

Lacanian Psychoanalysis and Reading Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot*

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ABSTRACT This paper examines *The Blood Knot* by Athol Fugard through the lens of psychoanalysis. Through close reading and content analysis of the play, it is shown that psychoanalysis, especially the post-structural version of Jacques Lacan is relevant to the reading and appreciation of *The Blood Knot*. Apartheid creates characters who live in the mirror. In the play the character Ethel assumes that everybody she interacts with is identified with the same institutional structure as herself. Psychoanalytic with particular focus on Lacan's orienting framework enables the reader to tease out the human and racial relationships that form the controlling idea of *The Blood Knot*.

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Lacanian psychoanalysis can contribute to an insightful study of post-colonial drama in general and to Athol Fugard's play, *The Blood Knot* in particular. The following discussion is based on the assumption that through the application of Lacan's psychoanalytic concepts, one is able to identify insights that enrich adjacent strategies of reading post-colonial literature. Some of these strategies are identified and described in critical works such as *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Studies* (1989), *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1995) and *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theatre* (1997). The texts referred to above concur in their preoccupation with developing approaches that accommodate differences within various cultures. In addition, they share a desire to describe features shared across cultures.

This flexibility of intention of the present project is echoed in the diversity of the critical attitudes that informs the proponents of post-colonial theory. Edward Said (1994) and Gilbert H Joanne for example think that it is essential to engage with cultural works in a provincial manner as well as contest for forms and values that any decent cultural work embodies. A distinctive tone is however, discerned in Lyotard (1984).

He analyses the scientific discourses of the West with a view to privileging customary knowledge because in his view, customary knowledge is a product of actual social relations and not valorised categories. It is within this context that the present discussion is situated. Through applying psychoanalysis in paper, the authors intend to show how human beings attempt to depict their identities and subjectivity and as a result come to terms with their environment.

METHODOLOGY

The basic method that this study has adopted is qualitative. In literary analysis, qualitative implies close reading of a creative work and the subjection of that work to rigorous content analysis. Reference to the text being read is therefore inevitable. The content analysis is simultaneously informed by a theoretical framework or a set of orienting frameworks. In this paper, the authors have not only analysed the main ideas in *The Blood Knot*; they have also delineated characters within the framework of Lacanian psychoanalysis and post colonial theory (Fortier 1997).

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Psychoanalysis, Freud and Lacan

Psychoanalysis is an interpretive strategy that deals specifically with the language which tries to render the body's experience, the role of

sexuality in defining self, and the construction of subjectivity and gender. Its most important exponent is Sigmund Freud. In order to understand Lacan's psychoanalysis, it is necessary to outline principal and relevant ideas in Freud's psychoanalytic theory. This is because in a very fundamental way, Lacan derives his ideas and concepts from Freud. Thus Freud provides an intellectual framework within which Lacan operates.

Freud's writings among others *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1950) and "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1900) illustrated that a person's identity emerges from a continuous, changing interplay over time of that person's predisposition and environmental and social contexts. *The Interpretation of Dreams* evolves and develops concepts of the unconscious and repression. Freud shows that states such as dreams are a product of conflicts between different mental systems. To reach the recesses of a dream, the analyst is required to know the processes through which that dream goes to attain the form in which it is described by the person being analysed. These processes are: Condensation, displacement, dramatization, symbolization and secondary revision.

Whereas condensation refers to several underlying meanings and associations of a dream, displacement examines the real focus of a dream. According to Freud, the dream is substituted by a procedure whereby the intention underlying the dream is disguised through the transfer of an act or emotion to some person or object other than that which actually arouses the unconscious feeling. There are cases also where displacement involves the suppression or even the inversion of the dream-thought. The contents of the dream are unconsciously dramatized in symbols. Finally, secondary revision designates the distortions which occur as a result of the conscious restructuring that take place when the dreamer recalls his or her dream.

