activities in places marked as “White South Africa” unless they had permission from the government. Blacks used separate transport and civil facilities. Black’s buses stopped at bus stops reserved for the blacks and white buses reserved for the white ones. Conditions in white hospitals, transports, public places etc. were much better than those of black hospitals, places, etc. Even the trade unions under apartheid were racially segregated. Cinemas and theatres in white areas were not permitted to welcome blacks. There were no cinemas in black areas. Their entry was banned in white churches under the Churches Native Laws Amendment Act of 1957, however, this was not enforced and churches were seen as one of the few places where people from different races could mix without the intrusion of the law. Blacks were forced to pay heavy taxes, which were significantly higher than that for whites. Apartheid spread through culture as well as the law, and was ingrained by most of the mainstream media. Jobs were difficult to find. Black’s children also suffered from many diseases caused by malnutrition and problems caused by sanitation, mortality rates were therefore very high.

South African government’s policy of racial exploitation had a damaging effect on the sport of the country as well. It made it difficult to compete across racial lines. In 1956, the first apartheid sports policy emphasized the white-led government’s antagonism to interracial sport and because of this attitude South Africa had to face various international bans from different sporting events. In a survey in 1977, white South Africans ranked the omission of international sports as one of the few most destructing repercussions of apartheid. Several black South Africans used media to question the “racialisation” of sports in the country. The first public exposure to this issue was given by the black journalist for the Johannesburg’s Drum magazine. During the period of 1980s when the domineering system was slowly coming to its end, the ANC and National party started negotiations on the end of apartheid. With its unity process,
FIFA finally welcomed South Africa back into international football on 3rd July 1992. The imposing of sanction on games by international teams had a deep effect on the white population. For many years multiracial sport, between teams with players of diverse races was prohibited. In fact, sport played a pivotal role in unifying the country’s races.

The policy of racial segregation generated momentous internal confrontation. The government came with a heavy hand on a series of popular uprisings and rebellion with police cruelty, which successively led to an increase in local support for the armed resistance fight. Several sections of society came in open defence of peaceful protests, passive resistance and armed revolt against the hardnosed system of apartheid. Stephen Clingman argues that, “living in South Africa in these terms may well be … something like existing in a nightmare world invented by a demented structuralist anthropologist” (16). The youth of the country played an active role by launching the Programme of Action in 1950, which noticed a string of strikes, boycotts, and civil disobedience actions that led to furio collision with the government authorities.

In 1959, a section of disillusioned ANC members formed the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), which organized a protest march against passbooks on 21 March 1960. The march was held in the township of Sharpeville, where more than 60 people were killed by the police and which came to be known as the ‘Sharpeville Massacre’ in the history of South Africa. In the wake of the incident, the government declared a state of emergency. Thousands of people were arrested, including leaders of the ANC and PAC, and both these organizations were banned. Some leaders went in exile abroad and remaining got engaged in terrorist activities. The ANC leaders launched a new military wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, which was designed to carry out acts of sabotage on strategic state structures. Louis Nkosi presents Sharpeville incident in ‘A Daily Exercise in the Absurd’ as:

No Newspaper report about a shooting in Sharpeville could ever convey significantly the deep sense of entrapment that the black people experience under apartheid rule. It is difficult to imagine a mode of expression that would
adequately describe this sense of malaise. At best an account of what a black man goes through in his daily life sounds like an exaggerated Kafka novel. (25)

Later, in the 1970s, some students influenced by the American Black Power movement created the Black Consciousness Movement, which advocated black pride and South African customs and did a lot of work to correct the feeling of inferiority implanted among black people by the system of apartheid. The prominent leader of this movement, Steve Biko, was taken into custody and was beaten to death in detention. In 1976, secondary students in Soweto uprising rose to protest against enforced tuitions in Afrikaans. The peaceful protest of the students turned into a bloodshed with the fire opened by the police. After 1976 numerous unions and workers came forward and gave vigorous support to the struggle against apartheid, filling up the vacuum created by the banning of political parties. Majority of the white population supported apartheid, only a minimum percentage was against its practice. In the early nineteenth century Anthony Trollope had stated, “South Africa is a country of black men and not of white men. It has been so; it is so; it will be so” (92).

The era of apartheid in South Africa was a period in which South Africa’s racist organizations were methodically strengthened through legislation and a wicked state control followed by the election to power of the Nationalist Government in 1948. As Head mentions, “Apartheid (separateness) was a political programme of separate development supposedly justified by the perception of Africans as a distinct subspecies of humanity inferior to whites, and who had no historical claim to the territory of Southern Africa” (xi). It created a society unduly broken between totalitarianism, dominating minority, and an intimidated, unfortunate majority. The dreadfulness and disgrace of the apartheid regime that had continued to burgeon unimpeded and uncontested flouted the basic impression about the necessary human esteem and truth. It is ironical to see that the blacks themselves mined the gold, which the white minority of South Africa used to earn huge profits at the international market.

South Africa’s policies towards the native blacks were subject to international scrutiny in 1960. The commonwealth nations opposed South Africa’s membership due to
its apartheid policies. As a result, it withdrew from the commonwealth in 1961. On 6th November 1962, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a Resolution 1761, criticizing apartheid policies. It also announced 21st March as the International Day for the elimination of Racial Discrimination in memory of the Sharpeville massacre. The United Nations General Assembly appealed its members to cut off all political, trade, and fiscal ties with South Africa. Subsequently, it came out with a proposal of ending all sorts of educational, cultural, and sporting relationships as well. At various international conferences South Africa was severely condemned for its racial attitude. The decade of 1960, witnessed the Anti-Apartheid Movements beginning to campaign for cultural boycotts of apartheid South Africa. Several artists across the globe were requested not to showcase their works in South Africa. Numerous British writers put their names, thereby, approving of the boycott. Sporting and cultural boycotts could not cast a strong impact as economic sanctions had; still they contributed much to awake the consciousness of South Africans regarding the international condemnation of apartheid.

