A Foucauldian Study of Space and Power in Two Novels
by Nadine Gordimer

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study the relation between space and power in Nadine Gordimer's first novel of the apartheid regime, *The Lying Days* (1953) and her first novel of the post-apartheid era, *None to Accompany Me* (1994) in the light of Michel Foucault's theory of space and power. The paper first introduces Gordimer and the concept of apartheid. Then, it states the common engagement of Foucault and Gordimer with the concepts of space and power in their work, the significance of the study and the limitations of the research. After offering the literature review, the researchers discuss Foucault's theories and his key concept of heterotopias (other spaces) and the relation between his ideas and apartheid. After that, drawing on the theoretical insights of Foucault, the researchers explore how Gordimer's selected novels display an ongoing and developing understanding of the importance of space as a way of explaining key questions of power, resistance and social organization and reflect on the geopolitics of apartheid and its policies of spatial control in South Africa. The researchers also explore how heterotopias as sites of social struggle and resistance challenge apartheid. The researchers examine space as a technique of control and domination, as well as a means of resistance.

Keywords: foucault; power; space; resistance; Nadine Gordimer

INTRODUCTION

Gordimer's (1923-2014) writing career has run in parallel with the rise and fall of the brutal apartheid regime in South Africa, from its 1948 inception to its demise in the historic general elections in which Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) party was voted into power. During the apartheid era, the racist organization of South Africa was systematically intensified by means of legislation and brutal state control following the election to power of the Nationalist Government in 1948. The word apartheid which means "separation", was coined by General Smuts in London in 1917 and Afrikaner politicians and intellectuals began to use it in the 1930s. It came to gain international currency after the National Party's initial victory in 1948 in the general election with the vigorous campaign "for the separate development of each race in the geographic zone assigned to it" (Derrida, 1986, p. 331). Apartheid was a political program of separate development which was justified by the colonial perception that Africans were a distinct subspecies of humanity and inferior to whites, and had no historical claim to the territory of Southern Africa. During the apartheid era, South African historical propaganda tended to view that the whites reached South Africa before the black inhabitants. The distortion and suppression of historical fact was one of the weapons of apartheid. (Witalec, 1996, p. 356)

Michel Foucault (1920-1984) has been very influential within the field of post-colonial theorizing. Foucault's writing, which would seem so intensely focused on France, or at most, on Europe, can be relevant to discussions of colonial geography and colonial power. It is thus significant that Edward Said should describe his magisterial *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) as "a kind of geographical inquiry into historical experience," and that he should defend the importance of this emphasis: "Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free of the struggle over geography." (p. 33) History always takes place, as Said suggests, and nowhere is the question of land, territory and power, as pertinent and contested as in the long and continuing history of imperialism. Foucault's engagement with the concepts of space and geography occurs throughout his work. One component of this engagement is his early remarks on heterotopias (other spaces). One recurring theme in Gordimer's fiction is also her preoccupation with questions of space, an extended fictional reflection on the geopolitics of apartheid and its policies of spatial control. In helping to identify and empower sites of marginalized voices from which effective resistance can emerge, there is an increasing attention given to questions of geography and space as a way of explaining key questions of power and social organization. Gordimer's fiction displays an ongoing and developing understanding of the importance of space which parallels contemporaneous critical thinking. What adds to the significance of the subject is the fact that Gordimer's preoccupation with the concept of heterotopias in her fiction occurred long before Foucault interpreted his definition of the concept in his work.

This paper aims to read Nadine Gordimer's novels, *The Lying Days* (1953) and *None to Accompany Me* (1994) in the light of Michel Foucault's theory of power, space and resistance. The Foucauldian framework enables the researchers to answer the following questions: How are space and power tied together from Foucault's views? What is Foucault's concept of heterotopia and how can it become a site of social struggle and resistance? And how does Gordimer employ the relation between space and power and the possibility of resistance in her novels, *The Lying Days* and *None To Accompany Me*? Although the exploration of the relation between space and power and the possibility of resistance develops a new analytical perspective on Gordimer's fiction, it has its own limitations. It is a piece of research conducted by researchers who are not South Africans themselves. Hence, a gap in understanding the complexity of spatial and social divisions in South African society is unavoidable. It is a monumental task for a foreign researcher to engage with the real South African world, and to make connections with the textual evidence of history as presented in Gordimer's fiction. Another limitation of this study is that although Foucault's spatial engagements have recurred throughout his career, they do not form a coherent whole. From his sketches of spatial order as heterotopia, to the more richly worked analyses of urban spatial separation in the context of discipline and governmentality, Foucault's work on space, territory, and geography remains enigmatic and provocative and many of the contours of his geography remain to be mapped.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study differs from that of other critics who have written on various aspects of Gordimer's writing since its emergence more than six decades ago. Although an enormous body of criticism has been done on Gordimer's work, there are not many critiques which have investigated the relation between space and power in Gordimer's work from a Foucauldian perspective. Rita Barnard in *Apartheid and Beyond* (2007) stresses the need for a new characterisation of South African literature:

> Despite the fact that two South African writers have been awarded the Nobel Prize, South African literature is still in some ways an emerging field of enquiry and one that continues to require redefinition in view of the changed circumstances in the country. (p. 4)

