Gordimer, Race, and the Impossibility of Communication Action in Apartheid South Africa

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Abstract:

Drawing from Bakhtin and Habermas, I will show how the different voices in Gordimer's novel seem to be enacting a democratic public sphere in which no voice is granted authority over others – a public sphere which carries the promise of countering the social and political hierarchies established by the racist South African regime. The promise, however, turns out to be an illusion. As I will demonstrate, the possibility of an Enlightenment bourgeois public sphere which the novel seems to be gesturing at is being irreparably undermined by racism. In a country where the Enlightenment aspiration to universalism and equality before the law are glaringly contravened by racism, Rosa Burger is painfully aware of her inability to fully access the predicament of the blacks. As such, Burger's daughter remains only Burger's daughter, and the children of Soweto the children of Soweto; at no point in the novel do they truly intermingle. Despite the fact that both are fighting racism – and the novel is devoted to the "coming-of-age" of both kinds of children – Rosa Burger remains only the daughter of a *Bürger* at the end of the novel, not the daughter of South Africa, much less to say the daughter of Black South Africa. She has finally "come into her own," but the "self" she manages to realize is at best that of a disillusioned bourgeois individual (that of a disillusioned *Bürger*, so to speak) – a "self" that recalls Hegel's "beautiful soul." To appropriate György Lukács's language, *Bürger's Daughter* could be described as "modern bourgeois literature bear[ing] witness against bourgeois society."

Keywords: Gordimer, Adorno, Bakhtin, Habermas, Lukács, Enlightenment, citizenship, human rights, citizen rights.

> 'All that is and has been written by South Africans is profoundly influenced, at the deepest and least controllable level of consciousness, by the politics of race. There is no country in the Western world where the creative imagination, whatever it seizes upon, finds the focus of even the most private events set in the overall social determination of racial laws.'
>
> *English-Language Literature and Politics in South Africa*,
> Nadine Gordimer

Burger, the last name of the heroine of Gordimer's novel, carries a double meaning: citizen and bourgeois. The entwinement of "citizen" with "bourgeois" recalls the revolutionary politics of the

middle class during the Enlightenment as well as its eventual failure.[1] Instead of examining the novel and the middle class in socio-economic terms,[2] my essay will discuss the novel against the backdrop of the visionary politics of the middle class during the Enlightenment, focusing specifically on their politics of human rights and citizen rights. This initial vision and its subsequent deformation constitute the core of the criticism launched by Lionel Burger against the bourgeois Afrikaners who have made citizenship and human rights the sole property of the white man. My task, however, begins where Lionel Burger's ends. By analyzing Rosa Burger's experience, I will identify certain blindspots in the universalism championed by the bourgeois revolution which renders its promise of "equality before the law" an empty and even false universalism. My critique of the bourgeois revolution gains further momentum in the second half of the paper, where the narrative design of *Burger's Daughter* is discussed in terms of a failed bourgeois public sphere. Drawing from Bakhtin and Habermas, I will show how Gordimer's novel seems to be enacting a democratic public sphere in which no voice is granted authority over others – a public sphere that carries the promise of countering the social and political hierarchies established by the racist South African regime. The promise, however, turns out to be an illusion. Just as Lionel Burger's revolution ends up as a failed bourgeois revolution, the public sphere which promises to be opened up by the novel also turns out to be a failed bourgeois public sphere. The Enlightenment bourgeois public sphere, in other words, can be irreparably undermined by racism. In a country where the Enlightenment aspiration to universalism and equality before the law are glaringly contravened by racism, Rosa Burger is painfully aware of her inability to fully access the predicament of the blacks. As such, Burger's daughter remains only Burger's daughter, and the children of Soweto the children of Soweto; at no point in the novel do they truly intermingle. Despite the fact that both are fighting racism – and the novel is devoted to the "coming-of-age" of both kinds of children – Rosa Burger remains only the daughter of a *Bürger* at the end of the novel, not the daughter of South Africa, much less to say the daughter of Black South Africa. She has finally "come into her own," but the "self" she manages to realize is at best that of a disillusioned bourgeois individual (that of a disillusioned *Bürger*, so to speak) – a "self" that recalls Hegel's "beautiful soul." To appropriate György Lukács's language, *Bürger's Daughter* could be described as "modern bourgeois literature bear[ing] witness against bourgeois society" (Lukács 1970, 145).

Rosa Burger is not just the daughter of Lionel Burger the Marxist revolutionary in South Africa. Like her father, she is also a descendent of the revolutionary *Bürger* who wrote the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. This heritage passes on to the Burgers the legacy of human and citizen rights. That the Enlightenment legacy of rights is taken very seriously by Lionel Burger[3] can be illustrated by his defense speech at the treason trial, when he repeatedly invokes the language of rights:

> . . . what we as Communists black and white working in harmony with others who do not share our political philosophy have set our sights on is the national liberation of the African people, and thus the abolishment of discrimination and extension of political *rights* to all the peoples of this country. . . For

> nearly thirty years the Communist Party allied itself as a legal organization with the African struggle for black *rights* and the extension of the franchise to the black majority. . . . the great mass movement of the African National Congress, and other movements, were outlawed . . . What legitimate *rights* had been recognized, according to the "standards of Western civilization" our white governments have declared themselves dedicated to preserve and perpetuate . . . why is it no black man has ever had the *right* of answering, before a black prosecutor, a black judge, to laws in whose drafting and promulgation his own people, the blacks, have had a say? (Gordimer 1979, 26-27; my italics).[4]

In the spirit and the language of the Enlightenment discourse on rights, Lionel Burger appeals for justice for the black people. The Enlightenment principles of equality and universal rights of man and of the citizen on the one hand, and the dignity of individuals, on the other, had been egregiously violated by the white South African government prior to the time period when the story takes place.[5] Invoking Marx's emphasis on equality, itself an Enlightenment legacy of universalism, Lionel Burger charges the white capitalist South African government for making human and citizen rights into their private property by appropriating the rights of the blacks. Following Marx's "overcoming" of the bourgeois liberal tradition, Lionel's protest against the South African government focuses on resisting racial separation made possible by the law of private property and champions instead of universal humanity and universal reason. It is on the grounds of universalism that Lionel seeks to transcend racial barriers and side with the black Africans against the white government. The power of Lionel Burger's treason trial speech[6] stems precisely from his insistence on humanity and human rights as universal, and his conviction that the individual is intrinsically embedded in this universality and as such carries an inescapable responsibility toward universal humanity. It is on the grounds of the principle that any human being, qua human being, participates in humanity that he indicts the white government for "deny[ing] the humanity of the black people they live among" (Gordimer 1979, 25). It is also because of his belief that he himself as a human being, qua human being, has a responsibility toward humanity that he finds it impossible to continue tolerating the government's "subjection and humiliation of *human beings*" on a daily basis – "a subjection and humiliation of live *people* in which, by my silence and political activity *I myself took part*" (Gordimer 1979, 24; my italics). To stand by white injustice against the blacks would "mak[e] it impossible for me to see myself as *a man among men, with all that implies of consciousness and responsibility*" (Gordimer 1979, 25; my italics). Also in line with Enlightenment universalism and democracy is Lionel's association of legitimacy with universal reason. He challenges the legitimacy of the South African government for its inability to grant "*reasonable* recognition" to the "*reasonable* aspirations" of the African people (Gordimer 1979, 26; my italics).

