

I. Racial Tension in *July's People*

Idea of a fair and equal world continues to enchant us. However, it takes no time before the beautiful vision of an equitable and justified world collapses. Nadine Gordimer's *July's People* makes its way in reality of a Utopian world. The ruling class rejects the notion of color bar and assumes that fairness and equity prevails in the world. However, Gordimer finds that the resistance was chiefly determined by the terms of color of skin of the people. Hence, the idea of redistribution of South Africa's material resources and political approach was resisted. In addition, one of the central burdens of the fiction is to show that Gordimer's use of utopia in *July's People* accords with the postmodern rejection of prescription and grand narratives. Gordimer does not imagine a full-fledged post-apartheid South Africa; rather, she merely adumbrates possibilities for a more equal co-existence between blacks and whites. If apartheid, with its policies of racial segregation, tipped the economic balance in favor of whites, Gordimer envisions a post-apartheid future where whites would remedy the economic disparities between them and their fellow black South Africans.

South Africa is a nation of the aborigines who were invaded and ruled by the White invaders for centuries. In this process, large majority of the Aborigines were subject to harsh racial and social discrimination. In this process, several of the local and the Black people of Africa were subject to violence and, many White ruler treated violence as being close to terrorism.

Issue of utopian projection is merely a presence of all equal society; however, can be a state of complete justice being dispersed to all groups and sects of people? In a nation ruled by Whites in the past, and now when the system has been uprooted, the Blacks are in power, and there is a certain scale of feeling of revenge amongst the White rulers. The immediate impact of this is seen in the life of few Whites who still preferred to live in

South Africa, the land of non-Whites, and Gordimer is one such who has witnessed the reversed sense of violence.

Hence, this political change is the source of sufferings of her protagonist, Maureen in *July's People*. The plot of the novel takes its idea from this historic reality and at the background of the novel is the civil unrest in Johannesburg and the sophisticated Whites have to run for shelter. One such White family of Maureen is forced into exile under the mercy of their native African helper, July. As such, the present research takes in consideration the notion of Dystopian Critique and Utopian Projection as has been represented in *July's People*.

When back in the city, the Smales used to speak of leaving the country and settling elsewhere, perhaps in Canada, but “they had stayed; and told each other and everyone else that this and nowhere else was home, while knowing . . . the reason had become they couldn't get their money out” (37). Back there, they were kind to their servant July, supplying him with two uniforms and giving him Wednesdays and alternate Sundays off, but not offering him a sitting room: “Since he would be the only servant in the suburb with such a privilege, there would be too many friends in and out the backyard, too much noise” (34). July was provided with those limited facilities which were the best in the community for the blacks. However, the racial prejudice still prevails and July thinks that he was not treated in nice way.

Critics are divided over the treatment of Maureen during her exile. The White lady facing the experiences the troubles of poor life becomes the gateway into the role reversal. She has inherited many of her traits from her mother who was concerned with keeping up the appearance of wealth even when non-existed. She is obsessed with maintaining the appearance of affluence even when she lacks wealth. This society judges everything on the basis of use-value.

However, Maureen is a female, and for critics like Dasmond Reeve in *The Outline and the Outsider* opines:

Her use-value lies in her house work and elegant manners; it is her real asset. By investing this wealth in the domestic slave market, she intends to find a savior. For this, she must also maintain as the house worker, thus she hates this kind of hypocrisy. Lack morality and propriety, they themselves demand it from others, and Maureen Smales is trapped in this contradictory nature of the present society. (43)

This is a type of domination on the ground that Maureen is of female gender. It further adds to the woes of Maureen for she is treated on the basis of her sexual orientation and thus, here mental and creative understandings are not paid due attention. As such, the essence of women is associated with sufferings from the past social, political and racial order that has set up the social pattern and behavior of human psyche.

July's People narrates the conflict of the white and black people marred in the race of ego problem. While exploring the Utopian world, Gordimer also makes a powerful criticism on the cruelties of patriarchal norms and values through the sufferings imposed on Maureen, a White woman born and raised in an aristocratic White family in Johannesburg, South Africa. Maureen faces no material scarcity in her life in the initial stage, however, when she and her family are forced by Black people to go in exile in rural South Africa, she starts to realize the hardships of being born as a female of a White race, a minority community in South Africa.

The plot of the novel deals on the harsh treatment to which Maureen is exposed because she is female and belongs to a White minority group in South Africa. Due to the political change, Whites are no more in the ruling group and Maureen and her family has to

go in exile for safety in rural Africa. There is a role-reversal, and she no more is a member of the dominating status but becomes one of the victims:

They had to get out, they had to go. People are burn in those houses. Those big houses! You can't imagine those houses. The whites are being killed in their houses. I have seen it – the whole thing just blow up, walls, roof When they come, one gun is no use. If he could chase them away, one day they would come back the next. There's trouble! Unless you've been there, you can't understand to it is. (19)

The pain of being dispersed from one's home due to the racial intolerance haunts Maureen and her husband, Bamford along with three children.

Although *July's People* is not traditional utopia, in the sense that it prescribes an ideal common wealth, it nevertheless contains utopian projection. Gordimer employs utopian idea in an attempt to look beyond the then context of conflict of the White versus Black. The novel sets up in a dystopian future in order to warn of the conflict and its outcome to the society. With the realization of new environment and places, Maureen enters into a dualistic realization. Firstly, she is a White and secondly, a female. Being a female in this alien land turns her status from master to slave, becoming one of the major sources of her sufferings. The fact that she is a White becomes one of the most disturbing realizations during her exile in the rural setting. This notion helps to delve into the fact of the upcoming catastrophic outcome for the race of Black and White and the Male and Female.

South Africa is a nation largely dominated by Black residents. However, there are few Whites, the reminiscent of the White's rule in Africa. These Whites are in minority in the present day Africa. They are occasionally threatened by the Black citizens in the form

of riots and conflict. Maureen and Bam are victims to similar types of uprising taking place in large cities in all over Africa. Gordimer presents the fragments of uprising, as:

You know about the big airport where the planes fly overseas? It was not working. And before that they shoot down plane with White people who were running away. Who shot? Black People? Our People? How could they do that – the old woman was impatient with him. I've seen those planes, they pass over high in the sky, you even see them go behind clouds. You can hear them after you can't see them anymore. (20)

The civil unrest causes Maureen and her family to take shelter for the protection of self and her family in a small village, the village of theirs' personal attendant, July. When they had no way of escaping this unrest through air way, they take another – to move to countryside where the political atmosphere was relatively calm. They all hid in a small lorry and go into hiding in a village, courtesy July.

The all good notion of society is marred by the presence of violence both at the central and domestic level. Its impact is long lasting and permanent. For Maureen, the sufferings are in born of realization that she wants to work out; however, is unaware of the process to delve into it. Initially, when life was good, or so-called good in city, she now in village realize that it was mere artificial. The feeling that Bam (male) is associated with her only in oral form adds to her level of woes. This has to do with Maureen identity of a White female. The realization that the superior status is no more and this shift in overnight time is one of the most disturbing facts in Maureen's life.

