

## *Sizwe Bansi is Dead*

*Sizwe Bansi is Dead* is yet another play capturing apartheid playing havoc with lives in South Africa mired in racism and identity crises. It delineates the dehumanizing and draconian laws of apartheid South Africa and the strategies of non-white populations to negotiate for their survival. The play forcefully brings out how cumulative forces curtail the basic and fundamental human rights of the Blacks and Coloureds (the right to work and get the basic means to live a decent life) in South Africa. The Bantu Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act, also known as “Influx Control,” enacted in 1953, has been used by Fugard to highlight yet another divisive instrument in South African politics to perpetuate domination and hegemony. The law was intended to control the influx of Blacks and Coloureds in search of employments to the towns. It was necessary for them to carry identity documents and reference books, so called Passes, at all times. Everyone was supposed to produce this identity document on demand and if he failed to do so he was considered a law offender. This stringent inhuman law imposed suppression and subjugation and led to protests by the non-White population in the country. The rationale behind this law was that it empowered the White men to have firm control over the non-White labour and the Blacks had to live permanently at the mercy of their employers. Lewis Nkosi aptly depicts the unpleasant effect of apartheid laws on the non-White population of South Africa around the time the play was written thus:

the total effect of the apartheid laws in South Africa is to make it almost illegal to live. Before you are through reading about what the black is not allowed to do, you begin to wonder if there is anything he is permitted to do. (25)

Fugard painstakingly shares the brutality of the law from his experience as a clerk in Native Commissioner’s Court:

During my six months in that Court Room, I saw more suffering than I could cope with. I knew that society was evil before I had that experience, but seeing the machinery in operation taught me how it works and in fact what it does to people. I think my basic pessimism was born there, watching that procession and being unable to relate to them. (*Notebooks 7*)

Fugard has raised some pertinent questions on how the subject people respond to the oppressive system of colonial administration. The first question that he raises is how ordinary people ensure their survival in hegemonic structures of apartheid regime. Can survival be possible in such an environment where people's self-worth, pride and dignity are denied?

There is uncertainty as to when Fugard actually wrote this play however, according to Shelley "*Sizwe Bansi is Dead* was first performed at The Space Theatre on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1972" (127). The play opens in "*Styles Photographic Studio in the African ownership of New Brighton, Port Elizabeth*", where Styles is busy reading a newspaper that has political overtones laced with racism. Since the newspaper contains comments on contemporary events, Styles looks for duplicities and hypocrisies of racist society of apartheid. The play's beginning in the 'here and now' of Styles's studio is to emphasise the hardships that Styles faces in Ford Factory in Port Elizabeth. Moreover, it captures vicissitudes of his life along with the circumstances that compels him to run his own studio. Port Elizabeth occupies a significant space in Fugard's dramaturgical landscape:

Port Elizabeth: up the road past the big motor-assembly and rubber factories, turn right down a dirt road, pot-holed..... Down this road until you come to the lake- the dumping ground for the waste products from the factories- a terrible smell. On the far side- like a scab on the hill rising from the water- is Korsten location: a collection of shanties, pondoks and mud huts. No streets, no numbers. A world where anything goes- any race any creed. (*Notebooks* 9)

The setting recalls to mind T.S. Eliot's phrase, to 'know the place for the first time' expressed in *Four Quartets*. We find in Styles's light-hearted banter a salutation to Eliot's proposal that "Every moment is a new and shocking/ Valuation of all we have been" ('East Coker' *Four Quartets*). Thus, the interface between 'time past' and 'time present' that can be considered essential ingredients of the play as a literary mode, prepares a ground for its evolution. In a way it can be said that Fugard has implied 'stream of consciousness' technique in the play.

Styles shares his experiences of people from the margins through a typical day at work in the Ford motor factory and the visit of Mr. Ford Two from America. He reveals a series of deceptions that take place at the Ford plant where he is employed. He makes us familiar with how the labourers are exploited on the basis of race at Ford Factory. Mr. Henry Ford Number Two, an international capitalist working with apartheid regime to exploit non-white populations, has recently come in South Africa. When Styles shares his experience at Ford Factory, he reveals the hypocrisy of apartheid. Mr. Bradley is the mediator of the exploitation of the workers. He creates the impression that the working conditions at Ford Factory are good- for example he purchases safety cloths, places safety signs, and makes the floor neat and clean as Styles explains:

I'm telling you we cleaned that place- spot checked after fifteen minutes!...like you would have thought it had just been built.

When we finished washing they gave us towels...*(laughs)*.

Three hundred of us, man! We were so clean we felt shy! Standing there like little ladies in front of the mirror.

New overall comes, wrapped in plastic. Brand new, man!... Then next door to the tool room ...brand new tool bag, set of spanners, shifting spanner, torque wrench- all of them brand new- and because I worked in the dangerous hot test section I was also given a new asbestos apron and fire-proof gloves to replace the ones I had lost about a year ago. (151-153)

It is noteworthy to observe that the workers have been labouring without any safeguard to their lives and the realization about "Safety- precautions after six years" (151) is felt. The apartheid government uses the press to leave lasting impression on the minds of the common people that the coming of Henry Ford Number Two will definitely improve the lot of non-white population in South Africa. He is "...going to see to it that the conditions of their non-white workers in Southern Africa were substantially improved..." (150).

What is being propagated subtly is that the well-being of non-Whites is dependent on the Whites. Everything is being manipulated to create a big hype

connected with the visit. But a close reading shows the lacunae embedded and implicit both at spatial and language level. The non-Whites dismissed as ‘boys’, not yet grown up with independent thinking. They are being denied an independent identity pushed to the periphery as bunch of ‘boys’. They are not adults, hence not independent humans. They need to be taken care of. This is a deliberate ploy to assert supremacy and simultaneously makes the non-whites feel intrinsically ‘inferior’. In this play Styles and other workers, though adult, were considered boys. Mr. Bradley calls them boys, “Come on boys! It is got to be spotless! Big day for the plant” (150). When Mr Bradley calls them boys, it suggests that he is justifying his superiority. The native South Africans are regarded to receive the commandments of their masters because they are boys, not men. The situation reminds us of *The Blood Knot* where Zachariah is called a ‘boy’ by his brother Morris because he is black. This shows the degrading status of non-White population in South Africa.

Fugard further reveals the consciousness of the Blacks and Coloureds about their standing and status in South Africa in the act of Styles. Styles has been interested in translating Mr. Bradley’s speech. This gives him a sense of importance and superiority. Unwittingly he translating it in another way and thus changes its meaning. But Styles’s interpretation of Mr. Bradley’s speech by Mr. Bradley’s statement shows his naivety of political consciousness. He makes plan to take the colonizers’ fabrications and to throw them back at him in mockery. But his mockery does not contain any significant meaning, because it lacks political consciousness. He creates a hilarious atmosphere when he plays the role of interpreter for Mr Bass Bradley:

‘Gentleman, old Bradley says this Ford is a big bastard. He owns everything in this building which means you as well’

A voice came out of the crowd:

‘Is he a bigger fool than Bradley?’

