



## Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer and Peter Abrahams: Characterization and Dramatization

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### ABSTRACT

Characterization, being an intrinsic aspect of novel production, helps to express ideas, and contributes to a series of events forming a spectacle in narrative as if it were in real life. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the process of character development thanks to Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer and Peter Abrahams' writing talents. These South African Apartheid novelists shed light on the prevailing human condition under racial discrimination by employing characters that either lead actions or answer back actions. They are defined according to their nature, their personality, their function and psychology. To this extent, critics like Bernth Lindfors and Vincent Jouve bring to light the political prejudice occasioned by the oppressor, which is a source of awareness and socio-political disrupt within the society embodied by verisimilitude.

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### INTRODUCTION

In the realm of literature, be it oral or written, the writer's literary production leads to questions that necessarily need answers related to themes and author's imagery employed. Consequently, trying to understand literature is not only for pleasure; rather, it also aims to develop skills; among those skills there are characterization and dramatization that constitute a non-negligible part of literature, especially in the South African novel. It seeks to explore the way characters behave regarding the actions and reactions through which they evolve. The other aspect is that beyond the simple invention of physical setting, the Apartheid novel is so political that the invented character is intended to experience an eventful life. Besides, the authors themselves, thanks to their writing skills, shape worlds in which a fringe of the society reacts to a political and social system.

The psychology of the characters is to be considered depending on the novelist's writing. Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer, and Peter Abrahams do not have the same techniques; hence their characters may be different, even if the question of Apartheid means the same to them. For instance, while Gordimer's black characters mainly embodied by Sonny, show up as militants in the political struggle of Apartheid, La Guma's non white characters, for instance, are rather revolutionary. In addition, his characters are created in such a way that the reader feels South Africa as it is known in history, in real life. Alex La Guma, in an interview by Robert Serumaga, comments on the psychology and action of the character and actions:

I've forgotten what my own book is about. Still, Michael Adonis is the typical colored I tried to make. During the years I lived in District Six, I played with and met characters like him – young men who, because of their situation in life and because of the lack of opportunity and because of their color have been prevented from achieving many ambitions [...] [1].

In the following sections, after recalling the contextual framework of the novels, the present work aim is to discuss the skills used by the writer to show Apartheid South Africa through characters who behave as if they were real committed people to racial issues. This provides us with a verisimilitude regarding what happens. It also can undoubtedly influence the psychology of protagonists and antagonists thanks to the novelists' writing ability and awareness of the political and social situation that prevail there. Therefore, ways characters – black or white, especially black ones get organized in the narratives, how they are described regarding their respective psychologies and reactions to situations, could be of great help in the present work.

### Contextual Framework and Novels Analysis

In the context of the color bar in South Africa, there are two kinds of political and social confrontations all along the books under study: on the one hand, because of the segregationist racist system, the clash between victimized and

victimizers takes place in a violent way. These two social classes are largely represented by the blacks and coloureds as victims of the system, and the white community representing the victimizers who keep on imposing their supremacy over the nonwhites. On the other hand, the interaction that very often takes place in the texts between characters of the same preoccupation, and generally their interactions are strategic, and sometimes pathetic.

Alex la Guma's works studied in this thesis, blacks and whites' encounter ends up with brutality perpetrated in District Six, a famous place to South African people. If we consider the role of the police in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) that incarnates the country's racist and marginalizing laws, we notice the character Constable Raalt who does his best to ill-treat the black community. Young blacks such as Michael Adonis, Willie Boy, Foxy, or young Joe are pursued at night by the police pretending that they smoke Indian hemp commonly known in their jargon as "Dagga", or they wander in the streets, which puts them in an uncomfortable posture to be punished.

The contact between the whites and the non-whites, naturally, in the context of the colour bar, is not that peaceful. Conflicts are recurrent for the ideology of the supremacy is not often in peace with the blacks. There is always an atmosphere of conflict for the ideology of the western race to impose its supremacy upon the non-European is not often welcomed by the others. That is why in the South African literary scene, this kind of ideology does not work without political and social effects. This explains why literary production in this context and social realities reminds us of Louis Althusser's thought about the issue. For him, an ideology is only meaningful and worth existing when its protagonist believes in it and has the representation not only in his mind, but in real life.