The current study has been made to fill the gap in Gordimer studies. Any reader of Gordimer's work will want to be aware of the following significant studies. Abdul JanMohamed's *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* (1983) examines Gordimer's work in the context of colonialist society's Manichean structure and ultimately saves her from the label of colonial writer. Stephen Clingman's *The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: History from the Inside* (1986) shows how Gordimer's work is caught up in the major literary and ideological movements of South Africa. He examines Gordimer's apprehension of how she as writer acts upon history, while at the same time history is acting or shaping her consciousness as well. Clingman examines Gordimer's work within a historical framework and notes how Gordimer's development, both political and formal, can be traced in her writing. Clingman remains the leading critic of the historical and political dimensions of her work, while other critics focus on other conditioning factors. As an example, Judie Newman's *Nadine Gordimer* (1988) examines the way gender complicates the intersecting themes of race, sex and colonialism in Gordimer's novels.

In *The Novels of Nadine Gordimer: Private Lives/Public Landscapes* (1985), John Cooke has offered the most sustained discussion of Gordimer's treatment of space, arguing that all of her fiction can be approached by a consideration of the respective landscapes upon which her novels are centered and which reveal a changing perception of her environment. For Cooke, this emphasis on landscape allows Gordimer to focus on the resurgence of African culture. The fates of the protagonists in the novels from *A Guest of Honour* through to *July's People* are, argues Cooke, "fundamentally tied to the landscapes they inhabit" (29), landscapes which embody the cultural situations of these characters.

Cooke's concentration on landscape suggests the relevance of a politics of space to Gordimer's work. In one of her 1982 interviews, Gordimer shows how the issue of land and ownership crystallizes the South African situation. A question is asked about the different treatment of landscape to be found in the work of white and black South African writers. Terence Diggory (1984) speculates that black writers identify with the people rather than the land, in contrast to white writers who are preoccupied with landscape in their work. On this issue Gordimer states that:

> I think there's something very interesting there. I think that whites are always having to assert their claim to the land because it's based, as Mehring's mistress points out, on a piece of paper - a deed of sale. And what is a deed of sale when people have first of all taken a country by conquest? Tenure is a very interesting concept, morally speaking. When you come to think of it, what is tenure? What is "legal" tenure? Blacks take the land for granted, it's simply there. It's theirs, although they've 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.'   (Robert Boyers et al., 1984, p. 6)

This important idea shows that colonial history has generated a racial difference concerning spatial perception. If South Africa's colonial origins produce this geopolitical tension, it is a tension which has been subsequently promoted in intensified ways by the apartheid system, which was based on the establishment and control of spatial boundaries.

In *Apartheid and Beyond: South African Writers and the Politics of Place* (2007), Rita Barnard contributes remarkably to the study of South African literary culture. She offers elegant readings of selected South African writers, focusing on the intimate relationship between place, subjectivity, and literary form revealed in their work. She also explores the way apartheid functioned in its day-to-day operations as a geographical system of control, exerting its power through such spatial mechanisms as residential segregation, bantustans, passes, and prisons. Though in the first instance concerned with literary texts, Apartheid and Beyond also meditates on crucial historical processes like colonial occupation, the creation of black townships, migration, forced removals, the emergence of informal settlements, the

gradual integration of white cities, and efforts at land reform. Cumulatively, the six essays in this book tell the story of the transformation of apartheid's landscapes of oppression into the more ambiguous landscapes of contemporary South Africa: landscapes of tourism and leisure, of crime and privatized security, of uncontrolled urbanization and persistent poverty. Apartheid and Beyond is both an innovative account of an important body of politically-inflected literature and an imaginative reflection on the socio-spatial aspects of the transition from apartheid to democracy. It includes two chapters on the work of Nadine Gordimer, "Leaving the House of the White Race" and "Of Trespassers and Trash." The first of these chapters treats the space of the "house, or, more specifically, the white suburban home," in *The Lying Days*, *July's People*, and *My Son's Story*, before turning in chapter 3 to the "fundamental South African injustice: the fact of territorial dispossession" as exemplified in *The Conservationist* (p. 81).

Barbara Temple-Thurston in *Nadine Gordimer Revisited* (1998) discusses each of Nadine Gordimer's novels in detail, examining the texts as a reflection of events and situations in the real world. She shows how Gordimer's typical concerns are developed through increasing stress on the politics of apartheid and its impact on the life of South African whites; and considers how Gordimer's work as a whole contributes to the creation of a literature to challenge apartheid. Temple-Hurston explores the themes of power, resistance and transgression in Gordimer's novels. In her article, "Sexuality, Resistance and Power in Nadine Gordimer's Novels," Barbara Temple-Hurston studies Gordimer's novels based on Michel Foucault's conception of power and its inevitable resistances. She illustrates how Gordimer, like Foucault, understands sexuality as a site of power relationships dominated increasingly by the voices of the social institutions. This article explores how thematically Gordimer's fiction per se serves as a discourse resisting and opposing the institution of apartheid.

