



## ***Blood Knot: The Concept of Marginality and Hegemony***

**Tahir Rafique<sup>1</sup>, Ansar Abbas<sup>2</sup>, Rubeqa Arshad<sup>3</sup>**

1. Master of Philosophy in English Literature Department of English, University of Chenab Gujrat, [rafiquetahir732@gmail.com](mailto:rafiquetahir732@gmail.com)
2. MPhil English in Applied Linguistics, Lecturer at IISAT University, Gujranwala [mmalikansar441@gmail.com](mailto:mmalikansar441@gmail.com)
3. Lecturer at IISAT University, Gujranwala, MPhil in Applied Linguistics, [rubeqaarshad700@gmail.com](mailto:rubeqaarshad700@gmail.com)

**DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71145/rjsp.v3i4.476>**

### **Abstract**

A moving examination of hegemony and marginality against the backdrop of South Africa during the apartheid era may be found in Athol Fugard's drama *Blood Knot*. The research explores the complicated relationships involving Morris and Zachariah, both half-brothers who have different perspectives on racial identification and social acceptance due to their different looks. This study uses a qualitative approach that is guided by the theoretical frameworks of hegemony and marginality to investigate how Fugard depicts the marginalization of nonconformists and the ubiquitous effect of hegemonic systems of power. The play's narrative highlights how hegemonic ideas influence personal identities and sustain social injustices, as well as the psychological and emotional costs of racial prejudice. Through *Blood Knot* in the wider context of post-colonial discourse, this study advances our knowledge of the long-lasting effects of the colonial legacy on social norms, administration, and relationships between individuals in modern environments.

**Keywords:** Blood Knot, Athol Fugard, Hegemony, Marginalization, Apartheid, Racial Discrimination

### **Introduction**

*Blood Knot* by Athol Fugard offers a comprehensive examination of the complicated interactions of hegemony and marginality in the setting of South Africa during the Apartheid era. The play emphasizes the complex relationship between two half-brothers, Morris and Zachariah, as well as the widespread impact of hegemonic systems on social relationships and individual identity. This study centers on three individuals who, in spite of their common ancestry, live in quite distinct cultural contexts because of the pronounced differences in their looks and the deeply ingrained racial biases in their community. Zachariah, with his deeper appearance, is obviously black and experiences severe discrimination because of his race, but Morris, with his lighter skin, may pass for a white man. Morris finds himself in an unusual position of marginalization as a result of this dichotomy he is not entirely accepted irrespective of the black group, which he is innately a member of, or the white community, which he can physically blend into. Zachariah, on the other hand, is more obviously marginalized, making him vulnerable to the social segregation inherent in the racial hierarchy of Apartheid. The play captures the larger social and political environment of South Africa, where legislation and customs institutionalized racial discrimination and the

domination of a white minority over a black majority. Fugard illustrates the mental and emotional consequences of such an authoritarian government via the brothers' connections and their hopes for a better future. Initially used as a form of escape, their simulation games slowly expose more profound realities about their internalized conceptions of race and power. Through the critical lenses of marginality and hegemony, this study attempts to clarify the complex ways in which Fugard depicts the effects of Apartheid on personal as well as communal personas in *Blood Knot*. The study will examine the brothers' connection and the larger ramifications of their encounters through qualitative evaluations of the play, underpinned by theoretical frameworks on marginality and hegemony. By means of this approach, the study aims to enhance comprehension of Fugard's work's continued significance in conversations about race, identity, and social justice within post-colonial settings.