In opposition to the government's measures to "keep blacks out of white lives" (Gordimer 1995, 126), Lionel opens his private house to the public and adopts the son of a revolutionary African into his family. To counter white separatism, Lionel espouses Marxism, bringing blacks and whites in a common struggle against injustice:

> I saw that white Marxists worked side by side with blacks in an *equality* that meant taking on the meanest of tasks – tasks that incurred loss of income and social prestige and the risk of arrest and imprisonment – as well as sharing policy-making and leadership. I saw whites prepared to work under blacks. (Gordimer 1979, 25; my italics)

Lionel's efforts to overcome racial separatism earn him his deserved trust and loyal friendship from the blacks of his generation, but not from their children, as the racism being practiced in South Africa grows more and more brutal. In no time, his family gets broken up, and his open house closed down. Zwelinzima Vulindlela – a revolutionary African's child whom Lionel adopted into his family – eventually turns against both him and his daughter.

The failure of Lionel Burger's project can be traced to the blindspots he inherits from the bourgeois revolution. Limited to the vision of a *Bürger*, Lionel seems to be oblivious to the problematic equation set up by the bourgeois revolution between human rights and citizen rights, as well as the failure of that revolution to offer protection against racial, class, and gender discriminations. As Lionel himself points out, "the white people in general in our country [. . .] deny the humanity of the black people they live among" (Gordimer 1979, 25). How can he expect citizen rights to be extended to those whose humanity has been denied in the first place? Furthermore, not unlike many white leftists in his days, Lionel Burger does not understand that racial discrimination cannot be casually glossed over as class discrimination. The incommensurability between the two is rigorously argued by the black activist Duma Dhladhla: "Whites, whatever you are, it doesn't matter. It's no difference. You can tell them – Afrikaners, Liberals, Communists. We don't accept anything from anybody. We take. D'you understand? [. . .] And the black people don't need anyone else. *We don't know about class interests. We're one kind*" (Gordimer 1979, 157; my italics). The visionary politics Lionel inherits from the Enlightenment is better suited to address class rather than racial inequality. Lacking sensitivity to race, Lionel Burger idealizes Marxism as the grand solution to all human conflicts:

> I saw that white Marxists worked side by side with blacks in an equality that meant taking on the meanest of tasks – tasks that incurred loss of income and social prestige and the risk of arrest and imprisonment – as well as sharing policy-making and leadership. I saw whites prepared to work under blacks. [. . .] we as Communists black and white working in harmony with others [. . .] the national liberation of the African people, and thus the abolishment of discrimination and extension of political *rights* to all the peoples of this country (Gordimer 1979, 25-26).[7]

Failing to understand the special dynamics of racism, Lionel Burger's appeal to rights and universal humanity is bound to be inadequate if not ineffective as a response to a racist regime. Robert Boyers observes that "*Burger's Daughter* is in a sense a response to two crucial events, namely, Sharpeville and Soweto" (Boyers 1984, 82). The extreme atrocities committed against the blacks on both occasions fueled black skepticism toward the white rhetoric of universal brotherhood and

universal franchise that Lionel Burger tries to advocate.[8] Ever since the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, the blacks increasingly stopped collaborating with the whites.[9] Lionel's appeal to universalism sounds especially irrelevant given the fact that his defense speech is made around the time when the Black Consciousness Movement is about to begin.[10] His communist brotherhood is no match for the divisive force of racism, and his rhetoric of universal brotherhood sounds outdated for a society deeply divided by racial conflicts and hatred. As it is, things would only get worse *despite of* Lionel's appeal to granting the blacks their political rights on account of their humanity. The black people who have already been denied of their humanity (Gordimer 1979, 25) are further stripped of their South African citizenship and converted into citizens of one of ten tribally based self-governing homelands in 1970.

Return of the repressed: race in South Africa and the two turning points in the political career of Rosa Burger

Nor is it just the children of Soweto (such as Zwelinzima) who find their situation trivialized by Lionel's color-blind Enlightenment universalism. Lionel's own daughter complains: "I don't know how to live in Lionel's country" because the gross injustice committed by racism under apartheid makes irrelevant his colorblind ideals about universalism and equality (Gordimer 1979, 210). A number of critics have pointed out the importance of the two events in Rosa's life – her witnessing the brutal whipping of a donkey by a black man who himself Rosa surmises must have been subjected to frequent abuses by his white masters, and the accusations launched against Rosa by Lionel's black adopted child after he has changed his name back to Zwelinzima Vulindlela. Both are turning points in Rosa's political career: the first drives her to escape from Lionel's country and abandon herself to the pursuit of private pleasures, the second drives her back to South Africa to take up Lionel's legacy. Both incidents have to do with Rosa's confrontation with injustice perpetrated by the whites against the blacks and her painful consciousness that her biology implicates her in the former even though her heart sides with the latter. The two turning points, in other words, pertain to the *race* issue which, repressed by Lionel, returns to haunt his daughter. Although many critics have pointed out the importance of these two events, regrettably, none seems to have analyzed why the first triggers Rosa's flight to Europe, whereas the second brings her back to Lionel's country. This is a question I would like to take up here.

