

УДК: 82-313.3

<https://doi.org/10.36906/2500-1795/23-1/13>*D.R. Ruzmatova***COLOR AND NUMBER SYMBOLISM IN THE NOVEL “PARADISE”****BY ABDULRAZZAK GURNAH**

Abstract. This article addresses the use of colors and numbers in fictional literature, namely Abdulrazak Gurnah's “Paradise”, to express ideas beyond their literal meanings. Some authors may even employ colors to express a mood or underline critical themes in their works; for example, pastel colors may suggest dreaminess, while deeper tones may denote mystery or dread. The practice of giving particular numbers or numbers patterns value and meaning is known as number symbolism. This custom has been practiced throughout history in various nations and traditions and is frequently applied in spiritual, religious, or mystical situations. The symbols for the numbers three, seven, twelve, forty, and hundreds are well-known. Each of them alludes to diverse cultural perspectives that vary. The novel “Paradise” by Abdulrazak Gurnah might serve as an illustration of how colors and numbers can be used to convey ideas to readers about the importance of both colors and symbols in global culture. White, black, green, and red are frequently used color combinations in “Paradise” and are associated with colonialism, passion, desire, and nature. Numbers three, seven and twelve examine memory, religion, and personal identity questions. Colors and numbers are two parallel motifs frequently appearing in literature, yet Abdulrazak Gurnah's “Paradise” shows how important colors are relative to numbers. Additionally, in fictional literature, colors and numerals serve as indicators of cultural elements.

Keywords: color; number; cultural aspect; fictional literature; colonialism; cross-culture; novel.

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*Рузматова Д.Р.***ЦВЕТОВАЯ И ЧИСЛОВАЯ СИМВОЛИКА В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИИ «РАЙ»****АБДУЛРАЗЗАКА ГУРНЫ**

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается символическая значимость цветообозначений и числительных в художественной литературе на материале романа «Рай» Абдулраззака Гурны. Ряд авторов используют символику цветообозначений для выражения основной идеи

произведения или для характеристики действующих героев. Практика придания символического значения определенным цветообозначениям и числительным известна как символизм чисел и цветообозначений. Этот символизм практиковался на протяжении всей истории у разных народов и часто применяется в духовных, религиозных или мистических ритуалах. Символика чисел три, семь, двенадцать, сорок и сотни хорошо известны. Каждый из них выражает различные культурные точки зрения. Роман Абдулразака Гурны «Рай» может служить иллюстрацией того, как цветообозначения и числительные могут использоваться для передачи читателям идей о символике цветообозначений, и вообще о роли символов в мировой культуре. Белый, черный, зеленый и красный цвета часто используются в произведении «Рай» и ассоциируются с колониализмом, страстью, желанием и природой. Числа три, семь и двенадцать используются при рассуждении автора и персонажей о памяти, религии и личности. Цветообозначения и числительные – два параллельных мотива, часто встречающиеся в литературе, однако именно произведение «Рай» Абдулразака Гурны показывает, насколько символика цветообозначений и числительных тесно переплетается между собой.

Ключевые слова: цвет; число; культурный аспект; художественная литература; колониализм; кросс-культура; роман.

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Ruzmatova D.R. Color and Number Symbolism in the Novel “Paradise” by Abdulrazzak Gurnah // Нижневартковский филологический вестник. 2023. №1. С. 132-141. <https://doi.org/10.36906/2500-1795/23-1/13>

Ruzmatova, D.R. (2023). Color and Number Symbolism in the Novel “Paradise” by Abdulrazzak Gurnah. *Nizhnevartovsk Philological Bulletin*, (1), 132-141. <https://doi.org/10.36906/2500-1795/23-1/13>

Color is an intrinsic element of our daily lives; its presence can be seen in everything we see. It is commonly acknowledged that colors tremendously influence our emotions and feelings. Colors have been proven to cause psychological, physical, biological, and metabolic effects in humans. Color is the primary building block of visual symbols and acts as a means of human communication. While numbers are pervasive in modern life and have evolved alongside mankind over millennia. They organize, document, and quantify human behavior, spiritual belief systems, and the emergence of innovation in all areas of life. Furthermore, numerical components of cultural

identities and interpersonal expression, such as rites of passage, population demography, and fiscal measures, are frequently present.

