Maureen between Criticism and Praise: Reading the Ending of Nadine Gordimer's *July's People*

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Abstract

The final scene in Gordimer's July's People is controversial. Most critics presented convincing thoughts and ideas about the scene, but Gordimer's unsaid expressions and unexplained cultural and social codes kept the reading of the scene perplexing and hard to interpret. We argued that this text, objectively, accuses Maureen the colonizer, for holding some racist and capitalist opinions, thus distancing her from the world in which she lived. Even when she switched roles with her husband, she failed to live to the expectations of her people and the other. S as not to be enlisted with the highly optimistic about the final scene, we also argued that Maureen simply tries to escape her real present into the world of unknown in the hope of finding a world that might accept her as she is, not as she should be.

Key Words: African-American Literature, Role-Switching, Post-Apartheid, South Africa, Utopian/Dystopian visions.

Introduction

Published in 1981, Nadine Gordimer's *July's People* is a good quality example for a post-apartheid interregnum contrasted with another example that reflects upon the "mood of white liberal failure," (Smith 141) especially for a one that witnessed a variety of "morbid symptoms" (Folks 115). In this novel, Gordimer presents two conflicting scenes in which roles are switched: the black servant, July, became a master and the master became a servant, or to be more accurate, a follower, the Smales (Tyler n.p). After chaos had spread around in South Africa, the white liberals did not feel safe or secure, so the Smales, a representative of the colonizer white society, agreed to move to Johannesburg, July's town, in search of refuge and safety. There, the Smales' life had turned upside-down. 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" (Erritouni 69-70). In other words, they were not convinced that the past was over and that there was no use crying over split milk. In *July's People*, Maureen, 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 Smith adds,

> 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.

In reading the ending of Gordimer's novel *July's People*, one is bombarded with several ambivalent yet perplexing thoughts. This, in fact, is a very common characteristic of her South African novels which celebrate a "dead end" and an "impasse" (Smith 140). *July's People* does not show whether or not it condemns the Smales; what role is assigned to them as individuals and as a collective; and who, from Gordimer's perspective, South Africa's predicted savior is.

In fact, the final scene includes a number of underlying facts that are intended to reflect upon the future of South Africa. In that scene, Maureen looks 'defeated,' though she was more "enabled" at the beginning (Pordzik 183), after she fails to communicate with July by trying to convince him that 'he and she' are 'equal' and that she has never been superior to him. Later on, she runs and chases a helicopter. In fact, most critics are impressed by the final scene, so most of their criticisms mainly focus on it. Although they rely on this scene to depict the future/rebirth of South Africa in the aftermath of apartheid, they have ignored some critical facts such as the role of the blacks and the role of the Smales' children.

Critics view the last scene of Gordimer's *July's People* as a tendency to embracing "the principle of hope" (Erritouni 69), celebrating an "open-ended" utopian horizon (qtd. in Erritouni 69), predicting an act of preparing for the future, especially in terms of culture sphere (Clingman 196), and hinting at an "authentic future" for South Africa (Folks 116). These arguments, we believe, make sense but they lack rationale and precise prediction of the futurity of South Africa, especially by failing to clearly explore the role pertained to Maureen, a representative of the white liberal South Africans and, ostensibly, a strong candidate to perform a leading role in future. These arguments also evaded interpreting Gordimer's unsaid discourse, highly degraded the future upcoming role for the black world/audience i.e. the Smales' children. In short, critics have considered one aspect of the ending by taking up the "uneasy sense of futurity conveyed in the text" (Pordzik 183). Hypothetically, critics' main job lies in deciphering Gordimer's symbolic and metaphorical signs which will eventually help readers get the precise role Maureen played.

