



Nadine Gordimer's *The Pickup*: A Study of the Fictionalization of the Stereotypical Image of a Woman

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Abstract

This study examines the feminist perspective that Nadine Gordimer took in depicting the character of Julie Summers in her novel *The Pickup*. In the following research, a textual analysis of the aforementioned novel is presented in an effort to bring attention to the conflict that exists between society and the feminine individual. Gordimer places Julie in a position in *The Pickup* where she is forced to make a choice between doing what she wants and living up to the expectations of society for women. Because she is a female protagonist living in a patriarchal culture, Julie is required to plot out the path of her life in order to be successful in overcoming a number of challenges. In a nutshell, Gordimer's feminist approach will be evaluated in terms of her capacity to interweave the social and cultural circumstances prevailing in the two distinct communities in which the protagonist resides with the protagonist's capacity to overcome all obstacles in order to alter the stereotypical image of women in both communities. This evaluation will take place in terms of Gordimer's ability to interweave the social and cultural circumstances prevailing in the two distinct communities in which the protagonist resides. Julie's resistance to being governed by the traditional codes that govern her South African community is another topic that is investigated in this study. Another topic that is investigated is Julie's desire to adapt to the culture and religion of her lover's community, which is located in a distant nation. When the main female character, represented here by Julie, makes the decision to live a life that is nonconformist to the prevalent societal and cultural norms regarding marriage and motherhood, the purpose of this study is also to investigate the various forces that may conspire against the particular female character in question. In addition to this, the purpose of the study is to determine Gordimer's viewpoint on the predicament faced by the contemporary African woman as a direct result of her defiance of the conventional cultural and social norms. In this instance, Julie is a model for subverting the traditional image of a woman who is capable of beginning significant societal change. Julie is a model for subverting the traditional image of a woman.



Introduction

In a society that has historically been dominated by men, a literary and social movement known as feminism was developed to advocate for the advancement of women's rights. It takes an interest, on the whole, in the way women in a particular community are treated. It works to advance the rights of women and insists that they be treated on an equal basis with men. It had a European perspective and was established in western regions of the world first. Nearly every female author has felt driven, at some point in her career, to write about the myriad ways in which women have been subjected to a variety of forms of oppression. A reaction to the patriarchal views that men still keep in place towards women, feminism can be understood in its most general sense as a reaction to these sentiments. In addition, it seeks to do away with the inherent oppression that women face in societies that are predominated by men. When describing the role that women are expected to play in society, terms such as discrimination, cruelty, segregation, subordination, and slavery are frequently employed. During its history, feminism has developed into a number of distinct movements, such as radical feminism, black feminism, implicit feminism, explicit feminism, etc. On a continental scale, black feminism has been dominant. The emphasis is placed on the position of black women in African society as a whole. Feminism holds the view that women should be treated as a separate category from the rest of society. Within the context of African society, women face a range of challenges on a daily basis. The fact that they live in an imperialized society has a negative impact on their political situation. On a social and cultural level, they are subjected to male dominance in their roles as wives, sisters, and daughters. This causes them pain. The protection of women from suffering and injustice is the primary objective of black feminism.

The elimination of all forms of gender discrimination is referred to as feminism. Empowerment of women is another term for this concept. It is a worldwide effort to teach women about the rights they have, how they can be free and how they can be independent. There have been movements and protests to realise the self as independent of any attachments, beliefs, and institutional faith that originate from a subordinate position. These movements and protests have taken place in various parts of the world. The novels written by Samuel Richardson are considered to be the founding texts of feminism. In these works, Clarissa Harlow fights against the phallocentrism of her culture and does everything in her power to shield herself from the oppressive advances of males. It's possible that this was the situation in the past, but do we still find ourselves in this position today? Has there been a perceptible difference in the manner in which men treat women, or has the exploitation of the fair sex



ceased to exist with the surfacing of voices that had been hushed for a considerable amount of time as a result of the pressures that were placed by conservatives? All of this and a great deal more can be attributed to the gradual development of a sensibility that has been built on the idea that a woman should not be confined to the confines of her house.

