

SET BOOKS STUDY GUIDE NOTES

BETRAYAL IN THE CITY

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BETRAYAL IN THE CITY BY FRANCIS IMBUGA

THE AUTHOR

Francis David Imbuga (1947- November, 2013) was one of the greatest literary giants. For three decades, he taught at Kenyatta University where he was the Director of quality Assurance, Chairman of the Department of Literature and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

Francis Imbuga studied at Alliance High School in the 1960's where he wrote and acted a play which won the National Beat Actor's Award.

Professor Imbuga published several plays including Betrayal in the City 1976, The Successor 1979, Man of Kafira 1984, Aminata 1988, and The Return of Mgofu 2011. He has also authored two novels, Shrine of Tears, 1993 and Miracle of Remera 2005.

In his works he addresses the problems of independent and post colonial African states, family relations, tradition, religion, change among other issues affecting our society today. Imbuga passed on in the year 2013.

THE TITLE

The title, *Betrayal in the City*, fits the events of the play as this is what the people of Kafira have to live with daily.

Betrayal in the City reflects the political, cultural and personal betrayal witnessed in the fictitious state of Kafira. Boss the head of state works alongside other strong cronies and

sycophants like Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito, and Nicodemo to let down their citizens through ;abuse of power, negligence of duty, senseless killings, and inefficiency to create a nation of hopelessness, corruption and disregard to the local citizens hence betrayal in the nation of Kafira.

The government is run by scandalous and corrupt leaders and under whose leadership the hopes of independence for the people of Kafira are dashed.

Betrayal in the City is characterized by all sorts of ills in society, namely: murder, misrule, tribalism, Nepotism, corruption, highhandedness, inefficiency, incompetence and a general atmosphere of rebellion and defiance.

As the title suggests, betrayal breeds suspicion and intolerance and this creates a highly unstable environment for decent and safe living. One cannot safely determine who to trust with information hence the general feeling of betrayal among the people.

THE SETTING

Betrayal in the City was first published in 1976 at a time when African states had attained their independence and were undergoing serious problems in adjusting to self-rule.

The play set in the fictional country of Kafira, ruled by Boss, who surrounds himself with kinsmen like Mulili and the sharing-the-pie government officials, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo.

Betrayal in the city is a perfect example of many failed states in the third world, and especially in Africa.

SYNOPSIS

Betrayal in the City is a political play. The writer examines the problems of independence and freedom in post-colonial states in Africa. The play talks about military regimes that were common on the African continent after independence. Many of such regimes were later overthrown by coup de tats. Francis Imbuga's major concern is betrayal at two levels, both at a personal and government level. *Betrayal in the City* shows a decay in morals, greed for power. Doga and Nina lament as they mourn their dead son, Adika and wishes to perform a ritual for their dead son. This effort is hampered by express directions from the government brought by Mulili and Jere claiming that the ritual should not go on in the interest of peace; but Doga and Nina are adamant. Their only remaining son, Jusper, is imprisoned. This shows us what is happening in Kafira - the corruption, injustice and oppression of the people.

Critics of the government are not tolerated. Jere and Mosese are henceforth put into prison over false charges. They both suffer the pain of the government's betrayal. Government officials make use of any opportunity to make money through unfair means. Tumbo for instance declares Jusper the winner of the play writing competition and awards him the winner's prize money. One third of the six hundred pounds to----- finance the play writing competition is given to Jusper and his girl friend, Regina; and the remaining two

thirds to put records straight emphasizing that everything is being done in strict confidence. Despite all this Jusper vows to revenge someday even if it means going it alone since he knows that a University student is not a very welcome person in Kafira and is looked at as a nuisance.

Government officials first think of what they are going to benefit before deliberating on matters of state. What first preoccupies their mind is how much they are going to gain. Being a relative to Boss gives Mulili a chance to despise his colleagues in service. Mulili falsely accuses Kabito knowing that Boss will believe what he says since he has been made to be his eyes and ears on the ground as he puts it. He is also favoured by Boss in many ways. The semi-illiterate Mulili sometimes completely misunderstands and distorts what is said to him and yet threatens to act basing on the strength of that misunderstanding.

Boss' trust of those who advise him especially Mulili makes him give unbearable directives to silence those presumably against his government including the simple old couple who were innocent. Boss also tries to take advantage of Regina forcefully. Such scandals speak unfavourably of the Head of State. Nicodemo and Tumbo discuss the state of affairs and how people are being killed: "We have no choice. Like caged animals, we move, but only inside the cage. It has become infectious-the desire to eliminate others..." This clearly implies that there are serious consequences of criticizing the government's plans.

The play within the play, Betrayal in the City, brings about the desired change that everybody has been waiting for. The rehearsal for the play intended to entertain the visiting Head of state becomes a real confrontation arrived at effortlessly by Jusper, Mosese, and Jere; taking everyone by surprise.

ACT SUMMARIES

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

The scene is at grave surrounded by dry thorny branches.

It is early morning. Doga and Nina are next to the grave of their late son, Adika who was murdered. Doga suspects that their son's murderer still lives among them. His suspicion arises from the smell of petrol at the site and the fact that the grave has a crack, an indication that the murderer's intention was to burn Adika's body to rid himself of Adika's ghost hunting him in future. Their only, living son, Jusper, was to guard the grave but this morning he cannot be traced. Nina is fearful for her son, who, according to them is not of sound mind. Her fears are heightened when she is made to notice that there seems to have been a struggle at the grave. Doga wants to cover up the crack on the grave so that the shaving ceremony planned to take place later in the day goes on but Nina will hear none of this. After much persuasion from the husband, she gives in and goes for soil to cover up the crack.

From Doga's speech, we hear that Adika was shot four times during a demonstration by Kafira University students who were protesting that most of the Kafira university lectures are expatriates. During Adika's burial, his brother, Jusper, was taken away by government agents for being a 'threat' to peace-loving people and after returning three months later, he is never the same.

Jusper enters, dressed in a red gown. He is obviously disturbed by his brother's death. He is seen addressing his dead brother. Nina comes back with soil and finds Jusper at the grave. Doga is hiding behind the bush. She tells Jusper to go and remove the red gown as the shaving ceremony was about to start. Jusper tells his mother that he cannot put on a clean shirt after the murder and proceeds to show his parents the crack (river) where he threw the person he murdered but all this time, they think he is mad. Nina even, innocently and ignorantly, tells him to go and confess the act! Jusper has killed Chagaga, the person who is suspected to have killed Adika, and thrown his body in the river but Doga and Nina think he is mad.

The couple's prayerful mood is interrupted by Jere and Mulili who inform them that the ceremony has been cancelled to their utter disappointment. They also inform the couple that Jusper has killed Chagaga and confessed the crime. The two order the couple to leave the grave as it no longer belongs to them. Jere tries to persuade Mulili to allow Doga and Nina to conduct the ceremony but Mulili will hear none of this despite the fact that Jere had helped hide Mulili's secret when he allowed Mustafa an inmate to escape. Mulili is boss's (head of state) cousin and since he has been promised a reward for being loyal to Boss, he does not wish to disappoint boss. Mulili even threatens Jere that should he allow the ceremony to take place, he (Mulili) will not keep quiet. Before they leave the stage, they are involved in a violent confrontation where Jere shoots at Mulili who dives off stage.

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE SCENE ONE

1. Where is this scene set
2. What are the two characters Doga and Nina doing at the grave and whose grave is it.
3. What is so strange about the grave's condition that morning?
4. Where was Jusper when the grave was being meddled with?
5. What are we told about Jusper's condition and why is it so?
6. Who killed Adika and what is his relationship with the sub chief
7. What led to the death of Adika and how was he killed
8. According to Jusper what is the difference between the sun Jupiter and Jusper and what does it represent
9. Jusper tells Nina that he is going to address the rally, which rally is he talking about and what does he want to tell them.
10. Why does Mulili and Jere come to the grave side and what is their mission
11. Mulili speaks poor / non-standard English , what does this tell us about him
12. What does Mulili and Jere reveal to Doga and Nina about Jusper
13. Why does Jere support the old couple's continuing with the ceremony

14. Mulili had allowed Mustafa to escape, what does this tell us about justice in Kafira.
15. Identify at least two character traits of Mulili, Doga, Nina, Jere and Jusper from this scene.
16. Identify the aspects of style used in this scene: identify the proverbs, instances of irony, use of cross purpose, monologue, and puns among others.
17. What are some of the themes brought out in this scene?
18. Identify the instances of Betrayal brought out in this scene

SCENE TWO

ACTION TAKES PLACE IN A PRISON CELL

Jere is pushed by an askari into a cell where he finds Mosese. Askari is fed up with Jere's inquisitive nature. He tells him that he is mad and that his inquisitive nature will not be entertained in prison and that it would make his life unbearable in prison. Jere is later informed that all inmates have to go through rehabilitation in order to be re-integrated in the society. He does not have any mental illness that would make him need any rehabilitation therefore he sarcastically tells askari that he is truly grateful and that he didn't know they took such pains. It is apparent that Mosese has decided to remain silent because silence can as well be a weapon but should he be so, the prisons authorities will demand an explanation as to what is he keeping quiet about. It is not surprising that the prison authorities don't entertain prisoners asking questions.

Askari informs Mosese that Jusper has been released from jail but has nothing to go back to since his parents were found dead in their hut. When Jere and Mosese are left alone, Jere informs Mosese of the events of the previous night where he and his cellmate decided to play Pilate and Jesus. According to Jere, Pilate had humiliated Jesus by stripping him and caning him on the buttocks. Jere's co-actor cried out after receiving the canes, alerting the prison authorities who moved Jere to the cell where Mosese was after stripping him and caning him. The two cellmates (Jere and Mosese) take time to know each other.

Mosese tells Jere how he ended up in prison. He had attended Adika's funeral where he saw firsthand the oppression by the political elite. He couldn't keep quiet, so after telling the politicians his mind, he was arrested and charged with trumped up charges of possessing drugs. He changes his name because the person who implicated him with the drugs shared a name with him. We learn of the regime's way of silencing dissenting voices, through the experiences of inmates.

Mosese has been informed by askari to cooperate in the performance of a play organized for a visiting head of state and in return he might be among the six hundred prisoners who are to be released. He doesn't want to do this as acting in the play means kneeling in front of boss and pleading for mercy yet he is not guilty. Prisoners are also denied food and only the ones who

show signs of cooperating with prison authorities are allowed privileges. This is evident when askari brings a mug of tea.

The citizens of Kafira had been waiting for the 'kingdom' for years and at last they were told it had come. According to Mosese, it was an illusion. He wonders how many people had seen the kingdom and what colour it is. Mosese is disillusioned. He says they have killed their past and were busy killing the future. He laments about the oppressive nature of boss' regime. For instance, soldiers had beaten up Regina and had forced her to give false evidence against her brother, Mosese. Mosese violently wriggles and as if in a trance rises and addresses the imaginary audience. His words portray his confused state of mind. On one hand he is faced with the choice of participating in the play, a sacrificial act that will lead to the release of 600 prisoners or on the other hand hold on to his principles and reject the request to participate in the play.

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE TWO

1. Where do the events of this scene take place
2. Why do you think Jere has been brought into the cell
3. How would you describe the treatment by the askari on Jere
4. Jere says that "the outside of this cell may well be the inside of another" what does this tell about the situation in Kafira
5. Link Pilate's situation to Jere like he puts it on page 23
6. Why does Mosese keep staring at the wall even when Jere and the askari are talking
7. Give the reasons why Mosese is in prison
8. Mosese says words have lost meaning to him and asks for the meaning of Africanisation what does this tell about the people's situation in the country
9. To what level has the askari learnt and why is he doing such a job
10. Why is Juser being released and what has just happened to his parents?
11. Why did Jere carry a bible to the cells and how does it bring him trouble
12. Apart from being a police officer, which are the other two professions that Jere was in before?
13. Which is item number three in the development plan and what is ironical about it?
14. Mosese says he saw betrayal in Regina's eyes why is this so
15. Why is the foreign dignitary visiting and why are the prisoners supposed to perform a play for him
16. The askari talks of selective breeding and says you need a tall relative to get anything in the country what does this tell about Kafira
17. Mosese says "it was better while we waited. Now we have nothing to look forward to..." what were they waiting for that they don't have and why has he lost hope?
18. Mosese sleeps and talks and in his dream. What does this tell about him and what message do we get from his conversation with an imaginary person.

19. Jere says “when the madness of an entire nation enters a solitary mind then its not enough to say that person is mad” what does Jere mean by this
20. Identify the character traits of ;Jere, Askari and Mosese in this scene
21. Identify the themes brought out in this scene
22. Identify and illustrate the stylistic devices used in this scene
23. Identify the elements of betrayal in this scene

SCENE THREE

Jusper stealthily enters Regina’s room without her notice and scares her. He is in his red academic gown and this heightens Regina’s anger at him. She requests him to rest but he says he can’t rest because the death of his whole family is in his mind. Apart from Adika, Nina and Doga were murdered in exchange for Jusper’s release. He says that he will get his revenge someday. Jusper was among the university students who protested on the streets and as they did this, people shouted abusive words at them in addition to telling that they were wasting time with the protests, it is also apparent that the government will not allow Adika’s photograph to be printed in the newspapers.

Regina would be happy if Jusper was to keep off from trouble with the authorities. She tells him that she has only him and Mosese left in the world and if anything went wrong, they would all be wiped out. Jusper insists that they have to talk of the masses that have no voices. Regina tells Jusper of the scheduled visits to Kafira by a certain head of state. If this is to happen, then, there will be three days holiday for all in addition to the prisoners being released to mark the occasion. She has a letter from Tumbo, who is boss’ right-hand man. In it, boss has promised to facilitate the release of Mosese. This does not go down well with Jusper who can read mischief in the act but who nevertheless promises to beat him at his own game.

Tumbo, a fat, overconfident man, enters the house. He notices through Jusper’s dressing that he is among the university students who were being known for rioting. Tumbo is already familiar with Jusper’s name which was signed against a student’s prayer that was all about asking God to help them drop their Christian names. Tumbo warns him that if the prayer by any chances suggested changing names, Jusper would be behind bars. Jusper sarcastically wonders why this would be the case yet since change of names was item number three in the new development plan. Furthermore, boss himself has substituted his Christian name to something that no one could pronounce. Tumbo defends boss by saying that a leader requires a mysterious name that the common tongues will bleed trying to pronounce. This is pointer to Tumbo’s sycophantic nature.

Tumbo revisits the issue of the visit by a certain head of state to Kafira. He learns from Regina that Jusper writes plays and since they require a one-act play for the entertainment, he concludes that Jusper can write one for the occasion. Tumbo says that he would have written one himself, but being a socialist, he thought of extending the opportunity to others to show them light, to ‘eat and let eat’: from their talk, we learn that boss is a fearful and insecure man

who has let advisers rule Kafira while pretending to be tough, he is hated by his own guards who will not talk about it. The worst of his advisers is his cousin Mulili who has been rewarded with a large farm for his “services to the nation” Boss is said to be of short temper and has a weakness for women.

When Jusper is back from buying drinks, the three talked about the idea of writing a play for the entertainment of the visiting head of state, Tumbo would be glad if Jusper wrote the intended play that would highlight the achievements the country has made. Money has been set aside for a play-writing competition, now that he knows what play ought to be organized. He declares Jusper the winner of that competition and informs him that he and his sister would be given a third of the money that was to finance the competition and that Jusper would be given his prize money once the results of the competition are made public. Jusper is to write the play and ensure that the words ‘progress and ‘achievements’ appear on every other page.

After Tumbo and Regina leave, Jusper reminds the audience what he holds, ‘the fruits of independence. We get them second hand.’ (pg 53)

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE THREE

1. Where is this scene set?
2. Why does Jusper imitate the ricocheting of guns as he enters?
3. Why is Regina uneasy about Jusper’s dressing in the red gown?
4. What does the red gown symbolise
5. For what does Jusper criticize Regina and even the beggars in the streets
6. For what does Jusper criticize the media
7. According to Jusper why was Adika killed and why is Mosese and Jere in prison
8. Why is Regina critical about people voicing their concerns against the government
9. What do we deduce/learn from Jusper and Reginas conversation about the intended visit by the foreign head of state
10. Why does Jusper pretend to be Regina’s cousin when Tumbo calls in?
11. Jusper asks Regina “are you sure this is not a trick-some sort of a trap?” why is Jusper critical about Tumbo’s helping her and what do you think the trap is?
12. Whats wrong with Christian names and why does Jusper criticize them p39
13. Why does Tumbo call the university students red guards?
14. Jusper is said to have written an interesting prayer, what was it about?
15. Tumbo says a leader should have a mysterious name that the common people will bleed trying to pronounce. What does this tell about the kind of leaders in Kafira
16. When asked about his university days Tumbo mumble, rumbles and stutters almost confusing himself, what do we deduce from this behavior
17. Tumbo says that education doesn’t matter and that there are opportunities only that they do not come on a silver platter. What does this reveal about Kafira

18. Regina reveals to Tumbo that Juser can write plays; why is Tumbo happy about this and says that there is a good potato in it. What does this mean
19. How much money has been allocated for the play and how much will Juser remain with. What happens to the remaining amount
20. What aspects does Tumbo insist that should be covered in the play
21. Why does Tumbo want Regina to visit Boss and what is the visit about
22. Why have many publishers rejected Juser's works? What does this say about them
23. How does Tumbo plan to cover up not having conducted a play writing competition
24. Identify the main themes brought out in this scene
25. Identify the aspects of style in this scene
26. What do we learn about the character traits of Juser, Regina and Tumbo from this scene
27. Identify the elements of betrayal in this scene

ACT TWO:

SCENE ONE

The scene begins with two members of a committee formed to plan for the entertainment of a visiting head of state are conversing. In their conversation, one of them, Kabito is bitter because he has lost a tender despite having spent a whole night 'being nice' to people in order to get it. They feel that Mulili does not qualify to be in the committee but they can't raise the issue with Boss, as Mulili is his cousin. Nicodemo is also uncomfortable sitting with the prisoners on the dais during the visit by the head of state. He is particularly uncomfortable with Mosese's release since he is the one that had planted an illegal drug on him that led to his arrest and incarceration! Tumbo joins the pair and reminds them of the need to please the visitor as it is through that that the voice of their negotiator will continue to be heard. They are not comfortable starting any formalities until they are told the size of the potato they will get. On being told that the potato will be determined by the number of days they work, they suggest ways to ensure that they have a maximum number of days; meeting every day until the visitor arrives and meeting after the visit for the purpose of review.

Mulili comes to the meeting later and apologizes for being late. He says that he has gone to make a follow-up on his tender which had been cancelled and after boss made threats to the university which had given the tender, Mulili gets the tender back. The committee members make recommendations on what should be included in the program, one of them being that school children as well as all adults' line up the road to welcome the visitor. This is despite the fact that it is third term and most of the children are sitting for their exams. They even recommend that the day be made a holiday to ensure their recommendations are implemented. Tumbo disagrees with the suggestion that the head of state visits upcountry to see the projects he supported. Kabito and Mulili disagree on the issue of forcing the drama department of the university to act in the play. Mulili accuses Kabito of calling him primary

kid and when Kabito refuses to apologize, Tumbo recommends a one hour break for the members to let off steam. Nicodemo had suggested a three hours break! As the scene ends, Mulili swears at Kabito and issues a chilling threat to him.

