

The Emergence of the Fanonian New Man in Athol

Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!*

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I. Introduction

Throughout his life, Frantz Fanon tried not only to criticize Western civilization by analyzing its violent enforcement of colonialism, imperialism¹⁾ and racism on the people in the Third World countries in order to subordinate them, but also to harbinge the emergence of a new human race, which would

1) In this paper, I follow Robert Young's distinction between two terms of "colonialism and imperialism." In his book *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Young argues that colonialism "functioned as an activity on the periphery, economically driven" (16-17). Colonialism was "fundamentally an act of geographical violence employed against indigenous people and their land right" (20). Imperialism is, on the other hand, argues Young, characterized by the exercise of power either through direct conquest or through political and economic influence. Unlike colonialism, imperialism is driven by ideology and theory (20).

occur in the course of the revolutionary decolonization against the oppressors.

Fanon has been known as the proponent of using violence in the process of the revolutionary decolonization and in the movement of the Third world's national liberation. It is because for Fanon, colonialism is fundamentally a violent situation since "the stage is set in motion between two kinds of interests--the interest of the colonizer and the interest of the colonized" (Gordon 77). As a result, Fanon insists that decolonization entails a violent struggle between two parties since decolonization is "the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men" (*Wretched* 35). In other words, if decolonization is a process in which "'The last [native] shall be first and the first [settler] last,' this will only come to pass after a murderous and decisive struggle between two protagonists" (37). In these contexts, Fanon argues clearly that all of oppressions represented by colonialism and imperialism are violent in nature and must be destroyed only by greater violence:

Colonialism only loosens its hold when the knife is at its throat, no Algerian really found these terms too violent. The leaflet only expressed what every Algerian felt at heart: Colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence. (*Wretched* 61)

Fanon emphasizes three functions of violence as an instrument for the achievement of revolutionary decolonization. Concerning the first function, Fanon argues that violence in the revolutionary decolonization as practice binds the colonized people together as a whole against colonialism which encourages divisions among the colonized people. The second important aspect that Fanon emphasizes in the function of violence is that without a violent break from the

social and political structure of the colonial system, a newly independent country from colonialism would fall into the pitfall of neocolonialism.²⁾

The third aspect of the function of violence in decolonization is "violence as a cleansing force." For Fanon, in the process of decolonization, violence liberates the consciousness of the oppressed people by erasing their inferiority complex:

At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect [. . .] When the people have taken violent part in the national liberation they will allow no one to set themselves up as "liberators."
(*Wretched* 94)

In other words, Fanon emphasizes violence as a cathartic element through which colonized man can create a healthier self-identity.

Fanon insists, however, that without political education, the emancipatory function of violence will last for a short while: "You won't change human beings if you forget to raise the standard of consciousness of the rank-and-file. Neither stubborn courage nor fine slogans are enough" (*Wretched* 136). Fanon also argues that the political education of the masses should not be one-way

2) The term "neocolonialism" was introduced in 1961 by Kwame Nkrumah, the political leader of Ghana. In his book *NEO-COLONIALISM: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. Nkrumah argues, "The essence of neocolonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of internal sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus political policy is directed from outside" (ix). Therefore, the so-called independence is bogus since the newly independent country is still depending upon the former master country politically as well as economically.

process from the revolutionary intellectuals to the colonial masses. Rather, the political education must be reciprocal.

As Fanon argues, "the political education of the masses proposes not to treat the masses as children but to make adults of them" (*Wretched* 181), the political education must focus on "opening their minds, awakening them, and allowing the birth of their intelligence." And it finally should lead them to realize the fact that "everything depends on them" (197), and thus make them fully conscious of their responsibilities in revolutionary decolonization.

Therefore, Fanon's "new man" is the one, with the unity of theory and practice, who can realize a true humanism not based upon the subordination, destruction and genocide of others but upon the coexistence with others in mutual understanding, and who can keep fighting for the true emancipation of the oppressed people in the world: "Insofar as I do battle for the creation of a human world--that is, of a world of reciprocal recognition" (*Black Skin* 218). In other words, Fanon's new man is none other than the true revolutionary who emerges in the process of the revolutionary decolonization.

