

**SOCIETAL MALADIES IN FRANK OGBECHE'S *HARVEST OF CORRUPTION*
AND FEMI OSOFISAN'S *MIDNIGHT HOTEL***

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE

FACULTY OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

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**AN ORIGINAL ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this project, titled Societal Maladies in Frank Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, was carried out under my supervision by Endurance Enorunose Ogbefun (Mr), with Matriculation Number ART2004469, in the Department of English and Literature, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

Dr. (Mr) Clement Eloghosa Odia
(Project Supervisor)

Date:

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for His grace and strength throughout this journey.

It is also dedicated to my grandmother, Dame (Mrs) Agnes Igbinovia, whose love and support have been my pillar of strength.

To my pride, my mother, Mrs. Idada Ogbefun, for her unwavering love and sacrifices—this is for you.

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I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ogbefun Aigbe. Thank you for your unwavering support and sacrifices, which have brought me to this milestone.

To my siblings Aisabor, Obehi, Omoyokhan, and Esohe—thank you for your encouragement, prayers, financial assistance, late-night hugs, and words of strength. Your love has been a source of motivation.

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To everyone who contributed to the success of this project—your support, guidance, and encouragement have been invaluable, and I will forever be grateful

ABSTRACT

This study examines how societal maladies are depicted and understood in Nigerian society. It does so by comparing two well-known Nigerian literary works: Frank Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. Instead of focusing on specific details, the study takes a thematic approach to explore the various aspects of these societal issues as presented in the two narratives. By closely analyzing the characters, plot developments, and socio-political contexts, the project aims to reveal the authors' criticisms and observations of the current realities in Nigeria. Additionally, by comparing the treatment of these themes in the two works, the study provides insights into the unique perspectives and storytelling techniques employed by the authors. Ultimately, this project enhances our understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding political corruption, sexual immorality, and religious bigotry in contemporary Nigerian literature. It also emphasizes the role of literature as a reflection of societal norms, challenges, and aspirations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Study

The objective of this research is to investigate and evaluate the subjects of political corruption, sexual immorality and religious bigotry as portrayed in Frank Ogbache's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. By examining these themes within the Nigerian society depicted in these literary pieces, the research aims to bring to light the authors' criticisms of societal problems and their reflections on the prevailing socio-political environment.

1.2 Scope of Study

This study will thoroughly analyze the themes of political corruption, sexual immorality, and religious bigotry as presented in Frank Ogbache's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. The focus will be on closely examining the characters, plot developments, and socio-political contexts in which these themes are embedded in the literary works. By identifying the different manifestations of these themes and their impact on the narrative structure and character dynamics, a comprehensive understanding will be gained.

1.3 Research Methodology

This study takes a qualitative approach, using a textual analysis to explore the themes of political corruption, sexual immorality, and religious bigotry in Ogbache's *Harvest of Corruption* and Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. By closely examining the texts, we will

identify and examine recurring themes, motifs, and narrative elements related to these societal issues. We will also conduct a comparative analysis to uncover similarities and differences in how these themes are addressed in the two works. To better understand the influences that shape the portrayal of these themes, we will consider the socio-political context in which each text was written and set. The findings of this study will help us understand the authors' critiques and reflections on societal issues, contributing to a deeper understanding of Nigerian society and literature. Throughout the research process, we will maintain rigor and validity by collecting data systematically, conducting thorough analysis, and critically reflecting on our findings. We will also consult relevant scholarly literature and theoretical frameworks to enhance our interpretation of the texts and findings.

1.4 Theoretical Background

The theory adopted in this research is the social realism. Social realism is a movement that surfaced in the 19th century and gained popularity in the early to mid-20th century, is a form of literature and art that aims to depict the realities of everyday life. It specifically focuses on the social and economic conditions experienced by the working class and marginalized communities. Social realism as a theory and artistic movement traces its origins to the early 19th and 20th centuries, emerging primarily as a response to the socio-economic challenges brought about by industrialization, capitalism, and class struggle. While realism as a literary and artistic approach had already taken root in the

works of European writers like Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, and Charles Dickens, social realism developed as a more pointed critique of the social and economic structures that shaped human suffering.

The intellectual foundation of social realism is deeply influenced by Karl Marx's historical materialism, which emphasizes the role of economic conditions in shaping human societies (Marx and Engels 52). Marxist critics like Georg Lukács further developed this idea, arguing that literature should reflect "the totality of social relations" and expose the ideological forces that sustain inequality (Lukács 36). Social realism, therefore, became a tool for writers, artists, and dramatists to challenge oppressive systems, advocate for social justice, and depict the lived experiences of the working class.

Social realism became a dominant force in literature, particularly in the 20th century, as writers sought to expose the inequalities perpetuated by industrialization, colonialism, and capitalism. It was widely adopted in American, European, and African literature, each adapting it to their respective historical and socio-political contexts.