The patriarchal society always learns to make the females as victims. This society has treated the women negatively thinking that they are not human beings. David Glover and Cora Kaplan opine that the depiction of Maureen is mysterious factor carries on a lone struggle. As Glover and Kaplan in "Gender and Psyche" opine that, "the opposed psychic

state has been productive” (8). In these lines, the dominant voice of females can be found that Maureen Smales has the confident voice to create the strong authentic female space. According to Glover and Kaplan, the idea of femininity and her sufferings are taken for granted:

The dark patriarchy always hinders to raise the equal notion of female world, ignoring and suppressing the female values. All the bad segments of humanity are rooted in the law of patriarchy. The females are suffering a lot that they cannot share the feelings with males. Gordimer endeavors to depict the real social codes, which suppress the female rights or notions. (9)

As such, Maureen’s dilemma is not only because she wants to cry but to strike a balance between the sufferings and rationality. She is mother to three children and when they are displaced from Johannesburg to a rural village in South Africa, every covered stigma of material security collapses.

The difference is Maureen’s life and Bam is exposed when Maureen is made to suffer to worst of village life; whereas, Bam continues to consolidate his role as a male. When Maureen is doubly tortured by theirs’ once husband, July, Bam turns from master to friend. But this is not the case with Maureen with whom July starts finding fault in her past. The homely environment in which Maureen found things smooth and clear no exists, and it taken by typical village life, as is reflected in following manner:

Beyond the clearing – the settlement of huts, livestock, kraals, and the stumped and burned off patches which were the land – the buttock-fold in the trees indicated the river and that was the end of measured distance. Like clouds, the savannah bush formed and reformed under the changes of light, moved or gave the impression of being moved past by the travelling eye;

silent and ashy green as mould spread and always spreading, rolling out
under the sky before her. (26)

The setting to which Maureen has to accustom herself is owned and mastered by July, the Black servant of hers. Now, this bush and the savannah are her reality, and above that July is another important fact to which she has to get custom to because the surroundings are equally of July. It is the transformation from one male master to the other; when Bam rules and dominates the body, the other, July controls her external affairs.

Maureen is married to Bam Smales, a typical male. He is a typical white who provides her with all material facilities but the women and children in the home have no say. Maureen is materially well-to-do during her stay in Johannesburg, as her demands were fulfilled. But these were physical and material requirements that were brought to her possession but when things turn apart she is forced to quit her city life, she comes to realize the pain of being born as a woman.

Maureen is the victim of social mores that takes the patriarchal supremacy – a society of male gender, Reeve in *The Outline and the Outsider* clarifies:

The balance between desire and duty is – has to be – maintained quite differently in accordance with the differences in the lovers' place in the economy. These alter the way of dealing with the experience; and so the experience itself. The *absolute nature* she and her kind were scrupulously just in granting to everybody was no more than the price of the master bedroom and the clandestine hotel tariff. (65)

Two different forms of social consciousness that reflect social and political divisions among women, as well as radically different theoretical assumptions about the nature of motherhood: motherhood as a primarily social bond or as a biologically grounded reality.

July's People is about the lives of women; and it shows how they have been treated by male ideology on the ground that they are female. This ideology named as patriarchy is sources of many of the sufferings to which females have succumbed to. Patriarchy means rule by male authority. However, this simple definition of patriarchy also shows the empowerment of the male in political, economic and social sectors of human life. So, patriarchy has established itself to the political power and authority established in terms of ruling authority which was the Whites, until it was reversed through a revolution.

A society is racial and sexist when the ideology of male supremacy goes on to male member through inheritance. It is a social order where male dominates positions of power and authority or when important achievements and historical events are attributed to the actions of men. For example, the priests are the most important person when it comes to social and religious practices. Similarly, there are male members who take important decisions in a society, whenever it is necessary.

Projection of Maureen as the only female gender of the house is yet another form dire and negative aspects, as viewed by negative critics. Her role both in city and village is limited to being a household female. As such, she does not share her feelings with her family as there is no one to understand her. The social laws of patriarchy hinder from bringing the female's creativity in the front position of human world. Males who are called intellectuals have trodden upon the half soul of society. By doing this, they have created a hegemony to rule over the other gender and race of people.

Of the awakening of the new world, Ali Erritouni in *Research in African Literatures* opines that the age of change was coming. He opines:

A change was inevitable. There could not have been similar groups of people restoring to same fate. Change was certain to occur; however, it does not come without a price. The narrator depicts this change: "They know,

they know what it is happening, the trouble in town. The white people are chased away from their house and we take. Everybody is like that, isn't it?"

(13).

In consideration to this notion, this research explores the relationship of rise of racial discrimination and fall of White's supremacy. Maureen's hardships on the hands of her husband and later by July and his family, the African Blacks were the symbol of beginning.

For Anthony Jarcher, Gordimer depicts a radical change in the life of her protagonist, Maureen. Through the endeavors of Maureen, the writer portrays the experiences of a female in a society predominant by males. However, when the hardship of life takes its toll on her, she realizes the woes of being woman. The discrimination imposed on Maureen are the outcome of societal set up which is predominantly patriarchal. It is this system that has ruled human society for ages. When life is full of material possession, many things are wrapped. But the exposure of hardships invite several such difficulties that only a female has to bear. When, Maureen is exposed to village life and its ups and downs, she comes to realize the patriarchal domination and, hence the painful experience. To expose these sufferings is the goal of the present researcher.

Gordimer's *July People* has been interpreted by several critics and researcher from different point of view; however, there have been no serious attempts to deal with the present work from the perspective of a world that assumes everything is fair and equal. A female is the first to be affected by this scenario; as females are the first and foremost target of gender and racial attacks. Maureen being a female is no exception to this, and is the hard hit by this issue. On the other hand, Bamford is less hit by racial changes because he continues to be a male, the member of the patriarchal clan.

The events of the novel take place during a fictional revolution which becomes a reality during the latter years of 1980s. This novel anticipates the power shift from the

White dominant to the World owned and ruled by the Blacks. The novel as written in 1981 describes a possible future in which apartheid is being challenged by whole-scale civil war. While the power shift is taking place in the capital and the cities, a white family flees to a black village to save from the consequences of shift in power for their own lives. The shift in political front begins to affect their relations with their black hosts, July and, even their family relationship.

Similarly, for other critics, Gordimer does not depict torture and murder of the whites in the novel. This could cause the “purge of the guilt of the whites” (123). It is clear that Gordimer focus on the apartheid system as such, but on the impact and consequences of it on the lives of the Smales. She perhaps does not describe the cruelties of the revolution because of this focus on the Smales and July’s community. Gordimer does not want to blame or purge the whites, but rather wants to illustrate what could have happened between blacks and whites in that time. The riots in the novel have never taken place, but they could have happened and they therefore express what some whites could have feared. When the blacks eventually took over in South Africa, it was with much less violence and murder. The transition itself was more peaceful from a white perspective, because the ruling party realised they could not go on and they therefore started negotiations to assign their power.

