

Violence and the Wandering Motif in Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah n'est pas obligé* and Alex la Guma's *A Walk in the Night*

Daniel René Akendengue

Associate Professor, English Department, Université Omar Bongo, Libreville, Gabon

TOYI Marie-Thérèse

Lecturer 1 in English Department, Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

This article studies the impact of violence on characters' wandering in Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah n'est pas obligé* and Alex la Guma's *A Walk in the Night*. After passing in review scholars' position on violence and journey in fiction, it analyses first how in *Allah n'est pas obligé*, an orphaned child searching for an aunt to take care of him embarks on wanderings in war-torn countries and gets dehumanised in the process. It then examines how, in *A Walk in the Night*, apartheid leaves characters from both the black and the white races unsettled in their prison-like District Six. The differences observed are only superficial because, in the main, the two novels meet on the feeling of loss and the aspiration for change which violence instils on characters and which is expressed physically by the latter's wanderings.

Keywords: violence, war, journey, child soldier, apartheid, dehumanization

Introduction

Violence is a recurrent theme in fiction. From the oral (fairy) tales where characters such as orphans and widows fall victims of merciless creatures often endowed with supernatural forces, to modern fiction where characters may use their position, their power, their ideologies...to oppress or to suppress others, fiction can be thought of as a channel through which violence is displayed with magnitude. Violence may directly come from antagonistic forces, as it may also be self-inflicted, at least indirectly, from such characters as those who embark on perilous missions, ignorant of the subversive forces they may encounter along the journey. Nonetheless, whatever its source may be, violence triggers different reactions from characters. Some characters may be conditioned not to move away from the place of oppression. Such are, for instance, the victims of domestic violence, minors or prisoners. Other victims of violence may use their freedom of movement to constantly change places, a fact which may turn them into wanderers. It is this second group which constitutes the focus of our study, in two novels considered as particularly violent: *Allah n'est pas obligé* by Ahmadou Kourouma, and *A Walk in the Night* by Alex la Guma.

The choice of the term wandering instead of journey is deliberate. In fact, journey those who are prepared to go, who know the survival means and the duration of their journey. But, when individuals leave their place for an unknown or an apprehended destination, unsure of means of survival, of how long they will stay, with a lot of suffering and perils involved, they are neither walking nor journeying, but wandering.

The present study aims at analysing the impact of violence in *Allah n'est pas obligé* and a walk in the night on characters' impulse to wander. It will be carried out in four movements. The first movement passes in review scholars' position on the theme of violence and wandering, the second studies violence and the wandering motif in *Allah n'est pas obligé* by Ahmadou Kourouma, the third carries out a similar study in *A Walk in the Night* by Alex la Guma, and the fourth attempts a synoptic view of the two novels.

I

Studying violence in fiction brings to mind Yambo Ouologuem's novel, *Le Devoir de violence*, in which the novelist advocates violence as a defensive tool against oppressive forces. In a study conducted on the novel, Maïangwa sees the book as a channel through which Ouologuem defends his support for violence: "violence in all its ramifications is a necessary evil, if true and lasting freedom is to be achieved" (76). Although seemingly immoral and controversial, this view is also shared by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who holds that "violence in order to change an intolerable, unjust social order is not savagery, it purifies man. Violence to protect and preserve an unjust, oppressive social order is criminal, and diminishes man" (qtd. in Michel Wade 28). The irony is that violence may turn against its proponents. A first example comes from *Johnny chien méchant* by Emmanuel Dongala. Because of the genocide in the Congo, Johnny plans to kill "anyone not in his group" (*New Directions* 49). But he soon realizes that "his girlfriend is of the same ethnic group as those he would exterminate like vermin" (*New Directions* 49). The second example comes from Clamence, the former merciless attorney of Camus's *La Chute*, who has come to learn from experience that "la sentence que vous portez sur les autres finit par virus revenir dans la figure, tout droit, et y pratique quelques dégâts" [the sentence that you give to others comes back to your face, straight, and causes there some damages] (143).