In African literature, social realism became a powerful tool for postcolonial writers seeking to critique the failures of independence-era governments, corruption, and social injustice. Nigerian writers such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o employed social realism to examine the socio-political struggles of their nations.

Thiong'o, in particular, combined social realism with Marxist ideology in novels such as *Petals of Blood* (1977), which critiques neocolonial exploitation (Ngũgĩ 95).

Frank Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* exemplify the principles of social realism by presenting narratives that reflect the socio-political realities of Nigeria. Both plays focus on corruption, moral decay, and class struggle, using characters and settings that mirror real-life experiences.

Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* critiques systemic corruption in Nigeria through the character of Chief Haladu Ade-Amaka, a powerful government official who manipulates the judicial system for personal gain. The tragic downfall of Aloho, an innocent young woman caught in the web of corruption, serves as a stark reminder of how institutional failure affects ordinary citizens (Ogbecbe 45).

The play aligns with social realism's focus on depicting societal maladies by using realistic dialogue, setting, and character development. The exposure of Chief Ade-Amaka's crimes and his eventual punishment suggest a moral resolution, but the play also highlights the entrenched nature of corruption in Nigerian society.

Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* presents a decaying society where economic disparity, political manipulation, and moral hypocrisy dominate. The rundown hotel serves as a microcosm of Nigeria, where corrupt politicians exploit the poor, and individuals must navigate a world that forces them into moral compromises (Osofisan 78).

The play's use of satire and irony reinforces social realism's goal of exposing contradictions within society. The economic struggles of lower-class characters contrast sharply with the excesses of the political elite, reflecting the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Osofisan's portrayal of societal hypocrisy aligns with Brechtian techniques, encouraging audiences to critically engage with the issues presented rather than merely sympathize with the characters.

Social realism remains a critical framework for analyzing literature that seeks to expose societal injustices. As seen in *Harvest of Corruption* and *Midnight Hotel*, the theory provides a lens through which corruption, class struggle, and moral decay can be examined. The tradition of social realism in African literature continues to shape contemporary works, demonstrating the enduring power of literature as a tool for social critique and transformation.

1.5 Review of Related Scholarships

Recent scholarship on Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* has provided valuable insights into the theatrical and stylistic elements of these plays. However, there remains a noticeable gap in the literature concerning the application of social realism in these works.

Frank Ogodo Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption*

Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* has been analyzed for its portrayal of political corruption and its impact on society. For instance, a study by Fawunmi (2022) examines the use of theatricals in the play, highlighting their significance in reshaping our understanding of social exchanges. This analysis underscores how Ogbeche employs linguistic structures to depict the moral decay and social vices prevalent in society. He notes that "the play vividly captures various forms of decay in the country" (Fawunmi 208).

Similarly, Dadjoi (2022) applies speech act theory to analyze the play, identifying and interpreting various speech acts to decode meanings. This approach reveals how characters' dialogues and actions contribute to the violation of legal and moral norms, offering insights into the communicative strategies employed to perpetuate corruption (Dadjoim 1 to 15.)

Additionally, a study by Nwankwo (2020) examines the political corruption and underdevelopment depicted in the play, highlighting how Ogbeche portrays the madness of corruption and its impact on African leaders. This analysis emphasizes the consequences of corruption and underdevelopment in African societies.

Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*

Regarding Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, scholars have examined its thematic concerns and literary devices. Yirenkyi (2020) explores Osofisan's commitment to addressing social issues through his plays, with a focus on *Midnight Hotel*. This analysis underscores the play's relevance in reflecting societal concerns, particularly in the context of African societies.

Additionally, Mensah (2020) discusses the centrality of metaphors in Osofisan's plays, including *Midnight Hotel*, highlighting how these literary devices project themes of oppression, dehumanization, social injustice, and poverty. This study emphasizes the symbolic elements that convey the play's critical stance on societal issues.

1.6 Thesis Statement

This research investigates how *Harvest of Corruption* by Frank Ogodo Ogbeche and *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan employ social realism to expose societal maladies such as political corruption, moral decay, injustice, and social inequality. By analyzing how these plays depict the struggles of the people against corrupt systems, this research exposes the role of literature in reflecting and challenging societal issues.

CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL CORRUPTION

Political corruption is a central theme in *Harvest of Corruption* by Frank Ogbecbe and *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan. Both plays use social realism to critique how corruption manifests in government institutions, law enforcement, and everyday life. The narratives expose how power is abused, justice is compromised, and the marginalized suffer the consequences. By examining key characters, dialogues, and symbolic elements in both plays, this chapter explores how political corruption is represented and its broader implications on Nigerian society.

