
It thus seems important to try and determine what the politics and poetics of “contested pasts” (Dalley) and “potential history” (Azoulay) underlying these works are. Paul Ricoeur once wrote that “[i]nsofar as it no longer exists, the discourse on history can seek to grasp it only indirectly. It is here that the relation with fiction shows itself as crucial. The reconstruction of the past […] is the work of the imagination”. How “true” are these works? Nigerian Chinua Achebe once declared that he wrote his seminal *Things Fall Apart* [1958] in the realist vein, “in the way fiction can be true”? What are the modalities underlying the transmission of (post)colonial history? What are the generic propositions made by these African writers? Realism? African futurism? Magic Realism? To what extent do these works embrace the ontological turn in history? How do they position themselves in regard to postmodernism’s rejection of history when racialised and colonized people aim to write over their erasure from history? How do these authors adopt a decolonial mindset to challenge Western views of history as fixed, written, and tied to a Realist literary tradition? Do they enable to retrieve silenced/eclipsed beings from the past, those unrecognized in archives, those who “have no part” (Rancière)? How important is characterisation, verisimilitude, and narrative ethics in these African writers’ respective approach? What ethics of writing underlies these writers’ approaches to the writing of history especially in a (postcolonial) context where “history, in short, was the annals of the bully on the ground” (in Serpell, 2019)?