

TRIBUTE TO AN AFRICAN NOBEL / ABDULRAZAK GURNAH : AN UNBOUND
VOICE, MANIFOLD RESONANCES

THEMATIC CALL FOR PAPERS

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Among the Senoufos from the North of Côte d'Ivoire, the sacred grove is commonly called SINZANG. The first of its kind would date from the time of the patriarch and chief of Korhogo, SORO Zouakagnon (1840-1894). The SINZANG is also the highest place for transmitting intergenerational knowledge. This sacred grove is a pantheon that promotes the teaching of ancestral knowledge.

As part of this pedagogical and academic logic, the SINZANG journal aims to promote both African and Western humanities. It is a peer-reviewed journal with an Academic Advisory Board. It is a bilingual and multidisciplinary biannual periodical, published both in English and in French. However, works written in German and Spanish are also welcomed.

ARGUMENT OF THE CALL FOR PAPERS

The Drafting Board of the scientific online journal SINZANG, a biannual publication of the English Department of the University Peleforo GON COULIBALY, Korhogo (Côte d'Ivoire), brings to the attention of the University scientific community, a thematic call for papers for the publication of a special issue (December 2024) whose theme is as follows :

Tribute to an African Nobel / Abdulrazak Gurnah : An Unbound Voice, Manifold Resonances

The aim of this call for papers is to elucidate the various aspects of the political verve conveyed through the writings of the Tanzanian writer Abdulrazak Gurnah. This commitment is blatant both in thematic and aesthetical tropes. The objective is to pinpoint the way the author challenges Eurocentric discourse and the transgression of narrative conventions in order to reinvigorate African novelistic creation, notably in his ten novels, which we hope to cover in this study.

Since its inception in 1901, the Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded annually to the author who "produces the most outstanding work of an idealistic tendency in the field of literature". After the inaugural consecration of Sully Prudhomme, authors, poets, playwrights and novelists have followed one another to the literary Nobel podium. In 2021, the celebrated Tanzanian novelist wins this grail one year after the release of his work *Afterlives*. In so doing, he joins the elitist pantheon of African authors to have won this international laurel. In doing so, Gurnah follows in the footsteps of his African predecessors the like of the Nigerian Wole Soyinka (1986), the Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz (1988), the South Africans Nadine Gordimer (1991) and John Maxwell Coetzee (2003) ; and, finally, the Zimbabwean author Doris Lessing (2007).

All the authors who have received this distinction are distinguished by a commitment that is widely present in their writings. The plural form of "writings" is explained by the fact that the Nobel Prize does not reward a single work, but a career, a literary production taken as a whole. It is an itinerary that recounts the suffering, anxieties, oppression and atrocities that is honored. Narrative innovations, new writing techniques, thematic and aesthetical transgressions are all rewarded by the Nobel Prize. These literary feats are even more remarkable when they depict the new forms of threat, fear and unease to which the contemporary world is prone to.

Gurnah won the Nobel Prize not for the pugnacity of the message conveyed in *Afterlives*, but for his commitment to campaigning on behalf of the voiceless in his entire novelistic output, which includes :

1. *Memory of Departure* (1987)
2. *Pilgrim Ways* (1988)
3. *Dottie* (1990)
4. *Paradise* (1994)
5. *Admiring Silence* (1996)
6. *By the Sea* (2001)
7. *Desertion* (2005)
8. *The Last Gift* (2011)

9. *Gravel Heart* (2017)

10. *Afterlives* (2020)

Taken as a whole, these works deal with fairly recurrent tropes of the elsewhere. When his homeland, the island of Zanzibar, is plunged into violence, Gurnah goes into exile in the UK in 1960. It is a painful experience that considerably influences almost all his works. As a result, his discursive style is strongly influenced by themes of migration and immigration. On the continent, he is one of the first authors to 'skim the routes' of migration, thus paving the way for his likes of the new generation, namely Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Leila Aboulela, Ben Okri and others.

Memory of Departure, *Pilgrim Ways*, *Dottie*, *Admiring Silence*, *Desertion* and *The Last Gift* illustrate migration and displacement issues. *Afterlives* deals not only with German colonization, but it is also with rife with questions related to identity. *Desertion* focuses on impossible love stories. *Paradise* deals with exile, and the colonized and the immigrant's sense of belonging to their culture-of-origin. It also highlights colonialism and slavery.

Postcolonial narrative is reactivated in *Admiring Silence* and *By the Sea*. The latter work of fiction highlights Indian Ocean Studies alongside *Desertion* and *Gravel Heart*. For Gurnah, the Indian Ocean is not simply an ordinary maritime space; it is also a historical space that serves as a bridge between many cultures, many peoples: a tool for human and cultural connectivity.

Indian Ocean Studies combines ecocritical study, environmental reflection and the subversion of Western discourse. Many other themes are addressed in Gurnah's texts: sexuality and homosexuality, women's feminist aspirations, transgressive narration...