Many literary researchers have investigated color and number symbolism in literature. Some noteworthy example could be that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's "Theory of Colors" (1770) was one of the first attempts in literature to carefully analyze color symbolism. "The Word 'Woman' and Other Related Writings" (199) by Laura Riding includes a section on color symbolism in poetry. In his books, particularly "Psychology of the Unconscious" (1912), Carl Jung, the creator of analytical psychology, examined the psychological connotations of color. Italo Calvino explored the use of color as a literary device and its symbolic implications in "Six Memos for the Next Millennium" (1988). Jacques Derrida, a philosopher and literary critic, analyzes the relationship between color and vision in his book "Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins" (1993). The historian and literary critic Michel Pastoureau has written extensively on color symbolism in medieval literature, most notably in his work "Blue: The History of a Color" (2000). In his book "Culture and Imperialism" (1993), literary critic and postcolonial theorist Edward Said explores the use of color symbolism in colonial literature.

Literary critics who have researched the usage of number symbols in literature include: In his work "Anatomy of Criticism" (1957), Northrop Frye, a notable literary critic, examined the symbolic usage of numbers in literature. He contended that numbers frequently symbolize archetypal patterns in literature and can be employed to create a sense of order and structure. In his book "The Poetics of Space" (1958), Gaston Bachelard, a French philosopher and literary critic, investigated various numbers' psychological and symbolic connotations. He contended that numbers have a strong influence on our imagination and can elicit a variety of feelings and meanings. In her book "The Structure of Shakespeare's Plays" (1973) British literary critic Elizabeth Sewall analyzed the usage of number symbols in Shakespeare's works. She stated that in Shakespeare, numbers are utilized to create a feeling of balance and harmony, and they can also be used to create order in the chaotic world of the play. In his essay "The Rhetoric of Temporality" (1983), Belgian literary critic Paul de Man addressed the use of numbers in writing. He contended that numbers are utilized in writing to generate a feeling of time and temporality, and that they can also be used to create a sense of continuity and coherence. Hugh Kenner, a Canadian literary critic, discussed the usage of number symbols in James Joyce's works in his book "Dublin's Joyce" (1955). Joyce, he said, employed numbers to create order and meaning in his complicated and often chaotic works. In his book "The Interior Distance" (1959), French literary critic Georges Poulet explored the usage of number symbols in Marcel Proust's works. He claimed that in his examination of memory and time, Proust used numbers to create a feeling of continuity and consistency. In his work "The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas" (1988), Umberto Eco, an Italian philosopher and literary critic, investigated the use of number symbols in literature. He contended that numbers may be employed to create a sense of harmony and balance in writing, as well as a sense of order in a chaotic world.

These are only a handful of the numerous literary critics who have investigated the usage of color and number symbols in literature. The use of colors and numbers as symbolic elements in

literature is a rich and complicated subject that continues to captivate and inspire both experts and readers.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate and interpret the importance of colors and numbers in Abdulrazak Gurnah's "Paradise". Abdulrazak Gurnah is a Tanzanian-British author who has made significant contributions to British-African and postcolonial writing. He has authored multiple novels, short tales, and essays, and his work has received widespread acclaim. Gurnah's novels frequently address themes of identity, displacement, and migration, reflecting on his personal experiences as a refugee who escaped to England as a young man from Zanzibar. His writing has a distinct style that combines elements of African and European literary traditions.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate and interpret the importance of colors and numbers in Abdulrazak Gurnah's "Paradise". Among Gurnah's most significant works are: "Paradise" (1994) is the story of a young guy from Zanzibar who travels to England to study and becomes entangled in a web of deception and betrayal. "By the Sea" (2001) delves into the lives of a group of exiles living in a small hamlet on the East African coast, as well as the conflicts that grow between them as they seek to reconcile their pasts. "Desertion" (2005) retells the narrative of a young man who travels from Zanzibar to Germany to study, only to become embroiled in the turbulence of WWII. "The Last Gift" (2011) is a novel about a group of Tanzanian immigrants living in London and the difficulties they confront in reconciling their African roots with their new life in the West.