It is not uncommon, in fiction, that characters embark on long journeys, for various reasons. The ancient Greek Mythology abounds with supernatural characters damned, exiled or turned into wanderers because of a transgression against a transcendental order. European picaresque narratives, such as *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, or *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, excel at placing characters on long and perilous journeys, after which some come back mature and strengthened. Journeying has been a recurrent theme in African fiction, covering the literature dealing with colonialists who journeyed to Africa for imperial motifs through the somewhat adventurous motifs well represented by Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, to nowadays' literature, in which the theme of Africans' migrations and exiles in and outside the continent is extensively explored. Americans under slavery developed a literature where the African American is depicted running to farther distances in search for safety. So is Eliza of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, who, against all the odds, crosses to Canada in order to prevent her baby from becoming a white man's property. Lidie Newton, the hero of Jane Smiley's novel, follows her husband everywhere, passing through Kansas at war between slave abolitionists and free staters and, as she keeps changing her identity (for example disguising herself into a boy for spying purposes), she ends up not only winning her cause, but also discovering her weaknesses and her strengths. And that is exactly what long journeying does to many characters: they end up discovering themselves, and they grow up.

Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*, placing an orphaned boy on frequent journeys between Ethiopia and Somalia, is read by Dietche as a "coming of age novel, the story of a boy struggling to become a man" (200). Askar, the protagonist, is a Somali orphan raised in Ogaden (Ethiopia), then evacuated to Mogadiscio (Somalia), before being sent back to fight as a liberator of the Ogaden. Dietche is of the opinion that "every move that Askar makes as he journeys from infancy through boyhood to adolescence is linked with war but these moves can also be seen as the normal and the natural progression that any child must follow as he moves along toward adulthood" (200).

Indeed, in a lot of literature dealing with violence and war, there is the recurrence of the theme of wandering, often through an orphan in distress who wants to go, always go, but go where? And till when will he stop wandering? (Notre librairie 148). These constant wanderings, especially by orphans and by children, bring in "la question fondamentale de l'itinéraire et de l'errance identitaire" [the fundamental issue of the itinerary and of identity wandering], raised by Denise Coussy and Jacques Chevrier (68-75). The farther the wandering takes characters, the more likely they are to lose not only their way, but also their identity.

Moreover, characters' wanderings will have different interpretations, depending on its cause, its itinerary and its final outcome. To Bourneuf and Ouellet, when characters' freedom of movement is restricted by oppressive human or physical forces, such as "les espaces clos où l'on tourne sans fin" [locked places where one turns about endlessly] (99), where journeys bring characters back to their point of departure, as if they were moving in a labyrinth, or in streets "qui ramènent toujours le piéton à son point de départ" [which always bring the pedestrian back to his point of departure](125), they hardly change or grow. They are well represented by Sisyphus, who is doomed to go up and down a stiff mountain, starting endlessly a job which he knows that it will yield no result, or by the Invisible Man of Ralph Ellison, who lives in a racist society which has decided to keep him running until he finds himself always unsettled and frustrated in spite of his potentials to change. Concerning Africans' journeys, situations of war constitute good grounds on which the journey motif by Africans has well developed. To take but the case of Dandy's study on Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* and Nyamfukudza's *The Non-Believer's Journey*, set in the violence which accompanies the Zimbabwean war for independence, the scholar highlights the metaphoric meaning of characters' journeys in the novels. He then concludes, like McLaughlin, that "the journey can be seen as a metaphor of the war itself" (Dandy 98).

The above notwithstanding, very few studies have explicitly put in correlation the reign of violence and characters' wandering in fiction. Existing studies have focussed on single themes such as violence, war, journey, with no investigation of the possible influence of one on the other. Our two novels under study are set in violence-dominated areas. Whether the wanderings encountered are a result of this violence or not remains to be demonstrated. In the lines below, focus goes to *Allah n'est pas obligé*, with a view of analysing the level of influence of violence or war on characters' wanderings.