‘They are asking, sir, is he bigger than you?’

‘Certainly ...[*blustering*]...certainly. He is a very big baas. He is a...

[*groping for words*]...he’s a Makulu Baas.’. (153)

When he is instructed to tell the boys in his own language, that this is a very big day in their lives, Styles interprets: “Gentlemen, this old fool says this is a hell of big day in our lives” (153). Styles’s behaviour endorses Fanon’s question: what does a black man want? And his subsequent conclusion that the desire of the black man is to take the position of the colonizer. He feels, to some extent, elevated when he works with the white man: “That was my moment, man. Kneeling there on the floor...foreman, plant supervisor, plant manager...and Styles? Standing!” (152). It is thus evident that Styles has elevated himself in the ranks of the colonizers. His attitude gravitates towards the colonizer’s position. Styles’ education and literacy is being used by him as a tool to help the oppressors in the oppression of his own people. He is considered an embodiment of well-known ‘kotma’ in Achebe’s works, who is trained and instructed by the colonizer for the purposes of assistance in the exploitation of the black people. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that it is his level of education and literacy that gives Styles an insight to interrogate the exploitation of the capitalist:

Car plant expansion. 1.5 million rand plan.’ *Ja*. I’ll tell you what that means...more machines, bigger buildings...never any expansion to the pay packet. Makes me fed up.I know what I am talking about. (149)

Styles is, in the Marxist sense, conscious of what is going on, but he lacks the requisite will to revolutionary action. This is in keeping with Marx’s predictions. He does not confront the system rather he chooses individualistic route of self-business. He seems to be Fanon’s African intellectual, articulated in ‘Pitfalls of National Consciousness’ and adopts the White man’s language not for the advantage of his community but for his personal ends.

When Styles plays the role of interpreter at Ford Factory, he is instructed by Mr. Bradley, “to tell the boys that when Mr. Henry Ford comes into the plant, I want them to look happy. We will slow down the speed of the line so that they can sing and smile while they are working” (153) and not to show their true feelings but to hide them. Mr Bradley wants the workers to show their happiness in order to impress Mr. Henry Ford. If they do so, Mr. Henry would think that they are “better than those monkeys in his own country, those niggers in Harlem who know nothing but strike,

strike” (154). Moreover, When Mr. Ford comes in, they must remember that “we are South African Monkeys, not American monkeys. South African monkeys are much better trained ...” (154). It brings out into the open the deception of Apartheid. They creates false notion that South African Blacks are in better position than that of American Blacks.

Even the arrival of Mr. Ford and his companions at the factory and their interaction with Black workers is not free from prejudice and discrimination. It is characterised by hierarchical structure. The authorities enter one by one according to their position: “the General Superintendent, Line Supervisor, General Foreman, Manager, Senior Manager, Managing Director....the bloody lot were there ...like a pack of puppies!” (155). They inspected each and everything at Ford Factory and it “ended up with us working harder that bloody day than ever before” (155). It is by now amply clear that the identity of the Blacks constructed by the Whites in South Africa is no better than the ‘monkeys’. This is the reason why Styles does not adopt confrontational counter discourse when he and his fellow workers are addressed as ‘monkeys’. Rather he supplicates in accordance with the diktats of the White man in order to appease them. Astonishingly he has no qualms in calling himself a monkey:

‘Styles, you are a bloody monkey, boy!’

‘What do you mean?’

‘You are a monkey, man.’

‘Go to hell!’

‘Come on, Styles, you’re a monkey, man, and you know it. Run  
up and

down the whole bloody day! Your life does not belong to you.  
You’ve

sold it. For what Styles? Gold wristwatch....(155-56)

The reason is self-explanatory. It is a matter of survival: “We are South African monkeys, not American monkeys. South African monkeys are much better trained....”(154).The acceptance embodies Styles’ consciousness of the duplicity of

apartheid discourse. South African Blacks are assumed to behave differently because they are different from American Blacks. What difference they have is not elaborated in the play. Are their living conditions better than those of American blacks? Are they paid much salary than Americans? Nothing is clear here. The idea inherent is to keep them divided. As long as they remain antagonist to each other so long they remain unaware of the conditions they live in. Thus 'divide and rule' strategy is applied by the colonizers.

The degradation and humiliation of Blacks at Ford Factory compels Styles to start self-business. Shava feels that Styles self-business is "an individual and individualised way of saying 'no' to apartheid oppression" (133). By taking on his own business, he shows his refusal of being 'somebody else's tool'. In one of his encounters he confides to his father: "Daddy if I could stand on my own two feet and not be somebody else's tool I'd have some respect for myself. I'd be a man" (156). When he informs his friend Dhlamini at the Funeral Parlour, it is greeted with excitement and suggestion to use the vacant room next door: "grab your chance, Styles. Grab it before somebody in my line puts you in a box and closes the lid" (157). Styles applied for the permission to use the room as the studio and after a long procedure and waiting got permission and starts running his own business. Seeking permission to start 'self-business' speaks of the subjugation and subordination of the Non-White population. The non-White population are oppressed to such an extent that they cannot do anything without the permission of the racist regime of apartheid.

Styles seems one of Fugard's most appealing characters who, in spite of being rooted in Black working class, has absorbed some socialist philosophy. By opting out of the factory he in fact makes his stand clear. He no longer wants to be another man's tool:

Selling most of his time on this earth to another man. Out of every twenty four hours I could only properly call mine the six when I was sleeping. What the hell is the use of that? '...if I could stand on my own two feet and not be somebody else's tool, I'd have some respect for myself. I'd be a man. (156)

Fugard's contextualizing the political history of South Africa in the text enables us to study the intervention of racial discrimination into class struggle. Even at present,

despite vigorous effort by the government for 'Black empowerment' racism is constantly observed in the society along with class struggle. If Styles is in any way taken as a part of the capitalist as some critics suggest, he empathizes with his community because being fully conscious of sufferings, understands the problems of his customers. He expresses his desire to remember the common people of his community who never get place in the history books and whose statues are never erected or those:

...who would be forgotten, and their dreams with them, if wasn't for Styles. That is what I do, friends. Put down, in my way, on paper the dreams and hopes my people so that even their children's children will remember a man... 'This was our Grandfather'... (159)

Thus, Styles studio is a site where all Black people assemble to express, recount their dreams that have been frustrated, obstructed and denied by apartheid and when their photos are taken, they think that their wishes, to some extent, have been fulfilled. A person comes to Styles's studio and shows his desire to be photographed with all his certificates that he has obtained after seven years of part-time study. Another time, twenty seven people pose to get the 'Family Card'. In one way or the other, photography becomes a way of recording history as Lena does in *Boesman and Lena* through her recollections. Although, the family card brings about more sales, yet he remembers the grandfather who comes across death without being photographed. His sympathetic attitude towards the old man dilutes the criticism that Styles is exploiting his own people:

...his grey hair was a sign of wisdom. His face weather-beaten and lined with experience. Looking at it was like the paging the volume of his history, written by himself. He was a living symbol of life, of all it means and does to a man. I adored him. He sat there - half smiling, half serious - as if he had already seen the end of his road. (161)

His kindness reflects his non-capitalist view. Besides, Styles highlights the capitalist agenda of the government for the workers. The government soul concern is in their labour power. The workers are exploited in such a way that the more they work the more poverty they face. They work laboriously day and night not for the benefits of their own but for the welfares of their owners. Irrespective of the hard work they do,



they are paid fixed wages. Their acquiescing to accept low, fixed wage is necessitated out of need to survive. As a result they possess nothing but share ability to work:

...We own nothing except ourselves. This world and its laws, allows us nothing, except ourselves. There is nothing we can leave behind when we die, except the memory of ourselves.... (163)

The phrase 'memory of ourselves' is a reference to their photographs captured in Styles through which they will be remembered after death, their soul gateway to posterity. Their dreams are also represented by the photographs. Capitalism thrives on selling dreams to the workers- that is unrealistic illusions. For example, a new washing powder will help to improve worker's lot in life. On the contrary, Styles' dream world is closer to reality than that of the other workers. Like Styles, Morris and Zachariah own nothing except themselves in *Blood Knot*. Morris is hopeful that his dreams might be fulfilled, while Styles has firm determination to protect this precious commodity- that is his studio, "a strong room of dreams" (159). Thus Styles attempts to reclaim his identity by establishing his place in the oppressive system of apartheid discourse. Scholars are divided over Styles leaving the factory and his ownership of the studio. Some are of the opinion that though photography studio may be a symbol of Black empowerment in racist regime, it, however, does not entail the liberation of the whole community. Rather they view it as self-serving and egocentric. Styles's desertion of his fellow workers at Ford Factory speaks of his lack of sympathy for his brethren's suffering. When he seeks emancipation by starting his own business, he thinks only about himself, not about the whole community. Nonetheless, his sympathy for his people shown through role-playing rebels some of the charges levelled against him.

Styles's role-playing assumes significance in the play. Role-playing symbolises a strategy in resistance plays by Black South African writers. In order to remove the problem of tedium through straight narrative and make the text interesting, Fugard and his collaborators introduce the role-playing within several systems of signification. For instance, looking at his display-board, Styles gets two types of knock:

I get two types of knock here. When I hear....[knocks solemnly on the table]....I don't even look up, man. 'Funeral parlour is next door.' But

when I hear....[energetic rap on the table....he laughs]....that's my sound, and I shout 'Come in!'

In walked a chap, full of smiles, little parcel under his arm. I can still see him, man!"

[*Styles acts both roles.*]

'Mr. Styles?'

I said: 'Come in!'

'Mr. Styles, I have come to take a snap, Mr. Styles.'

I said: 'Sit down! Sit down, my friend!'

'No, Mr. Styles. I want to take the snap standing. [Barely containing his suppressed excitement and happiness] Mr. Styles, take the card, please!'

I said: 'Certainly, friend.' (160)

On one hand, role-playing brings participation of other characters in the narrative. Styles represents not only one individual describing a particular situation, for example, a photographer or an ex-factory worker in his township studio, rather he assumes the role of a crowd, incorporating more than twenty seven members of a large family who come to get their photographs taken representing the whole black community as is obvious from Styles's statement:

The eldest son said to me: 'Mr. Styles, this is my father, my mother, my brothers and sisters, their wives and husbands, our children. Twenty-seven of us, Mr. Styles. We have come to take a card. My father....,' he pointed to the old man, '....my father always wanted it'.

I said: 'Certainly. (161)

Fugard's assertive concern suggests the nature of suffering and optimism for an entire community. Hence, the plurality undertaken in Styles's role is actualised here. Through undertaking this tactic Styles legitimizes his concern not only with himself as an individual but also with the simple people who are never mentioned in the

history books. Envisaging and representing multitude of invisible, yet very significant people, Styles not only focuses on the Camusian principle *Je suis, donc nous sommes*, but also offers a contrarian: “We are, therefore I am”.

Styles’s role-playing facilitates to represent the all-inclusive yet invisible system of apartheid. The working and implication of apartheid is represented in such a complex way that its victims cannot escape it anyhow. The subjects/victims of the system are needed to be represented in order to demonstrate the effect of their suffering as well as the possibilities of their resistance. This is the reason Styles’s caricature of ‘Baas’ Bradley has such peculiar weight. The victims enjoy a temporary ascendancy only through play-acting, because they know that the system’s subject/authority is and remains always there. It is well-known fact that what does not threaten does not require being expatriate. It is only through role-playing/play-acting, the actor is able to fully understand the System, which proves helpful to understand the working it from the inside- though outwardly appears to be in conformity. In the act of role-playing:

A man walks nervously into the studio. Dressed in an ill-fitting new double-breasted suit. He is carrying a plastic bag with a hat in it. His manner is hesitant and shy. Styles takes one look at him and breaks into an enormous smile. (164)

Fugard’s description of the man is representative of the Black man in apartheid South Africa. One glance and Styles understands that he has come to fulfil his ‘dream’. He welcomes the man cordially. The conversation between Styles and the man is important because it reveals the fractured identity of a man who is “not sure of himself”:

Man: Mr. Styles?

Styles: that’s me. Come in! You have come to take a card?

Man: Snap.

Styles: Yes, a card. Have you got a deposit?

Man: Yes.

Styles: Good. Let me take your name down. You see, you pay deposit now, and when you come for the card, you pay the rest.

Man: Yes.

Styles: [*to his desk and a black book for names and address*]. What is your name? [*The man hesitates, as if not sure of himself.*]

Your name please?

[*pause*]

Come on, my friend. You must surely must have a name?

Man: [*pulling himself together, but still very nervous*]. Robert Zwelinzima.

Styles: [*writing*]. Robert zwelinzima.'Address?

Man: [*swallowing*]. Fifty, Mapija Street.

Styles: [*writes, then pauses*]. 'Fifty, Mapija?'

Man: Yes. (164)

Nervousness and hesitancy of the man shows that he has done something wrong- he has adopted another man's identity who is no more in order to seek job in Port Elizabeth. The man has come to take the card in order to send to his wife in King William's Town. The man again seems tense when he is asked to smile to show his happiness to his wife:

Come on Robert! You want your wife to get a card with her husband looking like he has got all the worries in the world on his back? What will she think? 'My poor husband is in trouble!' You must smile!

