STATEMENTS AFTER AN ARREST UNDER THE IMMORALITY ACT

With the three Port Elizabeth Plays (*Boesman and Lena*, *The Blood Knot*, *Hello and Goodbye*) and *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act*, Athol Fugard's reputation as a major modern dramatist was established (Walder 1984:54-5). *Statements after an Arrest* is Fugard's favourite (Vandenbroucke 1986:191), the one, he avouches, `which sort of lurks in my life ..., the one that I think could still move me more than any of the others' (1982:129). Perhaps this is because the drama was written in response to political action taken against the playwright and his family (Seidenspinner 1968:238) and it is also the one which `most nearly approaches his own views' (Walder 1984:93).

The play was commissioned as the opening production of The Space in Upper Long Street, Cape Town. An early version was presented in March 1972, featuring Yvonne Bryceland, Percy Sieff and Christopher Prophet, with Fugard both acting and directing. The work was again performed in 1974 at the Royal Court Theatre in London, with Yvonne Bryceland and Ben Kingsley playing the `state-crossed lovers' (Cushman 1982:87). Together with *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *The Island*, it rotated in the repertoire for over two months, being both artistically and financially successful.[1] In 1978 *Statements after an Arrest* was staged at the Manhattan Theatre Club. In the same year, this drama, together with the other two projects contained in the *Statements* volume, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *The Island*, was published in German. On 11 June 1979 Barney Simons's production of *Statements*, with Wilma Stockenström, Vivian Solomons and Wilson Dunster, opened at the Market Theatre. The critical reception the drama received is recorded on pages 220 and 221 of Appendix A.

Sizwe Bansi is Dead, *The Island* and *Statements under an Arrest under the Immorality Act* can be classified under the improvised or the actors' theatre period.

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[1] Alistair Niven, in the 1975 *Commonwealth Newsletter* (no 7), writes that this season of plays by Athol Fugard was `the most ambitious programme of its kind yet seen in Britain' (1984:88).

At this time Fugard made use of the theatrical techniques of Jerzy Grotowski, his `agent provocateur', in his works (Raymer 1976:230), and particularly in *Statements after an Arrest*, which has less bearing on social reality than any of the earlier plays (Walder 1984:90). The period is also distinguished by the use of the lives of others - their histories, experiences and even the shape of their bodies (1984:78) - as raw material during the creative process, the elevating of actors from mere interpreters to co-creators and the writer 'demoting himself to the role of catalyst, recording organiser and `scribe' (Gray 1984:20). So, instead of elaborate production, dazzling technology and sanctified texts, there is minimal staging and impromptu inventiveness by the performers; in place of a predictable format there are self-inventing, open - yet concentrated - structures, and in lieu of the "conspiracy of silence" (the author's phrase) characteristic of the commercial circuits, there is unadorned `statement' (1984:20-1).[2] In this way the orthodox concepts of unique authorship, the copyrighting of communal experience, and the "mechanical linkage" of plot in Western theatre[3] are challenged, and `an alternative theatre is promoted as part of a counter-culture which is the polar opposite of the South African state version' (1984:20-21).

Raymer maintains that the collective projects - in which the playwright collaborated with, in particular, The Serpent Players of New Brighton, Port Elizabeth - `emerge[d] as authentic statements about the inequities endorsed by the apartheid legislation' (1976:181), while Gray (1984:20) posits that their intention was consciousness-raising, probably since their conception coincided with the post-Sharpeville wave of repression which ensured that barely any opposition against the state could be expressed. The theme of all three works, which are `far more ideological, even propagandistic, than any previous Fugard dramas' (Raymer 1976:180), then, is survival amidst a degrading, dehumanising and ultimately destructive environment (Vandenbroucke 1986:235), an environment which could reduce human beings to

[2] This format was employed in *The Coat* (1966) and was later reverted to in *My Life* (1994).

[3] In *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* comment is also passed on Western story-telling devices, such as letters, photos and theatre, and these devices are supplanted by `semi-organised talk' (Gray 1984:21).

objects (Colleran 1990:45). Cohen surmises that this particular play presents `a total image of the flinty cruelty of South Africa's institutionalised' racial system (quoted in Post 1985:5), a system which appeared at the time to have `no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end' (84).

The title of the drama under investigation points to a particular piece of apartheid legislation, the infamous Immorality Amendment Act, Number 23 of 1957, which was a law prohibiting sexual relations across racial lines (Colleran 1995:42). The title also anticipates the charges read out by a policeman (1995:44), the pivotal third party in the play and the catalyst precipitating and controlling the action, as well as the disjointed interjections and dystopian monologues (Baker-White 1992:239) uttered by the miscegenate couple. The legal term further denotes the distance between the actions of the characters and the accounts that are extracted from them (Colleran 1995:45).

Although Fugard makes an interracial sexual liaison central to the play, possibly in an attempt to `legitimate and humanise what was legally and morally' prohibited (Colleran 1995:48) under South Africa's apartheid régime, the aim, in Gray's opinion (1982:90), is universality. The focus is not so much on immorality, whether legal or religious (Vandenbroucke 1986:183), but on the ancient and ubiquitous conflict between individual rights and the laws of the government which intrude upon the most private aspects of the lives of its citizens. While certain socio-political factors are chronicled, the images of the work transport the audience beyond the private pain of the characters to allude to the agony experienced by an entire community (Walder in Brink 1993:443).

The play itself was prompted by six police photographs of a white librarian and a `Coloured' location school principal from De Aar, South Africa, who were caught in the act of lovemaking near Fugard's birthplace. The pictures of the two cowering `like trapped animals in the harsh glare of a torch' (Walder 1984:91) appeared in 1966 in an Afrikaans newspaper.

The action of *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* adheres to the Aristotelian unities of time and space. It is confined to a summer night which is

spent in the back room of the library in Noupoort,[4] a village in South Africa. Although the work consists of only one act, it can be `broken into two (roughly equal) halves' (Baker-White 1992:228).

The first half may be interpreted as an expository introduction initiating the themes. At the opening of the play, the two protagonists, a `Coloured' school principal - Errol Philander -and a white librarian - Frieda Joubert - are seen lying naked on the floor, having just made love. A `choreographed series of variations upon [this] ... image' (Walder 1984:90) constitutes the rest of the drama. The characters' hopes, ambitions and fears of discovery are revealed in logically connected realistic dialogue as they reminisce about their first meeting, jest and quarrel. Time within the drama remains a relatively linear and predictable frame for the action.