II

The protagonist of *Allah n'est pas obligé*, Birahima, is a character constantly on the move. After his mother's death, he is asked to leave Togobala, his home village in Ivory Coast, for Liberia, where he will be raised by his aunt Mohan. At the Liberian border, he –with his inseparable guide Tiécoura, alias Yacoubou – is intercepted by child soldiers and ends up joining their camp, a position which ends up giving him comfort for, as he admits, "quand on n'a pas de père, de mère, de frère, de soeur, de tante, d'oncle, quand on n'a pas de rien du tout, le mieux est de devenir un enfant-soldat" [when one has no father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, when one has nothing at all, the best thing is to become a child-soldier](120-1).

His involvement in the civil war in Liberia takes him to different towns and villages, looting and killing, up to the very village where his aunt lives. Mohan, his aunt, escapes to Sierra Leone through the forest, leaving

her husband dying in the pool of his blood. Birahima feels himself compelled to desert the Liberian camp in order to pursue his search for Mohan. But, on crossing the border to Sierra Leone, he sees himself compelled to enter another group of child soldiers. Under the mask of a child soldier, he reaches a camp where Mohan reportedly lies sick. However, before he sees her, Mohan has just died.

Birahima's wanderings start from his need to search for Mohan, an aunt who would care for him in the absence of a mother. But Mohan lives in a war-torn country, Liberia. It is partly because of her that Birahima wanders, struggling for survival and pursuing his search. Till the end of the novel, he steps where Mohan has just left, and the moment he seems to have attained his goal, the aunt has just died. Towards the end of the novel, one notices that not only Birahima (with Yacoubou as a guide), but also his cousins: Dr Mamadou and Saydou are all crossing borders and war zones in attempts to see Mohan. The children's zeal to tread where even the angels would fear, just in search of a mother, looks symbolic. It seems to refer to the endless search for care and love, which every woman represents for her children. Did Irigaray not say once: "our societies presuppose that the mother nurses the child for free, before and after giving birth, and that she remains the nurse of men and society" (qtd. in Bungaro 70). Whether the child is a medical doctor (Dr Mamadou), a notorious bandit (Seydou), or a child soldier (Birahima), he always needs care, which a mother knows best how to give to her children. But, since Mohan dies before being united to her children, the reader is brought to conclude that there is a futility in characters' wandering. No matter how far they go, they are doomed to fail; they will only catch a shadow of a mother, a dead woman, who needs them for her decent burial. In other words, children, especially orphans from war-torn zones, can hardly find genuine love and care. Their search for a caring hand is still a long and fruitless journey. They rather often fall victims of bloodthirsty warriors disguised as benefactors, who feed these kids' hungry stomachs, while keeping them exposed to dehumanisations of all sorts. Risking their lives through joining criminal groups gives children false hopes of relief, but in the end it ruins their future. Like Birahima, they mature into hardened criminals. Before going to Liberia, Birahima was "un enfant sans peur ni reproche" [a fearless and blameless child](13) and, at the end of the war, now that he narrates the story, he is proud of being a social deviant: "Je m'en fous des coutumes du village, attendu que j'ai été au Liberia, que j'ai tué beaucoup de gens avec Kalashnikov, (...), et me suis bien camé avec kanif et les autres drogues dures" [I don't care about family custom, since I have been to Liberia, and have killed many people with Kalashnikov, (...), and took kanif and other hard drugs](11).

Throughout his wanderings, not only does he get initiated into crimes, but also, he loses his identity any time he must take new and false identities to adjust to new situations. Before his first operation as a child soldier, he is given a new identity: "à mon arrivée, on m'a appris qui j'étais. J'étais un Mandingo, musulman, ami des Yacous et des Gyos". [On my arrival, they taught me who I was. I was a Mandingo, Muslim, a friend of the Yacous and of the Gyos] (78). He will keep taking new identities as situations change, in an effort to fight whatever might distance him from others. The result is that, in the end, he is insolent and uprooted, in addition to the bloodstained hands which he carries ostensibly as if they were marks of his bravery. He has a set goal, but no set itinerary. From the moment he enters in Liberia, he no longer decides on his movements: only circumstances dictate the next move he should take and, for his survival under the rule of the jungle, he commits crimes.

