

CHAPTER – II

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THEMES OF APARTHEID AND LIBERATION MOVEMENT

2.1 Apartheid:

2.1.1 Introduction:

Apartheid is a social and political policy of racial segregation enforced by white governments in South Africa. It is a rigid system of racial discrimination designed to maintain white supremacy over the blacks. Though it started much earlier with the white settlement in South Africa, the policy has been officially in effect since South Africa's national party came to power in 1948. The implementation of the policy, later referred to as 'separate development', was enforced by a series of laws. Apartheid legislation classified the South Africans into four racial groups-white, black, Coloured and Asian and prohibited most social contacts between the races. The interracial marriages were strictly prohibited. The aim of Apartheid system was to maintain white domination while extending racial separation. The racial discrimination was institutionalized with the enactment of Apartheid laws. These race laws touched every aspect of social life. They restricted the already limited rights of the blacks. Legislation stated where and how the blacks could live, travel, work, be educated, get married and mingle.

There was territorial separation. 'Homelands' were created for the non-white Africans and each non-white was assigned to a homeland according to the record of origin. Each race was allotted its own area. The Group Areas Act 21 of 1950 determined where one lived, how one survived and how one earned living by virtue of racial inequality. There were 'Forced Removals' to resettle people to their designated 'group areas'. In the early hours, heavily armed police entered

to force residents out of their homes and load their belongings onto government trucks. Being the citizens of the homelands, they were made to lose their citizenship in South Africa and any right of involvement with the South African parliament which held complete hegemony over the homelands. Africans living in the homelands needed passports to enter South Africa. They were made aliens in their own country.

As these lands were least economically-productive areas of the country, a majority of the blacks had to work in 'white area' and they lived in tightly segregated black townships within those areas. The homeland system disenfranchised black people residing in 'white South Africa' by restricting their voting rights to the homelands. The government strictly segregated education, medical care and other public services with inferior standards for blacks. There were separate beaches, buses, hospitals, schools and universities. The black education system within 'white South Africa' by design prepared blacks for lives as a labouring class. Blacks were prohibited living or visiting 'white towns' without a migration permit. They were required to carry 'pass books' containing fingerprints, photo and information. Being without a valid pass made a person subject to arrest and trial for being illegal migrant. The Blacks working in cities were separated from their families, spouse and children living in homelands. The blacks living in 'ghetto' or 'squatter camp' suffered from the diseases caused by malnutrition and sanitary problems. They were not allowed to run business or professional practices in 'white area'. They worked as agricultural or domestic workers on extremely low wages.

Apartheid laws were implemented harshly with police brutality. The penalties imposed on political protest, even on non-violent protests were severe. Anyone could be detained without hearing.

Thousands of individuals died in custody, frequently after torture. Those who were tried were sentenced to death, banished or imprisoned for life.

Apartheid had everlasting impact on South African society. It created mutual distrust, prejudices among the blacks and the whites. The whites, having extraordinary sense of their whiteness, were always shielded and favoured by the police and law. Whereas the blacks, vulnerable to poverty and powerlessness, were insulted and made feel themselves inferior. The policy 'destructive of justice and human dignity' pervaded South African culture and stagnated their development.

2.1.2 Nadine Gordimer's Treatment of Theme of Apartheid:

Nadine Gordimer is a fervent opponent of Apartheid system. She has always raised strong voice against Apartheid through her writing. She continued to demand, through both her writing and her activism that South African government should re-examine and replace its long held policy of Apartheid. She belongs to 'minority-within-the-white-minority' who refuses to accommodate with the system. She speaks on behalf of the oppressed blacks. She is a writer of social commitment and her works are mirror of South African history. As Dennis Brutus (1969:97) says, "Nadine Gordimer too is making her protest against Apartheid. This is her theme".

A writer is person who lives in a particular society and takes his images and ideas from the society. He writes about what he sees around him. Apartheid had been a crucial experience for Gordimer and she writes truthfully about it. Judie Newman (1988:15) quotes Gordimer's statement in this connection, "If you write honestly about life in South Africa, Apartheid damns itself."

Something Out There (1984):

‘A City of the Dead, a City of the Living’:

The story proves Nadine Gordimer's skill of minute observation and her eye for the details. It is realistic picture of a black township life-the house and the people living there. There is description of Samson's house. Samson lives as a tenant in a black township. He works in the city as an itinerant gardener. The house number 1907 Block C is registered in his name and he has to pay rent for the house. The house has two rooms and kitchen meant for the ideal family of four. But it holds the number of people the ingenuity of the necessity provides. The house is furnished with the things discarded by Samson's various employers for whom he works in the city. There is a sink, which is also the bathroom of the house. The other tenants living there are- a woman working in the kitchen of a chicken shop in the city, a slaughter-house cleaner. The city is far from the township and they have to take bus. The 'pass' is compulsory to go there.

Samson's wife is a complacent woman who thinks themselves to be lucky to have the house. That is why when Samson gives shelter to an activist in the house, she feels the privacy of her house disturbed and the peace threatened as it is not possible to hide someone for long time. Moreke has sent his son to a mission school as it is safer there. The activist tries to explain to Samson that the blacks should stick together. They should not send their children away. The whites have shut the blacks in the ghetto forcing them to kill each other. He asserts that they should fight unitedly to overthrow the white regime.