The event which thoroughly demoralizes Rosa into concluding "I don't know how to live in Lionel's country" (Gordimer 1979, 210) refers to her witnessing a drunken black man beating a donkey pulling a cart in which a black woman and a child are seated. Contrary to Lionel's naïve universalism, Rosa has no faith in universal justice because justice itself is perverted by racism in South Africa. Rosa cannot "deliver them [the family] over to the police" (Gordimer 1979, 209) because to do so would mean bearing on the blacks with her "white authority" (Gordimer 1979, 209) – on a family whose "final meaning of a day they had lived I had no knowledge of, a day of other appalling things, violence, disasters, urgencies, deprivations . . ." (Gordimer 1979, 209). Above all, handing them over

to justice would mean handing them over to *white* justice. Justice under apartheid is a white privilege, and it is the white privilege that has caused the man to get drunk and beat up the donkey in the first place. She cannot inflict more of her privileged access to justice by denying him of his humanity like "one of those whites who can care more for animals than people." Contrary to Lionel's naïve understanding of "universal justice," to uphold justice (for animals) under apartheid could mean further denying the blacks their humanity:

> I drove on because the horrible drunk was black, poor, and brutalized. If somebody's going to be brought to account, *I am accountable for him*, to him, as he is for the donkey. . . . I didn't do anything. I let him beat the donkey. The man was a black. So a kind of *vanity* counted for more than feeling; I couldn't bear to see myself - *her* - Rosa Burger - as one of those whites who can care more for animals than people. (Gordimer 1979, 210; my italics)

Significant here also is Rosa's confession that her flight from the scene (and subsequently from South Africa) is driven by "vanity" rather than "feeling" – that is, by her *image* of "Rosa Burger" as she surmises herself in the third rather than the first person. Rosa has special pride in her political difference from other Afrikaners. As such, she imagines that, once she cuts her "*external*" ties from the Afrikaners by leaving South Africa, all that will be left will be her "free and pure *internal* self." Rosa's flight to Europe, in other words, is a gesture of bad faith motivated by concerns for appearance and, above all, an attempt to escape from both the external situation and her own conscience.

Her relinquishment of all moral responsibilities in favor of the exploration of sensuality in Europe is not so much an act of being true to herself as an attempt to run away from her true self and identity. Her return to South Africa is hence a necessity. My argument, however, is that the accusations from Zwelinzima is what truly shocks Rosa into confronting her real identity as a "Burger" in all senses of the word: her identity as Lionel Burger's daughter, her inherited guilt as a white bourgeois (*Bürger*), and her duty as a citizen (*Bürger*) of South Africa.

Zwelinzima and Rosa's phone conversation begins with Zwelinzima confronting her with his identity. He rejects the childhood name given him by the Burgers, stating emphatically that "I'm not 'Baasie,' I'm Zwelinzima Vulindlela. [. . .] Zwel-in-zima. That's my name. 'Suffering land.' The name my father gave me." (Gordimer 1979, 318). When asked whether she knows the meaning of his name, Rosa is at a loss. The question makes her realize that, up till that point, she hasn't even taken seriously the meaning of her own name – that is, her own identity:

> — You know what my name means, Rosa? –
> — Vulindlela? Your father's name... oh, I don't know whether my surname means anything either – "citizen," solid citizen (Gordimer 1979, 318).

Rosa's adopted black "brother", Zwelinzima Vulindlela, rejects her because she was born

Burger – born as a (white) *citizen*, and as a bourgeois. By contrast, he was born Zwelinzima – born as "suffering land," *subjected* to the casual abuses of the racist government.

As the exchange unfolds, it becomes clear that Rosa has never cared enough to find out the real identity and the experience of Zwelinzima and his family as blacks in South Africa. Like her father, Rosa has simply been taking bourgeois comfort in play-acting with Zwelinzima as if they were simply one big, happy, color-free family. Hence Zwelinzima's complaint: "I'm not your Bassie, just don't go on thinking about [. . .] that *black* '*brother*,' that's all" (Gordimer 1979, 321; my italics). Far from being one family, Zwelinzima bluntly points out that "I don't know who you are. You hear me, Rosa? You didn't even know my name" (Gordimer 1979, 322). Not only that; Zwelinzima deems it a big lie to call themselves one family due to the glaring discrepancy in the ways his father and Rosa's father are being treated by their society. Theoretically belonging to the same Communist "family" fighting apartheid, Lionel Burger gets all the honor for his martyrdom, in contrast to Zwelinzima's father Issac Vulindlela who died a disgraceful death. Issac Vulindlela was in all likelihood murdered when he grew old and could no longer work, and he was framed as having committed suicide by "hang[ing] himself with his own prison pants" (Gordimer 1979, 318). The discrepancies in the significance assigned to the death of the white and the black fathers are described impetuously by Zwelinzima:

> Everyone in the world must be told what a great hero [Lionel] was and how much he suffered for the blacks. Everyone must cry over him and show his life on television and write in the papers. [...] there are dozens of our fathers sick and dying like dogs, [...]. Getting old and dying in prison. Killed in prison. [...] It's nothing, it's us, we must be used to it, it's not going to show on English television. [...] One of Lionel Burger's best tame blacks [Zwelinzima's father] sent scuttling like a bloody cockroach everywhere, you can always just put your foot on them. (Gordimer 1979, 320).

It is humiliating enough that the apartheid government refuses Zwelinzima's father justice by blatantly misrepresenting his murder as a self-debasing suicide: "hang[ing] himself with his own prison pants." Zwelinzima feels further trivialized by the fact that Rosa does not even bother to find out the truth. Again, Rosa's lack of sensitivity is revealed when Zwelinzima cross-examines her on the subject: "How did they kill him [Zwelinzima's father]? – You see, you don't know, you don't know, you don't talk about that" (Gordimer 1979, 318). Rosa's father and Zwelinzima's father both died in prison for fighting apartheid. The former is hailed by all as a martyr, while the latter is as insignificant as dirt. Diana Cooper-Clark phrases it well in her remarks that *Burger's Daughter* "illustrates the way in which black activists have been ignored while white South-African activists attract world attention" (Gordimer 1979, 221). The incommensurability between the white citizen and the black subject is such that, even when alive, Issac Vulindlela had no say in deciding what kind of school his son was to attend. Rosa even told him that "My mother didn't want your father to take you at all" (Gordimer 1979, 321). It is thus not surprising that Zwelinzima comes to view both the apartheid regime and the Burgers as imperialistic, and that Rosa Burger is guilty simply by being white:

"Whatever you whites touch, it's a take-over. He was my father. Even when we get free they'll want us to remember to thank Lionel Burger" (Gordimer 1979, 321). Zwelinzima also has no scruples telling Rosa to her face: "why do you think you should be different from all the other whites who've been shitting on us ever since they came?" (Gordimer 1979, 322). Zwelinzima further emphasizes that her guilt cannot be absolved by performing occasional good deeds for the blacks, such as her attempt to deliver a fake pass to Zwelinzima's father to allow his return from Botswana:

> He [Zwelinzima's father] was able to go back home and get caught because you took the pass there. You want me to know in case I blame you for nothing. You think because you're telling me it makes it all right – for you. It wasn't your fault – you want me to tell you, then it's all right. For you. Because I'm the only one who can say so. But he's dead, and what about all the others – who cares whose "fault" – they die because it's the whites [her community] killing them, black blood is the stuff to get rid of white shit. – (Gordimer 1979, 322).