In today's society, one of the most pressing issues is the difficulty in meeting men who are compatible with single women who are of marriageable age. This may have been symptomatic of the social behaviour of a world that severely constrained the potential for a society that is liberated. Around the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was a fundamental shift in the position of women in a society that was willing to accept alterations from the conventional duties allocated to women, and women's voices began to be heard. This shift in the position of women occurred in a society that was willing to accept alterations from the traditional roles that were traditionally assigned to women. Authors who subscribe to the feminist ideology have contended for decades that the primary distinction between males and females is not to be found in their anatomical make-up but rather in the roles that patriarchal societies (led by men) have traditionally assigned to each gender. Throughout history, the biological characteristics of women have been invoked to justify the oppression of women.

Discussion

Nadine Gordimer, a well-known South African author, was born in 1923 in the little town named Spring, which is located near to Johannesburg, in 1923. Nadine Gordimer has had a fruitful writing career that has spanned several decades. She is the recipient of a number of awards, one of which is the Nobel Prize in Literature from 1991. She has written the majority of her works, the majority of which are protest publications, many of which have been banned by the government. Gordimer's books contain references to both the apartheid and post-apartheid periods that occurred in South Africa. Gordimer places a strong focus, throughout her body of work, on the significance of the individual autonomy of women. She is of the opinion that the longing for independence and the constraints of occupying a certain amount of space are intricately intertwined. The majority of Gordimer's literature is concerned with investigating the potential of female liberation beyond the conventional bounds of place.

The novel "The Pickup" follows the lives of two young people: one young Arab male who relocates to South Africa and one young white South African woman. Given that Abdu and Julie are so dissimilar to one another in many ways, including their pasts, it is remarkable that they were able to find each other and start a relationship despite the strange circumstances under which they first met. This was made possible by the fact that they had a chance encounter. The story progresses, and the couple relocates from one region to another as well



as from one country to another, in order to show how they ultimately end up married and how, as a result of their differing thoughts on the future, they eventually divorce.

The representation of the female self and the other is the primary topic of "The Pickup" which is written by Gordimer. She has a strong interest in bringing attention to the impact that the existing power structure has on the private lives of individuals. The daughter of a wealthy South African businessman, Julie Summers's father's car breaks down in the middle of a Johannesburg street, resulting in a traffic jam being caused by the breakdown. Abdu, an undocumented immigrant from Arab countries who works as a mechanic at the shop, is transporting the vehicle there. Abdu examines Julie's car to determine whether any repairs are necessary. At first glance, the two main characters begin to develop feelings for one another that eventually turn into love. Julie is the one who first starts gushing about how much she admires the Arab man. Finally, she decides to make him her lover, and from that point on, their relationship is mostly characterised by the enjoyment of sexual activity. They eventually get married, becoming a couple as a result of this relationship.

Julie, the only child of parents who are divorced, has a difficult time feeling connected to either of her parents. She is aware that other people have negative opinions of her parents. While the mother is married to an up-and-coming casino owner in the United States, the father is tied down to another woman in a committed relationship. As a result, she has absolutely no interest in engaging in conversation with any of them. Julie has chosen not to live with her father and has rejected the idea of leading a rich life in the suburbs. The suburbs are a community characterised by economic prosperity since wealthy people want to live there. This fact makes the suburbs a desirable place to live. Julie decides to leave the suburbs and settle down in the city, where she lives a simple life that is marked by her freedom and her independence from others. She has severed ties with her family in order to concentrate on establishing her independence on her own. She has come to the conclusion that the fundamental source of her problems is the agitation that she experiences as a direct result of the breakup of her parents' marriage. When she is in any of their company, she never feels at ease.

