

“En Même Temps”: Emmanuel Macron Visits Musician Activist Fela Kuti’s Shrine in Nigeria

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*So French **President Emmanuel Macron** made good on his promise to visit ‘The New Afrika Shrine’ in Lagos.*

The venue was built as a homage to the late Nigerian musician-activist [Fela Kuti](#), who was a vehement critic of the military and civilian administrations that governed Nigeria during his lifetime.

I wonder how **President Muhammadu Buhari** took to Macron’s initial announcement of the visit. You see, Buhari was a member of the military government which on February 18th 1977 attacked and burned to the ground, the original ‘Shrine’. Fela’s ‘Shrine’ was considered by Nigeria’s rulers to have been a den of political subversion and deviant behaviour. And Buhari was of course the person who effectively set Fela up to be jailed for a currency violation offence during his later tenure as military dictator.

Like **Barack Obama**, who once mildly admonished an NBA basketball star for deigning to introduce him to Fela’s music by promising to gift him a Fela album (Obama: “You think I don’t know who Fela Kuti is?”), Macron is clearly one of these establishment-sponsored, high-achieving politicians who are nonetheless familiar with the pulsating beat and firebrand lyrics of fundamentally anti-establishment music.

Macron’s contradictions are legion. For instance, while he often speaks of his determination to restore French grandeur, he also calls for deeper European integration, a policy which necessarily entails French acceptance of German domination. Also, his initial highly publicised flattery of **Donald Trump** was followed by a severe rebuke of Trump’s policies in a speech that he gave before the American Congress.

His inconsistencies are underlined by his often used phrase: “en meme temps”, which means “at the same time”. So maybe the conversation with Buhari, or rather, his monologue to Buhari went something like this:

Monsieur President, I am totally against decadent marijuana-smoking, hyper-sexual persons like Fela, who wish to overthrow the existing social and economic order. At the same time, I will be going to pay homage to that principled and rebellious musician who you jailed in 1984 – the same chap who referred to you and other Nigerian dictators as “animals in human skin”.

L’homme est une contradiction ambulante ...

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This article was originally published on [Adeyinka Makinde's blog](#).

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