[*Robert shamefacedly relaxes a little and starts to smile.*] (166)

The impact of 'Pass Law' is writ large on Sizwe, who has assumed the role of Robert Zwelinzima, when he shamefacedly starts to smile. The perforced smile highlights the tension, the burden the various laws impose on Blacks, that they are unfamiliar with what constitutes relaxations. However, Styles consoles Sizwe and produces a Philips

class-room map containing America, England, Africa, Russia, Asia as a backdrop to the photo to mitigate the suffocation. Styles finds a cigarette, and lights it and gives it to Robert to “hold it Robert...keep on smiling...that’s it...[presses the release button- the shutter clicks.]” (167).

Styles’s advice to Robert to take the card as a movie is important: “Come on! What about a movie, man?” (167). When Robert does not understand, he demonstrates: “you just a walk” and “I take the card” that will show as if you are “walking home” (167). Robert is ready for this, taking “*Pipe in mouth, walking stick in hand, newspaper under the other arm*” and he “*takes the jaunty step and then freezes, as Styles has shown him earlier*” (167). Then camera flash goes off. Though an exaggerated version of reality has been depicted through photography, it, nonetheless reveals the wishes of the people and does not expose the facts. However, preserving photos is a way of reclaiming themselves within the prevailing discourse of apartheid. Sizwe Bansi, assuming as Robert, smiles while his photograph is taken because he wants to express that he is happy, though he is in trouble. It is essential to create the illusion of satisfied, contented life, a perfect picture to his wife, an attempt to hide harsh reality.

Representing history through photography upsets the actual history of the people, because it is something unitary and unchangeable. Non-white population take this opportunity to represent themselves as they wish to be seen by their loved ones. The future generation would think that their ancestors were not in distress rather they had happy moment in their lives. The card symbolises their refusal to be confined to the place specified for the Black people and induce a delusion of mobility otherwise denied. By smiling, Sizwe shows his hopefulness and thus keeps his family optimistic. He does not want his family to give way to despair. That is the reason he shows luxurious life through his posture taking “*pipe in one hand and cigarette in the other*” (167). This is a mask that reflects his intrinsic desire on imagined future rather than actual conditions of the moment. He does not imagine himself a poor black man, who can be put behind the bar any time for the improper documentation, rather he is a “chief Messenger at Feltex, sitting in his office with the world behind him” (167). The camera used by Styles is a gadget to inspire common people “those that the writers of big books forget about” (159), to make the moments of happiness (real or imagined) immortal. It is the way these people can navigate those lands that they find impossible

to venture into in real life. The camera acts as a tapestry to the Black people to view life in myriad way under oppression. For them, to pose is to be- I pose therefore I am. For example, when Styles takes picture in motion, Sizwe gives a pose as if he were going home. When Sizwe's picture reaches home, his wife and children would be glad to think that their father is returning home: "Look, children, your daddy is coming!" (168), and the children would express their happiness jumping and clapping their hands crying: "Daddy is coming! Daddy is coming!" (168). The photo that shows Sizwe 'coming home' replaces real Sizwe Bansi in Port Elizabeth in postcolonial sense of the term.

Possibly, Styles's photography resembles Athol Fugard's mission to witness the lives of the common people burdened by Apartheid. Though Styles endeavours to preserve the history of the common people through his photography, still he does not fulfil the purpose completely, because photography has its own weaknesses. As a historian, Styles does not think beyond 'witnessing' in Fugardian sense of the term. His only concern is to preserve the dreams of the people by taking photos and, therefore, involving them in telling their own stories:

Something you mustn't do is interfere with a man's dream. If he wants to do it standing, let him stand. If he wants to sit, let him sit. Do exactly what they want! (160)

Styles assists his customers in fulfilling their dreams, that appears rebellious act to do so in such an environment where the history of the Black man is not recorded rather it has been marginalized and to dream is not permitted. For example, Styles convinces Sizwe to make his photograph taken with "pipe in mouth, walking stick in hand, and newspaper under his arm" (167) to demonstrate that he leads luxurious life.

The question that then arises is that if these photographs represent 'false images', does the actual history of the people exist? What do these 'false images' suggest about Fugardian concept of witnessing? Possibly, Fugard wants to suggest that these people have a history not in real sense of the term, but in their own imagination that can be compared to the one recorded by the White man. Recording of history through photography is often used by the historians to demonstrate how desire works. Some scholars have expressed their opinion that, in one way or the other, Styles is busier with money making to make his survival ensured than with

truthfully preserving the history of the common people. In other words, he is more businessman than the photographer. In Shava's view, "He has become a ghost that haunts his own people and his will to survive is informed by the law of the jungle, the survival of the fittest" (136). The location of Styles studio beside a funeral parlour has its own significance. His business has affinity with funeral parlour. Styles is a man whose duty is to encapsulate the history of the people through his lens when alive, before they go to the funeral parlour. This is validated by the story of a man who, when comes to receive his photographs, informs Styles that his father has passed away before seeing the photos: "Mr. Styles, we almost didn't make it. My father died two days after the card. He will never see it" (163). The man thinks that his father though dead can, at least, be recollected through this photograph. Styles's customers are obsessed with photographs before they die. The inference to be drawn is that the Black men have no courage to do anything except leaving photos and perpetuate their memory. Styles explains to the man:

You must understand one thing. We own nothing except ourselves. This world and its laws, allows us nothing, except ourselves. There is nothing we can leave behind when we die, except the memory of ourselves. (163)

Remembering the ancestors may be theorized as a way of resisting oppressive system of apartheid, because memory offers the future generation to connect with their history. Edward Said, the Palestinian thinker and critic, views memory as: "A powerful collective instrument for preserving identity. It is one of the bulwarks against historical erasure, a means of resistance" (182-83). The history that the Black people create through their photos, by no means reflect 'authenticity' in any way because it demonstrates not only their cultures and traditions but also the cultures and traditions of the western people. While making their photos taken, Black people use cultural commodities of the western people for example cigarette in one hand and stick in another. They want to imitate western cultures as much as possible. The posture and the movie that Sizwe adopts during his photography itself show western influence. Fugard gives a vivid description of Sizwe's posture: '*[Pipe in one mouth, walking-stick in hand, newspaper under the other arm, Robert takes a jaunty step and then freezes, as Styles had shown him earlier]*' (168).