In "The Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality", Freud proposes that sexual development takes place within the first five years of life and what happens at that time is of crucial importance to the character and sexual life of the adult. Freud observes that people do not easily acknowledge the significance of childhood events because of 'infantile amnesia'. By infantile amnesia, Freud means partial forgetfulness. When experiences are painful, he says, they are repressed and leave only unimportant and isolat-

ed memories. Freud states that the psychosexual development of a child advances through a biologically pre-set sequence. This sequence includes the oral, the anal, the phallic and the genital stages. 'The pleasure principle' is responsible for the stimulation of the various bodily areas of the child. The kind of stimulation and satisfaction that the child experiences at each stage depends on her or his social environment. Excessive gratification or frustration causes lasting consequences, which in turn are a function of the stage at which the satisfaction or frustration occurs. Freud concluded that knowledge of this is important in determining the gratification being sought for by a person. It also indexes the emotional reactions that a person exhibits.

The Interpretation of Dreams and "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" complement each other in depicting the role of the unconscious in psychoanalysis. Jacques Lacan agrees with Freud in so far as the existence of the unconscious and its place in the interpretation of personality goes. However, while Freud focuses on the psychosexual stages preceding adolescence as the principal cause of adult neurosis, Lacan emphasizes the illusory promises of the 'mirror stage' as the cause of alienation in adulthood. Secondly, whereas Freud is overly concerned with instincts that direct the child's 'pleasure principle' to various bodily parts, Lacan is fundamentally preoccupied with how the unconscious representations dominate the entire life of a human being (MacCannell 2014).

According to Lacan, the 'mirror stage' covers children's lives between the ages of six months and eighteen months. During this stage, there is an apparent unity within the child's self because she or he sees the outside world as an extension of the self. This is due to the fact that the mirror presents to the child a visual entity that appears whole and that seems to move coherently. In reality, this is contrary to the child's own experience:

The mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation and which manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic, and lastly to an assumption of the armour of alienating identity, which will mark, with its rigid structure, the subjects' entire mental development (Lacan 1977a: 4).

As the above citation indicates, since the child takes the mirror image to be his own or her own, he or she identifies with that image. By taking himself or herself to be somebody else, the child becomes alienated right from the mirror stage.

The child's alienation is further cemented by family institutions. Lacan identifies three elements of the family structure that influence the child's future life. These are the maternal, the fraternal and the paternal unconscious realities. He calls these realities 'imagos'. The maternal imago represents the congenital deficiency that the child requires in regard to bodily needs. The child learns about the presence or absence of satisfaction. Initially, this is expressed in the child's desire for the mother's breast. In Lacan's view, this marks an important stage in the formation of the child's identity because all distinctive identities are based on loss, absence or failure. In general, Lacan sees the deficiencies of the human subject in all forms of nostalgia, including universal harmony (Lunderberg 2012). In sum, it is an obsession with a paradise lost before birth.

The second element of the family institution that affects the child's life is the fraternal imago. The fraternal imago enables the child to realize that her or his identity is bound up with the identities of others. As a result of this realization, the child loses subjectivity to others. The fraternal unconscious is driven by jealousy. Lacan describes this condition in archetypal terms, perceiving it as a primary embodiment of future social feeling.

Finally, the paternal imago also affects the future fate of child's self. Lacan's idea of the paternal imago is similar to Freud's conception of Oedipus complex. Lacan, however, stresses the fact much as the father plays an important role in repressing the child's sexuality, he is also responsible for sublimating reality for the child. Because of the contradictions that are embedded in the role of the father, the paternal imago is the cause of most neuroses in the life of the child. Much as the paternal imago is unable to suppress sexuality, it is also unable to serve as a workable model of sexual adulthood.

Notwithstanding the alienation of the child as described above, Lacan asserts that language enables her or him to begin searching for the lost self. It is entering into the symbolic order of

language that full subjectivity comes into being for the child.

Lacan states that language is made out arbitrary symbols. In saying this, he adopts the concepts of Ferdinand de Saussure (1974). De Saussure held that the main aim of linguistic study is to identify and describe the system that underlies any particular human signifying practice. He makes two distinctions in regard to human language. On the one hand, he sees language as a system which pre-exists particular instances of a language. On the other, he views language in terms of individual utterances. While langue is a system, parole is the specific exemplification of the system.