FOUCAULT'S THEORIES ON POWER, SPACE, AND RESISTANCE AND NADINE GORDIMER

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) and *History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (1976) Foucault challenges the traditionally accepted views of power. Famously, he writes that "power is exercised, rather than possessed" (*Discipline and Punish*, 1977 26). This model focuses on the power relations themselves rather than on the subjects related to power. Foucault rejects the idea of the pre-existing nature of subjects related to power which leads to his second point of divergence, the view that power is "productive" rather than repressive. Foucault shows how subjects are produced through certain institutional and cultural practices. Here his focus is on the practices of disciplinary power which are created with the development of human sciences in the nineteenth century. For Foucault, disciplinary practices establish binary oppositions such as healthy/ill, sane/mad and legal/criminal. These binary oppositions gain authority and can be used as a means of social control. Such divisions have a widespread effect in society, conditioning the way individuals label themselves and each other according to established norms (*Discipline and Punish*, 1977 199). These controls also involve the actual physical segregation of the population through incarceration.

The productive nature of power has profound implications for how it can be resisted, and here we meet with the most positive aspects of Foucault's thought. Foucault points out that "where there is power, there are resistances." (*History of Sexuality*, 1978, p. 95) In Foucault's view, where there is no possibility of resistance there can be no relations of power. Foucault believes that the study of power should be the study of "the total structure of actions brought to bear" ("Subject and Power", 1983, p. 220) on the actions of others, and of the

resistances and evasions encountered by those actions. Resistances arise, it seems, from within the power network, are produced by it, each a special case: "Resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations" (*History of Sexuality*, 1978, p. 96). These "points, knots, or focuses of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body, certain moments in life, certain types of behavior" (*History of Sexuality*, 1978, p. 96). The idea here is that rather than attempting to identify centralized sources of power, there are localized instances of it which individuals can address themselves to. This is not to deny the existence of state power, but rather to insist that effective resistance can be mobilized by locating the pervasive power relations which obtain in the lives of individuals at the micro-level of society. In helping to identify and empower sites of marginalized voices from which effective resistance can emerge, micropolitics - the exercising of power, by newly emerging groups, at a grass-roots social level - is closely related to another important trend in critical and cultural theory, the increase in attention given to questions of geography and space as a way of explaining key questions of power and social organization. In David Harvey's words, "command over space is a fundamental and all-pervasive source of social power in and over everyday life" (*Condition of Postmodernity*, 1990, p. 226).

Space is a polyvalent term that until the early twentieth century could be read simply as objective absolute space within which "objects exist and events occur" (Neil Smith, 2008, p. 95) . Foucault rarely treats space this way, preferring to treat it as an element of power and discipline. For Foucault space is not a pre-existing terrain. Rather, in his work, it is the very "production of space" (Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 1974) and its relation to power that is at stake. In the paper "Space, Knowledge and Power", Foucault conceptualizes space in terms of power. He also rejects the devaluation of space in favor of time. He suggests that the dichotomy between space and time is a mistake in the first place. In fact, space is created through social relations and should be conceptualized as a focus of power, a site of contesting social forces. In the paper, Foucault also discusses the politics of architecture and interprets architecture (that is, urban spatial orderings and form) as part of the "techniques of the government of societies" (cited in Rabinow, 1984, p. 239). By "government," a key concept for Foucault, he means the question of how and to what extent populations should be managed and regulated. A prominent spatial term associated with Foucault is heterotopias, or different spaces. Evident in the clash of cultures in colonial and postcolonial contexts is Foucault's concept of heterotopia. Heterotopia refers to the way in which different spaces can come into contact with other spaces that seem to bear no relation to them. The experience of heterotopia disposes people to wonder which world they are in. The mechanism of space provides the impetus for controlling and regulating the movements of people throughout the space of a colonised country. The colonised people must be restricted from entering the space of the colonial power. Indeed, the power to regulate the movements through space of others was an integral element in the practice of colonialism. We can see this concern with the regulation of space in Apartheid South Africa. In 1948 the Nationalist Party came to power which led to the development of apartheid in South Africa and the establishment of concentration camps to confine colonised others. While the regulation of space within apartheid South Africa was designed to keep the worlds of whites and non-whites apart, characters cross this spatial divide as this can be witnessed in Gordimer's novels.

In his article, "Of Other Spaces", Foucault suggests that heterotopias are spaces of alternative possibilities, sites which stand in a pointed relationship to other social spaces. They have "the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way

as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect. These spaces…which are linked with all the others… however contradict all the other sites." ("Other Spaces", 1986, p. 24) The concept of heterotopias can identify the sites of social experience and hence of social struggle. In "Of Other Spaces", Foucault's descriptions of spaces like Utopias as "fundamentally unreal spaces, as projections of a desire for perfect or radically alternative society contrasts with his understanding of the more concrete heterotopian spaces. Retaining the quality of utopian distance, "being outside of all places" (1986, p. 24), the heterotopian does, however, possess a recognizable location, and an insistent connection with other social spaces, its significance and meaning emerging through its function as a place of contrast, a counter-site, or as an idealized reflection of a culture's sense of itself. In addition, the heterotopia is not a singular or homogeneous site, but a simultaneity of multiple sites, a variety of contrasting or connected spaces whose several meanings compete and co-exist in the same place (1986, p. 25).