## **Literature Review**

Fugard's plays have been the subject of numerous studies because of his significant influence on theatre and his perceptive examination of social concerns. With his engrossing stories and nuanced characters, Athol Fugard is praised for his ability to portray the state of humanity and the social and political realities of South Africa. His works give voice to the marginalized and emphasize the challenges of those surviving under apartheid by delving into topics of marginality, identity, and resistance against repressive regimes. Anne Sarzin (1997) discusses that the turbulent post-apartheid South African landscape is reflected in Athol Fugard's writings, which portray a nation in transition and unsure of its future. His drama *Valley Song* offers a story that reflects current challenges with kindness and empathy while resonating with themes created by the nation's new era. Fugard's art, which is mainly from the Eastern Cape, draws from her forty years of experience providing a voice to the oppressed during apartheid to move beyond its local roots and reflect worldwide meaning. Fugard is indivisible from the spirit of South Africa itself, his storytelling alternating between remembering the inequalities of earlier times and foreseeing a brighter future (Sarzin, 1997). Khaya M. Gqibitole (2018) examines the effect of Fugard's writings as much more than any other dramatist of the colonial or post-colonial era. Moreover, he highlights the efforts of Fugard against the notion through theater. Further, he claims;

Some of the plays contested politics through a discussion of the diverse facets of restriction employed by the apartheid regime to gauge and suppress politics in the arts at the time and the underground activities of the playwright and his actor collaborators who had to contend with the apartheid machinery that was designed. (p. 1)

Hamzeh Al-Jarrah (2023) talks about the absence of presence dialectics in *Blood Knot* by Athol Fugard. He highlights, "The black body and its existential dimensions have become the fundamental project through which the black being and its presence-absence dialectics are discussed and analyzed" (p. 2). Parvin Ghasemi (2018) highlights the contribution of Athol Fugard and other writers like him, because of their efforts that somehow manage to reclaim their society. By the addition of postcolonial theories readers get to know more about the apparent meaning. They further talk about the contribution of Homi K. Bhabha's concept of 'third space' in which the relation of blacks and whites becomes reciprocal. Kim Lauren McKay (1987) claims that Fugard responds well to the constructed notion and literature of the West. Fugard uses the imagery of his character to justify, injustice. He claims that it is an honor to researchers to work on Fugard's plays, especially *Blood Knot*. He adds, "Athol Fugard's the *Blood Knot* brought the South African playwright international acclaim. After 140 performances in Port Elizabeth, ending in After 1962, and run in London, the play came to New York" (Lauren McKay, 1987, p. 3). Harry Garuba (2001) discusses the islands have traditionally been portrayed in the works of

literature about slavery, colonization, and research as desirable places to be charted and ruled symbols of the edges waiting to be conquered by the center. This story, which was created by and from the Western viewpoint, changed over time from an early longing for unexplored areas to a darker representation of these areas as sites of power and slavery throughout the slave trade and colonization centuries. Critics have studied in great detail how clichés like Robinson Crusoe/Man Friday and Prospero/Caliban have formed Western discourse's hegemonic effect on non-Western civilizations. Although this emphasis is essential for comprehending the complexities of colonial rule, it runs the risk of limiting the field of investigation and maybe ignoring other productive lines of research outside of the pre-existing frameworks of investigation and invasion. By examining the effects of colonization transcends societal effects to encompass crises of hegemony and state in post-colonial contexts, this research fills a major vacuum in the literature. It makes the case that ongoing factional conflicts within the dominant class, which result in instability, bloodshed, and impeded growth, frequently leave post-colonial nations without permanent hegemonic systems and functional states. These communities struggle to develop the institutional and social structures required for ongoing development and administration in the absence of a cohesive dominating class that can reach a consensus. This results in cycles of turmoil and hinders the effective establishment and execution of policies. The paper advocates for new models of state creation that recognize and deal with the complexity generated by their colonial pasts calling for an examination of relationships between states and society in post-colonial situations (Fadakinte, 2017). In the given research works we can see that many researchers have worked on the different aspects of *Blood Knot* by Athol Fugard but no one touches the concept of marginality and hegemony and this research focuses on the concept of marginality and hegemony.