The activist is accused in a case of blowing up a police station and wanted by the police. Samson is ready to keep him in the house. But Nanike could not bear the tension of hiding the activist with a gun. She could no longer live under the pressure in which the police

might raid the house anytime and arrest them. Moreover, the man has a very different, yellow-skinned face which she dislikes. It would not be possible for her to lie that she has forgotten the face during the police interrogation. The knocks at the door at night add to her tension. On a Sunday they have to lock themselves inside the house to avoid acquaintances. Gordimer skillfully delineates the tense mood in the house, especially Nanike's psychological pressure.

At last, Nanike herself goes to the police station and informs the police about the activist. Consequently, the activist is arrested. Gordimer hints at several possible reasons for Nanike's action. But she also hints at the fact that the black police, the ordinary, simple people like Nanike, sometimes unknowingly become obstacle in the liberation movement.

'Blinder':

The story throws light on the black people's servile, ineffectual life. The black people "whose lives are not easy, poor people, to whom things happen but who don't have the means, either to extricate themselves from what has happened." (85) They are deprived of the resources or means by the whites. Rose, a black domestic servant in a white family lives in the backyard. Her husband had disappeared before she took the job. Her lover, Ephraim who works as a night watchman is living with her. Gordimer reveals the reality of Apartheid society. It was a usual thing that a young man came to work in a city. He spent his whole life there away from his home because he had to earn money to send home.

Gordimer focuses on the entwining of personal fate with the political policies. Ephraim is killed in a bus accident when he is going home due to trouble over land. There is a dispute over the ancestral land

granted to his family by their local chief. Gordimer portrays 'Grand Apartheid'- partition of South Africa in homeland system:

Boundary lines have been drawn by government surveyors, ... the partition of the local chief's territory that falls on that side is no longer part of South Africa. The portion that remains on the other side now belongs to the South African government and will be sold to white farmers- Ephraim's father's land, his brother's land his land. (84)

Gordimer is mostly concerned with the impact of Apartheid on an individual's life. Rose, on her lover's death is left alone. She is even not informed officially about Ephraim's death, as she is not his wife. She learns about it after a week. Ephraim's wife has got the right to bury and mourn him. She gets his possessions. Rose is left alone. Gordimer focuses her loneliness by describing her sudden excitement over the arrival of Ephraim's wife and children. They have come there in the 'simpleton' hope of getting pension from the employers. Rose excitedly introduces them to the lady which seems strange enough. Rose borrows money from the lady for their returning journey. Rose is too much happy with Ephraim's relatives, because she knows there will be no more arrival in her lonely life.

Jump and other stories (1991):

'Jump':

The story is about a young white man victimized by racial hatred. He is an ordinary colonial child of parents who have come from Europe to find a 'better life'. The parents expect the boy to become an

accountant or someone alike, certainly one rung above the father. He grows up taking for granted the activities and outlets for adventurous play that has no place in the reality of the blacks' lives. He joins the parachute club. His weekend hobby, in addition to jumping from the sky is photography. But this very artistic activity traps him. He is arrested by the black soldiers while taking photograph of a sea-bird. He is detained and accused of being spy. In the debriefing, he is made to confess the crime of terroristic activities which he had not committed. The story points out how hatred on the part of one class of people leads further to hatred on the part of another class-

...for the first time in his life he thought about blacks and hated them and their government and everything they might do, whether it was good or bad. (8)

The innocent, brave youth with artistic mind is converted into a terrorist. He is drawn towards a white secret organization which is working to restore the white rule through the compliant black proxies. There he gets really associated with the murderous horde that burns down hospitals, cuts off the ears of the villagers, blows up trains full of innocent workers 'going home to their huts', rapes women, captures men and forces them to join the organizations or put them back over the border to die.

The story exemplifies Gordimer's skill of portraying the effect of social, political, racial hatred on an individual's life. The young man's parents return to their country. His mother repents for allowing their son "that parachute nonsense"(12) which has made a mess of their lives. She waits for her son. But the son now has gone far above in the

'parachute' from where he cannot jump though his conscience makes him restless. He says to himself, "Not now; not yet." (20)

'Once Upon a Time' :

Gordimer portrays the realm of terror, insecurity and distrust in the violent-ridden South Africa. The writers living in such circumstances could not escape from it. That is why when she is telling a bedtime story for children, it cannot but be full of violence, fear. She narrates, in the narration style peculiar to the children story, a story of the rich white couple living in a beautiful suburb and making every arrangement for their son's safety. They have a housemaid who is absolutely trustworthy and an itinerant gardener who is highly recommended by the neighbours. They get electronically-controlled gates fitted to their house and anyone who wants to enter the house would have to announce his intentions by pressing a button and speaking into a receiver relayed to the house. As they hear about the instances of burglary in the suburb, burglar bars are attached to the windows of the house. They hear about the buses being burned, cars stoned, the schoolchildren shot by the police. The riots are suppressed. But still, they would not trust anyone. Many unemployed blacks are hanging about the suburb importuning for a job and begging. But they do not help those blacks as they might turn out to be burglars. Still there are more reports of intrusion, burglary everyday. So, ultimately, they get 'Dragon-Teeth' razor-bladed coils all around the walls of the house. But this very arrangement kills their son. The child pretending to be a prince from a fairy story jumps on the terrible coils. It is a horrible death. The bleeding mass of the little boy is hacked out of the security coils with saws, wire-cutters, choppers.