The remaining action of the play takes place at Bantu's house in New Brighton that moves with Robert's dictation of his letter to be sent to his wife with this photograph:

Buntu's house in New Brighton. Table and two chairs. Robert, in a direct continuation of the preceding scene, is already there, as Buntu, Jacket slung over his shoulder, walks in. Holds out his hand to Robert.  
(169)

Sizwe, assuming the role of Robert confides to Buntu that he has got no permit to stay in Port Elizabeth. Rather he has been endorsed out to go to King William's Town where he does not want to go. When Buntu asks how they found out that your passbook is not in order, Sizwe narrates his story that reveals the complexity of apartheid. Sizwe recalls the night he was staying with Zola, the authorities raided and searched the premise and dragged him out from his house. Then they took him to "the administration office.... and then from there to the Labour Bureau" (170-71). There the white man took his book and looked at him and another white man came with a pink card that was a record of the black people. Then a person came in carrying a stamp and put it on his passbook. The stamp put in his passbook mandated him to report to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner in King William's Town for the purposes of repatriation:

You are required to report to the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, King William's Town, within three days of the above-mentioned date for the....'You should have been home yesterday!... 'for the purposes of repatriation to home district'. (171)

Repatriation, under apartheid laws, means sending the unemployed Black people back to the so called home lands. Sizwe thus, has no option but to go back to his home land Ciskei. Through Sizwe's pitiable predicament, Fugard exposes the dehumanizing effects of legislation on Black people.

Like Zachariah in *'The Blood Knot'* Sizwe Bansi is uneducated, so he is completely ignorant of the fact that the passbook he possesses is not order. The importance of the passbook is implicit in the response of Buntu. When Sizwe expresses his unwillingness to leave Port Elizabeth, Buntu replies: "May be. But if



that book says go, you go” (171). This suggests that the passbook’s entry is more important than that of a person who possesses it. Though Sizwe refuses to leave Port Elizabeth, but is compelled to do so because it is imprinted in the passbook. Sizwe wants to get rid of this passbook by burning it and getting a new one, but is stopped by Buntu who reminds him of dire consequences:

Burn that book? Stop kidding yourself, Sizwe! Anyway, suppose you do. You must immediately go apply for a new one. Right? And until that new one comes, be careful the police don’t stop you and ask for your book. (171-72)

In short, the racist regime has created such a fear psychosis that the Black people can never escape the instructions of the passbook. In addition, the bureaucratic procedures are so cumbersome that bypassing it, is near impossibility. The procedures are designed in such a manner that Sizwe cannot resist repatriation. Even if he does not carry the passbook with him or throws it away, it will be detected by the White man through his big machine that his stay, in Port Elizabeth, is illegal. His movement is monitored:

White man at the Labour Bureau takes the book, looks at it- does not look at you!- goes to the big machine and feeds in your number...[*Buntu goes through the motions of punching out a number on a computer.*]...card jumps out, he reads: ‘Sizwe Bansi. Endorsed to King William’s Town...’...So you burn that book, or throw it away, and get another one. Same thing happens. (172)

Fugard has added another dimension by highlighting the use of technology as an instrument to subvert and control the Black people. Improper documentation means “endorsed out” to the homelands.

Sizwe’s woes continue unabated. The legalities of passbooks haunts in every effort undertaken to make life meaningful. Whether it is to work as garden boy or sell potatoes passbook is mandatory. Buntu explains that the little White ladies want a garden boy with a good manners and he should have a wide knowledge of flowers and seasons. Moreover, his book must be in order. Buntu asks Sizwe in ironic tones, “Yours in order? What the hell do you know about seasons and flowers? [*After a*

*moment's thought.*] Do you know any White man who is prepared to give you a job?" (172). Sizwe answers "No" (172). His trouble peaks when he seems incapable to sell the potatoes because even for that he is needed a Hawker's license. And Hawker's license can be provided to persons whose entries in the passbook are in order. Thus circumstances do not permit him to do anything except to go back to King William's Town and knock the door of the Mines Recruiting Office in order to get a job there. The other hindrance is that Sizwe Bansi cannot be employed by any White man in Port Elizabeth, as Buntu makes it amply clear:

There is no way out, Sizwe. You're not the first one who has tried to find it. Take my advice and catch that train back to King William's Town. If you need work so bad go knock on the door of the Mines Recruiting Office. Dig gold for the white man. (173)

But, Sizwe neither wants to go back to King William's Town, because it is dry and very small place and contains too many people to get a job, nor does he want to join Mines Recruiting Office because it is a poorly paid job. In addition, it comprises danger because of its underground work. When the rocks fall, many people from Black community face imminent death:

I don't want to work on the mines. There is no money there. And it's dangerous, under the ground. Many black men get killed when the rocks fall. You can die there. (174)

Whereupon Buntu "*taking possibly real look at Sizwe*" remarks, "You don't want to die?" (174). Sizwe asserts, "I don't want to die" (174). Such helplessness echoes in *The Island* also where Antigone acknowledges that "I know I must die". However, it is a universal truth that the man who is born, suffers and dies. The death that Sizwe talks about is not the same that people observe in everyday life rather it symbolises his reluctance to surrender himself completely to the will of White man. In his opinion, going back to King William's Town signifies his complete submission. But, if he insists staying in Port Elizabeth and refuses to go back home, it shows his struggle for survival that is the message that Fugard wants to convey to the audience. Though the Black people are being exploited on the basis of race in South Africa, still they have the courage to face adversity and struggle for their survival in such an oppressive system like apartheid.

Though Sizwe's problem has profound personal implication, but the way Buntu formulates it seems to be purely social one. We are aware of the fact that Fugard himself has expressed his aim of writing plays to transcend the 'merely' socio-political. Several times he has asserted that he is writing plays in order to expose oppression and injustices done to the community other than the white one in South Africa. Sizwe is not the only person who is suffering from prejudice and injustice of apartheid rather Buntu himself is in the same boat, and it is clear when he tells Sizwe his trouble that he has faced in his home town. Like Sizwe, Buntu undergoes a lot of difficulties in order to get employment. He gives a clear picture of racist authorities when he describes his trouble to Sizwe:

Hai, Sizwe! If I had to tell you the trouble I had before I could get the right stamps in my book, even though I was born in this area! The trouble I had before I could get a decent job...born in this area! The trouble I had to get this two roomed house....born in this area! (174)

During his stay in Sky's shebeen, Sizwe airs his views about Ciskeian independence, the place where he resides is immersed in pitiable conditions. Ciskeian independence is noteworthy because of its inhuman conditions created by apartheid:

I must tell you, friend ...when a car passes or the wind blows up the dust, Ciskeian independence makes you cough. I'm telling you, friend...put a man in a pondok and call that independence? My good friend let me tell you...Ciskeian Independence is shit! (178)

These remarks represented Transkei when the play was produced there in October 1976. Having been aware of the fact, apartheid regime ordered the imprisonment of John Kani and Winston Ntshona. They remained imprisoned for two weeks and they were released after protracted and prolonged international pressures.