There is some connection between Foucault's ideas with the ideological practices of apartheid. The actual incarceration of blacks under directly repressive measures of apartheid correlates with Foucault's idea of social and spatial control of the population. After the rapid enactment of the program of Apartheid legislation, it is, in Foucault's terms, "the population that were being overimprisoned" (cited in Macey, 1994, p. 258). Beyond this physical incarceration, the apartheid ideology demanded a consciousness in individuals of their racial separateness. The effect was the formation of a disciplinary practice designed to produce 'normalized' and 'docile' subjects fearful of transgressing a particular binary opposition, especially through inter-racial sexual contact.

Planned in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the black township designed by the apartheid regime would seem particularly amenable to a Foucauldian reading. The township was, as the architect Glenn Mills has argued, "a strategic device by which a particular form of power-knowledge is realized." (1986, p. 65) The very design elements that the planners advocated for functional, scientific, and aesthetic reasons—the broad streets, the "green areas" between the cities and the townships, and the bold graph-like patterns of the roads and houses—were simultaneously also strategic devices. The broad streets permitted access to armored vehicles; buffer zones and limited road access allowed the townships to be sealed off from the cities in times of unrest; and the orderly repetition of identical houses on a geometric grid facilitated surveillance by police and informers. In *Apartheid and Bryond*, Rita Barnard notes that there is not a single political feature of the apartheid state that "did not, in practice, rely on the power of space to separate individuals from each other, to direct and control their movements, and to reinforce social distinctions" (2007, p. 6).

In the introduction to the collection of essays on the apartheid city, David Smith in *The Apartheid City and Beyond* (1992) quotes a description of a township from Gordimer's *Burger's Daughter* in which she identifies several issues which are explored in Smith's collection. In one part of the novel Gordimer raises the question of how the urban can be defined in this context: "is this conglomerate urban or rural?" She goes on to discuss the subject of inequality as a result of the conjunction of power and space: "is this a suburb or a strange kind of junk yard? The enormous backyard of the whole white city, where categories and functions lose their ordination and logic." She can also see how for all its deprivation, this special kind of urbanization contains within it the potential of a social possibility beyond that which has been imposed on its inhabitants: a 'place'; a position whose contradictions those who impose them do not see, and from which will come a resolution they have not been provided for (*Burger's Daughter*, pp. 149-51).

Smith finds Gordimer's description important in its presentation of these geopolitical issues, a description which "captures something of both the life and the landscape of

apartheid" (1992, p. 1). Smith also shows how Gordimer has located the heterotopic quality of township life. Her account:

> hints at the central significance of urbanization under apartheid: that those places imposed by the white government on the black majority have taken on a life of their own, rebounding on the system to its discomfort and ultimate demise. Very simply, urbanization under apartheid, no matter how carefully the state contrived to control it, has undermined apartheid itself, bringing South African society and its cities to the brink of significant if still uncertain change.   (1992, pp. 1-2)

Urbanization in South Africa, despite the deprivation and squalor that invariably accompanies it, identifies both a challenge to and a contradiction emerging from the policies of the apartheid regime. On the one hand, the expanding settlements display the failure of the strategies of strict spatial control and on the other hand, the presence of blacks in townships adjacent to cities is required since these people comprise much of a city's required workforce. There is a self-defeating element in this contradiction. Indeed, this contradiction has eventually undermined the function of apartheid, although the government attempted to control urbanization within its own practices. Gordimer's continuing preoccupation with the importance of human geography has a great historical significance, as a fictional investigation of a determining feature in the dissolution of apartheid.

In her earlier novels, Gordimer's presentation of geopolitics has had a symbolic dimension, as evidenced by the recurring idea of community, emerging from representations of black urbanization or collective activity. The presentation often parallels aspects of the Foucauldian heterotopia, a space that is connected to all other social sites in a contradictory relationship ("Other Spaces", 1986 24). The sites of black urbanization in South Africa fulfill this function since they are connected to all the other sites defined in the nation's economic hegemony, sites which they also contradict or challenge. The presentation of this idea has involved stylized representations of township life, or of communal gatherings in which spatial repression creates the possibility of a community, which is an integrated body politic. The effective culmination of these scenes, the connection between space, power and community, occurs in *My Son's Story* (1990) when white activists join with blacks in a political demonstration and sense the community of proximity which marks the vitality of the group:

> The blacks were accustomed to closeness. In queues for transport, for work permits, for housing allocation, for all the stamped paper that authorized their lives; loaded into overcrowded trains and buses to take them back and forth across the veld, fitting a family into one room, they cannot keep the outline of space--another, invisible skin – whites project around themselves, distanced from each other in everything but sexual and parental intimacy. But now in the graveyard the people from the combis were dispersed from one another and the spatial aura they instinctively kept, and pressed into a single, vast, stirring being with the people of the township. The nun was close against the breast of a man. A black child with his little naked penis waggling under a shirt clung to the leg of a professor. A woman's French perfume and the sweat of a drunk merged as if one breath came from them. And yet it was not alarming for the whites; in fact, an old fear of closeness, of the odours and heat of other flesh, was gone. One ultimate body of bodies was inhaling and exhaling in the single diastole and systole, and above was the freedom of the great open afternoon sky.   (p. 110)