Nevertheless, according to Gordimer, there should be perfect reciprocal understanding and affection between black and white people's mind. The mechanical arrangement cannot stop death or violence.

'The Moment Before the Gun Went Off':

The story reveals Gordimer's firm faith in inter-dependence and inter-relation between the blacks and the whites. According to her the blacks and the whites can live together cordially and can have most intimate relationship. Here, she criticizes the concepts fixed in the minds of both the blacks and whites about their relationships.

A white farmer, Marais Van der Vyver shoots one of his farm labourers dead. Actually the boy is killed accidentally and not deliberately. But the incident is interpreted in different ways. The white people treat it in their usual casual way. They think the white man might have really killed the servant boy. But it is not very serious crime for them. The blacks create uproar against the event. The black agitators criticize and condemn the white man's callousness. No one could imagine the fact that the man has killed the boy accidentally and has wept for his death, because the boy is not only his servant but also his own son.

Gordimer also depicts the black people's poverty and weakness. The servant boy and his family work on the farm owned by their white master. The white man provides money for the funeral. The dead boy's mother and (he stare) at the grave in perfect communication regarding what might have happened in 'the moment before the gun went off.'

'What Were You Dreaming?':

Here, we have picture of 'Grand Apartheid' in South Africa. The story is about Apartheid legislation, classification of the population,

the black townships in the white cities, homelands and forced removals. The black-white relationship is narrated from the points of view of a black man and a white lady. The story begins with the black man's narration of his experience of travelling. After long waiting, he is given lift by two whites- a lady and her friend from England. The Englishman does not know the life under Apartheid in South Africa. He is curious about the man's background. The lady acts as an interpreter. She explains to him the black man's answers. The black man tells that he is on the road from six days and has not eaten since the previous day. The Englishman who is not cognizant to the Apartheid realities sympathizes with the black man. But the lady does know very well how to take the story. She explains to her friend that-

...they're theatrical by nature .You must take it with a pinch of salt. (220)

She is a representative of cold, brutal white class who justifies the Apartheid system. She justifies the 'forced removals' as-

...we're talking about the destroying communities because they're black, and white people want to build houses or factories for whites where blacks live. I told you. We're talking about loading up trucks and carting black people out of sight of whites.(221)

She even justifies the 'segregated black townships' in the white cities. She believes the black should not be allowed to live in the cities with the white people. She just wants them 'out of sight'.

Still, the lady with patronizing outlook is a kind person who gives the black man some money to buy something to eat.

‘Keeping Fit’:

The story is one more record of the violent-ridden society under Apartheid. It depicts the era of Liberation Movement in South Africa when the black people were very much enraged and had become violent. The rage was on its height. South Africa’s history is punctuated with violent outbreaks. The rioters attacking white oppressors or murdering the black informers, police or internal strife between organizations like ANC and Inkatha formed the bloody past of Africa. Nadine Gordimer shows the narrow distance between life and death. She portrays the experience of witnessing death very closely. A white man, to keep himself fit and to take fresh breath, goes for running every morning. Once he inadvertently crosses the white suburb’s boundaries and enters a black township, the ‘unrest area’. He finds himself among the black armed men with knives, cleavers, sledges, hammers, etc. chasing another man. The man sees the mob murdering that man with their terrible weaponry- “the body writhed away like a chopped worm.”(233) He too, may have been murdered like that. But he is suddenly pushed into a shack and is saved. It is a black woman who has saved his life. This sudden assault and unexpected rescue leaves him aghast. The man is still terribly frightened. Being a white man, before this event he did not know how it was inside the shacks. He sees seven people living in that small shack where “too few possessions were too many for it to hold.”(240)

Gordimer presents before us picture of both- dirty, crowded, ugly life in a shack of blacks and the white man’s house with silk curtains, dressing table, garden, etc. On witnessing death so closely, the white man has understood what is meant by ‘the struggle for existence’,

when one is chased by the death itself. That is why when a bird is caught in the drain-pipe and is struggling to escape- the man becomes panicky. He could feel that poignancy. He shouts for its escape. His wife shouts back at him and tells him to free the bird himself as he is very much athletic.

Gordimer may have used these incidents with symbolic meaning in mind. The white man goes for running to have fresh breath. He feels- "that first discovery of independent life: I can breathe."(229) but he does not know that the blacks are denied this right by forcing them to live in crowded shacks. The man does exercise to keep himself fit. But the white oppressors are not aware of the need of granting freedom to everyone to keep social health or social fitness. When the man has the first-hand experience of 'the struggle for existence', he could feel the bird's pains. His wife asks the man to free the bird himself as he is so athletic. Gordimer suggests the need of athletic efforts on the part of sympathetic whites to free the blacks from the clutches of bondages.

2.2 Liberation Movement:

2.2.1 Introduction:

Oliver Tambo, (1986:11) president of the African National Congress said, "What the blacks want more than anything is to be free in our own country- more than anything else."