Undoubtedly, Ali Erritouni's reading of *July's People*'s ending is perplexing yet helpful as it offers a better vision about the Smales' children by showing their love to Africa. Erritouni argues that the novel celebrates both a utopian and dystopian visions: it celebrates a dystopian vision by virtue of white liberals' inability to redistribute their wealth and possessions with the Blacks, and their insistence on valuing the norms and traditions which they inherit by virtue of apartheid's racial policies. Once white liberals figure out this 'economic imbalance' which they cause by adoring possession policies, then it becomes of a utopian vision. I think that Erritouni is wrong when she assumes that a utopian vision is bound to occur only as a result of economic balance. Depending on the economic force only will neither secure the nation of South Africa nor cease the political horror and the lack of stability there. Erritouni builds her thoughts on one guess: she blames the Smales for their failure in co-existing and communicating with the Blacks by mistakenly thinking that a "post full-fledged post-apartheid South Africa" (68) is not bound to occur without the "redistribut[ing] of South Africa's material sources" (68). Erritouni claims that the text depicts a utopian life for the Blacks, who will "emerge victorious from their struggle for… economic justice," and a dystopian future for the white liberals, who will find themselves in "a subordinate position, ruled by blacks" (69). A utopian vision will occur only if Maureen and Bam share their properties with July and his people, according to Erritouni. Here, one keeps thinking of the role the Blacks will play in securing their economic balance. The Blacks may not sacrifice their political future for the sake of the economic one because political stability is more secure that economic balance.

Ralph Pordzik criticizes the ways in which some critics, like Erritouni, read the ending. He states

> how far fictional texts [such as *July's People*] contribute to an understanding of society that accounts for the interpenetration of cultural codes and attitudes, and acknowledges their important function and the process of creating new perceptual possibilities, of exploring and charting the multifarious relations between different systems of cognition. (178)

Based on Pordzik's argument, one can generate the notion that Pordzik fully disagrees with Erritouni who claims that understanding the future of South Africa depends only on re-distributing wealth with the Blacks. He believes that not considering the "cultural codes and attitudes" (178) and the "social and cultural formations within South African society" (190) makes understanding the future of South Africa impracticable. Pordzik does not clearly name these cultural/social codes we infer that the codes and attitudes he hints at are related to moral and social roles assigned to people, like those assigned to the characters in the novel. He, for example, talks about the mutual roles between the employer, the colonizer, and the servant, the colonized which Gordimer strongly underscores, and concludes that one might feel "inclined to speak of a total reversal" (183). These codes may also refer to the notion how to bring the white's culture and the black's culture together by accepting the other's language, tradition, and norms.

Once these codes considered, this means, according to Pordzik, that 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.

Like Erritouni, Dominic Head blames the Smales' couple by describing the text as a "brief and powerful condemnation of consumer capitalism and the identities it creates and sustains" (123). Head perceives of the Smales' couple as being "good for nothing". He assumes that Bam and Maureen fail to construct their own identities during apartheid because of their heavy reliance on the possession of objects, the Bakkie, "[t]he vehicle was the fever" (*July's People* 3). Not being able to construct any true identity in the future of South Africa is considered bad omen, thus reflecting upon the Smales' unreadiness to co-exist in a future which is, expectedly, more unsecure and unpredictable than their present. This is why Head reads the text as a "pessimistic prognosis" given that it "traces the dissolution of a materially dispossessed family, and which, in the process, systematically exposes the absence of any sustaining values …of their lives." (123) Drawing upon the same theme, Temple-Thurston attributes Maureen's inability to construct a true identity to knowing the truth, the truth about July when he meets her out. Right after recognizing the truth, Maureen is "left in vacuum, [and] her identity shattered" (102). However, like other critics, Head based her criticism of Maureen's identity on matters of possession; she looks at only one aspect of her failure: constructing her own identity in accordance with possession. However, she fails to see other important thoughts such as why she switches roles with her husband, why she fails to communicate with July and the Blacks, and why she alienates herself from her family.

