

**Abstract.** “Afrika förändrar människor” – Africa changes people – claims Per Wästberg on the pages of one of his books (1960b). His life and literary work seem to confirm the idea. In this article it is argued that the continent plays an important part in the process of identity transition. It is also an attempt at proving that the main character of Per Wästberg’s sequence of four novels from between 1986 and 1993 – *Eldens skugga* (*The Shadow of the Fire*), *Bergets källa* (*The Source of the Mountain*), *Ljusets hjärta* (*Heart of the Light*) and *Vindens låga* (*The Flame of the Wind*) – follows a pattern similar to that of rites of passage. A brief analysis of the works is preceded by a summary of Arnold van Gennep’s and Victor Turner’s anthropological theories on the three stages of rites of passage. Since the middle stage has Africa as its setting in the novels, it is given most attention. A description of Wästberg’s and the main character’s relationship with the continent will hopefully contribute to understanding why a stay in Africa becomes a crucial element of a change of identity.