Though Apartheid system was implemented with tremendous suppression of opposition, continual resistance to Apartheid existed within South Africa. A number of black political groups often supported by sympathetic whites, opposed Apartheid using a variety of ways- including violence, strikes, demonstrations and sabotage. These protests were often severely crushed by the government. As anti-Apartheid pressure mounted within and outside South Africa, the South

African government began to dismantle the Apartheid system in the early 1990s. But before that South Africa had to go through the series of violent encounters between the South African government and Liberation Movement activists.

The system of Apartheid provoked significant internal resistance. The government responded to a series of uprisings and protests with police brutality, which in turn increased local support for the armed resistance struggle. The Apartheid government tried to suppress the political resistance with detentions without trial, torture, censorship and banning of political organizations such as the African National Congress, the Black Consciousness Movement, the Azanian People's Organization, the Pan Africanist Congress and the United Democratic Front, which were popularly considered as Liberation Movements. In spite of suffering from extreme repression and exile, these organizations maintained popular support for the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa and established connections with the international anti-Apartheid movement during this period.

Internal resistance to the Apartheid system in South Africa came from several sectors of society and saw the creation of organizations dedicated variously to peaceful protests, passive resistance and armed insurrection. In 1949 the youth wing of the African National Congress (ANC) took control of the organization and started a radical Black Nationalist programme. The new young leaders proposed that the white authority could only be overthrown through only mass campaigns. According to this proposal the Programme of action was launched with a series of strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience actions that led to occasionally violent clashes with the authorities. Two remarkable instances of such violent clashes were- Sharpeville massacre and Soweto protest. Pan African Congress organized a demonstration against pass

books on 21st March 1960. In one of those protests in the township of Sharpeville, sixty-nine unarmed blacks were killed by the police. The nation went into a kind of political shock. The major black organizations were banned; harsh new security laws were enacted.

The cycle was repeated in 1976-77, when a protest by schoolchildren in the black township of Soweto, outside Johannesburg exploded in nationwide paroxysm of racial violence that claimed seven hundred lives. After these confrontations between the nation's white minority and newly assertive black majority, it was predicted that the white domination would end soon. But Apartheid survived and the black opposition had to be strengthened. Black opposition groups both inside South Africa and in exile decided to work in collaboration. ANC built an extensive network of international diplomatic and military contacts in support of its effort against the white regime. The ANC and PAC exploded bombs in restaurants, shopping centers and in front of government buildings such as magistrate courts, killing and maiming civilians and government officials in the process. By 1985, it had become the ANC's aim to make black townships 'ungovernable' by forcing residents to stop paying for services. The townships duly became the focus areas in the anti-Apartheid movement.

Throughout 1980s, township people resisted Apartheid by acting against the local issues. The focus of much resistance was against the community organizations and their leaders who were seen to be supporting the government. They were responsible for rent collection and so very much unpopular. A common form of township protest was the rent boycott. The official governments of many townships were overthrown and replaced by unofficial governments led generally by the youth but welcoming workers and residents of all ages. People's courts were set up. Black town councillors and policemen and their families

were attacked with petrol bombs and 'necklaces'- i.e. they were brutally murdered by having a burning tire placed around their necks. ANC arranged consumer boycotts of manufacturers who were seen to be treating workers badly or supporting Apartheid. During this boycotts, residents had to eat soap powder and drink kerosene if they were found to have bought from white-owned shops. During this period an average of more than hundred people died as a result of black-of-black violence in the black townships every month. With all this unrest in the country, the government's hold on the country was steadily weakening. The government recognized the need to reform Apartheid. Between 1986 and 1988, all 'Petty Apartheid' laws were repealed. Though the government realized its weakening power, they tried to regain the control by using the 'divide and rule' policy. In 1984 a new constitution was introduced which gave parliamentary representation to Coloureds and Indians excluding the blacks. This added to the wrath of Liberation Movement. The ANC launched a series of violent attacks on the government. Many Indians and Coloureds also rejected the new constitution. The government tried to suppress these widespread protests by imposing emergency.

The economy was getting weaker and weaker due to unrest, strikes, boycotts and economic sanctions. The value of Rand had dropped significantly and business leaders were putting pressure on the government to change. As a result of increased pressures both within and outside the country, the state was forced to take measures to bring an end to Apartheid. The other African countries also denied keeping any alliance with the racial government. They supported the anti-Apartheid movement by giving shelter to the activists in the exile. The other countries like United Nations, USA also rejected any support. At last, after long negotiations the government granted freedom to South Africa

in 1994. The elections were held throughout the country and Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first democratically-elected president.

2.2.1 Nadine Gordimer's Treatment of the Theme of Liberation Movement :

✓ Nadine Gordimer depicts political turmoil in South Africa in her short stories. She is not among the whites who manage to ignore the crisis in the country. For her it is 'the determining state of mind'. She protests Apartheid system and supports the Liberation Movement. She joined the African National Congress when it was still listed as an illegal organization by the South African government. She hid ANC leaders in her own home to aid their escape from arrest. She helped to found the Congress of South African writers which was mainly joined by black writers. She made her only court appearance in 1987, as an expert witness in a trial of the leaders of the United Democratic Front. Gordimer has publicly accepted the necessity for the whites to play a role in South Africa only on black terms. She welcomed the Black Trade Union Movement as providing one of the few areas where the whites could work 'with' rather than patronizing 'for' blacks.