Looking at the final scene from a different angle, Stephen Clingman argues that the text can be seen as a depiction of "future reality" based on how "change in South Africa will come about" (201). Strangely, Clingman has got a different perspective from other critics. He argues that the text is "less interested in the future *per se* than in its unfolding in the present" (201). In other words, he counterargues other critics' theorization about a utopian/dystopian vision. He, unconvincingly, argues that the ending predicts a projection of futurity, but, due to some deceptive techniques employed by Gordimer, what it may be doing is the other way round. That is, it "see[s] the present through the eyes of the future" (201). Here, we refer to Pordzik's criticism for some critics who depend on the "uneasy sense of futurity in South Africa" (182). It seems that Clingman has recoursed to the "uneasy sense of futurity" by claiming that future mirrors the present in its clashes, upheavals, and riots. The final scene, when Maureen chases the helicopter, is clear-cut evidence which proves that Maureen fails the present and waits for 'hope' to come by the future, the helicopter. Counterarguing Clingman, we believe that the final scene in which Maureen runs towards the helicopter is a concrete look at the future, not at the present. Clingman's reading gives Maureen extra credit. He depicts her as a seer or a prophet for the future, which doesn't match with her past and her present. She is unable to construct neither a past nor a present, but Clingman's reading makes the reader feel that Maureen explores the future and that she comes back into the present to take over everything.

Clearly, none of the critics' arguments tackle the role of the other, July, especially, as Tyler puts it, as being the prophetic savior (n.p). As a matter of fact, the villagers' role in terms of future significance parallels to that of Maureen and her children because one can not predict the future of South Africa without knowing the role of the Blacks there, but it is completely marginalized by critics. Possibly, the reader may sometimes foresee that when Gordimer mentions "they shriek" (158) she means that they are about to take over South Africa, so she does not assign to them any future role to play as their role is yet to come. Gordimer is excused for not bringing the voice of the blacks into the scene. However, it is a great venture to ignore the criticism of the blacks' silence, as the Blacks definitely must have a say in re/shaping the future they will rule.

What is more, contrary to what a number of critics have argued, we argue that this text condemns the Smales' couple who failed in almost all aspects of their life, especially in terms of constructing their own identity, co-existing with the 'other,' and communicating with one another. It is legitimate to infer that Maureen has failed the present and she waits for some glimpses of 'hope' to come in the future, which is unpredictable: her being uncertain about whether it is utopian or dystopian. This failure is a result of several weaknesses and shortcomings that occur in the Smales' life. Head provides an example that demonstrates the Smales' failure in constructing a true (realistic) identity, or one good image about themselves. When Bam hunted a pig-let, the narrator mentions, "Bam…shot it through the head. Its young bones were so light that the snout smashed. It was horrible, the bloodied pig-face weeping blood and trailing blood-snot" (*July's People* 77). It is clear that the gun functions as a tool for killing and the act of killing is not for sport or fun; it is for "survival" (127).

Though Head reaches this conclusion, he does not correlate the theme of survival to the true identity of the Smales. He believes that the experience of killing unveils the Smales' inner characters and reflects upon their patterns of thinking, therefore foreshadowing the "violence which underpins the bourgeois power" (*July's People* 128). Gordimer foreshadows this same image to show the dilemma faced by the Smales' who look very 'disabled' to take any 'positive' role in the future. This example, furthermore, holds a more painful truth; the Smales enters into a new phase in life where they can not live peacefully without material objects such as the gun, identifying a new turning point in their lives and stressing the fact that by depending on objects like the gun for survival means that the Smales are unable to play a utopian role in any post-apartheid future.

The Smales escape the roles they have inhabited for so long. This may explain why their identities crumble and why they soon become "bitter strangers to one another" (Temple-Thurston 95). Maureen reverses roles with Bam in the hope of gaining extra power but she seems unable to manage any of the roles assigned to her as mother, as a wife, and as white liberal. In general, she fails to live up to the expectation of her husband; both of them start to lose the sense of one another, looking at one another as a 'him' and a 'her,' "[her family] were chattering and said nothing to her when she appeared, as if they thought she had been there all the time" (*July's People* 154). This emphasizes how her family starts to view her as an image, not as a reality, as if she did not exist. Most importantly yet sympathetically, she also fails to deal in a motherly manner with her children, especially when Bam starts to take care of everything inside the house such as feeding the children and doing the household. These acts in effect make her unable to maintain her liberal identity by venturing her fate i.e., desperately running into an unknown future.