In literary writings, the white ruling class attempts to develop the ideology of capitalism, but the other class reacts against such a policy. For instance, while looking for the murderer of an old white man named Uncle Doughty by a young coloured, Michael Adonis, the police, under the control of Constable Raalt, do not hesitate to call out to a whole crowd of coloureds and non-whites to threaten them in order to know the murderer. In the Apartheid system, the white community imposes its supremacy in such a way that in the psychology of the blacks and coloureds, the feeling of inferiority prevails within some individuals.

In other words, for some nonwhites, once in contact with the police force, the attempt to please them so as to gain freedom and not be punished is seen as a strategic way to escape some kind of brutality. Abrahams, a coloured character, does not hesitate to inform Constable Raalt about the culprit by giving him clues after seeing him run away. Furthermore, once in front of the crowd of nonwhites, Raalt threatens them in a violent way as usual. Thus, when he is informed by Abrahams about the murderer, Raalt promises to find him even if he has to arrest any black "bastard" wearing a yellow shirt, and perhaps a kinky hair like the wanted.

Regarding literary style or writing techniques, the hatred that prevails between the white and the black communities, violence may also result from the nonwhites. It is rather a matter of circumstance. As illustration, Mister Green another old man undergoes a harsh punishment from a young coloured named Willie Boy who harasses him at the night in the street by asking him five bob:

Willie boy kicked him viciously in the ribs and squealed more from fear than pain.  
Then hands then hands were running through his pockets while he crouched  
trembling[2].

Confrontation and interaction are not merely confined in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) because this phenomenon can also be noticed in the other books. Therefore, in the psychology of the white man, the other races living in the South African society are inferior, which appears in their contact. For instance, in *In the Fog of the Season's End*, Issac, a coloured character and member of an underground political movement, feels sorry for "These people who believe themselves to be the master Race, to have the monopoly of brains, yet who were vindictive, selfish and cruel". If we remember the brutal attitude of the police in *A Walk In The Night* (1962), we can notice an analogy of the scorn that the white man nurses along the events in *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1972) against the non-white once in contact in a given circumstance: "[...] boys, boys, boys, he thought, you could grow to a hundred and they would still call you a boy because you were black" [2].

In the writings of Alex La Guma, the violent contact between the white ruling class and the nonwhite victimized class is due to the existing social realities largely influenced by the political relationships between the two different communities during the apartheid system.

*Mine Boy* (1946), similarly to the other books under study, reveals some harsh confrontations that prevail between these two different communities. Malay Camp is the place that welcomes Xuma the main character of the novel who goes through social and political hardships from this place to the mines where he truly lives and witnesses other kinds of confrontations and interactions between black workers and the white capitalist bosses.

The example of Malay Camp has been very helpful to Xuma given that, as an innocent country boy, he discovers the real contact between the white power interested in economy, and the nonwhites undergoing harsh exploitation in the mines. Therefore, after discovering this place with its eventful moments, he dare beat a policeman who, at any time of the day, pursues black people in the streets.

As another experience of his, Xuma is discovers the degree of corruption of the police in given circumstances. This happens when a policeman informs Leah (a quite rich coloured lady who very often gives shelter to people from the country who wait for a job and who dwells at Malay Camp) about when and how the police show up in the place, then for this, he receives money from her.

Quite differently from these cases the nonwhites' contact with the whites is primarily violent in *Mine Boy* (1946). There is, of course, hatred from the whites, but it is more strategic given that they do need the nonwhite labour people in the mines: The strategy is that they have *Indunas*, the police in charge of the security who always carry "kerries" and "assegais", in a threatening way to keep discipline among workers who are only needed for the bulk of the hard works in the mines:[... ] *an Induna feels Johannes' pockets before he enters[...]* [3]. In addition, Xuma, once with a white man in the mines, starts suffering from pushing a truck of sand. The Induna near him protests under his breath, a few men grumble in their throat, others whisper knowing that it is hard to carry such a burden.