Political Corruption in *Harvest of Corruption*

Frank Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* presents a grim portrayal of systemic corruption in Nigerian politics. Chief Haladu-Amaka, a high-ranking government official, epitomizes the greed and impunity of the ruling elite. His character demonstrates how politicians manipulate the system for personal enrichment, exploiting those below them. His arrogance is evident in his perception of the law: "I have the money, the influence, and the power. Who dares challenge me? The law? The law is for fools who cannot afford to twist it to their benefit" (Ogbecbe 45) . This statement underscores the entrenched belief among corrupt politicians that wealth and status place them above

accountability. The play critiques how the ruling elite operate with impunity, disregarding legal and ethical standards.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Yakubu represents law enforcement's complicity in corruption. Rather than ensuring justice, he serves as a tool for shielding corrupt officials. His perspective on law enforcement is cynical, reinforcing the theme of systemic corruption: "The law is for those who cannot afford to bend it. For those who can, the law is nothing but a game" (Ogbeche 83) . This statement reveals how legal institutions fail to protect ordinary citizens, as justice is often bought by those with wealth and connections. It also reflects the despair of a society where law enforcement is no longer a neutral entity but a willing participant in corruption.

Aloho, a desperate young job seeker, becomes an unintentional victim of this corrupt system. Her story highlights how systemic corruption affects individuals, particularly the vulnerable. She expresses her anguish after being implicated in illegal activities: "I never thought that accepting a job could lead me into this mess. I only wanted to make a living. Now, my life is ruined" (Ogbeche 67) . Her downfall emphasizes how corruption is not only a top-down issue but also a mechanism that preys on those seeking legitimate opportunities. Aloho's story reflects the broader consequences of corruption, where those at the bottom suffer the most while the real perpetrators remain untouched.

In contrast, Ogeyi embodies integrity and resistance against corruption. She refuses to be silenced, taking action against Chief Haladu-Amaka despite the risks involved. Her words serve as a call for justice: "We must not be silent in the face of injustice. If we allow these men to rule unchecked, we are just as guilty" (Ogbeche 89) . Her character serves as a beacon of hope, suggesting that moral individuals can still resist corruption, even in a deeply flawed system.

Political Corruption in *Midnight Hotel*

Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* employs satire to critique the political and moral failures of Nigerian society. The play's setting, a deteriorating hotel, serves as a metaphor for the nation—once prosperous but now in decay due to corruption and mismanagement. The characters represent different facets of political corruption and the various ways individuals navigate a corrupt system.

Chief Jimoh, a self-serving head waiter, personifies opportunism. He justifies his participation in corruption with a fatalistic worldview: "What else can a man do? If you do not play along, you starve. If you resist, you are crushed. So, tell me, who wants to be a martyr?" (Osofisan 47) . This line encapsulates the widespread resignation toward corruption in Nigerian society. Jimoh, like many lower-class citizens, recognizes the injustice of the system but chooses survival over integrity.

Awero, a corrupt parliamentarian, exemplifies how those in power manipulate political office for personal gain. Her perspective on governance is devoid of moral responsibility: "Politics is not about service, my dear. It's about securing your future. The people will always grumble, but they will also always obey" (Osofisan 56) . This cynical outlook reflects the disconnect between Nigerian politicians and the citizens they claim to serve. It also critiques how political power is often used as a means of personal enrichment rather than public service.

Osofisan employs powerful symbolism throughout *Midnight Hotel* to illustrate the growth of corruption. The expansion of the hotel despite its deteriorating state serves as a metaphor for how corruption continues to grow unchecked: "They keep building more rooms, yet the foundation is falling apart. Doesn't that remind you of something?" (Osofisan 73) . This metaphor highlights the contradiction between the country's superficial development and the underlying decay of its institutions.

Beyond institutional failure, both plays emphasize how corruption victimizes ordinary citizens, especially the marginalized. In *Harvest of Corruption*, Aloho is a tragic example of how innocent individuals become collateral damage in a corrupt system. Her desperate attempt to secure employment leads to her wrongful imprisonment and eventual death. Her lamentation about her fate reveals the vulnerability of the poor in a society dominated by corrupt elites: "I never thought that accepting a job could lead me into this mess. I only wanted to make a living. Now, my life is ruined" (Ogbeche 67).

Similarly, *Midnight Hotel* portrays the struggles of low-income individuals who, despite being victims of corruption, become complicit in it for survival. Chief Jimoh, a hotel worker, embodies this dilemma as he prioritizes his own survival over morality. His cynical view of integrity highlights the desperation of the underprivileged: "What else can a man do? If you do not play along, you starve. If you resist, you are crushed. So, tell me, who wants to be a martyr?" (Osofisan 47). His resignation to the corrupt system reflects the broader reality of how the oppressed often become enablers of the very structures that exploit them.

