

CHAPTER FIFTY

MUSIC IN SERVICE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL SATIRE IN FEMI OSOFISAN'S *MIDNIGHT HOTEL*

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Abstract

William Shakespeare once says that "If Music is the food of Love, play on give me excess of it". Music is not only food of love in the real sense of the word; it helps opens an avenue to understanding the character and mechanics of any society. Music always throws light on the economic, political, social, religious and moral values of any society. Music, therefore, reflects any society that gave it birth. This work focuses on the use of music, dance and song by Femi Osofisan as a tool to satirize and lampoon social and political decadent of certain segments of Nigerian society using his play MidNight Hotel. In Femi Osofisan's Midnight Hotel, music is used as an agent of satire on decadent ruling elites of our time. He uses music, dance, and song to ridicule the criminality and stupidity of the Nigerian political class. In this play, Osofisan exposes and denounce the decadent attitude of the emergent Nigerian elites. This work shows how Osofisan used the power of music and song to comment and satirize the socio-political and religious decadence in the play MidNight Hotel.

Keywords: Music, Socio-political satire, Moral values and Femi Osofisan's Midnight Hotel

Introduction

Nigeria in her quest for freedom from colonial rule struggle fervently and got independence from British imperialist in 1960. Nigerians were not only elated but optimistic that an atmosphere for achieving socio-political and economic development for the new state has been set. There is great hope that Nigeria will emerge as a great nation on the African continent; a state devoid of rancour, a stable nation free from outside control. But no sooner had Nigerians finished celebrating their freedom from a colonial vampire, Great Britain, than Nigerian emergent elites knocked it into pieces with the sledgehammer of regional and ethnic-tribal bigotry for the political war of survival, of everyone against another tribe. Anything done or said by a person will be given tribal interpretation. This is the beginning of inferno in Nigerian political space to date.

First, ethnic cleansing began, thus every tribe, regions went home in the name of political shield around their tribe or region. This tribal-cum regional arrangement eventually escalated into thirty months of civil war from 1967 to 1970. The war ended with the declaration of 'no winner, no vanquished". Thus, a seemingly harmonious nation free of ethnic and regional crises was established. But we know that the poor masses, the currency of war, that fought the war and cultivate the land to feed the nation lost the war; as the oil boom of the seventies and beyond took us to another state or regional anarchy where the masses have something to fear. At the end of the war, the army took sway and corruption soared at highest level unprecedented in pre-war periods.

The end of the civil war was followed by the oil boom in Nigeria state. Nigeria has enough money at that time to the extent that 'we don't know how to spend it'. The military with their civilian cronies has their heydays. Struggle for national wealth and oil wells to amass wealthy by all means became the order of the day. *Coup' detat* upon *coup' detat* every other day for the struggle of the oil money. We clap for them as they searched the nation's wealth in foreign accounts with reckless abandon. Economic extravagance is the order of the day. In the parliament inhabited by rogues; it is a war of survival of everyone against everyone (Hobbes,1902). Once you join you become a political whore. It is these political rogues, religious sycophants, brutal and criminal military personnel that Femi Osofisan brought to limelight for ridicule in his play *MidNight Hotel*; using dramatic performance, music and songs. In the play, Osofisan is interested in presenting a nation bedevilled by corruption, political rogues, military dictators who are always behind the fence and ready to take over the rule of power from politicians with the same flimsy excuse. It mirrored political liars, and religious sycophants and charlatans who prophesize who will take over power tomorrow, to comment on the character and mechanics of the Nigerian society in its symbolic setting in a dirty hotel or a whore house where all unconceivable atrocities happen. Activities in such dirty hotels are symbolic of evil that pervades Nigerian society. The hotel is an arena where political rogues and other unconceivable characters gather to share and enjoy the fruit of their corrupt activities. Because of tribal and criminal nature of the Nigerian state, the oil boom and its attendant miseries were accompanied by unprecedented evils and all unconceivable atrocities that tried to extirpate the last moral hope in average Nigerians. It is the ugly condition of the Nigerian state that Osofisan focuses his satiric satellite in this dramatic opera *MidNight Hotel* using songs as the embryo of thought.