Gordimer believes in that the whites should also play important role in the Liberation Movement'. She says, "concurrently with engagement in the political struggle for the end of Apartheid, there exists an awareness of the need for a new conception of culture, particularly among whites." (1986:39) That is why we find in her stories, the ardent white revolutionaries fighting along with the black activists against the Apartheid oppression. She asserts in her stories the relationship of 'brotherhood' between the blacks and whites.

***Something Out There* (1984):**

‘A City of the Dead, A City of the Living’ :

Gordimer delineates tension prevailing in a house which hides an underground activist. The terror of police raid hovers over the people living in the house. Samson Moreke lives in a black township with his wife Nanike. They have a house of two rooms and a kitchen meant for four people. But the house holds the number of people the ingenuity of necessity provides. Once Samson brings an activist involved in blowing up of a police station and wanted by the police. With the activist's arrival, the privacy of the house is disturbed. They have to share the meal with him which they ill afford. They have to lie to their neighbors about his presence.

The activist tries to enlighten the Morekes about the Liberation Movement. He asserts the need of unity among the blacks to fight with the white government. He tries to create awareness about the black's rights. But for Nanike these things are far away like ‘a city of the dead, a city of the living’ described by the activist. From the very beginning she is reluctant to keep him in the house. His stories about strange countries do not appeal her. Gordimer emphasizes her tense mood by using first person narration intermittently. Samson is out for work and she is alone with the activist whole day. His presence is unbearable for her. She tells us-

You only count the days if you are waiting to have a baby or you are in prison. I've had my child but I'm counting the days since he's been in this house. (10)

Nanike dislikes the yellow-faced, light skinned man. She fears that it would not be possible for her to lie that she has forgotten the

face during the police interrogation. She does not like the man's authoritative voice with which he orders them to shut themselves in the house on a Sunday. The knocks on the door at night add to her tension. The man's presence restrains every normal activity in the house. Nanike always fears that the people notice the things and so to hide the activist for long is impossible. She could not bear the pressure. Ultimately she informs the police and the activist is arrested.

Gordimer here points out the fact that the black people themselves become obstacle in the Liberation Movement. The simple, ignorant people like Nanike lack the vision. They could not understand that the activists are fighting for the whole black society. Moreover, there are black police when Nanike goes at the police station to inform about the activist. She informs them in her own language which they understand. But they fail to understand they are assisting the white government in the oppression of their own people.

'At the Rendezvous of Victory':

Gordimer is a literary witness of South Africa's history. She witnessed various phases through which the nation went - Apartheid crisis, the nationwide opposition to the Apartheid through the Liberation Movement, the defeat of white government, the ultimate victory of the black people and the formation of new government and constitution. The story covers all these events. It is about a black leader of guerrilla war who played a substantial role in getting freedom to his country but he is diplomatically thrown aside by other politicians afterwards. Sinclair General Zwedu was born in the blacks' compound on a white man's farm. At the very young age, he took away the local Boy Scout troop in a black shanty town and transformed the scouts into the Youth Group of National Independence Party. He was detained with the other freedom

fighters- among them was the future Prime Minister. In jail, he made up defiance songs that soon were being sung at mass meetings. He had invigorating influence on fellow political detainees. So he was sent to another prison. There he overpowered three warders and escaped across the borders. He took refuge in extremely cold countries which offered military training. He also succeeded to get help of money and arms. He had left his home country with empty hands, on bare feet. But he returned with the band of men with AKM assault rifles, heat-guided missiles and limpet mines. It was this exploit that earned him the title 'General Giant'. After four years and deaths of many his men controlled a third of the country and he was the man the white army wanted most to capture.

The war is won by the black people. The whole nation knew that the war could not have been won without General Giant. The character of General Giant is portrayed in contrast with another freedom fighter who became the Prime Minister when they won the war. This freedom fighter too had been imprisoned again and again. He had fled from the country and had established the Party's leadership in exile. He never returned to the country until it got the freedom. Unlike him, General Giant never lingered abroad. He would imperatively return as he was deeply rooted in the home country. General Giant never envied the future Prime Minister, his flat in London and the invitations to country houses to discuss the future of the country. Gordimer emphasizes the contrast between these two freedom fighters. General Giant is an honest, indiscreet, emotional man whereas another is a diplomat, shrewd man. Naturally, the diplomat became the Prime Minister of the country.

Gordimer depicts the political climate in South Africa after independence. There were newly arose questions before the country. The two armies, black and white, who had fought with each other, would have to be made one. The European powers promised loans for reconstruction.

Consequently the new black state became a puppet in their hands. The European powers insisted that General Giant must be relieved of all military authority. His personality was too strong and too strongly associated with the triumph of freedom fighter army. He was a divisive reminder of the past in the new, regular army.

General Giant was used in the first peace-time election as his legend would guarantee that he would win the seat. But this powerful man was not given the portfolio of 'Defence', which was suitable for him. Instead, he was given a harmless portfolio-'Sports and Recreation'. General Giant, a man of action who was fond of physical pleasures was gradually discarded from the political limelight. His honest, bold and straightforward opinions offended others in his party. He was stripped off his portfolio and the title 'General Giant'. Gordimer focuses this man's simplicity, though it is not suitable for politics. This simple man continued to live his life in his own way, enjoying it instead of pursuing power and money.