On the whole, the relationship between whites and nonwhites is marked by exploitation exerted on blacks and coloureds rather than a simple hatred against the nonwhite people: either the police are corrupt, or exploitation in the mines exerted on nonwhites prevails.

Social and political confrontations are also to be explored not only in *A Walk In The Night* (1962), *In the Fog of the Season' S End* (1972) and *Mine Boy* (1946), but the relationships between characters in *My Son's Story* (1990) and *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) are also analyzing in relation to their interactions and confrontations.

While Alex Guma uses violence as a strategy implemented either by the oppressor via the police force, especially in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) and *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1972), or by the oppressed to transcend the segregationist policy perpetrated by the white minorities, Nadine Gordimer and Peter Abrahams use other techniques to display certain confrontations among characters.

*My Son's Story* (1990) is of paramount importance in the Apartheid South African novel regarding political commitment and writing strategies. Sonny, the main character, is portrayed as an activist in a society dominated by a powerful white community using all State apparatuses to govern. As for the creation of situations of confrontation between characters, the events in this novel reveal two aspects: On the one hand, Sonny's political agitations which become so noticeable in the society that even his own family feels strongly affected despite his efforts of being a model and exemplar family educator in the area. Here, his political activism remains his main concern in the prevailing of the country in such a way that he is looked down upon by the white authorities, which eventually takes him to jail.

In all encounters between the two races, either there is the threat of prison, or that of physical brutality that Chips, Willie boy, and Franky Lorenzo undergo in *A Walk in the Night* (1962). The white authority displaces the nonwhites and controls the land. Generally, the nonwhites resist and defy the racist laws set by the system: It is the case in the 'grey area', a place where blacks settled to defy the regime though it was reserved to whites only.

Nadine Gordimer, unlike the other novelists under study, adopts a special writing strategy concerning race relationship. Apart from the use of violence in almost all the contacts between whites and blacks, the relationship between Sonny and Hannah Plowman is noticeable. Mixed love among different races is a real fact given that between a white woman, a 'blonde', monitoring, at the international scale human rights security and assistance, falls in love with this nonwhite political activist Sonny.

The contact between blacks and nonwhites in Apartheid results to another situation. Thus, the context of love between Sonny and Hannah Plowman is deceiving his own family in this romantic life. While the rest of his family still believes that Hannah is politically assisting their father (but Will, his son, does know for it is he who reveals it!), there are meetings hiding a love secret. This means that Nadine Gordimer, through her narrative strategy, shows, in deep details, another facet of the effects of the ruling system.

Like the political commitment discovered in *My Son's Story* (1990), *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) also insists on social and political relations between the white and black communities in novel creation. This novel represents, on the

one hand, a book of true political commitment started in the far west, Britain, by Africans who get together and plot a political revolution to free their African country named Panafrica.

What is mainly noticeable here is the blacks' sense of unity and courage to face the British in their home place to express their concern and preoccupation: the dream to free their African country. Apart from their direct call out to the British to satisfy their need, another kind of confrontation that exists among blacks themselves. This reminds us of the African disillusionment well-known to Western Africa and Eastern Africa about what Ngugi wa Thiong'o states in his *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural freedom (1993)*, 'Domination between the nations and within nations', which means that, after claiming for African freedom, African leaders betray their peoples because they do not respect what they had been advocating about African dignity and revival before gaining such an autonomy. The westerners keep dominating African nations even after independence; there is a noticeable internal domination, fight and jealousy among blacks themselves. To the fore, the contact between Africans in *A Wreath for Udomo (1956)* seems to be more striking than that existing between them and the whites. Michael Udomo is, therefore, seen as a betrayer, which displays a real African dis-ease within Africans as stated below:

Selina – There are more white people in our land now than there were when the British ruled.

Udomo – We need them, need their skills.

Selina – What of your promise that the land would be free of their rule?

Udomo – They don't rule. We rule. You know that, Ade.