### **Research Methodology**

To authenticate and make the research validate a theoretical framework is followed. Furthermore, qualitative research design is a concern in this study. The primary text is taken from Athol Fugard's play, *Blood Knot*. While secondary texts which are discussed in literature review as well as theoretical framework are taken from different research papers from various journals. To fulfill the deficiency in some sections, some online databases is consulted as well. Hegemony is taken as a theoretical framework along with marginality that is discussed;

### **Marginality**

The concept of marginality was introduced by Robert Park in his essay 'Migration and the Marginal Man'. Oliver (1998) defines marginality as the state of feeling or being seen as peripheral with respect to different conceptions of the center is known as marginality, and it frequently results in an identity that is stigmatized. In an online dictionary it is defined as "the state or condition of being isolated from and not fully accepted by the dominant society or culture, and therefore frequently disadvantaged" (Dictionary, 2024, p. 1).

### **Hegemony**

The concept of hegemony was given by Antonio Gramsci. According to this, "hegemony is a system of class alliance in which a "hegemonic class" exercised political leadership over "subaltern classes" by "winning them over" (Valeriano Ramos, 1982). Furthermore, in Encyclopedia Britannica, Ben Rosamond defines hegemony as "Hegemony, the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimating norms and ideas" (Rosamond, 2024, p. 1).

Here are some assumptions which are taken into account in the section on textual analysis;

- Hegemony is taken as the influence of the dominant class over the lower or submissive class.

- Marginality is considered as a situation of being isolated or rejected.

### Textual Analysis

Athol Fugard's *Blood Knot* deftly examines issues of hegemony and marginalization by focusing on the nuanced bond between Morris and Zachariah, two half-brothers. The drama, which is set in South Africa during the Apartheid era, emphasizes how the distinction between races affects the identities of individuals and connections in society. Morris is marginalized in both the black and white cultures while being able to pass for white due to his whiter skin tone. Although he is physically capable of crossing racial lines, his transition, which is a reflection of Robert Park's idea of the "marginal man," highlights his incapacity to completely assimilate into any racial community. Zachariah, on the other hand, is clearly positioned as inferior in the racial hierarchy because of the obvious discrimination he experiences because of his deeper skin tone. Their common goal of saving money for a farm represents a desire for independence and individuality beyond social norms, signifying their wish to overcome the racial marginalization enforced by Apartheid. Antonio Gramsci's idea of hegemony sheds light on the dominant relationships shown in *Blood Knot*. The drama powerfully illustrates how engrained social customs and coercive tactics are used by the controlling white minority to retain control over the black majority. Zachariah's obsession with the white lady he relates with, Ethel Lange, is a prime example of this hegemonic effect. Motivated by the idealized position linked with her brightness, Zachariah invests his wealth in the aim of keeping in touch, even if racial rules make meaningful relationships impossible. This demonstrates how deeply ingrained these cultural standards grow and exemplifies the hegemonic idea that being close to white people equals having a better social position as well as personal satisfaction. As a result, Fugard challenges the structural injustices that Apartheid upheld, showing how hegemony not only maintains racial differences but also molds the hopes and confidence of the marginalized Black people. Marginalized people frequently experience overt terminations and cruel treatment from people in places of authority, which heightens their sense of humiliation and isolation and reinforces their knowledge of what they are worth. As Athol Fugard;

MORRIS. But didn't you tell him, Zach? I told you to tell him that your feet are calloused and that you wanted to go back to pots.

ZACHARIAH. I did.

MORRIS. And then?

ZACHARIAH. He said: 'Go to the gate or go to hell'. (Fugard, 1963, p. 14)

This conversation eloquently illustrates how marginalization occurs. Zachariah receives a harsh and contemptuous reaction when he requests an adjustment in his employment circumstances and an essential need: "Go to the gate or go to hell." This conversation demonstrates the brutality of hegemonic authority, which not only disregards the sufferings that the marginalized face on a physical level but also intentionally perpetuates their status as inferiors through exchanges that are humiliating and heartless. Zachariah's needs are not being met, which is a blatant display of supremacy and a hint that those in positions of authority don't care about him. The oppressed person is constantly reminded of their deficient standing in the social order by this severe treatment, which feeds the oppressive cycle and increases their consciousness of their marginalized existence.

People who are marginalized frequently experience feelings of loneliness and yearn for intimate ties with people who are important to them. This underscores their innate need for empathy and intimacy in the face of discrimination.