The Nature of Music and Song in Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*

In Nigeria since independence, it has really become a veritable struggle to stay alive to remain human. Indeed, Nigeria lost its direction as a nation since 1960 to the present. The value on which Nigeria was built as an independent nation has been thrown into the abyss of horror by our leaders of yesterday and the contemporary ruling cabals, and the entire nation is fast plunging into the abyss of horror. The exposition and parody of this amoral condition through what Richard Wagner calls music drama and in the play *MidNight Hotel* is the focus of this work. Thus, Osofisan has satirized the evils inherent in the Nigerian political environment with hope to throw light on the decadent political environment that we call Nigeria- a whore house. The play through songs, music, and dramatic performance say everything, evil, degrading, and deadening to comment on the character of Nigerian society. *MidNight Hotel* present to the audience series of nightmarish experiences to the Nigerian audience, a kind of celebration of the evils of democracy in the state of the nation. This satiric dramatic opera is a photographic presentation of corruption that characterized post-independent oil boom Nigerian politics. Therefore, the story is really to a superlative degree.

Dramatic performance, music, and songs, therefore form part of the organic structure of the play *MidNight Hotel*. They form the basic make-up of this dramatic opera, whereby they

become systematically interrelated parts of the performance. The play as a form of another kind of opera genre, therefore, has an avowed attachment to an extravagant admiration for the use of music, dance and song to comment dramatically on the quality of life of the society and at the same time ignite the audience's sense of entertainment.

Dramatic opera is a very elaborate form of theatrical performance in which songs, music and dance accompanied spoken words: language plus songs give meaning to the performance. It is not a kind of Wagnerian opera where every word is sung to the accompaniment of orchestra (Wagner, 2020). In *the Midnight Hotel*, the play is accompanied by an orchestra- *Petronaira Banded* by the SongMaster- a playing group resident in the hotel. The play is therefore interspersed with songs and dialogue. *MidNight Hotel*, therefore, is not full opera in which every word is sung (Dahlhaus, 1979). At various points, the play either starts with a commentary by the Songmaster or with dialogue among characters of the play or with songs and dance. The songs are related to the incidents of the particular scene of the play. The songs are symphonic, ironic, satiric and focus on the criticisms of the oil boom Nigerian democratic space.

The play is set in a hotel; a house of corruption and sin; in a suburb of Lagos. The title of the play, therefore, is ironical and reflects the fact that it is critical of corruption in Nigerian society. Thus, dances, song and music in the play are used to lampoon and satirized the ugly events of post-independent oil boom Nigerian democracy where sex is business as depicted in the political prostitution of our politicians.

MidNight Hotel shows through effective character portrayal, ills like political corruption, moral depravity and false prophets that plague the mentality of Nigerian society. Awero, a female member of the parliament like other members insists on the corruption of various degrees like having sex with Pastor Suuru; a roguish-prophet-cum contractor that deposit money for the contract in foreign accounts in the name of "sampling the good". Awero takes the hypocritical Pastor Suuru, a friend of her husband, who has a Swiss account to the *MidNight Hotel* to sample him. At the hotel which is a house of immorality and a metaphor for corruption, they meet Alalise a family friend and headmaster who has come to lodge at the hotel with his three daughters. Awero also runs into her husband Asibong who incidentally has come to the hotel as a housing agent inspector. Unfortunately, the unexpected presence of both Alalise, Asibong and the rude behaviours of the hotel attendants, a kind of nemesis, prevents Awero from sampling Pastor Suuru.

This dramatic opera is simple and straight. The play is given dramatic and operatic tone by an opening song by the SongMaster and the *Petronaira Band*; the orchestra resident at the hotel. The song master introduces the *Petronaira Band* and the hotel indicating its birth as a nation. So, the SongMaster's '*Welcome Song*' introduces the play and guests at the hotel as opening glee. The opening song tells the guest the background of the hotel- a house of sin amalgamated in nineteen hundred and fourteen with just three rooms at the beginning'; and how the rooms reach its present number- thirty-six plus one; and with the audience a splendid

appetite. Hear them.

SONGMASTER'S WELCOME SONG

Good evening.

And welcome to Midnight Hotel!

Tonight's dinner of song and laughter

Will be assisted by the orchestra here

Called-the Petronaira Band!

It is led by one and only—

Songmaster! --Who over tonight's dinner,

Will preside by popular demand.

But, before you taste our dish,

I'm told to ask if it's your wish

To know the background of this hotel?

This place was built as house of sin

In the year nineteen hundred and fourteen

With just three rooms at the beginning

Then came Independence, and shortly after

Our customers and our staff began to slaughter

One another with such abandon

Such cheerful license

That soon our old management group

Was chased out by the messiahs in khaki

Commandos of rice, and oil and pepper soup

Who kindly led us from chaos to anarchy

They taught us new laws of profit and gain

And so, we increase our spaces now and again

By simply carving up the old rooms

Into smaller ones, and giving new names

So, who cares any more how many rooms

There are? Just join us for your crimes!