Rosa's attempt to help Issac Vulindlela escape only contributed to his captivity because of the racist White South Africa. The individual cannot seek exculpation by physically absenting himself/herself from a wrongful community of which s/he is a member. S/He must face reality and right the wrong of the community itself. This is the real reason that drives Rosa to return to South Africa: while Rosa tries to *exculpate herself by leaving South Africa*, Zwelinzima *inculpates her even as she is far away in Europe*. Seeking refuge in private pleasures in Europe under the tutelage of Katya – Lionel's first wife – is an escape from herself rather than the way to self-realization. Just like her father, Rosa eventually finds it necessary to break away from Katya.

Even before escaping to Europe, Rosa already attempted to seek refuge from being "Burger's daughter" by striking up a relationship with Conrad who, like Katya, is dedicated to the pursuit of private pleasures. Rosa finds no real satisfaction in that relationship either. This is not surprising. Repeatedly, Gordimer underscores in her writings the impossibility of developing wholesome personal relationships in a society poisoned by racism. In her third novel, *Occasion for Living* (1963), for example, Gordimer demonstrates that even love relationships – supposedly the most "private" and intimate of human relationships – are inevitably contaminated by apartheid:

> A line in a statute book has more authority than the claims of one man's love or another's. All claims of natural feeling are overridden alike by a line in a statute book that takes no account of humanness, that recognizes neither love nor respect nor jealousy nor rivalry nor compassion nor hate – nor any human attitude whatsoever where there are black and white together. (Gordimer 1963, 216)

Stephen Clingman comments that *Occasion for Loving*, like many of Gordimer's novels, "explores the degree to which the power of apartheid has on the contrary become internalised, preventing any such authenticity virtually, before it starts, even in the most intimate of ties" (Clingman 1984, 165). Clingman's comments resonate Gordimer's own words in the novel:

> What stronger and more proudly personal bond was there than love? Yet even between lovers they had seen blackness count, *the personal return inevitably to the social, the private to the political*. There was no recess of being, no emotion so private that white privilege did not single you out there. (Gordimer 1963, 279; my italics)

Above all, it is Eugene Goodheart's conclusive insight that might best help us understand why the pursuit of private pleasures yields no way out for Rosa, and why she feels compelled to return to South Africa to take up her political role in the end: "If 'white privilege' is an aggressive intruder into the integrity of personal relations, then any effort to live out one's personal life free of politics is self-diminishing. The apolitical view, *even the illusion of me, is possible only if one is free to constitute one's own personal realm*" (Goodheart 1984, 108). Rosa's infant intimacy with Zwelinzima, for example, could not escape being ruined by a racist society. The reconnection of the personal to the political toward the end of the novel thus seems unavoidable because personal fulfillment is impossible within an unjust society. Eventually, it is only in embracing her political duties with personal conviction that Rosa finds true fulfillment.

Burger's daughter only, not the daughter of (black) South Africa

The novel, however, ends in ambiguity, with no indication that Rosa's commitment to justice would bring about a better South Africa. Significantly, *Rosa realizes herself as Burger's daughter, not the daughter of South Africa, much less the daughter of Black South Africa*.

Rosa matures as a fully committed South African citizen fighting apartheid toward the end of the novel. But commitment in no way guarantees practical success. In fact, commitment means precisely holding fast to a course regardless of the outcome and even despite of the outcome. The committed individual feels that s/he has certain duties in the universe, and it is by carrying out those duties to the utmost of one's abilities that one can claim one's identity and find one's role in the universe. However, while an individual can try his/her best, whether the world responds to this commitment is a separate issue.

Rosa concedes in her reflection on Zwelinzima's accusations: "who was I to think we could be different from any other whites" (Gordimer 1979, 332). As much as she is committed to battling apartheid, there remains an unbridgeable gap between her and the blacks. Zwelinzima brutally punctures the cozy lies with which the Burgers have for years been comforting themselves with – the cozy lies that the Burgers and the blacks (including Zwelinzima) are one big, color-free, happy "family" – when he forces Rosa to confront the fact that she doesn't even know his name and real identity. The Burger's revolution that Lionel attempts to launch on behalf of the blacks in the name of universal human rights is bound to fail, not least because he does not understand the particularity of race issues, in the way that the bourgeois revolution in the eighteenth century was also a failed revolution due to its blindness to class and race issues. And, despite Rosa's growing alertness to the radical singularity of race, she is nonetheless powerless to bridge the big divide in South Africa because, as a white, she is forever divided from the experience of blacks under a racist regime. For

example, even though the Burgers and Issac Vulindlela went to jail for the same cause, they were treated completely differently by both the whites and the blacks. Just like her father, Rosa ends up in prison. Just like her father also, Rosa's experience obviously differs from that of Issac Vulindlela. Rosa is not murdered or subjected to torture. She is even granted special privileges:

> People detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act are not allowed visitors, even next of kin. But when later Rosa Burger became an awaiting-trial prisoner she was entitled to the privileges of that status, and in the absence of any blood relative, Flora Donaldon sought and was given permission to see her. (Gordimer 1979, 360)

While others are denied visits even from immediate family members, Rosa has the special privilege of conversing with a mere friend. As to the conditions of her confinement, we could venture a guess from Rosa's letter to Madame Bagnelli: "In a passage dealing with the comforts of a cell as if describing the features of a tourist hotel that wasn't quite what the brochure might have suggested – *I have rigged out of fruit boxes a sort of Japanese-style portable desk [. . .] and that's what I am writing at now [. . .]*" (Gordimer 1979, 361). Lionel can talk about universal human rights, and Rosa can claim Zwelinzima as her brother, only because they are Burgers and are speaking from the protected, privileged position of South African citizens. In contrast to "*Bűrger*," the Vulindlelas are mere subjects (or citizens of their "homelands") rather than citizens of the nation. While Lionel the citizen has the power to challenge the law at his treason trial, the black subjects are interrogated by the law without any power to interrogate it in turn. The difference in the whites and the blacks' social and political experience renders it very difficult if not totally impossible for a white to fully understand the predicament of the blacks. In "Living in the Interregnum," Gordimer explicitly agrees with Desmond Tutu's rejection of the whites' identification with the blacks, because the former have not been victims of "this baneful oppression and exploitation" (Boyers et al., 1990, 213, 212, 214).

