The Political, the Public and the Private:

Nadine Gordimer's Stories in

Crimes of Conscience

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Nadine Gordimer's stories in Crimes of Conscience[1] reveal not only her mature craftsmanship but also a masterful enmeshing of the political, the public, and the private in the lives of the individuals. These stories, sort of vignettes, deal with the extremely personal aspects of the inhabitants within the regional and social locales of South Africa. Specimens of consummate control in rendering the era in which these characters find themselves, the stories become chronicles of the times of the apartheid rule in South Africa. In his analytical study Nadine Gordimer (1994), Dominic Head writes that Gordimer's "career is one in which private and public realms are intertwined ..." (2). Head continues to explain that the most remarkable fact about Gordimer's oeuvre is its massive historical and political significance as a developing and shifting response to the events in modern South Africa spanning over forty years, almost six decades from 1940s to 1990s.

The intertwining of "public and private realms" in Crimes of Conscience addresses Gordimer's chief concern about the lack of any authentic voice in South Africa during the heydays of the apartheid regime that could articulate the reality beyond ordinary depictions in the newspapers. At a time when censorship laws ruled supreme and the work of all but particularly black writers was banned and thus kept away from readers for the fear of unrest or revolution, Gordimer emerged with courage to serve in the capacity

she knew the best. She says about herself: "I am an apolitical person, in a situation where to be effective you have to be political. All I have to offer is my ability to write" (quoted by Terkel in Bazin and Seymour 12). Gordimer used this weapon of word and its apolitical significance in furthering the cause of those who were fighting, albeit silently against the repressive and inhumane laws of the apartheid regime.

Speaking of some historically imperative developments in 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison. Gordimer was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991. In her lecture at the prize-winning ceremony Gordimer contextualizes the struggle leveled by a writer and the written word:

> Attempting to interpret through the word the readings we take in the societies, the world of which we are a part. It is in this sense, this inextricable, ineffable participation that writing is always and at once exploration of self and of the world, of individual and collective being. (Gordimer 1999, 196)

The "collective being" in her Crimes of Conscience is the society in South Africa that is formulated by the actualization of political policies of the apartheid regime. Crimes of Conscience evokes the highly personalized experiences of individuals in such a society where politics dictates public life by entering the fabric of everyday human existence. The stories in Crimes of Conscience portray the wider political landscape of South Africa as an inescapable backdrop against which human drama of real lives in enacted. Gordimer's mastery lies in her uncompromising portrayal of the complex individual being against the realistic representation of the public and the political events. The protagonists, whether black or white, make

highly individualized decisions, rebelling against the standard practices and modes of behavior expected of their respective classes. In this regard, Gordimer of Crimes of Conscience has recently been hailed as "the conscience of South Africa."[2] The stories in the collection chart new ways and possibilities for a freer future of her country where allegiance to truth would be held supreme.

The stories in Crimes of Conscience bring to us a world ruled by pass laws and land control policies of the whites that marginalize the lives of the black population in segregated suburban townships.[3] The fact is that these townships continued to grow as the non-white population increased in number and reached the fringes of the urban areas in some cases. The townships also serve as sites of black resistance and this points towards the inherent contradiction of the apartheid policy. Head explains:

> On the one hand the expanding settlements indicate the failure of the strategies of strict spatial control; on the other hand, the presence of blacks in townships adjoining cities is tacitly required since these people comprise much of a city's required workforce. (30-31)

One such township is depicted in the very first story "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living."[4]