Lacan, however, insists that language use does afford the child the opportunity to construct positions for the self which differentiate him or her from others. In other words, the child as an imaginary product of socially constituted identification becomes a human subject and able to use the first person pronoun 'I'. To Lacan, language is important because through it, the analyst is able to coax the analysand in the course of psychoanalytic dialogue. Commenting on the significance of language in this context, Jonathan Lee (1990: 128) said:

It is only through language that we are able to separate the agent and his actions, a human being and his characteristics; it is language alone that allows us to characterize human beings as unique, that makes it possible for us to disregard the qualities that individual have in common with countless other individuals.

Using language, psychoanalysis, then, becomes the exploration of the discourse in which the analysand's 'I' links itself to imaginary identities and the work of the analyst is to punctuate the analysand's discourse by grasping the hidden and dynamic meaning of the analysand's apparently meaningless speech. Consequently, the analyst assists the person being analysed to arrive at a symbolic interpretation of her or his associative discourse. The analysand's free association yields a narrative that constructs the analysand as a subject.

From the literary point of view, Lacan's analyst and analysand can be translated into the reader and text respectively. Just as the analysand views the analyst as a subject that knows, the reader approaches the text as a source of value and meaning. Through repeated readings of the text, the reader coaxes the text to play

out scenes based on prior readings. Readings such as these not only enable the reader to see oneself in the text but also enable the text to relate to the reader in a meaningful way. It is also possible to see character interaction in a single text within the same vein. In this case, critical reading involves how characters use language significantly to embody their unique subjectivity. The reader and characters engage in a psychoanalytic mediation in which predominant points of view are indexed by the linguistic signifiers, the reader and character's privilege.

Lacan's psychoanalytic method is exemplified in his interpretation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Purloined Letter" Lee (1990: 101-107). In the first incident of that story, the minister finds out the queen is anxious about a letter she has left and which is not noticed by the king. The second episode dramatizes the police inspector's failure to find the letter in the minister's house. However, when the detective enters the house of the minister, he immediately spots it. The detective later returns to the minister's house and replaces the queen's letter with a similar one. Lacan points out that in this story, the position of the letter in relation to characters causes anxiety. The letter is a signifier that produces subject positions for characters in the narrative. These subject positions depend on the unconscious identities of the characters.

Lacan and Post-Colonial Criticism

The idea of language as a system of unstable signifiers has been employed by some critics to discuss literary works in the post-colonial hinterlands. Using Lacan's insights, Homi K. Bhabha (1994) argued that colonialism is ambivalent. On the one hand, colonial power establishes sophisticated strategies of dominance and control. On the other hand, since colonial power is well aware of its transitory character, it puts in place institutions in which the colonized people play a crucial role. This is done to guarantee colonial power continued survival. By yoking together the certainty and the uncertainty of colonial power, its very foundations are unsettled. The language and the race of the colonized person pollutes the culture of the colonizer. Colonial power's assumption that it is in control of a superior discourse is imaginary and echoes Lacan's mirror stage. During this stage of colonial history, arguments are posited to justify the

perfection and legitimacy of colonial domination. In practice, colonial power is alienated from its own perception of the world because it cannot survive without assimilating elements from the colonized cosmos. Put in a different way, the subject positions of the colonizer and the colonized are in a constant flux because colonial power and discourse is haunted by its mirror stage of development.

Homi Bhabha tends to emphasize the subjectivity of the colonizer to the neglect of the colonized person's position. The colonized person's subjectivity can also be discussed through employing Bhabha's derived views. This can be done in two ways: by examining the colonized as any other human being in search of a subjectivity that has been lost to primordial institutional structures. Secondly, by interrogating the colonized as a product of the colonial institutional structures who is seeking for an identity. An emphasis on the colonial discourse alone consigns the colonized to inactivity. It against this background that Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot* is read in the passages that follow.

Athol Fugard's The Blood Knot

Though set in apartheid South Africa, Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot* examines themes that are also found in colonial situations proper. Just as colonialism creates subjects who are neither in the pure world of the colonizer nor the colonized, apartheid creates characters who do not fit neatly into the categories of white and black. A case in point is Morris, one the characters in *The Blood Knot*. Although the system describes him as light-skinned and therefore, a potential benefactor of its advantages, the actual situation on the ground is different. He is poor and under-privileged. The portrayal of this character sets the stage for a psychoanalytic interpretation of *The Blood Knot*.