Search of Utopia is an important theme in the novel because it is apparent everywhere. The apartheid system, although it is not discussed in detail, is important because there are certain boundaries between blacks and whites and their segregation is quite vivid. Black people always seem to have the same kind of profession and the same role in a white community in apartheid South Africa. The theme of materialism and possession is connected to the power of the Smales in the white society. In the past when whites were in power, possession and material objects were much more important for the

Smales, but it is difficult to let go of this materialism, as now they are in July's village.

These demarcation caused by segregation is the root cause of fall of Utopia.

Gordimer's *July's People* stands as a testament between the search for Utopian society and staunch commitment to post apartheid South Africa. In between this stance, the present research makes a way. For the same, the first chapter "Racial Tension in *July's People*" makes a critical study on how the South African society is reeling under race, gender and apartheid tension, and above all, searching a new meaning amid these conflicts and adversaries. Similarly, the second chapter "Dystopian Critique and Utopian Projection in Gordimer's *July's People*" explores how the essence of utopian life has taken its toll in the changing South African society. Conflict between those who see bright days ahead who are still marred by the imagination of the yester year days makes the notion of utopian projection and despotic critics.

Maureen thinks she is innocent of racism; however, the system in which they lived imposes racism. The family is not simply racist, but they are unwillingly part of the system and did not act against it. They did not expect that their relationship with July would deteriorate, although they did expect change because now they live with him and they no longer want to be seen as July's masters.

II. Dystopian Critique and Utopian World in Gordimer's *July's People*

Gordimer's *July's People* foresees the inevitable collapse of white South Africa and the emergence of new political and social realities that would require white South Africans to fashion the contours of a new identity. The question for Gordimer in this novel is not so much who will eventually rule South Africa. She assumes that blacks will emerge victorious from their struggle for political and economic justice, and whites will find themselves in a subordinate position, ruled by blacks. What is of more significance to Gordimer is the utopian vision of a democratic South Africa, led by the black majority, and the role South African whites would play in the new dispensation.

Gordimer's *July's People* is used as both a dystopian critique of the materialistic white liberals and their discriminatory policies and how the novel presents its audience with a sample of how blacks and whites living in a post-apartheid South Africa can coexist. *July's People* focuses heavily on the relationship between blacks and whites living in post-apartheid South Africa, including both the positive and negative consequences of such a relationship, and this article helps identify and clarify the interactions between these two races – the Whites and the Blacks.

July's People, however, dwells less on the pending demise of white South Africa and on the utopia of an alternative future, and more on the difficulties that arise from the attempt to. Nadine Gordimer evaluates *July's People* regards utopia as an inborn of patriarchal mentality and a means of exploitation on female. Maureen Smales, the protagonist, is one such female who stands representative of sufferings and domination imposed on her, on ground she is a female. The status of Maureen is of a person who is source of entertainment, refreshment which a male wants to possess. Though, her husband Bam Smales accepts modesty and love from her, lacks faith towards her. He fails to show courage enough to go to rescue her when she needs him the most. All these factors give

rise to a continuous state of conflict between a world of imagination and reality in which we live.

Bamford and Maureen Smales, liberal whites, have fled their house in the city because of a black revolution in mercy their Black servant July. Hence, there is a transformation in the role of the characters. July first lived as a black man in a white family in a white community (the city), while now the Smales live as a single white family in a black community. July was not unwanted in the white community because he was of Black race and a servant, an acceptable common practice. Maureen and Bam always were polite to July and think they have treated him well.

For Ali Erritounis reading of *July's People* ending is perplexing yet helpful as it offers a better vision about the Smales children by showing their love to Africa. Once these codes considered, this means, according to Erritorouni in "Apartheid Inequality and Postapartheid Utopia in Nadine Gordimer's *July's People*" (34). All other political and economic matters will be figured out, especially if one depends on the bases of "cognizance," (178) in dealing with their cultural/social matters, which, in the long run, would enable any post-apartheid nation evade any sort of cultural/social conflicts.

Gordimer is unambiguous about skin-colour in her novel. There is no confusion about race, as opposed to some of it is stated on the first page of the novel that there are several kinds of people. Novel's most important themes, the shift of power between people of different race is very conspicuous. This illustrates that there is a division between people. According to the narrator, "July bent at the doorway and began that day for them as his kind has always done for their kind" (1). Three sentences further into the novel, it becomes clear that July's kind carries "the tea-tray in black hands" (1). Obviously, July is a black servant.

The apartheid system is in a state of collapse, but there are still numerous racial differences. Bamford and Maureen realise this imminent revolution because the narrator explains that the couple “had thought of leaving . . . while they were young enough to cast off the blacks’ rejection as well as white privilege” (8). In their society, there is a large gap between white people and black or coloured people. When the Smales are in July’s village, the people almost immediately notice “the strange presence of whites in their midst” (12). Perhaps because their presence is this conspicuous, they are referred to as ‘whites’ throughout the novel. There probably have never been other white people or objects of white people in the village. As a result, the truck is seen as a “white man’s bakkie” and the family are seen as “five white faces” (18). The people in the village seem to want to keep them apart by continuously referring to them as whites.

After years of discrimination against the blacks, there seems to be a shift because whites are being discriminated against now. There never has been equality between the two races, although not all blacks want to murder whites and not all whites wanted to eliminate blacks. There are always more liberal people. July’s mother rather would see the whites with “their own people somewhere” (19). The people from July’s village look at the Smales with some suspicion, but this is not necessarily because they hate them. They are probably suspicious because they have not encountered whites before the Smales arrive. It seems to be an important event for July’s mother when she touches the skin of a white woman. Gordimer describes this touch quite elaborately, so it shows how far the races were kept apart.

On the other hand, in Maureen’s youth, she and Lydia seemed not to be very far apart. Lydia is a black girl, who at first appears to be Maureen’s friend. When Lydia does not stop for a red traffic light, Maureen grabs her hand and holds it. The two girls laugh and share, just as normal friends do. Then a photographer takes their picture and Maureen

discovers it years later in a coffee table book. Maureen then reads the caption: “White *herrenvolk* attitudes and life-styles; the marvellous photograph of the white schoolgirl and the black woman with the girl’s school case on her head” (33). Maureen realises that the book explains why Lydia carried her case, but that “she and Lydia, in their affection and ignorance didn’t know [why she carried it]” (33). To Maureen, Lydia was her friend who just also happened to carry her case, but in reality Lydia probably was the family’s servant who was hired to help her. Maureen seems to think that she did not do anything bad to black people. When she was young, she was ignorant of the fact that Lydia was working for her, but even now that she is an adult, she seems to deny that she is like many other whites.