Gurnah has won several prestigious literary awards, including the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature *"for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fates of the refugee in the gulf between cultures and continents"*, the Booker Prize for Fiction in 2021 for his novel "Afterlives" the Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 2017, and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1994. These are just a few examples of the many literary critics who have studied color symbolism in literature.

One of Abdulrazak Gurnah's most well-known and critically appreciated novels is "Paradise". The novel, which was published in 1994, depicts the narrative of Yusuf, a young man from Zanzibar who travels to England to study. His hopes for a better life are dashed when he realizes that the family who sponsored him has ulterior purposes and forces him to work in their shop.

As Yusuf attempts to manage life in a foreign area and come to terms with the realities of his predicament, the story addresses issues of identity, displacement, and cultural clash. The novel also digs into Zanzibar's complex history and ties with colonial powers, as well as themes of race, class, and gender.

The novel "Paradise" has received widespread acclaim for its lyrical style, nuanced characterizations, and ability to examine complex issues with sensitivity and understanding. The novel was a Booker Prize finalist in 1994 and has been translated into other languages. It is regarded as a fundamental work of African and postcolonial literature and is still frequently read and discussed by researchers and readers worldwide.

The use of color in "Paradise" emphasizes the contrast between Swahili people and white colonialists while also reflecting the variety and richness of Swahili culture. The novel's varied

colors signify diverse topics and ideas, such as power, identity, desire, violence, and nature. Using color as a motif, Gurnah creates a rich and nuanced portrayal of Zanzibar's cultural and social dynamics during the colonial period. Here are a few examples of the importance of color in the novel:

White: White is a color that is associated with colonialism and imperialism in the novel. *Before long they saw a column of soldiers marching with unhurried precision behind their European officer, who was dressed in white* (Gurnah 1994: 253); *One night I saw a very tall man leaning against the sufi tree there, as tall as a house and all white. Glowing like light ... but like fire not light* (Gurnah 1994: 28). The white colonialists who come to Zanzibar are portrayed as powerful and dominant, and their whiteness is a symbol of their authority and privilege.

The color white is also linked with purity and innocence, emphasizing the disparity between colonialists' idealized self-image and the harsh realities of their deeds. *Muungwana, he calls himself, a man of honour, when he's nothing but a plump little bun, strutting about like his plump white pigeons. He won't have much honour left by the time the seyyid has finished with him this time. Or that little woman over there* (Gurnah 1994: 186).

Black: Black is a color connected with the Swahili people and culture. *So many of the people who lived in Rusi were Muslims! In every town! Tartari, Kirgisi, Uzbeki! Who had heard of these names? His uncle's surprise was shared by these people too, who had never heard of a black man in Africa being a Muslim. Mashaallah!* (Gurnah 1994: 105). Black represents strength, resilience, and identity in the novel, and it is used to highlight the contrast between the Swahili people and the white colonialists.

The color black is also associated with darkness and mystery, which reflects the complexity and richness of Swahili culture. *Clumps of gnarled thorn trees dotted the plain, which was darkened by scattered outcrops of black rock* (Gurnah 1994: 57).

Red: Red is a color that is associated with passion and desire in the novel. *Their hair was groomed into tight plaits and dyed red like the earth, as were the soft-leather shukas which covered them diagonally from shoulder to hip and down to their knees... 'How do they get themselves to look so red?' another porter asked. 'It must be the blood they drink. It's true, isn't it? That they drink blood'.* (Gurnah 1994: 59). Red is associated with blood and violence, highlighting colonialism's brutal nature and its impact on the Swahili people.

Green: Green is a color that is linked with nature and the environment in the novel. *The lush green landscape of Zanzibar is a symbol of the island's natural beauty and fertility, and it is also a reminder of the importance of the environment to Swahili culture. He taught them hymns, and told them stories of green valleys that were lush with fruit and cream, and forests that were teeming with goblins and wild beasts, and mountainsides covered with snow and whole villages skating on frozen lakes* (Gurnah 1994: 62). Green is also linked with growth and renewal, which reflects the resilience and adaptability of the Swahili people in the face of colonialism.