MORRIS. A pen-pal. Zach! A corresponding pen-pal of the opposite sex! Don't you know them? [Zachariah's face is blank.] It's a woman, you see! [Looking for newspaper.] She wants a man friend, but she's in another town, so she writes to him—to you! (Fugard, 1963, p. 22)

The isolation that marginalized people feel and their need for interaction are highlighted in this conversation. Morris's description to Zachariah of the idea of a pen pal shows an effort to fill the void of loneliness Zachariah experiences. There is hope of mutual compatibility and comprehension when a lady from a different town desires to spend time with Zachariah. The marginalized person's need to feel appreciated and concerned is highlighted in this exchange, despite the societal and environmental obstacles established by their position within society. For individuals who feel marginalized and overlooked in their day-to-day existence, the idea of having someone who is concerned enough to write and stay in touch, even when they are far away, appeals to their core psychological demands. It highlights the fact that, despite their obstacles and sufferings, marginalized people yearn for the same fundamental human relationships and acceptance as everyone else.

People who are marginalized frequently suffer from a deep feeling of pessimism, which makes them believe that connections or possibilities are impossible or illusory.

"MORRIS. What's the use, Zach? You ask me to help you, and when I do, you're not interested no more. What's the matter, man?

ZACHARIAH. I can't get hot about a name on a piece of paper. It's not real to me" (Fugard, 1963, p. 27).

This text which is a dialogue between Morris and Zachariah exemplifies the pervasive pessimism that those on the margins frequently experience. Morris suggests that Zachariah get a pen pal as a way to deal with his isolation but Zachariah brushes this idea aside as unrealistic. This response brings to light a problem that marginalized people share: the belief that they are not really capable of taking advantage of possibilities for growth and relationships in their lives. The mention of a "name on a piece of paper" alludes to the gap that exists between Zachariah's present circumstances and the potential for lasting connections. It is possible for this feeling of pessimism to be so widespread that even well-meaning attempts to assist are greeted with suspicion and indifference. The conversation emphasizes how marginalization deprives people of belief and causes them to doubt the sincerity and viability of any significant improvement in their lives.

Marginalized people frequently find it difficult to believe that they're capable of being connected to anybody or making true associations, which makes them skeptical about possible partnerships.

"MORRIS. 'Please write soon. Yours . . .'

ZACHARIAH. Hers?" (Fugard, 1963, p. 30)

These lines demonstrate the ingrained mistrust that marginalized people may have against developing sincere relationships. Zachariah immediately asks, "Hers?" when Morris suggests concluding the letter with "Yours," expressing his skepticism about the prospect of making a lasting connection or feeling like he belongs. A marginalized status, which frequently includes a history of rejection and isolation, may be the cause of this disbelief. The thought of a penfriend and

the possibility that someone would want to get in touch with Zachariah seemed unrealistic to him. This skepticism is a coping technique for the pain and dissatisfaction that come with rejected intimacy attempts. As a result, the debate demonstrates how marginalization can cause people to lose belief in the sincerity and promise of new relationships, leading them to doubt even the most basic acts of companionship and connection.

When faced with circumstances that cross conventional racial and societal borders, marginalized individuals may feel confused and distressed, particularly during the apartheid era when they interact with Whites.

MORRIS. Can't you see, man! Ethel Lange is a white woman! [Pause. They look at each other in silence.]

ZACHARIAH [slowly]. You mean that this Ethel . . . here . . .

MORRIS. Is a white woman!

ZACHARIAH. How do you know? (Fugard, 1963, p. 35)

This conversation demonstrates the uncertainty and mental anguish that marginalized people may have when confronted with circumstances that defy the strict social and racial hierarchies to which they are used. The importance of this revelation is evident in the lengthy pause and stillness that follow upon learning that Ethel Lange is a white lady. The prospect of bridging racial divides in relationships can be a source of anxiety as well as confusion for marginalized people. Morris's strong remarks highlight the racial difference in society, while Zachariah's deliberate, hesitant questions show his difficulty taking in this fresh understanding. The knowledge that such a connection can cause social reactions and make their lives even more complicated is what causes them to be distressed. Therefore, the text emphasizes the widespread effects of marginalization on interpersonal interactions by demonstrating how deeply ingrained social and ethnic limits can result in significant perplexity and psychological distress when their existence is suddenly restricted.