Despite all that were said, it seems that some critics sympathize and/or idealize the Smales. Nicholas Visser does not blame the Smales; he argues 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. (qtd. in Erritouni 71 emphasis added)

Other critics have shown more interest about Maureen by pinning their hopes on her in order to be the savior, especially when she appears in the final scene. Critics read her appearance in the final scene as "librating" (Erritouni 73): a kind of liberation for her identity; some others like Temple-Thurston agree with Erritouni's perspective by perceiving Maureen as 'rebelling' against July and rejecting to be one of his people (102), whereas others, like Nancy Topping Bazin, views her as "self-destructing" in that she runs for a fatal future where she will be doomed (qtd. in Erritouni 73).

Among others, we wonder why Gordimer does not raise her voice to comment on the whole matter. However, an easy reading might be that Gordimer purposefully does not include her 'voice' in the novel. She does not want to look bias in favor of the white liberals; instead, she hints at some points by which the reader understands her intended message by virtue of interpreting the 'unsaid' in her discourse. She, we believe, is excused for not talking openly about the blacks because she, from an objective point of view, wishes not to tell the reader how the villagers may feel and/or react about the scene of the helicopter: she writes from the perspective of a white liberal full of 'national consciousness' to South Africa.

By and large, as a kind of self-defense and so as not to be accused of being bias to her race, Gordimer hints at several signs/codes that focus on the positive role the Smales children will play in the aftermath of apartheid. Seemingly, she wants critics and scholars to base their arguments on deciphering these signs and codes to predict a post-apartheid South African future. Expectedly, the major debate here is related to whether or not Maureen will be the suitable person to act as a messenger, a reformer, or a leader to South Africa. Instead, this privilege is given to her sons and mainly to Gina. 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 didn't miss his Superman and Asterix; she sat outside the hut and could not understand I *Promessi Sposi* (*July's People* 138).

This quote is significant. In it, Gordimer hints at three major points. First, the children start to have immunity against everything in July's country. Second, they could survive under harsh conditions, completely the opposite of their parents. Third, Maureen has become an 'outsider' or an 'outcast', simply because of being unable to get adapted to South Africa's new life standards. At this point, she feels defeated because, seemingly, she lost safety measures from the inside, "she was not in any possession of any part of her life (139), and from the outside, "Maureen Smales- *the name, the authority* that signed his pass every month –came back to the *gumba- gumba* gathering to look for July (*July's People* 145, emphasis added).

It is noteworthy to perceive that Maureen has not become the suitable representative for any post-apartheid future in South Africa because she simply fails to prove herself being physically and socially powerful for "she [is] not in any possession of any part of her life" and also "she had regained no establishment point of a continuing present from which to recognize her own consequence" (*July's People* 139). Even at the level of communicating with her family and children, she, as well as her children, has come to the conclusion that she has been turned into immobilized and helpless human. The narrator mentions

> They [the children] looked to their mother but her expression was closed to them. Even her body – so familiar in the Jeans as worn as the covering of a shabby stuffed toy, the T-Shirt stretched over the flat small breasts that were soft to lie against (*July's People* 145).

Throughout the novel, Maureen deals with July in a capitalist and racist mentality. Gordimer has given Maureen much more space, time and role but she looks 'tired' and 'overburdened' due to her racist ideologies which she absorbs by virtue of her 'whiteness'. It is worth to examine a number of the reasons that made her fail the present and her the past, alike. She tries, yet in vain, to idealize her racist way in dealing with July by deliberately acting out several liberal ideas, "her [Maureen's] little triumph in getting him [July] to come turned over inside her with a throb and showed the meanness within her…" (*July's People* 68). This may be an understandable example from Maureen's past in which she tries to debase and humiliate July by sending him an 'oral message' ordering him to come to her. This same scenario was repeated when she was fully cognizant of her "whiteness" and of her white legs while being at work, but she pretended to be ignorant about it all. To put it in different lexicons, her 'capitalist and/or racist mentality' drove her astray as she felt that being white justifies all her colonial manners.

Maureen's capitalist and/or racist mentality not only sustained her to look down at July and his people, but also prevented her from sharing and redistributing the bakkie and the gun with the blacks. The Smales refused to re-distribute their property with the Blacks because, as Rosemarie Bodenheimer puts it, they enjoyed having a "psyche shaped to the specifications of Western consumer capitalism" (109). To prove their racist ideologies, they reacted rudely with July by taking their bakkie, as if, as Erritouni reads it, it were an attempt to theft. Bam mentions, "I would never have thought he [July] would do something like that taking the car. He's always been correct" (58).