'Something Out There':

The story is an implicit warning given to the white South Africans by Nadine Gordimer. Throughout the story, the whites fear of 'something out there'. Gordimer underlines the existence of the horrible reality for the whites. The story has two parallel developing plots- one consists of the reports of monkey-like creature roaming in a white suburb of Johannesburg creating atmosphere of horror and another consists of the four revolutionaries living in an isolated house and planning for the explosion of a power station nearby. The two plots are fused together with the common thread of- 'menace', 'threat' or 'terror'. But before the story ends, Gordimer takes care to make it clear that the reality itself is horrible, to be feared of and this reality is man-made. Nothing is

supernatural or superhuman in it. The white people in the story live under the fear- either of a mysterious animal or the black terrorists and burglars. Gordimer points out that the white themselves are responsible for these 'horrible circumstances'.

Gordimer portrays the four revolutionaries who are the members of a Liberation Movement organization which believes in the protest through sabotage without any bloodshed. The four revolutionaries include a white man-Charles, a white woman- Joy and two black men- Vusi and Eddie. Through the sympathetic depiction of these four revolutionaries, Gordimer wants the whites to realize that those being referred as 'terrorists' or 'monsters' are human beings. She heartily appreciates these revolutionaries for their dedication to the cause of freedom.

The story unravels step by step the four revolutionaries' plan of exploding the power station. There was systematic plan in advance by the organization and all four were perfectly acting according to the plan. Each of them had been assigned the particular tasks. For example, Charles was given the duty of providing everything they might need. He himself had been provided with a combi. He went to the appointed places, at appointed times, to pick what was necessary. Charles and Joy-pretending to be a married couple rented an isolated house. Vusi and Eddie arrived at the house on fourth day according to the arrangement. They had to pose themselves to the estate agent, his wife and others as white masters and their black servants according to the prevalent social system. Gordimer explains to us that-

...all four had left behind, too, the 'normal' fear, repugnancies, prejudices, reservations that 'circumstances' as they had known it- what colour

they were, what that colour had meant where they lived- had been for them. (153)

There was equal distribution of work. That is why Joy was not forced to cook for the men. The other instance is Joy offered her help in building the shed wall. She learnt how to mix cement in a puddle of the right consistency. Her long skinny arms were stronger than they looked. When the wall was built and the garage door was installed successfully, they stood looking at it with satisfaction- Charles put an arm on the girl's shoulder, and she put an arm on Vusi's while Eddie raised and lowered the door for them. Gordimer focuses how the joy of creation was enjoyed by all four together.

The sense of attachment among them was so strong that no other reality existed for them. This sense made them to forget all the criteria of gender, colour or race. They were only comrades fighting for the one and only goal. Charles and Joy had been once lovers. But now they were co-revolutionaries. They had lost the scent of one another's skin. They had occupied the house, not lived in, as in war soldiers occupy trenches. They both were going matter-of-factly through the undertaken task. Gordimer emphasizes the perfect understanding among the four. Discipline was the molecular pattern of their association. "Vusi could not function without Eddie, Eddie and Vusi without Charles and Joy, Charles and Joy without Eddie and Vusi." (178) there is depiction of some best moments shared by the four. Joy dancing with the music on Eddie's player, summoned Eddie to dance. While Joy and Eddie danced, Charles smiled at them encouragingly. Vusi joined them with playing his saxophone. This picture shows Gordimer's firm faith in the harmony between the black and the white people. Her conviction is also revealed here. In a multiracial society it is not always necessary that the whites hold authoritative position. The blacks also can have qualities of

leadership. When Eddie did mistake of wandering in town which was highly risky for himself and their mission, Vusi was given the right to take him to task. Joy saw Eddie going out in early morning. She was supposed to complain about it to Vusi. Gordimer praises the ingenuity in the blacks. Vusi made a musical instrument- saxophone, out of tin rings from beer cans. Later on, when the police found that saxophone, they were sure it was made by a black. Because such a naïve ingenuity was found only in blacks. They could manage to put together bits of junks in a mine compound or while serving long prison sentence.

Gordimer tells us that it was clear to all four- why they were there. They had full faith in what they were doing. Eddie and Vusi were fighting for their own people. Gordimer highlights here, Charles and Joy, inspite of being whites, were opponents of the colour bar. They had set up themselves to demolish the oppressive system. They had chosen the path of revolution. Gordimer calls it 're-education'. With this 're-education' they could not bear themselves classified people living in a white suburb. That is why they were with two black men, assisting them in their struggle. According to the arrangement they dug pits, buried AKM assault rifles and bayonets, the grey limpet mines with detonators and timing devices. They exploded the power station without any damage of human life or bloodshed.

Gordimer demystifies all the things in the last pages of the novella. The animal had been found dead. It was only a baboon- just a native species. People were occupied with the news of power station explosion and investigations about it. Eddie was shot on the border by the police. The other three succeeded to escape. The police traced their assumed names while carrying out the plan and also their real identities. But they could not interrelate the assumed names and the real identities. They even could not find out the relationships among the four. There are

various guesses about it. Gordimer asserts that the police failed to understand that the four revolutionaries lived by 'assertion of brotherhood' outside the narrow community of their skin.