Serious political violence became a prominent feature in the black townships of South Africa. On 20th July 1985, the then president, P.W. Botha, declared a state of emergency that gave police and the military extensive powers. The government implemented curfews controlling the movement of people and detention without trial became a regular feature of the government as a reaction to increasing civil instability. Severe censorship of the press reflected the government’s strategy of curbing the freedom of the press. The media of the country openly opposed this censorship. Government agents killed many opponents within the country and abroad. Apartheid also had a relentless impact on the African women, as they became a victim of both racial as well as gender discrimination. Many black and coloured women were forced to work as agricultural or domestic workers and earned exceedingly low wages. The black population also suffered from various diseases and malnutrition. Laws related to birth and death was kept in check by the white minority government.

With increased international hostility, the Nordic countries— and Sweden in particular, gave both moral and economic support for the ANC. Other western nations espoused a more hesitant position. In Switzerland, the Swiss South African Association
promoted the South African government’s policy towards racism. The British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher pronounced the ANC a terrorist organization and in 1987 her spokesman, Bernard Ingham, notably said that any person who thinks that the ANC would ever form the South African government was ‘living in cloud cuckoo land’. However, Britain was not in favour of applying economic pressure upon its conglomerate interests in South Africa, such as the mining company. By 1980, the international outlook turned determinedly against the apartheid administration, the government along with the white population began to see the country as a citadel encircled with militarily, culturally, politically, and economically by radical black nationalists. The influence of western countries can be seen as one of the important factors that help end apartheid. The then prime minister of South Africa, P.W. Botha, was apprehensive about the help which Soviet Union was providing to the revolutionaries. However, over a few decades the political situation in South Africa has improved a lot. The year 2014 witnessed the dawn of multi-party politics in the “Rainbow Nation” where the leading party of the country won the elections in order to establish a fair government.

Democracy did not rise abruptly; it had to be constructed arduously. The white settler willingly gave up their control of political power. The final hand over of power was extraordinarily peaceful as it was thought that South Africa would explode into furious civil war. Gottfried Keller, the Swiss writer states that “Everything is politics,” for in his view, as George Lukacs, remarks:

[E]very action, thought and emotion of human being is inseparably bound up with the life and struggles of the community, i.e. with politics: whether the humans themselves are conscious of this, unconscious of it or even trying to escape from it, objectively their actions, thoughts and emotions nevertheless spring from and run into politics. (9)

At present the term “social apartheid” has been quoted as an aspect where the poor black Africans suffering from HIV/AIDS are by and large excluded from the society. Today many writers are expressing the frustrations and injustice meted out to the black people of their country. Uncle Tom’s Cabin is the first anti-slavery novel by

Nadine Gordimer embarked upon writing at a crucial point when the entire social structure of the country was in a state of chaos and mayhem. She was one of the most vibrant socially conscious writers of the world, was hostile to all kinds of social and political domination, which took place in South Africa. Her works have given voice to the suppressed people of her country. She says that the writer always writes the truth:

> It’s a part of my feeling that what a writer does is to try to make sense of life. I think that’s what writing is, I think that’s what painting is. It’s seeking that thread of order and logic in the disorder, and the incredible waste and marvelous profligate character of life. (Bazin and Seymour 140)

Nadine Gordimer was born on November 20, 1923, near Springs, Gauteng, South Africa, the daughter of a privileged white middle class, Jewish immigrants. Her father Isidore Gordimer was from Latvia and her mother Nan was from London. Her initial interest in racial and economic discrimination in South Africa was moulded in part by her parents. Her political identity was formed by her father’s experience as a refugee in Czarist Russia. But he was not sympathetic towards the racial experience of black people under apartheid rule. On the contrary, her mother’s active concern about the poverty and unfairness faced by black people in South Africa help form her interest in the lives of these people. Gordimer attended catholic convent school for a brief period of time and was mostly homebound as a child because her mother feared that her daughter is suffering from a heart ailment and did not put her into school. Her isolation led her to start writing at an early age and at the age of 15; she published her first stories. Her first published work was a short story for children, “The Quest for Seen Gold,” and at the age of 16, she published her first adult fiction.
Gordimer studied for a year at the University of the Witwatersrand, where she got along for the first time with fellow professionals across the colour bar. She also participated in the Sophiatown renaissance. She could not complete her degree and moved to Johannesburg in 1948, where she lived afterward. Even there, she continued to write and collected many of her early stories in *Face to Face*, published in 1949, which is not listed in some of her biographies; here she has divulged the psychological consequences of a racially divided society. Her first novel, *The Lying Days*, was published in 1953. Gordimer had a daughter, Oriane, by her first marriage in 1949 to Gerald Gavron, from whom she was divorced within three years. In 1954 she married Reinhold Cassirer, a respected art dealer who established the South African Sotheby’s and subsequently ran his own gallery. Their marriage lasted until his death from emphysema in 2001. From her second marriage she had a son, Hugo, who is a filmmaker in New York.