Athol Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!* (1989) deals with the struggle of the native Africans in the colonized situation of South Africa. Given the situation in which the violent oppressions on the native Africans from the colonialist pervade the colonial world, the colonized are ready to engage in counter-violence against the colonialist to get their culture as well as their freedom back. In *My Children! My Africa!* Thami Mbikwana is the native elite who is fully aware of the violent oppressions of colonialism on his people and thus ready to overthrow the colonialist domination through violent rebellion. In doing so, the protagonist is born again as a true revolutionary who has the real authority to lead his people since he is now fully integrated with his people, and the violence they convey is elevated into the revolutionary violence which

can lead the colonized into the revolutionary decolonization and thus into the new world of liberation.

There are several aspects that we have to examine in terms of how the main character becomes a true revolutionary. First, although the protagonist has been educated by the white educational/cultural system and he is an elite member of the system, he is never assimilated/incorporated into the white educational/cultural environment. Rather, the character is subjective enough to use the resources that he has learned from the white world to fight against its colonialism. Second, to be born again as a true revolutionary, the character transcends his class limitations as middle class petit bourgeoisie. Interestingly, as elite in the colonial education, the character at first wants to become a medical doctor not only to help the wretched native people but also to enjoy his life as a middle class citizen. However, the character comes to understand that to enjoy the comfortable middle class life promised in the future he must ignore the present hardship and oppression of his people by the colonialists. At last, by giving up the promising future as a medical doctor promised by his adherence to colonialism, the character becomes a revolutionary, the real doctor, since he can cure the source of hardship and oppression of his people in his own land. Third, in this process of becoming a real revolutionary, the character not only overcomes the colonial authority but also the local authority as well. That is, the character is not only persuaded by the colonialist not to get involved in the violent rebellion, but also by the local authority represented by the father figure to the protagonist in the play. In other words, while the colonial authority is already working to oppress the character and dissuade him from overthrowing the colonial system, the local native authority figure, Mr. M in the play, because of the lack of proper political understanding of the situation, is also preventing the character from becoming a fully developed revolutionary. However, the character is determined that he can

finally overcome the shortcomings of the local authority by completely uniting himself with the colonial masses in the violent uprising. In this way, role reversal occurs in that the father figure of the local authority loses his power and the protagonist comes to emerge as the real authority who can lead his people into the new world of liberation through the revolutionary decolonization. With these topics, I will study not only how the protagonist emerges as the true revolutionary in the process of the revolutionary decolonization, but also how he builds the authority with which he would lead his people to the postcolonial era.

II.

Athol Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!* is based upon a real event, "the death of an Eastern Cape teacher at the hands of students, that occurred in 1985" (Visser 495). However, the action of the play is set in a small Eastern Cape Karoo town of South Africa in 1984. Charles Wessels explains the political situations of 1984 in South Africa as follows:

The protest against apartheid education, largely through school boycotts but also by means of demonstrations and rallies, some violent, were particularly strenuous and led in part to the declaration of a State of Emergency in 1985 and to the subsequent banning of the Congress of South African Students. (qtd. in Colleran 395)

With these historical backgrounds, with the minimalist settings and three characters (one high school teacher and two students), *My Children! My Africa!* studies the new generation's resistance against the apartheid policy in general and the apartheid education policy called Bantu Education in particular. More