Bamford and Maureen may be white liberals, but this does not mean they were no part of the apartheid system. When they all lived in town, “July had to do what he was told by Maureen” which means that she uses black people as servants, which is quite normal (51). Apartheid creates structures where one race can –is almost forced to– exploit the other’s labour. Moreover, when she and Bam think about “converting the garage into a room where July could sit with his friends,” they eventually decide not to do this, because it would cause too much noise (148). When they actually have a liberal idea, they discard it in the end.

In July’s village, Maureen still thinks that she can go into July’s hut, although it seems to be the only place he keeps for himself. According to Maureen, “she was a white woman, someone who had employed him, there was a working relationship” and she is therefore allowed into his hut. This almost sounds as if she wants to say that July must be thankful for the job at the Smales. However, she is yet to realize the dynamic shift that has occurred in the gender issues, along with race. When, she moves into the hut of July as freely as she used to do, she finds that July is arrogant and in turn gives a nasty look to her.

She is troubled with the look and, realizes the pain of being a subdued white in a black community.

Due to the change of relationships between July, Maureen, and Bam, Gordimer's novel contains several gender issues. The relationship between July and his wife Martha is already established before the revolution and the arrival of the Smales does not seem to affect their relationship. It is already clear that July earns the money in the city, while Martha raises their children. Next to this, July makes the decisions in their relationship, because he brings the Smales to their village without any question or approval from his wife or mother. According to the narrator, "[h]is wife had accepted his dictum" (18). Martha and his mother had helped July with building the hut that they will have to leave to give it to the Smales. When the Smales arrived, "both women had moved about under his bidding without argument, although July knows that they will have to discuss it (18). Martha is annoyed that July brings the whites; because before he had been complaining that they have many separate rooms and they are spoilt. Although she objects to the white people at first, she gives in this illustrates how she gives July authority.

The pain of being White, now an inferior tribe, among the blacks has different aspect. For example, when Royce is ill, Martha gives Maureen some kind of medicine made of herbs. July is shocked when he hears about this, because the medicine "is no good for Royce" because it is "not for white people" (60). There is a contrast here: July still thinks white children need better medicines, because he has (still) internalised some ideas of white superiority. July's mother, mhani thinks that "white race bring trouble" (82). She is probably right in thinking this, because under the circumstances they are trouble maker, but not superior.

The political structure has put up structures like this. Another reason why she thinks that white people are trouble could be because white people turn black people into their

servants, or, as in this case, the revolutionary blacks will find out that there are white people hiding in their village and they will be punished for it. Although both races know about the distance between them, the whites still behave somewhat superior.

In the novel, men and women have their own roles, which would probably be regarded as old-fashioned in a Western society. July explains that “[t]he women have their work. They must do it. This is their place, we are always living here and they are doing all things, all things how it must be” (97). This proves that the role of a woman has been established for a long time. They have been doing the same work for years. The women take care of the children and pick plants and grass or search for food, while July is more secluded from them. He appears to have his own hut, which “was apparently something he kept for himself, apart from women” (66). It seems that the old power relations in July’s village have remained unchanged, because the black man has always been more powerful than the black woman.

Similarly, in gender concept, white people also have considered black men as more powerful than black women. Therefore, black women have the least power in their society. July’s status changes, because he is no longer a servant in a white society. The sexuality and power increases by these changes in status. The passage where July tries to repair the truck seems to illustrate this. Although, July is unable to fix the vehicle, “he dragged the exhaust pipe from the bakkie” and “tinker[ed] with it between his legs” (99). This act is viewed as an attempt to showcase the domination of male upon the female’s psyche.

As the events develop, July becomes the dominant figure in regards to domination of his White guests. This has been another of the reasons for the tic imposition in her village life. Thus, Maureen and Bam’s relationship changes while they are in July’s village. According to Jeffrey J. Folks:

Bamford Smales finds his male role as provider and reassurer, baseless as the economic control he once used to enjoy is quickly exploding. He is increasingly disoriented and no longer knows how to address his wife, Maureen, since she no longer matches his understanding of 'wife,' 'mother' or 'Maureen.' (119)

When Bam is able to provide for meat in the village, he seems to feel a little more masculine and his gender sexuality is established. Similarly, when Bam is able to shoot two wart-hog piglets, he becomes established as a male. The killing of the pig is now associated with Bam's sexuality as well as his status in the hegemony. On the other hand, Maureen takes over some of Bam's tasks but it is still Bam who is able to make her proud of him because of the meat. This also increases his masculinity because the same evening Maureen and Bam have sex for the first time in the village. There seems to be some kind of connection between men and meat, especially when they are able to provide for it and share it.

However, Bam also loses his supremacy as a white ruler. He is no more the white and has been reduced to inferior status to that of July. With the meat, Bam could contribute to providing for the people in the village, which made him proud. Unfortunately for Bam, July takes over his vehicle and after a while his gun is stolen. Both the gun and the truck are phallic symbols for Bam, and because he loses both, he begins to feel castrated. Bam is pushed out of his role as the great white hunter and responsible husband. Because Bam undergoes these changes, Maureen starts to regard him differently. As a result, there are different things happening in the life of husband and wife. According to the narrator "she looked down on this man who had nothing, now" (145). Maureen seems to feel sorry for him and because they both acquire other roles, the shift in gender role and its value.

Maureen's pain is reflected when she starts to refer to Bam as "the man" and Bam also does not know what to call Maureen (145). The couple starts to ignore each other and they will ultimately separate. Both Maureen and Bam are de-sexualised in a way that reveals the dependence of their sexuality on power. Bam loses his possessions and role and he is therefore no longer the stable certainty he was before. He turns into the mother figure of the family because he starts to take care of the children. While July becomes more masculine, Bam loses most of his masculinity and turns into a woman figure.

For Maureen, Bam and the children are material objects of great importance. Their reputation seems to be based on what they possess and this makes the move to July's village even more difficult. On the second page of the novel Maureen thinks how she and Bam could be described while they lived in the city. The narrator informs the reader about their reputation and status. Maureen thinks her husband is "Bamford Smales, Smales, Caprona & Partners, Architects" and Maureen would be "Maureen Hetherington from Western Areas Gold Mines" (2). This statement seems to imply that they were quite fortunate because Bam probably earns a considerable amount of money as an architect. They were able to afford three children and to employ some servants. The Smales were the owners of a nice city house, so they were quite affluent.

Gordimer wants to ridicule the Smales's materialism. When the vehicle is described, it is explained that the car was "for more affluent white South-Africans" and it was "for purposes to which a town car is not suited" (50). The narrator explains that Bam bought the truck for his fortieth birthday, but also that "the vehicle was bought for pleasure, as some women are said to be made for pleasure" (6). The narrator continues, "[t]hey stood round it indulgently, wife and family, the children excited, as it seemed nothing else could excite them, by a new possession. Nothing made them so happy as buying things; they had no interest in feeding rabbits" (6). This proves that the Smales are

made happy by buying things. Perhaps it makes them even happier that they do not really need the vehicle, but that they have the means to buy it for pleasure.