Gordimer, from her childhood, observed how the white minority increasingly abates the rights of the black majority. She did not select apartheid as her subject as a young writer, but found it impossible to go deep into South African life without touching it. And the moment the Afrikaner nationalists rose to power in 1948, the gallows of the apartheid system began to escalate around her that could not be easily overlooked. Her themes left no quarter of South African society undiscovered, from the hot crowded neighborhoods and dirty black townships to the poolside barbecues, and sundowner cocktail parties of the white society. There is a constant tension between personal solitariness and the commitment to social justice, the inability to change the prevailing situation, commitment to social justice, the inability to change the prevailing situation, and the denial of exile.

In a country like South Africa where politics is a reality, Gordimer knew that, there is a sense of responsibility, which waits outside the Eden of creativity. She admits that the “society’s right to make demands on the writer [is] as equal to that of the writer’s commitment to his artistic vision” (*The Essential Gesture* 289). She says that she has accepted that the “greater responsibility” of the writer “is to society and not to art” (288-89). Many of her novels testify that, “the writer’s freedom [is] to reproduce truth and
reality of life even if this truth does not coincide with his own sympathies” (108). As she maintains, “the only dictum I always remember is Andre Gide’s ‘salvation for the writer lies in being sincere’ even against one’s better judgment,” (Bazin and Seymour 186). This remarkable statement sanctions her belief that as a writer her first duty is to maintain the integrity of an artist.

Gordimer’s entry into the anti-apartheid movement was stimulated because of the arrest of her best friend, Bettie du Toit, in 1960 and the Sharpeville massacre. From then on, she immediately became active in South African politics, and became close friends with Nelson Mandela’s defence attorneys during his 1962 trial. She began to achieve international literary recognition by receiving her first major award in 1961. Gordimer continued to insist through her writing as well as her activism that South Africa should replace its ruthless policy of apartheid. During this time, the government of South Africa banned several of her works. Her first personal experience with censorship came with the banning of her novel, *The Late Bourgeois World* in 1976 for a decade by the South African government. Another novel, *A World of Strangers* was banned for twelve years. *July’s People* was also banned under apartheid, and continued to face censorship under the post-apartheid government as well. Later, she joined the African National Congress when it was considered as an illegal organization by the government of South Africa. According to her, ANC can reverse South Africa’s behaviour towards black citizens. She even aided the escape of ANC leaders from arrest by the government. She frequently took part in anti-apartheid demonstrations, which engulfed the entire South African nation and travelled to other countries vocalizing against the discrimination and political repression of South African government.

Her activism was not restricted to fight against racial segregation. She challenged censorship and control of information and literary works by the state. She also became a member of the Steering Committee of South Africa’s Anti-Censorship Action Group. She was the founding member of the Congress of South African Writers and actively participated in several international literary organizations. She also played an active role in the movement against HIV/AIDS, addressing a noteworthy public health crisis in South Africa. She remained critical of the South African government’s stance on AIDS.
On international platforms she spoke on the foreign policy of the South African government and its discrimination. In 2005, when Fidel Castro fell ill, she along with six other Nobel Prize winners in a public letter to the United States warned it not to subvert the communist government of Cuba. Gordimer identified herself as an atheist, but was not actively involved in atheist organizations.

Through Gordimer’s work, readers all over the world learned the human effects of the “color bar” and the harsh laws that closed every contact among races. Her writings are loaded with terror: The fear of the security forces arresting the couple of mixed races is real, and freedom of mixed marriages is impossible. Critics describe the entire work of the writer as representing a social history as narrated through finely constructed portraits of the characters that are part of her fiction. She spoke little about her own life, thus preferring to explore the complexity of the mind and heart in those of her characters. But there are many critics who have noticed in her fiction a theme of personal as well as political deliverance, reflecting her exertion in growing up under the possessive nature of her mother. Her novels try to bring a connection between private and public experience, “My private preoccupations remain, running strongly beneath or alongside or intertwined with the influence of the political situation” (Bazin and Seymour 35). Even in her private self her life is regulated by the political situation.

Gordimer’s fiction provides a space for her characters to lucidly express the divergence between the black and the white race in the South African world. It makes them mull over hierarchical social patterns and questions their legitimacy in their everyday South African life. In the South African context, the concept of politics is important as it promulgated apartheid on its white and black communities. It affected them as they are forced to live in separate places and created fear and a sense of aloofness towards each other. Her fiction allows her characters to focus on uncovering the real face of apartheid in South African world. As she belonged to a privileged white Jewish class in South Africa, it made her powerless to some extent, she had to stand back and work under the restrictions created by the apartheid government.
Her fiction provides a relation between the resistance, the struggle, and the liberation phases of South African history. The years of protest saw a very limited mixed gatherings and relationships of characters across the racial gamut. This kind of social structure becomes visible in The Lying Days (1953) and Occasion for Loving (1963). The era of struggle emerges in A Guest of Honour (1970). A Sport of Nature (1987) and None to Accompany Me (1994) display a South Africa free from the chains of apartheid. Many writers like Alex La Guma, Dennis Brutus; etc. left their land to champion the causes of the dispossessed black South African masses. The barriers between the black and the white race forced them to look at each other through a vantage point. Gordimer brings her characters as individuals in groups such as the black, the white, the Indian, and the coloured. The blacks are seen as the symbol of empathy for both the blacks and the coloured in the forthcoming era of twentieth-century South African society. The coloured and the blacks came together in the political campaigns of the ANC and the PAC in the post Soweto liberation struggle.