In her interview with Stephen Gray and Phil du Plessis, Gordimer states candidly that "White writers are cut off from the proletariat. There's no getting away from it" (Gray and Du Plessis 1990, 63). This sounds like a direct criticism of Lionel, who, his self-proclaimed "kinship with the blacks" notwithstanding, has no idea how far removed he is from the true sentiment of the blacks. Lionel's naivete is subjected to much more vehement criticism in *Burger's Daughter* by the black activist Dhladhla: "He does not live black, what does he know what a black man needs?" (Gordimer 1979, 159). A white man like Lionel may go to jail defending the blacks' rights, but "he goes for his ideas about me. I go for my ideas about myself" (Gordimer 1979, 159). For Dhladhla, Marxism misses the core issue in the conflicts in South Africa and is totally off the mark in substituting class for race:

> We are going to get rid of the capitalist and racist system but not as a "working class." That's a white nonsense, here. The white workers belong to the exploiting class and take part in the suppression of the blacks. The blackman is not fighting for equality with whites. Blackness is the blackman refusing to believe the whiteman's way of life is best for blacks. (Gordimer 1979, 163)

As if in direct counterpoint to Lionel, Dhladhla declares, "It's not a class struggle for blacks, it's a race struggle" (Gordimer 1979, 163). Robert Boyers summarizes very well Dhladhla's position: "To speak of common goals is nonsense in a country where *the white rule not as a 'ruling class' but as a 'colour.' In fact, to fight for equality with Whites is to accept the Marxist reading of class conflict and to ignore the primary fact of South African society which is colour*" (Boyers 1984, 83; my italics). Boyers bases his observations on the way how Sharpeville divided the black from the white activists. For the former, Sharpeville was a watershed after which the blacks no longer believed that non-violence could be the venue for their cause. In contrast, Lionel's perception and approach to the problems in South Africa remain unchanged:

> For though Lionel Burger and his friends were surely moved to furious protests on behalf of those massacred at *Sharpeville*, their response is consistent with the general feeling of indignation and radical enthusiasm they have maintained all along, As people with a vision of a better future and the patience to wait out the reversals to which any radical enterprise is subject, they can go on with their usual radical politics even after Sharpeville. (Boyers 1984, 83)

It is thus not surprising that young blacks like Dhladhla and Zwelinzima lose faith in the older generation and strike out on their own paths. In her interview with Servan-Schreiber, Gordimer explains why "a new generation of nationalistic and revolutionary blacks" turn to violence as their only hope:

> [. . .] the young, disillusioned by the failures and the resignation of their parents, denounced the illusion that any progress could be made in cooperation with whites. "We must act alone. As long as we are in contact with the whites, we will be allowing ourselves to be defeated by them. Let us find our own way." [. . .] Ashamed of the collaboration that their parents practiced with the whites, the young blacks reject everything about our way of life, thus indicating that they do not intend to allow themselves to be degraded, even by the whites who claim to desire their well-being. (Servan-Schreiber 1990, 111)

As for Rosa, despite her awareness of the special significance of race, in the end, she only succeeds in *bridging the gap between generations, and not between races*. There are reasons why Rosa can only assume the legacy of the Burgers but not that of the black South Africans. In addition to the fact that a healthy degree of understanding between blacks and whites is impossible in a racist society, a certain incommensurability seems to exist between the legacy of a *Burger* – that is, a bourgeois – and of the blacks in South Africa. Conor Cruise O'Brien points out that Rosa is a "Daughter of the South African Revolution" only in the "American sense of daughterhood." Important to note is that America was in many ways founded by the bourgeoisie and for the bourgeoisie:

> The style of *Burger's Daughter* is elegant, fastidious: a high style belonging to a cultivated upper class.

> [. . .] The style is appropriate, none the less, and not just because Lionel and Rosa belong to the white, educated middle class [. . .]. It is appropriate because the revolutionary's daughter is an aristocrat of the revolution, feels herself to be such, and is used to being seen as such. Nadine Gordimer knows revolutionaries and knows them to feel themselves as being, not struggling underdogs, but patricians of a present underworld, and of a future society. Rosa is the daughter of a revolution only just beginning, yet her style has already something in common with a Daughter of the South African Revolution, in the American sense of such a daughterhood: "She didn't understand the shame of the need to please, as royalty never carries money." (O'Brien 2003, 48)

While Rosa engages in frequent self-questioning and is much more self-critical than what O'Brien is ready to admit, Gordimer does discuss in an interview with Bernard Sachs how her upbringing impacts her life – an impact which no doubt can also be felt through her character Rosa Burger:

> A white South African, brought up on the soft side of the colour-bar, I have gone through the whole packaged-deal evolution that situation has to offer – *unquestioning acceptance of the superiority of my white skin*, as a small child; *acceptance of the paternal attitude that "they" are only human*, after all, as an older child; questioning of these attitudes as I grew up and read and experienced outside the reading and experience that informed my inheritance; and finally, re-birth as a human being among other human beings, with all this means in the face of the discrimination that sorts them into colours and races. *Whether I like it or not, this has been the crucial experience of my life*, as the war was for some people, or membership of the Communist Party for others. (Sachs 1990, 8; my italics)

Gordimer's awareness of her limitations as a white in South Africa prompts her to redefine commitment in existentialist terms rather than her fellow Marxists' traditional idea of "right[ing] wrongs on behalf blacks." In a lecture addressed to white university students entitled "Speak Out: The Necessity for Protest," Gordimer urges them to combat racism with an eye to "set[ting] our society free of the lies upon which it is built," but that the fight for authenticity will be "on behalf of yourselves, and that part of yourselves which exists tangled inextricably in human interdependence with the lives of those you live among":

> Our fundamental social problem remains daubed crudely black-and-white. But what is needed to approach it honestly now is a change of emphasis. We shall need to see our efforts not so much as attempts to right wrongs on behalf of blacks, as to set our society free of the lies upon which it is built. The role of the proctor, honourable though it may have seemed, and great courage though it undoubtedly showed in certain individuals at certain times, is one of those lies. If you students are to go speaking out, it will be on behalf of yourselves, and that part of yourselves which exists tangled inextricably in human interdependence with the lives of those you live among, whether or not on the surface of the skin it's their turn to reject you. (Gordimer 1988, 102; my italics)

Rosa Burger at her most mature displays Gordmer's full-fledged awareness of limitations – socio-political as well as existential: the limitations of her society, the limitations of the Burger legacy she inherits, and, above all, her self-limitations. Robert Boyers describes beautifully the evolution of Rosa into a full-fledged Burger's Daughter:

> In its movement towards reconciliation and affirmation it is a novel of growth, with that growth conceived as the achievement of a combined personal and political maturity. In the universe created by *Burger's Daughter,* to come to terms with oneself is to confront without illusion the circumstance one has inherited and in which one must live. (Boyers 1984, 67)

From the failed bourgeois revolution to the failed bourgeois public sphere

As the allusion to Lukács in the title of my essay suggests, *Burger's Daughter* in many ways exemplifies modern bourgeois literature bearing witness against modern bourgeois society. I have already demonstrated how Lionel Burger's revolution is a failed bourgeois revolution due to his blindness to the specificity of race in South Africa. I will now turn to demonstrate the manners in which the potentialities for *Burger's Daughter* to enact a bourgeois public sphere is also stifled by apartheid.