The justification of corruption by those in power is another striking similarity between the two plays. Chief Haladu-Amaka in *Harvest of Corruption* and Awero in *Midnight Hotel* both perceive corruption as an unavoidable part of politics and governance. Chief Haladu-Amaka views his wealth and status as a shield against accountability, boasting about his immunity from justice: "I have the money, the influence, and the power. Who dares challenge me?" (Ogbeche 45).

Similarly, Awero, a corrupt parliamentarian, openly admits that politics is not about public service but personal security. Her dismissive attitude towards the expectations of the people she represents underscores the moral bankruptcy of political leadership: "Politics is not about service, my dear. It's about securing your future. The people will always grumble, but they will also always obey" (Osofisan 56). Both

characters reflect a political culture in which leaders see public office as an opportunity for self-enrichment rather than a position of responsibility.

Ultimately, *Harvest of Corruption* and *Midnight Hotel* illustrate that corruption is not just an individual vice but a deeply rooted systemic issue. While Ogbecbe presents corruption as a force that leads to tragic consequences, Osofisan uses humor and satire to expose its absurdity and resilience. Despite their different approaches, both plays call for reflection on the role of leadership, law enforcement, and civic responsibility in addressing corruption.

CHAPTER THREE

SEXUAL IMMORALITIES

In the realm of African literature, the exploration of societal issues has always been a prominent theme, often portrayed through the lens of realism. Frank Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* are two influential works that delve into the intricate web of sexual immorality within the African context. Through the perspective of social realism theory, these playwrights shed light on the harsh realities of corruption, exploitation, and moral decay that afflict modern African societies.

Both Ogbecbe and Osofisan utilize vivid storytelling techniques and captivating characters to depict the widespread influence of sexual immorality on individuals and communities. Against a backdrop of political corruption and societal decline, their works serve as powerful condemnations of the moral crisis plaguing African nations. By examining the complex connections between power, exploitation, and sexual immorality, these playwrights offer profound insights into the intricacies of human nature and the societal forces at play.

This analysis aims to examine the portrayal of sexual immorality in *Harvest of Corruption* and *Midnight Hotel* through the lens of social realism theory. By exploring the socio-economic and political contexts depicted in these works, we aim to uncover the underlying causes and consequences of sexual exploitation and moral decay within African societies.

In this comparative analysis, we will explore how these playwrights utilize realism to uncover the systemic injustices and moral complexities present in their respective stories. Our aim is to shed light on the significant socio-cultural implications of sexual immorality as portrayed in Ogbeche's *Harvest of Corruption* and Osfisan's *Midnight Hotel*. Additionally, we seek to emphasize the continued relevance of social realism in addressing contemporary societal issues.

Frank Ogbeche's play, *Harvest of Corruption*, serves as a powerful portrayal of sexual immorality, serving as a cautionary tale about the increasing levels of indecency and societal decay within Nigeria. Throughout the text, various instances of sexual immorality are skillfully introduced and deeply ingrained, reflecting the widespread presence of this societal problem.

A conversation that bothers on sexual immorality occurs between Madam Hoha, Chief Ade-Amaka and Ochuole who doubles as the Chief Administrative Officer and side mistress for the Honourable Minister Ade-Amaka:

Madam Hoha: Now you're talking Chief. You can join your girl. She is dying to have you already. (Raises her voice). Ochuole take things easy ooo! I beg you. There he is. He bows after dropping the items and opening the drinks, he leaves). (p. 15)

The social realism theory is evident in the conversation between Madam Hoha, Chief Ade-Amaka, and Ochuole, as it exposes the presence of sexual immorality in a corrupt and exploitative society.

Madam Hoha's suggestion for Chief Ade-Amaka to get involved with Ochuole implies that sexual exploitation and immorality are seen as normal in this particular society. Ochuole, who holds the dual role of Chief Administrative Officer and mistress to the Minister, is objectified and manipulated, highlighting the power imbalances and gender dynamics at play.

Chief Ade-Amaka's use of affectionate terms like "baby" and his physical advances towards Ochuole reveal his predatory behavior and the pervasive influence of corruption on personal relationships. Despite Ochuole's discomfort and rejection of Chief's advances, he persists in asserting his dominance and control over her, demonstrating the exploitation and coercion that exist in such relationships.

Also, when Aloho who ignorantly and innocently serves as a Protocol Officer to Chief Ade-Amaka and Ogenyi are having a conversation after Aloho has being discharged and acquitted of drug related allegations through the connection of Chief Ade-Amaka who's also the main force behind the drug issues as he operates a Drug cartel, another incident of sexual immorality gets exposed:

Ogeyi: Calm down, Aloho, the world has not ended; you can still pick up the pieces. You can! Please pull yourself together and stop acting like a baby.

In this dialogue between Aloho and Ogeyi in the play *Harvest of Corruption*, we witness the exploration of sexual immorality within the context of corruption and exploitation, in line with the theory of social realism.