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE ONE

1. Kabito is the first to arrive and sleeps in one of the chairs , what does this symbolize?
2. where does this scene take place
3. Why is kabito asleep and why is he in foul mood
4. Why was Mulili given the tender
5. Why is Nicodemo against the use of prisoners to entertain the guests?
6. Why is mulili part of this committee
7. According to Tumbo what is the role of the committee
8. From the set up of the committee explain the theme of cronism
9. From the discussion on their payment, what do we learn about the members of this committee
10. Mulili says he used Boss to get the tender at the university, what does this tell about leadership in Kafira
11. Why are the university students not willing to participate in the entertainment program
12. What brings about the conflict between Mulili and Kabito
13. Why does the committee go for a break and for how long is the break
14. Identify the aspects of style evident in this scene
15. Identify the themes in this scene
16. Identify and illustrate the character traits of Tumbo, Nicodemo, Mulili and Kabito from this scene
17. Identify the elements of betrayal from this scene.

SCENE TWO

During the one hour break, Mulili rushes to boss to inform him about Kabito's 'ill deeds.' He finds boss pulling grey strands of hair from his head. He maligns Kabito to boss by telling him that Kabito is a green snake in the grass, has coloured boss' name in blood in front of the committee, came to the meeting drunk, was shouting to everybody that boss has denied him the milk tender, says that boss has ruined Kafira's economy by hiding millions in a foreign country and that boss had tried to get Regina by force. This irks boss who accuses Kabito of sowing seeds of discord among the people. He orders Mulili to do what must be done; to silence Kabito. Mulili is only too glad to do it. In fact, he tells him it is a small matter having silenced the old couple (Nina and Doga)

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE TWO

1. Where is this scene set
2. Why does Boss boast about his grey hair
3. Why has Mulili come to see Boss
4. What five allegations does Mulili present against Kabito
5. From Mulili's allegation what ills on leadership do we learn about Boss
6. Who is Mercedes and what makes her rude to Boss
7. What does Boss decide should be done against Kabito
8. Mulili says "that be small. You remember that old couple..." what did Mulili do to the old couple, on whose instructions and for what reason?
9. Identify the themes evident in this scene?
10. Identify the aspects of style evident in this scene
11. What are the character traits of Mulili and Kabito from this scene?
12. Identify the elements of betrayal in this scene

SCENE THREE

News about boss' attempt to rape Regina has reached Juser who now feels he can't go on with the play as he had earlier on promised Tumbo. The latter warns Juser that this would be deemed as sabotage, hence would be too dangerous. He is warned that if he makes any mistake, he could end his university studies even after he has already lost one year. Juser leaves but he doesn't promise boss that he is going to hide the truth. When Tumbo and Nicodemo meet to continue with the meeting after the 'break' they are aware of Kabito's murder but they dare not say anything. Tumbo says they are aware of Kabito's murder but they dare not say anything. Tumbo says they are like caged animals who move but only inside the cage. They pretend not to know anything about the death when Mulili enters. He pretends to be shocked and saddened by Kabito's death which he says was as result of Kabito being under the influence of alcohol.

Nicodemo wonders how one can get drunk in the space of one hour and Mulili foolishly says that people said that his breath smelled of spirits. When pressed further by Nicodemo who wonders about the mention of breath yet Kabito was dead, Mulili retorts that he didn't say breath but his body smelled whiskies. He goes ahead to say that boss wept when he heard of the death and has already declared one road to be called Kabito road. Nicodemo suggests that they should call off the meeting and wonders whether the day would be counted. Despite the solemnness of the occasion, the members of the committee seem to be more pre-occupied with concerns of seeking avenues of making money. This is a pointer to their greed and materialistic nature.

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE THREE

1. Where is this scene set
2. What had happened to Regina, why was it necessary for Regina to meet Boss and what transpired after that
3. Why is Boss's wife locked up after the incident
4. Why does Juser want to pull out of the programme
5. What does Juser stand to lose if he withdraws from the directing of the play
6. Why does Tumbo caution Juser against standing for truth and justice
7. What has happened to Kabito during the break
8. What is the cause of Kabito's death according to Mulili
9. What do you gather from Mulili's incoherent and apparent confused explanation of Kabito's death
10. Explain Tumbo's assertion that "like caged animals , we move, but only inside the cage"
11. Why is the meeting called off
12. How do the other committee members express their respect for the dead Kabito
13. Nicodemo asks whether they will be paid for that day, what does that tell us about his character
14. Identify the themes evident in this scene
15. Identify the aspects of style used in this scene
16. Identify the character traits of Juser, Tumbo, Mulili and Nicodemo from this scene
17. Identify the elements of betrayal from this scene

SCENE FOUR

THE REHEARSAL

The stage is set for the final rehearsal of the play meant to entertain the visiting head of state. Tumbo wants everything to go on well as he fears to disappoint boss who is already in a foul mood. Boss, has, as a result of his bad temper, locked up his wife in the palace cell. Juser informs Tumbo that all will go on well and that Mosese was cooperative during the previous night's rehearsal. Juser says that he is in the play because he realized that the problems of Kafira cannot be solved by isolation. According to him, if the play succeeds, he will have demonstrated that determination is greater in worth than numbers. Tumbo would prefer that boss doesn't know that the play is written by Juser who hopes that the release of a few prisoners, after the success of the play, will change Kafira. Juser is able to see the hypocrisy of the ruling elite. The release of a few prisoners is meant to improve the image of Kafira to the eyes of the world. This according to him is only the truth.

Boss joins them in the preparation of the rehearsal and Juser tells him the play is about an army cadet who is promoted to the rank of captain within six months of enrolment. During the pass-out parade he shoots his colleague accidentally because he doesn't know how to

handle a gun. It is later realised that he is not a relative of the army commander as it had been thought.

As the rehearsal starts, Boss volunteers to read the part of the chief of staff since the prisoner who had been allocated the role could not be present as he had stomach troubles. He also orders askari to untie the hands of Jere and Mosese so that they can join the rehearsal, Mosese (the junior soldier) argues with Jere (the captain) over which gun is shorter than the other; a. 32 or a 28. They go to their chief of staff (boss) to help unravel the mystery. He tells them to each take a gun and show it to him. The guns are now in the hands of Jere and Mosese! Their plan has succeeded. On realizing that he has been tricked, boss shouts to the guards but Jere tells him he has no guards. Jusper thinks that boss is dead and is about to go and design a coffin but is stopped by Mosese who tell boss to see what he had done to Jusper. Because of fear, Mulili betrays boss. He says that boss ought to be killed because he has taken everything in his hands, has spoiled Kafira's economy, and has ruled for too long and killed Kabito. Boss cannot stand the betrayal so he tells Jere to shoot him.

Jere tells boss that their interest is not to see human blood but to provide a mirror for Kafira to reflect the real faces of Kafira's front men. He says that they must also learn to sacrifice themselves for a better future. Mosese says that their achievement is largely because of the inefficiency of Tumbo. Jere gives boss the gun that he can shoot him (Jere) but boss declines. Jusper then takes the gun and shoots Mulili dead. He says that he did it for Kafira. Before the play ends, the ghosts of Doga and Nina enter the stage. Mulili's death seems to have appeased Doga and Nina.

REVISION QUESTIONS FOR THE SCENE

SCENE FOUR

1. where is this scene set
2. why is Boss's wife locked up?
3. what is the level of preparedness for the presentation of the play
4. Tumbo doesn't know what the play is even about, what does this tell us about him
5. why was Jusper thrown out of his position as student leader why does Tumbo suggest that they keep the fact that Jusper is the writer of the play a secret
6. Jusper says that he doesn't want the prisoners to come from the prison into another prison, what does this tell us about the society of Kafira
7. What warning does Boss give to Jusper for the university students
8. Why is Boss scornful of the university students
9. What did Boss do as a reaction to the students protest on employment of expatriates
10. According to Jusper's explanation to Boss what is the play the prisoners are going to present about?
11. Jusper's play within a play exposes the character traits of several characters. Identify and explain them

12. Why does Boss offer himself for the position of chief of staff and what happened to the one supposed to take that role
13. Why are the prisoners given real guns and what does this tell us about the state officials
14. Give a synopsis of the play the prisoners enact
15. how do the prisoners manage to take over the government
16. Why does Mulili try to escape
17. How does Mulili betray Boss and what allegations does he present against Boss
18. Why is Boss spared and Mulili killed
19. After killing Mulili, Jusper says” I did it for Kafira, I did it for all of you people “ what is the meaning of this statement
20. What is the significance of the reappearance of Doga and Nina and their freezing as they point at Mulili’s body at the end of the play.
21. Identify the stylistic devices used in this scene
22. Identify the elements of betrayal in this scene

THEMES

BETRAYAL

Betrayal is the act of being disloyal or being deceitful towards someone. Its about going against the trust that someone has on another.

The head of state in Kafira (Boss) has betrayed the people’s trust in him. He is supposed to protect the country’s sovereignty by creating job opportunities for his subjects, but instead he has facilitated the influx of expatriate personnel into the country. When the university students protest he deliberately sends in an order for three hundred more expatriate personnel. Under his rule , sycophancy, cronyism, corruption, nepotism, and persecution of perceived opponents have become the order of the day. He orders the killing of Kabito. He is also responsible for the death of Doga and Nina as well as the arrest of Mosese, Askari says ‘.....we calculated that two mature strokes would ease the tension. It worked perfectly. This is where the research stations come in,’ (pg 19)

Appointments are not based on merit. According to Tumbo, membership of the entertainment committee is based on the appointees unflinching loyalty to Boss who buys loyalty by handsomely rewarding individuals. For instance, Mulili is rewarded with acres of land and grade cattle.

Another incident of betrayal is when Kabito, a fellow member of the entertainment committee is betrayed to Boss by Mulili. Mulili comes up with fictitious reasons for getting rid of Kabito. The allegations are outrageous to say the least. He says that Kabito has complained that Boss has robbed him of the milk tender, he has ruined the economy, he hides

millions in foreign countries, and that he tried to get Regina by force. In fact, Mulili should be the “green snake on the grass” that she refers to. By having Kabito killed, he betrays both men.

Mulili betrays his colleague, Jere who gets arrested because he opposed the farmer’s brutality towards Doga and Nina. Apart from his name-calling and callous nature; he gets Jere into trouble when all he wanted to do was to assist the old couple.

Boss betrays the trust Regina has for him. Regina honours her meeting with Boss since she believes he is the only one who can secure the release of her brother Mosese. Unfortunately, Boss forcefully tries to get her and she is forced to escape by jumping out of a ten foot high window.

Mosese thinks that it would be an act of betrayal for Regina to plead for his release. Pleading to Boss for mercy would mean that he is guilty yet he is not. According to Mosese acting is tantamount to betraying their cause. He further argues that they are out to cause change in Kafira and even silence to him is a weapon.

REVENGE

Many characters are seen to be involved in various actions against each other in an attempt to avenge wrongs done against them

Jusper avenges the death of his brother Adika by killing Chagaga the sub chief’s brother the man who had apparently killed Adika by shooting him four times. Jere tells Jusper’s parents that “people had seen him drag the body to the river...” pg 12

Jere pleads with Mulili to allow the old couple continue with the ceremony. Mulili vehemently refuses and even imitates a priest’s burial liturgy an action that infuriates Jere who chases him away and even threatens to shoot him. Mulili threatens him that he shall pay for his actions and true to his words Jere is put behind bars.

After killing Chagaga and being put behind bars, Jusper’s parents are found dead an indication that someone had further avenged the killing of Chagaga. Jusper further says, “I will revenge someday...” pg 33 to which we see him killing Mulli at the end of the play who must have been involved in the killings.

During the meeting by the committee organizing for the entertainment for the visiting dignitary, there is a quarrel and bitter exchange over an apparent misunderstanding between Kabito and Mulili. Muili reports Kabito to Boss with many false allegations and this leads to the killing of Kabito.

At the end of the play Jusper is seen shooting Mulili dead. His is because Mulili is a symbol of the ills that have affected the state of Kafira. In fact Jusper says on p74 that “I did it for Kafira”

THE ROLE OF THE ELITES

The elites in any society should be actively involved in emancipating their societies from downfall especially occasioned by poor leadership. The same happens in the state of Kafira through various characters.

The university students led by Adika are seen demonstrating against the influx of expatriates in the country. This is because this has been the leading cause of unemployment. This however leads to the death of Adika but it's important to notice that they had expressed their misgivings against the government.

Through Mosese we also find that the elites are almost giving up on the government and even turning their backs to the going ons in the state. This is seen in Mosese's words when asked why he is showing his back to Jere and the askari to which he answers I have no front. However we see him speaking out his mind against the oppression I the state which leads to his imprisonment on trumped up charges.

Mosese in his trance/dream agrees to participate in the play together with Jere another elite. It is evident that it is through their role in the play that they manage to bring order to the state of Kafira by ousting and killing the evil element in government in Mulili.

Jusper an elite is actively involved in ousting the oppressive regime it is he who writes the controversial play through which they overthrow the government. It is him still who shoots Mulili the evil element and hence hope for Kafira as he says at the end of the play that, “I did it for Kafira. I did it for all of you people.” Pg 74

CORRUPTION

The government officials are corrupt through and through. The head of state (boss) puts Mulili, a cousin of jis, in a senior government position so that he can inform him on every intricate detail in the government. The man is illiterate and a non-performer who is determined to amass wealth for himself. He is inconsiderate and will do anything to earn acres of farmland and cattle.

Boss is corrupt. He practices nepotism and gives high government positions to unqualified relatives who work as his spies. He also employs many expatriates in public universities at the expense of the local citizens. Boss has amassed so much wealth from the state through corrupt deals and kept millions in foreign bank accounts.

Tumbo also fails to conduct a play writing competition and instead chooses Jusper and pays him only a third of the money. He pockets the rest claiming that it is for settling records straight. He does not read through the written play and out of his inefficiency, it turns out to be an avenue for the prisoners to eliminate Mulili and expose Boss. He also intends to extend the entertainment committee's session in order to earn more sitting allowance.

Jusper is a frustrated student who, like all the rest, has no hope of finding a job in Kafira since most of them go to expatriates. He tells Tumbo that during the holiday he would sit in the house and vegetate since the state regards the youth as neither children nor adults but fence sitters. Boss' intention is to use the expatriate as an opportunity to gain more foreign aid.

There is tribalism and nepotism within the government. While offering Mosese tea in the cell Askari says, 'Here, tea with milk yet you don't even belong to my tribe. You need a tall relative to get anything these days' (pg 27) only those with relatives working in the government can survive in this state.

While the entertainment committee meets Nicodemo tries to find out about what they will make out of it. He asks....."what size of potato per hour?" He is also interested in finding out how many days they would use. "How many working days....." Kabito suggest that they should meet every day until the visiting head of state arrives and even after the visit. Government officials are corrupt. Each is thinking of how to amass wealth.

Mulili is granted the milk tender because he is boss' cousin. It is not given to those that qualified. Kabito is corrupt. He spends the whole night trying to bribe the tendering committee yet he lost the tender. He says '.....I spent the whole of last night being nice to people.'" (pg 51)

To get money in this state in this state one doesn't have to be educated, One must have brains to this of unscrupulous ways of getting money. Tumbo tells Jusper on pg 50 '.....you need a different kind of this.'

LACK OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE

There is an inherent fear of speaking the truth a-in the entire play thus leading to miscarriage of Justice. Those who have spoken the truth have not lived to see their tomorrow but have been brutally exterminated like vermin.

A case in point is Adika, a student leader who is shot dead to silence the students who are protesting about the influx of expatriate personnel into the country. A Young man's life is so brutally brought to an abrupt end because he chooses to pursue the truth in order to attain justice for the greater good of Kafira state.

The student's lecturer decides to speak the truth during the burial by telling the politicians off when they decide to place restrictions on the mourners. But because speaking one's mind is

not a crime, they plant a drug, one kilogram of opium in his car and get him imprisoned, This is a serious case of intolerance and miscarriage of justice.

Doga and Nina are murdered in their own hut because they dared challenge one of Boss; closest advisers, Mulili, who is also his relative. They intended to carry out a simple shaving ceremony by the graveside of their murdered son but Mulili declared it a government property. When they seem not to notice his authority, he has them murdered just to prove who holds sway in this country.

When Adika's murderer, Chagaga he visits the grave to burn the body with petrol, he least expects Jusper to be guarding it. In the struggle that ensues, he gets killed and his body is dumped in the river by Jusper, A court of law should have ordered for a medical examination to determine the mental health of the young man prior to the killing. However, because Chagaga happens to be the sub-chief's brother, Jusper is locked up in prison.

Mulili cannot tolerate an argument, even a logical one from Kabito with whom he holds a grudge. He misreports him to Boss who orders his death. There is no way a truthful person like Kabito would survive in these circumstances.

Boss' own wife, Mercedes, is locked up in a cell for protesting against her husband 's moral standing. He even blames Kabito for inciting the woman to defy him.

MISUSE OF POWER/BAD GOVERNANCE AND MISRULE

The ruling elite in Kafira is perpetuating cronyism, nepotism .corruption and intimidation of opponents in order to cling to power. Mulili yields a lot of influence due to the fact that he is Boss' cousin. Kabito refers to him as an army-drop out and a second rate farmer.

Ordinary people cannot carry out their normal ceremonies without government interference. Doga and Nina, two innocent and bereaved citizens cannot carry out a simple ceremony for their dead son. The government sends two soldiers, Jere and Mulili to bar them from doing so. They are even murdered as a result.

Individuals are forced to take law into their hands since justice favours those connected to those in power. Jusper kills Chagaga in order to avenge the killing of his brother Adika. Chagaga happens to be the sub-chief's brother. Mulili says "All small murders get arrested." Like Jusper faces the full brunt of the law while big murderers like Mulili get away scot free due to political patronage.

The fact that Boss relies on the likes of Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo to render good and sustainable opinion and advice to the government tells the extent of the rot in this system. Mulili is barely coherent and there are lots of inconsistencies in his utterances. He is a liar and a cheat, a fraud who any right thinking leader should distance himself from. Tumbo,

Kabito and Nicodemo only think about their daily allowances and are determined to meet as long as it takes in order to reap as much.

Tumbo's remark at the end of the play puts what ails the state in plain terms, "I am truly sorry, but I am not entirely to blame, I was trained, but given the wrong job...." (pg 74) This remark points an accusing finger at the appointing authority. The likes of Mulili should not be in government.