The historical eras have modified the presentation of the characters and society’s expansion in her fiction. Clingman expresses that:

Gordimer, by contrast, views the history of her society—or at least parts of it—at much closer quarters…. For Gordimer is caught up in the midst of the processes she is attempting to depict. At the same time as she engages with history she is moulded by the patterns and forces she must try to assess. As much as she is an observer of the life around her, she is still a social participant in what she observes. (2)

Apartheid created a divided society, dominated by minority and a helpless majority. The laws implemented by the Afrikaner government stood as the racist steamroller of white power structures, hammering the essential of the African natives. The laws split the land wide apart. Gordimer emerged as the greatest supporter of human freedom in South Africa. She did not know politics until she saw it happening to people. She condemned the government policies through her writings. It is her literary career that has evolved her politically from liberal humanism to anti-apartheid opposition. She tries
to bring a balance between her western upbringing and African roots by taking from the western literary tradition and adding it to her experience in South Africa, in order to churn out a literature of amalgamation. Amongst all the white South African writers she is the only one writer who hasn’t gone back to the urban culture, which led to the creation of the literature of the country. She decided to live in the country and carved out an identity for herself as an ‘African’ writer. She confirms this statement:

I haven’t left South Africa because of my feeling of commitment to the place as a human being rather than as a writer. If I went to live in England, for instance, where I have my cultural roots, I might be very happy there. I might write quite well there. I don’t feel that I would lose my identity as a writer because I was born in Africa: I’ll carry Africa with me whenever I need to draw on it. But I do feel that as a human being, as a woman, I would then be living on the surface of whatever country I lived in. I could never have the commitment to the society in an adopted country that I have to my feeling of opposition to apartheid in South Africa. (Bazin and Seymour 44)

Gordimer’s fictional endeavor combines European and native cultures very well and is considerate to the majority expression in South Africa. Her work is not only politically committed but is innovative too, involving a subject matter of serious interest. Her commitment to literature is a known fact. She is acknowledged as a serious and careful writer. This politically conscious writer has impressed the world through her manner of writing. She displays the true reality of the African heartland with complex consciousness.

Gordimer through her work attempts to strengthen her relationship to African culture and there is a recurrent expression of the importance of African culture in the later fiction. The racist legislation in the country produced inequalities that led to frustration and a resultant creative apathy. Black South African writers could not produce a flourishing work of art because of various restrictions imposed on them by the government such as censorship laws along with other repressive policies, interfered with many writer’s career. She goes on to make an appeal for African writers to contribute to
the development of South African novel. She saw an element of willful optimism occurring in black writing. Her own writing is consciously, “high art in its nuances, its increasingly elliptical conciseness, sense of multiple ironies and self-conscious awareness of the traditions of the novel” (King 2). Her novels exhibit a radicalism of form and subject matter and there is a confusion of facts with imaginations, and a disjointed multiple narration. She makes an assiduous choice of titles for her novels and states that, “Titles either comment on or sum up the theme” (Bazin and Seymour 80). She even articulates, “To me titles are very important-the whole story must be in the title - and if I get a bad title, as I do sometimes, then I know the story’s not going to be any good” (71).

According to Georg Lukacs, a great literature is that which delves beyond the surface appearances in order to expose the social entirety, with all its oppositions. Gordimer observes the history of her South African society at very close quarters. Her “interpretation of apartheid problem is viewed from the stand of a social participant completely caught up in a swirl of the processes she wants to assess” (21). Her novels scrutinize the environment from which they come out, and bring to light that dark area where apartheid divides black man from the white. Her first two novels The Lying Days (1953) and Occasion for Loving (1963) focus on the intervention of harsh external reality into the comfortable life of South African middle class white society. The Lying Days (1953) is a semi-autobiographical novel that portrays a protected Afrikaner woman, Helen Shaw who gains political awareness through her affair with a social worker. In Occasion for Loving (1963) she introduces the theme of miscegenation. The affair of Ann Davis and Gideon Shibalo fails not because of the interference of the state but due to the cruel effects of apartheid. The novel stands as a foyer to the strong anti-racial literary structure. In the later novels she investigates the incapacitating effects of apartheid on blacks as well as whites. A Guest of Honour (1970) is the story of an exiled revolutionary, James Bray, who returns to his native land to take part in the independence celebrations. The novel talks about his disenchantment with the corruption, and selfishness of the new government, his defiance and ultimately his assassination. Set in an unnamed state that shows some resemblance to Zambia, the novel carries the realities of a black African state shortly after gaining political freedom from the white rule. A Sport of Nature (1987) is a somber condemnation of the present social scenario in South
Africa. Hillela is the main protagonist who takes up the cause of her murdered black husband and aids in the creation of a new black African nation. Gordimer often uses the man-woman relationship in bringing reconciliation between blacks and whites. *None to Accompany Me* (1994) comes up with fresh issues, after South Africa has gained independence. After the first non-racial elections a democratic form of government is set up. The novel highlights the story of Vera Stark, a lawyer fighting for blacks to reclaim the land. Vera amalgamates her personal and public life in an organized manner.

Gordimer, being a Nobel laureate and an eminent spokesperson of her country has attracted a lot of critical attention to her fiction. Critics say that the award of the Nobel Prize for literature to her affirms her participation in producing a literary piece to challenge apartheid. Her fictional narratives trace the political history of South Africa from 1949-2012. She has also won many prestigious awards including James Tait Black Memorial Prize (1972), Booker Prize (1974), the Grand Aigle d'Or (1975), Rome prize (1984), Nelly Sachs prize (1986) and many others. Besides getting a lot of appreciation she has also earned critical attention. Gordimer died on 13th July 2014, at the age of 90 at her Johannesburg home. She was deeply concerned about South Africa’s culture, its people and the struggle to gain democracy. She was regarded as the leading writer and an outspoken voice of her country.

