

## **Abstract**

Divided into a preface, an introductory chapter, five analytical chapters and a conclusion, the main premise of this dissertation is to explore the world of Nadine Gordimer's fiction through analysing five post-apartheid novels in an attempt to answer the following questions: How far does Gordimer present a realistic vision of the South African society in the post-apartheid era? To what extent are her works autobiographical? Is it possible to cross cultural barriers in post-apartheid South African society? To examine these questions and to ensure the validity of the study, the researcher applies the interdisciplinary approach through drawing on recent postcolonial theories.

The study concludes that Gordimer captures the contemporary reality of her nation through presenting a fragile and bleak picture of unstable life in post-apartheid South Africa, where patriarchy, perpetual violence, racial tension, fear of the Other (xenophobia), sexual freedom implied in homosexuality and lack of communication between generations, deteriorating marital relationships, exploitation of natural resources, and political corruption are the most common features of daily existence. Yet, Gordimer seems ambivalent about her new society in the sense that she expresses a cautious hope for the future through presenting mixed second generation socializing and interracial marriage. Acculturation can come about through communication and extended dialogue. Gordimer shows the occidental woman as wrestling her way to cross cultural barriers, language divides and religious boundaries. Gordimer shares many characteristic features with some of her female characters despite refusing to be related to any of her female characters on the grounds that she is too jealous about her personal life to write an autobiography. In short, whereas South African society has changed its segregationist policy of apartheid, there are still an aura of conferred superiority on whites and a scar of inherent inferiority on blacks.