While other warriors are struggling for power and wealth, Birahima's main reason for risking his life is his aunt. He must find her. It is surprising how a child soldier who survives the atrocities of war in a foreign land must cling to the aim of absolutely looking for somebody who will take care of him, a woman, whose life is also in danger. Not even after the aunt is widowed does Birahima decide to give up his search. In the end, it looks as if the roles have been reversed, as if he is itching to rescue Mohan from the atrocities of war. Likewise, although Mohan utters no word, she seems to have resigned from her role as a mother. A mother risks her life for her children. Mohan keeps running apparently mindless of her nephew's imminent arrival.

It is also worth mentioning that everybody in the novel is on the move. Birahima wanders with Yacoubou, his guide. Dr Mamadou, a brother of Seidou, travels from Ivory Coast to Sierra Leone looking for this mother. Mohan is often displaced by war, until she crosses over to Sierra Leone, dragging thus, unconsciously, the wanderings of Birahima as far as Sierra Leone. Warlords, in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, do not stay at one place: they go from village to village, from region to region, looking for better strategic places to satisfy their thirst for power and wealth.

All those characters' wanderings seem to symbolise loss: Birahima and his brothers meet their mother only when she has just died; Mohan successfully ran away from war-torn zones, but she is pinned down by a malaria which kills her; Foday Sankoh gets arrested in a peaceful country, Nigeria (Lagos) where he had gone to buy weapons to fight Johnny Koroma...and, contrary to Bourneuf and Ouelet's assertion that the ability to move around leads characters to growth, here, the larger the space, the freer their movements, and the greater the danger for the wanderers to lose orientation. This explains why everybody in the novel is either a victim or a loser. Birahima, formerly "un enfant sans reproche" (a blameless child), who ends up being hardened in crimes, must cry for the killing which his battalion inflicts on Mohan's husband. He is a loser. This murder pushes Mohan to escape far away, a fact which widens the distance between her and Birahima. Moreover, not only

Birahima and Mohan, but also everybody, lose in the battle. When ECOMOG soldiers intervene between warring factions, they kill unselectively. Birahima is a witness of how “ils canonèrent en pagaille assailants et assiégés” [they gunned down unselectively assailants and besieged] (145). Even warlords, armed to the teeth with ammunitions and fetish, lose their fief, their material property, and their lives. Everybody is a loser. Everybody has a share of loss in the trouble he caused: there is neither victor nor vanquished. Xavier Garnier rightly comments on *Allah n'est pas obligé*, that “chaque prédateur est à tout moment susceptible de servir de proie” [every predator is constantly likely to turn into others' prey] (166).

When no law regulates individuals' use of fire arms, they may use them defensively or offensively, a fact which degenerates into a generalized reign of fear and violence, as it is depicted in *Allah n'est pas obligé*. It would be interesting, however, to study what may characters' behaviour be when they live under an ideology such as South African apartheid, which tolerates defence mechanism only from one side.

III

A Walk in the Night depicts par excellence the wanderings of dejected characters that are constantly exposed to the numerous dangers of a racial ideology. Events in the novel take place at night, a time associated with darkness, confusion and evil. As for the streets where characters wander, they are open spaces with no wall to stop anybody's movements. Yet, no character reaches outside District Six. They keep zeroing in as if they were in prison. This is typically characteristic of oppressive spaces described by Bourneuf and Ouellet. Moreover, although la Guma presents protagonists as if they were at a walk, what they do in this place where the fear of being killed looms dark in everybody's mind is to wander.

After being unjustly sacked from his job, Michael Adonis spends hours wandering in pubs and in streets, obviously with an intention of drowning his sorrow in alcohol. It is there that the police apprehend him, and order him to “muck off from the street” (12), which adds to his malaise “a feeling of rage, frustration and violence” (12). Filled with this feeling, he goes home and kills a white old man, apparently unwillingly, but certainly under the impulse of the rage now at an explosive point in him. His initial stand looks firm: “I'm not moving out of this place. It's got nothing to do with me. I didn't mean to kill that old bastard, did I?” (43). yet, he must go. A Black cannot kill a white, no matter how old the latter was, and fear no punishment. Adonis jumps out of his room window, and finds himself back into dark streets, the same streets which had just violently rejected him.