Gordimer here returns to the notion of a black heterotopia, first broached in *The Lying Days*. In this passage spatial repression is shown, paradoxically, to have created the possibility of a community, an integrated body politic: it is a community of proximity, a vitality which is alien to the privileged whites who are soon infected by its sense of possibility. A heterotopia is a space which is connected to all other social sites, in a contradictory relationship. The sites of black urbanization in South Africa, symbolically

represented here, clearly fulfill this function since they are connected to the other sites defined in the nation's economic hegemony, sites which they also challenge and contradict. Uncontrollable black urbanization represents a challenge to the racist social organization of South Africa. The challenge is a unification of a repressed and collective identity. The image of unity in this body politic is made to show the nation's possibility, in the image of "the freedom of the great open afternoon sky," an unlimited space above this land, and above these people, presumably heralding the change they will bring to it. The unity, the single heartbeat, heralds the political change in a willful symbolism.

FOUCAULDIAN READING OF GORDIMER'S NOVELS
THE LYING DAYS

Gordimer's first novel, *The Lying Days*, written at the very beginning of the era of institutionalized racism in South Africa, seems particularly shrewd in the way it explores the effects of the Nationlalist Party's election victory of 1948 by focusing on questions of urban and domestic space: it records the lack of adequate houses for black workers, the active development of new suburbs and apartment blocks for whites, and, most sinisterly, the invasion of peoples' domestic privacy through the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) which banned cross-racial marriages and the Immorality Act (1950) which criminalised sexual relationships across the color line (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 14). *The Lying Days* concerns the partial growth and acquisition of race consciousness of its first-person narrator, Helen Shaw, through adolescence and young childhood as the apartheid ideology demanded a consciousness in individuals of their racial separateness. There is a spatial component to this novel's design which is crucial to how it is interpreted. The novel is written in three sections, each with a different setting which acts as a kind of background to key stages of Helen's development. Part one, 'The Mine', establishes the industrial situation of Helen's upbringing and suggests a submerged political consciousness, while part two, 'The Sea', presents the possibility of an apolitical white escapism, expressed through Helen's relationship with Ludi Kosh on the coast. The final and longest part is 'The City' where Helen's political awakening begins. The final section crystallizes how place is intimately bound up with individual lives; the city contains the sites of real and complex lived relations.

In South Africa, one must pay attention to the specific effect of the rigorous social and spatial divisions maintained and regulated by the apartheid state. Apartheid clearly represents Foucault's argument that modern power operates through continual classification, surveillance and intervention by setting up and policing the geographical boundaries that created South Africa as a politico-spatial entity. The most arresting spatial images in *The Lying Days* represent Helen's developing 'racial consciousness.' These begin with her childhood recollection of first venturing out from the isolated white Mine community to the forbidden concession stores which the blacks use. Helen's fascination and amazement at the jumble she sees in the shop windows and at the bewildering array of sensory experiences that greet her, represent a significant culture shock, or encounter with this 'other', so close, yet usually concealed from her view (pp. 19-24). As Helen begins to make her way home again, she observes a Mine boy urinating in the street and reports that "a sudden press of knowledge, hot and unwanted, came upon me." She senses "a question that has waited inside me but had never risen into words or thoughts because there were no words for it" (p. 24). The sudden knowledge and the question can suggest an emerging political consciousness, a "knowledge" that material situations differ, even the provision of facilities for essential bodily functions and a "question", as yet not properly articulated, concerning why this should be so. The importance of the scene is emphasized by later considerations of the provision of toilet facilities, the most basic and necessary of public spaces. At the university, Helen has

one of her first talks with Mary Seswayo, the black student she tries to befriend, in a cloakroom (pp. 130-132), a setting which seems insignificant enough. Of course it was the time before the passage of the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 which, Leonard Thompson explains, was to prevent the established universities from enrolling black students, unless special permission from a cabinet minister was granted (1990, p. 197). Helen has first encountered Mary in a cloakroom at the university, at which point the narrator pauses to remark how rare it is to find somewhere where a black girl can wash her hands in the same place as a white girl (p. 105), a point reinforced later when the narrator, reflecting on the restrictions which hamper Mary, observes that there are no public toilet facilities for blacks at all in the Johannesburg shopping center (p. 169). The detail that Helen is forbidden by her mother to use certain public conveniences (p. 23), now clearly represents luxurious disdain and adds a further poignancy to this motif and to the implication that not only general notions of power, but basic facets of human dignity are bound up with the control of space constructed and perpetuated by apartheid and its petty measures of enforcement.