While on the way back from Sky's place, Sizwe's and Buntu's meeting a dead man proves to be turning point in the play. Sizwe is eager to know where the dead man stays and suggests Buntu that "His passbook will tell you" (180). But, Buntu seems completely indifferent. On the insistence of Sizwe, Buntu reappears and examines the passbook of the dead man and reads the name and address 'Robert Zwelinzima. Tribe: Xhosa. Native Identification Number...' (181). The dead man

worked at many places but now he is unemployed and his passbook is in order. That is why Buntu expresses his happiness: “Hey look, Sizwe! He is one up on you. He has got a work-seeker’s permit” (181). Then Buntu takes Sizwe’s passbook along with Robert’s and compares the two books. Buntu here plays crucial role in changing Sizwe’s identity:

[Buntu’s house, as earlier. Table and two chairs. Buntu pushes Sizwe down into a chair. Sizwe still muttering, starts to struggle back into his clothes. Buntu opens the two reference books and places them side by side on the table. He produces a port of glue, then very carefully tears out the photograph in each book. A dab of glue on the back of each and then Sizwe’s goes back into Robert’s book, and Robert’s into Sizwe’s. Sizwe watches this operation, at first uninterestedly, but when he realizes what Buntu is up to, with growing alarm. When he is finished, Buntu pushes the two books in front of Sizwe.] (183)

The reason put forward by Buntu is that it is the only chance for him to stay in Port Elizabeth and find a job: “It’s your only chance!” (183). But Sizwe, is reluctant:

Man: No, Buntu! What’s it mean? That me, Sizwe Bansi....

Buntu: Is dead.

Man: I’m not dead friend.

Buntu: We burn this book....[*Sizwe’s original*]....and Sizwe Bansi disappears off the face of the earth.

Camouflaging or changing identity is not an easy task. This is evident from Sizwe’s hesitance to lose his passbook and take the passbook of the dead man: “I don’t want to lose my name” (184). It means he does not want to swap his identity. It is imperative to note that the name Sizwe Bansi, an embodiment of nationalist aspirations of the people and the passbook, a creation of apartheid regime, are inseparable. The passbook does not provide any information regarding Sizwe Bansi that he is a man having a wife and four children rather it suggests the white man’s way of defining Black people. Through passbook, the White man endeavours to catalogue them within

the hegemonic regimes of apartheid discourse. The passbook portrays Black people in such a way that it is considered superior to their will as Sizwe himself explains:

My passbook talks of good English too...big words that Sizwe can't read and doesn't understand. Sizwe wants to stay here in New Brighton and find a job; passbook says, 'No! Report back.' Sizwe wants to feed his wife and children; passbook says, 'No. Endorsed out.'

They never told us it would be like that when they introduced it. They said: Book of life! Your friend! You will never get lost! They told us lies.

That bloody book...! People, do you know? No! Wherever you go...it's that bloody book. You go to school, it goes too. Go to work, it goes too. Go to church and pray and sing lovely hymns, it sits there with you. Go to hospital to die, it lies there too! (180-183)

Thus, the passbook and Sizwe Bansi's survival are interrelated. His statement "I don't want to lose my name" (184) suggests that he does not want to lose his "bloody passbook" (182). Here Sizwe's difficulty seems a postcolonial dilemma because it implies the difficulty in surpassing the history of colonialism. It is a challenging task to keep ourselves away from fabrications that have been superimposed by the White man on our identities. However, in a racist society under apartheid, Sizwe feels compelled to change his identity, though reluctantly. When Sizwe hesitates to adopt the dead man's identity, Buntu is annoyed at him and expresses his displeasure:

All right, I was only trying to help. As Robert Zwelinzima you could have stayed and worked in this town. As Sizwe Bansi ...? Start walking, friend. King William's Town. Hundred and fifty miles. And don't waste any time! (184)

Sizwe is in the grips of identity crises. If he wants to stay in Port Elizabeth, he has no choice but to adopt Robert Zwelinzima's identity; and if he wants his own identity intact he has to go back King William's Town, because the government regulation under present regime doesn't allow anyone with improper documentation to stay put in Port Elizabeth. Though, the passbook fulfils the purpose of the "pass laws" designed to create an atmosphere that compelled the non-White population to take up

hazardous and poorly paid jobs- to dig gold for the White man, yet Sizwe finds it difficult to go back to King William's Town because he has a responsibility towards his family that consists of his wife and four children. That is the reason, when the opportunity comes to him to adopt Robert Zwelinzima's identity he is left with no option. But, it was not a happy and willing option. Because when he loses his name and chooses a new one, he looks as if he is suffering from identity crisis. Sizwe resembles Lena in this situation. Lena too had expressed her desire to lose her name and adopt a new one. When Boesman asks her "who are you?", she replies, "Mary. I want to be Mary." In both the cases, the option of losing one's name and adopting a new one implies a sort of 'identity crisis' among Black and Coloured people in South Africa. It also symbolises that they are living like ghost and they do not have any real identity of their own. Vandenbrouke asserts that a person must have a name in such a society where people are treated as uniform and faceless mass. If Sizwe changes his name and adopts a new one, he will be permitted to continue his stay in town, evade a trouble, get a job, earn for his family and live a luxurious life. But Sizwe is in a dilemma.

But Sizwe conscious of his responsibility to get livelihood for his family contemplates change of identity. But again he vacillates when he recalls his wife and children associated with his name:

Man: What about my wife, Nowetu?

Buntu: Buntu: What about her?

Man: [*maudlin tears*]. Her loving husband, Sizwe Bansi is dead!

Buntu: So what! She is going to marry a better man.

Man: [*bridling*]. Who?

Buntu: You....Robert Zwelinzima.

Man: [*thoroughly confused*]. How can I marry my wife, Buntu?

Buntu: Get her down here and I'll introduce you.

Man: Don't make jokes, Buntu. Robert ....Sizwe.....I'm all mixed up.  
Who am I? (185)

It is a problematic and complicated situation. If Sizwe becomes Robert Zwelinzima, what will happen to his wife and children? His children are registered at school under Bansi as their father. Moreover, Sizwe feels that adopting a new name means he is dead. Thus, Sizwe's metaphorical death seems a challenge because it symbolises not only his death but also the death of his family. Since he is a married man, his wife and children are living with that name. How can he perpetuate his lineage under a false name? Buntu incites him in this manner:

Are you really worried about your children, friend, or are you just worried about yourself and your bloody name? Wake up, man! Use that book and with your pay on Friday you'll have a real chance to do something for them. (185)

Here Sizwe is confused regarding his identity: "I'm afraid. How get I used to Robert? How do I live as another man's ghost?" (185). Buntu reminds him of the fact that he should not worry about being a ghost because he is already a ghost- his identity is the creation of the White man. Bill Ashcroft argues:

Rather than being swallowed by the hegemony of Empire, the apparently dominated culture and its interpolated subjects within it, are quite able to interpolate the various modes of imperial discourse to use for different purposes, to counter its effects by transforming them. (15)