The second half of the work commences with the entrance of arresting officers, who represent the security apparatus of the apartheid system (Raymer 1976:206). In a sudden shift of time forward, Detective Sergeant Du Preez, in heavy, authoritarian officialese (Baker-White 1992:238), recounts the investigation and details the charges against the two and how they were arrested. The arrest itself, as well as the spinster's and the married man's reactions to their discovery, are then recreated and re-enacted. After the security forces have imposed a `violent separation on the interracial lovers' (Peck 1992:68), the play takes a stylistic turn. The tone and structure also change. Vandenbroucke puts it best: `What had been a fairly conventionally psychological play, an apparently realistic love story unfolding in a straightforward logical manner and representation style, suddenly becomes something quite different' (1986:185).

Seminal to the stylistic transfiguration of the work is the intermittent and unremitting rhythmical sequence of the cruel and dehumanising police photographer's flashlights (Raymer 1976:191). Firstly, they add to the dramatic impact as they make the mood `eerie and surreal' (Vandenbroucke 1986:187), so

[4] Noupoort translates as `narrow gate'. Perhaps this name was deliberately chosen by the playwright to draw attention to the parochial mindsets of its residents. The Biblical connotations of the name also make the village an ironic setting for the events of the drama.

as to render palpable the nightmare of the interracial couple when they are intruded upon (Walder 1984:91). Secondly, they expose the `Coloured' man and the white woman physically, as well as emotionally and psychologically. The lights further `freeze [them] in theatrical space and time' (Baker-White 1992:229) and accentuate the `temporal disjunctions' (Vandenbroucke 1986:187) that exist between their words and actions and those of the policeman, who functions as the Present Absent in the play (Raymer 1976:207). As Errol Philander and Frieda Joubert lose their grip on reality and `continue in a state of mental alienation' (Fuchs 1984:76), acting like `automata' (Raymer 1976:190), the `formal ground of the [theatrical artifice] (shifts) from representational realism' (Baker-White 1992:229), *cinéma vérité*, to an amorphous anti-realism (1992:236). Simultaneously, `the generally simple and colloquial dialogue of the first half' (Vandenbroucke 1986:186) is substituted by `staccato spatterings' (Raymer 1976:191). The `brief and sharp interjections' in the mode of `fractured and repetitive montage' (Baker-White 1992:229) serve to bring the characters' unconscious into consciousness while they `relive and recount in detail the circumstances of their initial sexual encounter' (1992:237) in the presence of the police. To Baker-White, the `semiotic indeterminacy immanent in the ellipses and silences of the realist dialogue' of the first part is `exposed and concretised' (1992:243) when the personae `blurt out their "statements"' in the frenetic scene following: `panic-stricken, guilty (explanations and) excuses' for what is inexplicable and inexcusable to the police, which `become confessions, which become fragmentary, semi-poetic revelations' (Walder 1984:92) of the lovers' deepest desires, inner conflicts and insecurities.

According to Baker-White, Fugard's `abandonment of realism' in the second half of this `most Grotowskian work' of his (Walder 1984:90) could illustrate the `surrealist warp of time, the dadaist dismissal of logic, and the symbolist ideal of sensory bombardment which sought to produce a more immediate aesthetic response than the scientific sensibility of realism allowed' (1992:236). The transformation of `fictional time and place (`real' time and `real' place) `into present-tense theatrical' and anti-realist time and place is furthermore regarded by Baker-White as proof of the author's `identification with another *fin de siècle* movement, that of the futurists' (1992:236).

Throughout the play the two protagonists then also hint at the theme of time. At the opening it is the female who observes: `There's no sense of time. Everything very still' (81) and later: `Too dark. I can't see the clock' (94). She does not keep track of time because she longs to exist and act outside its framework. Her partner on several occasions asks her what time it is, but also once `escapes man's inexorable dependence on a bondage to time' and space (Angove 1987:51) when he contemplates an existence that is three billion years old (1987:52). Time seems circular, immeasurable and indeterminate (Baker-White 1992:236), as if it has `no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end ...' (84) (to borrow Errol's words).

Having `no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end ...' is how Frieda conceives of the time before she made Errol's acquaintance and now when he is not with her. Errol has infused her existence with purpose.[5] This is reflected in her recollections:

> I was ... [*Pause.*] I was waiting for him. I was always waiting for him. I tried as long as I could to think he might still come. Then at half-past five I thought to myself ... No, he's not going to ... and suddenly ... nothing. There was ... nothing. Just lock up and go home, have supper, go to bed, try to sleep so that tomorrow and its chance of seeing him would come. (97)

and

> going home after I'd closed the library began to be different. I had something to do, and think about at night. (101)

Frieda has earlier confided in her lover: `you are my chance. I don't want to lose it' (89). Therefore, she chooses to stay with him, even if she expects him to hurt her:

> I knew he was going to hurt me. I mean, not on purpose, but it just seems we can't avoid it. So I waited for it. It came. He said he supposed he shouldn't have come. (97)

[5] Sartre, Buber and Jaspers, *per contra*, postulate that one has to locate meaning within oneself (Bedford 1982:264).

In Vandenbroucke's opinion (1986:184), this quiet and unassuming character initially[5] comes across as very different from Fugard's typically strong women who jump at the opportunity to change (only think of Queeny, Hester and Elsa). Frieda Joubert, in contrast, owns up to being afraid of `everything. Me ... you ... them.... The dinosaurs and those hairy ... missing links ... that look like baboons, stand like men, and could almost smile' (83) - that is, evolution or transformation.

In her apparent dependence on the male protagonist and desire to please him - up to the point of exhibiting masochistic tendencies (`I knew he was going to hurt me.... So I waited for it' [97]) - she is depicted as insecure and weak. She attaches herself to Errol because she is in love with him, and she may also view him as a protector, even a rescuer. (This sheds light on her ability to remember the minute details of their meeting.)

Fugard's Frieda could be seen as `fallen into the "world"', which is the phrase Heidegger (1963:220) uses to denote identification with and absorption in another to the degree of losing one's own being. This is evident when she pleads with Errol: `What must I do? Please tell me' (92). When she cannot discern him in the darkness (I can't see the clock. Or you' [94]), she utters: `What are you doing? (94), and when the Special Branch bursts in upon her and Errol, her first instinct is to scurry away like a frightened animal, `*[looking for the man. As she finds him, [she] tries to hide behind his back ...]*' (96).