Mulili uses his relationship with Boss to secure tenders and amass wealth. He manages to reverse the termination of his tender by soliciting assistance from boss. Nicodemo says that Mulili bullied his way into securing the university tender (pg 51) Appointments to government positions are based on one's closeness to Boss. Tumbo tells members of the entertainment committee, "I trust gentlemen that you know why you sit on this committee. You were nominated for one reason: Your unflinching support for our government " (pg 52-53) It is evident that Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo are Boss' sycophants.

Mulili's unflinching support for Boss is rewarded with farm land and grade cattle.

Tumbo is mandated to organize a play writing competition but instead declares Jusper the winner of proposed play writing competition one third would go to Jusper and Regina and the other two thirds will be used to put the records straight.

FEAR/SUSPICION

Fear is the unpleasant feeling caused by the possibility of danger or evil. Actions or inaction by several characters on the play are motivated by fear. The people of Kafira live in great fear. They lack freedom of expression. They cannot understand why the likes of Jusper, Adika, and Moses talk too much and put themselves in unnecessary trouble.

Beggars feel that the protestors are wasting time.

Regina warns Jusper against talking too much. She does not want him to end up dead like Adika or in prison like Mosese. Jusper's red academic gown is a source of constant fear for Regina. Tumbo too gets scared of the students' red gowns and he calls them the red guards.

Askari warns Jere and Mosese that silence is all they need to stay out of trouble. Suspicion is created when prisoners either remain silent or talk too much.

No publisher is willing to publish Jusper's play since his plays has exposed the truth too much. They can only be published if he can hide or cover the truth. Jusper says that nobody wants things put in black and white. You need a little grey and blue here and there. (pg 47)

Tumbo confesses that Jusper has a point when he says that you can't clothe truth in lies, but adds that they know better than to shout about it. They know the truth but can't dare shout about it.

Tumbo is fearful of boss. He does not wish to disappoint. He says that Boss is in a foul mood. He wants the play to go on as scheduled. He also wouldn't want Boss to know that the writer of the play to be acted is Jusper.

Boss' advisers hate him but they do not want to talk beyond whispers. Tumbo says that until people like Mulili are out, it is dangerous to do things differently from what is expected in Kafira.

Regina fears going to see Boss to plead for Mosese's release because she is afraid of him. She fears that something will go wrong if he see her.

Regina fears for Juspers safety. She pleads with him to stop clashing with the authorities. She tells him, "Jusper, no good will come out of this struggle. Like you I only have two close friends left in this world. You and my brother, but my brother is inside. If anything should go wrong, we'll be wiped out." (pg 34)

Mulili is threatened by Jusper and Mosese at the end of the play to a point of denying having any close relationship with Boss. He is fearful that he might be killed but sure enough he is shot dead. Earlier he had intended to sneak out purportedly to go for a call of nature. The head of state is shocked by the turn of events and fears that all evils will be exposed by the prisoners. He begs to be killed. He would rather face death than the consequences of his deeds.

When Nicodemo suggests that Kabito should report the issue of losing his tender, Kabito remarks that reporting Mulili to Boss is tantamount to digging one's own grave.

When Kabito questions Mulili's presence on the committee, Tumbo says that Kabito should know better than that and in any case, the question was not in the agenda.

Tumbo and Nicodemo know that Mulili is responsible for Kabito's death but they cannot dare say anything. "Like caged animals, we move, but only inside the cage." (pg 62)

HYPOCRISY

Hypocrisy refers to pretence that one has qualities, beliefs or feelings that they do not really have. Prisoners are taking part in the play to entertain the visiting head of state to show national unity. The government is trying to show the impression that prisoners are actively involved in nation building. This may have not been the case earlier since Nicodemo says they are now being treated as if they do not belong to this world. The main reason for Boss' decision to have the prisoners take part in the play is to portray the country in positive light to ensure foreign investment. A successful visit will make it possible for the role of the negotiators to be heard.

Mulili pretends to be shocked by the news that Kabito is dead. He informs Tumbo and Nicodemo that Kabito has been involved in a fatal accident during the one hour break. He pretends to be saddened by the news. He claims that the accident was caused by the victim driving under the influence of alcohol. He further claims that Boss was in tears when he heard of Kabito's death and that he had declared that a road be named after Kabito. (pg 63)

By criticizing the excesses of Boss, Tumbo is being hypocritical since he is a beneficiary of Boss and his government. Tumbo seems to be making an attempt to distance himself from Boss when he says, 'Things will change; Boss is not at all bad at heart. His main problem is that he gets scared off too easily.' (pg 44) As a result of his loyalty he is made the chairman of the committee mandated to organize for the entertainment of a visiting head of state. He also owns apartments courtesy of Boss.

Tumbo pretends to be doing Regina a favour by introducing her to Boss yet he knows his (Boss) ridiculous weakness for women. When she gets into trouble and jumps out of a ten-foot high window, he belatedly says he will apologize to her. He pretends to be sorry for Regina while all along he had known what Boss was up to.

Tumbo claims to be a socialist at heart and says he could have written the play for the entertainment of the visiting Head of State himself but decides to extend this opportunity to someone else. "Tumbo, you have not done badly, why don't you lead the pack of them.....show them light, eat and let eat." (pg 44)

Boss claims to understand truth and justice, while in fact, he least does. He alleges that the rioting students and the dissenting lecturers have no idea what truth and justice are all about. This hypocrisy is self-serving in the sense that he intends to suppress their freedom of expression to create an opportunity to gain from foreign governments.

Mulili misreports Kabito to Boss for allegedly maligning Boss' reputation yet his real intention is to have Kabito punished for opposing him during the meeting. When Boss gives him the go-ahead to eliminate Kabito which he does, he later acts shocked and saddened by his death.

Askari pretends to be doing Jere a favour by putting him on rehabilitation after only two days and tells him that the government was giving his future some consideration even though he was contributing to the national headache.

HOPELESSNESS/DISILLUSIONMENT

To be disillusioned is to be disappointed when you realize that something is not as good as you had expected to a point of completing losing hope and giving up.

The masses in Kafira are disillusioned by the state of affairs in their country. Mosese says that they had waited for the kingdom for years, then it was said it had come but it was all an illusion. He wonders how many people had set eyes on that kingdom and what colour it is. According to Mosese it was better while they waited for the Kingdom because then they had hope, now they have nothing to look forward to. He feels that they have killed the past and

are busy killing the future. He says in the past, they had celebrations once a year and they had a reason to celebrate, but now there is nothing to celebrate about. People are busy shedding blood everywhere. (pg 27-28)

The masses have resigned to their fate after realizing the futility of fighting the government. As the students protest in the streets, people shout at them and beggars tell them they are wasting their time. (pg 33) Regina feels that Jusper and those others protesting against the government are wasting time and that no good will come out of their struggle with the government. She feels that they are fighting stones. (pg 34)

Doga and Nina have lost hope in life after their son; Adika is shot dead during the university riots. Their son Jusper seems to have lost his mind after his brother's death and is currently considered as good as 'dead.' Nina concludes that the authorities have robbed them all they had and blinded them.

After Kabito's murder, Tumbo and Nicodemo realize that their tenures as government officials hang in the balance. Tumbo says, "We have no choice, like caged animals, we move but only inside the cage." (pg 62) He says the elimination of citizens has become so rampant that one is not sure of seeing the next day.

Jere argues with Askari over the issue of freedom. He tells him that the outside of his cell may be well the inside of another, which implies there is no freedom in Kafira and even those who think they are free are not.

Jusper bemoans the fact that Regina too has been affected by the street disease, that is giving up. It is even pointed out that the beggars in the streets laugh at the university students because they believe that they could achieve nothing for Kafira.

OPPRESSION/SOCIAL INJUSTICE

The leadership of Kafira is dictatorial. It is oppressive. The government in a bid to perpetuate its continued stay in power has resulted in silencing its critics. The educated elite in particular pay the heaviest price for being at the fore front of criticizing the excess of Boss' regime.

Assassinations, arrests, imprisonments and torture of prisoners are the order of the day.

Boss must always have his way and will eliminate anyone who appears to be a stumbling block to his schemes. He does not entertain any freedom of expression of whatever kind. For example, the academic staff members should not weep in public for whatever reason, and if they do, they end up in prison like Mosese.

Freedom of expression is curtailed. Jere says "the outside of this cell may be the inside of another' (pg 21) Prisoners are not allowed to ask questions. It only makes one's life more unbearable.

When one asks questions he is subjected to beating as in the case of Jere. Prisoners are denied food only those who co-operate with authorities enjoy certain privileges. Jere is denied tea when Mosese is presented with a cup of tea.

During Adika's funeral Mosese says of the orders from the government. 'The funeral would not take more than ten minutes, the coffin could not be carried by students and weeping in public was illegal for the academic staff.' When Mosese protested against this high handedness, he is arrested and imprisoned on trumped up charges of possessing illegal drugs. Prisoners are denied food and only those who co-operate with prison authorities.

In a bid to secure conviction for Mosese, his sister (Regina) is subjected to beating by soldiers as people watch, forcing her to give evidence against him. As a result the beating she loses hearing in one ear.

Doga and Niana lose their lives after protesting the government's decision to prevent them from conducting the shaving ceremony for their late son Adika.

Tumbo and Nicodemo know that Mulili killed Kabito but they cannot say anything about it. "Like caged animals we move, but inside the cage" (pg 62)

Boss' regime has established research stations meant to rehabilitate perceived opponents of the state before they are re-integrated into the society. Askari tells Jere, "You see we have research stations dotted all over the countryside." (pg 17)

Boss tells Jusper that when he goes back to the University he should tell the leaders that it is his (Boss') duty to decide on the magnitude of Kaira's africanization programme and that they have no right to chant about it. When the students demonstrate against the influx of expatriate personnel, Boss warns that the result will always be the same, deaths and imprisonment.

Jere protests the mistreatment of Nina and Doga by the government. He successfully tries to convince Mulili to allow them to conduct the shaving ceremony for their son Adika. An altercation ensues between him and Mulili when he insists that the ceremony will go on as planned resulting in his arrest and imprisonment.

Jusper's unstable state of mind can be attributed to the physical as well as psychological suffering he has undergone. He has been arrested twice, first during the burial of his brother Adika and seconds the murder of Chagaga who killed his brother. Doga says "then they came and took him away.....when they brought him back after three months he was no longer the son we knew (pg 4-5) The death of his brother took a heavy toll on him and he could not come to terms with it.

Prisoners must perform a play that must entertain the visiting head of state in order to earn amnesty.

CHARACTER, CHARACTERIZATION AND ROLES OF CHARACTERS

JERE

He is an ex-soldier and now a prisoner. He was a colleague of Mulili. He taught religious knowledge for three years before he was drafted into the army. He can be described as;

Reasonable

Jere is reasonable as he listens to Doga and Nina and understands their predicament. He even tells them that Mulili does not belong with them and does not know their ways when Nina threatens to curse them by stripping naked and Mulili makes fun of her.

He pleads with Doga to understand that he and Mulili are simply obeying orders when they say that the ceremony cannot go on. He says, ‘old man, if I had the power, I would let you go on. I would even take part in the ceremony. I knew Adika well.

Patriotic

He aspires for a prosperous Kafira and advocates for unity among all citizens. He tells Boss, “No, your excellency, we shall not shoot you. Kafira needs each one of us, you included.” (pg 73)

Friendly/Sociable/Understanding

He hits it off with the other prisoner with whom he enacts the episode of Pilate and Jesus from the Bible.

He easily makes friends with Mosese in prison. They quickly find that they have a lot to talk about because they are like minded as far as the administration of Kafira is concerned.

He empathizes with the old couple and wishes to allow them to carry out their shaving ceremony.

Secretive/cautious

He does not let out the secret that Mulili allowed Mustafa to escape across the border.

When Mosese tells him about the circumstances that brought him to prison, the events of Adika’s funeral, Jere does not let Mosese know that he knows Jusper.

Daring

He is unperturbed by the threats directed to him by Askari. When Askari tells him, “.....I have killed a man once in this very cell, he replies, congratulations! How did you manage?” (pg 30)

Intelligent/Cunning/clever/tactful

He and Mosese clearly carry out a palace coup to expose the villains like Mulili in the government.

He says they have no intentions of getting rid of Boss because they want the act to be ‘A mirror that will reflect the real faces of Kafira’s front men.’

He compares the prison department with Meteorological Department which confuses the public by giving contradictory information.

Philosophical

After observing Mosese's reverie, Jere aptly summarizes the state of the society thus, "When the madness of an entire nation disturbs a solitary mind, it is not enough to say the man is mad."

Mosese's behavior is a result of what the authority has put its citizen through—that is, oppression to the point of madness.

Roles

- i) He plays a significant role in the development of the plot of the story.
- ii) He enhances the character of other characters in the play. For instance, through him, the Askari is portrayed as brutal and intimidating.
- iii) Several themes have been brought out using him, for instance the themes of self-sacrifice and oppression.
- iv) He is used by the writer to highlight several stylistic devices such as play within a play, suspense and biblical allusion.

JUSPER WENDO

He is a philosophy student at the university. He is the son of Doga and Nina. His brother Adika was shot dead during a demonstration held by the university students. He can be described as;

Arrogant/disrespectful

Jusper talks arrogantly to people who do not make sense to him. He talks back at Tumbo regardless of his powerful office. He openly shows his disrespect by talking negatively about the evils of the government. At some point, Tumbo thinks he is drunk.

Vengeful/vindictive

He kills Chagaga, the sub-chief's brother who also killed Adika, his brother. He shoots Mulili for having caused all the pain and suffering in the society. He is over-excited that they have successfully carried out the coup.

He vows to avenge the killing of his brother Adika. He tells Regina, "I will get my revenge someday, even if it means doing it alone." (pg 33)

Sarcastic

When asked by Tumbo what achievement he is going to highlight in the play meant for entertaining the visiting head of state, he says, "the number of expatriate professionals had steadily increased over the year, signifying the full extent of our potential progress...." (pg 48)

On the issue of name changing, he says, “but there is nothing wrong with that. Changing names is item number three in the new development plan, isn’t it? In fact, Boss himself gave us a fine example when he substituted his Christian name with something none of us can pronounce.” (pg 40)

After being told by Tumbo that he has won the nonexistent play writing competition, he remarks that out of ten plays submitted, his came first and that the other entries have of course been returned to their authors. (pg 49)

Open/Outspoken/candid

Jusper speaks his mind when he finds his parents at the graveside; he openly confesses having killed someone. Nina thinks he is drunk and only to find out later that he actually killed Chagaga.

When asked by Tumbo how much beer he drinks he retorts that it is as much as he (Tumbo) drank off the pocket money he got during his university days.

He talks to the president candidly as he gives him a summary of his play. He is not afraid to reveal to him that he has written the play.

Intelligent/creative

Jusper is a university student. He is also a playwright who depicts the society so clearly that publishers dread publishing his work. He is able to trick the president to provide real guns so that he can find a chance to avenge the deaths of his parents and brother. He also succeeds in tricking Tumbo and taking advantage of inefficiency. He writes an ingenious play that deceives Tumbo completely.

Stubborn

Jusper refuses to remove his red gown despite his girlfriend’s nagging. She says it makes him appear dangerous. Students are always treated suspiciously whenever they put them on but he is ready to face the consequences. He is unapologetic to Tumbo for wearing it.

Roles

- i) Major events in the play revolve around him
- ii) His experiences expose the Boss’ regime.
- iii) His brother Adika is brutally murdered during a student’s demonstration. He is arrested when he revenges his brother’s killing and is released in exchange for his parent’s murder.
- iv) His unstable state of mind points to an individual who has undergone both physical and emotional trauma.

- v) He highlights the themes of suffering, disillusionment, betrayal and self-sacrifice. The writer has used Jisper to highlight aspects of style such as play within a play, allusion and satire.

MULILI

Mulili is an ex-soldier and now a farmer. He is cousin to Boss and is a member of the visitor's entertainment committee.

Unfeeling/inhuman/Callous

He makes fun of Doga and Nina's sorrow due to the loss of their son and forbids them to carry out the shaving ceremony at the graveside. Even when Nina threatens to strip naked in protest, a traditional curse, Mulili asks, "....How many naked body I have seen and I am still Mulili with my two eyes, natural?" (pg 9)

He is insensitive to Doga's feelings that Doga finally tells him, ".....may you die the way Adika did." (pg 10)

He has Doga, Nina and Kabito killed in cold-blood.

He declares that there is no reason why Boss should not be killed.

Disrespectful

He shows disrespect for the elder couple (Doga and Nina) when he dares Nina to go ahead and strip after she had threatened to do so. He says he has seen many naked bodies and he is still Mulili with two eyes, natural. (pg 9)

Vengeful/Vindictive

He bears a grudge against Kabito because he feels belittled by Kabito whom he alleges has called him a primary school kid. As if that is not enough, he goes ahead to tell lies about Kabito to Boss leading to his elimination.

He threatens Jere for failing to enforce the instructions they had to prevent Doga and Nina from carrying out their late son's shaving ceremony. This act lands Jere in prison

Corrupt

Being Boss' cousin he is promised many acres of land and grade cattle. He will therefore do anything to ensure he gets this.

When the tender for the supply of milk to the university is awarded to somebody else (Kabito), Mulili reports to Boss who revokes it and gives it to him. Mulili goes on to have Kabito killed after lying to Boss that Kabito had maligned his name.

He allows a fugitive, Mustafa, to escape across the border.

Comical/funny

His ungrammatical English makes him a funny character provoking laughter in the reader every time he speaks. For example, in reference to Doga's statement that an innocent man is in prison because of Adika, Mulili says, 'That no matter, he go against law and order, tell us new thing or make clear out of here. You are trespasser.' (pg 10)

When Nina says that they do not want to be shown letter because their hope has been killed, Mulili tells them, "Your people full of primitive; instead going to find how the other is, they comes and gets stick with dead one." (pg 10)

He mixes up simple sayings. For example, when he comes late for the meeting of the entertainment committee that is preparing for the head of state, he tells the other, "Gentlemen, I am very sorrowful, but I always say, better never than late" (pg 54) When telling Boss about Kabito, he says, 'The one, he be a green grass in the snake.' (pg 59)

He quickly changes things he had said to suit himself. For instance, he reports that Kabito died in an accident because he was driving while under the influence of alcohol. Nicodemo asks, "His breath did you say?" He retreats, "who said breath I said his body smelled whiskies?" (pg 63)

Short tempered/temperamental

Mulili falls out with people on many occasions because of his short temper. For example, when Doga pleads with him to let him carry on with the shaving ceremony, he loses his temper.

Nina gets angry with him and threatens to strip naked, but he is not moved.

Doga curses him to die like Adika but he responds, ".....you tell him me I am a man with action not words, come on tell....." (pg 10)

Mulili abuses Kabito a goat when the latter refuses to apologise to him (pg 57)

Sycophant/fanatical

He does all he can to please the authority (Boss). For example, he does not agree with Jere to let Doga and Nina perform the shaving ceremony for their late son even when Jere feels they can allow the couple to do it under supervision.