Another pertinent point which illuminates the difficulty for characters to walk is the recurrence of night darkness. A walker, be he a wanderer, needs light for a right orientation. Darkness hinders movement and progress. However, given the ever-presence of the white police who see in every Black a suspect to arrest and kill, the Blacks in *A Walk in the Night* resort to working surreptitiously behind the safety of night darkness so as to survive the crippling yoke of apartheid. Walking and operating in the dark slows down achievement of one's goal, but, in contexts of oppression, it can present some advantages. Darkness contributes a lot in hiding characters' identity, keeping them not only anonymous, but also non-entities. Apart from Michael Adonis whose constant wanderings gave a title to the novel, Willieboy is seen strolling up streets, with “the shadows which were part of his own anonymity” (48) and later, he walks “unsteadily in the dark (57). He is there, a sheer victim of apartheid, with no single mention of the reason why he should suffer, and doing nothing useful with his youth but wander the streets of District Six. The look-out man is another Black who maintains “an expression of officiousness with which he tried to hide his identity as another of the massed nonentities to which they both belonged” (49), not only because of the darkness which brings confusion, but also because of apartheid which does not allow them full expression of their potentials.

The loss of one's identity can come as a consequence of much wandering and, if it does not reinforce or generate violence, it can hinder life and growth. Luckay's remark is pertinent in this respect. According to him, the loss of one's identity can be fatal Identity allows mutual recognition, which in turn can lead to solidarity among those who recognize themselves as members of a same group. He looks at post-apartheid South Africa and realizes that a sense of belonging gives all the Blacks assurance and a hope that they are not alone, a thing which counters fear (3). Under apartheid regime, the sense of belonging which would have alleviated the Blacks' plight is what the Whites cautiously denied to them. And, by doing so, not only the Blacks, but also the Whites, fall victims of “lack of matrix of reference” (Luckay 4), which gives to the war for survival a sense of loneliness and disorientation.

To take but the case of Uncle Doughty, he is widely travelled but what remains of him is only a shadow. He likens himself to the spirit of Hamlet's father, which he incarnated once on the stage. This spirit is

... doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away

(Qtd in *A Walk in the Night* 21)

Uncle Doughty sees himself as a night wanderer. His walk is not physical, it is mainly psychological. After a brilliant international career as an actor in England and in Australia, Doughty ends his life in a poor black area of District Six, a “shit street” as he calls it (27). In an identification attempt, and probably for his own security in this Black dominated place, he tells Adonis: “that’s us, us, Michael, my boy. Just ghosts, doomed to walk the nights” (28). The “us” could be interpreted as intending to mean self-aggrandizement. In fact, a few pages earlier, Uncle Doughty was still referring to himself in plural: “Give us a hand” (25), probably to refer to the mess in which all the Whites in South Africa find themselves, after being disillusioned that not only the Blacks, but also the Whites, can be victims of apartheid. And the kind of help which Adonis gives Uncle Doughty is the help from his frustrated heart: he kills the old man. Doughty eliminated from the struggle for survival, Adonis must now go back into wanderings, because of this very murder which he just committed.

Presumably, Doughty’s brilliant past must have been darkened by some secret crimes which he thinks he is expiating now, and for which his psychology is deranged: he is a psychological wanderer, while Adonis wanders physically. What puts characters into wandering is not only their past crimes and their guilty conscience, but also, sometimes, their feeling of helplessness. Adonis goes into the streets first out of frustration, then out of fear to be arrested; the gang of criminals goes from place to place looking for Socks, their associate in some secret job; Joe, wretched and helpless, often wanders around the harbour, picking there rotten fish to eat (5); Willieboy is spotted “running up the street in the lamp-lit darkness” (38), out of fear of being mistaken for the murderer of Uncle Doughty, and the white police spend restless nights on patrol, hunting for the Blacks to arrest. In District Six, everybody is a wanderer, because nobody has peace of mind. The South African apartheid regime, meant to oppress the Blacks, makes a lot of victims even among the law-enforcers.