In the story "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living," Nanike Moreke and Samson Moreke live in a house that comprises of a "sub-economic township planners usual two rooms" (Gordimer 1991, 1). The very first line of the story is italicized because it is the first person narrative voice of Nanike, and is suggestive of the degree to which politics has penetrated into the lives of ordinary people of South Africa: *"You only count the days if you are waiting to have a*

baby or you are in prison. I have had my child but I'm counting the days since he's been in this house" (1). The man responsible for this feeling of captivity is a fugitive himself who has been promised shelter by white police and of whose presence in the house Nanike ultimately informs the police. Samson, we are told, works in the city and the house has been sublet to other people. This is not just for the sake of economic considerations but because "No one with a roof over his head can say 'no' to one of the same blood – everyone knows that" (5). Money is welcomed too, considering that Samson saves money to buy the newspaper, "the smell of the cooking never varies" and "they did not have the money to eat meat often" (5). It is for this reason too that the fugitive though described as having "a yellow face, lighter than anyone else" must be provided refuge (4). Samson shares a certain commonality of experience with the fugitive because of him being non-white. He says: "What is the same blood? Here in this place? If you are not white, you are all the same colour" (6).

Color as a sign of sameness also raises an important issue in other stories, like "Outside World." Although pass laws is not a matter to be taken into consideration inside the township where color bar does not operate, the enemy is present on the other side of this racial divide. The white man is, as self-explaining from the title, the Something Out There (1984) (The title of the collection from which the story "Outside World" has been taken). The township in the form of house "Number 1907 Block C" becomes a site of resistance as it provides shelter to a man fighting from the margins of a society that has been responsible for his oppression. Head writes that these margins become the sites of:

> ... social experience and hence of social struggle. Township life is a manifestation of

> dispossession and repression. Yet it also contains a seed of something more positive...an implicit challenge to governmental control of urbanization. (29)

With reference to the story "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living," Nanike plays a decisive role in identifying the enemy. Though the status of the fugitive is sacrosanct in the black township, Nanike reports against him on a Sunday night after having spent almost a week in his company. Head reads this gesture of Nanike as an act springing from the impulse to "safeguard her domestic environment" with a "rejection of the incipient sexual attraction"(175) she feels for the fugitive in the absence of her husband Samson who works in the city for white people. In a 1982 interview Gordimer herself suggested that: "the loyalty to your sex is secondary to the loyalty to your race" (quoted by Boyers, et. al in Bazin and Seymour 186). Nanike of "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living" is interpreted as the one who decided in the interest of the township society at large, expressing her loyalty to the cause of peace rather than bloodshed.

In the story, besides the controversial loyalties of Nanike, there are constant references to the social activities of people of the township. These social activities display overlapping effects on the personal and private lives of the inhabitants. The "shebeen" and the excitement generated by its presence, the cultural practice of drinking together on weekends, the reference to the child as the "latest-the fifth living baby" (3), all evoke a distinctly personal scenario of life in townships.[5] These various events in the story intermingle with the reference to the Soweto riots of 1976 in which blacks rose up against the discriminatory laws imposed on them. Thus, in a bid to capture the essence of the agents of change as and when they transpired, the

public and the private are connected in a struggle to reveal the internal core of the enveloping political truth.

Read as stories of loyalties and betrayals, the writer does not only point out black man's betrayal against the black society and its milieu, she also depicts the betrayal of the whites against their own order. The private selves of the whites are not thus hidden from our view. The protagonist Derek Felterman, in the story "Crimes of Conscience," from which the collection takes its title, is a white man who chooses to place his confidence in a white woman with radical left wing associations. Derek has been employed by the internal security for the purpose of intrigue and espionage. He ultimately reveals the secret nature of his mission to the woman but not before he has found out for his own purpose what she has been involved in for a very long time, political activism. The story implies how sensitive Gordimer has been to the "thick ... air of deception" all those years. Times when one felt oneself to be among friends only to discover later that somebody was there who was indeed not a friend (Bazin and Seymour 1986, p.257).

The story "Crimes of Conscience" focuses on the person of Alison Jane Ross, a white woman involved in anti-apartheid activism. She is described as someone who does not believe in standing "on the side lines" (83). As a correspondence college teacher she tells Derek that her vocation is "teaching people I never see," the very brand of activism Gordimer endorsed as opposed to one that manifested itself in just a liberal outlook to impress others. Derek falls in love with her and in the final embrace at the end of the story both seem united in their stance of opposition to not just the apartheid but the whole philosophy of segregation. The fact that Alison holds Derek's head as he confesses his crime of spying on her points probably to the decision about involving minds rather than just hearts. The hint is that all this may lead to action.