Most reading of *The Blood Knot* have not paid special attention to the overriding psychological overtones of the play. Some critics have emphasized economic exploitation and racial discrimination as the controlling ideas of the play. Other readers examine the play within the lens of existentialism, seeing Fugard as primarily attempting to empower his characters to shape their destinies. Brian Crow (1992) is a typical example of these readers. He observed:

Fugard has most pervasively explored Camus' perception that the actor is not merely a theatrical functionary, but an emblem of the modern hero, free to explore his own being and make and remake himself in his own desired image (p. 151)

The Blood Knot dramatizes a story of two brothers who share a shack in Korsten on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth. They have the same black mother. However, Zach has a black father while his brother Morris has a white father. The main action of the play centres on how the brothers explore their distinctive identities. Zach and Morris attempt to seek identities in a world that has predetermined their subject positions. The light-skinned Morris is supposed to be advantaged socially and economically over the dark-skinned Zach. This is in keeping with the policy of separate development. But as they act and tell each other stories of their lives, they come closer to what they actually are than what the institutional structure of apartheid has prescribed for them.

Morris searches for Zach, finds him and resolves to live with him. From the point of view of Lacan's psychoanalysis, the search subscribes to some features of the 'mirror stage'. Morris seeks for a human being that he can identify with through a pre-existing category. Using language, he wants to classify his identity in terms of social ties that bind people together. In this case, Morris looks for his mother's child. Since he cannot find his mother physically, he relocates her in the bond of brotherhood that exists between himself and Zach. By so doing, Morris tries to rediscover and reinstate his maternal imago. When Morris finally finds Zach, he ritualizes their reunion verbally. Morris has been wearing Zach's coat long before their meeting. He describes the significance of this wearing thus:

You get right inside the man when you can wrap up in the smell of him. It's been a big help to me. It prepared me for your flesh, Zach. Because your flesh, you see has an effect on me. The sight of it the feel of it... I saw you again after all those years...and it hurt (p. 28).

Morris uses language to re-establish his maternity through Zach. It is instructive that for Morris and Zach, brotherhood is defined exclusively in terms of motherhood.

Ironically, the coat that Morris has been wearing is several sizes larger for him. The largeness

of the coat symbolizes the maternal imago's inability to accommodate the brothers' egos and solve all their problems. Implicitly, through this image the playwright exhorts the brothers to get out of the illusory paradise of their mother's womb and try to inscribe their unique subjective positions on the world. Because the maternal imago and the fraternal imago are inextricably tied up in *The Blood Knot*, the brothers' identification with them is equally interwoven.

As pointed out earlier, the fraternal imago enables the child to define himself or herself in relation to other people around him or her. While the fraternal imago drives Zach to end his friendship with Minnie, it does not enable him to live harmoniously with Morris. Zach remembers Minnie with longing and nostalgia because they have a lot in common. When Morris appears on the scene, he introduces a vocabulary that is completely out of harmony with what Zach used to. Morris is determined to transform both his own and his brother's economic status. He intends to save money to buy a farm and build a house. Being fairly educated, he is more ambitious than Zach. Morris hopes that Zach would also benefit from his great plan. However, due to their different socialization as individual subjects, brotherhood alienates them more than it brings them together.

The fraternal imago's alienation of the brothers is brought out clearly when Zach begins entertaining the illusion of having a white girl friend. Through the role plays and the dialogues that Zach and Morris engage in, obstacles to that prospective relationship are disclosed and elaborated. Ethel's expectations are contrary to Zach's social and economic conditions. Zach's analysis of his own social and economic situation is intended to verify that Ethel cannot accept him. Besides the fact that Ethel comes from a middle class family, she is protected by the laws of the land. On his part, Zach is almost destitute. The statements that Zach and Morris make in the course of their dialogue reveal the evils of the political system under which they live. They also enable them to explore the background of the conditions that have led to their present life. By dramatizing the imagined relationship between himself and Ethel, Zach is able to express his socially constituted identity. He summarizes it thus:

I would like to send you a picture of me, but it's this way. It's winter down here now. The

weather is bad, the lake is black, the birds have gone. Wait for Spring when things improve. Okay? Good. I heard you ask about my car. Yes. I have it. We the pumped the tyre today. Tomorrow, I think I'll put in some petrol. I'd like to take you for a drive, Ethel and Lucy too (p. 38).