Adebhoy – I'm not sure of that anymore. Sure we're the ministers. The Cabinet's ours. We sign the laws. But white men run all the big industrialization and construction projects. They control us with their money and you know it. That's why you have to shut your eyes to their clubs for whites only. Everywhere in the land, in factories, on building and construction projects, where roads are being made, whites give the orders and blacks do the work [...]

Selina – like in Mhendi's land[...] [4].

*Mine Boy (1946)* and *A Wreath for Udomo (1956)* by Peter Abrahams insist on the issue of land usurped by the whites. While there is economic exploitation in the mines that threatens the life of nonwhite workers because of lack of labour security, these political and revolutionary activists still show this phenomenon of exploitation perpetrated by the white power through their interactions in *A Wreath for Udomo' (1956)*.

In short, confrontation through interactions between characters in the South African novel ends up with violence. Violence occurs in the texts, and it does occur either between protagonists of different social and political interest or ideology, or between the white community and the nonwhite community. Thanks to the authors' awareness and writing strategies, these kinds of situational show or tell, in a realistic way, how Apartheid works.

In the course of world history, intellectual capacity has always been a leading weapon to run for power, defend a given ideology, or be against it, in the exploration of the South African novel. From this standpoint, the following section raises the issue of the choice and usefulness of literate characters in the context of political struggle.

Political activism requires some intellectual capacities as class struggle is very often founded on organization and method to come up with satisfactory outcomes. In the context of class struggle in South Africa, the most noticeable advantage of black fighters at that time was that they had received a quite enough intellectual training that, of course, enabled them to notice the rampant discriminatory racial policy and the laws adopted in the Constitution. This awareness leads to better leading and organizing skills in political actions to stop any discriminatory political policy on the land of South Africa. So, as already stated, the presence of historical facts contributes to the existing influences upon Apartheid literature, intellectuals, or in other terms literate figures can play an outstanding role in society. And this is confirmed in the race relationship of South African postcolonial history.

The novels under study largely account for ways characters interact, which sometimes leads to some confrontations within the same group, or between groups of different ideologies and interests. Whatever the case may be, in such confrontations and interactions, ideological resistance, violence within different communities, and even humanist attitudes within the same groups of common ideology. That is why it is worth stating that Yousaf Nahem explains the nature of this violence in his central analysis of *A Walk in the Night*:

All along this book, I have tried to show a meticulous witnessing on the committed atrocities during this long dark period of Apartheid, but also at the same time they provide us a lot, because his novels report on a transfer to violence, to an ideological resistance [5].

## Psychology of Characters

Characterization, as a realistic writing approach in modern fiction is one of the writing techniques the most essential in literary writing, especially in that of Apartheid South Africa. Besides, the question of character exploration in the present study leads to two kinds of characters: the protagonist that mainly struggles for a specific cause on the one hand, and the antagonist opposing him on the other hand. Yet, other characters known as secondary ones also play a considerable role provided that they take part in the course of the events; characters in general can be discovered as flat characters that are stereotypes, or round characters looking like real people who act and react as if they were in a physical world.

### *Characters Personality in the novels*

John Abrahams, in *A Walk in the Night*, as a secondary character, is described to be the counter example of Michael Adonis or Franky Lorenzo, especially when confrontations with the police force occur. For instance, when looking for the culprit after the killing of Uncle Doughty, Raalt, the police Constable, questions a gathering of nonwhites in order to find the old man's murderer to exert revenge over him. In fact, Abrahams resolutely intends to reveal who the murderer is. However, this does not prevent him from being scolded by the police force, and even menaced to be taken to court in case they need an eye-witness. With cowardice and a friendly look at Constable, he tells him:

There is a dead man upstairs. Look like murder, baas.

Then, Constable Raalt stared back at him and said: "How hell to know what murder is and what isn't, jong?"

Abrahams does not stop at that level; he adds: "Well, Konstable, I reckon I saw who did it.