Helen's concern with the idea of spatial provision/deprivation as a political issue is crystallized through her concern for Mary Seswayo when Helen confronts the black African space in the township. The township is perhaps an obvious example of an ideologically saturated and yet successfully contested place. *The Lying Days* describes the township in terms that correspond to a remarkable degree with Foucault's notion of the heterotopia. This term identifies certain peculiarly significant sites that, while they do exist in society, nonetheless have the curious property of "suspecting, neutralizing, or inverting the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect" ("Other Spaces", pp. 24-25). The heterotopia, one might say, is simultaneously a representation and a contestation of the "normal" spaces of a given society. This kind of space is introduced in a crucial scene in which Helen and another companion, Charles, drive Mary home to the Mariastad location in which she is staying. This scene involves a culture shock for the two whites which is analogous to Helen's reactions at the sensory experience of the township:

> And all above the crust of vague, close, low houses, smoke hung, quite still as if it had
> been there forever; and shouts rose, and it seemed that the shout had been there forever,
> too, many voices lifted at different times and for different reasons that became simply a
> shout, that never began and never ended.   (p. 173)

As is characteristic in this novel, the emphasis is again on architectural structures and on domestic space. The spatial compression of the township gives the illusion of permanence, despite its architectural insubstantiality. The images focused on to express this paradox are significant: the polluting smoke is a permanent feature and the impression of the many voices of the township forming a single shout suggests the disorder and incoherence of compression and squalor, at least to the whites with a more privileged notion of personal space and communication. Paradoxically, the single voice also suggests a coherence and unity, the unity of a common experience of repression. There is a clear sense here of the unity required for political action, even though we see only the raw material of this mobilization: an unarticulated, but nevertheless unified, "shout". This is an embryonic version of Foucault's notion of heterotopia which is suggested by the township description in *Burger's Daughter*. It is significant that, in contrast to this single shout, Charles and Helen are both reduced to silence by the experience of the township: they both "stopped talking, as people do when they feel they may have lost their way" (p. 173). This is a suggestion of guilt, of a tacit awareness of white complicity in the material manifestation of repression. The politics of the geography gives the scene an extra dimension and importance. When Mary disappears into one of the houses, Helen is able to imagine the inside of Mary's house which she hasn't seen simply because the location is uniform in its squalor and compression (p. 175).

The theme of Mary's domestic space is developed through Helen's concern over Mary's exam revision. Having discovered that the house in which Mary is staying is too cramped and chaotic for study, it occurs to Helen that Mary could stay with her and her parents: not in the house exactly, but in the "cooler", an annex/ storeroom originally built for keeping food, and which would be "neither inside the house, nor out in the yard with Anna [the black servant], but something in between" (p. 187). The compromise solution – the creation of a makeshift space which is neither inside the domain of the whites, nor outside where the black servants are billeted – is clearly symbolic. Yet Helen's compromise, designed primarily to placate the racist concerns of her mother, also indicates the literal dilemma of spatial provision for blacks.

Spatial images and references are rife in the novel and there is room here to mention only a handful of the more significant instances. There is, however, one further important aspect of this motif, involving the character Joel Aaron, who acts in the novel as a kind of moral conscience for Helen. In key scenes, he helps to nourish Helen's developing political consciousness. In one symbolic scene, Helen and Joel take a drive to a beauty spot known as Macdonald's Kloof, and here Helen reflects on questions of racial difference, making the crucial "discovery" that Mary Seswayo "is a girl…like me" (p. 142). Joel traces, on a rock, a map which represents a version of the world, based specially on an awareness of political geography:

> Here's a whole group of islands, with a warm current wrapped round them, so they're the coconut-palm kind. The people sing and they sail about—all over here—in the hollowed-out barks of trees, with figureheads like ugly sea monsters. Over this side is a huge, rich country, an Africa and America rolled into one, with a bit of Italy thrown in for charm.
>
> (p. 145)

This symbolic scene, which crystallizes a key moment in Helen's awakening, contains also this resonant image of global spatial politics, presented ironically by Joel's observation of the "cocktail" of privilege, embracing resources (Africa), capitalist clout (America) and cultural and aesthetic credibility (Italy). The resonance of this scene and the centrality of the idea of mapping to it are elements which indicate the importance of questions of space even at the beginning of Gordimer's novelistic career. The scene resurfaces in a dream of Helen's immediately following a moment in which the headlights of cars shine into the bedroom of Helen and her lover, Paul Clark, reminding them of the police with flashlights enforcing the Mixed Marriages ban (p. 261). The apartheid regime's extreme intrusion into the private realms of the individuals is related to Foucault's idea of surveillance that leads to self-surveillance as is reflected in Helen's reaction that night as she instinctively recoils from Paul. Here the Kloof episode, with its broader implications about geopolitics, is explicitly linked with localized measures of racial and spatial control.

A more fully worked-through spatial issue is represented by Joel: he is training to be an architect and it is clearly appropriate that this character, whose function has a direct bearing on the novel's political vision, should be studying the provision and organization of social space. A more fully worked-through spatial issue is represented by the character, Joel, whose function has a direct impact on the novel's political vision. Joel is training to be an architect and it is clearly appropriate that this character should be studying the provision and organization of social space. The question of architecture and urban design is one which recurs in Gordimer's *None to Accompany Me*. At one stage we learn that Joel's future plans include the possibility of building houses for blacks (p. 157). In the final chapter of the novel the narrator-Helen explicitly identifies herself as the writer of the novel and here she is considering whether or not the process of fictional composition is comparable to the positive expression of Joel's "creative urge": the example of Joel's intended active participation in the construction of a new society. The implication is that this should be the goal of the novelist, especially in South Africa and the novel's preoccupation with spatial politics indicates an

intention to contribute to the building – in a sense literally, as well as metaphorically – of a more equitable society.