For an efficient organization of all these ideas, we suggest the following reading axes:

I. ABDULRAZAK GURNAH : A POSTCOLONIAL WRITING

This section focuses on the author's postcolonial stance. It exhumes the excesses of the colonial system and its unfortunate implications in African spaces under foreign domination. The advent of Western colonization imposed a police regime whose violence (in the broadest sense of the term) indelibly scar indigenous peoples and their cultures. British colonization (and German colonization which is highlighted in *Afterlives*) sends such a heavy blow to the ancestral and tribal systems of the African peoples that they eventually give in. At the advent of the independences, African elites do no better than their colonial predecessors. On the contrary, they set up autocratic regimes with pogroms fueled against their political adversaries, intellectuals and subversive writers, who most often go into exile for life.

I.I. Diasporic Experiences

- migration
- forced migration
- immigration
- exile
- refugees
- asylum seekers
- displacement
- dislocation
- translocation
- identity loss

- assimilation
- alienation
- hybridity
- nativism
- nationalism

I.2 Aftermaths of Colonialism and Colonization

- colonial oppression
- colonial stereotyping of the colonized
- colonial discourse
- cultural imperialism
- racial representations
- question of identity
- colonial language vs. African language
- decolonization and the politics of writing back
- the sense of belonging
- the political significance of Indian Ocean Studies

2. A TRANSGRESSIVE NARRATIVE STYLE

Gurnah's narrative transgression is proof of the insubordination of his pen. In his texts, he deploys narrative categories that stands against pre-established epistemologies. His manipulation of narrative instances such as chronotope (time and space), narrative voices, focalization, plot... is the hallmark of a subversion that he has made his own. The following narratological reflections are worth exploring in Gurnah.

- disordered narrations
- narrative changes
- narratological unreality
- multiple focus (narrative polyphony)
- imbedded narratives
- homodiegetic narration
- multimodal narratives (generic hybridity)
- postcolonial narratology
- intertextuality: the presence of the tale in fiction
- the aesthetics of Indian Ocean studies.

3. THE ENDEMIC TRIBULATIONS OF POST-COLONIAL AFRICA

The Tanzanian author's commitment can also be seen in the acuity with which he depicts the tares of post-colonial societies. Apart from denouncing the perverse direct effects of colonization, Africa is inevitably prey to new challenges and new forms of unrest. Society thus becomes anomic: it disintegrates under the weight of moral derangement. Alongside normative heterosexuality, new ways of conceiving and experiencing sexuality are emerging. Men (the masculine gender) are no longer attracted solely to the feminine gender. In contemporary African societies, homosexuality is undermining the male gender. Men are emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same sex.

At the same time, post-colonial societies are witnessing the rise of feminist postures that challenge the natural hegemony that patriarchy has deliberately granted to the male gender over women.

Socially and politically speaking, Africa is in turmoil. Post-independence government regimes have failed to foster a climate of well-being for the masses, or to ensure the security of their populations. Post-independence state management by African leaders has encouraged the eruption of violence in inter-human relations. The many coups d'états, rebellions, states of emergency and curfews are a perfect illustration.

The abusive exploitation of biodiversity (fauna, flora, fishing resources, natural areas) is a clear threat to man's survival in the universe. All these elements can be summed up in the following points:

3.1 Gender and Sexuality

- homosexuality
- sexual stereotypes
- same-sex attraction and desire: homosexuality
- mixed couples
- inter-gender relations and prejudice
- patriarchy, the patriarchal vision of African societies
- feminism and its agendas (women's awareness and empowerment)...

3.2. The Challenges of the Postcolony

- the postcolony
- class struggles
- the irruption of dictatorial regimes
- poor governance of African leaders
- trauma
- state-sponsored violence...

3.3 Ecocritical Study of Contemporary Spaces

- climate change
- environmental injustice
- anthropocentrism
- ecocentrism
- deep ecology
- Ecocritical study of Ocean Sea Studies...

NOTA I :

- Papers accepted for review are evaluated anonymously. The final decision rests with the Drafting Panel.
- Contributors take sole responsibility of views and opinions expressed in their articles published in SINZANG
- Writing language : English (preferably) or French
- Colleagues wishing to take part in this literary event (and who have problems to find out some of the novels by Gurnah) are invited to contact the SINZANG JOURNAL editorial board, email:

sinzangarticles@revue-sinzang.net and revuesinzang@gmail.com for specific questions relating to the call for papers.

They can also contact Dr. Kouakou Antony ANDE

Mobile: +225 07 09 54 03 14

We already have an electronic copy of *Paradise, By the Sea* and *Afterlives* for colleagues outside Côte d'Ivoire. You only need to send us an email.

