

Chronology

- 1923 Gordimer was born in Springs, near Johannesburg.
- 1948 Afrikaner National Party won the general election and came to power with its policy of apartheid.
- 1949 Gordimer married G. Gavron; her first collection of short stories, *Face to Face* was published; Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act was passed.
- 1950 The Population Registration Act which classified the population on the basis of race was passed; The Immorality Act (Amendment) passed, banning all sexual relations across colour line; Group Areas Act, dividing the urban areas into black and white only zones; and Suppression of Communism Act was passed.
- 1951 The first issue of *Drum* magazine was published as *African Drum*.
- 1952 The African National Congress (ANC) launched the (passive) resistance campaign.
- 1953 Gordimer's first novel, *The Lying Days* was published; The South African Communist Party (SACP) was formed.
- 1954 Gordimer married Reinhold Cassirer (her second marriage).
- 1955 The Nationalist Government began 'rezoning' of Sophiatown, a black location Northwest of Johannesburg; by 1963 it was destroyed and work for a new white suburb, Triof, began; till 1955 it was a meeting place for writers and artists of different races.

- 1956 ANC adopted the Freedom Charter, which later became the basis of the South African Constitution; more than one thousand members of Congress Alliance arrested; Treason trial followed; Gordimer's *Six Feet of the Country* was published.
- 1958 H. F. Verwoerd became Prime Minister; Gordimer's *A World of Strangers* was published.
- 1959 Many Africans left ANC and formed the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). Extension of University Education Act passed, prohibiting admission of black students without special permission.
- 1960 PAC began campaign against the Pass laws, leading to the infamous Sharpeville Massacre; marked the end of non-violent resistance; ANC and PAC banned; State of Emergency declared; Gordimer's *Friday's Footprint* was published.
- 1961 South Africa left Commonwealth and became a republic; ANC formed the militant wing Umkhonto we Sizwe for armed struggle and PAC formed Poqo (meaning pure); signaled the beginning of subversive activities by underground militants.
- 1962 Nelson Mandela arrested.
- 1963 Gordimer's *Occasion for Loving* was published.
- 1964 Nelson Mandela and several other ANC and PAC leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment.

- 1965 Gordimer's short story collection *Not for Publication* was published.
- 1966 B. J. Vorster became the Prime Minister after the assassination of Verwoerd; District Six was cleared and declared a 'white only' area; like Sophiatown it was a meeting point of writers and musicians; Gordimer's novel, *The Late Bourgeois World* was published.
- 1968 Steve Biko founded the South African Students Organization (SASO) exclusively for blacks; this organization inspired the Black Consciousness in the 1970s.
- 1969 Gordimer was awarded Thomas Pringle Award.
- 1971 Gordimer published *A Guest of Honour*; she was awarded James Tait Black Memorial Prize.
- 1972 Black People's Convention was organized with a view to propagating the Black Consciousness outside schools and colleges; Gordimer's story collection *Livingstone's Companions* was published.
- 1974 The UN General Assembly invited ANC and PAC to participate as observers; Gordimer published *The Conservationist*.
- 1975 Gordimer was awarded French Grand Aigle d'Or Prize and South African CNA Literary Award.
- 1976 Soweto uprising: police fired on thousands of black school children in Soweto, who protested against the compulsory use of Afrikaans in teaching some subjects; by 1977, the uprising spread to the other parts of the country; hundreds were killed and many went into exile; the events of 1976 gave a new height to

the Black Consciousness movement; Gordimer's *Some Monday for Sure* was published.

1977 Government banned SASO; Biko was arrested and killed in police custody, provoking a countrywide protest.

1978 B. J. Vorster resigned; P. W. Botha became South Africa's Prime Minister.

1979 African trade unions came to be recognized because of the Industrial Relations Act; Gordimer published *Burger's Daughter*.

1980 Gordimer's short story collection *A Soldier's Embrace* was published.

1981 Gordimer's *July's People* published.

1982 ANC carried out sabotage attack on South African nuclear power station at Koeberg; Ruth First, South African scholar and anti-apartheid activist was assassinated in Maputo, Mozambique.

1984 New constitution allows Coloureds and Asians limited participation in government; Gordimer's *Something out There* was published.

1985 Leaders of United Democratic Front (UDF) were charged with high treason; Gordimer received the Italian Malaparte Prize.

1986 The government declared a National State of Emergency in response to the rising political violence in the townships; Pass laws repealed; Gordimer received the Bennett Award (USA).

1987 Gordimer's novel *A Sport of Nature* was published.

- 1988 Gordimer's *The Essential Gesture: Writing, Politics and Places* was published.
- 1989 P. W. Botha suffered a stroke; F. W. de Clerk became the state president and met Nelson Mandela (the first time by a president of South Africa).
- 1990 ANC, SACP and other political opposition organizations were unbanned; De Clerk announced the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela; censorship of literature was withdrawn; Gordimer published *My Son's Story*.
- 1991 Gordimer won Nobel Prize for Literature; De Clerk declared all apartheid laws would be repealed; Mandela was elected the president of ANC.
- 1993 Mandela and De Clerk jointly won the Nobel Prize for Peace.
- 1994 First free General Elections were held and Mandela was elected the first President of South Africa; his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* was published. Gordimer published her novel *None to Accompany Me*.
- 1998 Gordimer's second post-apartheid novel *The House Gun* was published.
- 2002 Gordimer published her novel, *The Pickup*.
- 2005 Gordimer published *Get a Life*.
- 2014 Gordimer died at the age of 90.