Again the betrayal of a white individual against the white apartheid government is seen as a sign of better times. Through the private lives of Alison and Derek the reader is introduced to the state judicial system, the music and the cultural life of South Africa, its vibrancy and its color. Gordimer thus shows the political and the public or cultural, blend with the private, affecting the individuals in myriad ways.

The stories in Crimes of Conscience also project the issue of land and its possession as one of the most important aspects of the creed of apartheid. In her 1982 interview Gordimer explains:

> Blacks take the land for granted it's simply there. It's theirs, although they have been conquered; they were always there. They don't have this necessity to say, "well I love this land because it's beautiful, because it's this, that and the other." (Quoted by Boyers, et. al in Bazin and Seymour 188)

It was thus the need to authenticate their hold over the land, which lay at the heart of the apartheid government's repressive policies of land control and the Group Areas Act.[6]

"Oral History" in Crimes of Conscience is the story of one such homeland. The title points to the oral tradition of story telling in South Africa, a tradition Gordimer refers to as rich and poetic. Originally included in her collection of short stories A Soldier's Embrace published in 1980, Nadine Gordimer seems to not only provide this oral history in written form but is fully conscious that the human element in the story would have been missed by an ordinary newspaper report. In one of her interviews, she

commented on this particular short story in the following terms:

> The title is the key to the right style for the story. I wanted to tell it the way you tell something that has actually happened (an episode in the chronicle of a village or people). (Quoted by Gardner in Bazin and Seymour 1990, 170)

"Oral History" points towards the literary tradition of South Africa and also to the oppression inflicted on tribal homelands that are considered the hotbeds of intrigue against the government. The chief of the tribe plays the role of informer to the white army against his own people. This results in massacre of the entire tribe by the white and the ultimate suicide of the chief. In the tribal village of Dilolo the white man's presence can be felt when "land rovers come upon people's cattle" and the "string shaped army planes fly over twice a day" (88), but the people have grown so accustomed to these alien interventions in the idyllic land that they don't even look up when it happens. Gordimer expressed this in her interview as a contrast between "the very strange life that we live here and the innocence one might find in the landscape around us" (quoted by Terkel in Bazin and Seymour 22). Like the title of the story itself, the language of "Oral History" is authentic to its tradition. Gordimer believes and explains that the oral tradition of storytelling is richly imaginative both in ideas and the use of the words: "This oral tradition may flow into the mould of the written word" (quoted by Sachs in Bazin and Seymour 8).

The political aspect of government propaganda to sway public opinion through newspaper and radio is another highlighted theme of "Oral History." This refers to the fact that the government wants a particular viewpoint to reach

the public concerning those who rebel against its policies. In the end, the white government itself resorts to violent means against the rebels claiming that they are evildoers out to kill and maim people and burn villages. The whites had earlier painted all these people as the enemies of the tribe, "these men who went over the border and came back with guns to kill people and burn huts" (89). It was to save the tribe from these evildoers that the white government said it would shoot "anybody who walked in the bush after dark (89). That the chief of the tribe, who sneaks out of the village in the night and reports against "these men" is "not afraid [that] he would meet a patrol and be shot, alone in the night in the sand forest, the forested desert he had known before and would know beyond his span of life" (95) is an affirmation of Gordimer's viewpoint that the black man's claim to the land needs no confirmation. It is the white man who needs decrees and laws to ensure that land does not slip out of his reach. To the black man it is his and shall always be.