The children are also indulged with toys and they exhibit their materialism very conspicuously. Victor brings his racing track to July's village, although his parents did not allow him to bring it, because it is useless there. The children also keep asking if they can go to the cinema or if their parents can buy them drinks. Although their children are materialistic, it is clear that they have learned this from their parents who brought the car, the gun, the toilet paper, some pink cups and the malaria pills. The children are able to adapt more quickly than their parents, because after a while they do not need to use toilet paper any longer and are able to communicate with people of the village.

Despite all that are said and criticized of the Smales; the portrayal of these characters is that the Smales have been portrayed as victims to the policies of apartheid. It is their unwitting collusion with apartheid, he argues, that makes them act in a colonial way. He maintains that the Smaleses are, to be sure, limited, and those limitations are explored at length; nevertheless, the novel does not in any straightforward way condemn the Smaleses. What it does, and does unrelentingly, is exposing the intractable contradictions inherent in the lives of such people. (Erritouni 71)

The narrator mentions May be the three had become immune, too. They had survived in their own ability to ignore the precautions it was impossible for her to maintain for them. Victor was forgetting how to read, but did not miss his Superman and Asterix; she sat outside the hut and could not understand *Promessi Sposi* (138).

However, Bam and Maureen cannot adapt easily. Because the Smales' attach quite some value to their possessions, the change to the village is more radical for them because they lose many of them. According to Head, their possessions are part of their identity (124). Head explains that their identities have had power within the "bourgeois construct,"

but that they are not transferable (124). Head also mentions that eventually, “the Smales can be reduced to a series of vacuous titles and roles” (124).

Further into the novel, Maureen feels that she has lost all her possessions. She realises that she has lost all her belongings to July. When Maureen is searching for the vehicle, she felt that “there was nothing belonging to her, in the vehicle, any more” (93). A page later the reader is told how July feels about this, because he does not seem to care much about their losses. Gordimer narrates, “Pride, comfort of possession was making him forget by whose losses possession had come about” (94). Although it does not seem to influence July heavily, in the end he feels much more powerful, and thus, the influence of the utopian world is obvious in *July’s People*.

For the Smales, dispossession from the material possession, has its impact on the way of living and it ultimately affect their life. It has an immediate effect on the relation of the husband and wife and the respect, regards and way of mutual understanding. July becomes prouder and more powerful by gaining possessions, while the Smales grow apart. According to Folks, “The title of the novel is a play on possession of a race over the other” (116). This is another of the idea that predominantly deals over the novel. July’s people is a clear indication to the role reversal from the master to servant, i.e. the Smales are no more on the dominating role and position, but are on the mercy of July’s who used to be their servant of once upon a time life, back in Johannesburg.

The Smales are referred to as July’s people, because July used to be their servant and has brought them to the village life for their safety. So, now there dwells a dual layer of life of Smales. First, having lost their previous life in city and, secondly have to live on the mercy of their’s once helper. However, July does not use the Smales as “his people,” as his servants, but he is somehow able to take possession of their truck and the Smales are helpless to the new found power by July.

The term July's people also can be implied for his wife, mother and his children, along with the Smales family. However, in both case, July is the master. The Smales are referred to as July's people, but that is not uncommon, because they are related to July and all belong together. The Smales become July's property and they turn into his pets.

Maureen narrates, "[s]he looked at her servant: they were their creatures, like their cattle and pigs" (96). While possessions have always been important for July, they are now even more important for July now he realises he has the power to possess them.

As such, the notion of inferior and superior complexity is an important theme in *July's People*. The two main movements in the novel are both related to the shift in power. Because July acquires power and the Smales lose theirs, and all relationships change.

According to Folks:

Nadine Gordimer chose well in selecting the epigraph, from Antonio Gramsci for *July's People*: 'The old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum there arises a great diversity of morbid symptoms.' An interregnum is the period 'between rulers. Smales were part of the old power and that July is part of the new power. The interregnum is the period in which the Smales have to adjust to July's standards. (115)

It is also a period of slow change, because the black people from July's village at first do not realise that there has been a reversal of power. But, soon the African people realize the changes of city, and this adds to enhancement of Smales, and especially to Maureen.

In the fourth chapter, the point of view changes because in that chapter, the reader perceives the perspective of the black people in July's hut. July explains to his wife and mother why he has brought the Smales. July's mother still thinks that the whites are in power, even after July has told her about the situation in the city. According to July's mother, "[w]hite people. They are very powerful, my son. They are very clever. You will

never come to the end of the things they can do” (21). This shows how blacks perceived whites. She adds that they can go anywhere they want to go because “They’ve got money” (19). It is quite clear that there is a great gap between black and white people. Black people live in little huts made of mud. Martha is able to see her husband once every two years because he has to earn money by serving whites, while white people have black servants to clean their houses where they have “[a] room to sleep in, another room to eat in, another room to sit in, a room with books” (19). The differences between the two races are enormous and because of the revolution this division of power will finally change.

In the past, Maureen and Bam were powerful because they were white, which was the master-race. Now that the power reversal is initiated, they start to lose power. Gordimer gives many instances where the reader can see the helplessness of the Smales. Maureen and Bam knew that a change was imminent because there had been strikes by black workers in 1980. When the situation became too dangerous because of riots and bombs, the couple wanted to withdraw all their money and leave the country before it became too dangerous. They turned out to be too late and July offers them to come to his home. July saw “their helplessness, in their own house, which made it clear to him that he must do this” (11). July appears as their saviour, because the Smales are unable to run away. They have to hide, because “[t]he whites are being killed in their houses” (19). July explains to his family what is happening in the city. He tells his mother that houses are blown up or set on fire and about black people who shoot down planes full of white people trying to leave South Africa (20). July suddenly realises that “[t]hey can’t do anything. Nothing to us anymore” (21). He realises that the shift in power relations has taken place.

Maureen also realises how courageous July’s act is to hide them and that he now has more power than her family. July risks his life for the Smales and therefore Maureen tells Bam that they “owe him everything” (58). Maureen recognises the seriousness of the

situation and perhaps also knows that she should feel fortunate to be saved by a former servant. Although Bam and Maureen have always been polite to July, they probably did not treat him better than other whites. Although the Smales are liberal, they did not really interfere with politics. There has always been a sense of distrust towards July and it is therefore quite unexpected that July offers to help them. They really are dependent on July and as mentioned before, they seem to become his pets. However, July still behaves as their servant. According to Uledi-Kamanga:

Maureen, the more prominently drawn member of the white family, objects to July's subservient conduct as she is painfully aware of its incongruity in an environment where they are literally dependents of July. The further enhancement on tragedy is July has become their ultimate hope and is their saviour. (121)

When July starts to realise that Maureen and Bam are his dependents, he becomes interested in Bam's vehicle. Because the truck is important to Bam, he seems to feel emasculated without it. Maureen describes Bam when they have been living in July's village for a while as "an architect lying on his bed in a mud hut, a man without a vehicle" (98).