IV

Read from a purely linguistic angle, *Allah n’est pas obligé* and *A Walk in the Night* have very little in common. Not only do they belong to different linguistic traditions, but also, their events take place in unidentical spatio-temporal settings. *Allah n’est pas obligé* is set in Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars, while *A Walk in the Night* is set in apartheid South Africa. These settings, however, have something in common: characters placed in them move in conditions which create a debilitating subjection of individuals to inhuman treatment, where the latter are denied their most fundamental rights, including their right to life. The civil war in which *Allah n’est pas obligé* is set destroys human lives and property. As for apartheid, it targets mainly the Blacks in order to oppress and gradually suppress them.

The impact of the violence reigning in these settings on protagonists’ wanderings is function, among others, of the latter’s attitude to life. Birahima’s guilty conscience instils in him a fear of being doomed to fail throughout all his life: “ET moi j’ai tué beaucoup d’innocents au Liberia et en Sierra Leone où j’ai fait la guerre tribale... je suis poursuivi par les gnamas, donc tout se gâte chez moi et avec moi” (12). As for me, I have killed many innocent people in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, where I was involved in a tribal war... I am pursued by ghosts, and everything with me and around me worsens]. This feared doom justifies his constant failure to find his aunt Mohan, in spite of the three years he spends wandering in foreign war-torn countries. Although at times Birahima takes pride in his crimes, the reader pities a child soldier of Birahima’s age who emerges from his international wanderings physically sound but morally and culturally destroyed.

Contrary to Birahima, Adonis is a passive victim of violence. He is denied any role in the fight against his oppressors. There is no room for him to defend his innocence when he is unjustly sacked and, when he kills Doughty unwillingly, he does so because of the rage he came home with. His attitude to his crime is rather ambivalent. The first feeling he has is shock: he didn’t mean to kill Uncle Doughty. Then, although the murder puts him on the run in the dark streets of District Six like the spirit of Hamlet’s father doomed to wander the nights until his crimes are purged away, Adonis still nurses a certain pride in his crime. He sees the murder as an act which “placed him above others, like a poor beggar who suddenly found himself the heir to vast riches” (66), ignoring that one murder can trigger off an unbreakable chain of troubles. It is his friend Joe who brings him back to his senses. He needs to start life afresh, but in an honest manner, by resisting the temptation to follow a gang of criminals who are recruiting him into their group. Joe reminds Adonis that entering such groups may put him on the run for the rest of his life:

Like I said, we all got troubles, but johns like them don’t help you out of them. They in trouble themselves. You’d only add to the whole heap of troubles. I don’t know how to tell it, but you run away with them and you got another trouble. Like those rookers. They started a small trouble, maybe, and they run away from it and it was another trouble, so they run away all the time, adding up the troubles (69).

In the night wanderings, Adonis has reached a crossroads, and he is confronted to a problem of choice: living like Joe, innocent and wretched, with no guarantee of either the daily bread or protection, or following the gang of criminals actively recruiting him and promising him survival means. In the context of South African apartheid, this is a difficult choice. The reality on the ground shows him how being innocent – like Willieboy – does not guarantee safety, and becoming a criminal with the gang threatens his identity and his life.

Both Birahima and Adonis survive the violence, but they look lost. They are tragic characters moving in a society which does not care. They are at the mercy of all sorts of criminal groups- the only groups with arms wide open to welcome dejected victims of inhuman conditions brought about by war (*Allah n'est pas obligé*) or by apartheid (*A Walk in the Night*). They are in a jungle where only the strongest survive and, for their survival, they need to bridge the gap separating them from adverse groups, and thus find themselves candidates to worse crimes. In the absence of powerful moral boosters, they seem to lack the psychological stamina needed to withstand their environment which is inherently dehumanising. Their frequent wanderings would have entailed growth, in the logic of Bourneuf and Ouellet's theory on the impact of journeys on characters. Indeed, Birahima and Adonis change, but they change so negatively that they end up somersaulting the moral scale. Their wanderings seem to symbolize their attempt to reach the unattainable: the reigning violence cannot leave them unaffected. With murder in their hands and on their conscience, they look unfit to sustain their dignity and, while their survival would have depended on their bullying ability – a faculty which they still use unreservedly – they end up losing orientation.