Aloho's admission of being seduced into engaging in affairs with Chief Ade-Amaka, her superior and the mastermind behind the drug problems, reveals the widespread influence of sexual exploitation and manipulation in the society depicted. Chief Ade-Amaka takes advantage of Aloho's vulnerability as a young woman seeking employment, using his power and authority to satisfy his own desires, thus perpetuating a culture of sexual immorality and exploitation.

The interaction between Aloho and Ogeyi beautifully illustrates the intricate dynamics of power, exploitation, and moral decline in a community. By employing the theory of social realism, this conversation presents a thought-provoking analysis of the societal problems and ethical uncertainties prevalent in modern African societies. It highlights the ongoing battle for honesty and fairness in the midst of widespread corruption and exploitation.

Further, the conversation between Aloho and the Doctor underpins some properties of sexual immorality as it's pegged on terminating Aloho's pregnancy:

Aloho: Thank you Doctor. (Reassured). My name is Aloho and I have a problem. Right now I have a feeling that I am pregnant and I do not want to keep the baby. In fact, Doctor, I am not ready for a family life yet. Please, I want a D and C, can you help me?

In the dialogue between Aloho and Doctor Chukwuma, the examination of sexual misconduct within the context of abortion is apparent, aligning with social realism theory.

Aloho's acknowledgment that she suspects pregnancy and her intent to terminate it highlights societal pressures and ethical dilemmas encountered by women facing unplanned pregnancy. Aloho's resistance to becoming a mother emphasizes the intricacies of personal choice and reproductive rights in the portrayed society.

Doctor Chukwuma's initial reluctance to perform the abortion mirrors the moral and legal constraints on medical practitioners regarding abortion services. His acknowledgment of the illegality of such actions underscores the societal stigma and legal ramifications associated with abortion, particularly in contexts where it is highly restricted or prohibited.

However, Doctor Chukwuma's eventual willingness to assist Aloho, albeit motivated by financial gain, highlights the pervasive influence of corruption and moral compromise within the medical profession. His readiness to take a risk and perform the procedure in exchange for monetary compensation underscores the systemic injustices and moral ambiguities inherent in contemporary African societies.

Through the perspective of social realism theory, the conversation between Aloho and Doctor Chukwuma serves as a poignant portrayal of the complex intersections of power, exploitation, and moral decay within the context of sexual misconduct and reproductive rights. It offers a critical examination of the societal pressures and moral complexities faced by individuals navigating unwanted pregnancy and abortion, shedding light on the ongoing struggle for bodily autonomy and reproductive justice amidst systemic injustice and corruption.

After clinically exploring how sexual immoralities manifest in Frank Ogbecbe's "Harvest of Corruption," the transition will be made to examining sexual immorality in Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*.

In Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, the exploration of sexual misconduct serves as a central theme within the broader context of societal decay and corruption. Set within a hotel that metaphorically represents Nigeria itself, the play delves into the intricate interplay of power, exploitation, and moral degradation that characterize Nigerian society renewal.

The moral degradation in our society is undeniable due to the myriad of negative actions and deeds by a majority of its people. In Osofisan's play *Midnight Hotel*, the conversation between Jimoh and his assistant, Bicycle, regarding the naked woman Bicycle encountered in one of the hotel rooms exemplifies this moral degradation. Bicycle, apparently inexperienced with women, is unfazed by her nudity. He is surprised

by the woman's nonchalance, suggesting she may be a prostitute. He expresses his dismay to his boss, hoping he would understand his confusion.

Bicycle: Jimoh, er, sorry Chief Jimoh, if you see de ting wey I take my eyes see jus' now! If you see am!

Jimoh: What did you see?

Bicycle: A woman, chief Jimoh. A woman!

(pp 3-4).

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if you see de ting wey I take my eyes
see jus' now! If you see am!

Jimoh: What did you see?

Bicycle: A woman, chief Jimoh. A woman!
she was nakedly naked

The social realism theory is used to analyse the portrayal of sexual immorality and societal decline in the discourse between Jimoh and Bicycle.

Bicycle's astonishment and dismay upon discovering a nude woman in one of the hotel rooms underscores the ethical decay prevalent in the society portrayed in the play. Jimoh is unaffected by Bicycle's outrage, dismissing the event as typical of Lagos. Jimoh's answer illustrates how, in the play's social milieu, immorality and sexual exploitation have become commonplace.

The statement made by Jimoh that "in Lagos, sex is business" highlights how sexuality is commodified and how transactional relationships are ingrained in the society that is portrayed. Women are seen like commodities to be bought and sold, and their

sexuality and nudity are only seen from the perspectives of exploitation and financial benefit.