When we are being marginalized and a superior group is ruling us with our consent a sort of, we try to make the relationships better with the ruling class or dominant class. It is a form of hegemonic influence. Marginalized individuals try to get close to the superior class or ruling class, which is dominant in society.

MORRIS [vehemently]. Yes, burn the bloody thing! Destroy it!

ZACHARIAH. But it's my pen-pal, Morris. Now, isn't it? Doesn't it say here: 'Mr Zachariah Pietersen'? Well, that's me . . . isn't it? It is. My letter. You just don't go and burn another man's letter, Morrie. (Fugard, 1963, p. 36)

Morris's fierce emphasis on destroying the letter sent by the white lady, Ethel Lange, in this conversation is a reflection of the dominant forces and oppressive social conventions that enforced tight racial discrimination in the apartheid era. Morris urgently requests that the letter be destroyed since he is fully conscious of the risks and potential social consequences that could result from a black man writing a white lady. However, Zachariah's hesitation to set the letter on fire reveals his inner turmoil. Despite any possible issues, he acknowledges the letter as a personal link and states his right to keep it. This exchange demonstrates how hegemonic power establishes social borders and causes internal conflict for people who are on the outside of them. Zachariah's dispute shows how marginalized people can exercise their autonomy even under constrictive social institutions, indicating a subtle opposition to these repressive standards. The conflict between upholding

dominant societal norms and the yearning for interpersonal relationships that cut over racial boundaries is well-expressed in the play.

Hegemony can cause people to unconsciously form preferences and attractions that support the values of the group in power. This effect is most noticeable in cultures where racial class distinctions are well ingrained, as marginalized people tend to absorb the cultural standards and principles of the ruling group. Because of this, people could show an appreciation for people who are representative of the prevailing culture, even if these choices run counter to their encounters and the facts of society. The process of internalizing prevailing ideals has the potential to sustain social hierarchies and the control structures that first push people to the margins.

MORRIS [pause]. Are you finished now, Zach? Good, because I want to remind you, Zach, that when I was writing to her you weren't even interested in a single thing I said. But now, suddenly, now you are! Why? Why, I ask myself . . . and a suspicious little voice answers: is it maybe because she's white?

ZACHARIAH. You want to hear me say it? [Morris says nothing.] It's because she's white! I like this little white girl! I like the thought of this little white girl. (Fugard, 1963, p. 39)

Morris encounters Zachariah in this chapter on his newfound interest in the letter with Ethel Lange, pointing out that Zachariah's curiosity was piqued only after learning that she was a white woman. Zachariah's acknowledgment: "It's because she's white! I like this little white girl! I like the thought of this little white girl" (Fugard, 1963, p. 39). It demonstrates how his tastes and desires have been shaped by hegemonic impact. His desire for white ladies, who represent a greater social standing and attractiveness because of the apartheid-era distinction between races, has been imprinted in him by the ruling socio-economic framework.

The underlying impacts of hegemony are seen in this encounter, as the marginalized internalize the cultural standards and principles of the dominant group, even when their choices run counter to their own desires and realities. Zachariah's lack of enthusiasm for Ethel until he finds out about her race emphasizes how ubiquitous hegemonic power is. Zachariah, who is marginalized, has an ingrained belief in the superiority of the dominant culture, which is shown in his subliminal desire to relate to anyone in the majority group.

It would highlight the intricacies and difficulties associated with hegemonic relations of power and ethnic marginalization, impacting the two individuals involved, if a white lady in apartheid-era South Africa met her black penfriend without knowing anything about his race beforehand.