For there's nothing we cannot supply

From pleasures which make men sigh

Softly, and pass out in ecstasy,

To those which merely tickle your kinni

Our specialty is in those secret games

Which men indulge in, and nation sometimes

We've got them all, just place your order

For we'll be here, always open

Even when war engulfs the nation
The war of scarcity,
, or of inflation.
Or the one which you call Elections
Now coming upon like a huge conflagration

So that's is our story, you guests of tonight
We wish you a splendid appetite!

The 'SongMaster's Welcome Song' satirically and sardonically introduces the play and indicates its operatic genre and corruption theme. In this opening glee, the “SongMaster Welcome Song” also points out the play's topicality and satirical target on the ruling hegemonic class of our epoch. In this opening glee, date and numbers are deliberately used to show the origin and the nature of the Nigerian state-the year 1914 refers to the historical amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates and Lagos colony to form the state known as Nigeria with three regions under Lord Lugard as the governor-general. The song also exposes and condemns all forms of corruption, political treachery, immorality, perversion and other vices that trail independence. This led to a military take over which made matters even worse and dragged the country into more anarchic tendencies.

In order to put the audience right in the corrupt world the play is set, Chief Jimoh the senior attendant of the hotel introduced the “Song of the Lagos Woman”, after hearing Bicycle's harrowing experience with a naked prostitute in the hotel. He invites the Petronaira Band to join him in singing the:

Song of Lagos Woman' for Bicycle.

Lagos Woman, she knows
Oh she knows
He knows where the oil boom goes
But she'll never tell, oh no...

She goes to Europe frequently
And when she comes down from the skies
The men of customs prudently
They turn away their probing eyes
But she'll never, oh no

That the price she paid, you know
For this her thriving trade
Was a little escapade
At Midnight Hotel
For that is where the oil boom goes.

The satiric tone of the most song's message comes in this form. *The Song of Lagos Woman* shows the corruption that is endemic in Nigerian society. The Hotel is symbolic of corruption ravaging contemporary Nigerian political space. The *Petronaira Band* orchestrates this evil in our political environment. This shows that the play is set in corrupt political space- a hotel where amoral things are discussed and privileged by the ruling hegemonic political class of our epoch. Bicycle, Chief Jimoh's Assistant is bewildered by the sight of human vanity- a society where nakedness is no longer abhorred and prostitution accepted as normal trade for the survival of the fittest. The song opens Bicycle's eyes to the vanity of human desire.

In the second song, Awero a parliamentarian lures Pastor Suuru to a hotel for a sampling of the goods as the rule of the game in the parliament before the contract is given. This song alludes to bribery and corruption in Nigeria. Before you get anything from the government-contract, job and what have you, in Nigeria, you must perform what they call kick back—brown envelope, or you scratch my back and I scratch your back. This is the language of corruption in Nigerian socio-economic and political environment. At the end the contract money may no longer complete the work in process, or even not executed at all, resulting in a myriad of abandon projects all over the political spaces in the country. Because of Pastor Suuru's naivety, Awero invites the SongMaster to sing “Song in Praise of Sampling the Goods” for Pastor Suuru for the Pastor to know what is at stake. Either I sample you, or you lose the contract, pure and simple.

Song in Praise of Sampling the Goods

The world's market, they say
And so is Parliament
So don't bring us your lament
Unless you are willing to pay

Chorus

But please, take off your clothes
And do not waste my time
I want to sample your type
We made our own investment
When we came to campaign
So there is no need to bargain
About our reimbursement
You cannot like a government
If it isn't efficient
How shall we give an example
If we refuse to sample?

This leads to the song of a political prostitute as the pastor is not responding to Honorable Awero's demand. Pastor Suuru's naivety in sampling the goods before Awero gives him the contract lead to the 'Song of Political Prostitute'.

AWERO: All this retreating and retreating, as if you're not a political prostitute like the rest.
Yes, Pastor! A political prostitute, as the song has it! That's what you are! (Calls out angrily).
Songmaster! Let's have the "Song of the Political Prostitute", o jare!

Spoken (by Awero)

Turn around

And stop pretending!

It's as old as politics!

Better men have come before

Once you join

You'll end as a whore!

So let's sing you the story:

There were these two

From the country of sand

One was a hero from the ancient age

One, a king of the present age

They wore their plumage

Splendidly

They shook the soapbox

Thunderously

They came with fine intentions

But the day grew old

And the night fell

There were strange fingers

In the dark!