The dialogue between Jimoh and Bicycle is a striking illustration of the moral deterioration and social decay that define Nigerian society when viewed through the prism of social realism theory. Through her focus on the marketing of women's bodies and the normalisation of sexual immorality, Osofisan provides a critical analysis of the ethical ambiguities and structural inequalities that exist in modern African communities. Furthermore, it is morally inappropriate for Awero and Pastor Suuru to have an unholy love relationship since Pastor Suuru, a self-proclaimed man of God, should be held accountable for his extramarital encounters with his friend's wife. It is crucial to remember that during their numerous conversations at the hotel, Pastor Suuru fidgeted, but Awero kept encouraging him to do the "thing."

: Relax, pastor, this place is quite safe (12-13)

As the play's events unfold, Pastor Suuru is revealed to be a religious quack, eerily evoking Soyinka's Brother Jero, who exhibited duplicity and mischievous behaviour throughout the play *The Trial of Brother Jero*. Probes are needed throughout Alatisé and Suuru's talk. When Alatisé questioned Suuru about his mission at the hotel, he was unable to provide an acceptable answer, stating only that he was;

Alatise: (Laughing suddenly) I don't wish to be too curious, pastor,... can one ask what kind of business you were going about at this hour ---- in your singlet?

Suuru: Oh yes! Funny isn't it? Ha haha! Headmaster this is Lagos you know! We holy men in the city, the temptation we run through in the course of following the Lord's sheep (p. 41).

The interplay between Awero and Pastor Suuru illustrates the examination of sexual immorality, a key theme in the play scrutinized through the lens of social realism.

The dialogue between the two characters exposes the contrast between Pastor Suuru's religious vocation and his illicit affair with Awero, highlighting the complexities of morality within Nigerian society. Awero's exploitation of Pastor Suuru using a contractual promise highlights the transactional nature of their connection, reflecting the corruption and exploitation permeating the society.

Osofisan's exploration of sexual immorality through Awero and Pastor Suuru's affair critiques the societal decay afflicting contemporary African communities. The play exposes the corruption, exploitation, and hypocrisy underpinning their relationship, serving as a reflection of the ethical crisis within Nigerian society.

Both *Harvest of Corruption* by Frank Ogbecbe and *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan explore the pervasive issue of sexual immorality within Nigerian society, employing distinct narrative frameworks. While both plays utilize social realism to

portray prevalent social problems, their approaches and focus on sexual misconduct vary notably.

In *Harvest of Corruption*, Aloho's storyline serves as a central focus, exposing the corrupt bargains and exploitation orchestrations within bureaucratic hierarchies. Aloho's entanglement with Chief Ade-Amaka, initially a transactional exchange, descends into a forced sexual affair, highlighting the insidious impact of power imbalances on moral conduct and the decay of governance. The play emphasizes how corruption corrupts personal ethics, driving individuals like Aloho to compromise their integrity for survival and advancement.

Despite their divergent approaches, both plays employ sexual immorality as a lens to critique broader social issues like corruption, exploitation, and hypocrisy. Utilizing social realism, they craft vivid and authentic portrayals of Nigerian society, illuminating the intricate relationship between individual morality and institutional corruption. Both works highlight the repercussions of sexual misconduct on individuals and the community, showcasing its role in perpetuating cycles of exploitation and suffering.

However, the plays differ in their narrative structures and settings. *Harvest of Corruption* unfolds primarily within government offices and legal institutions, exposing the machinations of corrupt officials and their victims. Conversely, *Midnight Hotel* unfolds in a seedy hotel, capturing a broader perspective of Nigerian society. The hotel serves as a metaphor for moral decay permeating various societal aspects, providing a

complex tapestry of characters and narratives that expose the many facets of sexual immorality.

In sum, both *Harvest of Corruption* and *Midnight Hotel* offer penetrating critiques of sexual immorality in Nigerian society, employing social realism to create powerful and thought-provoking portrayals of moral decline and institutional corruption. While their approaches and settings may differ, both plays emphasize the urgent need for societal transformation and ethical renewal.

CHAPTER FOUR

RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY

Throughout history and literature, religious hypocrisy has been a widespread phenomenon. It occurs when individuals or institutions within religious contexts display behavior that contradicts the moral principles they claim to uphold. This betrayal of trust undermines the integrity and authenticity of faith-based systems by exposing human frailty and corrupting influences. Religious hypocrisy thrives in environments where moral relativism collides with institutional authority, breeding cynicism among followers. A deeper examination can be found through Ogburn's *Harvest of Corruption* and Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, which depict how this form of hypocritical behaviour permeates clergy members as well as various religious establishments in Africa society. An exploration into these works seeks to illuminate complexities surrounding faith, morality & corruption while uncovering universal truths about their impact on not only individuals but communities alike - all achieved via literature acting effectively appropriation humanities mirror for reflecting intricate aspects concerning our condition today!