The expression of his identity is an excuse for satirizing a system of administration and a mode of production that has consigned him to abject poverty. By emphasizing the fact that transitory conditions have led to his failure to meet Ethel, Zach underlines the significance of his shifting identity. Should the season change, (read as should apartheid end) he seems to be saying, he would be in a position to take Ethel out. Finally, he becomes so disillusioned and disgusted with himself that he 'donates' Ethel to Morris. In this context, Zach is involved in an act of transference through narrativizing his longings and aspirations and blaming his failure to live them on conditions other than the ones the audience knows.

Morris's initial feeling is that he would fare much better than his brother in his quest for Ethel. Besides the fact that he is light-skinned, he actually knows the demands of a woman of Ethel's class (p. 55). As a matter of fact, it is Morris' knowledge of the typical and distinctive class tendencies that dissuades Zach from pursuing Ethel. It is possible that Morris paradoxically discourages Zach to seek out Ethel because he regards himself better placed to win her favour. But as the action of the play progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that Morris cannot meet Ethel as well:

Zachariah: But what is the matter, man? You were telling me everything so damn good. Come on. Tell me: (Coaxing). Tell your brother what is the matter.

Morris: I haven't got a hanky.

Zachariah: I think we can buy one.

Morris: And the breast pocket?

Zachariah: What is the problem there? Let's also.

Morris: Don't be a bloody fool! You got to buy a whole suit to get the breast pocket. And that's still not all. What about socks decent shoes, a spotty tie and a clean white shirt?(pp. 55-56).

The term 'coaxing' belongs to the lexicon of psychoanalysis. In a typical psychoanalytic sense, Zach coaxes Morris to reveal his fears in regard to be friending Ethel. Zach's ignorance

of what Morris requires forces the latter to enumerate the clothing he needs in order to meet Ethel confidently. The implication of Morris's endless inventory is that he is not qualified to see Ethel let alone befriend her. The last line of the foregoing citation carries an underlying symbolism. Morris is not a clean white person and that is why he cannot afford to buy a clean white shirt. Eventually, he rejects Ethel and 'gives' her back to Zach.

But in order to demonstrate the absurdity of the whole situation, Zach goes ahead and looks for some of the clothing that Morris needs. The very procedure of searching and buying is brought under scrutiny:

Zachariah: It wasn't easy. At the first shop, when I asked for the outfit of a gentleman, they said that I was an agitator and was going to call the police. I had to get out man...quick! Even this fellow... Mr. Moses... "Come again my friend. You are drunk". He said. But when I showed him our future, he sobered up (p. 61).

Zach's identity classifies him as a person who cannot buy decent clothes. Any invitation of the idea calls for victimization. He has to define his subjectivity in terms of others' expectations to avoid being victimized. In this case, he physically shows the shopkeeper money to prove that he is able to purchase clothes. Despite Zach's 'struggle' to make his brother presentable, a struggle that depletes all their resources, he is unable to transform Morris into the person that Ethel would like to befriend. Both Zach and Morris discover that being light-skinned is not enough to make a person be on the correct side of the system. For Morris and Zach, the defeated fraternal imago is transmuted into social feelings and relationships that are equally incapable of satisfying them.

The paternal imago is partially present in Morris's life but totally absent in Zach's life. That the paternal imago is not present in the life of Zach probably accounts for the fact that he neither has any models by which to live nor any prohibitions to fear. Consequently, his subjectivity is identified with drives that don't seem to be under firm control. Zach's description of the first sexual activity he engages in sounds more like a rape than what society thinks is a normal love relationship. The absence of the father figure appears to be in harmony with the absence of intimidation that is ordinarily associated with sexual perversions. Even then, Zach fears to meet

Ethel because of the punishment that could be meted out against him by the white male world. Socially, it is the white male world that has established laws to protect its interests. The male world represents the paternal imago that has only managed to create fear in the likes of Zach.