NONE TO ACCOMPANY ME

Gordimer's eleventh novel, *None to Accompany Me*, is her first to be set and written after the watershed of February 1990, which saw the release of Nelson Mandela, and the subsequent unbanning of the ANC. This first post-apartheid novel seems to be very much a novel of the transition in terms of the novel's pre-1994 election subjects - the problems of black empowerment and reclamation of the land, and the white involvement in the new struggles.

In *None to Accompany Me*, Gordimer investigates the adjustments required of all groups in the new power-sharing with its attendant political complexities, compromises, and ambiguities. This aspect of the novel is explored through the experiences of Sibongile and Didymus Maqoma, the activists, back from exile, who will now be involved in the fashioning of the new state. The personal difficulties for them stem from a reversal of roles: Didymus is a man of the past, a former hero, while Sibongile now begins her rise to a position of prominent political influence.

The novel's main concentration, however, is on its white heroine, Vera Stark, and on the familiar theme of space. A major preoccupation of Gordimer which began in her first novel, has been to examine the control of space (both rural and urban) as an index of repression (apartheid, of course, was based on "zoning") and as a focus of political resistance. In her first ten novels, Gordimer returns again and again to descriptions of township life, finding, ultimately, a utopian impulse in the community values they can be made to represent. This is not to eschew the actualities of deprivation in the peripheries of South African urbanization; Gordimer's is a serious geopolitical point about how unchecked urbanization, in conflict with traditional Nationalist Party policy, was a key factor in the demise of apartheid. Consequently, there is a sense of expectation in Gordimer's accounts of black urban life in which the irresistibility of change is often conveyed.

None to Accompany me deals with two issues in South African history. Firstly, it focuses on the whites' territorial segregation of the African land through successive Acts. The Group Areas Act 1950 imposed residential apartheid on South Africa. The urban areas were zoned, the better areas being allotted to the whites. The Native Laws Amendment Act 1952 limited the blacks' right to live permanently in urban areas. The Land Act 1954 imposed a buffer strip of five hundred yards between any black quarter and the white town it served, creating a captive labour force. The blacks were allowed to live in zoned areas but only as migrants. (Ume, 1981, 178) In *None to Accompany Me*, Vera deals with a case in which an Afrikaner is trying to get rid of the black 'squatters' on his property. He refuses to hold any dialogue over the issue with Vera and Zeph Rapulana, "the squatter camp leader" (p. 311). He calls those blacks 'trespassers' and wants them "to pack up their rubbish and get off his land" because:

> He decided to move with the times…farmers would have to - in the businessmen's way of speaking - 'diversify resources', yes, that's it,get up to the tricks that make those people rich. He applied to the Provincial Administration for permission to establish a black township on one of his holdings. He would convert the farm into cash as a landlord; he would divide it into plots for rent to blacks. He was going to turn their invasion to profit.
> (pp. 22-24)

In this way, the novel restates the white man's occupation of the South African land. Vera's attempt to sell her house and live in a property owned by a black man reiterates the black man's inherent right of land ownership in South Africa:

> The tenant. The designation, for the public, suited her well…between Zeph Rapulana and Mrs Stark, linking their present arrangement to Odensville, the matter of land, over which they had come to begin to know one another. It was a consequence in which there were loyalties but no dependencies, in which there was feeling caught in no recognized category, having no need to be questioned.   (p. 321)

Despite the Sharpville massacre of 1960, the black student uprising of 1976, and the present killings when Vera, in the novel, alos gets a bullet wound, she continues to live in the same area without any sense of fear.

Besides the issue of territorial segregation, *None to Accompany Me* explores beyond the white dilemma, into the effects of displacement upon the black people in South Africa. On coming back from exile in England, Sibongile, the emerging black political figure, finds it difficult to put up with the temporary displacement from one room to another until a residence is found for her family. Gordimer sums up the effects of displacement in describing Mpho's (Sibongile's daughter) personality:

> The oyster-shell-pink palms of her slender hands completed the striking colour contrast of matt black skin… Her hair, drawn back straightened… Congolese style… Out of her mouth came a perky London English . She could not speak an African language, neither the Zulu of her mother nor the Xhosa of her father.   (p. 49)

This exemplifies Gordimer's fundamental assumption that subjectivity is profoundly shaped by spatial relations.

In a widely quoted comment, Foucault remarks that "space is fundamental in any exercise of power" (cited in Rabinow, 1984, p. 252). In South Africa, the disciplinary space of the township designed by the apartheid regime to control the blacks became the crucial locus of resistance in the antiapartheid struggle which suggests that we need to be suspicious of totalizing models of power, of descriptions of place that ignore the transformative and creative capacities of human beings. In *None To Accompany Me*, the question of spatial control is presented more literally than in Gordimer's earlier works. The novel's heroine, Vera Stark, is a lawyer working for a legal foundation that promotes black claims to the land where *None to Accompany Me* deals directly with the actual legal niceties of ownership and renegotiation.