MORRIS. To hell and gone! [Reads on through his laughter.] Okay, Zach. 'We're coming down for a holiday in June, so where . . . can we . . . meet you?' [Long pause. He reads again.] 'We're coming down for a holiday in June, so where can we meet you?' (Fugard, 1963, p. 48)

In the apartheid setting of *Blood Knot*, Zachariah's race is kept a secret from Ethel, which emphasizes the discrimination based on race that is upheld by dominant white supremacy. The letter demonstrates Ethel's ignorance of the racial barriers that isolate and marginalize non-white people like Zachariah, leading her to believe that he enjoys the same liberties and advantages as her. Morris's response, at first comical but finally troubling, captures the harsh realities of apartheid's racial hierarchy as well as the difficulties experienced by people like Zachariah in bridging racial gaps in interpersonal interactions.

Scenes from Athol Fugard's play *Blood Knot*, which is set in apartheid-era South Africa and features a white littermate who finds out about their black penfriend's race, emphasize the complicated relationship between marginalization and hegemonic dominance, as well as the significant influence of ethnic origin. "MORRIS [brutally]. I'm not going to read it. You want to know why? Because it doesn't matter. The game's up, man. Nothing matters except: 'I'm coming down in June, so where can I meet you?'" (Fugard, 1963, p. 49)

Morris's response to Ethel's letter illustrates a brutal fact of life under the apartheid regime. In the film *Blood Knot*, ethnically diverse half-siblings Morris and Zachariah struggle with their individuality and the social restrictions brought on by apartheid's racial segregation laws. Morris, who might pass for white, struggles with his identity and the privilege that comes with having a lighter complexion, whereas Zachariah, who determines more strongly with his black background, suffers from racial marginalization.

The ethnic limits highlight the significant effects of hegemonic power dynamics and marginalization in settings where biracial partnerships were forbidden, such as the apartheid era shown in Athol Fugard's play *Blood Knot*. "MORRIS. Then listen, Zach, because I know it. 'Dear Ethel, forgive me, but I was born a dark sort of boy who wanted to play with whiteness . . .'" (Fugard, 1963, p. 50)

These lines show how it was alarming to them and they are aware of it that it may be dangerous for them but they did and now it was the effect of that sort of consequence that they are very upset in this situation when Ethel desire to meet him. When she would get to know that Zachariah is a black man that would be a surprise for her and perhaps, she would cry in that situation. How it would be possible to say that it was the desire of a black man to play with whiteness.

People's internalized views of racial identity and beauty standards can be a powerful reflection of the widespread marginalization perpetuated by hegemonic structures of power in cultures where institutionalized prejudice is prevalent.

"ZACHARIAH. Ethel is so . . . so . . . snow white.  
MORRIS. And . . . come on . . .  
ZACHARIAH. And I am too . . . truly . . . too black.

MORRIS. Now, this is the hard part, Zach." (Fugard, 1963, p. 52)

In *Blood Knot*, racially diverse half-siblings Zachariah and Morris face the brutal reality of racial discrimination under apartheid. Zachariah's self-awareness of being "too black" and his description of Ethel as "snow white" allude to the thoroughly established racial order and aesthetic standards that were implemented by apartheid in the community. Because of his darker complexion tone, Zachariah feels lesser to Ethel, and his portrayal of her as "snow white" idealizes her whiteness as a standard of beauty and social approval. Morris's reply, "And... come on...," implies an effort to strike an appropriate compromise between addressing Zachariah's racial circumstances and striving to comfort him in the face of institutional prejudice.

People who live in racial discrimination-ridden societies frequently have to negotiate intricate relationship dynamics that are molded by cultural notions of skin color and ethnicity, which have an impact on their connections and interactions with one another.

“ZACHARIAH. Okay, okay. Let’s try it this way. Would you like to meet her?