That Gordimer chooses the novel as her genre is significant. The rise of the novel goes hand-in-hand with the rise of the bourgeois-*citizen*. In contradistinction to Ian Watt who focuses on the relationship between the novel and the bourgeois-*economic*-being, I have chosen to focus on the relationship between the novel and the bourgeois-*political*-being – that is, the connections between the "bourgeois genre" and the rising tide of popular-democratic speech, in particular the bourgeois public sphere which invites citizens to engage in democratic debates and exercise their rights to citizenship. Also worth noting is that the novel has been singled out by Bahktin as the genre exemplary of "dialogism" – a feature associated by many critics with democracy.

The text of *Burger's Daughter* consists largely of speeches by different characters, such as "the (Leninist) Marxism which Rosa has inherited from her father, the Freudian existentialism of Conrad, the hedonism of Katya, the liberalism of Bernard Chebalier, the progressive conservatism of Brandt Vermuelen, the radical black nationalism of Duma Dhladhla, and so on" (Martin 1986, 4). The narrative viewpoint of the novel also switches constantly between the first person and the third person, privileging neither the former nor the latter. For these reasons, critics such as Louise Yelin and Nita Schechet hail the novel as demonstrative of Bakhtin's idea of dialogism where all voices are included without hierarchy. Yelin even describes Gordimer's assemblage of a wide range of fragmented voices as "enabl[ing] the circumventing of the prohibitions of apartheid":

> The figure of a set of reflections without an authoritative "original" [in *Burger's Daughter*] . . . suggests a strategy for imagining the nation itself. This figure undermines the hierarchy of signifying practices whereby certain representations are privileged, others are devalued, and still others are repressed or occluded altogether. And, reflecting all South Africans alike, it enables the circumventing of the

prohibitions of apartheid. (Yelin 1998, 114-15)

Contrary to Yelin, I am skeptical about prematurely associating *Burger's Daughter* with "dialogism," much less to assert the novel's ability to "[circumvent] . . . the prohibitions of apartheid." In reality, there exists in the novel hardly any "dialogue" in the sense of real human exchange or "full speech" as Lacan describes it. Instead of finding fruitful dialogues between human beings, we encounter all kinds of fragmented monologues in *Burger's Daughter*, with a variety of characters talking to some absent interlocutors without knowing whether their messages would ever reach the other party, nor do they seem to care. As regards "conversations," whenever they do take place, they can be more accurately described as two ongoing monologues, since such conversations often feature people talking at cross purposes, as in the case of the angry phone conversation between Rosa and Zwelinzima; or they are merely empty palaver, as for instance the exchanges between Conrad and Rosa, with Conrad having "no conversation among other people," and Rosa "los[ing] mental grip of what she was occupied with, keeping still and quiet as if to attract something that might approach her" (Gordimer 1979, 47). The novel is full of fragmented speeches, leading nowhere, reaching no one, and making nothing happen. In Lacanian terms, the novel is populated with empty speeches.

That the characters in *Burger's Daugther* are incapable of genuine dialogues is not surprising, nor is it merely a result of direct censorship. Through state terror and other kinds of intimidation tactics, the apartheid regime divides even people of the same color, trapping each of them in fear. Bakhtin's dialogism or heteroglossia has been lauded for advocating democratic inclusion of all voices without privileging any one of them – a practice that can easily be associated with the Enlightenment public sphere as Habermas describes it, where all voices are equal and equally represented.[11] My argument is, however, insofar as Gordimer's novel cannot really be characterized as "dialogic," its resemblance to Habermas's ideal public sphere is also superficial. As much as Bakhtin's "dialogism" requires genuine human exchange, the bourgeois public sphere as Habermas formulates it requires genuine *communication, debate, and consensus*. Unlike the fragmented monologues in *Burger's Daughter* where no one is really listening to anyone else, the ideal bourgeois public sphere is founded on authentic self-expression, genuine human exchange, participation, and engaged discussion. It is not surprising that Habermas's Enlightenment public sphere presupposes freedom of speech and assembly, a free press, and the right to freely participate in political debate and decision-making, without which there is no real self-expression and human communication. Freedom of speech and assembly are precisely prohibited by the apartheid regime. All attempts at free discussion and real self-expression are stifled in Rosa's days. The two most authentic speakers in *Burger's Daughter* are Lionel and the mature Rosa. Lionel's own defense speech is dotted with ellipses and never gets represented in completion (Gordimer 1979, 24-27). His important line quoted by Rosa at the very end of the book is deleted by the prison censor and "Madame Bagnelli was never able to make it out" (Gordimer 1979, 361), nor can the readers, nor can the third-person

narrator, nor can the author. Dismally enough, Lionel and Rosa's messages cannot even reach a fellow white, not to mention the blacks.

As the missing quote from Lionel in Rosa's letter at the very end of the novel tellingly demonstrates, Gordimer gives us an unfinished story full of fragments of different characters' consciousnesses over which the author imposes no final say. Again, Yelin and others have capitalized on this device as demonstrative and even performative of democracy.[12] Indeed, the surrender of knowledge by the author places her on the same level as her characters – that is, she knows about them no more at any given moment than they themselves do. When this device is assessed in its proper historical context, as I have attempted to do earlier in this essay, however, the more convincing reason for this surrender of the omniscient narrator becomes apparent. The anxious, fractured, and discontinuous world of *Burger's Daughter* is more a reflection of what Gramsci calls a "crisis of authority" – a phenomenon that happens to be highly characteristic of the fragmented spiritual wastelands haunting high modernism also – than that of an ideal public sphere featuring heteroglossia in the sense of fruitful discussions arising from equal, democratic political participation. To a certain extent, Julián Jiménez Heffernan's analysis of Gordimer's *Get a Life* can be appropriated for illuminating *Burger's Daughter*. The earlier novel, no less than the later one, "dramatiz[es] a plural consciousness ailed by dislocation, inertness, and unspeakableness. The novel thus unfolds as a tragedy of point of view, a vocal drama of moral representativeness climaxed in a 'crisis of authority' (Gramsci)" (Heffernan 2010, 87). The fragments and interruptions in *Burger's Daughter*, far from indicating a healthy public sphere, are "morbid symptoms" (Gramsci) of a "diseased condition" (Heffernan 2010, 89) incapacitating both "utopian commitment" and "moral agency" (Heffernan 2010, 87).