Like that of Nanike in "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living," the chief's act in "Oral History" might simplistically be seen as one of betrayal against his tribe and race. After all he reports against men with "warrior smiles" while "the pupils with their defiance, their belief, their claim, hold on him" (94), these men fight for the end to white supremacy. The fact that they are using violent means, not in the manner expressed in government letters to the chief but in the sense of perpetuating hatred to end hatred, is the point of divergence between them and him. The Chief acts like Nanike to "preserve his domestic environment" and his tribe. Instinctively he chooses the path of peace so that peace might prevail. His efforts are thwarted when this gesture is reciprocated in the white government's ruthless act of burning the entire village and with it "all five generations of the clan's life that had been chronicled by each succeeding generation in episodes told to the next",

ultimately forcing him to commit suicide. In his death he seeks not atonement for his sins but unity with his people who had paid through their lives for the cause of humanity, peace and love. In Reading Nadine Gordimer's South Africa, Katherine Wagner writes:

> Gordimer despite her overtly revolutionary sympathies has herself never fully overcome her instinctive revulsion against violence as a mode of forcing change. Though violence is seen as an unavoidable tool of the struggle, it is acknowledged that "killing is killing, violence is pain and death." (Wagner 1994, 18)

One of the most remarkable qualities of Gordimer's works, as already cited, "is its massive historical and political significance as a developing and shifting response to events in modern South Africa" (Head 2). In "A Rendezvous to Victory," Gordimer encapsulates the idea of how peace instead of violence can be evermore demanding. Peace, Gordimer argues, attempts to build bridges rather than lay landmines. In the story, General Giant Zwedu is a figure with whom Gordimer bears sympathies, yet does not fully endorse his aspect of lackadaisical self-pity as a former revolutionary. "A Rendezvous to Victory" gives specimens of the undesirable, both among the white as well as the black aspirants to power. Gordimer has reflected upon the role the white and the black would have to play in an apartheid free society, considering it an "act of trust."[7] This act of trust requires however an understanding of the status whites can hope to enjoy in a predominantly black South Africa. On the contrary the whites in "A Rendezvous to Victory" are, what Gordimer wrote in her essay "Where Do Whites Fit in?"

> The stubborn mass that will continue, like a Napoleon in a mad house, to see itself as the undisputed master and make no attempt to consider the reality of living another role. (Gordimer 1959, 33)

"A Rendezvous to Victory," represents this escape from reality that is reflected in the act of "the defeated white government" as well as "the European powers by whom the new black state was promised loans for reconstruction" (103).

During discussions pertaining to the framework of the new government in "A Rendezvous to Victory," it is decided that General Giant Zwedu should be appointed as the "commander in chief of the new states Defence Force"(103) because he is a divisive reminder of the past. In "Oral History" a white army ruthlessly destroys an entire village to save its skin, pre-empting resistance from a few black warriors. Operating from the same premise, in "A Rendezvous to Victory," the white advisers, in their act of self-preservation, insist that in the "new black state" (103) the man leading the army must not be black. Indirectly, they are asserting that a predominantly black army led by a black person will ultimately lead to violence against the whites.

It seems that the above quoted reference from the stories is like a classic case of reflecting ones own wrong doings and prejudices as a majority onto other people. Blacks are traditionally taken to be subservient to the dictates of whites. The roles might have reversed but the phenomenon has not yet sunk in. The whites are not the only ones responsible for this attitude. In the story mentioned above the new black prime minister seems equally, rather more, inclined to pay heed to the advice of the "British lawyers and African experts from American

Universities" (103). He does not listen much to those who really fought for freedom from the white rule. He is also in a sense living in and conditioned to the hierarchical societal order of yore.[8] "A Rendezvous to Victory" expresses this phenomenon reflected in the behavior of black as well as white children in the manner they conduct themselves in the departure lounge of the newly extended airport, "Black children were spores attached to maternal skirts. White children ran back and forth to the bar counter, buying potato crisps and peanuts (108).