In a relationship where one partner subjugates him/herself to the other, everything inflicted upon the latter has an impact upon the former. When Errol struggles in vain to pull up his trousers without exposing himself, his mistress is filled with horror (96). When his appeal for her `respect for him as an independent individual is substituted by an embarrassingly grovelling picture of servitude' (Angove 1987:54), she is on the brink of hysteria (99). Sartre's assertion that `love as a fundamental mode of being-for-others holds in its being-for-others the seed of [one's] own destruction' (1958:377) is applicable here.

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[6] The emphasis is on `initially' as she grows in stature during the course of the play and begins to transcend her own limitations.

It is possible that Fugard's Frieda bends to Errol's will as she recoils from existential isolation and self-determination. She recalls one instance in her childhood when she was alone, `entombed in the long passage way of family home' (Colleran 1995:46):

> The shutters must have been closed because it was all dark and quiet. Then somebody opened the front door at the other end and suddenly I saw all the sunlight and noise of the street outside. I started to walk towards it, but before I could get there the door closed. I was so upset! (86-7)

The darkness and silence in the house are suggestive of a birth that is `blocked' (and therefore does not occur) and dissolution. Frieda is also troubled about the ravages the aging process (a sign of the decline towards death) leaves on her body:

> Skin around my knees is just starting to get a little slack.... Lines around my mouth are starting to worry me. Hair causes me concern. I think it's going off. (101-2)

After the experience of the door being shut in her face when she was a child, she, dreading visibility and exposure, remembers how one day in the library she yearned for everything to vanish:

> But I just went on stamping and wishing it would get still darker so that everything would disappear - him, me, the room, what I was feeling - just disappear.... [*Frightened of what she had just said; very loudly* ...] No. No! (98)[7]

Nevertheless, by contemplating one's demise, one also takes cognisance of the future.[8] For example, the librarian, `incapable of entering into the spirit of the

[7] Further confirmation of the character's anticipation of death is the anecdote she shares with Errol of snakes slaughtered while copulating: `They killed them.... Their ... the pieces kept moving ... for a long time afterwards' (85).

[8] Existentialists regard existence toward death as the very summit of existence (Heidegger quoted in Friedman 1964:542). Because, when *Dasein* faces the fact of its dissolution - as Errol does when he has the epiphany - its perspective of life and time is broadened. *Dasein* is liberated from its `lostness in those possibilities which may accidentally thrust themselves' upon it (Heidegger 1962:308) and it is

provocation' of the forty-three cents game (Seidenspinner 1986:292), proposes to the principal that if she were to have only a few cents left, she would save some of it for the next day (87). Being prepared for tomorrow and planning for it indicates that she is able to transfigure her own being.[9] At the same time, Seidenspinner feels it bears witness to her `white' outlook (1986:292).

Even though Frieda appears to rely on Errol, this is because she, with her `"white superiority" consciousness' (Angove 1987:54), has sensed that dependence would be less intimidating to his masculine ego. That she has become conscious of her own identity is clear when she reprimands him:

> I'm not no one. I'm also me. I'm the other person on the floor. With you. (85)

From being shy and submissive, she has matured into someone who is able to balance solitude with relations and being a part of others with being apart from others.[10] Most existentialist philosophers agree that `with others' is an element of `being-in-the-world': not in isolated *Existenz* but in participation and communication with others may one reach one's self and learn to live fully (Sartre 1947:44-5 & Jaspers in Friedman 1964:204). However, `in order to be able to go out to the other, [one] must have the starting place, [one] must have been, [one] must be, with [one]self' (Buber 1947:21), that is, independent and self-aware.

Fugard's interest in the subject of selfless love is notable in his characterisation of

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individualised to its `ownmost potentiality-for-Being' (Heidegger 1963:294). Heidegger holds that the more *Dasein* understands itself in terms of this potentiality, the more unequivocally does it choose and discover the possibility of living fully, `and the less it does so by accident' (1962:435).

[9] May (in Friedman 1964:449) takes the future to be the dominant mode of time. This is because *Dasein* is characterised by possibility and exists as `pro-ject'. While it is constantly moving `ahead of', `beyond' and `outside' itself, directing itself upon what is still to come, it is, simultaneously, propelled towards itself (Grimsley 1967:46). This notion, of course, also features in phenomenologist thinking.

[10] The equilibrium Frieda maintains between being separated and related is again visible at the moment of the arrest. At first she hides behind Errol, but later `she scrambles forward, and, using her blanket, tries to shield him' (96).

Frieda. The persona is portrayed as relating to the principal in a selfless way, and her concern with his `thou' personalises the physical aspect of their relationship. She cares about him and his needs; this is unmistakable when she inquires: `Are you sure you are happy?' (87) and `What will make you happy?' (92).[11] She also bids him to be proud of himself (92) after he has lashed out against himself for his own sense of shame and humiliation. And, although she initially cowers behind him when the security forces intrude upon them, she immediately afterwards takes the blanket, with which she has covered herself, to shield him (96).

Angove, *per contra*, takes this to be a `subconscious condescending reaction' (1987:53). She adds that, notwithstanding all Frieda's efforts to understand Errol, `under the tension of police confrontation', instead of being enraged or justifiably defiant, she reverts to the role she has been conditioned to since birth: that of being the protector of the black man. In the process the latter is denied the opportunity to acknowledge his responsibility and guilt (1987:53).

Because her life meanings are evolved, Frieda does not conceal her emotions or lie to others, but communicates herself as she is. For example, she confesses that she loves Errol (82)[12]. She is further portrayed as mature in that she assumes accountability for what she has done before as well as for what she will do in future. Moreover, she does not refrain from making choices (and with choices changes). When the other wavers between staying with her or returning to the location, she urges him:

> Go home. Take your conscience and your guilt and go back to

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[11] Raymer, nonetheless, hypothesises that

> her uneasiness about the game illustrates [too well] the problems faced by `Coloured' and black persons, problems that she, for all her `liberalism', has no comprehension of and no real curiosity about. Like many Liberals, she would like to look the other way. She finds it hard to endure even if only in her imagination what it must be like to be non-white in South Africa (1976:203).

[12] To Binswanger (in Friedman 1964:516), the dual mode of love and friendship is essential to the existential experience.

> Bontrug and look after your family. I've also got problems. I can't add your adultery to them. If you haven't got the courage to say No ... to anybody ... me or her ... I'll do it for you.