The diseased condition, of course, is apartheid, which prevents people from reaching out to each other, less to say speaking and acting on behalf of each other. Gordimer's dispensation with the omniscient narration is hence related to her commitment to "set our society free of the lies" (Gordimer 1988, 102) and her refusal to affect formal unity and the possibility of authorial omniscience in a society plagued by dissonance, violence, secrecy, and a lack of information and communication. As discussed before, apartheid makes it impossible for an individual to act on behalf of those s/he cannot claim to understand; likewise, apartheid also makes it impossible for a writer to speak on behalf of others whose feelings s/he cannot access. While writing *Burger's Daughter*, Gordimer published "Literature and Politics in South Africa," in which she laments that the ability of literature to generate a national community is being severely undermined by racist politics:

> The dilemma of the writer in a multi-racial society, where the law effectively prevents any real identification of the writer with his society as a whole, so that *ultimately he can identify only with his colour, distorts this mean irreparably*. And *cultural identity is the ground on which the exploration of the self in the imaginative writer makes a national literature*. (Gordimer 1974, 226; my italics)

Yelin herself points out that Gordimer is suggesting that "*apartheid deforms, even forecloses, the imagination of a [real] community*" (Yelin 1998, 112). This observation of Yelin undermines her

hasty glossing of Gordimer's late modernist style in terms of Bakhtin's heteroglossia. In *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin explains how Dostoyevsky creates the polyphonic or dialogic novel: "It is quite possible to imagine and postulate a unified truth that requires a plurality of consciousnesses, one that cannot in principle be fitted into the bounds of a single consciousness, one that is, so to speak, by its very nature *full of event potential* and is born at a point of contact among various consciousnesses" (Bakhtin 1984, 81). Note that Bakhtin's dialogue requires a "*unified* truth" and "*contact* among various consciousnesses" – elements conspicuously absent in *Burger's Daughter*.

The "tragedy of point of view" enacted in *Burger's Daughter* is a testimony to the failure of the bourgeois public sphere rather than its efficacy. It is not surprising that, of the Frankfurt School thinkers, it is Adorno rather than Habermas from the Frankfurt School whom Gordimer has invoked in her works. In Adorno's language, Gordimer's novel is committed to "mak[ing] an uncompromising reprint" of the society (Adorno 1997, 28) by "embodying the contradictions [of society], pure and uncompromised, in its innermost structure" (Adorno 1983, 32). What Adorno says of Schönberg could be equally an apt description of Gordimer's artistic creation: in a society beset by contradictions and injustice, "if [an art work] is not to degenerate into deception and ideology, it must assume the form of negation. The *chef d'oeuvre* remained unfinished and Schönberg's admission of failure, his recognition that it was 'a fragment, like everything else,' says perhaps more for him than any success" (Adorno 1983, 164). The multiple interrupted voices that lead nowhere in *Burger's Daughter*, in other words, are much more in the spirit of the many impotent voices of high modernism in T.S. Eliot's *Wasteland* than those celebrated by Bakhtin's dialogism.

Coming of age: *Burger's Daughter* versus *the Children of Soweto*

To conclude our discussion about *Burger's Daughter* being modern bourgeois literature bearing witness against modern bourgeois society, let us now turn to the reception of the novel in South Africa. In this regard also, the finding is far from upbeat. Despite the many international awards won by Gordimer, the reception of her novel was beset by all kinds of complications and problems in her home country – the very country her novel was meant to address first and foremost, and where her message was most urgently needed.

B*urger's Daughter* was published in England and banned in South Africa three weeks after its publication for being "obscene, blasphemous, pernicious in the area of race relations, offensive to certain parts of the population, and detrimental to the security of the state" (Servan-Schreiber 1990, 114).[13] It was unbanned several months later only under international pressure (Hurwitt 1998, 263). Even if there were no censorship, it would still have been unlikely for *Burger's Daughter* to bring together a community, less to mention a public sphere, in South Africa. The novel met hostility from both the right and the left, the whites and the blacks. Susan Gardner points out that "Some reactions were crude personal attacks on Gordimer [. . .]. *Burger's Daughter* was [. . .] deplored as a distortion of SA Communist Party history, which also profits from the sufferings of some of the prototypes (members of the Fischer, Roux, Bunting, and Simons families)"

(Gardner 2003a, 168).[14] And even if we discount the bitter criticism from those with a particular political agenda, the sophisticated style (or, in Marxist terms, the "bourgeois style") of the novel did not reach out too readily to the black public which had long been deprived of proper educational opportunities. This poses a very serious challenge to the very meaning (and the "being" in existentialist terms) of the novel itself. As Gordimer herself emphasizes: "A literary culture cannot be created by writers without readers. There are no readers without adequate education" (Gordimer 1999, 16-17).

Far from being able to call into being a community through her work, Gordimer described herself during the apartheid era as a "minority within a minority," "a dissident white; a white writer" (Gordimer 1983, 272). By choosing to be a dissident white writer, she had chosen exile from the white community (see Lazarus 1990, 148-49). Isolated from the whites, Gordimer was likewise isolated from the blacks. By the time of the publication of *Burger's Daughter* (1979), the Black Consciousness movement had been brutally suppressed. With the Soweto Uprising in 1976 and the murder of Steve Biko the national leader of the Black Consciousness Movement in 1977, black resentment against whites – including even the sympathetic whites – was strong. Stephen Clingman opines that "It is the acute marginalisation all this involved which *Burger's Daughter* most powerfully reveals in its very deepest attempts to come to terms with it" (Clingman 1984, 165).

