



## SOCIAL REALITY OF MIGRATION IN ABDULRAZAK GURNAH'S NOVELS

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### ABSTRACT:

Social Reality of Migration in Abdulrazak Gurnah's Novels Migration is a multifaceted social issue in Abdulrazak Gurnah's Novels. The purpose of this research is to take an analytical approach to Abdulrazak Gurnah's fundamental concerns about human migration. The portrayal of human migration has always been an important part of literature. The goal of this research is to better understand how Gurnah's literary depictions from the early days of colonialism through the end of the twentieth century delve into the cultural, social, and political landscape of East Africa's coast. The study will be conducted to find out the social reality of migration in Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels.

**Key words:** - *Migration, colonialism, multifaceted social issue*

### INTRODUCTION:

Human migration is a multifaceted societal problem. I try to take an analytical approach to Abdulrazak Gurnah's fundamental concerns about social reality of human migration. Human migration has long been an important theme in literature. The researchers seek to comprehend how Gurnah speculates and interrogates the cultural, social, and political picture on the East African coast via his literary description from colonialism's beginnings until the end of the twentieth century.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The present paper studies the entire novelistic corpus of Abdulrazak Gurnah, whose work focuses on the issue of migration. Gurnah, on the other hand, uses fresh aesthetic qualities as an analytic frame to connect with his signature issue in each novel. Gurnah's novels offer new insights into relocation and raise new concerns about what it means to be a migrant or stranger in hostile surroundings, and how such circumstances necessitate a negotiation of hospitable space. The artistic resourcefulness and diversity with which he structures his

storylines in order to locate them within their historical circumstances is what gives each of his works a specific aesthetic appeal. Gurnah employs a range of narrative perspectives that not only challenge the reader in the effort of comprehending his complicated works, but also allow the reader to enjoy the process of doing so. Gurnah is one of the most prolific and refreshing personalities in East African writing. His writing style is different adhered to reality. Memory of Departure (1987), Pilgrims Way (1988), Dottie (1990), Paradise (1994, short-listed for the Man Booker Prize), Admiring Silence (1996), By the Sea (2001), Desertion (2005) and The Last Gift (2011), all of Gurnah's these novels are engage with migration and its attendant themes. Apart from the eight novels, Gurnah is also known for his critical works. He has edited several volumes of literary criticism, Essays on African Writing: A Re-evaluation (1993) and Essays on African Writing: Contemporary Literature (1995) and The Cambridge Companion to Salman Rushdie (2007).

**Social Reality of Migration - A Brief :**

In Gurnah's novels, there is a specific focus on Zanzibar setting. The fundamental context of Gurnah's story is the environment of hatred in the UK, as well as the circumstances of his expulsion from Zanzibar. Gurnah's principal themes of migration, trade, and hospitality are crystallised by his compassion for those dislocated from their place of origin. These topics are explored throughout his fiction, which is situated in a variety of diverse yet interconnected temporal and physical locales. The cultural, historical and economic significance of Zanzibar may be better understood. Human exchanges are recurring themes in Gurnah's work. The extensive commercial history between Zanzibar and the rest of the world resulted in the Zanzibar community's mosaic-like composition. Because of this trading history, as well as Zanzibar's contact with the horrific past of slavery and colonialism, human connections on the East African Indian Ocean Island have been defined by power disparities attributable to these historical occasions.

***They brought with them their goods and their God and their way of looking at the world, their stories and their songs and prayers, and ... and a glimpse of their learning ... they brought their hungers and greed, their fantasies and lies and hatreds, leaving some among their numbers behind .... (By the Sea 15)***

Social reality of migration in Gurnah's novels focuses our attention to his novels. They experience with travel and narration which expose and contradict monologic conceptions of reality. This paper has demonstrated how Gurnah's novels direct the reader's attention to the extensive and various intercultural exchanges between the East African Indian Ocean coast and the outside world, even before European colonialism. The relocation of people caused by post-independence nationalism and

the violence associated with East African nationalism accounts for the social and existential problems that his characters experience in the UK. Thus, his writings inspire readers to join him in questioning the world they live in, with its numerous exclusionary mechanisms, whether discursive or material, and to envisage alternative social realities.

Gurnah's novels draw our attention to how monologic versions of reality are exposed and challenged by encounters brought about by travel and narration. Through an analysis of these devices, it has been shown how the reader's attention to the long and varied intercultural exchanges between the East African Indian Ocean coast and the outside world, even before the advent of European colonialism. The displacement of people, occasioned by post-independence nationalism and the violence attending the politics of the nation in East Africa, accounts for the social and existential anxieties that his characters live with in the UK.