To this she adds: `Take me with you. Now' (93).[13]

From the quotation above two inferences can be drawn. First, Frieda refuses responsibility for Errol's guilt and cowardice. She is the author and the mistress of her own destiny. Secondly, like Morris from *The Blood Knot*, she entertains the illusion that `it is possible to live outside one's socio-cultural heritage' (Angove 1987:53) and that `love can be divorced from cultural differences' (1987:49-50). Nevertheless, that the *dramatis persona* is also sensible of her similarities to others and feels answerable for their actions as long as she co-exists with them. This is discernible from the first person plural pronoun she employs when imploring Errol, after he has verbally battered her: `Is there nothing we can do any more except hurt each other? (93). She also intimates that if she had forty-three cents, she would send a telegram, with the following message appearing on it: `Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who ...' (88).[14] In addition, she reveals that she has thought about Errol's family (103).

The intrusion of the representatives of the apartheid ideology, functioning as a fulcrum between the drama's apparently disparate halves, temporarily rattles Frieda Joubert's confidence and, as Raymer (1976:192) submits, it even seems to addle her mind. Her mental disintegration is apparent from her `compulsive "babble" taking on a Beckettian tenor' (1976:191).

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[13] Later, when he does not answer the police's question about the library key he has in his possession, she interposes: `I gave it to him' (104).

[14] Frieda is indeed religious. When Errol mentions that he is afraid of the doctrine of Bishop Usher - the defender of creationism - that `God created the world ... the act of creation took place on October the twenty-sixth, four thousand and four B.C., at nine a.m., she objects to this ostensible blasphemy: `You shouldn't.... Try ... please try to understand' (84). Sören Kierkegaard (in Grimsley 1967:21), differing in this from several other existentialists, writes that the religious stage is the final stage in the development of the human being. A person recognises him/herself as a creature who must stand alone before God, as well as the absolute and unconditional demands imposed on him/her.

The arresting officers are not seen behind the source of light and their `lack of human response' (Raymer 1976:206) transfigures them into disembodied, `omnipresent menaces' (1976:207) and the librarian's (as well as the principal's) nemeses (Vandenbroucke 1986:188):

> WOMAN.... [*Pause as they both wait innocently and eagerly for a response to what they have said. Nothing. The silence slowly becomes a threat.*] Say something. [*Mounting hysteria.*] SAY SOMETHING!... (101)

Endeavouring to elicit some reaction from the intruders, Frieda confesses (Raymer 1976:206):

> Yes, we have made love. I switched off the light. Yes. Yes. Guilty. No doubt about it. Guilty of taking my chance and finding him. Hands, eyes, ears, nose, tongue ... totally guilty. Nothing is innocent. (101)

She accepts her guilt just as she `accept[s] the authoritarian logic which condemns [her]' (Walder 19874:92). Angove (!987:54) ascribes the absence of anger - or even hostility - to cultural indoctrination.

Experiencing her own objectification, she applies the question-and-answer technique of a police interrogation to herself (Raymer 1976:192). According to Raymer (1976:191), this gruesome and grotesque self-examination stresses the stylised and `unrealistic' enactment of the arrest, in addition to being a demonstration of the dramatist's use of role-playing:

> You say you have no previous experience of men. That you were a virgin, and yet you took the initiative. What would you have done if Philander had rejected you?
> Hated him.
> Would the fact that a coloured man had rejected you have humiliated you more than if a white man had done so?
> By the time it happened his colour did not mean anything to me any more.
> Did you encourage Philander?
> Yes.
> Why?

I wanted him. (102)

This rather bizarre admission may be an attempt to expiate the contrition which could be occasioned by her religious convictions in addition to the government's Immorality Act. Nonetheless, as existentialist philosophers maintain, all beings in whom self-consciousness has developed denounce themselves at one or other stage; it is part of existence and could, moreover, effect change. The anxiety attendant on remorse is a constructive emotion, for, as Martin Heidegger expounds, in full existentialist jargon, it has the `character of an *appeal* to *Dasein* by calling it to its ownmost potentiality-for-Being-its-Self; and this is done by way of *summoning* it to its ownmost Being-guilty ...' (1963:314).

Rollo May agrees with Heidegger. He intimates that an uneasy conscience is the outcome of denying one's existential potentialities by locking them up within the self, so failing to fulfil them (in Friedman 1964:448). The librarian, notwithstanding, has neither forgotten nor `missed' her being. Therefore, shortly after the first impulsive confession and clearing of her conscience, she announces that she is not ashamed of herself (104). She *chose* to give Errol the key to the back door of the library and she knew what she was doing when she seduced him. She was *not* the victim of vicissitudes. By having her face her accusers directly and appropriate answerability for her actions, the dramatist highlights his protagonist's courage and strong character.

Whereas Frieda has earlier shied away from light (whether in the form of a lit match, an open curtain or the police's camera shots), this contrasting with Errol's demand to be seen (Angove 1987:52), in her last speech she resigns herself to the fact: `I don't want to see myself but it will happen' (105). Despite the humiliation of the exposure and the embarrassment her body has caused her before, when the torches trap her another time, `she is unaware of the light shining on her. She studies herself, quietly, privately' - and objectively:

> Ugly feet. The soles have got hard patches. My legs are bandy. Good calf muscles ... probably got them riding to school on my bicycle up a steep hill each day. Skin around my knees is just starting to get a little slack. I enjoy making the muscles in my thighs move. Hair is very mousy ... very sparse.... I think the area around

> my waist is quite nice. Few soft and feminine contours around my hips. (101) My breasts are slacker than I would like them to be. (102) My neck is unattractive. My face is quite interesting but can be very plain sometimes. Lines around my mouth are starting to worry me. Hair causes me concern. I think it's going off. (102) Ashamed of my hands. Nail-polish has come off in patches. Skin looks very old. (101-2)

Even though it may be argued that she views her body as an object, it is significant that the description of herself is concluded with:

> I think there is a lot of me in my hands somehow.
> My favourite colour is blue....
> My favourite flower is.... (102)

This, together with the predominance of the first person singular pronoun, shows that Frieda Joubert, in spite of her initial insecurity, perceives herself to be a centre of possibilities. She furthermore accepts her body for itself and comes to value it. My conviction is that this is the author's way of illustrating the character's taking cognisance of and affirming her physical as well as psychological identity. This paves the way for the discovery of the `free spiritual being' (Grimsley 1967:32) which is capable of change.