He is very proud of having undeservingly won the milk tender. This is because he is Boss' cousin. He is impressed by the way he got the tender. "What happen to Mr. Mulili tender supply for milk?.....You knows, who is speaking! I it's me, Boss himself and no bloody vice-deputy." (pg 54)

He does everything to impress Boss and make him think he is loyal. He even suggests that people should go on holiday during the visit by the foreign head of state, so that everyone can

line up along the road to receive him. This is against logic because, according to Kabito, this is the final term and most school children will be sitting their exams and cannot afford to line up along the road.

He was a soldier and now a farmer but still insist on being part of the authority. For example, he has the audacity to criticize university lecturers for allegedly going against policy. He also says that university students should co-operate with the government because, “We pays for their fees, we pays for their luxury, we give them all necessary, who are they?” (pg 56)

When he goes for the rehearsal, he tells Boss, “Yes, your excellent. I say myself: go and be with cousin as he sees the final one.” (pg 69)

Roles

- Mulili symbolizes the excesses of Boss;-
- He is portrayed as cruel, greedy, vengeful and dictatorial. Tumbo says of him, ‘the most of the advisers is that of his, Mulili.’ (pg 44)
- Through him the character of Jere is brought out a principled when the latter amidst Mulili’s objections insists that Adika’s shaving ceremony will proceed as scheduled.
- He enhances the themes of misuse of power, corruption and self-preservation. The writer has effectively employed use of humour through Mulili.

TUMBO

Tumbo is a government official and a confidant of Boss, the Head of state. He is Regina’s landlord and chairman of the committee charged with the responsibility of organizing entertainment for the visiting of head of state. Despite his limited education, he has managed to acquire wealth and enjoys immense influence owing to his close association to the Boss.

Hypocritical/insincere

He is a beneficiary of Boss’ government yet given an opportunity he criticizes his regime and those working for it. About Mulili he says, “That is why he retired from the army. Until people like him are out, it is dangerous to seem to do things differently in Kafira.’ (pg 44-45)

Corrupt

He says that he would not have acquired the blocks of buildings he has if he had ‘depended o empty talk’ like the university students who he feels talk too much. He says, ‘you were born alone and when you die, you will die alone....’ This implies that he has used fraudulent means to acquire property.

He pretends to be a socialist when he offers Juser the chance to write the play to entertain the visiting head of state. He says, ‘You see, the whole program has cost the government

some quarter of a million shillings. In fact, I had a mind of writing the play myself, but I thought better of it.....eat and let eat.’ (pg 44)

He says a sum of money has been allocated for a play-writing competition but he does not organise the competition. Instead he gives the opportunity to Jusper, of the six hundred pounds meant to finance the competition, he gives one third to Jusper and Regina and says the rest ‘will be used to put records straight’ (pg 49)

Sycophantic

He has secured his place in the entertainment committee by virtue of his unflinching support for the government. He tells the other committee members, “ I trust, gentlemen, that you know why you are in this committee. You were nominated for one reason, your unflinching support of our government (pg 52-53)

Cowardly

He does not live up to what he believes in. He strongly believes that until people like Mulili are out of the government, ‘It is dangerous to seem to do things differently in Kafira.’ (Pg 44-45)

He convinces Regina to go and see Boss even though he knows well Boss’ weakness for women. When Regina is hesitant, he tells her, ‘We can’t afford to make him angry at this stage.’ (pg 46)

When Kabito is eliminated and Jusper insists on standing for truth and justice even if it will cost him another year at the university, Tumbo tells him. ‘if you knew what has happened to one of us at the committee, I am sure you would postpone your eagerness to stand by truth and justice.’ (pg 62)

Ignorant/inefficient/careless

He does not know who Soyinka is. He thinks he is a prime minister of a certain country he purports to have forgotten. He even insists he is a politician.

He does not realize that the achievement Jusper says will be highlighted in the play is meant to portray the government that Tumbo serves in bad light.

Mosese says that it is out of his inefficiency that they are able to carry out the palace coup.s

Gullible

He played along to Mosese, Jere and Jusper’s plot to bring down Boss. Mosese says that it was largely through his inefficiency that they achieved their objective. (pg 74)

Jusper is able to convince him that he is Regina's cousin.

Illiterate

When Jusper tells him that he drinks as much as he (Tumbo) drank off the pocket money he got during his university days, a visibly embarrassed Tumbo attempts to justify his limited education by claiming that though he qualified for university admission, he sold the scholarship since his family was poor (pg 41)

Roles

Tumbo contributes significantly to the development of the plot of the play;

- i) Being Boss' confidant he comes out as a major beneficiary of Boss' regime.
- ii) Towards the end of the play, he confesses that he was trained but given the wrong job. This aspect portrays him as sycophantic.
- iii) It is through his inefficiency that the plot by Mosese, Jusper and Jere to topple Boss succeeds.
- iv) Through him, we get to know Jusper's character as daring and outspoken and Regina as trusting.
- v) He also highlights the themes of fear, self-preservation and misuse of power.
- vi) Through him several aspects of style have been effectively used by the writer. They include foreshadow, satire, play within a play and suspense.

BOSS

He is the president of Kafira and cousin to Mulili. He plays the role of the chief of staff in the rehearsal. His wife is called Mercedes.

Authoritative/over-strict

Boss leads the country with an iron fist. He wants everything to go his way and cannot stand anyone who appears to block his orders and decisions and he cannot brook dissent. He has signed the death warrants of very many innocent people including Kabito, Adika, Doga and Nina.

He warns Jusper against students' protests during the rehearsal. He even brags of having given three hundred jobs to expatriates just to prove a point to the protesters.

Corrupt

According to Mulili, Boss has acquired a lot of wealth and banked the money in foreign accounts. When Mulili tells him that Kabito was spreading such allegations he shouts, "who gave him that information, just how much does Kabito know about me?" (pg 59). This seems to confirm his corrupt nature.

He orders that the tender awarded to Kabito be revoked and given to Mulili. Boss is also notorious for nepotism. He assigns powerful positions to his uneducated and inexperienced kinsmen in order to secure his interests. He also gives jobs to expatriates in return for foreign donations and funding.

He demands that prisoners stage a play for the guest president in order to portray national unity and the involvement of prisoners in national matters. He does this to make an impression that would attract funding.

Through Mulili we get to learn that he has stashed huge amounts of money in foreign accounts which has brought down the economy of Kafira.

Temperamental/impatient/cruel/brutal

Regina says that boss is reported to have a short temper. Tumbo says that Boss is known to make hasty decisions and stand by them. When instructing Mulili to get rid of Kabito, he impatiently orders Mulili out of the palace. Tumbo says that when Boss is angry he does not differentiate between a human being and a rat. He also refers to him as an animal.

Proud/conceited

He says that students do not understand what truth and justice is. He says that their protest against foreign expatriates led to the death of a student leader and the imprisonment of a lecturer.

To put them in their place, he brings in three hundred more expatriate personnel just to prove his point. He says that five of them are his own personal appointments.

Immoral/amorous

He has a ridiculous weakness for women according to Tumbo. He also attempts to rape Regina who is forced to escape by jumping a ten foot high window.

Incompetent/ inefficient

He relies on hearsay and propaganda to run the affairs of the state. He admits that Kabito has been one of his loyal servants.

He allows prisoners to handle fire arms during the rehearsal which they use to stage the palace coup.

Vengeful/Vindictive

He is averse to criticism. He orders the killing of Kabito since it is alleged that he (Kabito) raised serious allegations about his integrity. He tells Juser that since the university students questioned his appointment of expatriate personnel, just to put them in their place, he orders three hundred more expatriate personnel.

Gullible

He falls for Mosese, Jere, and Juser's trick and orders the guards to surrender their guns to be used as props.

Suspicious

He has deliberately put Mulili on the entertainment committee to report directly to him if something should seem to be going wrong. He suspects Tumbo of being behind Kabito's action to discredit him. 'Tumbo must have a hand in this' (pg 59)

ROLES

- i. Boss is the architect of the misrule in Kafira.
- ii. He has allowed his advisers such as Mulili to unleash terror to innocent civilians.
- iii. He is a central character since the events in the story centre around his misrule.
- iv. He brings out the character of Mulili as vindictive when Mulili convinces him on the need to eliminate Kabito. He also helps bring out the character of Tumbo as sycophantic.
- v. Through him several themes are highlighted such as misuse of power, betrayal, and social injustice.
- vi. He enhances several stylistic devices such as play within a play, suspense, satire and symbolism.

ASKARI

He is a prison warder and is mandated to keep watch over Jere and Mosese.

Cruel/intimidating

Even though Jere was once a soldier like him, he threatens to teach him a lesson or two if Jere calls him his friend again.

He also warns Jere that he has once killed a man in that very cell

Hypocritical

He tells Jere that they are giving consideration to his future ‘despite his contribution to the national headache.’ He pretends to be doing Jere a favour and says he should be filling in forms for his rehabilitation.

He says that experts have to be called in to give meaning to data collected in the various research centres that the government has put up and which show that rehabilitation of prisoners is invaluable. He goes ahead to say that this is not the type of work ‘any of these local pretenders would handle.’ (pg 17)

MOSESE

He is a former university lecturer who is later imprisoned for criticizing the ruling elite.

Friendly/sociable

He easily makes friends with Jere in prison. He also shares his views with Jere . For example, when Jere tells him that he was a soldier before he came to face to face with reality, Mosese tells him that fire has always been there. (pg 22)

He explains to Jere the reason he had changed his name –an illegal drug was planted on him by a man bearing the same name as him (Nicodemus) leading to his imprisonment.

Intelligent/observant

He was a university lecturer. He is also able to see through the scheme that the authorities have. They intend to use prisoners to act a play to entertain a visiting Head of state to symbolize national unity and therefore build confidence in the visitor to encourage him to invest more in Kafira.

Together with Jere and Jusper, he intelligently carries out a palace coup.

Principled

Initially, he refuses to participate in a play to be performed for the visiting head of state. “I will not bend so low.” (pg 26). ‘I cannot do it. Among my friends, that would be equivalent to kneeling in front of Boss and pleading for mercy.’ (pg 27)

His change of name was influenced by Boss decision to change his. He changed his name since the man who planted a drug on him to implicate him shared a name with him (Nicodemus) (pg 25)

Selfless

Even though he is not related to Adika who is just one among his many students, he protests his killing and fights injustice but the reward for his effort was imprisonment.

Daring

Together with Jusper and Jere he agrees to take part in a potentially dangerous plot to bring down Boss through a play meant for entertaining the visiting head of state. The plan may not work hence they may be labelled traitors.

Sceptical/Hopeless/pessimistic

After being sent to prison on trumped up charges, he loses faith in the freedom of Kafira. When told that the release of six hundred prisoners will depend on his participation in the play to entertain the visiting head of state, it only makes him feel like he is betraying what he believes in. He feels it would be like kneeling down ‘in front of Boss and pleading for mercy’ for something he has not done. (pg 28)

He does not believe in the Bible teachings that Jere seems to believe in. For example, he says, ‘That is why I don’t believe in such crap as the last shall be first, and blessed are the poor for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven!.....’ (pg 28)

When Jere tells him that things will change, he says, ‘.....that is why I prefer to wait and see. I will stay here and remain loyal to my principles. (pg 28)

Roles

- i. Mosese helps highlight the plight of the educated elite in Kafira.
- ii. Boss’ regime seems to deliberately persecute university lectures like Mosese and university student’s whom he perceives as his most potent critics. Mosese is arrested and imprisoned for protesting the mistreatment of the family of his late student (Adika) during the funeral, weeping in public is made illegal for the academic staff.
- iii. Through him, the character of Askari is brought out as brutal and inhuman.
- iv. He helps develop among other themes the themes of selflessness and misuse of power.
- v. He also highlights play within a play, satire and suspense among other stylistic devices.

REGINA

She is sister of Mosese and Jusper Wendo’s girlfriend. Her concern for her brother and boyfriend is responsible for her confrontational nature. She pleads with Jusper as well as Mosese to co-operate with the authorities.

Fearful/cowardly

She is so afraid of the laid down rules that she demands that Jusper removes the red gown as it makes him appear dangerous. She fears that he might be killed for being a 'red guard'

She pleads with Jusper not to talk of revenge for the death of his parents and brother. She says, 'Jusper, you promised. You promised to be a good boy. Do you now talk of revenge?' (pg 33)

Jusper tells her that she seems to have lost her fighting spirit like everyone else in the street.

Principled

She refuses to succumb to Boss' compromising demands and escapes by jumping from a ten foot high window.

Trusting

She believes that Tumbo will speak to Boss on her behalf. She is convinced that boss will replace the political prisoners to mark the visit of foreign head of state.

When Jusper asks her, 'do you think he means it?' she responds, 'he does. He says he will be in charge of the whole thing himself. And don't forget he is Boss' right hand man.' (pg 37)

ROLES

- i. Regina highlights major problems affecting Kafira, which is a disillusioned citizenry.
- ii. She berates her boyfriend Jusper for being critical of Boss, According to her, nothing good will come out of Jusper's continued antagonism towards the government. She is willing to allow the status quo to remain out of fear for the well-being of her loved ones.
- iii. She pleads with Jusper to stop his agitation, pointing out that Jusper and her brother Mosese are the only people she has in this world, but Mosese was in and that left Jusper to either build or destroy her. (pg 32)
- iv. She brings the character of as traitorous. Out pd good will she agrees to meet him only for Boss to try to rape her.
- v. She also brings put the portrayal of Jusper as principled and selfless. Through her, the author successfully brings out the themes of betrayal, sexual immorality and misuse of power. The author's effective use of stylistic devices such as satire and humour can also be attributed to her.

DOGA

He is Nina's husband and father to Jusper and the later Adika.

Suspicious

Doga believes that the individual responsible for the death of their son Adika lives among them. His suspicion is raised by evidence on Adika's grave. (pg 1)

Forthright/open/candid

He tells his wife to calm down when she acts nervous about the violation of their late son's grave and says, 'What sort of a mother are you?'

He also disagrees with his wife about informing the sub-chief about the crack on the grave. He can't imagine informing the sub-chief because it is his brother who killed his son.

He would rather cheat the ancestors than follow protocol of a wicked government.

He also curse Mulili when he proves adamant about allowing them to carry on with the shaving ceremony. He tells him, 'May you die the way Adika did.' (pg 10)

Optimistic

He believes that Juser is Okay where he is. 'Juser is alright where he is.' (pg 2)

Perceptive

He is able to identify Jere as Kaleka's son despite the later wearing a cap. (pg 9)

Dishonest

He is determined to cover up any evil on his son's grave by filling the crack on the grave with soil so that the shaving ceremony can go on.

Stubborn/determined

He is determined to have his late son's shaving ceremony go on despite the pleas from his wife that people might boycott the ceremony if they knew about the crack in the grave.

Grateful/appreciative

He is grateful to Jere for informing them about the whereabouts of Juser. As a form of gratitude he offers him a pocket bible. 'Kaleka's son, I have nothing to give you, (handing him a pocket bible) take this.' (pg 12)

Rational/realistic

He tells his wife that they need not to cry since tears are for the young and their own wells are dry.

Devoted/religious

His devotion is depicted by the song he sings with his wife and the prayer he says with her. Later on, he gives Jere a bible.

NINA

She is Doga's wife and mother to Jusper and the late Adika.

Motherly/concerned

She mourns the death of her son and wonders why people would kill him. She is heart broken by the people who come to interfere with his grave and she cannot stand it.

The death of her son sends her into mourning. She begs Mulili to allow them to allow them to carry on with the shaving ceremony.

She is concerned about the whereabouts of Jusper when she finds that he is not guarding the grave.

Emotional

She weeps besides her son's grave

Determined/daring

When Mulili refuses to allow her to carry out the shaving ceremony, she threatens to strip naked and cause him blindness.

Honest

She feels that the evil done to her son's grave should not be hidden. According to her, one cannot outwit their ancestors. She suggests to her husband that they report the evil to the sub-chief. 'It would be wrong for us to sit on this evil.' (pg 3)

Religious

She tells her husband that they need to commit the day on God's hands. They sing and later she invokes a prayer.

Fearful

She is concerned about her son Jusper's safety when they fail to find him at Adika's grave. 'But where is he now? Doga, my heart fails me. (pg 2)

STYLE AND LANGUAGE

SATIRE

Satire is a form of writing where an individual or society is ridiculed or where the foolishness of an idea, practice or custom is shown. It's a form of criticism of vices through or by use of humour.

The writer portrays the evils of the society in a rather humorous way. From the beginning of the play, he depicts the government as insensitive to the needs of its own people. Adika is shot dead by the sub-chief's brother for leading a demonstration against the employment of many expatriates. Chagaga is jailed and later released because he shot Adika in 'self-defence' other than listen to the protest of the people and consider their demands; the government executes those who oppose its ideas.

Government officials such as Askari and Mulili are satirised for their cruelty. They have little regard for human life. Askari mistreats prisoners under his watch such as Jere. He repeatedly threatens Jere and even informs him that he has killed a man in the very cell Jere is in. Mulili has no qualms taking away human life.

Mulili and Boss have been satirized for being traitorous. Boss betrays the trust bestowed on him by his subjects. Instead of being a servant leader, he has become a tyrant. A peaceful demonstration by university students is violently dispersed leading to the death of a student; Adika. Instead of securing jobs for the citizens of his country he has resorted to importation of expatriates. His leadership is also characterized by intimidation, assassination and corruption. Mulili is a beneficiary of Boss' misrule. Ironically, when tables are turned on Boss by Jere, Jusper and Mosese, he betrays Boss and blames him for the ills in Kafira as well as for killing Kabito. He urges Jere to Kill Boss.

Tumbo a government official's inefficiency is satirized. He uses his position to benefit himself. He claims that the reason he never got proper education is that his parents were poor and so he sold his scholarship. He fails in his duty to set up a writing competition, feigns ignorance that it took place and gives the opportunity to Jusper who grabs it to turn against the president and his cronies. When he visits Regina, Tumbo sends Jusper for beer claiming that it is tough being a government official. When we do not quite see what is tough in his line of duty.

Tumbo is happy when Jusper highlights in the play the influx of expatriate is a sign of potential progress.

Mulili is satirised for being insensitive to the rights of children. He suggests that during the head of state's visit, all children and adults should line up on the road to welcome the visitor despite the fact that it's the final term and most of the children will be sitting for exams.

IRONY

SITUATIONAL IRONY

After the death of Adika, Juser went wild singing songs of vengeance and as a result he is taken away by agents of the government to be cooled down. He was said to be dangerous to peace loving people. It is ironical that when he was brought back after three months, he has instead worsened and people said he was mad. (pg 4-5)

In prison, one is not allowed to talk too much. It doesn't pay to talk a lot. It is ironical that askari takes great exception to Mosese's silence and tries to force him to talk. Due to the fact that the prison authorities know Mosese as being talkative they will not allow him to keep quiet and demand that he explains what he is keeping quiet about.

It is ironical that though while in prison one is expected to show consistency of character and a marked improvement, one cannot afford to stick to one's principles otherwise he will never leave jail.