It is perhaps no coincidence that Gordimer published this novel in 1979, the Year of the Child. Gordimer ascribes the whole imminent revolution at the end of the book to children – to the children of Soweto on the one hand, and Burger's daughter on the other. In a way, one can say that the book traces the "coming of age" of two kinds of children – with the Burger's Daughter on the one hand, and the Children of Black South Africa on the other, fighting for the same cause, yet divided from each other, by their skin color and a range of attendant implications including their educational levels which in turn bear on their opportunities for making their voices heard. The contrast in the educational levels turns out to be no less stark than that of the skin colors: two kinds of children coming of age, with white bourgeois eloquence on the one hand and a group still struggling with their spelling and grammar on the other. As Gordimer remarks about the document distributed by the Soweto children:

> In that book [*Burger's Daughter*] I published a document that was a real document, distributed by the students in the 1976 riots in Soweto, and banned by the government. It's in the book with all the misspellings and grammatical mistakes ... everything exactly as it was; and indeed that's important because, as Rosa points out, these kids rioted because they felt their education wasn't good enough. (Hurwitt 1998, 263)

The contrast well reminds us of Rosa who can escape to France versus Zwelinzima stuck in the suffering land. . . .

The contrast also reminds us of Gordimer's observation that apartheid would doom her to be an outsider: "Until every law that set me aside from black people was abolished, until we were all to be born and pursue our lives everywhere in the same right, governed by the free choice of all the

people, my place would not know me. No matter how I and others like me conducted ourselves, we were held in the categories of the past" (Gordimer 1995, 133). Even more striking is her statement about her being deprived of a community she could call "my people" despite her being a South African citizen: "still I was aware that although I could say 'my country' – blacks did not dispute the claim of birthright – I could not say 'my people'" (Gordimer 1995, 133). Rosa Burger–a Citizen of South Africa, and a Burger's Daughter, but she could not call herself the Daughter of South Africa – much less the Daughter of Black South Africa.

Endnotes:

1. *Die Burger* is also the name of the leading Afrikaans newspaper in Cape Town. The name "Burger" thus recalls the Enlightenment public sphere.
2. See, for example, Ian Watt's *Rise of the Novel*, Bram Dijkstra's *Defoe and Economics*, John Richetti's *Popular Fiction before Richardson*, and John Bender's *Imagining the Penitentiary*.
3. To the extent that Lionel Burger takes the South African government to task for ignoring the "legitimate *rights*" of the African National Congress and the rights of the blacks and the dissidents, he is speaking the language of a *Bürger* rather than a Marxist. In other words, his Marxism (and Rosa's) does not rule out the legacy of the revolutionary middle class in the Enlightenment period. Hence the word "Burger" in both their surnames and the title of the book. Note that despite Marx's rejection of right for its association with bourgeois liberalism, the basic impetus of his theory can be understood as an attempt to fight for the rights of the oppressed. Hence communist countries in the twentieth century can also deploy the language of rights in their promotion of social rights.
4. The commitment to arguing for justice on the grounds of rights is also very pronounced in the thinking of Bram Fischer, the Afrikaner anti-apartheid activist and lawyer on whom Lionel Burger is apparently modeled. See, for example, Fischer's "Message from Underground":

   > In 1965 South Africa presents a surface of ebullient confidence: [. . .] the confidence of a Government which, during sixteen years, has with increasing violence attempted to crush every effort by the majority of the people to win *human rights* until today it appears supremely stable. [. . .] Can any economy long be stable where its prosperity is reserved for a politically dominant white minority? Can any policy produce racial harmony where it imposes economic and social degradation and a denial of *human rights* on the vast majority of people? [. . .] Our police State, now arming itself to the teeth, has used this law with barbarous intensity to try to break the forces striving for basic *human rights*. [. . .] most important, is the extension of *human rights* to all *citizens*. [. . .] If the combination of predictable and unpredictable forces leads to large-scale violence or war, the consequences would be so disastrous in loss of life, in suffering, in economic disruption, in a legacy of bitter hatred and in the threat to world peace, that I believe that white South Africans must at some stage be brought to realise that their own long-term interests lie not in maintaining race supremacy but in extending *human rights* to all." (Fischer 1965, my italics)
5. The novel was first published in 1979.
6. Gordimer bases her character Lionel Burger on Bram Fischer, an Afrikaner lawyer who fought the white government on behalf of the blacks under apartheid. See Gordimer, "The Fischer Case," 21-30 and "Why Did Bram Fischer Choose Jail?", 30 ff.
7. Note again the similarities between Lionel Burger and Bram Fischer in Gordimer's description of the latter in her interview with Marilyn Powell:

   > He [Fischer] became a lawyer and was interested in politics, and clearly had he joined the Afrikaner establishment, had he joined the National Party and followed the apartheid line, he probably could have one day been Prime Minister. But as a young man he became tremendously

> troubled by what he saw around him, by the inequalities in life in South Africa, became very troubled about the position of blacks and the way he saw South African history evolving, repressing them more and more, became very interested in his reading in leftist ideas and eventually joined the Communist Party. Why did he? [. . .] At that time, there was indeed no political party he could have joined which did not have a racial bias and that was the only one that was open to mixed membership. (Bazin and Seymour 1990, 231)

Communism was the only political party which was not racist in South Africa. In other words, the Communist party was the most universalist. But being universalist is not sufficient an answer to racism. The specificities of racial discrimination must be confronted if the problem is to be properly addressed.

8. Lionel Burger's appeal to reason, morality, and the universal franchise is altogether very reminiscent of the Congress Alliance's position in the 1950s. Stephen Clingman points out that the Coalition (of which the ANC was a member) during this period espoused a rather liberal outlook, and was determined as a "moral class" itself to reform the existing system by appealing to reason, education, and bourgeois notions of morality (Clingman 1984, 58).
9. The Sharpeville Massacre marked the beginning of the end of black collaboration with white liberals. The apartheid regime's brutal attacks on the blacks and intimidation of their white sympathizers since Sharpeville increasingly separated the two groups and gave rise to the Black Consciousness Movement in the mid-1960s.
10. Bram Fischer stood trial in 1964, and then again in November, 1965 when he was accused of conspiracy to commit sabotage as well as being a member of the Communist Party. According to Stephen Clingman, Lionel's speech is actually taken from the one Fischer actually delivered in his trial (Clingman 1998, 186 ff.). The speech, in other words, was given shortly before the Black Consciousness Movement emerged in South Africa in the mid-1960s.
11. The novel struggles for voice, its contribution towards democracy, and Hirschkop links this, several times, with the work of Habermas on the public sphere.
12. In addition to Louise Yelin and Nita Schechet, Mari-Ann Berg and M. W. Smith also hold a similar position.
13. Three of Gordimer's novels were banned: *A World of Strangers*, *The Late Bourgeois World*, and *Burger's Daughter*. For Gordimer's comments on South African censorship, see her *What Happened to Burger's Daughter, or How South African Censorship Works*.
14. See also Ross 42 for attacks on Gordimer from both the right and the left.

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