- Oh you did? And what is your name, Kerel?
- John Abrahams baas. [...] Don't listen to them, baas, I believe in law and order".
- "Oh", Constable Raalt said, smiling at him with a small sneer, and added: "you believe in law and order. That's very good, jong." He looks at the driver and says: "He believes in law and order." To the man he said: "Good. Give us some of your law and order [6].

With the use of dialogue in characterization, two different attitudes are noticeable in *A Walk in the Night (1962)*: the feeling of inferiority in the attitude of John Abrahams as a black character on the one hand, and Constable Raalt's arrogance, which shows the difference within the society because of the colour line. More, this situation truly shows that some of the coloureds and blacks are rather interested in personal survival in such a way that they accept submission to escape from any kind of violence exerted on them. It is the case of John Abrahams who collaborates with the police in search of Old Doughty's murderer. Like in the death of this white old man, the white communities benefit from the protection of the power with all the government apparatuses. In addition, in *In the Fog of the Season's End* Alex La Guma sheds light on the South African struggles through characters who are involved in political resistance. This resistance is based on a collective struggle, which represents the best way to solve the problems caused by the system. The characters overcome loneliness and disconnectedness that are truly imposed on them by the white community. Hence, the white man's unique preoccupation is to come across a black and exert superiority and repression over him or her.

Contrary to John Abrahams, other black characters like Beukes in *In the Fog of the Season's End (1972)*, Sony in *My Son's Story (1990)*, Michael Udomo in *A wreath for Udomo*, like Michael Adonis and Franky Lorenzo in *A walk in the Night (1962)*, show no fear, or feeling of inferiority vis-à-vis the white community. For instance, in *My Son's Story*, Sonny is depicted a true and unshakeable incarnation of the politically committed black leader:

The definite face that begins to emerge with adolescence was long, slender and tenderly responsive beneath thick-browed, great black, eyes ringed with dark skin as if in physical manifestation of deep thought [7].

This vivid description of the character psychology and commitment shows that the Apartheid novelist sheds light on the black community's determination to deny the system of the colour line.

The psychology of the characters in the novels under study is principally linked to the system in which blacks endure hardships and are given very little opportunity to live a peaceful life within the community. This can be the source of all blacks' awareness founded in despair, loss, marginalization, to name but these. This situation in which black characters belong to the underestimated and losing community seems to be a source of motivation in the struggle of these victimized people. As for young characters in *A Walk in the Night (1962)* like Michael Adonis, Willieboy, among many others, they represent those who cannot find a way out except if it is not banditry and street life. Even Peter Abrahams, as a writer who has experienced Apartheid hardships and exile, brings light to the issue as quoted by Bernth Lindfors in *"Exile and Aesthetic Distance: Geographical Influences on Political Commitment in the Works of Peter Abrahams"* (1986):

In 1939 I had signed on a ship as stoker and left South Africa. I had come away charged with bitterness against the whites of that land in particular and all whites in general. Life there had allowed me no self-respect, no dignity [....]. The need to be psychologically free of the colour bar had, over the years grown into a kind of obsession [...] I had escaped and reached England [....] [8].

### ***Human Condition and Social Awareness***

Peter Abrahams' life experience is mirrored in the psychology of his characters that become more conscious, and exert revenge over any white man; they are even ready to follow the path to exile. It is the case of Michael Adonis who, after murdering the old man at the tenement, eventually runs away because the white authorities never excuse a nonwhite who exerts violence over the white community:

There is going to be trouble. Didn't mean it. Better get out. The law don't like white people being finished off. Well, I didn't mean it. Better get out before somebody comes [....] [2].

Sonny, in *My Son's Story* (1990), shows an attitude of maturity and progress enabling him to target the prevailing social political unrest. That is why characters like him to respond by a series of actions in order to thwart racial discrimination.

The South African Apartheid novel shows the nonwhite's regretful fate. Thus, one illustration in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) is that of the victimized characters that are, at any time, deprived of basic needs to live peacefully rather than be socially and politically the society's dropouts:

The young man wore jeans that had been washed several times... he also wore an old khaki shirt and over it a rubbed and scuffed and worn leather coat... his shoes were of the moccasin type, with leather thongs stitching the saddle to the rest of the uppers. They had been bright once, but now there were worn a dark brown, beginning to crack in the grooves across the insteps. The thongs had broken in two places on one shoe and in one place on the other [2].