According to Jere, the character in the Pilate story (his fellow inmate) did not want to be Pilate and instead insisted on being Jesus. The said character did not know that being Jesus meant receiving canes and when Jere caned him, he wailed and Jere was subsequently punished (it was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth) (pg 23)

It is ironical that it will take a state visitor to have political prisoners released in Kafira. Jere tells askari that innocence can be an offence. This statement is given credence by the fact that Jere and Mosese are in prison, not because of committing an offence but standing for the truth.

Tumbo says that a sum of money has been allocated for a play-writing competition and adds that the democratic part of it is that anyone has to participate yet in actual sense, there is no competition. He goes ahead to pronounce Juser as the winner of the non-existence competition. News of Juser's win will be in the papers the following week.

It's ironical that Tumbo will not accept the suggestion that the visiting head of state visits the upcountry to see the progress in agriculture despite the fact that the head of state offered technicians for the said progress.

Kabito's attack on the government that Mulili and his likes choke Kafira is ironical since he is a major beneficiary of the system. His appointment to the entertainment committee is reward for his loyalty to Boss. It is also ironical that by pointing out the truth, he is accused of sowing seeds of discord among the other people.

According to Boss, grey hair symbolizes wisdom. It is therefore ironic that he is determined to remove all strands of grey hair, claiming that a leader should have grey hair. (pg 58)

DRAMATIC IRONY

As Jusper enters, Doga hides behind the bush. The audience as well as Nina is aware of Doga's whereabouts but Jusper is not.

Jusper asks Tumbo if he had come to see his (Jusper's) cousin, The readers as well as Jusper know that Regina is the girlfriend to Jusper and not his cousin but Tumbo doesn't.

Mulili is not aware that Tumbo and Nicodemo are already aware of Kabito's death. Tumbo tells Nicodemo, "Here he comes. Remember we know nothing." (enter Mulili) (pg 62)

Boss, Tumbo and Mulili are not aware of the plot by Mosese, Jere, and Jusper to topple Boss who is duped into ordering the guards to surrender their guns to be used during the final rehearsal of the play. The readers on the other hand are aware of the plot by the three.

IMAGERY

The writer has employed the use of figurative language in the play. Metaphors and similes have been used as follows;

I. Similes

"He was slaughtered like a goat." This shows how Adika was killed mercilessly. While referring to this co-actor in the Pilate story, Jere says of him. 'he wailed like a woman in a death home' (pg 23) This is a pointer of the cowardice of the individual.

While referring to the terror inflicted on the citizens by Boss and his henchmen, Jusper tells Regina, they come quietly when you are least expecting and before you realize it, they have pounced on you like hungry leopards.' (pg 32)

Jusper goes on to say, "I defended his remains like a man." (pg 34) This shows his determination and bravery in ensuring that his brother's grave was not desecrated.

II. Metaphor

Mulili tells Jere, "Big coward Jere, you a woman" (pg 10) The implication here is that Jere is a coward for sympathising with Nina and Doga.

Jusper tells Regina, "Adika died for the truth.....he was killed for asking whether or not we were on the right train" (pg 34). Jusper here is adverting that Adika died for questioning how the country was being governed.

Tumbo tells Juser that there is a good potato in the work they are about to do in reference to money.

Mulili refers to Jere as chicken hearted (pg 44)

ALLUSION

Allusion refers to reference to something or someone else without the context of a given text.

The writer makes several allusions in reference to the Bible. When Jere canes his cell mate as they act out the part of Jesus Christ and Pilate, he finds himself in trouble when the cell mate cries out. He is stripped naked and caned. He tells them it was a case of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This is a verse in the Bible.

The above story is an allusion to the Biblical crucifixion of Jesus. Many citizens of Kafira have been crucified innocently just like Jesus and many others are the pilates that beat up Christ. Doga, Nina and Kabito are among those who die needless deaths. The pilates are exemplified by the likes of Boss and Mulili.

Mosese alludes to the biblical inheritance of the Kingdom of heaven in reference to their high expectations after independence. When they are told that their kingdom (independence) has come, it turns out to be an allusion.

Mosese also alluded to the bible when he says ‘.....the last shall be first and blessed are the poor for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.’ (pg 27) Mosese questions the validity of this bible verse by pointing out the disappointment of the masses. He is disillusioned that people had placed their hope in Boss’ regime, only to be disappointed by the turn of events.

Boss tells Juser that when he was acting, he used to be given bad roles. He would die for mistakes that were not his. Juser tells him, “I would say it’s sacrifice” A kind of death for a future. The sort of role Christ played’ (pg 66)

While referring to this mother, Mosese tells Jere, “once every year she slaughtered a cock to mark the birth of Christ” (pg 28) Christmas is alluded here.

SYMBOLISM

After Adika’s burial following his killing Nina says that his death has made them blind and left them in blindness. This words ‘blind’ and blindness symbolize the state of hopelessness or disillusionment of Doga and Nina.

Reference is made to the word ‘potato’. Nicodemo asks Kabito “did you get the potato?” Potato refers to the university tender.

Kabito insists on knowing their terms of service and Nicodemo proceeds to ask the size of potato per hour they are entitled to (pg 53) This is in reference to allowance due to them. 'Potato' symbolizes corruption that is rampant in Kafira.

Boss orders an Askari to untie the hands of Mosese and Jere (pg 70) The act of untying the two symbolizes their freedom and by extension salvation for the citizens of Kafira.

Askari is a symbol of oppression. Political prisoners like Jere and Mosese are mistreated while in prison. The brutality of the regime is evident when Askari says of Mosese '.....when they brought him in last night, he was all questions. We calculated that two mature strokes would ease the tension (pg 19) He informs Jere that he has once killed a man in that very cell. (pg 30)s

The gun is a symbol of power. The moment the Askaris surrender their guns to Jere, Mosese and Jisper, power shifts from Boss to the three. Mulili, Boss and Tumbo are at the mercy of the three.

The reappearance of Doga and Nina at the end of the play after the killing of Mulili is a symbol of change in Kafira, their reappearance at the graveside which now is for Mulili shows that the social order of injustice and misrule exemplified by poor advisors like Mulili has been done away with and now they expect a new Kafira with better leadership and justice.

HUMOUR

The writer has employed humour in his play. He portrays Mulili humorously. His broken English and barely comprehensible talks ease the tense moments that keep building in the play. Some of the funny statements he makes include;

The green grass in the snake instead of the green snake in the grass to refer to hypocrites.

Sometimes I wonder why you possession that thing between your legs

You must apology to me this, now (pg 57)

You plays with fire you goat!

Mulili's attempt to communicate in English is laughable. "Who you call child eeh? Jere you tell him. Tell him what I does with stubborn old mens' (pg 8)

"Big coward. Why you doesn't let her get on with it. How many I have seen and I am still Mulili with my two eyes, natural? Look, no goggles" (pg 9)

Mulili's disjointed English is a pointer to his limited education. This is an indication of Boss' leadership which regards individuals not on the basis of their qualifications but on the basis of blood relationship and perceived loyalty.

Mosese says he has no front when asked by Askari, "What do you think you are doing showing us your back?" (pg 18)

While responding to Tumbo's question whether Juser drinks, Regina replies, 'there is no brand of beer he hasn't tasted.' (pg 41)

In a bid to cover up the heinous crime he has committed Mulili says, "I also ask that, people say his breath smelled full of spirits. That hard stuff" (pg 63) When cornered by Nicodemo he says, "Who said breath, I said his body smelled whiskies." Humour here is used to portray the wicked and cruel nature of Mulili and clearly points out his direct involvement in the killing of Kabito.

On realizing that tables have been turned in his cousin Boss and the guns are now in the hands of Jere and Mosese, Mulili says, "I go for short call" (pg 72)

Juser refers to Regina as girlfriend number one (pg 6). Here humour is used to relieve the tension building up following the desecration of Adika's grave.

It is ridiculously funny how Tumbo confuses Wole Soyinka a renowned writer, for a Prime minister and a politician.

PROVERBS

Proverbs are pithy statements that are mainly employed to give advice or to caution. Several instances of proverbs are evident in the text.

The writer has used proverbs to illustrate the wisdom of Doga and his realistic nature. He says, "a mouse does not share a bowl with a cat." (pg 3) which implies that they cannot share mutual relationship with the sub-chief whose brother, Chagaga, is responsible for the death of Adika

When Nina suggests that they should report to the sub-chief what has just happened to the grave, Doga uses a proverb to explain her failure to see the futility of her actions. Thus he says, '....when dry thunder tears the sky before our eyes, do we forget the storm of yesterday?' (pg 3)

Doga insists that the shaving ceremony must go on regardless of the obstacles that they face. He uses a proverb. "A cloudy sky does not always cry rain" (pg 3)

Kabito tells Nicodemo, “the tree climber begins from the bottom, not top’ (pg 53). Through this proverb, Kabito wishes to be informed the terms of service of the committee before their meeting. The portrayal of Kabito is that of a materialistic, greedy and self-centred individual.

FORESHADOW

A foreshadow is a premonition that something is going to happen. Authors use words, signs or events to prepare readers for something that is just to occur.

Doga foreshadows Mulili’s death when he says ‘Empty words will be your downfall. May you die the way Adika did’ (pg 10) His words come to pass when Jusper shoots Mulili.

After his parents are murdered in exchange for his release, Jusper says, “I will get my revenge someday, even if it means going alone” (pg 33) His words are fulfilled when he shoots Mulili dead.

While reacting to Tumbo’s insistence that she must personally see Boss to secure her brother’s release, Regina says, “I have this funny feeling that something will go wrong’ (pg 45) Her fears are justified when later on Boss forcefully tries to get her and she is only able to escape by jumping out of a ten foot high window.

Mulili foreshadows the arrest and imprisonment of Jere when he threatens him; “Hey you.....you shall pay for it” (pg 15)

Boss foreshadows his near death when he says, just before the rehearsal; ‘In four out of five cases I had to die for little mistakes that were not my own.....”(pg 66)

The reappearance of Doga and Nina at the end of the play after the killing of Mulili foreshadows the change in Kafira, their reappearance at the graveside which now is for Mulili shows that the social order of injustice and misrule exemplified by poor advisors like Mulili has been done away with and now they expect a new Kafira with better leadership and justice.

PLAY WITHIN A PLAY

The play written by Jusper is entitled Betrayal in the City and captures the event of the palace coup so aptly, In this play prisoners stage a palace coup and exposes the villains in the government who are finally gotten rid of.

Tumbo, the inefficient government official is ordered out of the centre of power and Mulili, the embodiment of evil is killed.

Boss’ life is spared even when he offers himself to be shot- as a sign that there is hope for change in Kafira.

USE OF SONG

The writer has used a song on pg 8;

When we walk with the Lord

In the light of his way...

.....But trust and obey.

This song and the subsequent prayer indicate that the couple can only turn to God for solace after all else has failed. Generally, it is their hope in life because under the Kafira government, they can only trust and obey.

It portrays them as religious despite the challenges they are facing. They are seeking for answers through divine intervention.

The song and the prayer summarize their total sense of loss and their deep religious devotion

CROSS PURPOSE

This style is used in reference to individuals talking about different things in the course of their conversation without realizing it.

The first incident of cross purpose is when Doga, Nina and Jusper appear not to communicate and their statements overlap. When Jusper is at cross purpose with Doga and Nina. Jusper appears not to communicate with his parents and their statements overlap. When Jusper is referring to a murder he committed at night, his mother thinks that he imagines killing his father. Doga tells Nina not to detain Jusper and instead allow him to go for he is a nuisance. Jusper responds, “he can’t go he is dead” (pg 6) Jusper is referring to Adika;s murderer (Chagaga) while his mother means that Doga is dead.

Jusper and Nina also speak in cross purpose on (pg 7) when Jusper asks “...shall I go and confess idid it?” to which Nina answers “yes my son, go and put on a clean shirt and then you can confess” Nina thinks Jusper is talking about the ceremony whereas Jusper is talking about confessing that he had killed Chagaga.

Mosese and Jere talk at cross purpose. (pg 30-31) While Mosese in his reverie, seems to be talking to imaginary persons. Jere’s questions punctuate his reverie. In his attempt to understand Mosese’s talk, he finally concludes,

When the madness of an entire nation disturbs a solitary mind, it is not enough to say the man is mad. (pg 33)

BETRAYAL IN THE CITY ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. The Elites play a major role in salvaging countries marred by poor governance. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
2. The government of Kafira is a dictatorial regime that doesn't mind the suffering of the masses. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
3. Revenge is a vicious cycle that needs to be stopped since it hinders development. Explain the veracity of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
4. Kafira is an epitome of corruption in the developing countries. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
5. Deceit reigns in situations of poor governance and with them comes conflict. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
6. A state can be brought down if its leadership thrives on cronism and poor advisors. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
7. Kafira's woes can be attributed to the inefficiency of its leadership. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
8. Betrayal in the city is a perfect satire of the ills in third world countries. . Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Francis Imbuga's *Betrayal in the City*
9. Bad governance creates room for economic opportunism. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
10. Mulili is an embodiment of evil attributes. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
11. Many people in Kafira are traitorous. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
12. Strikes come with many adverse effects. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
13. Write an essay explaining the relevance of the title BETRAYAL IN THE CITY. from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
14. "THE OUTSIDE OF THIS CELL MIGHT AS WELL BE THE INSIDE OF ANOTHER" from instances in the play write an essay justifying Jere's assertion drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
15. Oppression breeds misery and conflict. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
16. The situation in Kafira has bred despondency amongst its citizens. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga
17. Many events and actions in *Betrayal in the City* are triggered by the need for revenge. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE BY BERTOLT BRECHT

THE AUTHOR

Bertolt Brecht was a German poet , playwright and theatrical reformer. He was born in 1898 and became one of the most prominent figures in the 20th-century theater. Bertolt Brecht was concerned with encouraging audiences to think rather than becoming too involved in the story line and to identify with the characters. Bertolt Brecht was born in Augsburg, the son of Beltold Brecht, the director of a paper company, and Sophie Brezing, the daughter of a civil servant. His father was a Catholic, and his mother a Protestant. Both parents hailed from Achern in the Black Forest. Brecht began to write poetry as a boy, and had his first poems published in 1914. Between 1919 and 1921 he wrote theatre criticisms for the left-wing Socialist paper Die Augsburger. After military service as a medical orderly, he returned to his studies, but abandoned them in 1921. During the Bavarian revolutionary turmoil of 1918, Brech wrote his first play, *Baal*. From this period also dates his poem, '*Legend of the Dead Soldier*'. It was cited by the Nazis as one of their strong reasons to deprive him of German citizenship in 1935. Like several other poems, it was set to music by the author, and sung to the accompaniment of his guitar in a Berlin cabaret. Brecht's works have been translated into

42 languages and sold over 70 volumes. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* was written in 1944 in Hollywood. Drawing on the Greek tradition, he wanted his theater to represent a forum for debate hall rather than a place of illusions. He aimed to take emotion out of the production, persuade the audience to distance from the make believe characters and urge actors to dissociate from their roles. Then the political truth would be more easy to comprehend. Once he said: "Nothing is more important than learning to think crudely. Crude thinking is the thinking of great men." Brecht formulated his literary theories much in reaction to Georg Lukács (1885-1971), a Hungarian philosopher and Marxist literary theoretician. He disapproved Lukács attempt to distinguish between good realism and bad naturalism. He died in 1956.

SETTING

The Caucasus is a region that bridges Europe and Asia. The Caucasus is divided by the Caucasian mountain ranges into two regions:

The northern slopes of the mountains reach into Chechnya and other border states of the former Soviet Union

On the southern side of the mountains are the modern-day countries Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Grusinia, where *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* takes place, is a fictionalized version of the modern day countries; Georgia and Azerbaijan towards the end of the WWII in 1944.

The play was translated to English by Eric Bentley.

The play is a comedy, with a happy ending.

The play is based on communism i.e. whoever can make the best use of resources in order to provide for others deserves to get the best of the resources.

Brecht shows communism through three stories;

- i) The ownership of a piece of land between goat herders and fruit farmers. In the end through arbitrators, the fruit farmers get the valley because they will use the land better.
- ii) The story about Grusha the kitchen maid, through the use of Solomonic law: Solomon and the baby (from the bible). Grusha gets the baby because she deserves him.
- iii) The story about Judge Azdak. His fair judging in favour of the peasants made him very popular especially among the poor.

THE TITLE

The Caucasian Chalk Circle is derived from a circle Judge Azdak orders Shauwa to draw, ".....get a piece of chalk and draw a circle on the floor." (pg 97). Its purpose is to determine Michael's real mother. Both Natella Abashwili and Grusha Vashnadze desire custodian of the child.

Shauwa is directed to place the child in the circle and the mother to hold him by the hands and pull him out. Whoever pulls him out of the circle would retain him.

It is ironical that Natella, Michael's biological mother, is denied custody of the child when she pulls him out. Grusha declines to tear the child and consequently ends with the child. The title symbolically signifies the possibility of surrendering what might be rightfully yours for better utilization.

The play infers from both a Chinese play (Circle of chalk written in 1300 AD) and a biblical story (The judgement of Solomon- 1 Kings 3: 16-28)

In the Chinese story, a young girl, HAI-tang, bears a child as the second wife of a wealthy man. His first wife claims the child is her own. However, the second wife is judged the true mother when she refuses to pull the child apart in the test of the Chalk Circle.

In the biblical story, two women live in the same house and both bear a child. One baby dies in the night and its mother swaps him for the living baby. Both claim the living child is their own. Solomon orders that the child be cut in two and each half be given to each mother. The real mother of the child gives up the child rather than see him harmed and is judged to be the true mother.

The agriculturist and herders are seated in circles as they negotiate and in the end the herders agree to surrender their claim on the valley of Rosa Luxemburg since they would put it to better use.

SYNOPSIS

The Caucasian Chalk Circle begins with a prologue which captures a dispute between two communities; the fruit growing and the goat farming one. The clash is over who should own and manage the valley. The Goat Farm Commune Group is the original owner who had relocated due to the advancing Hitler's army. The fruit growing Commune has demonstrated interest in the piece of land. A delegate from Tiflis-the capital of the Soviet State of Georgia-has been sent to settle the dispute.

The Fruit Growing Collective Farm has made elaborate arrangements of irrigating the valley so as to make it more productive. The delegate awards the land to the fruit growers because they have plans to use the resources better despite the land originally belonging to the goat farming group.

Act one begins when the city of Grusinia has been taken over by the iron shirts and the governor, Georgi Abashwili, is beheaded in a coup that has been planned by his brother, the Fat Prince and his head fastened on a wall. The governor's wife Natella flees and in the process abandons her child, Michael.