Besides her capitalist mentality, Maureen was acting as a colonial manner throughout the novel. She blindly ignores the fact that all the bourgeois titles, or what we term the 'bourgeois dignity', she and her family gain are by virtue owed a great deal to the policies of [racism] the South African nation-state under white rule (Pordzik 68-9). According to Edward Said, behaviors such as "hardening attitudes, the tightening of the grip of the demeaning generalization and triumphalist cliché, the dominance of crude power" will inevitably increase aspects of hatred and detest between the colonizer and the other (xviii). Maureen, unthinkably, has never 'questioned' the fact why she had never asked herself about her friend Lydia who always used to carry her case to school. The narrator mentions

> Why had Lydia carried her case? Did the photographer know what he saw, when they crossed the road like that, together? Did the book, placing the pair in its context, give the reason she and Lydia, in their affection and ignorance, didn't know? (July's People 33)

To be less optimistic about the role Maureen performed, we dare say that she does not behave maturely enough; she does not deal with July, the former servant and the current master, in a very diplomatic way although there were many signs that pointed to the 'cruciality' of the stage . A constructive example to prove our claim is by reading the scene where Maureen goes out to look for July, even when she envisages him as a savior. She wants July to forget about everything that is past, and to turn to a new life. In other words, she wants him to forget that she was the colonizer and he was the colonized.

Notably, she is the one who wants to meet July as she used to do in the past. Frantz Fanon, in his *The Wretched of the Earth* explains that once the colonizer (here Maureen) no longer becomes able to confront with the colonized subjects, she or he comes to terms of sitting around the table of negotiations in an attempt to slow down the violence of the colonized. In other words, once he or she no longer trusts his eternal power, he or she will submit to the will of the colonized and forget, although temporarily, about his racist power (46). By the end, Maureen reaches a deadlock when she could not convince him that her capitalist mentality is no more there, and that her mentality has been replaced with her liberal views. Here, the reader, as if, laughs at the stupidity of Maureen who tries to, mistakenly if not ignorantly, thinks that colonization may end as soon as July does not call her "the Master" (*July's People* 111). Ironically, despite all that she does with July in her past, she tells him "[y]ou know quite well what I mean…For what's happened. It's different here. *You are not a servant*" (71 Emphasis added).

Another convincing reason which points to Maureen's failure to proceed forward is her inability to accept the 'other,' not even thinking that one day he may come to power and that she may undergo the same conditions. July is forced to ask for permission for even trivial things, "she matched the remembered *total dependency* with his one.--[He] used to ask for everything. *An aspirin. Can I use the telephone*? Nothing in that house was his" (*July's People* 155 emphasis added). Surprisingly, she confesses that in her past, she intends to put July under her control, "total dependency," (155) but despite the harm she does to him in the past, she never excuses him in the present. She believes that "moral relativism" applies only to her, especially when she loots a pharmacy (Erritouni 72). She, mistakenly, thinks that she is justified to loot a pharmacy because she is in urgent need, but July, on the other hand, is not justified because he is not a 'Maureen'.

The reader must appreciate why Gordimer, inferably, no longer trusts any role that Maureen partakes in any post-apartheid future. Always looking outside the sphere of the "hierarchical structure" (Erritouni 73) and always staggering with "fear climb[ing] her hand-over-hand to throttle," (July's *People* 159) Maureen has been replaced by her children in the hopes they take their role more seriously than their mother did. Gordimer speculates that the Smaleses' children may take the leading role in the new epoch.

That all said about Maureen's unpreparedness for future and Gordimer's lack of trust in Maureen, one has to think of the rationale behind Gordimer's way of referring to Bam and Maureen as the 'Smales couple' and referring to their children as the 'Smaleses children'. A possible answer is that Gordimer has assigned to them different roles. However, it is not strange that Gordimer hasn't assigned a role to the children in the ending. She predicts that these children may not take their role in the future easily; they will rebel against their past, their traditions and everything imposed on them by their parents until they are able to lead a revolutionary 'change' in the future. Gordimer doesn't spell out a specific timing for when these children shall start "change"? Our next explanation is that Gordimer applies what we, among others, term 'role switching', 'role reversal', or "reversal of power relationship" (Head 125), in which she explains the reversal of powers between Maureen and bam, Maureen and July and, more importantly, the Smales couple and their children.