In her last monologue, Fugard has Frieda confront her ultimate isolation. She takes it into herself, thereby transcending it:

> I am here. You are not here. I know that without even trying to find you, as I did once, because nothing can be here except me. That doesn't mean I don't want you. But you are gone from other places. The pain will come. I'm holding it far away. But just now I will have to let it go and it will come. It will not take any time to find me. Because it's mine. The pain is going to be me. I don't want to see myself. But I know that will also happen. I must be my hands again, my eyes, my ears ... all of me but now without you. All of me that found you must now lose you. My hands still have the sweat of your body on them, but I'll have to wash them ... sometime. If I don't, they will. Nothing can stop me losing that little bit of you. In every corner of being myself there is a little of you left and now I must start to lose it. (105)

The character also recognises her lover as the subject for whom she has formerly consented to be an object. It dawns upon her that she cannot continue to hold on to

the known and the safety he embodied for her. She has to advance into an unknown and uncertain future by herself. Although at first she craved for belonging and love, she has grown during the course of the play and is now set on satisfying the highest needs of her being (in correspondence with Maslow's pyramid): self-esteem and self-actualisation. This is the meaning she has created for herself which will sustain her throughout the trauma.

Whereas the persona of Frieda Joubert is presented as weak at the beginning of *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act*, it is just the opposite with Errol Philander. Errol is the one to ask her: `Which one are you frightened of? Me or you?' (82). Whereas she avoids the light, he orders her to look at him. He is ostensibly frightened of very little, deriving his confidence from the epiphany he had a year ago while reading a book on geology:

> Then suddenly those words: "... no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end...." I stopped. I had to. it was a `comprehension' - ja, of life and time ... and there in the middle of it ... at that precise moment ... in Bontrug, was me. Being me, just being me there in that little room was... the most exciting thing that had ever happened to me. I wanted that moment to last forever! It was so intense it almost hurt. There was nothing I was frightened to see. (84-5)

`Extracting himself from the burden of a history, a culture, a social existence, he experienced freedom' and his uniqueness within eternity (Angove 1987:50). It further struck him that he was part of an `awesome process' toward liberation: `a bright moment unfurled against the immensity of time' (Raymer 1976:195) because he himself is a `product of an evolutionary process ..., evolved out of the contact between the races in the Cape', and, as such, `one of the truest South Africans' - a fact conveniently forgotten by the powers that were (Walder 1984:93).

Fugard's Philander is seemingly in contact with his existential identity. For instance, he notifies Frieda: `Here I am. Me' (83). He does not hesitate when it comes to voicing his discontent (`Hate it! Bontrug. The braks that run out at me when I get there. My school. The children I teach. My home' [91]). Although his cynical and

`fatalistic approach to the relationship[15] reveals a ... realistic view of life' (Angove 1987:50), he still allows himself to daydream about an altered future:

> But if that one day I also had a real chance to start again - you know, to make everything different - and forty-three cents would buy me even just the first brick for a five-roomed house ... I'd spend it on that and go hungry.... (89)

The principal is confident that the present year will be different as he will turn his hand to the creative solution: `this year ... I'm really going to teach. You watch' (89).[16] It appears from this that Errol has a purpose which he will fulfil in future.

Whereas the female character has some regard for religion, the male is apparently aware that in order to exist, he must rebel. Errol is alarmed by the claim of Bishop Usher, defender of creationism, that the world was created by God (84) for `if God didn't exist, everything would be possible' - this being the very starting point of existentialist theory (Dostoievsky in Sartre 1948:33). The principal, like the teacher in *The Road to Mecca*, is `determined on creating a human situation where all the answers are human, or, rather, formulated in terms of reason. His partiality for the factual is evident when he apprises his mistress:

> There was a point ... a billion or so years after the beginning of the earth, when the surface cooled sufficiently to permit water to accumulate in liquid form. Up until then it had just been gaseous....

Whereas Fugard's Frieda makes mention of `those hairy ... missing links ... that look like baboons' (83), his other protagonist, being fascinated with facts, knows exactly where, when and by whom the `Australopithecus' was discovered: `Fossilised skull in limestone quarry in Taung, Bechuanaland. Raymond Dart. 1930'. He can even

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[15] For example, his `There is no tomorrow. Just today' (84) `allud[es] to the illegitimacy of their relationship and predict[s] the destruction of their existence' (Seidenspinner 1986:293).

[16] Nevertheless, the creative solution has failed Errol thus far: `Like my correspondence course. Three assignments unopened. In my drawer' (89).

His studies have been neither inspiring nor rewarding and though he has had the opportunity to find fulfilment in teaching, he has not yet experienced it.

cite his sources: `The conclusion of Charles Lyell after a good look at what was happening on the surface of the earth. *Principles of Geology*, 1830' (84). Errol is therefore portrayed as reasonable. Jaspers proclaims that *Existenz* itself only becomes clear through reason, reason being `salvation from nihilism' (Jaspers 1950:46).. Because *Existenz* and reason are inseparable, `each disappears with the disappearance of the other' (1950:67).

Life and death are as interdependent as reason and existence are, and Errol does not avoid the subject. He explains to Frieda: `the difference between life and even the most complex of chemical processes are (*sic*) ... a degree of independence from the environment;[17] sexual reproduction; and, finally, a susceptibility to death' (82). He also knows that because `life lives, life must die' (82); nothing can ever remain as it is. In Yalom's view (1980:165, 31), meditating on mortality provides a new perspective on the present and imbues it with intensity. This is so because, when *Dasein* contemplates itself as the `possibility of no-longer-being-able-to-be-there', it is `assigned to its Heideggerian `ownmost potentiality-for-Being' (1963:183) - which is accomplished through adjustment.

Regardless of whether or not Errol actually meditates on his own mortality, the fact remains that he understands that `life must die' and he still does not live life to the fullest. This is reflected in his remark: `Oh ... another day. Nothing special ... until now' (81). Yet the mere mention of Bontrug in the alien surroundings of Frieda's home `breaks the bubble of illusion' (Angove 1987:53) and restores the stark reality that one's `socio-cultural environment ... is carried within one's genes' (1987:53). The character, thus, is unable to create meaning out of the situations in which he finds himself and life, to him, is a matter of prolonged suffering (Walder 1984:93).