Ogburn's *Harvest of Corruption* presents various occurrences of religious hypocrisy, particularly through the character Aloho. Through a thorough examination and analysis of selected characters in the literary piece, readers can discern how this topic plays an important role within Nigerian society. Ogeyi's dialogue with Aloho highlights a clear instance where deeply-rooted religious hypocrisy becomes increasingly apparent.

Aloho:Ogeyi (Stops eating briefly). I believe she has changed. Anyway, (resumes eating) she asked me to come to her ministry tomorrow morning. She assured me that her Oga will employ me. Ogeyi, I am going right now. I want to get a job and I will try to be careful about it. I know how you feel, trust me. I

.(Pp. 8-10)

The conversation between Aloho and Ogeyi presents a poignant portrayal of religious hypocrisy in the realm of social realism. Despite her perceived uprightness and commitment to religious values, Aloho becomes increasingly frustrated by her inability to find work - leading to feelings of disillusionment and desperation. She questions whether living an upright life has been worth it when it only seems to result in unemployment and societal judgment.

Aloho's claim to have consistently pursued a righteous life underscores her conviction that material fortune aligns with virtue. Nonetheless, her dissatisfaction with the absence of concrete results reveals an inner struggle between her religious beliefs and the harsh socio-economic conditions she faces. Although Aloho professes moral certainty, finding work becomes more important than adhering to those principles - even if it means compromising them in some way.

On the other hand, Ogeyi advocates for religious tradition and encourages Aloho to have faith in God's plan while waiting patiently. She cautions her against giving in to worldly pleasures and stresses the significance of adhering to God's wishes.

Unfortunately, despite Ogeyi's counsel being well-intentioned, it does not align with Aloho's current predicaments causing frustration and disappointment.

The conversation highlights the double standard embedded in religious discourse, as people struggle to balance their spiritual goals with material wants. Aloho's restlessness echoes a wider sense of disappointment in society, which sees little progress towards tangible achievements despite devout ambitions amidst economic difficulties. Although professing devotion, both figures prioritize practical considerations and a pressing need for improved financial situations above all else.

The exchange between Aloho and Ogeyi provides a thought-

The decision made by Aloho to terminate her pregnancy emphasizes the extent of her ethical compromise and internal conflict. Even though she admits that what she did is immoral, Aloho still feels distant from both her beliefs and family as a result, struggling with feelings of humiliation and hopelessness. By stating that she has "surpassed comprehension of Christian theology," it reveals how widespread religious deceit can impact one's personal convictions and sense-making abilities in leading an upright life.'

The playwright delves into the detrimental outcomes of religious hypocrisy by means of Aloho's narrative. This shows how it can cause individuals to stray from their path and deteriorate both their moral compass as well as sense of identity. Through Aloho's tragic journey towards ethical uncertainty and hopelessness, a warning is given about the disintegrating impact that hypocritical behavior has on one's spiritual welfare along with personal uprightness.

The conversation effectively portrays the widespread impact of hypocritical religious beliefs in society. It serves as a solemn cue to the intricate relationships between faith, ethics, and human imperfection; it encourages individuals to confront the effects of ethical compromise and strive for genuineness on their spiritual path.

In Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, the intricate theme of religious hypocrisy takes center stage, offering a perceptive exploration of faith and ethics in Nigerian society. Against a backdrop of decayed lodgings, the play introduces an array of characters grappling with their own moral dilemmas, allowing for introspection into subtle nuance surrounding conflicting beliefs. Through sharp-edged wit and discerning commentary on both institutionalizations and individual lead life within religion invite readers to examine conventional conceptions regarding righteousness as well as challenge common understandings about piety-nuanced aspects often left unexplored otherwise are brought forth. Thus by delving deep inside *Midnight Hotel*, we come face-to-face with divergent realities pertaining to matter-of-fact intricacies around religious hypocrites' nature & consequential outcomes it bears upon collectively wider polity concerned thereof likely consequences bearing down leeway overtime avoidance eventually compounding societal complexity even further over time if not managed duly at Now itself!

The love affair between Awero and Pastor Suuru is morally questionable as it uncovers the fact that a man of God, Pastor Suuru, engages in extramarital affairs with his friend's wife. It raises concerns about their relationship dynamics. Furthermore, during their frequent hotel conversations, despite being encouraged by Awero to act upon

his desires; Pastor Suuru displayed discomfort indicating spiritual weakness contradicting his beliefs as an advocate for spiritual strength which epitomizes religious deception at its peak.

Pastor Suuru's feeble attempt to absolve himself by citing the behavior of other religious leaders who also engage in profiteering reveals his moral bankruptcy. He compounds this by acknowledging that even the Bishop is involved, exposing how widespread hypocrisy has become in religion. His defense equates religion with personal gain and validates his own actions through those of others, highlighting a bleak truth where spiritual guides have abandoned their role as beacons of rectitude for one marked by deceit and self-interest infiltrating religious institutions - an unfortunate reality indeed.

