

LITERATURE PRIZE 2021

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Abdulrazak Gurnah

The Nobel Prize in Literature

"the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction"



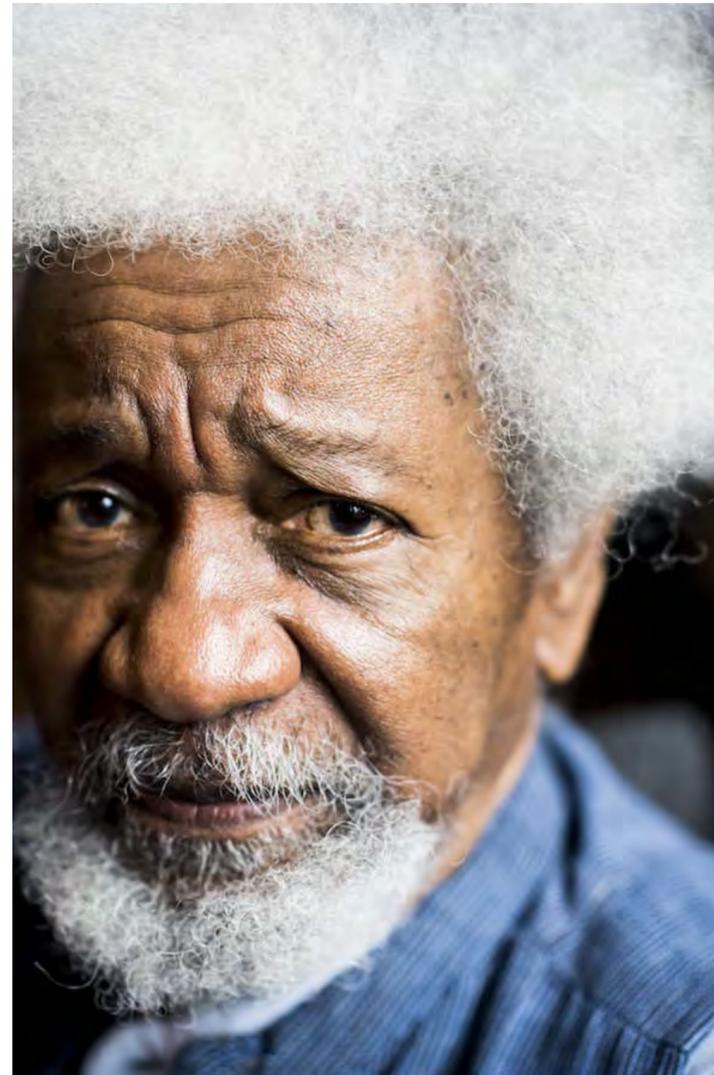
Who is rewarded with the literature prize?



ALICE MUNRO (2013). FOTO: ©NOBEL MEDIA AB.



HERTA MÜLLER (2009). © THE NOBEL FOUNDATION. PHOTO: U. MONTAN.



WOLE SOYINKA (1986). © NOBEL MEDIA AB. PHOTO: A. MAHMOUD.

The Nobel Prize in Literature has mainly been awarded to authors who have written works of fiction – novels, short stories, poetry collections and theatrical plays.

The literature prize 2021



Abdulrazak Gurnah
Born: 1948, Zanzibar

"for his uncompromising and
compassionate penetration of the effects of
colonialism and the fate of the refugee in
the gulf between cultures and continents."