Ashcroft's cultural transformation ascribes resistance strategy adopted by the colonized to transform the colonizer's culture in order to navigate injustice of apartheid and ensure their survival. Buntu advises Sizwe Bansi to "be a real ghost, if that is what they want...spook them to hell" (185). It is significant to understand why he is advised to be a spook. The reason is to ensure his survival- the only option left if he wishes to survive. Buntu reminds Sizwe that the identity he adopts caricatures him as a ghost, but then 'wasn't Sizwe Bansi a ghost?' (185). The discomfiture of Sizwe is palpable. Finally, Sizwe starts realizing his predicament when Buntu lays bare the reality:

No? when the white man looked at you at the Labour Bureau what did he see? A man with dignity or a bloody passbook with an N.I. number? Isn't that a ghost? When the white man sees you walk down the street

and calls out, 'Hey. John! Come here'...to you, Sizwe Bansi...isn't that a ghost? Or when his little child calls you 'Boy'...you a man, circumcised, with a wife and four children...isn't that a ghost? Stop fooling yourself. All I'm saying is be a real ghost, if that is what they want, what they have turned us into. Spook them into hell, man! (185)

Sizwe is silenced and contemplates his change of identity seriously. For the subject people, surrendering one's identity does not have much significance because they lack any worthwhile identity in apartheid South Africa. Still, despite the fractured and dismembered life that the colonized experience, Fugard consistently shows his regard for their significance, he consistently raises his voice against the prevailing South African ideology that considers native South Africans rubbish. The crux of the play that Fugard and his collaborators want to highlight is that the authorities of apartheid regime do not recognise the existence of Black or Coloured South Africans. They create such an atmosphere that the native South Africans (black or coloureds) find no alternative but to lose his singularity and take another man's identity. When the opportunity comes to Sizwe that he can work in Port Elizabeth and earn livelihood for his family by surrendering his identity, he is caught between bread or dignity. It is a biased and imbalanced contest for the Black South Africans.

Buntu believes that life at present is more significant than self-pride and dignity. Hence he counsels Sizwe to take care for the lives of his wife and children rather than thinks of pride and dignity. Buntu argues that if he is living alone and does not have anyone to worry about or look after except himself, it may be possible for him to pay some sort of price for self-pride and dignity. But if he has a wife and four children dependent on him he must give preference to them over his 'little pride':

If there was just me...I mean, If I was alone.....may be then I'd be prepared to pay some sort of price for little pride. But, if I had a wife and four children wasting away their one and only life in the dust and poverty of Ciskeian Independence....if I had four children waiting for me, their father, to do something about their lives....ag no, Sizwe.... (190)

When Sizwe hesitates again Buntu snaps:



Shit on names, man! To hell with them if in exchange you can get a piece of bread for your stomach and a blanket in winter. Understand me, brother, I'm not saying that pride isn't a way for us. What I'm saying is shit on our pride if we only bluff ourselves that we are men.  
(190)

Buntu says that if name is the emblem for pride, "then shit on it. Take mine and give me food for my children" (191). The apprehension in Sizwe's mind is that how does he continue to survive along with his wife and children in such a degrading, deplorable oppressive system? Should he allow himself to be humiliated by transforming his name for the sake of his wife and children? Should he maintain his self-pride and dignity by sticking on to his real identity? The question of surviving or maintaining one's identity is the most challenging and daunting issue in apartheid South Africa.

When finally Sizwe agrees to change his identity, Buntu wants to train him by calling him 'Robert Zwelinzima'. Buntu treats him as a worker at an imaginary Sales House:

Buntu: [*pencil poised, ready to fill in a form*]. Your name, please, sir?

Man: [*playing along uncertainty*.] Robert Zwelinzima.

Buntu: [*writing*.] 'Robert Zwelinzima.' Address?

Man: Fifty, Mapija Street.

Buntu: Where do you work?

Man: Feltex.

Buntu: And how much do get paid?

Man: Twelve....twelve rand ninety nine cents.

Buntu: N. I. number, please?

[*Sizwe hesitates*.]

Your Native Identity number please?

[Sizwe is still uncertain. Buntu abandons the act and picks up Robert Zwelinzima's passbook. He reads out the number.]

N-I-3-8-1-1-8-6-3.

Burn that into your head, friend. You hear me? It's more important than your name. (186)

This incident is a turning point in the play. By metamorphosing into Robert Zwelinzima, Sizwe is able to stay in Port Elizabeth and earn livelihood for his wife and children. Sizwe's uncertain and fractured identity reflects the indeterminate and fractured identity of South African Blacks. South Africa is "a country now poised between a semi-colonial past and a newly emergent, decolonized future" (*The Township Plays*: xi). However, the only redeeming feature is that people are trying to speak out as does Sizwe in the play. He is ready to take on the identity of the dead man, but it is difficult for him to go back to King William's Town in order to dig gold for the white man. He is well aware of the fact that his safety is certain so long as his fingerprints are not checked, but still it is entangled to another man's passbook, which is in order. When Sizwe asks Buntu, 'for how long' he is safe, Buntu replies:

How long? For as long as you can stay out of trouble. Trouble will mean police station, then fingerprints off to Pretoria to check on previous convictions...and when they do that...Sizwe Bansi will live again and you will have had it. (191)

Sizwe is astonished at Buntu's statement, because it is well known to him that a Black man cannot stay out of trouble: "a black man stay out of trouble? Impossible, Buntu. Our skin is trouble" (191). The hegemony of the Whites is apparent. A Black man cannot visualise a life for himself without trouble. Although he tries to negotiate the complex web of troubles spread by the White regime, yet he is unable to do so. In spite of having passbook in order, though taking it from another man, Sizwe is afraid of the consequences of the operating complex laws. Sizwe wants to suggest that passbook is not the only thing that matters for the black man. If he has passbook in order, it does not mean that he is out of trouble, because it is his skin colour that creates problem and not the passbook alone. If he escapes one trouble, he faces another one. It is not because he has committed a crime; it is just because he has black

skin. That is why Sizwe finds impossible to live without trouble. In Sizwe's opinion, it would be a grave fallacy on the part of the Black man to imagine a life free from problems. It is essentially his skin colour that troubles the eyes of the White man 'our skin is trouble'. Just as a person cannot live without skin, similarly a black man cannot live without trouble. Thus, the [black] skin is synonymous with trouble. This reminds us of the situation of Lena when she expresses her desire to have 'a room with a door and all that'. Boesman's response to her desire is remarkable, because, instead of consoling her, he rebukes her by saying whether she considers herself a white woman. It means only white woman can think of 'a room with a door'. As far as Black men or women are concerned, a house with a roof is beyond imagination for them. Sky is the roof for them. They have to live without house. In short, they have to face trouble, because they are Black.