The lure of contracts

The scent of gold

Money again had woven its spell.

And come the next morning

Two more whores had joined the band.

Spoken (by Awero).

So turn around

And stop pretending

It's as old as politics!

Better men have come before

Once you loin

You'll end as a whore!

So listen to the story:

And these other two

From the forest of rain

Both were heroes from another age

Both are kings of the present age

They wore their plumage

Splendidly
They shook the soapbox
Thunderously
They came with fine intentions
But the day grew old
And the night fell
There were strange fingers
In the dark!
The lure of contracts
The scent of gold
Money again had woven its spell.
And come the next morning
Two more whores had joined the band!

The 'Song of Political prostitute' comments satirically that in today's politics bribery and corruption is the order of the day. Honesty mere lips service. This is because every politician is a thief and only gullible masses are cheated in the games. In the Nigerian political environment, if you do not bow to bribery and corruption, there is no contract for you. Songs in *MidNight Hotel* is highly parodistic, imagistic, witty, humorous in content and form. Honourable Awero has lured the Pastor into a house of sin to sample him before she can give him a contract or never. This song expresses the nature and character of the oil boom in Nigeria immediately after the civil war in 1970. Most importantly and satirically, it points to the unchanging attitude of Nigerian politicians. This is a satirical point of reference to the corruption and looting of Nigerian oil wealth by the decadent political class. The law says nothing, but simply look the order way as if all is well. Therefore, the law is made for those who cannot bend it, and not for politicians who for their naked greed cannot obey it.

The irony of the song lies in its very nature. It talks about the reality of the Nigerian political environment. The poor masses who lost their polluted environment wallow in abject poverty while the politicians who sponsored bills and manage the economy impoverished the masses and sing the glory of the oil boom. The song satirizes the reason for the continuing poverty of the masses as the politicians they voted into power or that rigged themselves into power for the possession of the oil wealth enjoy themselves as poverty, hunger and starvation wipe out the hope of the living.

Each ugly situation created in this dramatic Opera is accompanied by song to lampoon, ridicule, satirize and vilify the ruling hegemonic class of our country, Nigeria. The song comments on the action of the play. The message of the songs is therefore addressed to the audience. The content of each song comments on the situations within the play, which is a reflection of the Nigerian political system.

The play is riddled with bizarre political deception and intimidation for personal gains(Awero and Pastor). She tells pastor Suuru that unless she samples him; there will be no

contract for him. This is the in-thing in Nigerian political environment. Definitely, this threat is not to benefit those she is representing, but to achieve her socio-political and economic desire and live above ordinary mortals.

The song “Ode to the Swiss Accounts” parodied politicians that stole Nigerian wealth and store them in a foreign account. The Pastor sensing that he is dying bid fair well to his accounts in foreign countries, especially, Switzerland. He speaks of the reality of how he garnered the wealth and the reality of forfeiting them if he eventually died.

Suuru: Bye bye, contracts! Bye, my accounts in Switzerland! Ah my head! Ah, Songmaster. I am dying. Don't let me go like that, without wishing them goodbye. Join me in an *Ode to my Swiss Accounts*.

I'm sorry to go
I must admit
But you all know
I've done my bit,
And have myself to alone to thank
By pulling strings
Every now and then
I've left my offsprings
Safe in the bank.

Chorus

O dabo o, my Swiss Accounts,
And how I'll miss every one of you!
Some people dream of ridding the country
Of all corruption
Avoid them, my friend- they don't survive:
For how can they sans foreign exchange?

Chorus

O dabo o, my Swiss Accounts,
Some people dream of leading the country
To revolution:
Avoid them, my friend- they don't survive:
For how can they sans foreign exchange
O dabo o, my Swiss Accounts,

In 'Song of Lost Deposit' Alatisse narrates how he was rigged out in an election by his opponent and describes the Nigerian electoral system as a gambling house. He lost the election, through "rigging mind you" according to him. He stakes all his wealth and property to win the election, but at the end lost everything as the SongMaster will bear him witness in the “Song of the Lost Deposit”. The Orchestra plays, as he and his daughters sing and dance.

For that day you recall
We all went to the polls
As to a gambling house
We took along with us
The things we cherished best
And stake them in the test
And some had brought their stress
And some their bitterness
So many brought their greed
But those who lost deposit
Were those who brought their dreams!