Seen from this angle, the `forty-three cents' game may be nothing more than an attempt on Errol's part to assure himself that his existence has significance, albeit hypothetically. At the same time it invites Frieda to participate, at least intellectually, in his situation by conveying to her the `immediate importance of his everyday

[17] It appears that Errol appreciates the existential truth that in dependence on a limited environment one becomes a limited self.

hardships (for example lack of water and public conveniences, provision of food, work and accommodation') (Seidenspinner 1986:292). The objective of the game is to work out what he - and she - would do with a few coins if they had nothing else: no family, no home and, most importantly, no tomorrow (87). In contrast to what he has claimed before, it is patent that Errol is reluctant to envisage the future, because, if he resigns himself to what is to be, he also has to take on responsibility - not only for what he has done before, but also for what he will do and think and feel from now on until his end. Instead, he resolves to buy a newspaper and read `what happened in the world yesterday' (87-8).

Moreover, it could be that Errol hopes that Frieda will remove accountability from him and that she will revitalise his present purposeless existence. As he muses:

> I don't know. I can't tell. I can't see or do anything properly any more, except come here.... (93)

Some existentialist psychologists regard the orgiastic state of sexual intercourse as a means of swallowing others or being swallowed (Yalom 1980:393).[18] Errol is happy when sex is good (87). Yet, as soon as the act is something of the past, he has to ply his mistress with questions regarding his presence: `What about me? I want to be seen. I want you to see me' (82). He also moves into a `faint patch of light from the curtained window' and announces: `The brightest spot in our world. Here I am. Me. Can you see me?' (82-3) and `You can see me?' (83)

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[18] Kierkegaard sorts sex under the aesthetic stage. This stage is characterised by `spontaneous vitality and an immediacy which is dominated by the needs of the present moment and the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment' (Grimsley 1967:20). Nevertheless, the aesthetic type of existence is incomplete and begets tension and despair.

Like Kierkegaard, other existential philosophers also have a negative view of sex *per se*; that is, sex without love to personalise it. Errol admits: `I can't love' (106). In addition, he is unfaithful to his wife. Existential writers further look upon sex as an obstacle to living fully and as doomed to failure (Friedman 1964:537). To Berdyaev and Sartre, sexual desire is nothing other than the desire to get hold of the other's `free subjectivity through his objectivity-for-[oneself]' (Friedman 1964:536). In other words, passion's purpose is possessing the other as an object in order to serve one's own turn.

Thus, it may be deduced that, like Lena and Helen, Errol Philander endeavours to establish himself in another's eyes. It is not so much she who depends on him, but he who relies on her to give meaning to his being; she is the object to be manipulated for the selfish end of unearthing his *raison d'être*. Authenticity, instead, involves people's `acceptance of ... the fact that they ... give meaning to life by every act' (Coates quoted in Bedford 1972:314).

Further confirmation that the relationship Errol has with his mistress is not a mutual `I-Thou' (as hers is with him) but a unilateral `I-it' (Yalom's classification 1980:366-7)[19] is that he does not really listen to her. On one occasion the stage directions indicate that he acts as if he has not heard her (85). She, for her part, recalls an earlier conversation:

> we talked a bit. But I didn't really listen to him because ... he wasn't really talking to me. (97)

We may infer that the principal's `dialogue' (in which there is the opportunity to overcome his solipsistic predicament, grow in interaction with the woman and discover the truth, is no more than a disguised form of monologue, centring exclusively on himself. Thus, his words do not answer the existential question of what he has made of himself but are `chatter', the utterance of the everyday world which disguises *Dasein*'s abandonment by its verbosity (Grimsley's notion 1967:56). In epitome, her claim does not stand over against his own in equal right; her side is not experienced, nor does he empathise with her `otherness' (which happens to be the basic principle of marriage, as Buber [1947:61] contends).[20]

Seen in this light, the female character's initial insecurity is intelligible. Her wearying of playing the part the other has conceived of for her is inevitable; the entrance of the police voyeur simply expedites the breakdown of their relationship. So, as

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[19] Frankl and Yalom (1980:440) posit that the inability to establish mutual relationships is a manifestation of undeveloped life meanings.

[20] Buber also calls it `reflection' when `a man withdraws from accepting with his essential being another [person] in his [or her] particularity' (1947:23).

Weales proclaims: `although *Statements* is concerned with what the state, through the Immorality Act does to Woman and the Man, it is also about the way [the two protagonists] fall short of understanding each other (1978:10).

It is logical that Errol should be anxious about losing the dispenser of meaning in his life. Yet, instead of locating the reason for his mortification within himself, he faults Frieda for it (albeit subconsciously). This is prominent each time he elicits conflict with and inflicts psychological pain on her. He does not understand why he does this; all he knows is that he `can't help it' (89). (Someone who cannot recognise the reason for his/her actions or feelings obviously cannot change.)

Angove, however, has an explanation for Errol's conduct. First, his love for Frieda is irrevocably part of his bitterness at not being allowed to have all that she represents (1987:52). Secondly, he constantly reminds himself of the framework by which he is circumscribed (1987:52). And, unlike Morris from *The Blood Knot*, he will not make the `mistake of trying to break through the barrier of his predestined existence' (1987:52). Consequently he is `natural and loving to [his mistress] only when he has transcended the barriers of time and space in his recollections of an existence where there is "no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end"' (84) (Angove 1987:52). `When plunged back into reality, Errol almost defiantly makes his siding with his own people clear', and his language once again becomes `permeated by bitterness and aggression' (1987:51).

Notwithstanding - or perhaps because of - the fact that Fugard's Philander is divided between his love for Frieda and his loyalty towards the `Coloured' people, he works towards being a self-contained self. His turning back upon himself is justified by the assumption that he has an appreciation of the absolute truth.[21] He recalls the night of January the twenty-six, almost a year before, when he was reading and suddenly had a `"comprehension" - *ja*, of life and time' (84-5) and of his being an integral part

[21] Yet, as Sartre (1962:45) submits, in order to get any truth about oneself, one must have contact with others. The truth is lost to those who shut themselves off from others in self-will (Jaspers 1950:48). Moreover, since ones' `true environment is the universe (Tillich in Friedman 1964:377), one can only become whole by virtue of one's relations to other people (Buber 1947:168).

of it.