MORRIS. Listen, Zach. I’ve told you before. Ethel is your—” (Fugard, 1963, p. 54)

Zachariah’s question over encountering another because of skin color resemblance in South Africa during the apartheid era, as portrayed in Athol Fugard’s drama *Blood Knot*, demonstrates the complex ways in which racial identity and cultural norms interact. Zachariah may view complexional commonalities as a means of bridging interpersonal obstacles that impede interaction and connection because he is aware of social conventions that favor people with lighter complexions. Morris’s remark, which seems to indicate a hesitation or outright rejection to assist in setting up such a conference, shows that he is aware of the deeply ingrained racial dynamics and social restraints that existed in apartheid society. His reluctance is a reflection of the difficulties and dangers involved in questioning cultural norms that uphold the separation of races and give priority to racial uniformity.

Racial discrimination-filled environments, like the apartheid era that Athol Fugard’s play *Blood Knot*, highlight the significant impact of racist systems on people’s identities and economic decisions. These environments place pressure on marginalized people to adhere to hegemonic standards of whiteness, including appearance and attire.

“MORRIS. I haven’t got a hanky.

ZACHARIAH. I think we can buy one.

MORRIS. And the breast pocket?

ZACHARIAH. What’s the problem there? Let’s also—” (Fugard, 1963, p. 56)

The dialogue between Morris and Zachariah in *Blood Knot* illustrates the internalized pressure that marginalized people have to fit in with societal norms that value whiteness. Despite their financial struggles, Morris’s self-consciousness about his appearance such as the necessity for a handkerchief and appropriate clothes illustrates the extent people will go to in order to confront and overcome systematic racism. Zachariah’s recommendation to buy these things in order to live up to social norms highlights the financial compromises that marginalized people may have to make in order to lessen the effects of racial prejudice. Physical appearance and expression became essential in navigating acceptance in society and possibilities in apartheid-era South Africa, where racial segregation laws and social norms systemically handicapped Black people.

The scene from Athol Fugard’s play *Blood Knot*, in which Zachariah wastes all of his savings trying to get Morris ready for his encounter with a white girl, is a perfect example of how authoritarian white supremacy has a significant impact on racially discriminatory situations.

ZACHARIAH. My hands are full. [Pause.] I been shopping, Morrie. (Fugard, 1963, p. 59)

Zachariah’s choice of wasting all of his money purchasing for Morris during the apartheid era in South Africa highlights the internalized compulsion to adhere to social norms set out by white supremacists. Morris’s preparation for his meeting with the white girl is a reflection of the racial hierarchy and societal standards that marginalized people have to deal with daily. Zachariah’s activities demonstrate the financial compromises that people on the margins made in order to oppose racial prejudice and be accepted by a system that consistently harmed Black society. Zachariah makes an effort to lessen the social obstacles established by legislation enforcing racial discrimination and societal prejudices that favored white people by making an investment in

Morris's looks.

*Blood Knot* by Athol Fugard deftly explores the complex relationship between hegemony, racial prejudice, and individual identity against the harsh landscape of South Africa during the apartheid era. Fugard effectively conveys the terrible effects of hegemonic power on marginalized people through moving sequences and complex character dynamics between Morris and Zachariah. Morris's selfless use of his savings to improve his appearance highlights the extent to which marginalized people have to overcome racial discrimination in order to achieve social acceptance. In the end, *Blood Knot* criticizes the apartheid-era racial hierarchy, highlighting the resiliency and inner turmoil experienced by people trying to claim their individuality in the face of a system that is set up against them. Fugard's writings continue to be a powerful illustration of both the persistence of racial injustice and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of repressive systems. Fugard's writings continue to be a powerful illustration of both the persistence of racial injustice and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of repressive systems.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the complex dynamics of hegemony and marginality in South Africa during the apartheid era can be examined via the intriguing prism of Athol Fugard's *Blood Knot*. Fugard skillfully illustrates the severe effects of racial discrimination and societal hierarchies on relations with others as well as individual personality through the lives of Morris and Zachariah. This study has shown how marginalization takes the form of internalized ideas about race and social standing as well as overt prejudice, while hegemony maintains inequality by influencing social conventions and wielding political power. By examining these themes, this study highlights *Blood Knot*'s continued significance in conversations about post-colonial cultures and calls for complex methods of governance that tackle past wrongs and promote diverse structures of society.

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