Nigerian electoral process has always been a scam since the first republic to date because always money will weave its spell. The highest bidder takes the glory. Even if you go to the court of law, still the highest bidder will eventually win the race. This is because the world is a market.

MidNight Hotel is a comic opera, a hilarious comedy which use theatrical devices of humour, music, even vilification song, to satirize political corruption and economic mismanagement of Nigerian society, since the first republic to the present. It lashes at the moral decadence, political corruption, the pretence and materialism of the so-called leaders and religious sycophants. The society is portrayed as one engulfed in war and deep spiritual slumber where wrong is celebrated as right and good acts frown at deliberately.

Music is one of the potent, common and most expressive means of communication of the corruption and other debased evil in the play. Language of music is universal; it knows no boundary. There is a general consensus about the power and potency of music to arouse feelings, remould behaviour and communicate in a special way. These are the function of music and song in this dramatic opera.

Being a musical satire on Nigeria political space, it is not surprising that music is the backbone of the message in *MidNight Hotel*. The framework of the play is built on music, song and dance. The play opens and closes with music. In all, the songs are performed and all the characters participated in the music that is realistically orchestrated by the *Petronaira Band*, resident in the hotel. Music played a variety of function in this play. Songs are used as commentary on the characters they play mirrors. Music and song are used to simulate and sustain audience interest and participation and enforce distancing of both the performers and audience from the events of the play. The theme of immorality, exploitation, political corruption, economic saboteur and revolution was clearly expressed in the songs. The spiritual slumber, political corruption, and the moral decadence of the Nigeria state represented by the *MidNight Hotel* are portrayed in the “Song master's welcome song” which serves as opening glee welcomes the customers to the world of this satiric opera.

All the songs in the play raise probing question, satirize the abysmal degeneracy of the nation and make philosophical comments on the state of things. “The Song of the Lagos Woman” for example comments on the corruption that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society engendering immorality, greed and the amassment of wealth all to spend on lust, vanity, extravagance and frivolity.

The theme of political prostitution and immorality is further highlighted in the '*Song in Praise of Sampling the Goods.*' In this song, Osofisan reduces the status, mentality and activities of our politicians to mere market women in the market place, whose major objective is to make a profit after investing. This song drives home aptly the theme of moral ineptitude in our political spaces.

The songs also strengthen, enhance and amplify the action on stage. They react to the events and characters on stage and the audience responds to it. They express opinions on the events of the play. The characters raise the ideas, and the songs develop and enhance them.

The 'Song of Fairy Mother' amplifies the ills that plague the Nigerian society like election fraud, legislative manoeuvres, looting of the economy, and ineptitude.

Song of the Fairy Mother

Madam What's her-name
Was here last week
She wanted to know
Ding-a-ling-o
How do we manage
Ding-a-ling-o
With such few fairies
Around
Ding-a-ling-o
Dinga-ling-o
We asked What's -her-name
To please explain
Exactly what she meant
Ding-a-ling-o
With such few fairies
Around
Dinga-ling-o
Ding-a-ling-o
And Ma What's-her- name
She laughed and laughed
And called us savages
For back in her homeland
Many black fairies
Abound

So said What's-her-name
And these faiiies
They won the vote, and
Ding-a-ling-o
They sit in Parliament
Ding-a-ling-o
All our wealth these fairies
Impound
Ding-ling-o
Ding-a-ling-o
They stack all our funds
In their foreign accounts
They eat in our name, and
Dinga-a-ling-o
They drink in our name
Ding-a-ling-o
While we shrink, these fairies
Are around!
Ding-a-ling-o
Ding-a-ling-o

Being a satiric opera, music and song are systematically woven into the play to bring out the comic flavour of the play, and at the same time carrying a significant message to the audience. Music and song are used to create a lively atmosphere while expressing a message bitter to swallow but is understood easily because of the comic mood of the play. As the girls sang and danced around the candle, they enhance the comic situation of the play but ironically driving Asibong craze. The balanced nature of the songs and the sarcasm in the message makes the play a spectacle to behold.