SCHEDULE

October 1, 2024 : Deadline for submissions

October 30, 2024 : Return of peer-reviewed articles to contributors

November 15, 2024 : Return of the final texts to the Drafting Board

November 30, 2024 : Sending of off-prints

December 2024 : On-line release of articles

PAYMENT OF ASSESSMENT AND PUBLICATION FEES

Submitted articles will be evaluated by independent reviewers. At the end of the peer-reviewing, if the project is accepted, payment of 45,000 CFA (69 euros) is required for evaluation and publication costs, to be paid when sending the improved article in accordance with the evaluation recommendations.

Payments are made to the following address: **Kouakou Antony ANDE**

-Via Mobile Money services preferably for Ivorian residents: 0709540314 (Orange Money) / 0506410849 (Wave).

-As for international payments, they will be made via **MoneyGram, Western Union, Ria**

When you fill out the transfer form, you must include your telephone number and address.

Keep the receipt as proof of payment and promptly send a scanned copy to our email addresses.

NOTA 2 :

As contributors send their articles, they should pay right away 15000 CFA (23 euros) for assessment fees. The remaining instalment (30000 Fr CFA, 46 euros) will be paid when sending the final text to the Drafting Board.

EDITORIAL RULES

All articles should be submitted electronically to the Editor-in-Chief. Authors are advised to adhere strictly to the referencing style of NORCAMES as follows. Manuscripts that do not adhere to these guidelines will not be reviewed. They will be ruled out.

SINZANG is a scientific journal of literature, language, communication and educational sciences. It is hosted by the Arts and Humanities Research and Training Unit of Peleforo GON COULIBALY University. It publishes only original works. Accordingly, the manuscripts must not be previously published. All proposed articles will be submitted to the review committee to select the best ones for publication. Proposals for correction will be sent to the author by the editorial board. Nota Bene: The views expressed by the authors of articles are theirs, not those of the editorial and review committee of SINZANG.

PRESENTATION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

For the writing of articles to be submitted to the Journal SINZANG, the texts must strictly respect the following NORCAMES/LSH requirements:

1. Title of the article, First name(s) and NAME(s) of the author, Home institution, Email address, Summary in French, Keywords, Abstract, Keywords, Introduction (justification of the theme, problematic, hypotheses/scientific objectives, approach), Articulated development, Conclusion, Bibliographic references.

2. Abstracts in English and French, maximum 10 lines each, followed by 5 keywords.

3. The text's articulations, except for the Introduction, the Conclusion and the Bibliography, must be titled and numbered by numbers as follows: I. ; I.1; I.2; 2. ; 2.1; 2.2; 3. etc.

4. The articles are spaced 1.5. They must contain between 5000 and 8000 words. They must be processed under Word software, Georgia font, item 12

5. The quoted passages are presented in Roman and quotation marks. When the sentence quoting and the quotation exceed three lines, go to the line to present the quotation (line spacing 1 or single) in Roman and indented on the left, decreasing the font size by one point (11).

6. Citation references are incorporated into the text quotes, as appropriate, as follows:

- Initial (s) of the author's First Name(s). Author's Name, Year of Publication, pages cited);

Example 1 :

En effet, le but poursuivi par M. Ascher (1998, p. 223), est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupé du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...)
».

Example 2 :

To say more about this capacity of civil society, which in its actual deployment attests that it can carry development and history, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) writes Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont fait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

Example 3:

To a certain extent, the Ivorian philosopher is right to read, in this destabilizing shock, the process of underdevelopment. As he says:

Le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socioéconomique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi

crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation socio-historique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

7. Historical sources, oral information references and explanatory notes are numbered in continuous series and presented at the bottom of the page.

8. The various elements of a bibliographic reference are presented as follows:

NAME (S) and First name(s) of the author, Year of publication, Title area, Place of publication, Editor area, pages (p.) occupied by the article in the journal or collective work, Collection area.

In the Title area, the title of an article is presented in Roman and quotation marks, and the title of a work, thesis, report, journal or journal is presented in italics. In the Publisher area, the Publishing House (for a book), possibly the collection in quotation marks, the Name and the issue/volume of the journal (for an article). If a work is a translation and/or a reissue, specify, after the title, the name of the translator and/or the edition (ex: 2nd edition).

Only references to the texts cited are given in the bibliography. Bibliographic references are listed in alphabetical order of author names. For example:

AMIN Samir, 1996, *Les défis de la mondialisation*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

AUDARD Catherine, 2009, *Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ? Ethique, politique, société*, Paris, Gallimard. BERGER Gaston, 1967, *L'homme moderne et son éducation*, Paris, Puf.

DIAGNE Souleymane Bachir, 2003, « Islam et philosophie. Leçons d'une rencontre », *Diogène*, 20 2, p. 154-151.

LEVINAS Emmanuel, 1963, *De l'existence à l'existant*, Paris, J. Vrin, « bibliothèque des textes philosophiques ».

9. Tables, Diagrams and Illustrations If tables are used, they must be numbered in Roman numerals in the order they appear in the text. They must have a specific title and a source. Diagrams and illustrations must be numbered in Arabic numerals in the order in which they appear in the text.

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