The consequential conditioning of the black or the white generations has been an outcome of the erroneous myths of white supremacy manifested in practical terms through the control of power and through the acts of philanthropy directed to gain influence in the governance of the state. Christopher Heywood, a consistent critic of Gordimer's works, in his book Nadine Gordimer extends the parameters of philanthropy to explain that all this "... Includes the internationally recognised sources of benevolent philanthropy which stem form the anti-slavery movement in England and America" (42). Wagner also in Reading Nadine Gordimer's South Africa terms such philanthropy as a form of "superficial liberalism."[9]

Thus Nanike Moreke, Derek Felterman, the Chief of the Dilolo tribe, and to some extent General Giant Zwedu are activists as well as radicals in that they move away from the usual, giving priority to their own sense of just and unjust.[10] In the respective stories, all the fore-mentioned characters undergo some peculiar personal experience and thereafter are impelled to follow the path of righteousness irrespective of the claim of their particular political calling. General Zwedu has fought long and sincerely for revolution, but has been unable to subvert the old order. In his essay on Nadine Gordimer in Imaginary Homelands, Salman Rushdie comments on the character of the General: "A

classic cameo portrait-of the guerilla 'general' for whom, after the success of his revolution, his old friend now the Prime Minister of the newly liberated nation, has less and less time (191).[11] The mark of a man of integrity is a trait missing in the Prime Minister who assumes power under white tutelage. His relieving of General Zwedu of his former position as commander in chief makes one discern in him a certain sense of ineptitude and selfishness. The Prime Minister is found more interested in acquiring the trappings of power rather than serving the people.

Based on her sketching of the political, the public, and the private sides of her characters, Gordimer contrasted the projections of art with those of real life. She spoke of Nelson Mandela's remarkable quality "to recognise the people he may not have seen for years, or whom he may have met fleetingly" (Gordimer 1999 in Living in hope and history: notes for our century, London, Bloomsbury) at the Noble Peace Prize Ceremony in 1993. Gordimer praised in Mandela a "sign of something profound: a remove from self-centeredness; the capacity to live for others ...(Gordimer 1999, 151).[12] The revolutionary General Zwedu of "A Rendezvous to Victory" knows only to live in the era of war, becoming almost legendry for his exploits. Gordimer's portrayal of the General implies that peace has found him wanting in the qualities of stoic leadership, while about Mandela, Gordimer said: "he could so easily have become legendry" (Gordimer 1999, 152). She contrasted him with Che Guevara, explaining that once a personage becomes a myth he has disappeared forever as a leader to take on the present in vulnerable flesh (152).

And it is a myth what the journalist in "A Rendezvous to Victory" wants General Zwedu to reduce to. He refers to the "dog bite scars on his legs as a consequence of delivering telegrams in the white men's suburbs" (99). The truth is very different and, like all other statements, is

distorted to the journalist's purpose of making "a novel opening to story," something to prove that he "wasn't on the side of the whites" (99). Gordimer criticized severely this brand of writing as an attempt to pass off as a liberal activist. She believed that such superficial liberalism reflected a lack of commitment to any ideal except self-projection.[13]

In the short story "The Ultimate Safari," the subject is a child and her rendering of the journey to the land of "away" to seek refuge from possible death is the outcome of war in her native country. Dominic Head explains that the victim country referred to in the story is Mozambique (Head 177). Head's finding does coincide with the actual facts at the time "The Ultimate Safari" was published. In 1980s, Mozambiqu was going through a very difficult time in its history. Millions of people, who tried to escape, were displaced due to the civil war between Renamo, the Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana, backed by South Africa, which resented Mozambique's staunch support of South African National Congress and the ruling party Frelimo Frente de Liberacao de Mocambique.[14] "The Ultimate Safari" narrates one such escapade from a child's point of view, exhibiting how political decisions leave indelible marks on private experiences. The cost of the escapades in terms of the loss of loved ones and the life long scars, sustained as a result, reveal, Gordimer's overt commitment not to political ideals but to the extent of human courage amid ordeals that result from false commitment to political agendas. The child's term to express the land of safety is "away." This "land of away" is actually South Africa since there is mention of how "in 1844, the eastern boundary of the park was agreed upon with the Portugese." The eastern boundary happens to be a major portion of the border between Mozambique and South Africa.[15]

The title "The Ultimate Safari" is ironic and has satirical undertones of how whites like to see Africa, more as a land of wonder than reality. This reduces Africa to the same status as of a mythological figure, a land that has not yet lost its fairy tale value. The epigraph reads thus:

> THE AFRICAN ADVENTURE LIVES ON. YOU CAN DO IT! THE ULTIMATE SAFARI OR EXPEDITION WITH LEADERS WHO KNOW AFRICA (Gordimer1991, 110).