Yellow: Yellow is a color that is associated with wealth and prosperity in the novel. The yellow sun and yellow gold are symbols of the wealth and prosperity of the Swahili people, and

they are also a reminder of the economic power that allowed the Swahili people to thrive before the arrival of the colonialists. ... *taking in the locked wooden storehouses and the huge yellow flag with its picture of a glaring black bird, Yusuf was able to take a long look at him* (Gurnah 1994: 62). Yellow is also associated with warmth and happiness, which reflects the joy and vibrancy of Swahili culture.

Gold: Gold is a color that is connected with wealth and power in the novel. The yellow gold that is mined in Zanzibar is a symbol of the island's wealth and prosperity, and it is also a reminder of the economic power that allowed the Swahili people to thrive before the arrival of the colonialists. *At the far end of the garden, lights hung on posts illuminated the terrace and carved a golden pavilion out of the deepening gloom* (Gurnah 1994: 62). Gold is also associated with luxury and extravagance, which reflects the opulence and grandeur of the Swahili court. *They were stunned by the eloquence of the brocade robes and the gold ornaments of the guests, and applauded the gay turbans the men wore* (Gurnah 1994: 51).

Orange: Orange is a color that has a connection with energy and vitality in the novel. It indicates the society is undergoing significant transformation. *Nor the bitter scent of orange sap in the day and the deep embrace of jasmine fragrance at night, nor fragrance of pomegranate seeds or the sweet herbaceous grasses in the borders* (Gurnah 1994: 233). It is also associated with warmth and enthusiasm, which highlights the passion and vitality of youth in a society that is in flux.

Hence, white is associated with the colonialists who come to Zanzibar and represents their power and privilege; black – the Swahili people and represents their strength, resilience, and identity; red – passion and desire for freedom; green – nature and the environment and represents the lush landscape of Zanzibar and its fertility; yellow – wealth and prosperity and represents the economic power that allowed the Swahili people to thrive before the arrival of the colonialists; gold – wealth and power and represents the wealth and prosperity of Zanzibar.

The use of color in “Paradise” by Abdulrazzak Gurnah reflects the Swahili people’s culture in various ways. Swahili culture is known for its vibrancy, diversity, and complexity, and the use of color in the novel reflects these qualities:

1. *Importance of nature:* The Swahili people have a strong bond with nature and the environment, reflected in the novel’s use of green and blue. The lush green scenery of Zanzibar and the azure waves of the Indian Ocean are significant symbols of the island's natural beauty and wealth. Swahili culture is renowned for its regard for nature.

2. *Rich cultural heritage:* The use of purple in the novel reflects the Swahili people’s rich cultural heritage and history. Purple is associated with royalty and power, and it is a symbol of the opulence and grandeur of the Swahili court. This reflects the Swahili people’s pride in their history and cultural identity.

3. *Resilience and strength:* The use of black in the novel reflects the Swahili people’s resilience and strength in the face of adversity. Black is a symbol of strength and identity, and it represents the Swahili people’s ability to withstand the challenges of colonialism and maintain their cultural identity.

4. *Desire for freedom:* The use of red and orange in the novel reflects the Swahili people's desire for freedom and agency. Red is associated with passion and desire, while orange is associated with energy and vitality, and these colors represent the Swahili people's struggle to break free from the constraints of colonialism and assert their identity and agency.

While the colors are the representation of cross-cultural influence in the novel, the use of numbers is also a prominent motif in "Paradise" by Abdulrazzak Gurnah, there are a few instances where numbers are used symbolically to convey meaning:

The number three: The number three appears several times in the novel and is often associated with the character of Yusuf. Gurnah depicts the period of Ramadan and fasting of Muslims as the following *"By the time afternoon arrived, Yusuf was weak with hunger and exhaustion. He found the first three days of fasting the worst, and if left to himself he would lie silently in a piece of shade through the best part of a day"* (Gurnah 1994:96). It shows the adaptation of the organism for endless hours without food or water, and the daylight agony was at least bearable. The reference to the religion is also given with the indication of the number three as: *His mother had taught him the alphabet, and had taught him to read the first three simple suras* (Gurnah 1994:96).