Character description and psychology are closely related in the sense that the main purpose of the committed Apartheid novelist is to express his or her thought and preoccupation through chosen characters. That is why similarities are noticeable whenever it comes to consider character's physical appearance, psychology and attitude.

This explains why young characters in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) resort to violence because of their bad living conditions, others, rather, show that they are responsible and know how to take their proper destiny in hands. *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) and *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1972) are two novels similar in kind regarding the motivation found in black characters' attitudes. On the one hand, Michael Udomo and his fellows can be considered to be so responsible to the extent that their struggle is conducted with much diplomacy to free Africa from the hands of the white colonizer. On the other hand, the level of intelligence of the black activists in *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1972) in terms of militant and political leadership through underground movements, not only testify to victimization of blacks, but it also raises awareness.

The innocent Xuma in *Mine Boy* (1946) shows a responsible, committed and respectful behavior when it comes to resisting, with Joseph, the police agent who questions them in the streets. However, Xuma, instead of showing cowardice, uses violence against the police agent, which implies that, though he is a young victimized character, he does not feel any fear or inferiority once in front of the white man.

From another perspective, the issue of characterization in which the character is the focal point, the human being mirroring what truly happens to society under Apartheid. Since in novel writing, the character is part of the world created by the author, the story is mainly based upon conflict. So, in this conflict, there are always two main roles: the protagonist and the antagonist. In other words, in the Apartheid novel, as in the other novels in general, there are protagonists, hereby nonwhites, and the antagonists represented by the white actors who impose their supremacy over the rest.

Consequently, the events narrated in the novel lead to a specific character psychology, whereby the description is organized through actions, and reactions in novel writing in this context; the narrative can be supplemented by function of characters.

In the novels under study, two main features are noticeable: primarily, nonwhite characters react against white characters. And this is noticeable in the actions, reactions, and psychology of actors, be they the victimized or the oppressors. Thus, what is fundamental in character description and psychology is their roles as actors aiming at resolving a conflict. That is why characters like Sonny, Michael Adonis, Beukes or Michael Udomo, are discovered as true actors

of a society undermined by social and political deprivation. Through their actions and reactions, psychological characters are figured out in *My Son's Story* (1990). For instance, the character of Sonny shows another feature of a political committed activist. Because of the system, he is a true betrayer and deceiver for his own community and family with his secret love affair with a white woman named Hannah Plowman.

If Sonny's secret life is revealed by Will, his son, some critics like Vincent Jouve[9] in his *Poétique du roman* (2007), finds that in the plot, different relevant rules are noticeable. He even quotes from Ph. Hamon as “*preferential axes*” [10], regarding love, sex and gender issues, or political commitment:

The thematic role, as its name indicates, has the characteristics of the thematic part of narrative grammar. It designates the envisaged actor from a figurative viewpoint that is like something conveying “meaning”. The thematic role is also related to psychological categories (the banker, the workman, the instructor, etc.) that permit to identify the character in terms of content [10].

As a result, even if nonwhite characters are mostly preoccupied by their human condition disrupted by social and political prejudice, they differ in some ways. Such a difference can be found in their personality and psychology as well.

The authors' narratives reinforce the events in rendering more vivid the primary role of the novel, that is to say the consideration of human condition. This human condition has been one of the authors' concerns in such a way that they resort to skillful writing techniques that need exploring in the following section.

### **Narration of the Characters' Presence**

In narrative development, writing techniques enhance the interest of novelists in using characters as real figures of actions in the plot. Character intervention in the narrative is differently presented by an author depending on his or her mood, the writing purpose and motivation. Even if novels are written in prose, characters' speeches can present different facets: either the character uses a direct speech or he uses the indirect speech that conveys messages through actions and reactions.