The 2021 literature laureate



PHOTO: MARK PRINGLE

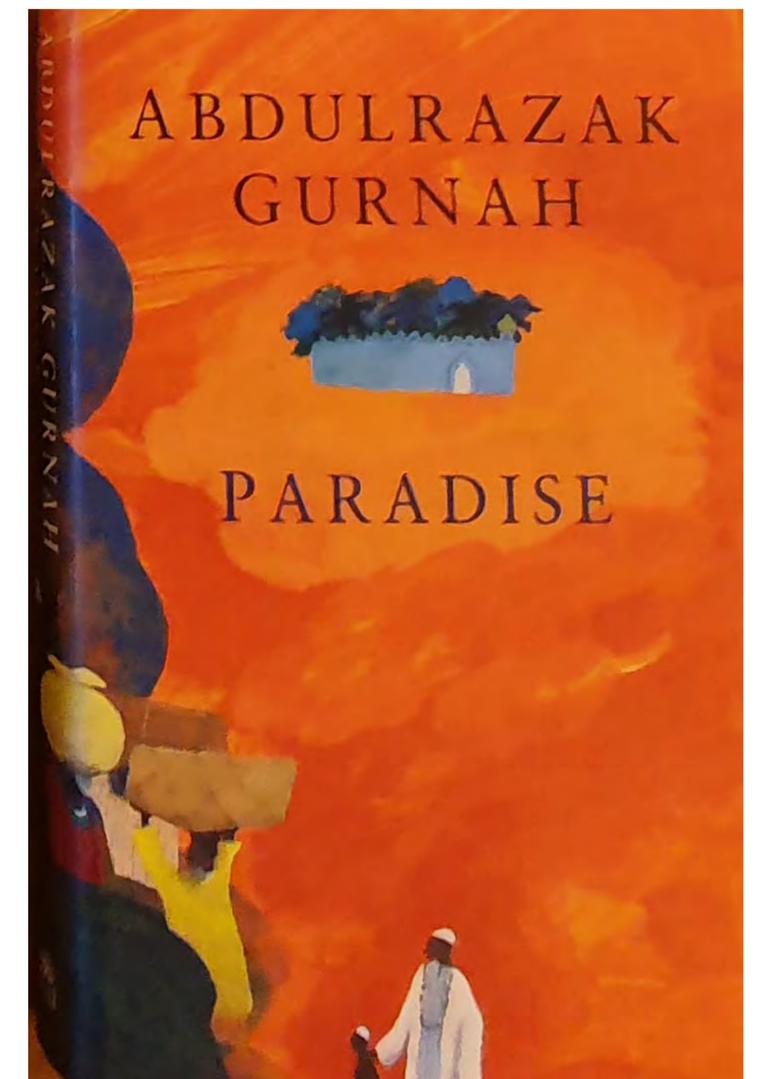
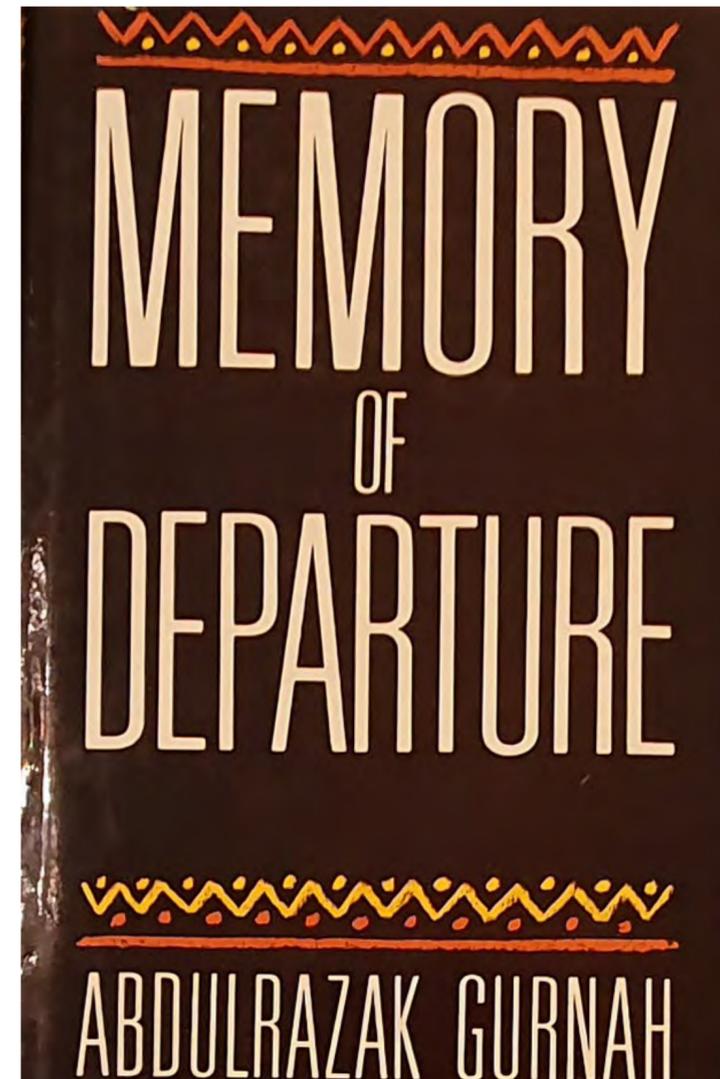
Abdulrazak Gurnah was born on Zanzibar but emigrated to England at the age of eighteen.

“I guess it was coming to England – that there were things that were nagging to be worked out in a way, and also those things were nagging to be worked out privately. These things weren’t something you could just sit around with friends and chat about. Some of those feelings of regret or homesickness, of wanting to think about what had been left behind. You couldn’t just really sit the way you are at eighteen, nineteen or twenty, and so it began as a desire to understand the things that were nagging and troubling.”

From an interview with Abdulrazak Gurnah
conducted by Marco Ruberto at the University of Kent,
Canterbury, 3 December 2008.

Debut and breakthrough

In 1987, Gurnah made his debut with the novel *Memory of Departure*. His breakthrough as a writer came with the 1994 novel *Paradise*.



Recurring themes in Gurnah's writing



Colonialism and refugees' experience of displacement are themes that recur in Abdulrazak Gurnah's books.

A storyteller who portrays people in a complex world



Abdulrazak Gurnah portrays his characters with compassion and empathy.



PHOTO:DENNIS DECAIRES

“It’s both the pleasure of making things, crafting, getting it right, but it’s also the pleasure of getting something across.”

Abdulrazak Gurnah, Nobel Prize in Literature 2021

THE
NOBEL
PRIZE

FOR THE GREATEST
BENEFIT TO
HUMANKIND

Nobel Prize lessons