Furthermore, Suuru's lack of ability to offer a convincing explanation regarding his sole presence at the hotel in just a vest accentuates his deceitfulness and ethical uncertainty. His casual retort towards Alatis depicts inadequacy for responsibility and honesty- signs of individuals who leverage religious influence for their own benefit. The playwright uses Suuru as a medium to criticize fraudulent religion practitioners while revealing how people trade off spiritual principles when seeking worldly pleasures.

The exchange between Awero and Pastor Suuru provides a scathing condemnation of religious hypocrisy, laying bare the ethical compromises and moral inconsistencies that plague Nigerian culture. This illuminates how deceitful practices within religion have destructive consequences on both individuals' values and societal

norms, urging viewers to acknowledge the hidden hypocrisies veiled by outward shows of piety.

The theme of religious hypocrisy is a prevalent motif in both Frank Ogbече's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*, highlighting the societal degeneration and moral decay within Nigerian culture. Despite their shared exploration, each play takes on this topic differently, showcasing their individual playwrights' artistic perspectives and distinct viewpoints.

The play *Harvest of Corruption* showcases religious hypocrisy through the character of Chief Haladu Ade-Amaka, who presents himself as a devout Christian but indulges in corrupt and immoral practices behind closed doors. His use of religious symbols to offer bribes or justify his actions highlights how political leaders often feign piety while engaging in unethical behavior. Ayo's willingness to succumb to bribery despite being a professedly faithful clerical officer also underscores this theme. The highly hypocritical nature of Aloho further emphasizes the pervasive presence of religious duplicity throughout the storyline. Ultimately, "Harvest of Corruption" delivers an incisive critique that lays bare the intertwining web between religion and corruption while highlighting its toxic influence within Nigerian politics scenes seeking true moral guidance for their people.

Conversely, *Midnight Hotel* employs satire to scrutinize religious hypocrisy in Nigerian society. The play uses a rundown hotel as a microcosm of the societal issues present. Characters like Pastor Suuru and Awero reveal the moral contradictions and

ethical compromises entrenched within religious institutions. Pastor Suuru's affair with married woman Awero discredits him as he doesn't take his duties seriously- revealing hypocrisies present among clergy members while highlighting their deteriorating morals too. Likewise, Awero manipulates her actions using religion for justification thus exposing political elites' hypocrisy at large through this rhetoric use. Unlike “Harvest of Corruption,” which solely focuses on politics-corruption; *Midnight Hotel* critiques broader societal values including how deep-rooted is complicity among pastors when it comes to promoting corrupt activities that have caused so much rot in morality across different geographical locations from whence people come or live out there life experiences lives daily basis - be you Christian Muslim atheist etc...

Despite variances in their plots, both plays communicate a common idea that Nigeria is entrenched with religious hypocrisy which infiltrates different aspects of people's lives such as politics and personal relationships. By showcasing the derisive and moral deficiency behavior of characters, Ogbeche and Osofisan urge viewers to face the paradoxes involved in practicing religion while seeking authenticity and soundness on their spiritual voyage.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, examining Frank Ogbecbe's *Harvest of Corruption* and Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel* using the Social Realism theory exposes the complex fabric of political corruption, sexual misconduct, and religious hypocrisy woven into Nigerian culture. By adhering to Social Realism principles that aim at portraying harsh realities with emphasis on social problems and systemic injustices these plays offer a heartrending representation of many Nigerians' experiences.

By closely scrutinizing character interactions, plot frameworks and thematic recurring symbols, it is apparent that both playwrights skillfully handle the intricacies of moral decay and societal discontent. Their stories offer a realistic depiction of people struggling with ethical dilemmas presented by dishonest establishments. Whether through morally impaired government officials in *Harvest of Corruption* or ethically challenged religious leaders in *Midnight Hotel*, these plays reveal how corruption, immorality and hypocrisy infiltrate all aspects of life in sinister ways.

Moreover, the examination demonstrates how these themes intersect with one another and further strengthen their influence. By merging political corruption, sexual exploitation, and religious hypocrisy within the plays' narratives, they emphasize that injustice is a systemic problem perpetuated by several societal players. These works provide an incisive commentary on prevailing norms challenging audiences to face

uncomfortable realities of power dynamics intrinsic in our society while confronting issues such as privilege and moral responsibility head-on.

Harvest of Corruption and *Midnight Hotel*, despite their bleak depiction of societal issues, showcases hope and redemption. The plays introduce characters who exhibit resilience, moral uprightness, and an unwavering sense of justice - alluding to the potential for individual empowerment through collectivism against corruption's pervasive nature. These individuals serve as symbols in a world that has been overcome by darkness; they are inspirers who provoke thought about alternate futures leading towards social change.

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