Julie, who does not currently reside with her family, takes advantage of the independence afforded to her by the presence of her many acquaintances from other countries. Because Julie gets along so well with such a varied group of friends, she feels compelled to devote the majority of her spare time to hanging out with them. She derives a sense of fulfilment from connecting with them. According to the story, she goes to hang out with her close friends at The Table, which is right where she belongs. They are, after all, her elective siblings who have been predetermined by their history and their family, regardless of whether they are white and still living in the suburbs or black and still living in the old ghettos



(Gordimer, 2002; 23) A safe haven for Julie is the group of friends who get together and call themselves "The Table." They give her a sense of belonging that is absent in her family, and she is grateful for that. They strive to understand one another and live together in harmony as a diverse group of friends.

Like with a large number of other young men from Arab nations, Abdu, whose real name is Ibrahim Bin Mousa, has travelled to South Africa in the hopes of enhancing his standard of life in his home country. He is currently living as an expatriate in a faraway country where the native tongue is wholly unrelated to his own. He is employed in a South African workshop that is owned by black people. Because Abdu's permission to remain in South Africa has run out, he is now regarded as an unlawful resident in that country. It is required of him that he live under the watch of his employer. His home is the quaint little house that is connected to the garage where he works as a mechanic. As Tereza Stejskalova points out: "He is one of the unwanted and unaccepted. The more he is denied movement, the greater is his desire to move. His status manifests itself through the notion that the social stature he enters relegates him to the position of unwanted alien and insignificant invader. He is reminded of this position wherever he goes. Being detached, listening rather than speaking that is his response, his manner of communication in that other world" (2008;52-53).

Abdu only wants to learn English well enough to converse with Julie, and that's it. He is thinking about taking classes in the local language because he wants to work in the area. The bond between Julie and Abdu is so strong that she ultimately decides to make him her boyfriend. Despite this, difficulties should be anticipated. Julie's involvement with Abdu drives the native owner of the garage against him when he learns of it. He had previously been defending Abdu from harm. The former immediately begins to feel a great deal of resentment towards the latter as a result of this. It was regrettable to see what she was doing with that man, he says, making the observation. (Gordimer.2001.31) Also, the employer has informed the local authorities of Abdu's status as an illegal immigrant due to his employer's recent change in attitude towards Abdu. Julie makes every attempt to find a solution as soon as she learns about Abdu's illegal overstay and the knowledge that he has been reported to the police. She makes every effort to resolve his situation so that he can remain in South Africa with her. Julie consults the lawyer who defends her uncle for advice. The lawyer who represented her brought the bad news to her that her partner had violated the law by overstaying his visa. One of the lovers has already damaged their reputation in South Africa and is forced to leave when the two fall deeply in love. As stated by the lawyer, "You put yourself in a situation where you are the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation... By continuing to live in this nation and under a different name, you committed a crime." (Gordimer.2001.79)



The researcher would want to elaborate on Julie's character as a young, beautiful lady who asserts herself by resisting the social standards of her town before studying the similarity between Julie and Abdu. Julie is a young woman who opposes the social standards of her town. She is an independent thinker who will never put up with being confined by the standards of her nation. Julie is able to make her case and defend her stance. She is such a forward-thinking individual who approaches life as an exciting journey. She has the goal of leading a life of her own choosing. She is dissatisfied with the amount of freedom and convenience she currently possesses, despite the fact that she is free to make her own decisions. She is looking for a type of freedom that comes with responsibilities and risks. She is sick of having things so easy for her and has the urge to have a life that is significant to her on her own terms. She yearns for a form of freedom that can only be attained via battle with the man she considers to be both her "dream-knight" and her "orient prince." Because Julie is unable to achieve the level of autonomy she seeks in South Africa, she explores her options in other countries. Hence, she favours a sort of freedom that is accompanied with suffering, which is suggestive of existential freedom. This shows that she values freedom in its existential form.