Fortunately, the kitchen maid Grusha salvages the child from the soldiers and the Fat Prince and escapes with him to her brother's place in the Northern Mountains, pursued by soldiers. She endures great suffering in the way, including hostile and uncooperative people. She finally gets to her brother's place but he (the brother) insists that she must be married to an almost 'dying' man by the name Jussup. Jussup has faked illness to avoid taking part in the war. When it is announced that the war is over, Jussup miraculously recovers. Grusha is stuck with a husband she did not want. When

Simon (Grusha's lover) returns from the war, he discovers that Grusha is married and suspects that Michael is her child. Later, the child is taken away from her by some soldiers who claim that he belongs to Natella and he is taken back to the Caucasian village.

Through a flashback, the writer explains how the Grand Duke is sheltered by Azdak, later to be judge, soon after he escapes the bloody coup. However, Azdak is not aware that he is hiding a dangerous fugitive and fearing he might be branded a traitor he presents himself to the soldiers to be tried and soon wins their favour and is installed as judge.

Azdak judges four very weird cases, ruling in each case in favour of the poor. He soon gains reputation for supporting the poor. He serves for two years as a judge, before the return of the Grand Duke. He is arrested for being a 'traitor' and as the soldiers are about to kill him, he is saved by the Grand Duke who recalls that he saved his life. He reappoints him to be the judge.

The major case that Azdak handles is that of Grusha and the child. The governor's wife wants Michael back because without him, she cannot take over the former Governor's wealth. However, Grusha wants to keep the child because she has raised him for the past two years. Interestingly, even Simon offers to support her in the trial. When Azdak listens to the case, he orders a Chalk Circle to be drawn, after he learns what Grusha has done to the child. The child is placed in the middle and orders the two women to pull saying that whoever can pull him out of the circle will get him.

The governor's wife pulls whereas Grusha lets go. This is repeated and finally, AZDAK gives Michael to Grusha. The governor's wife is ordered to leave. Michael's wealth is taken and made into public gardens.

The message the author is passing across is that resources should belong to those who make better use of them- the child to Grusha, just the same way the valley goes to those who will take care of it. In the end, Azdak divorces Grusha from Jussup, paving way for her to get married to Simon. Azdak disappears never to be seen again.

PROLOGUE

Summer of 1945

The play begins with a prologue (an introduction to a play) that captures a conflict between members of two collective farms both who claim a stake in a disputed valley. The two rivals are: Goat Farm Rosa Luxemburg and Fruit Farm Galinsk. The two are neighbours.

The goat herding commune claims to be the original owners of the disputed land until Hitler's armies forced them to relocate. The fruit growing commune has laid down an elaborate plan to irrigate the valley for agricultural purposes. They intend to use a dam across the mountain lake and water seven hundred acres of infertile land and plan to plant vineyards and orchards there

A delegate from the State Reconstruction Commission from Tiflis-the capital city-has been sent to arbitrate on the dispute. He intimates that Goat Farm Rosa Luxemburg occupied the valley before moving East on orders from the government.

The Goat herding commune is now dissatisfied with their new grazing land which they claim is not palatable to their animals. They claim that the valley belongs to them from eternity and the law attests to that. However, members from the Fruit Farm Galinsk explain the reason why they deserve to own the valley.

An amicable solution is finally reached when the land is awarded to the Fruit growing commune and the two groups settle down to eat and drink. Entertainment soon follows when a legendary singer- Arkadi- is invited to perform an old Chinese song entitled, The Chalk Circle. This song is about two stories which have a bearing on their resolved dispute.

The prologue serves several functions; first, it gives the play a unique structure, secondly, enables the playwright to pass on his/her key message and the moral of the play to the reader or audience before he or she watches or reads it. Bertolt roots for communism, that whoever can make good use of something should keep it.

THE NOBLE CHILD

This part opens with Arkadi- the singer narrating a story about Georgi Abashwili, the governor in Grusinia and a rich man who owns numerous horses and soldiers. He is married to Natella and they have a son, Michael.

On the morning of the Easter Sunday, the governor's family goes to church. At the gateway, he is confronted by many beggars and petitioners. Mothers hold emaciated children as people with clutches and petitions beg for money. They complain of high taxes, starvation and bribery. The governor ignores them and soldiers whip them with thick leather whips to keep them away.

Michael-the governor's son and heir- is brought along and the crowd sees him for the first time. He is carried in a decorated carriage and is attended to by two doctors. Even the mighty Prince Kazbeki bows before him at the church door.

Natella informs the prince about the Governor's plan of bringing down the slums to pave way for his garden. The governor has lost interest in the affairs of Grusinian people in spite of the raging war that is taking place. The governor even dismisses a messenger from the city bringing some confidential papers for him saying he can only attend to him after the service. Later the adjutant (an officer who acts as military assistant) informs the messenger that the governor does not wish to receive military news before dinner.

Grusha Vashnadze- governor's kitchen maid- does not attend the service as she has to get a goose for the family's banquet. She is seen talking to Simon Shashava, a soldier, who reveals that he often hides behind a bush to watch her dip her legs in the river as she washes her line.

Before the awaited dinner and a talk with the architects can take place, the palace is surrounded and the Governor arrested. George Abashwili is executed and the city is in bloodshed. Natella's life is in danger. Servants rush out of the house trying to frantically salvage what they can. A scuffle erupts between the two family doctors over who should attend to the governor's wife who has fainted.

Simon comes looking for Grusha. He aims at wooing her. The two have to part ways when Simon is ordered by the adjutant to guard Natella on her way to safety. He gives Grusha a silver chain that his mother had given him. She promises him that she would wait for him and remain faithful till their reunion.

The adjutant is seen trying to save Natella from danger but she is reluctant to go without her most valued essentials. The adjutant forces her on a horse back amidst complaints that she has left her wine-coloured dress. She leaves her child Michael behind who falls into the custody of Grusha the kitchen maid. As everyone flees, Grusha decides to hide the child under a blanket and keeps the baby company throughout the night. The following day she flees with the child from the Ironshirts who together with the Fat Prince are looking for the baby, "It's a pity they took the brat along, though, I need him urgently." (pg 28)

THE FLIGHT TO THE MOUNTAINS

The Singer accounts Grusha escape from the city to the Northern Mountains to save Michael from the Fat Prince and his soldiers. She is carrying Michael in a sack. She journeys along the Grusinian highway on the Northern Mountains after singing "The song of the Four Generals." As lunchtime approaches, she has to look for a meal to feed the child. She buys milk from a peasant at two piasters, an equivalent to a week's pay.

Having spent most of her money Grusha keeps on moving towards the north as the Iron shirts who want to kill Michael pursue her. The singer tells us that she then arrives at the River Sirra and with the burden of the child weighing on her; she decides to keep him at the doorstep of a farmyard after realising that the peasant woman has some milk. She anticipates the peasant will feed him and goes to hide behind a tree in order to watch what would happen.

When the peasant woman finds Michael at her door, she takes him into the house. She suggests to her husband that they keep the child but her husband tells her to give him to the local priest. As Grusha hurries off in the opposite direction she bumps on Ironshirts who demand to know where she is coming from. She lies that she is going to meet Simon Shashava. The ironshirts demand the whereabouts of Michael. Grusha gets scared and rushes back to the cottage where she had left the child and pleads with the peasant woman to hide it.

Initially the woman agrees to hide Michael but is immediately frightened by the presence of the soldiers. She reveals to the corporal that Grusha left the child on her doorstep. In desperation, Grusha seizes a log and hits the corporal on the head until he loses consciousness. She then grabs Michael and runs away.

In her flight from the Ironshirts, she finally reaches the foot of Janga-Tau Glacier after journeying for twenty-two days. She adopts Michael. She removes his silken shirt, throws it away and wraps him in rags. Finally, she arrives at the bridge on the glacier still pursued by the Ironshirts. One of the bridge's rope is broken and half of the bridge is hanging down the abyss. Despite the danger, Grusha is determined to cross the bridge. Luckily they get to the other side of the bridge despite fears and warning by the merchants on the impending danger. She laughs triumphantly to her freedom as the Ironshirts pursuing her cannot cross the bridge. Finally she sings "The Song of the Child" (pg 41)

IN THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

After journeying across the glacier for another seven days, Grusha finally arrives at Lavrenti's (her brother) house. She expects to be welcomed warmly but this is not the case. Her brother has to cook up a story to convince his religious wife that his sister is on her way to her husband's place at the mountains.

To have Grusha leave the house, Lavrenti comes up with an idea of getting her a husband. He (Lavrenti) organizes to get her married to a "dying" man- Jussup at a fee of 400 piasters. The mother-in-law realizing there is a child demands for an additional 200 piasters for the wedding to proceed. The mother-in-law has hired a cheap monk to unite the two.

After the wedding, neighbours who came to witness the marriage ceremony are served with cakes as they gossip. From the gossiping visitors, news indicate that the Grand Duke has assembled an army to fight the princes that rebelled against him the previous year. When Grusha hears that the soldiers are coming back now that the war is over, she is in shock and drops a cake pan. Her worry being that Simon will come back and find she is married to another man. Once Jussup hears the war is over, he miraculously recovers.

Jussup gets out of bed and the visitors are shocked to see him. He orders them out of the house before kicking them out. Grusha finds herself in a tight position as she discovers she has a husband yet the man she loves is on the way. Furthermore, Jussup demands that she becomes more intimate with him and accuses her of not performing her wifely duties. With time Simon's face grows dimmer and his voice becomes fainter.

In a play within a play, we see as Grusha washes linen by the stream accompanied by Michael, she advises him to go play with the other children. As they play they enact the beheading of the governor- Michael's father. However, instead of playing the part of the governor like the other children want him to do; he insists that he be allowed to behead the fat boy, who represents the fat prince. This foreshadows the beheading of the fat prince later.

As the children play, Grusha turns and sees Simon Shashava on the other side of the stream. After some talk, he sadly learns that all is not well with their relationship. Simon notices the child, Michael, Simon asks, 'Is there a little one already?' (pg 61) Grusha admits there is a child but not hers. The singer who speaks for each of the two characters' thought, reveals much of the information to us. Simon demands that she give him the silver cross back, but she declines.

Grusha hears the other children calling. She finds the ironshirts taking Michael away. When asked whether the child is hers she responds by saying that she is indeed the mother, something that makes Simon leave a dejected man. The iron shirts take away Michael back to the city.

Grusha follows them to the city but dreads to lay claim on the child. The Singer ends the act with questions about Grusha's future: "Who will decide the case? To whom will the child be assigned? Who will be the judge?..." (pg 62). The matter will now be handed over by Azdak, the city judge, to determine the rightful owner of the child.

THE STORY OF THE JUDGE

Rewind to the day of the coup, the day Grusha took the child. The village clerk(scrivener), Azdak, has been poaching in the woods and comes across someone he believes to be a refugee. He shelters him for the night only discovering after the man has gone that it was the Grand Duke himself, who escaped the clutches of the rebellious princes.

Rather than risk being found out Azdak hands himself in, expecting to be punished. When he gets to the courtroom he sees the hanging bodies of authority figures and mistakenly interprets the revolution as a people's revolt. His shouts of joy are interrupted by a soldier who tells him he's got it all wrong: it's not a people's revolution but a military coup. An uprising by the rebellious carpet weavers resulted in all the hangings and the soldiers were brought in to suppress them. Azdak is nearly hanged by soldiers.

The Fat Prince brings his nephew(Bizergan Kazbeki) to be installed as the new judge (the old judge had been killed by the carpet weavers). Azdak suggest that the candidate's knowledge in law be tested. In a play within a play, Azdak plays the role of the defendant. The soldiers, after testing the nephew in a mock trial in which Azdak accuses the Fat Prince of profiting from the Persian war, makes Azdak judge instead.

Over two years Azdak, with his trusty assistant Shauva, travels the country turning justice on its head, accusing a rape victim of being a rapist herself, sympathising with an old woman clearly guilty of theft, doling out law as he sees fit. Finally the Grand Duke comes back, the Fat Prince is beheaded and Natella Abashvilli returns from exile. Frightened that his behaviour over the last couple of years will land him in trouble now that order is restored, Azdak promises to help Natella get her son back.

THE CHALK CIRCLE

The Singer introduces us to the Act by saying it is "the story of the trial." The trial is about determining who is the true mother to Michael and in this regard, Grusha has come back to the city to face the law for having taken the Governor's son.

As they wait for the judge to come, Simon appears and swears he will say he is the father to the child. Then Grusha spots the Ironshirt whom she clobbered and this makes her regret why she came to Nuka. The corporal leaves cursing as he fears exposing Grusha because he would be admitting that he ran after the child to kill it.

The governors wife, Natella, arrives, in her characteristic style, she cannot hide her contempt for the low class and the underprivileged: "At least there are no common people here, thank God. I can't stand their smell. It always gives me migraine." (pg 88)

Azdak having been declared an enemy of the new regime(for having worked with the Fat Prince) is stripped of his judge's robes. The Ironshirts and the farmers tear his gown and beat him. He is about to be hanged when a messenger arrives announcing the Grand Duke would like Azdak to remain as judge, as a thank you for saving his life that Easter Sunday.

Azdak presides over a trial in which he must judge who gets Michael – Grusha, who has cared for him and put herself through hell for him; or his natural mother, Natella, who abandoned him. A heated debate ensues on who is the rightful owner of the child. The prosecutors explain that Grusha has stolen Natella's child and refuses to hand it over. They advance their case by saying that Grusha does not have any blood relations with the child. On the other hand, Grusha lays claim on the child by saying that she brought him up and always found him something to eat.

Hearing both arguments, Azdak is unable to decide. He adjourns the court to hear the case of an old couple who want a divorce. He tells them he'll think about it. Returning to Michael's case, Azdak invokes the ancient wisdom of the Chalk Circle: Michael is placed in the centre of a circle and whoever is strong enough to pull him out must be the right mother. Grusha won't pull, she cannot hurt him. Azdak orders the women to repeat the trial. Grusha again cannot pull.

Azdak judges that she must be the right mother. Natella faints. Simon and Grusha thank Azdak, who signs the divorce papers – not the divorce of the old couple but Grusha's divorce from the man she married in the mountains. Everyone dances. Azdak disappears. The Singer explains that the child has been given to the mother who will be best for it – and, reminding us of the prologue, that the land should go to whoever is right for it.

THEMES

CORRUPTION/GREED AND MATERIALISM

Corruption mainly refers to lack of integrity or honesty and is mainly manifested by accepting bribes. Corrupt individuals use their privileged positions they have been entrusted with to make illegitimate gains, thus undermining their moral integrity. They are usually driven by greed. Forms of corruption vary and can include bribery, extortion, nepotism, and general embezzlement of mainly of public funds.

George Abashwili is materialistic. As he makes procession to enter the church for Easter service, many beggars and petitioners try in vain to reach out to him. We learn through his wife Natella that the governor plans to tear down the slums to create room for the garden of the East Wing of palace. "All those wretched slums are to be torn down to make room for the garden." (pg 15)

After the coup and the beheading of the governor, we see Natella in a hurry to collect her dresses and shoes. She abandons her son Michael as she runs for her safety. Later we learn that the main reason she is claiming her son Michael from Grusha is to get inheritance of the vast governor's estates.

The Ironshirts are corrupt. They use their privileged positions to execute others and in the process make illegitimate gains. One Ironshirt says, ".....This morning they strung up the city judge. As for us we beat them to pulp. We are paid one hundred piasters per man, you understand?" The iron shirts follow Grusha and Michael since a good price is offered.

Azdak, the judge, is overly corrupt and his greed unstoppable. He openly takes bribes in the court before listening to a case. He begins by saying, "I accept," meaning that he is willing to be bribed. As Azdak executes his duties, his deeds do not measure up to the expected standards. He makes controversial judgements that put his integrity into questions. He sits on the statue book when

delivering justice. A pointer to his contempt for what is just. He also takes wine in public as he executes his duties.

ABUSE OF POWER

The governor, George Abashwili, is said to be as rich as Croesus. He has so many horses in his stable and yet there are so many beggars on his door step. This shows that he amasses so much wealth for himself at the expense of his subjects. They pile along the gate carrying thin children and holding petitions. They cry for mercy and reduction of the high taxes. (pg 14).

The governor has hired two doctors to look after his son Michael-the apple of his eyes. (pg 15). This is in contrast to the starving and suffering common men who push and shove to see the governor's heir.

The governor plans to tear down the slums to start building the East Wing garden for his son Michael. It does not matter to him that those slums are people's homes.

The soldiers also abuse power. ".....soldiers push the crowd back lashing at them with thick whips." (pg 14) When the crowd pushes to have a peep at their heir-baby Michael- the crowd is pushed back by the iron shirts using thick whips.

The Fat prince abuses power when he conspires and overthrows the governor from power. He (The Fat prince) then orders the governor to be beheaded and his head hanged at the entrance of the palace for all to see. He then orders the iron shirts to follow Grusha and get Michael back; he intends to kill him too. The fat prince also abuses power by practising nepotism, where he intends to have his nephew, Bizergan Kazbeki, to be bestowed as the new judge. ".....so I've bought along my dear nephew Bizergan Kazbeki, He'll be the new judge, hm?" (pg 71)

The judge, Azdak abuses power openly by accepting bribes. Before considering any case he utters a short statement- I accept- to mean he is ready to take a bribe. All the cases he judges are in favour of the suffering poor. He fines the wealthy like the farmers heavily, in this way he abuses power to help the poor.

LOVE/COMPASSION

The playwright explores the theme of love and friendship through various characters in the play. This is mainly portrayed through the parental love between the governor and his son Michael, Grusha, the kitchen maid and Michael, Grusha's romantic love with Simon Shashava and finally between Grusha and her brother Lavrenti Vashnadze.

Michael does not experience the motherly love from his biological mother Natella Abashwili. Fortunately, his father, the governor of the Caucasian City bestows on Michael fatherly love. Michael is attended to by two doctors who never move from his side to keep him in good health. The Fat prince also notices the child on their way to church and comments that, "And little Michael is a governor from head to foot!" (pg 15). Natella, Michael's biological mother, is jealous of the attention Michael is given by his father. She says it is impossible for them to live in the slum but her

husband would build the East Wing for Michael since he is the apple of the governor's eye. ".....will only build for little Michael.....Michael is all..... (pg 18-19). Finally she abandons him.

Grusha loves Michael. She has to overcome a strong tide of opposition from the other servants before she rescues Michael. The groom tells her, "Better put him down, I tell you. I'd rather not think what'd happen to anybody who was found with the baby." (pg 27) The older woman tells her, Grusha, you're a good soul, but you are not very bright, and you know it. I tell you, if he has plague he couldn't be more dangerous." (pg 27). Grusha watches over Michael the whole night and by morning as the writer puts it, the seduction between Grusha and Michael is complete, ".....till morning the seduction was complete.....she crept away,"(pg 29). She also saves the child from being killed by several iron shirts. Just like a mother who loves her child, she makes several sacrifices. She is forced to buy him milk at an exorbitant price using her meagre weekly pay. She risks her life to save Michael by hitting a corporal with a wooden log and crosses over to the Northern Mountains using a broken bridge. She has to marry a "dying man"- Jussup- for Michael's sake and thus risks her engagement with Simon Shashava.