*Sizwe Bansi is Dead* ends with transformed identity of Sizwe. Now he has become Robert Zwelinzima-cum-Sizwe Bansi:

Sizwe picks up the passbook, (Robert's passbook) looks at it for a long time, then puts it in his pocket. He finds his walking stick, newspaper, and pipe and moves downstage into a solitary light. He finishes the letter to his wife. (191)

Buntu is planning to get him a lodger's permit so that his wife and children could come to Port Elizabeth. But, the solution put forth by Fugard according to some critics is not sustainable. Rather it is individualistic and temporary. Due to the ruthlessness of racist government and its controlling systems through advanced technologies, SizweBansi's solution to his problem is bound to be short lived.

The play ends with Styles Photographic Studio where Sizwe is ready for the pose of the photo and Styles is behind the camera. Styles says: "Hold it, Robert. Hold it just like that. Just one more. Now smile, Robert....smile...smile...[*Camera flash and blackout.*]"(192). Though this represents false image of Sizwe, yet the picture of a happy man is significant in Fugard's play. Fugard here is not so much emphasizing on bringing a change in society. Rather he is more interested in focussing and highlighting the endurance and strength of the people clinging to life in all adversity. Fugard is very much concerned testifying the clever ways devised to cope with the system and survive, instead of confronting it. He is no less concerned with human

dignity and self-respect. In a country where a name is reduced to a label, the Black man at worst a “boy”, at best a “John,” and thus nameless, the exchange of Sizwe’s name with the dead man repositions him as a “real ghost” for his own survival.

Fugard also brings to the fore other problematic ideologies constructed as a result of racist policies. The first relates to economic compulsion that has created a society vertically divided on the lines of haves and have-nots, exploiters and exploited. Sizwe’s intention to start his own business is ‘way out’ of malicious circle of apartheid that promotes not only racial oppression but also economic exploitation. By starting his own business Styles demonstrates his mode of resistance. Despite this, he is not free from either being exploited or becoming an exploiter. He cannot escape being exploited because the photograph he prepares for his people fulfils, to some extent, the purpose of ‘pass laws’. His studio is a place “Where people come because they’ve lost their Reference Book and need a photo for a new one” (159). Thus, when he prepares photographs for his people, he not only runs his own business but also promotes the ‘pass laws’, hence being exploited, in one way or the other. He, however, in the course of running his studio also becomes an exploiter because he does not think for the benefit of whole community rather he cares for his profit. For example, when a family containing young men and women, mothers and fathers, uncles and aunties, brothers and sisters come to take a single card, Styles feels uneasy: “Jesus, it was hard work, but finally I had them all sorted out....”(162), and when they walk out of his studio, he utters, ‘Never Again!’ (163). The implication is that he wanted to take their photographs one by one not for the advantage of his people but for the profit of his own. His intention reveals his exploitative nature because he wants to hoard money, though exploiting his own people.

The choice of language is another manifestation of assertion and domination also played out by Fugard. Unlike Mda, Mbongemi Ngema, and other Black playwrights who deliberately include African languages such as Xhosa in their plays, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* is written/performed in English without incorporating any of the African languages. For example, in the factory scene, where ‘Baas’ Bradley’s English language is translated by Styles, it is far from Xhosa. We are unable to decode any language other than English. On the one hand Bradley’s unilingualism evokes laughter for the workers who speak in Xhosa and compels him to get his language interpreted. He remains oblivious of the authenticity of interpretation. On the other

hand, Bradley's unilingualism is also the source of political power play. The implication is that though he is familiar only with English, he is capable to regulate the workers instructing them how to behave, how to look and what to wear etc. In other words, his language is imperative and, qualifying him to dictate terms to manipulate and control the whole scene. Bradley instructs Styles to tell the boys that when Mr Ford comes into the plant [he] want them all to look happy, and Styles interprets:

Gentlemen, he says that when the door opens and his grandmother walks in you must see to it that you are wearing a mask of smiles. Hide your true feelings, brothers. You must sing. (153-154)

As the play is written exclusively in English language, it seems that Fugard and his collaborators have the White and/or foreign audiences. Possibly it has been done to keep it outside the periphery of protest or struggle theatre. It often fulfils the purpose of Fugard. His plays are mainly intended for immediate and for direct relationship with his audiences. If we look at the play from this perspective, it works as a double mediator for the interpretation of 'black situation'. Firstly, it mediates the White and Black writers through collaboration and, secondly, it mediates the White and Black actors to the audiences through performance. Understood so then can a concomitant compromise between Black and White not be possible? If so, it might illustrate something about the probing confusion of metaphors, which comes out from Styles's description of his life's journey. When he gets the permission from Administration Office to grab the place for his studio, Styles faces the problem of influx by the cockroaches in his first entry into studio:

...I'm standing there-here-feeling big and what do I see on the walls? Cockroaches. *Ja*, cockroaches....in my place. ...I'm not afraid of them but I just don't like them! All over. (157)

And the remedy he has been prescribed for cockroaches is an insecticide, 'The Mass Murderer! Doom!' In this scene, the cockroaches turn out to be a metaphor for the Black masses who attempt to invade the white capitalist's condemned buildings. This becomes apparent when Styles does not succeed in his attempt to 'doom' the cockroaches. But, metaphorically, Styles himself becomes, though temporarily, part and parcel of the forces of White repression. It becomes more obvious when he

applies much more efficient method to kill the cockroaches after testing his first failure to do so. He is advised by his neighbour to let the cats to do the job. Consequently, he takes the cat called Blackie to his studio that successfully does the job:

The next morning when I walked in what do you think I saw? Wings. I smiled. Because one thing I do know is that no cockroach can take his Wings off. He's dead! (159)

Even if one does not declare Styles to be an important part of White domination through this specific labyrinth of metaphors, Styles's adoption of the strong-arm strategies that traditionally symbolize the apartheid government gives some important clues. The motive behind the creation of Styles baffles Scholars and critics. Some attribute it to Fugard's liberal vision narrowing considerably when he depicts Styles saving himself and ignoring others. Shava argues: "Styles choses personal assertion, not public commitment, in the interests of maintaining the family of which he is head and chief bread winner" (1333). Possibly, Fugard's view is that apartheid is invincible because of its political hold. The only way left for the colonized is to dance in accordance with the tune of the colonizer. He has only one alternative that is to depict the harm done to him and his community in pursuit of survival.

## Works Cited

Ashcroft, Bill. *Post-Colonial Transformation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001. Print.

Fugard, Athol. *Notebooks: 1960-1977*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984. Print.

Fugard, Athol. "Sizwe Bansi is Dead." *The Township Plays*. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1993. Print.

Nkosi, Lewis. *Home and Exile and Other Selections*. London: Longman, 1983. Print.

Said, E. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin, 2003. Print.

Shava, PinielViriri. *A People's Voice: Black South African Writing in the Twentieth Century*. London: Zed Books, 1989. Print.

Shelly, Alan. *Athol Fugard: His Plays, People and Politics*. London: Oberon Books, 2009. Print.