The number seven: The number seven is also used symbolically in the novel and is often associated with religion again: *When he was seven, he was sent to the teacher in the town they had just moved to, to be educated in religion* (Gurnah 1994:96). For children, age seven is considered the first level of maturing, and they need to be taught religion as well. *'God has made seven Heavens,' Hamid said, ignoring Kalasinga and turning his head aside as if to address Yusuf alone. His voice was slowly softening. 'Paradise is the seventh level, itself divided into seven levels. The highest is the Jennet al Adn, the Garden of Eden* (Gurnah 1994:80). The number seven often goes with spiritual and mystical significance, and its repeated appearance in the novel may reflect the mystical and spiritual aspects of the characters.

The number twelve: The number twelve appears in the novel as the protagonist Yusuf's age when he is sold by his father to repay a debt. From the simple life of rural Africa, Yusuf is thrown into the complexities of precolonial urban East Africa—a fascinating world in which Muslim black Africans, Christian missionaries, and Indians from the subcontinent coexist in a fragile, subtle social hierarchy. *He was already twelve. ... He stopped struggling after a moment and let his mother hold him to her. That was his first foreboding. When he saw the tears in his mother's eyes his heart leapt with terror* (Gurnah 1994:12-13).

The number nine: The number nine appears in the story given in the novel and here the author used text in the text technique. *A jinn stole a beautiful young princess from her home on the night of her betrothal ... Why could he not visit the princess for the nine days when the jinn was not there?* (Gurnah 1994:188-189). The use of the number nine in this context may reflect the importance of fate of human being. As in the novel stated, events should not happen by chance, and they are the destiny of the person.

The number one: The number one appears in the novel in reference to the character of Yusuf, who is often described as a solitary figure. Yusuf is a traditional healer and a symbol of cultural resistance, and his solitary nature reflects the challenges of maintaining cultural traditions and practices in a society that is undergoing significant change. *Then one day that devil Mohammed Abdalla came and took me and my sister away, and brought us here. We were to be rehani until our Ba could repay his debt. He died very soon after that, my poor Ba, and Ma and my brothers went back to Arabia and left us here. They just went and left us here* (Gurnah 1994:203). In the Swahili language, “rehani” means “mortgage” and “secured loan” using Yusuf and his sister as a source of secured loan shows the cruelty of the time and society that the protagonist belongs. The use of number one in this context may reflect the importance of individuality and resistance in the face of cultural and social pressures.

The number two: The number two appears in reference to the two worlds that are depicted in the novel: the world of the colonialists and the world of the Swahili people. The characters in the novel are caught between these two worlds, and the tension between them is a central theme of the novel. The use of the number two in this context may reflect the duality and complexity of the characters' experiences and the challenges of navigating the tension between tradition and modernity: *This is how you've bought your way across this land. Give me two guns, so I can send my sons hunting for ivory* (Gurnah 1994:149) ... *Only two of their guns · were armed, perhaps they should arm a couple more of the ones packed away* (Gurnah 1994:155).

A major topic of “Paradise” is the conflict between the two worlds of the colonizers and the Swahili people. Depending on their unique experiences and viewpoints, the characters in the book resolve this tension in various ways. One traditional healer who has strong ties to Swahili culture and custom is Yusuf. He fears the colonialists' modern world and sees it as a danger to the morals and traditions of his people. Depending on their unique experiences and viewpoints, the individuals in “Paradise” handle the conflict between the two worlds in a variety of ways. While some of the characters strive for education and independence, others reject the impact of Western society and continue to adhere to customary traditions. The book encourages readers to consider the various facets of this tension and the challenges of navigating social and cultural change.

As a result, in “Paradise”, the use of colors and numbers serves to emphasize a number of themes and ideas, such as the difficulties of growing up, the dualities and complexity of the characters' experiences, and the significance of individualism and resistance to societal and cultural influences.

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