A Portray Of Political Satire In Wole Soyinka's King Baabu

There are many ways in which autocratic government suppress and oppress any opposition, but the regimes don't usually last long as seen in Wole Soyinka's King Baabu. The regime of Abacha which Wole Soyinka satirizes in the play is an instance. He is a character that misuse power and abuse power over anything in his country. Soyinka always put Achaba on his toes with different literary works like Beatification of the Area boy, which is a reflection of Abacha's tyrannical nature. He added to his weapons against Abacha with King Baabu, also a satire on politics. The protagonist of the play, General Basha Bash of Guatu gets into power by coup and gives himself the title King Baabu. The short rule of military in Nigeria in comparison to other African countries where military government ruled for long, can be related to writers such as Wole Soyinka.

Wole Soyinka's King Baabu affirms political realities of African continent to satirize the decayed political system. Wole Soyinka has always showed his stance in political situation of his society and has written a lot of work to satirize and show the realities of politics in Africa. One of his essays include " Open sore of A Continent" where he narrates how Nigeria prevent military government after independence from colonial government.

Soyinka's craft is so distinct to the extent that he blends element of "Theatre of the Absurd" in the play to portray the level of political decadence. He apply element of "Theatre of the Absurd" like confusing dialogue to portray the level of intellectual backwardness in political leaders as seen in the character of King Baabu who is an eponymous of the play. By extension, this can be traced to the context of Nigeria history to General Sani Abacha. In the play King Baabu can be said to stand for General Sani Abacha and Potipoo reflects Ernest Shonekan. Shonekan was appointed after the brutal rule of Babangida as milititary leader, Shonekan was to be the civilian government, a man of the people but he only lasted for three months in power as the coup led by General Sani Abacha overthrew him. This instance is what we have in Wole Soyinka's King Baabu as portrayed by Baasha against Potipoo.

Wole Soyinka reflects core element of political decadence of our society through the deployment of the theme of conspiracy in King Baabu. Soyinka's satirist stance can be seen in the engagement of Potipoo with the civilians. Potipoo thinks he can bring new era but what we have is reverse order. Baasha's wife confirms the theme of conspiracy in the play by inciting her husband against Potipoo's government.

The social concern of Soyinka and concern of drama in political discourse give us instance of the framework that will benefit the whole country of Guatu in scene II of the play. There is an analysis of how natural resources should be managed for the betterment of the country, the discourse cuts across issue of agriculture and economy which are the core problem of a typical African state. In the play we have instance of suggestion of using different land for agriculture in order to enhance economy. By extension, this is a message that Soyinka encode for Africa rulers on how to use and get maximum result from natural resources that seem useless.

Soyinka furthers his satire journey in King Baabu by giving Baabu a miserable, useless and less impact ending. In the play, when the people finally revolt, nobody stands with Baabu on the

battlefield, he falls in mud in his quest to run for his life. The fall of Baabu is symbolic in the journey of Soyinka’s satire in the play. In comparison, it is a means of prophesying what will end any bad political leader of our time, it is a satire against the political leader who always misuse power. Moreover, the reaction of the civilians in the play is a means of sensitizing the public on how to subdue the dominance of bad governance. The people of Guatu revolt and they overthrow Baasha’s government.