Society in South Africa has assigned literature a vital role to acquaint the world with the brutalities the people have met with. In the midst of political cataclysm, Gordimer’s themes reverberates the political intervention on the private life of South African society. Through her fictional narratives she aimed to explore the venues for a revolutionary change in the political and social life of the people of her country. Politics and society, incarcerated her attention, rather than any other theme. Her impulse to write was persuaded by a need to understand life for herself. The discriminatory society of South Africa inevitably propelled her into a disagreement with politics. Thurston says that, “only through deliberate scrutiny of herself, her society, and her relationship to that society did Gordimer evolve the acute political consciousness-witnessed in the progress of her novels” (xi). Gordimer’s writings and various interviews do sometimes highlight the connection between her real world and the fiction and they mark ideological shift in
her political consciousness. Her fictions highlight the “idea of nation and claiming for art a transformative power in society” where “she envisions a national culture and consciousness that enshrines the values of nonracialism with economic, political and cultural equity for each and for all” (Thurston 10). Her novels bring out racism as the primary issue in South African society. Novels like God’s Step-Children by Sarah Gertrude Millin and Turbott Wolfe by William Plomer are South Africa’s most famous racist novels. Gordimer’s work respond most strongly to Plomer’s novel in general terms. In the novel Turbott Wolfe, one of its characters, Mabel Van Der Horst, speaks on the ‘native question’:

Native question! What the hell is the native question? You take away the black man’s country, and shirking the future consequences of your action you blindly affix a label to what you know (and fear) the black man is thinking of you -, the native question. Native question indeed! My god man, there is no native question. It isn’t a question. It’s an answer. I don’t know whether people are willfully blind, that they can’t see what’s coming. The white man’s as dead as doornail in this country. (11)

No South African writer has been able to avoid the theme of race in his novel. The novels of various writers proclaim the need for human beings to unite with each other as equals. If black and white sees each other as human beings, then the problem of apartheid will be solved. Gordimer’s fiction is loaded with history in one sense and her novels are not only novels of observation, rather, they end with a vision. But the vision of each novel is not separable from its observation.

There are certain kinds of limitations that apply to Gordimer’s work. Firstly, her novels are restricted by their historical situation. As there are always prospects, which are visible in her work; partly because she is contained by the moment with which she engages. Secondly, in a country like South Africa there is a limited society in a structural as well as moral sense that acts as a social limitation. It is impossible to give complete account of South African social relations. Thirdly, Gordimer has written about blacks in South Africa; she has mixed with them and had close black friends. But there is still a
division that exists between her and the black world. She could not become a part of the black world. Clingman testifies that, “one would not wish to argue in any abstract or deterministic fashion and say that the return of the repressed in Gordimer’s fiction is an inevitable and necessary effect of an oppressive social fracture in South Africa” (212).

In South Africa there is a system of severe division of society on the basis of race and class maintained by the apartheid state. Clingman posits, “the South African social formation is one riven in any number of different directions - along the lines of race and colour, and various sub-groupings within this, but also according to ethnicity and gender” (16). The social fracture of South Africa has always maintained its dual interest of white power and profit. Gordimer puts it that, “living in a society that has been as deeply and calculatedly compartmentalized as South Africa’s has been under the colour bar, the writer’s potential has unscaleable limitations” (African Writers on African Writing 52). Gordimer has been closely involved in a black social world; and even at the peak of Black Consciousness exclusivism she was able to offer its tone with great accuracy.

Like Gordimer, other writers have also faced an intense situation of social and historical division. Her style of writing, mood and subject matter has often been compared to that of pre-revolutionary writing in Russia. She identified with the disprivileged in South Africa whereas she herself belonged to a privileged class and her novels are engaged in telling the truth. She has lived through the tough time where her novels undermine many of the fibs of apartheid.

Nature is seen as an important feature in Gordimer’s novels. It is represented in the form of irony. In this guise it easily bears the message of what Terry Eagleton has called the ‘ironic wit of history’ that the oppressors rise only to fall. The political culture of white has its historical roots in a colonial culture; therefore, the land naturally becomes a sign of the people. It is the nature in Africa that stands for the helplessness of its people and acknowledged the dark forces with which they are recognized. Several novels of Gordimer’s expound a repressed life in political, cultural, and environmental terms. The return of the nature represents the return of the people. Clingman remarks that, “For the turn to nature in white South African fiction is still an index of a residual alienation as
much as it is of a new affiliation; it is a symbolic registration at the same time of identification and distance in social and historical terms” (221).

The shape of Gordimer’s career has been subtle for a more noteworthy reason: she has not confined herself into any of the contexts her critics have used. Some of them have seen her as simply a European writer who writes about South Africa because she happens to live there. Reviewers have assessed her work by making comparisons with the great nineteenth century Russian writers. Others consider her as a white colonial writer. However, there are many critics who see her as a product of a South African tradition, which is a category in its own. This category unfortunately has been destroyed by the banning, censoring, exile, and even imprisonment of two generations of black writers. Gordimer has rejected the label of a “white South African writer”. Finally, there are many critics who agree with Gordimer that she and other white writers are “shaped by an African experience are fundamentally African writers” (Cooke 7). She does not concede to any particular political affiliation, neither claimed any ethnic or religious influences. She again and again returned to her fundamental belief - an unequivocal refutation of apartheid. Her task of highlighting the evil effects of apartheid was even more difficult than her predecessors. Cooke says, “Infact, Gordimer’s perception of her society’s racial development was relatively sanguine; racial barriers, she felt, were being scaled through individual contact between blacks and whites” (25). Gordimer’s belief in the power of what she termed as the ‘strange partnership’ between blacks and whites become an important theme of her novels. She has very adroitly investigated the downfall of liberalism in South African society.