Conclusion

Although few studies have explored the existence of possible relationships between violence and characters' wanderings in fiction, the present study focussing on *Allah n'est pas obligé* and *A Walk in the Night* has demonstrated that protagonists in the novels may turn into temporary or permanent wanderers in response to the violent setting in which they are placed. What accelerates their turning into wanderers is their level of involvement in the violence, which in turn instils in them a feeling of guilt, humiliation and failure. In the logic that "guilt and shame humiliate and undermine ones [sic] sense of integrity of the self (and challenges the maintenance of dignity...)" [Luckay 3], protagonists in the two novels gradually lose their identity and their dignity. Their physical wandering is but a visible manifestation of their disorientation and, implicitly, of their fruitless effort to come back to normalcy. The farther they reach in the wanderings, the greater the risk for them to get lost.

Works Cited

- Asein, S.O. *Alex la Guma: the Man and His Work*. Ibadan: New Horn press, 1987.
- Bourneuf, Rowland and R. Ouellet. *L'Univers du roman*. Paris, PUF, 1972.
- Bungaro, Monica. "Mothering Daughters and the other side of the Story in Amma Darko, Ama Ata Aidoo and Nozipo Macaire". *New Directions in African Literature* 125. Ed. Ernest Emenyonu. James Currey: Oxford, 2006. 67-81.
- Camus, Albert. *La Chute*. N.P. Gallimard, 2004.
- Coussy, Denise and Jacques Chevrier "L'Errance chez Williams Sassiné et V.S. Naipaul". *Notre Librairie. Revue des littératures du sud. Cahier spécial. Ahmadou Kourouma: l'héritage. Identités littéraires*. No 155-156. Juillet - Décembre 2004. 68-75.
- Dandy, J.O. "The Representation of Violence, the Individual History and the Land in Chinodya's *Harvest of Thorns* and Nyamfukudza's *The Non-Believer's Journeys*." *African Literature Today* 23. Ed. Eldred Durosimi Jones and Marjorie Jones. James Currey Publishers, n. p. 2002. 91-99.
- Dietche, Julie Phelps. "Child of War: Askar in Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*". *Calabar Studies in African Literature. Children and Literature in Africa*. Ed. Ernest Emenyonu et al. Heinemann, 1992. 199-214.
- Diop, Papa Samba. "Le pays d'origine comme espace de création littéraire". *Notre Librairie. Revue des littératures du sud. Cahier spécial. Ahmadou Kourouma: L'héritage. Identités littéraires*. No 155-156. Juillet – décembre 2004. 54-61.
- Garrier, Xavier. "Allah, fétiches et dictionnaires: une équation politique au second degré". *Notre Librairie. Revue des littératures du Sud. Cahier spécial. Ahmadou Kourouma: l'héritage. Identités littéraires*. no 155-156. Juillet- Décembre 2004. 164-169.
- La Guma, Alex. *A Walk in the Night*. Ibadan: Heinemann, 2000.
- Kourouma, Ahmadou. *Allah n'est pas obligé*. Paris 6: Seuil, 2000.
- Luckay, Zuzana. "Representations of Violence in contemporary South African Fiction". www.humiliationstudies.org/documants/luckayviolenceandthecontextofhostility.pdf.
- Maiangwa, Yusufu. "The Duty of Violence in Yambo Ouologuem's *Bound to violence*". *New West African Literature*. Ed Kolawole Ogungbesan. London/Ibadan/ Nairobi. Heinemann, 1979. 71-79.
- Notre Librairie. *Revue des littératures du sud. Penser la violence*. Nr 148. Juillet-septembre 2002.
- Priebe, Richard. "Transcultural Identity in African Narratives of Childhood" *New Directions in African Literature* 125. Ed Ernest Emenyonu. James Currey: Oxford, 2006. 41-52.
- Smiley, J. *The All-Time Travels and Adventures of Lidie Newton*. New York & Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf. 1998.

Wade, Michel. "Art and Morality in Alex la Guma's *A Walk in the Night*." *The South African Novel in English: Essays in Criticism and Society*. Ed. Kenneth Parker. London: Macmillan, 1978. 89-98.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