In regards, Head also mentions that Bam and Maureen become completely dependent without the gun and vehicle (132). Head adds that "without their power they will have a quite different role in the community, one requiring an alternative identity, an inner resource of adaptability which they clearly not have" (132). Though the truck originally belongs to Bam, he is unable to protest against July's wish to keep the keys. Maureen wants to calm July down by telling him that Bam will not steal the truck from him. This is also a sign of Bam's powerlessness. Bam might want to have his truck back, but is indebted to July because he is trying to save their lives.

July seems to be quite confident of his position, because he knows he is becoming more powerful. He also tells Maureen that she does not have to work with the women in “their place” (97). Because English is not July’s first language, Maureen is uncertain what he wants to say exactly. She thinks July is implying that Maureen has no claim to the earth there (97). Somehow it feels as if Maureen agrees with July’s behaviour, although she does not like it that he steals the vehicle. However, there is practically nothing for the Smales to do in this behalf. They are mere spectator to the events being carried by July. There is a drastic change coming to July when he has come to village after the uprising in Johannesburg. Maureen realises that she has to be submissive because they are powerless.

Maureen feels that she is completely without power and she is therefore desperate for change. In the end Maureen feels so hopeless that she needs to leave the village. According to Uledi-Kamanga, “Maureen’s atavistic flight for personal survival not only diminishes her human stature, but symbolises the total collapse of white supremacy” (122). By Maureen’s attempt to escape, the hierarchy of power finally shifts. Maureen was not very far apart from July in the hierarchy, but now they have moved to July’s village, she becomes the lowest in the hierarchy and she is therefore most motivated to run. According to Head,

When Maureen runs to the sound of the helicopter at the end of the novel, just such an acceptance is implied: it is not clear whether the helicopter heralds the arrival of revolutionary forces, or of government forces re-establishing the old order. This is an apocalyptic moment for the bankrupt white identity: the white woman finally accepts that she has no inner resource and no residual power or control to deal with her situation. She runs to accept the inevitability that her fate lies in the hands of others. (134)

Maureen’s, Bam’s and July’s behaviour show that they all know that Maureen and Bam have to give up power, name, and authority, because they have become July’s

dependents. Although July seems hesitant or unclear about his relationship with the Smales, he realises how their powerlessness empowers him. Already in the beginning of the novel when the Smales have just arrived in his village, he shows his authority and he is even embarrassed at Maureen's "ignorance of a kind of authority not understood" (13). July wants to tell everybody that the Smales have given the truck to July. Bam is unable to believe this and laughs about it, but it turns out that the main issue between the Smales and July will be the possession of the 'bakkie.' Erritouni opines:

The Smales' life had turned upsidedown. They became fully dependant on their servant, their new master, but they were unable to benefit from the advantages given to them and decided not to take off their colonizer's garment. They tightened their grip on their own properties and decided not to abandon their past; rejecting every attempt to create an economic balance. (69-70)

In other words, they were not convinced that the past was over and that there was no use crying over split milk. Maureen in *July's People*, the protagonist, depicts the negative image of the white liberals who appear dogmatic, not even willing to face reality.

In commenting about the gist and the intention of the novel *July's People* could be seen as primarily prophetic and admonitory, its warning incorporated at every stage in the depiction of the alien roles thrust on its white protagonists forced to flee their threatened white city to the protection of their servant's tiny village in the bush. To relegate to the past all the trappings of white invulnerability, to imagine them irretrievably destroyed, could be seen as the central intention of the novel.

When they are in the village, July keeps the keys and suddenly leaves with the truck because he is arrogating it. Maureen tries to find out where July is going to, because he has not asked or announced anything. According to the narrator, "July had gone. Somewhere.

With Someone” (39). July feels that it is in his right to let someone else drive the truck. Maureen also realises that “There was no reason why July should be expected back within any limit of time that could be fixed” (43). It turns out that July went to the store. Maureen is worried whether anyone has seen July in the truck or whether people asked him questions about it (54). According to the narrator, “People – black people – would certainly have seen him at the store, in possession of the yellow bakkie” (56). This must give July confidence, because it is a reversal of the old situation because now July can choose his comfort.

It seems that from now on, July’s pleasure outweighs the Smales’s security which adds to the woes of Maureen. The Smales are very much attached to the vehicle, because it is their only way to escape. They do not like to see July in the truck and come up with excuses why July should not drive it, but July laughs about their concerns. Bam mentions that “If they catch you, without a licence” (59). Then July laughs and answers, “Who is going to catch me? The white policeman is run away when the black soldiers come that time” (59). Bam is not satisfied because he expresses his concerns “that someone will come to look for us here because of the bakkie” (59). July tries to comfort Bam by telling him that he will find an excuse for people who ask about the bakkie. July will tell them that “The bakkie it’s mine” (59). This is already a hint towards the Smales that July feels that it actually is his truck now. Maureen and Bam keep discussing why July keeps the keys of their vehicle, which illustrates how significant they are.

July knows that Maureen and Bam are irritated about the keys, because he tells Maureen, “You don’t like I must keep the keys. Isn’t it. I can see all the time, you don’t like that” (69). Maureen responds by shaking her head and by making up a lie. Maureen just wants July to ask her if he can drive the truck, but July thinks that Maureen would not trust him anyway. After this discussion it is evident that July will keep the keys and that he

has taken the truck. However, when they all go to the chief with the pick-up, July indulges Bam and lets him drive (106). July has the power to decide this, because it is unexpected by Bam. On their way back, though, July drives the truck and “When they walked to the settlement July would have the keys of the vehicle back in his pocket” (123). Bam realises that July has indulged him by ‘letting’ him drive. He complains to Maureen, “You saw he ‘let me’ drive, going there? . . . A treat for me. July’s pretty sure of himself these days” (127). As soon as July realises his power and the Smales’s powerlessness, he takes an interest in Bam’s truck. Eventually, July takes Bam’s truck while Bam and Maureen cannot act against it, because of their safety. According to Folks, the Smales are in a gradual reversal of role of gender and race which causes July to realise his independence (119).

Because the blacks are chasing the whites out and killing the whites in their own houses, Bam has to give over his role of protector which means that the role of Bam, as the white race is no more practicable in terms of authority. Although whites were very powerful because of their money, they have now become dependents of July. The black people are shooting at whites.

Bam does not only lose his role as protector of the family, he also is unable to help Maureen in the hut. When Maureen wants to raise the suitcase in their hut, she needs bricks. She knows that bricks are “a cherished commodity” and directly thinks Bam cannot find bricks for her. She immediately finds her own solution: “Ask July” (55). Maureen does not even ask Bam if he is able to fix it, but directly goes to July, who has taken over most of Bam’s tasks. July makes it very clear that he is in power now. July asks Maureen, “[w]ho will go to the shop to get things for you? Who can bring your matches, your paraffin? Who can get food for your children? Tell me?” (61). He wants Maureen to know that he is in control. Bam and Maureen are no longer able to do these things and when

Maureen asks for the car keys (only to take the rubber floor-mat) July bursts into these questions.