specifically, as Albert Wertheim analyzes, in the play, Fugard "examines the issue of how a new generation will achieve freedom and at what cost" (179). In the play, although Isabel Dyson and Thami Mbikwana represent a new generation, each of them represents a totally different world from the outset. Given the presence of the apartheid policy in South Africa, the lives between the ruling whites and the ruled blacks are divided into two just like a Manichean world. As a senior white high school girl attending Camdeboo Girls High in the white area, Isabel comes from the affluent middle class family; whereas as a senior black high school boy attending the Zolile High School in the black township called "the location" by the whites, Thami comes from a lower working class family. Because of the privileges as a white girl in a discriminating society, Isabel, in the beginning of the play, does not have any serious political consciousness about economical, political, cultural and educational discriminations imposed on the black majority by the white minority in the country. On the other hand, Thami, completely unprivileged as a black in the apartheid society, is rebellious from the beginning of the play. Therefore, in terms of political orientation, Isabel starts the journey as a naïve middle class school girl in the beginning and becomes an awakened white liberal at the end of the play through the interaction with Thami and Mr. M (Anela Myalatya), a fifty-seven year old black bachelor school teacher who has dedicated his whole life to the education of young black students in the black township high school. By contrast, Thami starts the play as a discontented rebel and finally becomes a revolutionary at the end of the play. Given the oppressions and discriminations directed by the white colonialism on the black South African natives, Thami emerges as the only figure in the play who has the authority to lead the colonized people to the world of decolonization through revolutionary violence. The question then arises as to how Thami can

become a true revolutionary in spite of the strenuous bafflement by the white colonizers with the apartheid policy and its education?

First, although Thami has been forced to be educated by Bantu Education implemented by the white government, he has never been assimilated/incorporated into the white cultural/literary tradition at all. Although he is just an eighteen-year-old high school student, Thami is well aware of the purpose of Bantu Education: the forced education on the colonized blacks by the white colonizers. In his monologue, Thami understands what is hidden behind the generous and benign façade of Mr. Dawid Grobbelaar, the unseen character, who wants to be called Oom Dawie (Uncle Dave) by the native black students and is the inspector of Bantu Schools in the Cape Midlands Region. In his usual pep talk, Oom Dawie tries to encourage the native black students in Standard Ten at the Thami's school by calling them "elite":

Boys and girls or maybe I should say 'young men' and 'young women' now, because you are coming to the end of your time behind those desks . . . you are special! You are elite! We have educated you because we want you to be major shareholders in the future of this wonderful Republic of ours. In fact, we want all the peoples of South Africa to share in that future . . . black, white, brown, yellow, and if there are some green ones out there, then them as well. (48-49)

However, Thami quickly undermines Oom Dawie's speech and considers it as just lip service since it does not reflect any realities of the black people's lives under the apartheid policy of the country:

I look around me in the location at the men and women who went out into that "wonderful future" before me. Who do I see? Happy

and contented shareholders in this exciting enterprise called the Republic of South Africa? No. I see a generation of tired, defeated men and women crawling back to their miserable little *pondoks* at the end of a day's work for the white baas or madam. And those are lucky ones. They've at least got work. Most of them are just sitting around wasting away their lives while they wait helplessly for a miracle to feed their families, a miracle that never comes. (49)

Thami understands that the cruel realities of the deprived black natives come from the fact that they are colonized in their own lands by the white settlers. Thus, Thami knows the fact that despite Oom Dawie's eulogy to the black students in the Zolile High School, the white colonizers have been forcing on them an inferior education in order to suppress them for good:

Black people lived on this land for centuries before any white settler had landed! Does Oom Dawie think we are blind? That when we walk through the streets of the white town we do not see the big houses and the beautiful gardens with their swimming pools full of laughing people, and compare it with what we've got, what we have to call home? Or does Oom Dawie just think we are very stupid? That in spite of wonderful education he has given us, we can't use the simple arithmetic of add and subtract, multiply and divide to work out the rightful share of twenty-five million black people? (49-50)

The promises of Bantu Education turn out to be a deception since the young South African black natives with the high school diploma are soon going to find themselves that the school education is useless in their real lives. Therefore, it is quite natural for Thami, a young, smart and rebellious student activist, to be against the education of white colonialism as he asks the reader/audience in his monologue: "Do you understand now why it is not as

easy as it used to be to sit behind that desk and learn only what Oom Dawie has decided I must know?" (50). Thami goes further than just being rebellious against Bantu Education. While negating all the knowledge that he has obtained from Bantu Education, Thami tries to revive the proud history of the native's resistances against the white colonial government of South Africa:

My head is rebellious. It refuses now to remember when the Dutch landed, and the Huguenots landed, and the British landed. It has already forgotten when the Old Union became the proud young Republic. But it does know what happened in Kliptown in 1955, in Sharpeville on twenty-first March 1960 and in Soweto on the sixteenth of June 1976. Do you? Better find out because those are dates your children will have to learn one day. (50)

Therefore, Thami also abandons the education at the Zolile High School since the School does not teach them how to get their freedom from the oppression of white colonialism. Rather, the education at the Zolile High School suppresses the rebellious passion of the young hearts and minds like Thami's: "We don't need Zolile classrooms anymore. We know now what they really are--traps which have been carefully set to catch our minds, our souls" (50). Finally, given the situation that the authority of the official education from white colonialism is tainted, Thami finds the people's school as the alternative authority replacing the colonial education:

We have woken up at last. We have found another school--the streets, the little rooms, the funeral parlors of the location--anywhere the people meet and whisper names we have been told to forget, the dates of events they try to tell us never happened, and the speeches they try to say were never made. Those are the lessons we are eager

and proud to learn, because they are lessons about our history, about our heroes. But the time for whispering them is past. Tomorrow we start shouting. AMANDLA! (50)

Rather than make Thami integrated into the white cultural/educational environment, Bantu Education of white colonialism has fueled Thami's rebellion and will to resist.

Second, to become a revolutionary who can fight for saving his oppressed people from white colonialism, Thami is completely ready to give up all the privileges that he can expect from his education. First of all, not only does Thami's school reports describe him as "A most particularly promising pupil" (46), but he is the top student in his school and thus has been his teachers' favorite. In particular, Mr. M considers Thami as his protégé and has placed all of his hope as an old teacher on the future success of Thami. Mr. M's expectation is based upon the belief that Thami will become a "real leader" not "rabble-rouser" (25). To give Thami a chance of a university education, Mr. M. organizes Thami and Isabel as a team for the English literature quiz contest since he knows that Thami's lower working class family cannot afford the expenses of Thami's university education. If Thami and Isabel win first prize in the contest, five thousand rand will be divided equally for both schools and a full university scholarship will be awarded to Thami. In order to meet his teachers' expectations of him, young Thami was also determined to be successful through his education. In a composition written when he was ten years old, Thami dreamt about being a medical doctor helping his poor natives and enjoying his life as a member of the affluent middle class citizen:

The story of my life so far. By Thami Mbikwana [. . .] When I am big I am going to be a doctor so that I can help my people. I will

drive to the hospital every day in a big, white ambulance full of nurses. I will make black people better free of charge. The white people must pay me for my medicine because they have got lots of money. That way I will also get lots of money. My mother and my father will stop working and come and live with me in a big house. That is the story of my life up to where I am in Standard Two. (47)

However, today, Thami, eight years since he wrote the composition, has become a totally different person. Given the situation that the pain and suffering of his people come from the fact that the natives are deprived of their liberty from white colonialism, Thami is well aware that the pain and suffering of his people cannot be cured by doctor's medical treatment or medicine. Thami, who knows what will benefit his people most is to bring freedom back to them, gives up being a medical doctor since a medical doctor cannot cure the source of his people's illness. Rather, he wants to be a real doctor by being a revolutionary who can cure his people's mental and physical sufferings caused by white colonialism by bringing colonialism down and thus bring freedom back to his people:

To start with I don't think I want to be a doctor anymore. That praiseworthy ambition has unfortunately died in me. It still upsets me very much when I think about the pain and suffering of my people, but I realize now that what causes most of it is not an illness that can be cured by the pills and bottles of medicine they handout at the clinic. I don't need to go to university to learn what my people really need is a strong double-dose of that traditional old Xhosa remedy called "*Inkululeko*." Freedom. (47)