#### ***Characters' attitude and Discourse***

In indirect speech, the novelist always chooses to use inverted commas and dashes in narrative:

There was laughter, and private exchanges. ----as some what sort of people are we sending around? Did you hear that? ---- Some mission.[...] He goes about claiming [...] I am telling you. [...] they had their break from tension and then were rapped to order. – This is not a circus, comrades. – One who always could be counted on to hold the floor as if he were eyeing in a mirror his plump handsome face, himself his own appreciative audience, began a prepared speech.

- Comrades [...] we are facing a grave crisis whose ultimate consequences we may not foresee... the forces of democratic actions are threatened from within [...] [7].

In the same vein, the narrator, as in the previous example taken from Nadine Gordimer's novel, combines both narrative and direct discourse to shape his story in Peter Abrahams' *Mine Boy* (1946) as follows:

Leah led the way. The fox followed her. A policeman brought each of the others along. Two policemen guarded the five tins.

The fox looked round the faces. He recognized xuma.

“Hello, Xuma.”

Xuma remained silent. The fox looked at Leah. There was admiration in his eyes as he saw her composure and the crooked smile on the side of her face [3].

In this section, the narrator sometimes uses writing devices like direct speech and indirect speech to provide meaning.

On the whole, stylistic studies give much consideration in writing techniques to allow the narrator to give the floor to the actor himself to give an internal speech as if he were witnessing the events or actions through observation. This issue cannot be dealt with without having a glance at the created world to mean the plot; hence, characters are bound to be taken as real actors in a world where a minority centralizes resolutely the power to the detriment of a victimized majority. That is why in the present study, writing styles can be different from one another; all depends on the author's narratives and techniques of narration. The way people are described in a work, their intentions and psychology deal with characterization. A narrative can be shaped like a play. In this way, dramatization is paramount. So, what is important, as far as characterization and dramatization are concerned, is whether the presentation is direct or indirect, to mean whether it is a showing or telling perspective.

The character of a writer's work is to be defined according to the strategy of protest adopted. Peter Abrahams addresses the cause of political freedom for African peoples by creating characters that represent educated Africans who fight from abroad for this cause, and return to their homelands to lead nationalist movements and become political actors. Whereas in Alex La Guma's work, there is a realistic description of his society mirroring black people's resistance that he portrays in his texts. So, here, a literature of protest against injustice and for justice is dealt with via characters' psychology and personalities.

### **Characters and Conflict Resolution**

Either in *A wreath for Udomo* (1956), or in *A Walk in the Night* (1962), characters evolve together according to common aspirations to arrive at a resolution. Thus, to come up with this end, each character tends to use different ways and means to survive and be in peaceful conditions. Therefore, the black communities and white authorities (the colonial section, the Progressist Party, the secretary...) are all composed of characters in the dynamics of convincing one another according to the socio-political position. In other words, the African freedom group is mainly composed of Michael Udomo, Paul Mabi and Adheboy who all aspire to African freedom and political autonomy. Nevertheless, individual or personal objectives are not to be neglected, especially in the different characters' attitudes in *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956). The sense of patriotism is confirmed by Michael Udomo to Lois about Thomas Landwood's personality and struggle. He says: "*He is a great patriot*". But, Lois, a British woman, first reacts by a smile and utters: "*You man and your patriotism*"[4]. This reveals that, even if the white woman is among black people, she still feels superior to them. She is arrogant. She creates opportunities for black liberators to get together as compatriots. Lois Barlow has helped Michael Udomo launch his first political actions abroad with Thomas Landwood, David Mhendi, and Richard Adheboy.

However, one of the differences between characters in *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) and those in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) lies upon this told story about black liberators' struggle on the land of the colonizer. In this respect, once in Africa, relationships between whites and blacks evolve in another dimension. While violence and brutality is simply stated in *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956), it is showed as if it were in real life in Alex La Guma's fiction. More precisely, David Mhendi's wife, among others, at the "Squatter A," is a political victim, as Mhendi himself reports:

They have been trying to move my people from their old lands to a near-desert strip of land.  
The settlers don't like to see us on fertile land [...] [4].