Maureen has found acute pain in present situation of shift of role. She wants July to behave as an equal. She wants him to stop referring to himself as their boy and to them as the masters. She tells July that he is “not a servant” any more (71). Because July does not work for her any more, she does not want to pay him. July does not agree with this and wants to be paid, because he still claims to be “the boy of your house” (71). When Maureen later in the novel mentions July’s town woman, he becomes enraged by the idea of Maureen telling his wife. According to the narrator, “She had never been afraid of a man. Now comes fear, on top of everything else, the fleas, the menstruating in rags – and it comes from this one, from *him*” (98). July is able to make Maureen afraid.

Maureen is well aware of July’s power. She notices the difference between July’s life in town and his life now. According to Maureen, “Now he chose what he wanted to know and not know. The present was his; he would arrange the past to suit it” (96). While July could not choose as a servant, he is free and able to choose now. His freedom and the reversal of the situation give him power, while Maureen and Bam have to give up power. According to Folks, “. . . the giving up of power, that figurative abdication that is the central theme of *July’s People*, is suggested in the concept of ‘interregnum’ itself: one reign has come to an end, while the new rule has not begun” (116).

There is the sight of Maureen's white, varicose-veined, unshaven bare legs as she forages for wild spinach with the black women; or the instant when a young village boy examines Bam's shotgun, gazing down the barrels: "two blue-steel tunnels with an immaculate burnish, a precision of echoing roundness spinning away with the light that whirled along them - something more perfect than any object in the settlement or that he had ever seen, anywhere” (34).

The Smales are bewildered by their new environment and the conversations that they have whether with July or between each other seem to be at cross-purposes. What the author does, and effectively so is to drop the reader into the world of the Smales so that you can smell and hear everything and understand how precious the smallest items are.

And soap? – She was cherishing a big cake of toilet soap, carefully drying it after each use. Soap he had remembered to take from her store cupboard?

His clean clothes smelled of Lifebuoy she bought for them – the servants.

He didn't say; perhaps merely not to boasts his foresight. She was going to ask and quite saw that she could not. (39)

Maureen, the mother in the Smales family is the character that we felt in the group that really stood out as going on a personal journey in the novel. She watches her children adapt and make friends in the community so easily, whereas she is never accepted by the other women. She is constantly interpreting and re-interpreting thoughts and language in her interactions between July, her former servant, and Bam her husband.

While Bam struggles to make himself useful by building a well and assert his manhood by shooting wild pig, it is Maureen whose head we get into most and her vulnerability and frustration that we feel. Her sense of loss is highlighted when she realizes that she does not want to read the paperback that she has brought with her:

But the transport of a novel, the false awareness of being within another time, place and life that was the pleasure of reading for her, was not possible. She was in another time, place, consciousness; it pressed in upon her and filled her as someone's breath fills a balloon's shape. She was already not what she was. No fiction could compete with what she was finding she did not know, could not have imagined or discovered through imagination. They had nothing. (43)

The key theme of the novel hangs around perception and misunderstanding of people's behaviour and their motives. Maureen as July's former employer has always thought she and her husband were open-minded but as the book continues we see her liberalism put to the test. She always trusted July as a servant, confident that he was always honest with money and their belongings and initially feels grateful to him for rescuing them. However while at July's house, she discovers objects that used to belong to the Smales.

While these are of low value – for example a pair of scissors), an underlying suspicion begins to creep through and she begins to question July's motives. Is Maureen right to worry about July's reasons for bringing the family there or is she just being paranoid? Is she as liberal as she thinks or were her values just a facade? As a reader we are brought on the journey really experiencing the situation and relationships.

So in hindsight, *July's People* is an accomplished and thought-provoking piece of writing. I didn't really enjoy reading it, but I think that was because I had a pre-conception of what the novel would be about. I was expecting some kind of big event to happen and felt as if I was waiting. I was also bemused because when I started reading I didn't realise that the events in the book were actually imagined, not real – Gordimer's idea of what could happen in South Africa. I couldn't quite sympathise with the Smales because however detached from their previous life I couldn't help but think how much worse it could be for them. I found myself frustrated, but I think that this is the mindset that Gordimer aims to put the reader in. After talking about the book in a group, I feel as if I could read this book again, and appreciate it in a different way.

Although July is the most powerful in the novel now the revolution has rearranged the hierarchy, July is not really the most powerful black man in the village. Maureen and Bam need to receive the approval of the chief of the area in order to stay in July's village. It turns out that it is not really July's village and he does not own the place. According to

Folks, “although his assumed town-name may refer to Julius Caesar, July had no ‘rule’ or power in the village for, upon his periodic return visits, he is the ‘outsider’ frequently shown sitting alone, essentially estranged from his ‘wife’ and mother, with apparently little to do other than learn to drive, a skill that may be useful in the future, but seems superfluous at present” (123).

This means that July does not really fit in with the rest and he is therefore not as powerful as it seems. Moreover July is not very excited at the *gumba-gumba*, which illustrates that he does not belong to the rest of the village people. July has no real rule in the village because he is taken as someone who has been in the company of a White family and people. However, for Maureen and Bam though, he appears dominant and powerful because he is at this situation the only hope for survival.

The main theme of the novel is the shift of power due to the revolution from gender and race perspective. According to Head,

The situation of the Smales’ new dependence on their former servant creates a simple reversal of the power relationship from dominant turning into dominated; but it also produces a complex analysis of the network of forces that has created these individuals and the matrix in which they interact.

(125)

Everything that happens in the novel is caused by the reversal of power. Maureen also understands that there is a new division. She explains “. . . us and them. What he’s really asking about: an explosion of roles, that’s what the blowing up of the Union Buildings and the burning of master bedrooms is” (117). Head adds that there is “a transition of power from white to black” (132).

All conflicts in the novel are caused because of the importance and change in notion of power – the rise of the oppressed. Race, gender and possessions are all connected

to power. July's brave deed by risking his own life gives him authority. The Smales are forced to leave the city and they therefore become powerless, which gives July authority. The power relations in the whole country are reversed.

Racial notion and shift in power politics are significant issues in the novel. Many relationships are made more difficult because of the sudden change in status and social hierarchy. Although the apartheid system is in a state of collapse, there are still clear racial differences. Bam and Maureen, as well as July and Martha, are confronted with gender issues. When Bam realises he is powerless, his masculinity diminishes. Similarly, Maureen's power also diminishes because she is a white woman – a female race. As such, it is obvious for the male gender to dominate the females.

On the other hand, July and Martha's relationship does not really change because their roles were already established before the revolution. Both of them are of the same gender and of the dominated race. Furthermore, Maureen and Bam attach great importance to their possessions. These gave them power in the city, but they are stripped of all their possessions in the village and therefore lose power. Maureen and Bam's powerlessness gives July more power. Because the couple must be very thankful for saving their lives, they cannot object to anything July does. Now that they are all in July's village, they will have to conform to his rules. The master-servant relationship has changed from a white master to a black master. The relations have turned upside down in the novel.