Third, to be a devoted revolutionary, Thami must not only fight against white colonialism but also overcome the opposition from the local authority

represented by Mr. M who tries to prevent Thami from becoming a revolutionary warrior. More specifically, Mr. M is in disagreement with Thami on several important points. First of all, in the play, although Mr. M really cares about Thami and thus wants to pave the way for Thami's future, he is a very authoritarian paternal figure to Thami. Mr. M's attitude as an authoritarian teacher makes a striking contrast with that of Mr. M as a democratic mediator between Thami and Isabel at the team debate in the beginning of the play. At the debate held in Thami's school, Mr. M is such a democratic, unbiased and intelligent mediator that Isabel, who has never visited a school in the black township, feels that Thami's school is freer than hers:

It was so . . . so free and easy. The debates at my school are such stuffy affairs. And so boring most of the time. Everything is done according to the rules with everybody being polite and nobody getting excited . . . lots of discipline but very little enthusiasm. This one was a riot! (8)

However, Isabel later points to Mr. M that his attitude toward Thami is "dictatorial" (24) when Mr. M does not consult with Thami for organizing a team for the interschool English literature quiz contest. Rather than change his attitude, Mr. M advocates his one-way, top-down pedagogy in the name of his authority as a teacher:

ISABEL: Yes, what about my teammate. What does he say? Have you *asked* him yet?

MR. M: No, I haven't asked him Isabel, and I won't [. . .] I am an old-fashioned traditionalist in most things young lady, and my classroom is certainly no exception. I Teach, Thami Learns. He understands and accepts that that is the way it should be [. . .]

We do not blur the difference between the generations in the way that you white people do. Respect for authority, right authority, is deeply ingrained in the African soul. It's all I've got when I stand there in Number One. Respect for my authority is my only teaching aid. If I ever lost it those young people will abandon their desks and take to the streets. I expect Thami to trust my judgment of what is best for him, and he does. That trust is the most sacred responsibility in my life. (24)

Most importantly, Mr. M's dictatorial and unilateral imposition of his authority reminds Thami of the oppressive white colonialist against which he is fighting as he says to Isabel: "[. . .] Sitting in a classroom doesn't mean the same thing to me that it does to you. That classroom is a political reality in my life--it's a part of the whole political system we're up against and Mr. M has chosen to identify himself with it" (44).

However, Mr. M does not know the fact that his authoritarian attitude has caused the failure of communication even with his most favorite student Thami. Although Thami seemingly follows Mr. M's order in front of him saying politely, "Yes Teacher" (31), in the deep inside of his heart Thami does not concede or obey his teacher's authority. Rather, Thami's resistance and disrespect toward his teacher's dictatorial authority have grown: "He always thinks *he* knows what is best for me. He never asks me how I feel about things. I know he means well, but I'm not a child anymore. I've got ideas of my own now" (13). Ultimately, Thami usurps Mr. M's authority which is regarded as a part of the white colonial authority, and replaces it with the People's authority with which the black South Africans fight against white colonialism:

Mr. M has been listening to the exchange between Thami and Isabel very attentively.

MR. M (*Trying to put a smile on it*): Who is the *we* you speak of with such authority Thami?

THAMI: The People.

MR. M (*Recognition*): Yes, yes, yes, of course . . . I should have known. "The People" . . . with a capital P. Does that include me? Am I one of "The People"?

THAMI: If you choose to be.

MR. M: I've got to choose have I. My black skin doesn't confer automatic membership. So how do I go about choosing?