Morris's case is basically the same. Although he has lived with his father for some time and gone to school, his attempt to imbibe values from the father figure fails. There is a disparity between what the father figure gives Morris in genetic and material terms and the actual life he is leading. The struggle to make life more worth living is due to what he knows as a result of interacting with his father. When he first meets Zach, his subject position is typified by the paternal imago. It is through interrogating the paternal imago that he begins discovering his subjectivity for what it really is. In other words, the presence or absence of the paternal imago in the lives of Zach and Morris does not excuse them from seeking their distinctive identities.

Ethel and the Letter

The foregoing discussion has illustrated how Ethel's name affects the protagonists' perception of themselves and those around them. At no time in the action of the play does Ethel appear physically on the stage. The audience knows her through the letter she writes in reply to Zach's earlier letter. Notwithstanding her absence from the stage, Ethel is made audible and vivid through the words of her letter and the subsequent utterances of the brothers. The words of her letter create a powerful image of her presence and how she would have acted were she on the stage. The letter emerges as signifier that conditions human relationships that obtain in the entire play.

Ethel writes her letter innocently, detailing her interest and introducing her family and friends. The various subjects that Ethel describes in her letter index, her status in society and by implication, her expectations. The letter thus positions her as a subject with the capacity to render unstable and multiple other persons. It also demonstrates her unconscious shifting identities as well. Zach and Morris see her differently from the way she imagines and sees herself to be. Through her letter, we learn that she is a member of the middle class. That her brother is a policeman shows that she belongs to a category

of people who are also custodians of the law. That is why she casts a strong shadow of fear in Zach and Morris. In Lacan's psychoanalysis, this is the law that has kept her from the intrusion of others who belong to different categories. Her subjectivity is enmeshed in a web of social relationships that the white society has created for her.

The letter by itself is not meant to offend, threaten or intimidate Zach and Morris. But the bits of information it reveals help Zach and Morris to shape their identities. No sooner has Zach received the letter than he is traumatized. Instead of the letter raising his hopes as to the new friend is about to get, it becomes the epitome of his fear, insecurity, hopelessness and depression. Morris captures the mood aptly when he observes:

What have you thought! That is the crime. I seem to remember somebody saying, "I like the thought of this little white girl". When they get their hands on a dark-born boy playing with a white idea, you think they don't find out what he has been dreaming at night (p. 49).

Ethel's letter makes Zach and Morris psychoanalyze each other to the point of not liking what they find out about themselves. The letter is treated as a concrete presence with the ability of interpreting the brothers' thoughts and judging them accordingly. In classical psychological terms, the letter *conditions* the brothers to behave as if Ethel were actually in their presence. Frustrated and diffident, Morris says, "Everything was fine until she came along" (p. 69). Ethel has been actualized through the letter. The letter thus enables the brothers to cross racial and economic boundaries and relate to Ethel in an immediate and direct way. Because Ethel has inscribed elements of her personality and subjectivity in her letter, she does not have to be physically present for her impact to be felt. In semiotic terms, the letter is an effective signifier and therefore, an *effective actor*. It motivates and influences the direction of the dramatic action on the stage.

Just as Lacan's analysis of "The Purloined Letter" depicts anxieties of characters as a result of their interest in the letter, in this case Ethel's letter is a constant that provides a point of reference for the different identities that are discerned in the character of Zach, Morris and Ethel. It is a signifying chain that links these characters as individual and also links them to

the social and institutional structures that have created them.

CONCLUSION

A psychoanalytic reading of Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot* with particular reference to the Lacanian streak is productive in that it enables the reader to unearth elements of human-identity that are most keenly felt at the psychic level. The authors have shown that that together with postcolonial theory' psychoanalysis is capable of revealing knotty relationships in apartheid South Africa as instantiated in *The Blood Knot*. It is demonstrated that various social and institutional structures influence the characters' attempts to define their "self". Apartheid creates characters who live in the mirror. Ethel assumes that everybody she interacts with is identified with the same-institutional structures as herself. Morris and Zach also keep shifting their subject positions. Through using language, they question the present assumptions and live imaginary lives that are continually in the process of becoming. The authors recommend that other works of art that are set in postcolonial hinterlands such as Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) can be analyzed using the same framework.

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