In his reading of the story and its epigraph, Head argues that apparently the story's epigraph is a "travel advertisement," but the ultimate Safari in Africa makes explicit how power and the control and representation of space are inextricably linked (Head 177). The white public's site of recreation is a black man's site of oppression, embodying alienation, hunger, thirst and possible death. The Kruger Park, which provides refuge to the girl's family and others fleeing from the war-torn Mozambique, is also a place that reduces their status to that of animals. The man leading them to "the land of away" requires that they " move like animals among the animals" (Gordimer 1991, 113) or otherwise they would be taken back to the land of strife. The child expresses with dismay and wonder: "it was hard to be like animals" (114). The child says so, not out of some sense of human superiority but because animals had access to food and they "ate, ate all the time ... [and] there was nothing for us" (14). And yet complete identification with the animals is something unavoidable under the circumstances, for humans. It turns out to be a survival strategy. Even if the humans were spotted by their own kind (the black people working as servants of the whites), the black fellows " could...pretend we were not there; they had seen only animals" (14).

The Kruger Park symbolizes the landscape of practical utilization. The Park, converted into an ecological conservatory serves certain economic purposes and these economic factors have overtaken the more important issues of social space for the humans. Talking about the issues related to economic gains versus human space and answering a question with reference to her novel The Conservationist (1994), Gordimer said in an interview:

> It's such a paradox really because we are all for conservation; we all have this concern about the natural environment in which we live ... [so] the concern for the birds and the beast and the lack of concern for the human beings becomes another issue. (Quoted by Walters in Bazin and Seymour 286)

Through her novels, prose writings, but particularly through the short stories in Crimes of Conscience Gordimer suggests that concern for politics and lack of concern for human beings is an issue which needs to be taken up seriously. Gordimer's commitment lay first and foremost with the truth of a private experience rather than with any political dogma, whether conservative or radical. Gordimer's stories in Crimes of Conscience prove that she never sacrificed the "possible revelation of a private contradiction to make a political point" (quoted by Ross in Bazin and Seymour 35). Whatever else they may represent, as an "honest writer" her works embody above all truth in all its "private contradictions[s]" (also quoted by Salkey in Bazin and Seymour 43) that is conditioned under the intertwining and overlapping effects of the of public locales rooted in political landscapes.

Notes:

[1] Nadine Gordimer. Crimes of Conscience. Oxford: Heinemann, 1991. Crimes of Conscience is a collection of short stories. All references and page numbers hereafter to various stories in the collection are cited from this edition.

[2] For reference, see the internet resource (http://www.salon.com/books/int/1998/03/cov_si_09int.html)

[3] The apartheid ethos of segregation between the black and the white translated itself into one of the most brutal policies of spatial and urban control, the Group Areas Act of 1950. According to this piece of legislation the blacks were evicted from "desirable areas now re-designated for whites only" where the blacks were not allowed to enter and from where these people went to work to cities "every morning by over-crowded trains, used rather like cattle trucks" carrying their pass books, which served as identities "sometimes ironically called the 'Book of life.'" For details, see Adams and Durham 1995, "Introduction."

[4] The story "A City of the Dead, A City of the Living" in the 1991 edition has been selected from the previously published works of 1980's.