To her credit there are fifteen novels, over twenty-one collections of short stories and numerous presentations on cultural criticism. Clingman in his critical work on Gordimer’s novels sums up her contribution to the world of literature:

A great drama unfolds in the novels of Nadine Gordimer, but it is not the expected one of what her work observes in the world it depicts; rather it is the drama of the novels themselves, in their own development from one world to another, one culture to another in the making, from one historical life to the next…. Gordimer
has moved from political ignorance to a profound politicality, from aspects of a racist mental world to one approaching a revolutionary alignment. (223)

Gordimer has evolved as a writer and has stretched the limits of her caliber within the space provided to her. She has depicted a “dramatic ideological shift” which worked into “the depths of an historical ‘unconscious’” (Clingman 224). Her fiction has a unique consistency, goal, and reveals a terrible moment of truth. It created a sharp illustration of the society. She made use of different structures in her work to convey her message. Participating in the struggle of a nation to come into existence, she was attentive of her role of a ‘cultural worker’. As a cultural worker she recorded the truth of a society perplexed by the onslaught of colonialism. In a politically unstable environment Gordimer records all the events and situations and mirror to the world around. She believed that a writer could present history better than a historian ever could. She became a witness to the political and social revolution as well as the cultural awakening of her nation. She was sensitive of the outshining effect of politics in the life of South Africa. In her essay “A Writer in South Africa,” Gordimer talks of the inter-related aspect of politics and society in South Africa:

Whites among themselves are shaped by their peculiar position, just as black people are shaped by theirs. I write about their private selves: often, in the most private situations they are what they are because their lives are regulated and their mores formed by the political situation. You see, in South Africa society is the political situation. To paraphrase, one might say … politics is character in South Africa. (64)

It is Gordimer’s political commitment that pervades her fiction. Politics dominates the normal life in the society of South Africa and affects the secular rituals of the state. It is her commitment towards her country that prompted her to a vigorous endeavor to wash the assault of corrupt politics. This, in a way would reinstate the cultural flow in a society that suffered the illegal control of a foreign race. She accepted the need of a common culture in the society for it to survive. It is the mélange of various cultures that has created the present society of South Africa. In such a society,
inconsistency between various races and classes make exchange of ideas difficult. Raymond Williams, emphasizes that a society “needs a common culture not for the sake of an abstraction, but because we shall not survive without it” (316). When the government introduces such a legal system which hampers contact across the colour bar and racial separation becomes a model of society, the possibilities for the setting of a common culture becomes negligible. The writers of South Africa have tried to reconstruct a nation from the cubicle of apartheid. Gordimer like Raymond Williams believed that a common culture is a precondition for the development and growth of the society. A nation like South Africa requires some kind of national identity apart from being an apartheid-ridden state whose rules thwart its people from being equal. A common culture does not mean an equal culture but it stands for equal opportunity to its people. Gordimer establishes the problem of ‘cultural identity’ in the society of South Africa:

The dilemma of a literature in South Africa, where the law effectively prevents any real identification of the writer with his society as a whole, so that ultimately he can identify only with his color, distorts this mean irreparably. And cultural identity is the ground on which the exploration of self in the imaginative writer makes a national literature. (Telling Times: Writing and Living 119)

The writer, in order, to reconstruct the society, advocated the need of overthrowing the political morality so that a cultural identity is given to the country of South Africa. But the fact remains that none of the writers could sense the society as a whole due to the presence of colour bar. Yet, they have managed to construct a picture of their society. Gordimer also, through her work tries to open the eyes of the whites who refused to see the revolutionary changes taking place in the country. Her fiction is an answer to the war of resistance and struggle for independence and to break free the society from the white dominance not just in the political field but also in the cultural and social realm. In order to bring a political change, Gordimer, along with other writers joined the struggle against the white rule. She enunciates that the principal emotion for the white liberal is ‘guilt,’ whereas his black contemporary is filled with the emotion of ‘resentment’:
The black writer is extremely limited in his presentation of white characters—witness the frequency with which his are no more than cardboard or caricature. What he cannot know about the white man’s life because of those large areas of the white experience, he is excluded from by law, he supplies out of a fantasy distorted by resentment…. In the works of the white writers, you often get the same gap in experience between black and white lives compensated for by the projection of emotions about blacks into the creation of a black topology. Guilt is the prevailing emotion there; often it produces cardboard and unconscious caricatures just as resentment does. (*Telling Times: Writing and Living* 119)

Gordimer, in her novels, portray the middle-class English speaking society, makes a close analysis of their lives and experiences but maintains a kind of distance and indifference. She even tries to put up a question on the consciousness of the white community towards the need for a change of power from the European base to an African milieu. Her writing bears an influence of the European, Asian, and Jewish culture. The severity and directness of the society in her fiction makes it a rallying call for political and social change. Her writings are an attempt to raise the consciousness of the masses. Themes based on the political atmosphere of her country augment her fiction. Gordimer not only draws reality in its true form, but also adds her own foresight to it. Her writing involves politics of her country but is not entirely political in its nature.