Although Gordimer excludes the children from the final scene, the reader, all over the novel, notice how Gordimer gives special attention to them. She intentionally equips them with some powers that predict their futuristic role as good members of any new epoch/civilization. Unlike their parents, the Smales' children socialize with the blacks; they learn their language,

> [h]ere was something for which Victor, Gina and Royce knew in the village people's language but not their own, and sing their songs to the extent that "the children couldn't believe [*the gumba-gumba*] was something unknown to them (140).

By way of illustration, Gina looks different from her mother, and she looks much more prepared and more enabled to co-exist and take a leading role in the future of South Africa. When Bam sang a comic song in Afrikaans for Royce, Gina "wavered through a lullaby she had learnt from her companions, in their language." (*July's People* 79) In fact, this quote gives emphasis to two major ideas: Gina's companions and Gina's memorizing of the Black's language. Mastering the language of the 'other' enables her to better socialize, communicate and understand them. Gordimer has never shown that Maureen is able to have any black companion in the past except for Lydia, who acts more like a servant, rather than an intimate friend. This is strong evidence that Maureen does not possess the means to communicating like her Gina who excels in creating and maintaining smart ways to intermingle and socialize with the Blacks putting her "capitalist mentality" aside and starts to think and act depending on the choices available for her.

Additionally, Gina enjoys a stronger identity than that of her mother's. She grows up completely opposing the traditions and values Maureen wants to instill in her. Erritouni explains how Gina has befriended Africa and the Africans. She explains that Gina has "adopt[ed] the communal traditions of Africans in which the older children help raise the younger children." (78) The narrator maintains

> She walked in with the old woman's sciatic gait of black children who carry brothers and sisters almost as big as they are. She had a baby on her small back and wore an expression of importance. She sat down with her legs folded sideways under her. (*July's People* 41)

This quote is important as it indicates how Gina has absorbed the African identity, culture, people, and traditions, thus indicating that Gordimer highly recommends Gina, in particular, to replace Maureen because especially that Gina looks more open minded and colonial free than Maureen. Like Gina, Victor, Maureen's son, looks more interested in sharing his own properties with the other villagers, unlike his smother who argued forcefully with July to get back the bakkie. Contrary to his mother's will, Victor "nagged [so much] for his racing-car-track" (*July's People*13) because he wants to "show it to the black children who watched the hut from afar" (13). By looking at this scene from a different angel it shows that the Black boys are themselves interested in sharing Victor's electric racing-car track; a thing which means that Victor is socially accepted by them, unlike Maureen, when July even refuses to stop calling her "master".

In conclusion, it can be inferred that the Smales' children are the future of South Africa but the final scene points to the annihilation of class, "the ruling class" (Tyler N.p). Based on their acts along the novel, they are the best example of coexistence and positive communication with the South Africans. In other words, the final scene, as well as the novel, holds one message: new beginning. Here, 'new beginning' means a new life, a new future; a future that has no past, no Maureen and no Bam. This 'new life' starts as soon as Maureen's role ends, exactly from the moment she starts thinking of the helicopter.

Contrary to what critics have argued, especially in terms of a utopian future of Maureen in South Africa, our reading for Maureen's final scene is by some means pessimistic. She looks defeated and less enabled than she was at the beginning. Even when she switches roles of power with her husband, she was unable to occupy a utopian position in the post-apartheid South Africa, so she gives up and "runs" (*July's People* 160). In other words, it is not Maureen who is qualified for taking leading role in the new South Africa but it is her children, who have absorbed the African ideologies, traditions, values, language and emerge both consciously and unconsciously delving in the African society to be accepted by them that could do the job. These children succeeded in 'passing' into the African black society because they have already constructed an identity that values sharing and redistributing wealth, skills, and emotions.

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