Jump and Other Stories (1991):

'Comrades':

Through the story Gordimer comments on the white activists' lack of awareness of the black people's sufferings and deprivation. These white activists are sympathetic towards the blacks and they do uphold the black cause. They attend conference, meetings and discuss about the black people's rights. But they do not have the slightest idea of black people's sufferings. Mrs. Hattie Telford, a rich white lady is a member of the committee of white and black activists. She attends a university conference on People's Education. While returning to home, she is requested for the lift in her car by four black, young activists who also have attended the conference. The youngsters are the members of Youth Congress in Phoneng- two hundreds kilometers away. On learning that they are hungry Mrs. Telford takes them to her house and gives them food. While conversing with them she learns that these youngsters have not been at school for several years.

According to Gordimer, for both kinds of whites- those who believe in colour bar and take part in the black oppression and another kind- those who are on blacks' side, the condition of life are same. They do not experience the actual oppression, injustice in their daily lives. Mrs. Telford is a representative of the whites who live in their ivory tower. She could not imagine the fact that the youngsters have been deprived from education. She could not understand what 'activism' is. She does not know that-

...they are the children growing into young men and women for whom school is a battleground, a place of boycotts and demonstrations, the literacy of political rhetoric, the education of revolt against living the life their parents live. (95)

These youngsters, beyond their childhood accepted the great responsibility of fighting for the cause of freedom- leading a boycott, throwing stones at police station or burning the school down. They have gone through imprisonment. For Mrs. Telford, this is unbelievable. She could not believe these innocent youths will have a career of wiring explosives and will turn out to be violent fighters. "She can see they have been terribly harmed but cannot believe they could harm." (96)

The conversation about their 'deprivation' makes the atmosphere nervous. The lady, to relieve the tense mood asks something. But what she asks again reveals her ignorance. She asks if they like the carved wooden lion- a decorative piece in her house. She expects some praising words. But the young people remain speechless. Gordimer ironically points out that the expensive, rich decorations- all are on the same level of impact, phenomena undifferentiated, undecipherable for the blacks. Only the food that fed their hunger was real.

Gordimer makes use of sharp irony while exposing the lady. In fact, the irony pervades the story from the very title to the concluding line itself. The white lady, being a member of the committee is called 'comrade' by the young members, but she shares nothing with them.

'Amnesty':

The story deals with an entanglement of personal life with the political activism. Gordimer explores how a political activist's

domestic life gets affected due to his participation in the Liberation Movement. While making extensive use of the Liberation Movement as the background, Gordimer also focuses here a young woman's hope and despair. The events are viewed through the eyes of this simple, young farm girl whose fiancé has gone to town for work. There he has joined the union. He has promised her to marry after returning with enough money. But he gets involved deeper and deeper in his political activism and the woman remains waiting for him. Gordimer, throughout the story, juxtaposes his activism with the woman's yearnings-

The third year, we heard he was in prison. Instead of getting married.(248)

The man is fighting to end the 'yes-baas' system. He gets six years imprisonment and is sent to Cape Town. He is allowed one letter a month. He writes it to his beloved as his parents are illiterate. Through the letters he explains to her the black people's situation and also the union's struggle for the rights of the workers. He criticizes black people's ignorance and superstitious faith in God- that the God will decide what is good for them. They themselves won't find the force to change their lives. Once the woman with his parents goes to meet him to Cape Town, but the police do not allow them to board the ferry. They demand permit. The man writes her about an advice office run by Churches where she could have got the information about the permit. One of his letters expresses the freedom fighter's hope that one day the blacks will have the things they need -land, food, the end of ignorance. The next word 'power' has been blacked out by the prison officer, who reads the letter first.

The man is released after five years. His return makes his family very much happy. But this happiness does not last for long. Now

he is an activist in the Movement and has no time for the family. He even has not found time to marry her. He comes home occasionally and returns with the comrades immediately. These activists are uncertain what is going to come next. They are fighting for all black people who suffer. The black suffer because they have not got money, land and power. The white man owns the land and let the blacks squat in mud and tin huts only as long as they work for him.

Gordimer emphasizes the enlightenment and awareness among these activists. Now they are systematically planning their struggle. The man and his comrades discuss about organizing the people on the farms, the workers and demand for- minimum wages, limitation of the working hours, the right to strike, annual leave, accident compensation, pension, sick and maternity leave. They hope their children will belong to a country for which they are fighting now.

The man involved in freedom struggle is always referred as 'he'; his name is not given in the story. It seems that Gordimer wants the reader to see him as the representative of all men who get involved with freedom struggle. Through him Gordimer comments on the problems and the woes of such men. Such men cannot spare time for their family. The activist in the story does not find the time to marry or build a house. His little daughter is not ready to accept him as a father as he has not given her time to get used to him. The man is too occupied with the Movement to understand the woman's yearnings for his company. She is still waiting for him to come back home.