In the end, Osofisan prescribed in a song the revolutionary way out of the Nigeria ugly political condition. "The Song of a Faraway Land". A critical look at the song brings to the fore, where Osofisan is heading to. The narrative song gives us a history of political insincerity and exploitation of the masses. These heinous crimes and devilish activities of politicians once increased because the people are ignorant of the roguish mechanics of the political class. However, at a certain point where they can no longer carry the cross, they wake up and revolted against the liars and looters till peace returned. Through this song, Osofisan provides a plan of action to topple the exploiters. In this song, Osofisan projects radical view by prescribing that the only way to peace is a revolution. The allusion to Shah of Iran in the song is a testimony of a strong historical dept, illustrative of the end all oppressors as with the Shah dynasty in Iran. Hence the closing song '**The Song of Faraway Land**'

Once it was, in a faraway land
In a once- familiar state

A once-familiar time
The people had no peace
The people had no rest.
For their leaders were always at war
For their leaders were always at war
All these leaders knew
Was to wreck the land
And do such killing and looting
And dance around, give no ear,
While the people groaned everywhere
(Spoken by Songmaste)
We'll chase away these exploiters, the people said:
But look at who they put in their place!

Chorus:

Oh the winners are laughing now
And storing riches
In banks abroad:
But they forget
They forget the Shah of Iran
That the season can change at noon
And bring an evening of rain oh
So let the winners go laughing on
Let the winners go laughing on!
Thus, it was, in a faraway land
In a once-familiar state
A once-familiar time
That thug came to power
And the people lost their rights
As the agent of terror seized the land
Bringing pain and sorrow to the land
Till the people woke up
And they got their guns
Against the liars and looters
They learnt at last to pay the price:
Will you follow, when it's your turn?

Chorus:

No people can have peace
No people can have rest
Till the struggle for freedom is won
So, the story just goes on and on
And the story goes on and on

Through these lyrics, Osofisan protest and revolts against the social, political and economic conditions of the Nigerian society: the squalor, corruption, injustice and abuse of state power. Through this song, he takes a message to the poor masses; that they must rise and denounce corrupt leadership. In the play, music and song are agents that encapsulate Osofisan's philosophy; the overthrow of an oppressive and unjust political system.

Femi Osofisan's *Midnight* is not an only mirror of the Nigerian society but also an instrument to provoke the audience to examine themselves and take decisive action. He uses music, song and dance to question, query, interrogate and even prescribe a royal road of action towards revolution. Through this play, he uses all the theatre resources at his disposal to suggest a way to a radical change in society. The moral decadence, political exploitation, religious deceits of our leaders are observed by the playwright through the barrel of his comic dramatic opera and solution suggested for a way out of the problem.

Conclusion

MidNight Hotel shows some of the challenges Nigeria is facing as a developing nation and calls us to reason together and move the country forward. The play using music and song shows various ills that affect all facet of socio-political and economic issues of the nation since independence. *MidNight Hotel* recalls how injustice and fraudulent activities in the government circle have destroyed that hope of making Nigeria a vibrant nation. A nation where religious and political struggle for survival is the order of the day. As members of the parliament -the political class 'sample' even men and women of God in order to get a contract. Thus 'kick-back' is the order of the day in Nigerian socio-political and economic arena for a kiss of life. Honourable Awero, a member of the parliament tells Pastor Suuru that members of the parliament sample contractors before they are given contracts. Unless this is done no contract for the Pastor.

Alatise, a headmaster-cum-politician lost his deposit in an election and is running away from the people, he borrowed money from to finance his campaign for the election. He lost through rigging according to him, an act that characterized the Nigerian political system since 1960 to the present. Osofisan in this play use song and music as a vibrant medium to bring out the decay in Nigeria socio-political environment. In this play, music, song and dance as employed by Osofisan to condemn political ills of the Nigerian society. The songs in the play highlight issues of corruption that is endemic in our society since independence.

MidNight Hotel is a personification of Nigeria, a lawless nation where bribery and corruption is the order of the day. Bicycle being bribed by guests to satisfy their needs, Jimoh being promise haven on earth by guests to satisfy their desire. These promises are never fulfilled just like political campaign promises. In the Nigerian political arena, money changing hands for sponsorship and gratification before the election is won or lost. In the end, nothing is done for the masses who voted them into power. There is also the issue of violation of human rights by the law enforcement agents; the army, police civil defence and so on; who are supposed to protect the masses on whose sweat their salary come from. This is

evident in the soldier's maltreatment of Alatisé and his daughters in *the MidNight Hotel*.

MidNight Hotel explores song, music and dance as a tool to satirize socio-political problems of the Nigerian state. They are used as a tool to unveil the political decadence of our country, Nigeria. The playwright uses song and music to ridicule and denounce the stupidity and uselessness of the characters in this play, both politicians, the military, and bloody civilians. The play satirizes the absurd political, economic and religious mentality of Nigerians through songs. The songs are a reflection of the mentality and character of Nigerian politicians.

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