Mhendi keeps on affirming that his people do not want to move, that the colonizer does not want to give up the homes and lands that have always been theirs. These black people turn on the whites who came to supervise them. While this phenomenon is told according to Peter Abrahams' writing style, it is showed as it happened in real life in La Guma's texts. In *A Walk in the Night* (1962), white characters torment nonwhites; police brutality has been showed in his writings as stated below:

The look-out got his hands under Willieboy's armpits and hauled him over, then started to drag him down the corridor to the front door. His heels made a squealing sound on the oilcloth [...] [2]

Yet, even if violence is mostly exerted by the whites, it is sometimes perpetrated over them as revenge whenever an occasion is offered to blacks. Because of this situation, black characters turn wicked and brutal in their acts. For instance, Willieboy harasses the old white man, Mr Green as stated: "Willieboy kicked him viciously in the ribs and he squealed more from fear than pain... I got a good mind to chop you" [2].

Most of the events in *A Walk in the Night* (1962) are focused on dramatization, but telling devices, are also noticeable in La Guma's writing as follow:

Help Oh! God! Save me. I'm dying, I'm dying. Save me. Save me. Oh Christ help!  
Help me. Help me. Help me. Please help. God. Jesus. Mother [...] [2].

As for the relationships between black people and the white protagonists of the segregationist system, characters are taken as victims of the political and social situation. Michael Adonis, Willieboy, Joe, Chips, Franky Lorenzo, have all undergone the police brutality. This way of ruling is a confirmation of the gap between blacks and whites. Constable Raalt does his best to ill-treat people "*wandering aimlessly*" in the street. One example is that of a man whose skin is olive was found smoking, received blows, and the audience did not react for fear of being beaten in turn by the police. Chips, one of the black characters, tried to please him with pounds, but after sliding them into his pockets, he articulated: "*You don't have to smile at me; I'm not your play mate* [2].

Besides, in this country's literature that is deeply influenced by the prevailing apartheid system, a representation of South Africa appears as an image of how people evolve in the real country rather than a mere ideology or set of mentalities. Moreover, Dominique Maingueneau states the same thing regarding the direct resemblance between real

South Africa under apartheid and its representation in literature by Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer and Peter Abrahams:

The literary work is not a representation, an arrangement of content that would allow expressing in a more or less indirect way, sorrow and happiness, ideologies or mentalities. It definitely speaks of the world it is meant to represent. There is not on one side a universe of things and silent activities, on the other, literary representations isolated from it and that would provide an image. [...]

The work can represent but a world that is disrupted by a return to the conditions of possibilities of its proper enunciation [11].

On the whole, in both *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) and *A Walk in the Night* (1962), some of the characters' attitudes and acts are developed in the authors' writings. In relation to this, characterization and dramatization as writing styles are also taken into account. Alex La Guma has adopted showing strategies more frequently than Peter Abrahams. Whatever the case, each of them has his own objectives and messages to convey. But, in most cases such messages are conveyed to the reader by rhetorical figures and symbolical elements that are specific to the Apartheid context.

## CONCLUSION

Characterization makes a novel attractive, interesting and consistent. Thus, thanks to characters' movements and actions, the readers and the audience feel the increased intensity of the authors' intentions and messages. In fact, the exposure of the brutalities of Apartheid, the way characters are different, their psychology and concerns, are, on the whole, embodied, in this paper, by the novel-based colour bar production exposed by Alex La Guma, Nadine Gordimer and Peter Abrahams. These novelists have often described the experience of writing focused on the discrimination period that undergoes a political system of injustice in the society. So, as for findings, from the main characters' actions to the secondary ones' presence and state of mind, these authors' works bring light to a world of fiction mirroring real facts through realistic atmosphere. In a nutshell, characterization and dramatization are intrinsically related to novel production, especially in the context of Apartheid South African literature of protest and resistance to an established discriminatory system. From a different perspective, it is worth exploring other research paths related to the concepts of showing and telling devices to shed more light on writing strategies developed here to deal with the color bar-based literature.

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