[5] Shebeen is a Gaelic term meaning "little shop." The term was coined by early Irish policemen in Cape Town and relates to the Illegal establishments, which sold alcohol (in various home-brewed forms, known as "utshwala" or "kaffir beer;" as well as the more colloquial "isikilimikwiki," or "kill me quick") to black South Africans. Early in the 20th century, the South African government attempted to control access to beer by establishing a monopoly on the product and specifying that it could only be consumed in municipal beer halls. Shebeens often held in black homes and usually sponsored by women, were the underground answer to this and similar decrees. They featured entertainment in the form of music and musical theater, as well as (of course) dancing (and services). Shebeen performers were classified by the South African government as "vagrants" and thus denied professional status. The shebeens were frequent sites of underground political activity. For details, see http://www.allaboutjazz.com/southafrica/glossary.htm

[6] The Group Areas Act not only led to the re-zoning of the non-white population, "it also resulted in the setting up of separate tribal homelands

known as Bantustans. These had there own supposedly independent governments though they were puppet administrations, entirely dependent for economic and military support upon South Africa and not recognized by any other government in the world." For details, see Adams and Durham 1995, "Introduction."

[7] Repeatedly in her interviews and through her essays Gordimer briefs about the whites resolute clinging to power in the face of black majority. She argues that this amounts to a blatant rejection of the realities and facts, as they exist. Gordimer is of the viewpoint that: "The future of whites in South Africa must be put in the hands of those whose lives have been directed by them for so long. It will be an act of trust (quoted by Ellis in Bazin and Seymour 93).

[8] In one of her interviews Gordimer commented on how "Blacks in South Africa suffer from conditioning too. Among the older ones a slave mentality exists ..." (quoted by Ellis in Bazin and Seymour)

[9] Katherine Wagner points towards this theme in the works of Gordimer saying: "superficial liberalism of outlook becomes the target of her most devastating critique" (see Wagner 14). Such "superficial liberalism" springs sometimes from weakness or from a need to be categorized as do-gooders. Such liberals lack initiative in the true sense and are always at the beck and call of their particular ideological belief to guide them in their practical lives.

[10] In Reading Nadine Gordimer, Wagner argues that a "protagonist's positive activism emerges only when he experiences injustice as a personal violation of his own emotional connections and moral integrity" (Wagner 20).

[11] Rushdie praised the "very deeply felt and imagined ... portrait of Sinclair 'General Giant' Zwedu as one, which from Che Guevara ... Castro, after their triumph, to the revolutionary fighters of present day Black Africa ... is a portrait with many echoes in real life (Rushdie 1991, 192).

[12] Ending her speech on the occasion of his Noble Peace Prize Ceremony, Nadine Gordimer said, "At the rendezvous of victory there is room for all. Mandela's words show he knows that without that provision there is no victory, for anyone" (Gordimer, Living in Hope. 1999. 154).

[13] In her essay about the writers' freedom written in 1975, she spoke of the need to resist writing in a manner that conformed to "orthodoxy of opposition." She differentiated between writer's commitment to truth and the simple journalistic commitment to propaganda, believing that the journalistic

"jargon of struggle" is "not deep enough, wide enough, flexible enough, cutting enough, fresh enough for the vocabulary of the poet, the short story writer or the novelist" (Gordimer (1975) Living in Hope. 1999. 106-107). Gordimer also wrote of how a writer instead of choosing his subject was in fact chosen by it. Choice of subject meant to her "the consciousness of [writer's] own era". She believed that commitment lay in the treatment the writer gives to that subject, "how he deals with his commitment is usually understood as the reverse process, a writer's selection of subject in conformity with the rationalization of his own ideological and /or political beliefs" (Gordimer (1975) Living in Hope. 1999. 116).

[14] A Time Report on web published on 6th January 2001 relates the context of the floods that had ravaged that country, throwing its economy into turmoil. The report recaps how in the late 1980s the civil conflict "destroyed much of the country's economic infrastructure, took the lives of nearly a million Mozambican, and forced millions more to flee to neighboring countries." For details, see <http://www.time.comltime/europe/moztrail/>

[15] For details, see www.ecoafrica.com/krugerpark/general.html/ South Africa is the country itself responsible in a sense for the displacement because of the backing of the rebel forces of Renamo.

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