Someone who strives towards self-reliance will turn down other people's assistance. So when Frieda offers Errol water after she has been informed of the water-level of the location dam, so acknowledging her social guilt (Angove 1987:51), he responds with: `Thanks, but I'll go along with Bontrug' (90). When she insists, he loses his patience:

> *Your* water. You want to send me some of *your* water. Is it so hard to understand? Because if you can't...! (90)

Frieda admits that she does not understand a thing (91). Instead of explaining to her that her privilege blinds her to the fact that the water is not *hers*, furthermore that her response to the `Coloureds' basic and immediate need reflects the white South African's person's `ignorance of the utterly invidious and degrading practical implications of such a dilemma' (Angove 1987:51), thirdly that her proposed involvement is idealistic and impractical[22], and lastly that he feels an obligation to cast in his lot with his people, he lets her know that she should not even try to comprehend because she cannot.[23] Because communication paves the way for the truth, and truth unites people (Jaspers 1950:48), `[t]here is nothing left to say ... Nothing to do' (104) between the two lovers at the end of the drama and he forsakes her when he slinks away from the pool of light in which he and she have been standing.[24]

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[22] She also assures him: `We're going to have prayers for rain next week. Wednesday' (89).

[23] Vandenbroucke conjectures that this impasse hints at the `difficulty of understanding across racial lines' (1986:185). This may be so, but, then again, we can only partially know others.

[24] John Raymer remarks that even though Errol's and Frieda's love disintegrates, what is of real importance is that their affair could happen in the first place.... `This interracial love affair is itself a moving "statement" about the possibilities of love conquering the terrors of apartheid' (1976:206-7).

In Grimsley's view (1967:54), one who balks at dispersing his self in participation and seeks specialness instead, as Errol does, may often surround himself with objects to substitute for people. The principal will spend his last few cents on a brick for a five-roomed house (89). He also intends buying a car (89). One may presume, on the basis of the metaphors of property he employs (Colleran 1995:45), that Errol's *Dasein* is bound to objectification, possessions supplying him with a sense of identity. However, Grimsley propounds that `to be "in the world" is not to be related to objects alone. We are not `merely "in the world" but "with others" and this "with others" is an essential element of being in the world' (1967:50) as we reach our own selves in the presence of others (Sartre 1948:45). Meaning therefore cannot be found in isolation.

Thirdly, an individual who longs to be unique is often concerned with his own position. Errol Philander, who is the head of a school, is ashamed of himself, firstly because he betrays his wife and children, and then, whenever he calls upon his mistress, he has to subject himself to various ignominies which strike at the root of the sense of specialness he wishes to sustain. These include waiting until it is dark, using back doors and hiding `on hands and knees among the shit' (80) beneath the bridge.

For these reasons, the principal feels insecure and inferior. He describes himself as a coward (93) or - worse - a *brak* (88)[25] that is `hungry enough to make every mistake ... even bark' (89). He also takes it that he cannot `see or do anything properly any more, except come here, and even that [he does] thinking it's a mistake' (93). This is because he is so `buggered-up inside that [he] say[s] "No"' when he means "Yes" (90). In fact, he judges that he is not only literally but also figuratively `in the shit' (91).

[25] A *brak* is a mongrel. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1989:653) defines a mongrel as a `dog of no definable type or breed'. It also has the derogatory meaning of a `person not of pure race', the product of interracial intercourse.

Someone who does not perceive himself as having worth has trouble loving others (Bedford 1972:316). Neither of the relationships Errol has fulfils him and the one with Frieda founders soon enough under pressure.

Rather than being honest about the fact that he transgresses against himself and Frieda by failing to fulfil his potential, so bringing himself to his entire being, Errol alternates between blaming God and Frieda. Having vicariously experienced what it is like to be white, he is discontented with the school where he teaches and the schoolchildren, his home in Bontrug - in short, his entire world:

> So I say to myself: "Careful, Philander. It's yours. It's all you can ever really have. Love it. You've got to." Sometimes that's easy too. But you see, even when I do ... there's still you. (91)

His mistress, nevertheless, is the one who has to give him a chance (89) as he supposes he cannot create and take it himself and change (`if that one day also had a real chance to start again' [89]). It is possible that he inflicts pain on her because he suspects her of begrudging him this opportunity. Then again, it is not within her power to give it him as existence supposes autonomous action.

Philander does not assume authorship for hurting his partner's feelings. According to him, he does not do this on purpose. Moreover, since his stance is unintentional, seeking to conduct himself differently is of no avail as what he does and says is simply beyond his control (89).

The character further believes that it is beyond him to leave his family. As he muses: `I'm not ... strong enough to hurt them, for something I wanted. What would happen to them if I did?' (93)

What Errol actually *should* say is that he not strong enough to make a choice and make sense of, or alter, his existence and so determine who he is.[26] In lieu of

[26] Frieda, in contrast, strives to convince herself that her lover had too strong a feeling of responsibility towards his family to have an affair with a white woman just because he had the opportunity to do so.

committing himself to a certain course and acting on it, he takes the cowardly way out and lets others make the decisions for him. Human reality, however, is not given automatically but depends upon the individual's courage to comprehend itself as a choice in the making (Sartre 1958:478). Heidegger (1963:68) agrees that *Dasein* has to `choose' itself in order to grow and win itself. Grimsley puts it succintly: Existence is action. It `is not; [it] becomes' (1967:24).

Irvin Yalom (1980:312) contends that letting others and `oughts' decide for one, or not discriminating between wishes, is symptomatic of a disordered will, something that emerges in a conversation Errol has with Frieda:

> She asks me, What do you want?
> I don't know.
> Yes, you do.
> Everything.
> You can't have it. Choose.
> I can't.
> You're a coward.
> I know.
> You realise it's useless.
> Yes.
> What will you do if they find out about us?
> I don't know. So she tells me.... (106-7)

The principal furthermore does not have to uphold previous decisions he has made, for example that of getting married. In terms of existentialist thought, no choice is binding and all choices can be remade; one is always free to turn and `veer off onto a new road of existence' (Bedford 1972:279). However pitiful his life [has] become', he still has it within his power `physically to get up and leave' his wife (Cohen 1977:76).

Guilt is the corollary of not shifting for oneself.[27] By not exploring his existential possibilities and making personal progress, Errol cannot answer the call of his being - `Where art thou?' - with `Here am I' (Buber's phrases 1947:166). This is never more obvious than after the arrest. Exposed by the police flashlights, the *dramatis*

[27] In turn, the dread of being found blameworthy and condemned may thwart the taking of sound decisions and acting on them (Tillich 1952:79).

persona's precarious sense of self, which his mistress earlier had to affirm, gives way. Without even for a moment `questioning the moral rectitude of his accusers' (Angove 1987:55), he breaks down and becomes the servile, cringing `Coloured' (99) he has deep down always suspected himself to be. He implores the white woman: `Water, Miesies. Please, Miesies ... water ...' (99),[28] this being reminiscent of the black man-white man game Zachariah and Morris used to play in *The Blood Knot*. When Frieda reacts with bewilderment, he mutters: `I'll ... I'll just go. I'll use the back door' (99), and she discovers that there is `dust on his shoes. Him. His feet. His thoughts' (100). From the perspective of her `white superiority' (Angove 1987:54), he is not her equal - either physically and psychologically. Vandenbroucke (1986:189) postulates that the nadir of humiliation Errol reaches at this point surpasses even his previous self-loathing.