Julie is able to live the kind of life she has always desired because to her partnership with Abdu. She engages in sexual activity with a person from outside her hometown in an effort to justify her position against it and her parents. Kirsty Hemsworth argues for the idea "The liberal values that Julie defends serve as the cornerstone of her positive self-concept. She appears to be able to support and validate her points of view. (Hemsworth.2012.69) Despite the fact that they are incredibly fond of one another, Julie has a totally different perspective on their union. She comes to see that her love for Abdu gives her a reason to justify her own existence. The only thing that directs her acts are her thoughts. She recognises it as a result in the context of her relationship, in Derek Barker's view. "She is the embodiment of everything that her life, feelings, and everything else are not. This is the antithesis of pure alterity because of her intense enmity against what she views as the core of her alterity... She prefers to live a relatively modest life because she does not uphold the ideals that her parents established in her. (Barker.2007.103)

Julie had the dawning realisation that none of her efforts to formally acknowledge Abdu's stay in her southern country have been successful despite her best efforts. After that, she does something that is quite extraordinary for a young woman like herself to do. She has made the decision to accompany her boyfriend when he travels back to the nation of his birth. A choice that neither her father nor Abdu could ever back, nor one that she ultimately made. She is acting on her own volition and has her own motives and justifications for doing so. Regardless of how other people, including her lover, react to it, and her justification is completely unique and stands on its own. Julie does not give any consideration to the



difficulties and setbacks that she may have in the future. In this light, Dimitriu has several observations to make: “She embarks on a journey of self-discovery that proves to have no boundaries other than those imposed upon her by her own inner dedication. Rejecting what she comes to regard as the superficial landscapes of global opportunities, she identifies the map of her own inner life as a new country of exploration”. (Dimitriu.2003.32)

When the father learns that his daughter is steadfast in her refusal to heed his advice, he confronts aspects of Julie's personality that he believes are crucial given the lifestyle she has been leading. He recognises that she is a young woman who appreciates her freedom and independence. She hates being constantly constrained by rules and boundaries. In addition, the parent is aware that she is the only one who can steer and guide her daughter's actions within a culture whose norms and beliefs she finds objectionable. The father is well aware of the amount to which his daughter would suffer as a result of her decision, as well as the fact that she will never feel like she has a place to call her own in the nation to which she wishes to immigrate. He assaults her by leveraging her feminism against her and by exploiting racist preconceptions of women from non-Western cultures, according to Dana Mount's observations. (Mount.2014.113)

Julie heartily endorses the choice to accompany with Abdu and carries it out. Her decision represents a significant turning point in both her life and the manner she lives it. According to Kirsty Hemsworth, she transforms from being the spoiled daughter of liberal success to someone who longs for a new community with its own bounds (Hemsworth.2012.72). Additionally, she views it as a decision that she made on her own and does not give her parents' opinions much weight. She has realised that she needs to change her way of life, and this realisation is a decision she made entirely on her own. She has shown that she is capable of exceeding the expectations that are generally set for women by disregarding her father's advice and agreeing to get married to Abdu.

Julie is aware of the unexpected and the unknown that await her, but she is internally strong enough to handle its effects. Despite the fact that she is aware of what is in store for her, this is nonetheless the case. She has absolutely no desire to revisit her previous decisions and alter any of them. She exhibits a great degree of assurance in her decision and provides no sign that she is hesitant to go forward. Julie "Julie has the ability to select the location of her global citizenship." claims Malika. Yet, despite her father's efforts to persuade her not to move to the East, she shows little interest in a family from the West when it comes to making a home there. Her father is attempting to talk her out of moving to the East, but she refuses (Malika.2017.215)



Julie is a woman of persistence, fortitude, and revolutionary spirit, with a strong sense of self. She went away from her family and refused to spend any of her affluent father's money, which is an example of her capacity to alter how others perceive women throughout the world. She was eager on relocating with her partner as well. As Julie relocates to Abdu's place of origin, she will embark on yet another one of her journeys of self-discovery. Actually, she is on a quest for personal fulfilment and is attempting the inconceivable as part of that purpose. It's obvious that it has an odd and distinctive nature. In a world that is accustomed to looking down on women and is powerless to change their civilizations, this journey shows new female potentials. This voyage takes place in a society that is accustomed to demeaning women. A trip that inspires her to achieve exceptional and unforeseen goals. To challenge the stereotype of women, she opts for a non-traditional path that is fraught with struggle and danger.