There is a clear difference between the utopian black heterotopia celebrated, symbolically in Gordimer's earlier novels and the portrayal, in *None to Accompany Me*, of collective action tainted by the actualities of power-broking: the big change is occurring, and so the bigger literary gesture has served its purpose. At the conference to elect the new executive members of "the Movement," there is a scene between sessions which presents the black heterotopia going awry. Didymus moves among the crowd, displaying the politician's skilled "grin of recognition even without knowing whom he was greeting" (p. 94). He finds himself among those old comrades who are about to vote him off the new executive.

While his conclave drew aside, their eyes glancing into and away from the throng as they sheltered within their half-turned backs, in the air thick with voices and the friction of movement, the susurration of clothing, the echo of coughs, laughter, a slithering stamping of feet, the tremolo of ululating cries broke again and again into song. People sing on marches, they sing at funerals, they sing on their way to jail; it was their secret, all that time of the forbidden.

> You can't toyi-toyi your way to freedom, Sibongile often tartly remarked in exile. He saw her, caught up in a sway and shuffle of women and young men. Her shoulders shrugged rhythmically and her head was thrown back; Sibongile was enjoying herself, or learning how to be a politician. He was amused.   (p. 95)

This is a new black collective in Gordimer, combining the suggestion of machiavellian plotting with an ambivalent representation of dancing and singing, usually associated with solidarity and purpose, but which here denotes the escapism of Sibongile's enjoyment, or, emptied of its spontaneous vitality, cynical political display.

The new interregnum is concerned with practical politics and with effecting change in material circumstances. So these wry observations of the compromises produced in those seeking office may not, in themselves, imply a hypocrisy to be overtly condemned. More important, for this interregnum, is a steady focus on questions of poverty and class, another literal concern, and one which colors the treatment of urbanization. When Mpho, the daughter of Sibongile and Didymus, visits her grandmother's home in Alexandra, we read of a:

> house with its broken-pillared stoep and dust-dried pot-plants, battered relic of real bricks and mortar with two diamond-paned rotting windows from the time when Alex was the reflection of out-of-bounds white respectability, yearned for, imitated, now standing alone on ash-coloured earth surrounded by shacks, and what had once been an aspiration to a patch of fenced suburban garden now a pile of rubbish where the street dumped its beer cans and pissed, and the ribcages of scavenging dogs moved like bellows.   (p. 50)

If the imitation of "out-of-bounds white respectability," denoted by architectural detail, once carried an element of social assertion, the logic of the passage, emphasizing impoverishment and social collapse, suggests such "assertion" was a flawed project. Superficial imitation of this kind, which clearly indicates the adoption of trappings without attention to the material underpinnings, may have a direct relevance to the emerging community of blacks in power, quickly learning cynical political tricks. In the final chapter of the novel, the image of Vera Stark ending her days in the annex to the house of a black man now staking a claim in the capitalist world reminds us of Helen's idea in *The Lying Days* that her black university colleague, Mary Seswayo, could do her revision in the "cooler" of her parents' house. Now it is the ageing white woman who is installed on the peripheries of emerging black rule, and this intertextual echo and reversal completes another cycle in Gordimer's work: where, in the first novel, Helen Shaw was struggling to identify with Mary Seswayo, in this laterst novel, the heroine has moved through commitment and identification and now inhabits the place that was designated for Mary.

CONCLUSION

The racial ideology of social and political control in South Africa was systematically consolidated and culminated in the apartheid system which eventually created an internally compartmentalized society. Apartheid clearly represents Foucault's argument that modern power operates through continual classification, surveillance and intervention by setting up and policing the geographical boundaries that created South Africa as a politico-spatial entity. Apartheid clearly represents an instance of the territorialization of power. The interpretations of Gordimer's *The Lying Days* and *None to Accompany Me* in this paper indicate strong connections with critical theories of Foucault. The researchers have characterized her selected novels as an associated articulation of geopolitical concern. The apartheid government was designed to deny possession of power to the majority of its citizens. As we see in *The Lying Day*s, the possibility of building a more equitable society in the face of the formidable apparatus of state surveillance and control depended on the demise of apartheid regime.

According to Foucault, heterotopias are spaces of alternative possibilities and sites from which energies for social change might emerge. The heterotopias of urban South Africa inevitably challenged the foundations of apartheid society. Clearly, these heterotopias return

us to the micropolitics of the body. Heterotopias are places created for individual bodies to resist the organized spaces of incarceration and surveillance and to establish their own spaces of consciousness and freedom. Urbanization is a form of transgression for Gordimer, a form of a social development beyond the limits of apartheid. In this sense urbanization, through its transgressive potential, is a key route for the fashioning of the cultural and racial hybridization that Gordimer has identified as the necessary future for South African nation portrayed in *None to Accompany Me*. In her fiction, the treatment of social space, Gordimer shows urbanization as the center of apartheid's self-contradiction and the source of its demise. At one level, the demise of apartheid regime offers an exemplary working-through of Foucault's conviction that power is something that is exercised at the micro-level of society, rather than something which is possessed, in a "top-down" model of power and where there is power, there are resistances.

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