Because the power relations are reversed, it seems that in this novel there is also a mirror image. Bam and especially Maureen are confronted with their own behaviour to July before the shift. While first the blacks were on the receiving end, after the shift, the whites are on the receiving end. July sees Bam and Maureen as rulers, but this is only relative, because there is always someone above them. This is also the case after the power shift, because Maureen and Bam think July is powerful, but there is a more powerful chief

above July. July steals scissors when he is powerless, Maureen steals pills when she is powerless. This illustrates that they are quite similar and that their situation is similar as well.

Gordimer's *July's People* depicts the transformation of a white family during the internal conflict in South Africa. The revolution in which whites have to escape the city in order to survive, takes the Smales family from a sophisticated city life to rural Africa, thereby forever changing the dynamics of life. Thus, the entire white family is engulfed in an incessant wave of troubles. In the course, their supremacy of the utopian world also collapses. The blacks take over power and the white family struggles with their new situation. Their black servant July has rescued them, but realises he is in power now, while the Smales have to accept that they are dependants of July. As such, whites – the once dominant group becomes the dominated one.

The message of the novels is to depict the pain of transformation of the dystopian society is problematic in the sense that there is utopian society. The themes of Black and White are also one of the causes that are linked to power. The characters seem to be unable to cope with the power shift, although some of them in the end accept the change of their situation. Maureen is unable to adapt, because she cannot deal with the change of relations with her husband and with her servant. Maureen is most desperate to escape because she longs to civilization with her old life standards as a white female. Although Maureen's husband seems to handle it better than her, his self image also changes, because his sense of manhood seems to disappear.

Bam invests his energy into business to accumulate money while his wife is the housewife who buys clothing, jewelry, furniture and ornaments. Instead, it is an expression of a society that encourages people to define their identity and create a sense of value

through luxury goods, though Maureen participates in 'conspicuous,' she seeks to transcend this role forced on her and yearns for a more meaningful form of existence:

She went secretly, observed from afar by whispering black children, to fetch ration for her children to drink. Within the hot metal that boomed hollowly where her weight buckled it, the vehicle was a deserted house re-entered. Trapped flies lay droning into unconsciousness on their backs. It was as if she had walked into that other abandoned house. (12)

Bam, the husband of Maureen Smales, intends to have sexual relationship with her in return for her loans. He deceives her into believing that he can make a handsome sum of money for her without endangering the small amount she possesses. His ulterior motives become clear to Maureen Smales only when he tricks her into coming to his house and makes a claim that the man who pays for the great role in family is generally allowed to have a next wife and behave like an animal. He discards her without knowing the reality, only for the reason she believes that Maureen Smales has compulsion to take domestic duty from her husband.

Sudden and catastrophic event is in the form of racial uprising taking place in Johannesburg, and its immediate impact is in the life of the Smales. This form of violence has its nightmares and haunting affect in the life of minority Whites who have to shelter under the mercy of Blacks in the Black people community.

Consciously, the novelist has questioned the way of females' position that Maureen Smales as the central character who is mentally and physically strong. The novelist has found in the intimacy of females to share the feelings to make the woman world as more powerful than males. Females are more energetic than male characters but males have to take support of female for their benefit.

Maureen Smales does not share her feelings with her family. The social laws of patriarchy hinder from bringing the female's creativity in the front position of human world. Males who are called intellectuals do not have intellect in reality. They have trodden upon the half soul of society that they have nothing creative in the mind except to suppress females, "They know, they know what it is happening, the trouble in town. The white people are chased away from their house and we take. Everybody is like that, isn't it?" (13).

As such, patriarchy considerably gives the right only for males so that females are left as the desirable beings of males. The novelist has demonstrated that the women are treated not as the human beings but as the baby producing machines. She highlights the males' ignorance to know the female world. Therefore, the novelist focuses on the reality of this blind society where the same humans are treated negatively.

The novelist has found that the male gender has nothing good as they cannot observe the human equally, so that they treated the women so negatively that they are not intellectuals. They depart from the female world and see women as machines. As such, there is a gradual fall of the utopian notion in our society. The world that promises equality and fairness is no more in real life.

III. Conclusion: Fall of Utopian World

On the aftermath of a popular uprising in South Africa, the once powerful White race is left in a vulnerable situation. They have to take shelter for the protection of their life and property. One such family is of Maureen Smales, consisting of her husband, Bamford Smales and theirs' three children who have taken safety in rural Africa under the mercy of their black servant, July. However, things start to take a nasty turn as the utopian world and dystopia start to take its toll on Maureen who is the immediate victim of the social and political change.

The White utopia is no more in existence not only in South Africa but also, around the world. For, the promise of fairness and equality has been limited to the White community, and besides them, it is non-existent, and hence society and nations are revolting against this uprising. The pain of being a White female amongst the Blacks in rural Africa turns out to be most hurting to Maureen. The revolution in which whites have to escape the city for survival results in role reversal of the Blacks in position of White. The blacks take over power and the white family struggles with their new situation. Their black servant July has rescued them, but realises he is in power now, while the Smales have to accept that they are dependants of July. The characters try to grow accustomed to the new situation, but are unable to adapt fully.

Maureen is of the view that the all-good ideal world owned and dominated by the Whites is falling. As there is a role reversal, there seems to be that the issue of the ruled and ruler becomes problematic and when there is a shift in political power. The themes of – there is a beautiful and all equal world, also cause problems that are linked to power. The characters seem to be unable to cope with the power shift, although some of them in the end accept the change of their situation. Maureen from *July's People* is unable to adapt, because she cannot deal with the change of relations with her husband and with her

servant. Maureen is most desperate to escape because she longs to civilization with her old life standards as a white female. Although Maureen's husband seems to handle it better than her, his self image also changes, because his sense of manhood seems to disappear. All the characters are influenced by the power shift, because many of them lose their self-confidence and are unable to cope with the change the shift causes to their relations. The power shift therefore has psychological consequences. Because, Gordimer is unwilling to tolerate the silence about the unfair power distribution of apartheid, they both started writing about the consequences of shift in power.

The situation before and after the transformation of South Africa from White's dominance to Blacks upraise to power changes the notion of the utopian notion of the Whites. The basic difference is caused due to the gender and skin colour (race). The whites are being confronted with their behaviour before the power shift, because the blacks take over their behaviour. Because of the reversal of power relations, the powerful people become powerless and the powerless become powerful. These categories could have disappeared, but they only reverse and this illustrates that power is never evenly distributed. There seems to be a powerful and powerless group with nothing in between. While first blacks were on the receiving end, after the reversal, whites are on the receiving end and have to adapt.

As such, all the characters dwell in a world guided by all good philosophy. However this is not reality, for there is world full of biasness and discrimination. This change is such that many of them lose their confidence and are unable to cope with the change the shift causes to their relations. The shift therefore has psychological, mental, physical and material consequences on the life of the white Smales. This impact is so huge that they are left in lurch and their entire family set up is shattered to pieces.

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