Abdu informs his family that the visitor is his wife and introduces her to them after resettling himself in the neighbourhood. After being shocked, Julie instantly starts to look around her. There are many different religions practised by different people, and many different languages spoken. There are no alarm clocks in the town, therefore no one is woken up by them. The muezzin, also referred to as the call to prayer, awakens them from their slumber. In addition, women are expected to cover their hair at all times and are not permitted to eat in the same room as men. At this time, Julie has realised that she needs accept all of the unique traits that the group possesses in order to fit in with this new and weird group. She will need to learn the language of the region in order to converse with the locals. She also needs to become used to the new customs that are common there as well as the locals' religious practises. She needs to familiarise herself with all of the customs followed in the new society, starting with the dietary customs and continuing on to those that concern acceptable and unacceptable social behaviour for women as well as how she should conduct herself while she is a member of the Muslim community. Abdu confirms that his real name is Ibrahim Ibn Mousa and that he has already returned to his country of birth. The process of adjusting to Julie's new identity and her husband's new name begins. She begins the process of acclimating to the new neighbourhood on her own. In order to increase her capacity to speak with Ibrahim's family, she enrolls in an Arabic language course. She wants to continue her study on her own. " I must learn the language", she declares (Gordimer.2001.121)

Julie, a recent addition to the family, is adamant about getting to know each individual family member and never lets up in her pursuit of this goal. She abides with the standards set for women in her culture and accepts the constraints imposed on her life. She makes an attempt to develop close relationships with the female family members in order to better comprehend the many traditions that are followed by them. She takes the initiative to get



close to them, and as a result of their mutually beneficial connection, they begin to view her as one of them. Because of this, Julie's capacity for developing her own identity is reflected in her capacity to assimilate into the norms and practises of the new neighbourhood. She never conveys the idea that she is dissatisfied with the new situation in which she finds herself. She is able to profoundly challenge traditional views about women because of her commitment to her in-laws and the fact that she is actively involved in all facets of family life. Braine Worsfold made the following comment about Julie's relationship to her family: "Julie's Summers finds a deep-rooted affinity with those women from other African cultures with whom she interacts. While she is drawn by the minimalism of the desert of life in the desert village. She is especially enamored of the close, spontaneous, sincere relationship that she establishes with her sisters-in-law: Maryam and Amina" (Worsfold.2010.168).

Ibrahim, who has returned to his native country, is yet tempted to depart in search of a better life elsewhere. Along with Julie, he wishes to immigrate to the United States. She is, however, unconcerned about leaving the region where she has lately planted roots and the community into which she has recently integrated. Her mother currently resides in the United States, which is her husband's final destination. Julie refuses to join Ibrahim in a country that corresponds to her previous lifestyle in Africa, despite the fact that the country is suitable for her. Living in America is his dream; it is the land of opportunity. He purchases two tickets, much to what Julie did in South Africa. They have not yet left together. For Julie, Ibrahim's native country is now a place she voluntarily adores, whilst he no longer feels at home there. Derek

Julie often makes decisions that require her to be fully responsible and committed. She decides to live with his family because he works abroad. She feels good without him. She forms a bond with them that is unique to her. Her spirituality is affected by what J.M. Coetzee calls "her spirituality is affected by what can only be described as the spirit of the place." A few blocks from where the family lives is where the desert starts. Julie makes it a habit to wake up early and sit at the edge of the desert, letting the desert control her. (Coetzee.2007.13) Ibrahim has to leave at some point, leaving Julie to deal with a language, culture, and religion that are very different from her own. The husband leaves his wife in the hopes that she will come back to him someday. Julie's stubbornness means that a wish she has will never come true. Monique JoEvery thinks about where Julie is now and says: "Julie finds belonging within the borders of Ibrahim's family and their proximity to the desert, while Ibrahim leaves Julie and his family behind in search of better opportunities in the Western world. These different strategies for reclaiming a sense of belonging provide



insights into how societal understandings of home have shifted a world defined by migration” (JoEvery.2018.35).