THAMI: By identifying with the fight for our Freedom. (39)

Thami and Mr. M are also in disagreement with the nature and function of Bantu Education. For Thami, because Bantu Education is the colonial education with which the white colonialists govern the colonized natives forever by making the natives inferior, the validity of the foundation of Bantu Education must be totally negated. Thus, Thami is very reluctant to be a team member for the English literature quiz contest since to prepare for the contest, Thami, with Isabel, must study the British writers from the English literary canon such as Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Byron, Shelly, Dickens, Hardy and Jane Austen. However, for Thami, studying only the British authors from the English literary canon not only alienates Thami from his own culture in his own land but also reinforces the Eurocentric educational hegemony of the white colonialism in South Africa. Therefore, at the end of the team practice in Scene 5, Act One, Thami rebels against Mr. M's preference of English literature since as Marcia Blumberg points out, "The Eurocentric discourse embedded in the canonical poetry and the total exclusion of African voices again ironically mark Mr. M's unwitting absorption into the discourse of colonialism" (249). As

Albert Wertheim analyzes, Thami's rejection of the recitation of the Eurocentric literature in the team practice and thus his advocacy of the indigenous African culture are revealed at the beginning of Scene 6, Act One, where he sings a lyric about school in his own language of Xhosa (183).

Unlike Thami, assuming himself "a black Confucian" (26), Mr. M keeps the absolute faith on education like his respected teacher Confucius who was a great philosopher, scholar and teacher in ancient China. Like Confucius, Mr. M's devotion for the education of the young native students and his eager pursuit of knowledge are genuine. Therefore, in spite of the fact that Bantu Education is an inferior education for the colonized black natives, Mr. M believes that education still can open and liberate the consciousness of the oppressed natives:

MR. M: [. . .] So then tell me, do you think I agree with this inferior "Bantu Education" that is being forced on you?

THAMI: You teach it.

MR. M: But unhappily so! Most unhappily, unhappily so! Don't you know that? [. . .] And I have! Yes, I have succeeded! I have got irrefutable proof of my success. You! Yes. You can stand here and I have won mine. I have liberated your mind in spite of what the Bantu Education was trying to do to it. Your mouthful of big words and long sentences which the not-so-clever Comrades are asking you to speak and write for them, your wonderful eloquence at last night's meeting which got them all so excited--yes, I heard about it!--you must thank me for all of that, Thami. (57-58)

However, Thami dismisses Mr. M's assertion that Bantu Education can liberate people's consciousness by pointing out that Mr. M's education is not to subvert the white colonialism but to conform to it. For Thami, Mr. M's education is no

longer valid since it cannot bring real liberation: "Yours were lessons in whispering. There are men now who are teaching us to shout. Those little tricks and jokes of yours in the classroom liberated nothing. The struggle doesn't need the big English words you taught me how to spell" (58).

The confrontation over the function and nature of Bantu Education between Mr. M and Thami leads to the dispute over how the colonized blacks can achieve their freedom from white colonialism. Mr. M's position is "Education First, then Liberation Follows." Accordingly, Mr. M prefers the alteration of white people's consciousness by adopting the nonviolent assimilationist engagement with white people. In other words, through the allies of the white and black, Mr. M dreams of a country where the black and white can make real progress by fighting together, not by fighting each other with violence. And this is why he organizes the interracial team of Thami and Isabel for the English literature quiz contest: "A waste! They shouldn't be fighting each other. They should be fighting together! [. . .] If they were allies [. . .] The thought that you and Thami would be another two victims of this country's lunacy, was almost too much for me" (20-21).

The main reason that Mr. M does not trust the violent resistance to bring the liberation is that the violent resistance cannot make real progress while education can do by changing the oppressor's consciousness: "Stone and petrol bombs can't get inside those armored cars. Words can. They can do something even more devastating than that . . . they can get inside the heads of those inside the armored cars" (59). Thus, as Mr. M calls the black rebel's revolutionary action "an act of Lawlessness" (40), for him, violence should never be conceded under any circumstances. Mr. M's stern advocacy of anti-violence is symbolically well dramatized in Scene 2, Act Two. Thami and his fellow students boycott the school and take to the streets under the

leadership of the Comrades, the liberation movement organization, to fight against white colonialism with violent methods, such as stones and arsons while the police of white colonialism brutally suppresses the uprising. Mr. M, left alone in the classroom, rings his school bell wildly. The angry mob throws stones and breaks glasses in the classroom to threaten Mr. M. Thami comes to the classroom to warn Mr. M not to ring the bell since ringing the bell is defying the boycott determined by the Comrades. Picking up a stone, the symbol of violence, in one hand and his dictionary, the symbol of study and education, in the other hand, Mr. M gives his last lesson to Thami that is, ‘The pen is mightier than the sword’:

You know something interesting, Thami . . . if you put these two on a scale I think you would find that they weighed just about the same. But in this hand I am holding the whole English language. This . . . (*The stone*) is just one word in that language. It’s true! All that wonderful poetry that you and Isabel tried to cram into your beautiful heads . . . in here! Twenty-six letters, sixty thousand words. The greatest souls the world has ever known were able to open the floodgates of their ecstasy, their despair, their joy! . . . with the words in this little book! Aren’t you tempted? I was. (64)

Finally, Mr. M is killed by the violence of his fellow natives. However, Mr. M is guilty as he confirms to the Comrade the charge that he is an informer to the police. Although Mr. M claims that his action is out of concern for his students, saying, "I’d sell my soul to have you all back behind your desks for one last lesson" (67), his collaboration with the police puts the revolutionary uprising led by the Comrades in peril. As Mr. M confesses to Thami that he gave names and addresses of the people in the political action committee of the Comrades, all of the leaders in the uprising are arrested after Mr. M’s visit to

the police and they are held in detention. Therefore, for the native people, killing Mr. M is not murder but "an act of self-defense" (73) since he betrayed them and their fight for freedom. More importantly, killing Mr. M is just a ritual since given the fact that everyone in the black township knows that Mr. M is a traitor, he exists as the living dead even if he is not killed: "There was nothing left for him. That visit to the police station had finished everything. Nobody would have ever spoken to him again or let him teach their children" (75). In this sense, as Richard Hornby analyzes, Mr. M is "a classically tragic hero, bringing about his own downfall by acting according to a set of genuine but ultimately limited ideals" (126).

In opposition to Mr. M's belief, Thami's slogan is "Liberation First, then Education" (61). For Thami, Mr. M's position is totally blind to the urge of the colonized black people for radical change and thus out of touch with the realities of the blacks. Thami believes that Mr. M's assertion is just reinforcing and reproducing the ideology of white colonialism in that it does not and cannot bring any meaningful changes to the colonized black natives in their own soil. Therefore, Thami completely undermines the validity of Mr. M's position as follows:

His ideas about change are the old-fashioned ones. And what have they achieved? Nothing. We are worse off now than we ever were. The people don't want to listen to his kind of talk anymore [. . .] It calls our struggle vandalism and lawless behavior. It's the sort of talk that expects us to do nothing and wait quietly for white South Africa to wake up. If we listen to it our grandchildren still won't know what it means to be Free. (43)

Therefore, for Thami, violent resistance is an inevitable choice to achieve freedom and to make real changes from the domination of white colonialism.

At last, the literary quiz team meets its end since Thami pulls out of the competition to participate in the violent uprising against white colonialism as one of the major leaders of the Comrades. Thami and the fellow black students are so determined that they will go back to school only "when the authorities scrap Bantu Education and recognize and negotiate with Student Committees" (55). Although Thami tries to save Mr. M's life in spite of the fact that he is an informer, Thami is resolute and stuck with the cause of the uprising. In the final meeting with Isabel to say good-bye before he leaves the area of unrest for good, Thami, challenged by Isabel who calls Mr. M's death "murder" by mad mobs, defends Mr. M's death as "blind and stupid but still self-defense" (73) by his people. Thami explains to Isabel that Mr. M's action is treason for the native blacks who are fighting against the white colonialism that has initiated and perpetrated mass murder on the native blacks:

What Anela Myalatya did to them [the black people] and their cause is what your laws define as treason when it is done to you and threatens the safety and security of your comfortable white world. Anybody accused of it is put on trial in your courts and if found guilty they get hanged. Many of my people have been found guilty and have been hanged. Those hangings we call murder! (74)

Furthermore, Thami points out the fact that it is the law of white colonialism that led Mr. M into the death by the angry mob given the fact that there is no justice for the blacks in the country:

There is no justice for black people in this country other than what we make for ourselves. When you judge us for what happened in front of the school four days ago just remember that you carry a share of the responsibility for it. It is your laws that have made

simple, decent black people so desperate that they turn into "mad mobs." (74)

In fact, Thami himself is a victim of Mr. M's treason since he is running away from the pursuit of the police. Thami is not even able to say good-bye to his parents and probably cannot see them for a long time or for good because of the danger of arrest by the police. However, Thami is not just running away from the police. He is going to leave the country heading north with the stern determination that he will become a real revolutionary who can keep a balance between theory and praxis and thus lead his people into a postcolonial era: "I'm going to join the movement. I want to be a fighter. I've been thinking about it for a long time. Now I know it's the right thing to do. I don't want to end up being one of the mob that killed Mr. M--but that will happen to me if I stay here" (76). Therefore, although Fugard tries to recuperate Mr. M's authority through Isabel's final eulogy on Mr. M in the last scene of the play and thus claim Thami and Isabel as Mr. M's children as the title of the play suggests, Thami and his revolutionary comrades are way beyond Mr. M's authority and in fact they represent the moral, ideological and political rising of the new black generation who can lead colonized South African blacks to true liberation.

III. Conclusion

As Frantz Fanon analyzes and predicts in his writings, Thami and his revolutionary comrades in *My Children! My Africa!* can be categorized as "new men" that Fanon expects to emerge in the process of the revolutionary

decolonization. In fact, these characters are the revolutionary intellectuals who are fully integrated with the colonial masses in the violent uprising in their own lands fighting against the oppressions. Also they have the balanced perspective on the both sides of the colonized and the colonizer. Furthermore, they are ready to sacrifice all of their privileges including their own lives for the liberation of their people from the foreign oppressions.

Here still remains an important matter that I want to stress out. Although I have focused on the violence in the process of decolonization, violence does not simply disappear even after the colonized achieves its independence from the colonizer as we have seen in many countries in the Third World. In other words, if the newly independent country is not ruled in a democratic way, the violence that once used to achieve its liberation and independence from the colonizer will be executed on the people of the newly independent countries. Therefore, only when Thami and his comrades firmly stick to the democratic principles not only during the liberation movement but after the independence, we will have opportunity to see the emergence of new human race based upon new humanism.

Key Words Frantz Fanon, New Man, revolutionary decolonization, the function of violence in decolonization, Athol Fugard, *My Children! My Africa!*

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The Emergence of the Fanonian New Man in Athol Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!*

Abstract

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This paper investigates the emergence of the Fanonian New Man in Athol Fugard's *My Children! My Africa!* by employing Frantz Fanon's philosophy of the revolutionary decolonization. In his philosophy of the revolutionary decolonization, Fanon argues that since colonialism is violent in nature, it can be defeated only when it is confronted by greater violence. Fanon insists that through violence in the revolutionary decolonization, the colonized, first, can bind the colonized people together as a whole against colonialism; second, they can make a clear break from colonialism; third, violence is a cleansing force since it can erase the inferiority complex of the colonized. In the process of the revolutionary decolonization, Fanon predicts the emergence of a "new man" who is the real revolutionary with the unity of theory and praxis, with the integration with his/her people, and with the application of democratic principles.

In *My Children! My Africa!*, Athol Fugard tries not only to criticize the oppressive and segregative policy of apartheid in South Africa but also to show the violent uprising against the oppressors as an inevitable instrument for achieving true emancipation of the oppressed. Although he is a member of the elite in the colonial education system and a promising future is waiting for him, the protagonist not only gives up the opportunity but also makes up his mind to become a revolutionary. His decision is against his teacher's advice who is a father figure for the protagonist. However, by integrating himself with

his people's hardship in the oppression, the protagonist transforms himself into a revolutionary, a real teacher, who has the authority to lead his people to the liberation movement against the oppression and thus to lead his people to the new world of the postcolonial era.

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