As if imagining that his occupation will exonerate or restore some dignity to him, Philander then says: `I'm ... I'm Principal.... I ... I won't do it again ...' (96). It appears that under pressure he reposes trust in his career and abilities, and not in himself. He is estranged from his existential identity. Bugental (1976:14) avers that an identity which is based on objectification is dependent on external circumstances and the impression others have of it. Errol feels, however, that everyone sees right through his public persona (`I know you see' [106])[29] after he has visualised his flight from `everything but especially God' (106). Not only God, but also the dogs `can see' (106).

Experiencing his own objectification after the violation of his privacy, Errol reports on events in the past tense, as if viewing these and himself from a distance:

> There was nothing left to say. I had thought there would be. That if it ever happened, and we had known it could, that there would be something left to say, to her, to myself. Something to say to them.

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[28] It seems that one of the ways in which the state tyrannises or terrorises its subjects can be seen in the effect of the police's actions on Errol. Already fragile and humiliated by his history and circumstances, he regresses and cannot realise the growth and transcendence that might otherwise have been possible.

[29] This is what Sartre refers to as hell in *No Exit* (1955:17).

> But when the light went on, it burnt out all the words I had left. Nothing to say. Nothing to do. (104)

When the cruel reality of the intrusion strikes him fully, he switches to the present tense, but without discarding the same short, clipped sentences:

> They find you.
> They put on the light.
> They take the picture.
> They take your name.
> And then they take you. (106-7)

Since the security officers have robbed him of his identity, he responds to what *Das Man* commands, and also transfers authorship to the latter:

> That on the night of January the twelfth 1966, I ... who had been made in his image ... did lose a part of me. They did it I say. They dug a hole and buried it. Ask the dogs. (107)[30]

The ellipses in the quotation above separate the subject from the predicate; the same applies to the auxiliary verb `did'. In this fashion Fugard illustrates that Errol does not consider himself to be the agent of the action, therefore not answerable for it. He is incapable of functioning adequately, either psychologically or physically. Earlier he said, `I can't see or do anything properly any more ...' (93). His legs are now also beginning to fail him. Moreover, wherever he goes, he cannot elude the omnipresence of God:

> I'm running away very fast, from everything but especially God, because he mustn't know. But the street doesn't work any more. Because when I reach the end where the stones and the darkness should start, the light goes on.... But I can't run very fast. My hands get in the way .... And then I reach my house. But I don't find anyone there, only God, waiting in the dark. And now I'm too tired to run any more.... (106-7)

As in *The Road to Mecca*, the Lord is depicted as anything but a loving Father. In

[30] However, there is one moment in the drama when Errol recognises the role he plays in his destiny. This is when he declares: `We knew all right what we were doing' (101).

fact, the dramatist has the protagonist associate God with whites and with the enforcers of law and justice. This is made explicit by the following quotation:

> I just think he (God) must have driven there by car because otherwise how could he have got there before me. He lives in the town .... God shines a torch to see what she looks like. Did he have it, he asks her. Yes, she says. Then he asks me: "Why did you let them do it?"
> So I tell God I don't smoke and I don't drink and I know the price of bread. But he says it makes no difference.... (107-8)

Errol feels that he has to account to God for not recognising the demands imposed on him. Hence he takes the only way out. He confesses: `I can't love' (106). In the end he is, as his name says, just a philanderer. He has not only wronged his wife, his children and his mistress, but he has also erred against himself. This is because one can only grow to a whole in interaction with another (Buber 1947:168), *Existenz* only becoming `real' if it comes to itself through, and simultaneously with, other existences (Jaspers 1957:92),.

In the character's last speech - a `bleakly pessimistic' one, verging on despair (Walder 1984:93) - the stage directions specify that Errol must stand alone again, having earlier crawled away into his own private world (Raymer 1976:190). Forestalling God and the police, His `arbitrary agents of destruction' (Anon quoted in Angove 1987:55), Errol pronounces sentence upon himself: `guilty' (107) and starts executing it. Like the jackal that bit off his foot to free itself (which he mentioned before), Errol now symbolically dismembers and emasculates himself (Walder 1984:92):[31]

> But I know you see.
> An arm without a hand.
> A leg without a foot.
> A head without a body.
> A man without his name....
> And then I'm in Bontrug. And the dogs don't bark at me, they laugh.
> They're all standing up and walking around their back legs to show

[31] The person on whom the character of Philander was modelled went one step further: he committed suicide.

> me theirs. (106-7)[32]

His dismemberment `... represents a culmination of all those emasculated men - Morris, Johnnie, Boesman - robbed of their ability to act, even to function at all' (Walder 1984:92). In fact, the playwright calls `every arrest under the Immorality Act a vestigial re-enactment of the castration ritual' (quoted in Vandenbroucke 1986:189).

In Errol's scenario, after the arresting officers have unmanned him, God wants what is left of him:

> And then I start to give him the other parts. I give him my feet and my legs, I give him my head and body, I give him my arms, until at last there is nothing left, just my hands, and they are empty. But he takes them back too. And then there is only the emptiness left. But he doesn't want that. Because it's me. It's all that is left of me. (108)

Thus, the effort of the finite self to become `the centre of everything gradually has the effect of its ceasing to be the centre of anything' (Tillich 1968:71). The only thing the principal can ultimately lay claim to - and hold onto - is the emptiness within himself: the Special Branch cannot reach there and God would not have it. At last he has something to call his own, however insignificant that may be. In this fashion the character affirms his `I-ness', although the `I' which is affirmed is a negated one - which is, as Errol assumes, all `Coloureds' are allowed in South African society. The female persona, however, has demonstrated that a desire for change has to arise within oneself. Possibly on this account, Dennis Walder (1984:93) surmises that *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* could be considered the most inward of all of Fugard's dramas.

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[32] Frieda, just the reverse, gains control over her body: `I must be my hands again, my eyes, my ears ... all of me' (105).