Conclusion

To sum up, it can be said that, "The Pickup" is a novel that offers a typical feminist viewpoint on how women should live their life in a variety of situations. This viewpoint is offered from the perspective of how women ought to live their lives. This is a feminist protest against the patriarchal system. Julie has shown that she has incredible influence over her life by choosing to behave irrationally in the face of irrational circumstances. Julie's actions are a clear illustration of how a woman should plan her life in any situation in a patriarchal society, and they serve as a role model. Julie has worked hard to protect the distinctive femininity that is hers, both in her native country and the land she now calls home. She is an excellent illustration of the kind of resilient, self-reliant woman who, despite the difficulties she has encountered throughout her life, has never allowed herself to feel confused or discouraged about the decisions she has taken at any point in her life. Her ability to find calm inside herself has enabled her to keep up a steadfast and unshakeable demeanour. She can offer proof of her complete responsibility and commitment for each and every action she has performed in the past. Julie has shown how she can independently prove the validity of her femininity. Because Julie challenges the conventional view of a woman by leading men rather than following them, but living in a patriarchal environment, she is, in a sense, an unusual example of a feminist heroine.

نادين جورديمر " رواية البيك أب: دراسة في خيال الصورة النمطية للمرأة"

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الملاخص :

تبحث هذه الدراسة في المنظور النسوي الذي اتخذته نادين جورديمر في تصوير شخصية جولي سامرز في روايتها The Pickup. في البحث التالي ، تم تقديم تحليل نصي للرواية المذكورة في محاولة للفت الانتباه إلى الصراع القائم بين المجتمع والفرد الأنثوي. تضع جورديمر جولي في منصب في The Pickup حيث تضطر إلى الاختيار بين فعل ما تريد والوفاء بتوقعات المجتمع من النساء. نظرًا لكونها بطلّة تعيش في ثقافة أبوية ، فإن جولي مطالبة برسم مسار حياتها من أجل النجاح في التغلب على عدد من التحديات. باختصار ، سيتم تقييم نهج جورديمر النسوي من حيث قدرتها على تشابك الظروف الاجتماعية والثقافية السائدة في المجتمعين المتميزين حيث يقيم البطل مع قدرة البطل على التغلب على جميع العقبات من أجل تغيير الصورة النمطية للمرأة في كلا المجتمعين. سيتم إجراء هذا التقييم من حيث قدرة Gordimer على تشابك الظروف الاجتماعية والثقافية السائدة في المجتمعين المتميزين اللذين يقيم فيهما بطل الرواية. تعتبر مقاومة جولي للخضوع للقوانين التقليدية التي تحكم مجتمعها في جنوب إفريقيا موضوعًا آخر تم التحقيق فيه في هذه الدراسة. موضوع آخر يتم التحقيق فيه هو رغبة جولي في التكيف مع ثقافة ودين مجتمع عشيقها ، والذي يقع في دولة بعيدة. عندما تتخذ الشخصية الأنثوية الرئيسية ، الممثلة هنا جولي ، قرارًا بأن تعيش حياة غير مطابقة للمعايير الاجتماعية والثقافية السائدة فيما يتعلق بالزواج والأمومة ، فإن الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو أيضًا التحقيق في القوى المختلفة التي قد تتأمر ضد شخصية أنثوية معينة في السؤال. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، فإن الغرض من الدراسة هو تحديد وجهة نظر جورديمر بشأن الأزق الذي تواجهه المرأة الأفريقية المعاصرة كنتيجة مباشرة لتحديها للأعراف الثقافية والاجتماعية التقليدية. في هذه الحالة ، تعتبر جولي نموذجًا لتخريب الصورة التقليدية للمرأة القادرة على بدء تغيير مجتمعي كبير. جولي هي نموذج لتخريب الصورة التقليدية للمرأة.



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