The climax of Grusha's love for Michael is shown at the trial scene. Grusha defends for her love towards Michael by saying that she brought him up and that she married because of Michael. When Azdak, the judge, asks for Michael so that he can choose his true mother, Michael's love for Grusha is seen when he smiles at her. After drawing the Chalk Circle, Azdak orders the two women to pull the child out of the circle. Meanwhile, Grusha refuses to pull portraying her motherly love and finally she says, 'I brought him up! Shall I also tear him to bits? I can't.' (pg 98)

As Grusha flees to the north, she comes across a bridge on the glacier. She is determined to cross but the merchants caution her against risking her life and that of Michael, The merchant woman tells her, 'But you can't take the child on that bridge. It's sure to break. And look! (pg 41) The next man warns her to think of the baby, "I think of the baby. Risk your life not a child's (pg 41). This shows their love and compassion for Michael.

The love relationship between Grusha and Simon is romantic. It is already sealed through an engagement. They exchange intimate words and inquire about each other's background. Simon removes a chain from his neck and tells Grusha, ".....my mother gave me this cross.....please wear it." (pg 22). Grusha promises Simon that she would wait for him. She says, "Simon Shashava.....it is just as it was." (pg 23). Grusha is introduced to the idea of getting married to Jussup due to the illegitimacy of the child. However, deep within her, she loves Simon and wishes that the union would not last long so that she may re-unite with her fiancé whom she thinks would willingly take care of Michael. This turns out to be true.

True love unfolds when Simon testifies at the court that he is Michael's father. "I am the father, your honour." (pg 93). The climax of the sincere love for each other is portrayed when Grusha informs Simon that, "Now I can tell you: I took him because on that Easter Sunday I got engaged to you. So he's a child of love. Michael, let's dance." (pg 99). This she does after the judgement where she wins the child.

When Grusha runs to the North and arrives at her brother's house, her brother sympathises with her and gives her a roof and even makes arrangements for her to get married to the "dying" man, Jussup. After the marriage, Jussup takes in both her and the child without asking questions. It is her compassion for Michael that makes her to agree to be married yet she is engaged to Simon.

NEGLIGENCE OF DUTY /IRRESPONSIBILITY

Negligence refers to failure to give somebody or something enough care or attention. It also refers to failure to perform one's duty which impacts negatively on others.

Georgi Abashwili is the Governor and therefore responsible for the welfare of those under him. Although he is rich, he has so many beggars from the gateway, holding up thin children, crutches and petitions. Although they have come for help, he does not attend to any. It is Easter and therefore one would expect he would be compassionate enough to listen to their grievances. They complain of taxes being high. One petitioner laments: "The child is starving in my arms (pg 14). Although there is a servant collecting their grievances and another distributing coins from a purse, none of their petitions is attended to and eventually they are driven back with whips.

Despite being in a high position and being responsible for the welfare of the people, we are surprised to learn that, he knows nothing about the approaching war and therefore no safety measures have been put in place. When asked about the war, he indicates lack of interest.

The Governor has ignored the plight of his subjects. There are so many of them in the slums. To make matters worse he has decided to tear down the slums to make room for a garden for the East Wing he is about to construct. People are complaining of hunger, yet his child has two doctors, The two doctors are also irresponsible in that none wants to take responsibility over the discomfort of the child. They blame each other over luke warm bath water used to bath the child.

The governor is informed by his Adjutant that an injured young rider has come as a messenger from the capital, bringing him confidential papers. He neglects his responsibility to see him and after waiting in vain the messenger mutters a curse and leaves. We are not surprised when we learn that the plotting against the Governor by The Fat Prince happened in the capital therefore we can guess that the messenger comes to warn him. Eventually, the governor loses his life.

It is strange that the Governor refuses to talk to the wounded Rider when he appears again but prefers to confer with the architects. The Adjutant says of him, "The governor does not wish to receive military news before dinner- especially if it's depressing (pg 19). Because of his irresponsibility in choosing his priorities, he is caught unawares and is beheaded. That is why the singer laments over the blindness of the great who, ".....go their ways like gods....sure of hired fists. Trusting in their power. But long is not forever." (pg 20)

It is the height of irresponsibility when Natella Abashwili takes her time choosing the dresses and shoes to carry. She finally leaves and forgets her child whom she had directed to be laid on the floor. She is busy rummaging through clothing when the Adjutant is busy pleading that they should run for their lives. She does not care about the many people she is exposing to danger by her delay, Maro, a

servant, realizes that, only beasts can leave children behind. She says, “They left it behind, the beasts” (pg 26)

Lavrenti, Grusha’s brother, is irresponsible and neglects her when he fails to look after her. He marries her off to a total stranger and “a dying man” it becomes a double tragedy when Jussup does not die and Grusha does not know what to do with a total stranger who is unaware of her plight and yet she cannot marry her lover Simon. As an older brother of Grusha, Lavrenti fails in his responsibility to support her.

The monk hired to officiate the wedding is irresponsible. He agrees to join a girl to “a dying man.” We are surprised that, the monk, a man who should be a role model is upholding morals in a society is called from a tavern. He is drunk.

DECEIT, RELIGIOUSITY AND HYPOCRISY

Religion refers to having or showing belief in and reverence for a deity on the other hand hypocrisy is deception by pretending to entertain on set of intentions while acting under the influence of another. In “*The Caucasian Chalk Circle*” cases of religious hypocrisy are common.

Act one of the play begins with Governor Georgi Abashwili going for Easter mass. He is accompanied by his wife Natella, and Michael, their child. Although he would like to pass as a devoted Christian, his regime has oppressed the people it serves. As they enter the church, beggars and petitioners cry over all sorts of problems that bespeaks of a people who have been living in an oppressive regime. They lament, “Mercy! Mercy, your Grace! The taxes are too high. –I lost my leg in the Persian war....The child is starving in my arms....the water inspector takes bribes..... (pg 14)

As for the Fat Prince, hypocrisy reigns supreme. He attends church, wishes the Governor a happy Easter Sunday and bows before Michael. He tickles the child after commenting, “I love a gay sky.....little Michael is a Governor from head to foot!” (pg 15). He also tells the governor there is good news after so much bad. This is total deception that he is loyal to the Governor’s family. Plans to behead the Governor and end Michael’s life are already in place. While he directs the soldier to fasten the Governor’s head in the middle, he displays his hypocrisy when he says, “This morning at the church....Abashwili...I love a gay sky....prefer the lightning that comes out of a gay sky.” (pg 28)

The Monk who is supposed to be religiously inclined is portrayed as hypocritical. He presides over the wedding between Jussup and Grusha while drunk. He is found in the tavern (perhaps taking alcohol) by Grusha;s mother-in-law who threatens to expose him. He is also paid to do the same. Even when Jussup fails to take the vows and instead his mother does it on his behalf, he goes hiding and he has to be looked for by the mother-in-law. Being a religious person, his character should be beyond reproach.

It smacks of religious hypocrisy for Jussup to go through the rigorous of a wedding, a much valued religious ceremony, yet he knows he is pretending to be a dying man. Grusha is hypocritical because she is not committed to the marriage as she does it for own expediency.

The mourners are also hypocritical. They gobble down the cake without being seriously mournful. They seem to expectantly look forward to the death of Jussup. They are sincerely not sad, only greedily wolfing down the funeral cakes.

Aniko pretends to have religious principles that she does not possess. In fact, her hypocritical nature is displayed in her meanness. Lavrenti says she is very sensitive, "People need only mention our farm and she is worried." (pg 48). Her servants seem to suffer under her as she shouts orders all over. The maid may not be well paid. She once goes to church with a hole in her stocking. Ever since, Aniko has worn two pairs of stockings in church. She is truly hypocritical, feigning to be concerned about Grusha yet she is not. She has false appearance as a devout woman. Lavrenti is afraid of her. He tells Grusha, "You can't stay here long with the child. She is religious, you see." (pg 46). Aniko is painted as really heartless. She is the exaggerated embodiment of certain aspects of religious opinions.

Lavrenti is also hypocritical. He also makes Grusha who is honest to be dehumanized by leading her to engage in a fake wedding. He cannot stand up for his sister but sings to the whims of Aniko, "You need a place to go.....because of the child.....have a husband, so people won't talk.....can find you a husband." (pg 48)

The mother-in-law is hypocritical. She deceives the mourners that Grusha is a bride to Jussup. She pretends that Grusha came from the city to find Jussup alive. The first woman confidentially seems to know Jussup is faking illness and near death to avoid conscription to the war. Another feels it would be a blessing if he does not suffer too long; so she wishes he dies especially now he is of no use as a farmer as the corn is ripe and there is no one to harvest.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TURBULENCE

Bertolt Brecht has profoundly raised the issue of political intolerance that has consequently resulted to social instability. The ruling class has no regard for the woes of the have-nots. Poor leadership has led to violence and suffering of both the nobles and the masses.

First, we are presented with a desperate and deplorable Caucasian village due to war. It is described as war ravaged and is in ruins, "That's where we stopped three Nazi tanks but the apple orchard was already destroyed.....Our beautiful daily farm: a ruin." (pg 97) The number of villages have declined and people have relocated to other areas. We are told by a wounded soldier, "Comrade, we haven't as many villages as we used to have. We haven't as many hands." (pg 8) The village has been ruined with almost everything being rationed. "All pleasures have to be rationed. Tobacco is rationed and wine." (pg 8)

People's normal lifestyle is affected as evident when the Goat Herding commune is forced to relocate on orders from the government. They fight to reclaim the land for they are not satisfied with their new grazing land. An old man comments, "You can't live there. It doesn't even smell of morning in the morning." (pg 8)

Political intolerance has brought fear and insecurity. The girl Tractorist notes that plans to rehabilitate the disputed valley had been conceived during days and nights when they have to take cover in the mountains. She says, “Often we hadn’t even enough ammunition for our half-dozen rifles. We could hardly lay our hands on a pencil. (pg 10)

The effects of political and social turbulences are not restricted to the Caucasian village only. From Arkadi’s performance, we learnt that the war in Persia has spilled to the Grusinian people. Under the leadership of the Grand Duke and Governor Georgi Abashwili majority of the poor people have been rendered beggars. The Governor is confronted by many petitioners who are not comfortable in the state of affairs, The children are emaciated. Some people are in clutches while others have been crippled due to the war. They complain about the high taxes and bribery from senior people like the water inspector. The same people cannot win the governor’s eye and soldiers cause further suffering when they lash at them with thick whips. The state of the poor is deplorable as evident when the Governor contemplates bringing down their slums in order to create room for his gardens.

The political class especially the nobles have no regard to the masses. Michael-The Governor’s heir and son- is served by two doctors, He is the apple of the Governor’s eye. The governor is not perturbed by the suffering of the people. He is contemptuous even to the people who have to provide him with security briefs from the capital. A rider with confidential papers has to wait until the Governor attends the Easter Sunday service and the latter ‘attends’ his visitors-architects- at dinner. It is this indifference that leads the princes to stage a coup and subsequently orders for his execution. The coup comes with numerous harrowing effects. The singer comments: “when the house of a great one collapses many little ones are slain.” (pg 20) . The servants panic and fear for their lives as illustrated when they ask, “what about us? We’ll be slaughtered like chickens. As always.’.....There is bloodshed in the city, they say? (pg 21)

Coup results to people being internally displaced as seen when the Grand Duke flees and seeks refuge at Azdak’s place. The Governor’s wife is also relocated to safer grounds while Grusha disappears to the Northern Mountains to protect Michael whom the soldiers desperately want to kill.

Political instability has bred inhuman and sadistic characters. The soldiers who behead the governor also fasten his head on the wall with nails. Moral conscience is lost among people like the old man who cannot sympathize with Michael. Grusha has to plead to get milk for the baby. He tells her, “milk? We have no milk. The soldiers from the city have our goats. Go to the soldiers if you want milk. (pg 31)

Grusha is forced to pay two piasters for a drop. The peasant woman whom Grusha thinks will hide the baby from the Iron shirts betrays her by denouncing Michael. She tells the soldiers, “Soldier, I didn’t know a thing about it. Please don’t burn the roof over our heads.....I had nothing to do with it. She left it on my doorstep. (pg 38) The fabric that holds the society together has therefore been dismantled by political instability.

ANTAGONISM/CONFLICTS/DISPUTES

A conflict is a disagreement that arises when two or more parties dispute or fail to agree. The Caucasian Chalk Circle addresses a number of these disputes.

In the prologue there is a conflict between two land owners over the valley-The Goat Herders Collective Farm and the Fruit Growing Commune. They are arguing over the ownership and usage of the valley. The Goat Herders claim they are the original owners of the valley but have been forced to flee by the government because of war. They have come back because the land they have relocated to is not favourable for their goats. Unfortunately the Fruit Growers have laid elaborate plans for the valley which they will irrigate. They purpose to establish fruit and vine orchards. The delegate from Tiflis helps settle the difference between the two communes.

There is a conflict between the princes and the Grand Duke. The princess want to take over power and leadership from the Duke and his Governors. The conflict leads to staging of a coup where the Grand Duke is exiled and the Governor of Nuka-George Abashwili- is beheaded. The judge of the Supreme Court is hanged and Azdak made the judge.

There is conflict between Grusha-Governor's kitchen maid- and Natella Abashwili. They both claim motherhood rights to Michael. Natella claims that she is the biological mother while Grusha claims right over the child since she picked him and nurtured him for two years. The mother claims him out of greed for property. The conflict id resolved by judge Azdak who draws a circle round the child and asks the two to pull the child from the circle. Grusha hesitates twice and the judge rules in her favour.

Another conflict develops between Grusha and Jussup. When Grusha gets to her brother's home in the Northern Mountains, Lavrenti- her brother schemes to have her married to a "dying man" ironically it turns out that Jussup has all along feigned illness to evade war and when news breaks out that the war is over he 'recovers' and Grusha is horrified. She had engaged herself to Simon Shashava and cannot imagine cheating on him. Jussup complains that she is not fulfilling her matrimonial duties. He argues, "Can't the peasant do it herself? Get the brush.....you are my wife and you're not my wife.....God has given you sex.. (pg 56-57). The dispute is settled when Azdak gives Grusha a divorce and then she is free to marry Simon.

There is conflict between Grusha and Simon when the latter returns from war and finds her at the river washing lines. When he sees Michael, he thinks that she has been unfaithful to him. He gets emotional and walks away. He later on realizes that the baby belonged to Natella. He comes to help her acquire the child during the famous chalk circle. He even lies that he is the father to Michael.

Other examples of conflict are between:

- I) Azdak and Shauwa
- II) Azdak and landowners
- III) The monk and Jussup's mother
- IV) Grusha and the corporal

SELF-SACRIFICE AND SELFLESSNESS

This is the act of giving up what one has or wants so that other people can have what they need. It is acting with less concern for yourself than for the welfare or success of others. One cares more about the needs and happiness of other people than their own.

Grusha is the best example. When the governor's wife and her personal servant forget Michael, Grusha takes care of him. Other servants advise her to abandon the child for her own good. One old woman tells her, "Grusha you're a good soul, but you are not very bright and you know it. (pg 27) Grusha tries to leave Michael but realizes she cannot. The singer tells us that after looking at the baby, Grusha hears as if it is telling her, "woman" it said, ' Help me" (pg 28)

Despite the danger in town, Grusha watches over the baby the whole night and the next day takes him with her. On the way she has to buy the baby milk. When the old man sells to her the milk so expensively, she decides not to buy, but on realizing the baby needs it so badly and the journey is long she goes back and buys the milk.

The baby's weight weighs on her back but she moves on. She decides to save the baby from starving by leaving it outside the door of a Fat peasant woman. She tells Michael, "The peasant woman is kind, and can't you just smell milk" (pg 34) She hides behind the tree and observes the woman carry the baby into the house.

She risks her life when she hits the corporal to save the baby. "Again looking round in despair, she sees a log of wood, seizes it, and hits the corporal over the head from behind" (pg 39). It is during her escape that she decides to adopt the baby.

Grusha risks both their lives on order to get away from the Iron shirt. This is when she reaches Janga-Tau Glacier. No amount of warning can stop her and she crosses the dangerous bridge after turning the offer by the merchant woman to hide the baby for her. "I won't, we belong together.....live together, die together." (pg 41)

Grusha has to bear the discomfort of her brother's home. She makes another sacrifice as she has to live with a hard to please sister-in-law. To survive she has to be crafty. She tells Michael they have to be "As small as cockroaches.. the sister-in-law will forget we are in the house." (pg 47)

Grusha, who is already engaged to Simon and has promised to await his return ends up getting married to a 'dying man' –Jussup-to make Michael have a legitimate father. This is another sacrifice that she makes.

She endangers her life by following the Ironshirts who have taken Michael. She is a wanted person for having attacked and injured a corporal. What matters to her is Michael. She goes through the court procedure for Michael. It is out of her self-sacrifice that eventually Grusha wins the case.

Other characters that make sacrifices for the welfare of other people are;

- Lavrenti who tries as much as he could to ensure that Grusha is comfortable in his house..
- Simon commitment to Grusha calls for sacrifice. He has been away for two years and remained loyal to her.
- Simon's big sacrifice to accompany the Governor's wife as her guard to Tiflis.
- Shalva the adjutant makes sacrifices when he helps Natella escape during the coup. He remains loyal to the governor's family despite the risks as the public has turned against the authority.

SOCIAL CLASS INEQUALITY

There is existence of social classes in the society described in the Caucasian Chalk Circle. There is unfair difference between groups of people in this society. Some are wealthier than others and enjoy a high status or opportunities as opposed to others. The diverse lifestyle enjoyed by the governor and his family is in contrast to the object poverty the lowly citizen has to endure. Georgi Abashwili is “rich as Croesus” (pg 13) “had a healthy baby ...so many horses in his stable (pg 13-14) In sharp contrast “so many beggars in his door step so many petitioners his courtyard.....He enjoyed his life” (pg 14)

The governor and his beautiful wife go to church guarded by extremely many soldiers who are at his service. Beggars and petitioners pour from the church gateway with complains. They display thin children to the governor, others hold up crutches and petitions. They are a pitiful sight. The social difference is due to the poor governance. The governor’s family is expensively dressed. Natella derides the poor, For instance on page 18 she says “It’s impossible to live in such a slum....” When she enters the court, she is relieved that there are no common people: “I can’t stand their smell. It always gives me a migraine.” (pg 88)

From the onset, she dislikes Azdak and on pg 89 she says, “I disliked that man from the moment I saw him” Natella’s behaviour is characterized by false pride and an exaggerated sense of self-importance. She does not have time for the poor beggars and her servants and only identifies herself. Her contempt for the poor is seen in the court when he sees Michael and laments that he is in ‘rags.’

The class of people conscripted to fight the Persian war have been maimed, yet they have not been compensated. The down trodden have suffered injustice while they are innocent, “My brother is innocent, your Grace “misunderstanding”-worse still they suffer from hunger.

BETRAYAL

To betray is to hurt people who trust you especially by not being loyal or faithful to them.