Gordimer studies the social reality of black and white conflict in her writings. Judith Kitchen in her essay, “Nadine Gordimer: The Realism of Possibility” refers to the personal factor in the social reality in Gordimer’s fiction. By selecting the politically saturated subjects she tries to construct her perception out of chaos. Her fiction gives a broad spectrum of situations, events, and characters without any exaggeration and gathers candor and humanity. Her fictional narratives are an attempt to explore the experiences in the making of her nation. Even though Gordimer denies going with any political party in South Africa, still her writings have a connotation of politics. As she goes deep in studying the personal lives of her people she becomes more and more political in her approach. Her focus on the corrupt political system that controls the private lives of people is actually to awaken the white consciousness towards the need to bring a change.
She believed that the white writers task, as a ‘cultural worker’ is to open the eyes of white people and to create a guilty conscience. She makes an effort to bring some “influence to bear upon the whites … who are already coming to, bewildered out of the trip of power, and those who gain courage from reading the open expression of their own suppressed rebellion” (294). She managed to keep herself free from the control of radical extremists and remained devoted to the cause of truth.

The representation of literary works fundamentally involves the trouble of applying a critical method. The liberal literary criticism exhibit an impressive layout of critical approaches - viz, the formalist, the mythological, the psychological, and the post structuralist deconstruction with a fairness that excogitate the patient pluralism of large-minded democracy various methodologies suffer from a common enfeebling characteristics in trying to comprehend literature in terms of its own laws or in trying to cut down it into universal structure. Literature is a social creation, and it’s understanding must therefore depend upon an adequate sociology. The study of literature has moved from mere evaluation of novels, poems, and plays. It is the study of ideas and difficulties that arise in any literary text. Graham Howe, a conservative critic and so a spokesperson of the liberal school says that:

Criticism should be able to give some intelligible account of the relation of literature to the social order. There is a methodology for this, and so far as I know there is only one. To think on this subject at all requires some applications of Marxism. (57).

Thus, Marxism is the only method for the exact understanding and interpretation of literary works. As Marx believed that life is not to be taken as a vague impressionistic view of the superficial facts seen in the surface connections. Marxism viewed life as a representation of concrete reality, which is structured and corresponds to the various phases of the modes of production. It is these structural entities, which increases the consciousness in all its several forms. By nature literature is one of the forms of consciousness. Marxism holds that matter is primary and idea or consciousness
secondary. According to Marx, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness” (300).

It is a known fact that literature is a product of society but it does not put an end to any problem but only aggravates the trouble. A proper understanding of Marxism takes into consideration the various factors that form a particular society. Antonio Gramsci, a Marxist scholar constructed a theory of ‘hegemony’ as a political theory and evolved it to the common sense knowledge of everyday. He believed that the interests of the ruling class are not only reckoned in their political ideas and principles, but are also embarked as common sense, and have relevance in society in a general fashion. This is reiterated as:

The “spontaneous” consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is “historically” caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production. (*Selections from the Prison Notebooks* 12)

According to Gramsci, a ruling power can exercise its authority by pliantly responding to new conditions and to the ever-changing wishes of those it governs. He conceived that power is an ongoing action, which functions even at those times when a reigning class can no longer produce consent. He indicates that politics, culture, and the economy are assimilated with one another in a shifting channel of influence. He saw the capitalist state as a combination of two spheres, a ‘political society,’ which rules through pressure and a ‘civil society’ which rules through acceptance. The dynamism of society can be comprehended in terms of a system where the predominant thoughts are developed by the reigning class to procure its command over the working class. He also mentioned that it is only the working class that can save the society from inhumanity and economic wreck.

Gramsci says that with time only a revolution will overthrow the dominant group’s control over the state. The revolutionaries themselves will create the conditions required for the complete achievement of their goal. The revolution is an agitation,
endlessly breaking up, reforming social groups and preventing life from relishing a momentary success. He conceived that:

The state is the economic-political organization of the bourgeois class. There is a clash between opposed interests. The state has always been the protagonist of history. In its organs the power of the propertied class is centralized. Within the state, the propertied class forges its own discipline and unity, over and above the disputes and clashes of competition, in order to keep intact its privileged position in the supreme phase of competition itself: the class struggle for power, for pre-eminence in the leadership and ordering of society. (Selections from Political Writings 73-74)

George Lukacs propounds that the bourgeois society is constituted as the universal form of society who considered scientific knowledge as an ideological weapon of the society. According to Lukacs, every social class has a determined class-consciousness, which it can achieve. The proletariat’s class-consciousness is the outcome of a constant struggle to apprehend the absolute totality. The proletariat was the first class to have achieved the true class-consciousness above other classes. He remarks that, “proletarian science is revolutionary not just by virtue of its revolutionary ideas which it opposes to bourgeois society, but above all because of its method” (27).

Human action or inaction invariably touches and modifies the environment and the world around us – Racism is ideological, but it has concrete entailment in the actual world. Marxist theory on the question of black has surely developed. It is seen as a guide to social revolution and political action, and has been reinforced by consecutive generations of Marxists. Du Bois argues that racism wasn’t metaphysical, nor did it exist independently from class. Its growth is an outcome of one class’s endeavor to keep power aside from another. Even Hillel Ticktin believes that favoritism on the basis of race must be viewed as a function of capitalism. According to him, termination of apartheid will not eventually end racial discrimination. Only a socialist form of government will abolish the formal racial discrimination in South Africa. Anthony Marx analyzes the issue of race
from a cultural and political point of view, rooted in the history of slavery and colonialism.