In Gurnah's fictions, Migration has two stratum-internal and external. He deployed internal migration as the movement of people to a particular place within the country, and external migration as the movement of people to other country. Cultural changes are more prevalent in the case of external migration in compare to the internal migration. According to Malinowski,

***“Culture is an adaptive mechanism, created by the society to please different needs of the people of any community. The cultural attribute is established in a specific situation and circumstances...”***

According to him, all the different cultures on this paradise should be considered on the basis of its historical context. In the process of Migration from particular regions of individuals and groups may have to redefine a new cultural trait to adapt them in a new cultural milieu. It enables humans to make adjustment in

behaviour without going through a biological modification of one's organism. Migrants bring with them different cultures, traditions, languages and religions. When culturally different persons come into the contacts of another culture they significantly influence on each other's culture, language, and even politics.

The cross-cultural interaction creates conflicts and confusions. Cultural philosophy has been inherited from the ancestors. On the basis of this inherited philosophy, it usually creates the assumptions that how and in which way it is culturally related or different from others. The way to look at realism of society is influenced by the self-centred principle to judge others. This philosophy of culture believes can be understood in the context cultural history of a particular society.

Gurnah's novels delineate homelessness and how the feeling of homeless creates identity crisis. **Memory of Departure** is set in the years immediately after Tanzania's independence in 1961. The novel insists that how the human body tries to follow the soul as body is far from where the soul wants to wander. Post-colonial literary theory of Cap low very relevant in which he emphasizes that a condition of detachment from society is characterized by the absence or attenuation of the affiliated bonds. The setting of this novel is not prolonged outside East African and Indian Ocean coastal towns but the novel narrates Gurnah's complete historical, geopolitical, and economic legacy through imagination. This novel engages with cynicism, disillusionment, and the violent socio-political situation just after independence in Tanzania. This violent situation left many natives just like an immigrant in their own country because they had to relocate by leaving their own place. The novel explores the different aspect in post-independence Tanzania's political system.

Gurnah's **Paradise** is set before the First World War in Zanzibar. The novel has six segments

which progressing around the life of the Yusuf and an Arab descent slave trader Aziz. It focuses on the depiction of nineteenth century colonial East Africa. The relevance of this depiction can be found significant as it gives historical description of the end of the nineteenth century, finding the strong link between the Slavery and migrated Arabs in East Africa.

Abdulrazak Gurnah's **Admiring Silence** published in 1996 is written in a first-person account of an unnamed migrant of Omani-Swahili origin from Zanzibar who is smuggled out England from his native place Zanzibar. The first section of the novel describes how he came in contact with a British white woman Emma and we come to know the background of the narrator.

Gurnah's novel *Pilgrims Way* published in 1988 depicts the tussle between different ethnic and racial groups during 1970s in Britain. These all different groups of British society had tried to come together in the previous decades to fight with racism. Gurnah through this novel tries to give a realistic picture of society through the political consciousness of its main character Daud. The protagonist Daud is a young misanthropic Tanzanian migrant who works in a hospital in Canterbury. He suffers with racial abuse so many times in his life. This minute description is constructed to place Daud in British society with a synchronic and diachronic perception. It portrays the process of difficulty in identity formation by the protagonist through a visualization process of 'othering'.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

The present research aims to study following objectives:

1. To make an indepth study of different social human relationship in Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels.
2. To understand migration problem and its consequences related to refugees.
3. To critically examine the socio-cultural issues in Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels.

**HYPOTHESIS:**

The present research will be based on following Hypothesis:

1. Abdulrazak Gurnah is the thinker of social reality of migration.
2. Abdulrazak Gurnah's profound and systematic exposition of migration has got much to offer the contemporary society.
3. Migration and homelessness is the core issue of Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels.

**SCOPE AND LIMITATION:**

The present study aims to investigate how Abdulrazak Gurnah is deep-rooted in humanism which allowed him to give voice to the silenced majority of the refugees. Almost all the novels of Gurnah are related to cultural aspect of human relationship and the predicament of migration. The scope for the study is limited to his ten novels.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

With the corpus of his fictional writings, Gurnah attracted the attention of critics and scholars from the different parts of the country and the world as well. I propose to make a humble endeavour in the dissertation to study all the novels of Gurnah in a systematic manner in the light of critical responses of various critics. The Descriptive and analytical methods will be used for the study. The material used for the study will be original novels, texts books as primary sources.

**CONCLUSION :**

To be conclude this research paper demonstrates how Gurnah's fiction employs numerous artistic tactics as possible means of thinking about individual identity and social relations with others through its examination of migratory subjectivities and their multiple and varied negotiations to construct enabling spaces.

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