'Home':

Gordimer depicts the brutal treatment given to the Liberation Movement activists by the police. She criticizes the South African government's oppressive policy of "tearing up lives with their decrees on

bits of paper, breaking down doors in power of arrest, shutting people off from life in cells”(124) She illustrates here how a happy ‘home’ is disturbed by government’s oppression. Teresa, apparently delicate looking woman is an activist and is helping her activist brother in exile. She has married a Swedish man and has been living happy married life since seven years. But her happy married life gets disturbed when the news of arrest of her brother, mother and a sister comes to her. She becomes extremely worried about her mother. The story throws light on Teresa’s transformation through the crisis. She faces double anxiety for the arrested people. On one hand they are her family members and on the other her brother Robbie is a co-activist of the Movement. Teresa is most worried about her mother. Before her arrest, she has hated her mother for her meekness, subservience to an unfeeling, the acceptance of the ghetto place which the law allotted to them, her attempts to genteel the place with the curtains and room-fresheners. But she is filled with anguish for her mother. Every moment she thinks how her mother would stand up prison life. Gordimer contrasts the free breath with the arrested breath in prison. The free breath of the people whose relatives are detained in prison is arrested by anxiety. All the time while she works, eats, sleeps, Teresa thinks of her mother. She is anxious about what might be happening with her mother in the cell.

Moreover, Teresa is worried about Movement’s future. She feels indignation towards Robbie’s foolish act of coming home. Robbie is the activist in exile and such people do not afford self-indulgence. The police keep watch on their houses. When simple desires like ‘a home-cooked meal’ bring them to the house, the police trap them. Robbie is arrested in this way. But along with him his mother and sister who are not concerned with the Movement are also arrested. Gordimer shows here the

harsh repression of the Liberation Movement. The police arrest anyone and everyone related to an activist and they are detained without trial.

Initially, Teresa is very much shocked, dazed. She weeps and curses the government. Gordimer presents us a strong, determined woman going through the ordeal of her relatives' imprisonment. The ordeal transforms her into an independent and powerful woman of action. Her brother, mother and sister are detained under Section 29 and they would have no access to lawyer or relatives. She struggles for her relatives. She meets an Indian woman lawyer whom they have heard at protest meetings against detention without trial. She spends all her spare time in seeing lawyers, collecting and filling in applications to magistrates, chiefs of police, government officials and consulting organizations concerned with the condition of detainees. She manages to get a parcel of blankets and clothing to her relatives. Finally, she succeeds in meeting her mother. The other activists cooperate with her in this struggle. While doing all these things, she has to live away from the 'home', as she too, could be arrested anytime.

During this period, Teresa's husband feels alone. Through this character, Gordimer shows us the detachment of a foreigner. Neither he shares Teresa's anguish for her mother, nor the background of poverty in which she is brought up. He is not 'comrade' with her in the Liberation Movement. While she is away from 'home', he wrongly suspects of her having another lover. Gordimer exemplifies how the political system- the police repression affects the personal life. It breaks the best harmony in a married couple. Ultimately Teresa's husband understands that it is not a lover for whom she left him. But it is for the dark family of which she is not a member, her country to which he does not belong.

'Safe Houses':

Gordimer unfolds the life of an underground activist. Though the story mainly deals with the theme of clandestine sexual relationship between the activist and a rich lady, Gordimer also depicts the activist's tricks to hide himself from the police. This man is working for Movement. He has lived underground life several times. His long experience of activism has enabled him to develop his own mechanism for hiding himself from the police. This time he has come back to his country from exile. He does not grow beard because he knows the beard is the first thing police would expect to find one behind. According to him, to hide away, one has to be out in the open places of life. Best safety lies in crowds, in the selective crowds; he goes to football matches with beer in a knapsack, and a cap with a plastic eyeshade over his sunglasses, but he does not go to pop concerts where the police keep an eye on young leftists whose democratic recreation this is. He goes to the movies but not to the concerts although he longs for the company of strings and brass. He thinks that the small gatherings where everyone can be trusted are traps. The good friends who provide bed sometimes offer the use of a car. But according to him, driving alone is another sure way to be traced and picked up. He walks and takes buses among ordinary workers and students.

Once, he meets a rich lady in bus. The lady being there for the first time in the bus does not know anything about the bus travel. He pays for her ticket, as she has no change. He accompanies her to the house. As he is a white, she does not suspect him. She invites him to her house. In this casual meeting both recognize each other's loneliness and sexual yearnings. It leads to the physical relationship between them. The lady is shrewd enough and she manages to keep the affair secret from the black servants. The activist understands that to be underground is to have

a go at living without consequences, i.e. living the life of non-existence. But he could not restrain himself from involving himself in the relationship with the lady. He devises a story about his existence and identity. He lies to her that he is a construction engineer and he has to travel abroad frequently. While devising story of his profession, he uses his experience of guerilla training camps in Tanzania and Libya, his presence in the offices of an exiled High Command in cities deadened by northern snows or tropical heat. He goes on involving himself while violating the Movement's principles.

He is a missing person accused in a trial and the newspapers have published daily accounts of the proceedings of the trial. His comrades are presented at the trial and police are in search of him. There is pressure on him to leave the country, but he has resisted them. Presently, he is given shelter by various friends of the Movement, but these shelters are precarious. When his latest shelter is located by the police, he goes to the lady. He lives there that night. The affair is over as the lady's husband is to return on the next day. After some days, the activist is arrested by the police. Being once again in the cell with his comrades, he wonders whether she recognized him and whether it was she who reported the police about him.