In literature the social contradictions do not appear as social conflicts like strikes and other obvious forms of class struggle. They are seen as personal situations, which do not show social determining factors. Each historical period produces a social consciousness that is determined by the particular social condition of that era. Such social consciousness is the outcome of the clash of values, beliefs, and interests of the opposite social classes whose conflict characterizes the historical nature of that age.

Various books as well as surplus essays and articles have been written on her. *Aspects of South African Literature* (1976) by Christopher Heywood presents a background of a literature set in a problematic country highlighting the socio-political changes in South Africa. John Cooke’s *The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: Private Lives/Public Landscapes* (1986), gives emphasis to the peculiar childhood of the author, taking notice of the recurrent theme of the possessive mother, advocating that Gordimer has bestowed her private history with public associations, a complete release from familial restrictions require a challenge to the authoritative political order.

*The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: History from the Inside* (1986) by Stephen Clingman is one of the most update book on Gordimer in which he touches all the main themes of her novels and introduces the evolving consciousness of South African history through her novels. This book acts as a mirror to the turbulent society of South Africa. He analyzes her novels from all perspectives including social, political, cultural, etc. He relates the deep history of Gordimer’s novel in relation to the history of South Africa:

Yet, if all South African writers are to varying degrees ‘engaged’ with history either deliberately or by necessity, there is surely no other South African writer who has engaged with it so directly as Nadine Gordimer, and whose work has so sharply defined and attuned a ‘sense of history’. (7)

Judie Newman in her book *Nadine Gordimer* (1988) evaluates her novels from the perspective of gender. She advocates that Gordimer is doubly marginalized in South
Africa as a white and as a woman. Like in other critical works, this work also brings an interaction of Gordimer’s private and public life. *Conversations with Nadine Gordimer* (1990) edited by Nancy Topping Bazin and Marilyn Dallman Seymour includes various interviews of Gordimer tracing every aspect of her personal and professional life and her stand on various issues that have affected the South African society terribly. *The Later Fiction of Nadine Gordimer* (1993), a collection of essays on the later works of Gordimer edited by Bruce King examines the autobiographical ground of Gordimer’s fiction, the uncertainty of disorderly politics, her equivocal relationship with her religion, her use of irony, and many other topics.

Dominic Head’s book, *Nadine Gordimer* (1994) is a treatise which offers a far-reaching and in detailed study of the entire work of the author. This book gives attention to Gordimer’s texts both as an expression of social and political events and circumstances in the country. There is “a working out of the politics of textuality and, consequently, as an appropriate way for Gordimer to define how her fictions offer their intervention” (xii). Barbara Temple-Thurston’s *Nadine Gordimer Revisited* (1999) discusses all her novels in detail and provides a close look on the contemporary socio-historical background of Gordimer’s country through her works. The author also studies the themes of dejection, alienation, and emptiness as they perfectly reflect the political inconstancy when all means of internal encounter had been suppressed. *Nadine Gordimer: Weaving Together Fiction, Women and Politics* (2012) by Denise Brahimi traces the tension appearing from the coexistence of opposite races that seeps into the works of Gordimer. There is a thirst for “recognition that the white liberals depicted in Gordimer’s novels expect from the blacks” (2). The book also retraces the history of the anti-apartheid movement in Gordimer’s works.

Gordimer both as a writer and as a South African remained opposed to apartheid throughout her life. The present thesis evaluates the political colour in her subjects and characters. All the chapters make a detailed study of the social reality that Gordimer has portrayed in her works. In the political sense, the legitimacy of the domination is explained through the concept of ideology. Eagleton distinguishes politics and ideology by remarking that, “Politics refers to the power processes by which social orders are
sustained or challenged; whereas ideology denotes the ways in which these power processes get caught up in a realm of signification” (11). The whole concept of power politics stands on the structure of ideology. There is an ideological struggle in the novels of Gordimer that becomes part of the class struggle. Gordimer’s social vision is elaborated well in her novels, which gives a better understanding of the politics. The human contact across the colour bar is analyzed with infinitesimal details. Gordimer being a part of the intelligentsia worked tirelessly to show the world how things really were in the society of South Africa. She is seen as writer whose allegiance was towards her fellow countrymen. She maintains that:

In a country of total repression like South Africa where literature is nevertheless, only half-suppressed because the greater part of that black majority is kept semiliterate and cannot be affected by books there is--just--the possibility for a writer to be ‘only’ a writer. In terms of activity and yet “more than a writer” in terms of fulfilling the demands of his society…. As a ‘cultural worker’ in the race/class struggle he still may be seen to serve, even if he won’t march towards tear gas and bullets. (292)

The predominant emotion in Gordimer’s fiction is ‘fear’ which gives a deep look into the minds of characters and social convention. She highlights various colours of fear, right from physical reaction, to that of a profound racial instinctive. While creating the social history of her country the writer tries to gather legitimacy for the black cause. The power structure within the various sections of society is evident in her novels. The struggle for power between the blacks and the whites give a new meaning to the interracial conflict in the society of South Africa. Her novels cover every section of her society, namely the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’. Irony is present in the narrative to reflect the discrepancy in the society. Her contribution in awakening the conscience of South Africa was appreciated in the award of Nobel Prize.

The novels of Gordimer consider the significance of hegemonic structure in the evolution of human spirit as it emerged and became consolidated during the struggle years of South Africa. The present study is broad based and wishes to see the
development of her themes from the first novel to the latest one. It examines the basic problems of social structure and the dynamics of social life such as equality and social justice.