When the governor is being arrested, the iron shirts of the place guard who are supposed to guard the governor refuse to obey. They stare coldly and indifferently at the Adjutant and refuse to obey him when he commands them. The doctors betray the Abashwili family immediately they realize the governor has been arrested. (pg 21) “on that little brat’s account”

The Fat Prince is with the Governor at the church and even wishes him a happy Easter, yet he is the one who leads the iron shirts in arresting the Governor.

Grusha is betrayed by the peasant woman whom she had trusted not to reveal presence of the child. She is also betrayed by her brother. She has been asked by Simon where she would hide and she confidently says she would run to her brother in the Northern Mountains. When she arrives there, her brother cannot host her with the child because he says his wife is religious and cannot host her. Instead of being given a warm welcome, Grusha stays like a fugitive in her brother’s house. In order to get her out of his house he gets her ‘a dying’ husband and when he ‘resurrects’ she finds herself with a husband she does not love.

Jussup betrays his fellow young men, the government and his mother when he pretends to be seriously sick so that he doesn’t get drafted to war.

Simon feels betrayed by Grusha as she has promised to wait until he returns after giving company to Natella and guarding her on the way to the loyal guards. When he comes, she is apparently married and has a child. He does not know the circumstances that lead her to get married or the nature of the marriage. He feels so betrayed that he cannot even get his cross back but directs Grusha to throw it into the stream.

Natella betrays her own child and her husband when she escapes leaving Michael in the courtyard. She orders a servant to put down the child in order for the servant to run for her little saffron coloured boots to match with a green dress. The baby is left behind.

JUSTICE.

In Caucasian Chalk Circle the writer explores on the beauty of fair and reasonable treatment of people. Through the legal system used to punish people is not perfect the people who have committed crimes are somehow brought to justice. Justice is a fundamental thematic concern in the prologue. The meeting between the Goat Herders and the Fruit Growers is meant to determine which people deserve to own the valley. The Goat Herders who formerly owned the land had vacated at the approach of Hitler's armies. Their intended resettlement encounters opposition from Collective Fruit Farmers. With their delegates they sit in a circle signalling their determination to negotiate between themselves in order to reach a fair and reasonable decision without perverting the cause of justice. A delegate from Tiflis presides over the case. Both sides present their arguments as to the reason why they are deserving owners of the valley. They arrive at a consensus through the voice of reason rather than by the rule of law.

The petitioners and beggars bitterly cry for justice. The governor demurs to heed to their pitiable calls for fair treatment. However, reason does not prevail; the soldiers are guilty of abstracting justice by lashing at the pitiful petitioners. They are heavily taxed and expect the water inspector who takes bribes to be brought to justice.

Due to the injustice the people suffer, they are somehow rewarded when the Fat Princes and soldiers plan a coup d'état. The grand Duke and his governors are overthrown. Although the legal system used to punish people like the Governor and the Fat prince is crude, the people engaged in administering justice are convicted that they are justified to put the criminals to the gallows for their heinous crimes.

The singer voices the importance of acceptable and appropriate handling of fellow human beings. Although Azdak is a criminal, he argues that he should not be arrested for stealing only a rabbit. He expresses the opinion that Shauwa is a worse criminal for catching people and will be judged by God. Later Azdak denounced himself for committing an unpardonable crime of ignorantly letting the Grand Duke escape. He persuades Shauwa to chain him and take him to be judged in Nuka. He begs to be shredded to pieces because he is conscience-stricken. This way justice will prevail.

Azdak dispenses justice although not in a fastidious or meticulous manner. It is justice in his own fashion. He harbours a soft heart for the vulnerable and down trodden. He encounters no restrictions of the statute book which he seizes on instead of making reference to it. The period of his judging is described as "a brief golden age, almost an age of justice." (pg 99). However, he does not acquaint

himself with the legal system of the statute book. He carries not, the professional demeanour of a judge.

He presides over a number of cases some are handled simultaneously; Most of the accused are acquitted though proved guilty. The plaintiffs are condemned and fined. Azdak rules in favour of the doctor who is guilty of professional negligence. Azdak turns justice upside down to the relief of the vulnerable. His ruling is controversial. He declares to the Doctor; you have perpetrated an unpardonable error in the practice of your profession; you are acquitted. (pg 77) Ludovica is accused of committing an intentional assault yet she is the victim of rape by the stable man who is not sentenced.

He acquits the old woman guilty of theft and drinks with the thief, bandit –Irakli whom he addresses as pious man. He offers to sit on the floor and offers the judge's chair to the old woman. Shauwa's official designation is prosecutor, however he doubles up as a sweeper. This displays lack of seriousness in court. Sometimes the judge's chair is carried to the tavern where Azdak carries judgement while drinking wine. The singer comments "Azdak broke rules to save them" (pg 82). He renders verdict to save the poor "The poor and the lowly." He dispenses justice in his fashion.

When the landowners take law into their hands to get revenge for not getting justice from Azdak, it is his previous human treatment of the Duke that saves him from the gallows. Justices prevails to favour Azdak who is reappointed judge by the order and authority of the Grand Duke who has returned. This dramatic turn of events offers more room for Azdak to preside over other cases such as the famous Chalk Circle.

The writer uses Grusha as a vehicle of justice. She fearlessly condemns Azdak for being corrupt. Azdak asks her, "You want justice, but do not want to pay for it." (pg 94). Grusha comments sarcastically, "A fine kind of justice" (pg 94) I'd tell you what I think of your justice, you drunken onion!" (pg 95). Grusha is rewarded for her human nature.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION

A character is a person who takes part in the actions of a work of art.

GRUSHA VASHNADZE

She is a kitchen maid in the governor's palace. She is a fiancé to Simon Shashava and a sister to Lavrenti Vashnadze.

She is the heroine in the play. She rescues Michael who is abandoned by her fleeing mother, Natella after the coup. To survive she makes several sacrifices and choices she stays with him for two years. She is described as;

a) Loving/Caring/Concerned

She is concerned about Simon's fate when he is delegated to be Natella's Abashwili's guard after the coup. She says, "Isn't it dangerous to go with her. You are a man Simon Shashava what has that woman got to do with you" (pg 22)

She is concerned about the plight of the Governor she asks “What have they done with the governor” (pg 26) When Michael is left behind by his mother Natella. She picks him up to spare him from being killed by the soldiers who are looking for him. She does this despite the fact that other servants at the palace dissuade her to do so (pg 27). She has laid down all her life for the welfare of Michael.

b) Courageous/Bold/Daring/Brave

Her courage has been motivated by her will to defend Michael. She is not afraid even at the law courts. When told by judge Azdak that she would be fined ten piasters for contempt of court she responds, “Even if it was thirty, I’d tell you what I think of your justice, you drunken onion” (pg 95)

She hits the corporal until he collapses and gets a chance to flee with the child. In a daring move, she crosses the broken bridge despite the impending danger and risks. In the court room, she confronts the Governor’s wife and says, “You want to hand the child over to her, she wouldn’t even know how to keep it dry. She is so refined. (pg 94) Grusha knows how to fight for her rights.

c) Motherly

She is more motherly to Michael than his biological mother. When people run to save their lives and forget the baby she sits with the child all through the night until dawn. Then she takes him away. She suckled Michael just like a mother, and realizing that he is not suckling anymore, she goes to the peasant and tells him, “The baby must be fed”(pg 32)

At the trial scene, Grusha cannot bring herself to pull Michael from the chalk circle. When asked why she is not participating she says, “I brought him up! Shall I also tear him up to bits? I can’t (pg 98) This test makes judge Azdak choose the mother who is motherly. Grusha adopts Michael bringing out her deeper feelings as a mother would do. She says “Since no one else will take you son....we’ll see it through together.” (pg 39) She does several selfless actions for the sake of Michael. First, she gives up her money for the child, paying two piasters for milk then goes back to save Michael after leaving him with the peasant woman. She even gets married breaking her promise to Simon.

D) Defensive/Abusive

When the governor’s wife remarks that Michael is in ‘rags’ and “He must have been in a pigsty” (pg 97) Grusha retorts, “I’m not a pig but there are some who are!” In the court room when Azdak initially fines her ten piasters for contempt of court, she refers to him as a “drunken onion” (pg 55)

E) Determined/Resolute

She is determined to keep Michael that when the corporal goes to take a look at Michael, she seizes a log and hits him in the head with it, knocking him down. Her determination is also exemplified when she succeeds in getting across the broken bridge thus risking her life and Michael’s. At the court when she is asked by judge Azdak if she would want Michael to go back to her mother so that he can be rich and powerful she says, “I won’t give him up. I have raised him and he knows me.” (pg 17)

F) Possessive

When asked by a cook why she must hold on to the baby at any price when the baby isn't hers she says, "He's mine. I brought him up (pg 87)

G) Appreciative

When Simon offers to help her by swearing that the child is his, she says to Simon, "Thank You" (pg 87)'

H) Obedient

She has to miss the Easter Sunday Service to attend to the master. "I was dressed to go but they needed another geese for the banquet.

AZDAK

Initially he is a village recorder/clerk but after he is accidentally chosen to be the judge by the iron shirts. He represents the voice of reason and social justice as he takes from the rich and gives to the poor. He is in charge of determining who the mother will be in the chalk circle.

During his initial appearance in stage he is in rags an indication that, he lives in abject poverty. Since he is the village recorder economic hardships triggered by an oppressive and unstable government must have contributed to his degradation.

He is a dynamic character who despite his many faults one cannot fail to admire him. Azdak can be described as:-

i) Intelligent/wise/skilful/ knowledgeable

He has firsthand knowledge about political affairs in Persia. He narrates to the iron shirts about the political turbulence in the country, when consulted by the iron shirts about installation of a new judge; he portrays himself as intelligently reasonable and sensible. He proposes that the judge to be appointed should be vetted. "tested to the marrow" (pg 71)

He skilfully sings the song of injustice in Persia in which he is used as a vehicle to highlight evils such as inhumanity, injustice, corruption, economic devastation and poverty.

In the play within a play, he intelligently imitates the Grand Duke's accent. His defence is quite impressive. He displays knowledge about how the princes were corrupt and did not lose war because that corruptly made money out of it. "war lost but not for the princes. Princes won their war. Got 3,863,000 piasters for horses not delivered, 8,240, 000 piasters for food supplies not produced" (pg 74) The skilful and intelligent way in which he puts up his defence makes him be installed as the judge.

As a judge he disguises his intentions well. He asks for payment from the prosecutors and Grusha. As the prosecutors are able to pay him well, they smile with relief thinking that he would be on their side, He seems to be hard on Grusha especially when he says he wants to be told the truth and especially when he tells her, we'll make it short and not listen to any more lies (to Grusha) especially not yours (pg 93) We are surprised when he later rules the case in her favour.

He is able to exchange a dialogue using proverbs with Simon to further his argument. When Simon implies that, since he has been given work by the ruling class he thinks he is of the same class, he answers “Better a treasure in manure than a stone in a mountain stream (pg 94). He means although the nobility are corrupt, they are providing him with a means of livelihood, rather than when he would be starving with the morally upright people.

The idea of the chalk circle is a sign of intelligence on Azdak part as it finally proves that motherhood is not just the biological process but also the emotional attachment one has towards the child.

ii) Hospitable/Accommodative/welcoming

He accommodates an old man in his hut, who turns out to be the Grand Duke. Although he is in rags his generosity is seen when he offers a stranger cheese and a place to sleep.

iii) Considerate/Judicious/Sensible

He listens to both sides giving them chances to explain their side of the story. After the first lawyer has presented his case, Azdak asks Grusha: “What is your answer to all this and anything else the lawyer might have to say” (pg 91) When she just answers that the child is hers, he asks, “Is that all? I hope you can prove it. Why should I assign the child to you in any case.” (pg 91)

He is sensible when he refuses to divorce a couple who have been married for the last forty years but wants to get divorce simply because they don’t like each other.

Justice is done when the circle is drawn and the mothers are asked to pull the child out of it.

iv) Cautious/suspicious/ discerning

He is wary of the way the old beggar behaves and he discerns that the beggar may actually be disguised” do not lick your chops like a Grand Duke.....watching you gives me the most awful ideas.....flogger.” (pg 64)

When the old man offers to give some hundred thousand piasters, he cannot trust him when he says he does not have the money with him. He handles his guest and the people he interacts with a lot of caution. He does trust the old man, “....In short I don’t trust you.” (pg 66)

v) Remorseful/contrite

He suffers from guilt conscience and reproachfully denounces himself when he realizes that he had harboured and let the Grand Duke escape. “In the name of justice, I ask to be severely judged in public trial. I’m contemptible, I am a traitor! A branded criminal.” (pg 66)

His conscience also pricks him for having treated people injudiciously. “I’ll have to pay for it. I let the.....andouts get away with murder. I’ll have to pay for it....” (pg 84)

vi) Humorous

He makes a joke in court when it is explained that Grusha is engaged to Simon yet is married to a peasant in the mountain village. He asks whether she did so because Simon was not good in bed.

vii) Abusive/disrespectful/insolent

He insults the old beggar when he discovers that he is not a beggar ‘.....walking swindler! Peasant flogger and a leech.” He tells the old beggar “I couldn’t hand over a bedbug to that animal” (pg 65) referring to Shauwa. He insults the iron shirts who have been beating him. He addresses them as dogs living in the dog world. (pg 89)

Viii) Corrupt/unscrupulous/undisciplined

He is overly corrupt. Before he presides over any case he solicits for a bribe when he says, “I accept” on pg 77 the singer tells us that he is crooked.

The way he handles the court cases leaves a lot to be desired. He sits in the judge’s chair peeling an apple.

He seems overwhelmed by the number of cases he has to handle and so he decides to handle two cases simultaneously.

He sometimes presides over serious cases out of the court where the judge’s chair has to be carried.

He enters from the caravansary.....carried (pg 77)

He presides over another case in the tavern while drinking wine.

Instead of referring to the statute book, he sits on it

He sits on the floor and does some personal grooming in the courtroom. “Azdak sits on the floor shaving.....” (pg 83)

There isn’t a standard way of charging clients and it seems all are charged differently. Grusha is first fined ten, then twenty, then thirty and finally forty.

viii) Immoral

On page 93 while addressing Grusha he says, “Is he no good in bed? Tell the truth” this is in reference to Simon.

In the court, he admonishes Grusha for not, “making eye.....and wiggling her backside a little to keep him.....in good temper.” (pg 95)

GEORGI ABASHWILI

He is the governor of the Grusinian people, Natella’s husband and Michael’s father. He is beheaded on Easter Sunday after his brother the Fat Prince successfully stages a coup.

He is described as;

I) Irresponsible/inhuman/insensitive

He lacks commitment to the people he is serving. He uses his position to mistreat the poor and the less fortunate in the city of Nuka. The deplorable nature of the beggars and petitioners shows that they have been neglected and are living in abject poverty.

He is not interested in the state of war. He ignores a messenger (rider) from the capital who comes with confidential papers. He will not attend to this matter until after the service. This annoys the rider who, “.....turns sharply round and, muttering a curse goes off (pg 66)

II) Hypocritical/selfish/self-centred

He appears to be more interested in the Easter Sunday service than the people he serves. Christian values dictates that the weak and poor should be considered yet he ignores the many beggars and petitioners who flock the gateway.

He is more concerned about his personal interests. He intends to bring down the slums to pave way for his garden. He engages two doctors to take care of his son yet the beggar's children are thin, with scarcely anything to eat.

He has accumulated so much wealth around him that the singer compares his richness to Croesus (a king of Lydia who was known for his riches)

His contempt for the poor masses is telling, when he ignores them as he enters the church.

III) Loving

He refers to his son as the apple of his eye. Two doctors are responsible for him. He is ready to build a whole wing which makes his wife Natella jealous of their son.

NATELLA ABASHWILI

She is the wife to Governor Abashwili and biological mother to Michael. When the coup takes place, she leaves behind her child and later, she tries to reclaim him back from Grusha, the lady who salvaged him.

She is portrayed as;

I) Materialistic/greedy

She is so much concerned with earthly things and wealth that she even forgets her child when she is fleeing. She cannot imagine leaving behind her personal possessions such as dresses. This is done oblivious of the danger she is exposing herself and the servants to. “I’ve got to take this silver dress- it cost a thousand piasters...the wine coloured one?” (pg 25) She desperately rummages into the trunks looking for her most valuable essentials. She cannot even dream of escaping on a horse back despite prevailing danger. “Such nonsense! I wouldn’t dream of going on horseback!” (pg 25)

II) Contemptuous/ Vain/proud/self-centred

Her behaviour is characterised by false pride and an exaggerated sense of self-importance. She does not have time for beggars and her servants.

She only identifies herself with people of class. She insults a young woman who already assured her that no harm has come to her dress. “Nothing in your head, but making eyes at Shalva....I’ll kill you, you bitch.” She beats up the young woman. (pg 24)

She is offensive by nature. She lacks respect for human beings. She refers to Azdak as a creature. “What sort of a creature is that Shalva” (pg 85) she comments that Michael must have been in pigsty because he is dressed in rags.

When she enters the courtroom, she sighs with relief that there is no common man around. She says she cannot stand their smell as it always gives her migraine. She looks at Grusha and asks contemptuously, “Is that the creature” (pg 88)

III) Careless/irresponsible

She orders the woman holding Michael, Natella’s own son to put him down so that she can get her little saffron coloured boots from the bedroom. She is not interested in the child. No wonder the child is left behind as she flees.

IV) Pretentious/Hypocritical

The first lawyer cautions her against speaking disrespectfully about people until they have another judge, she retorts, “But I didn’t say anything.....I love the people with their simple straight forward minds. It’s only that their smell brings on my migraine” (pg 92)

At the courtroom, she pretends that she is very affected by the loss of her child. She describes her loss as, “A most cruel fate, sir, forces me to describe to you the fortunes of a bereaved mother’s soul, the anxiety, the sleepless nights the.....”(pg 92)

V) Wicked

When Azdak is lifted up and dragged under the noose. The governor’s wife claps her hands hysterically and comments, “I disliked that man from the moment I first saw him.” (pg 89)

SHAUWA

He is a policeman and a guard that accompanies Azdak to Nuka on request to a court trial. He doubles up as a prosecutor and a sweeper in court during Azdak’s term as judge.

He can be described as;

I) Compromising/tolerant/patient

He does not arrest Azdak for his criminal activity of stealing rabbits. Instead he tries to reason with him, “....When prince’s rabbits are stolen.....I’m a policemanshould I do with the offending party (pg 65). Although Azdak remains stubborn and unwilling to change his behaviour Shauwa is tolerant and patient with this. He tells him, “You caught another rabbit....you’d promised me it wouldn’t happen again.” Azdak claims the rabbit should be exterminated. He is oblivious of the tricky circumstance he places Shauwa in. The latter is tolerant and persuasive instead, Azdak don’t be hard on me. I’ll lose my job if I don’t arrest you. I know you’re a good heart” (pg 65). Shauwa is a policeman with power to arrest Azdak but instead Azdak incriminates him and orders him to go home and repent which Shauwa does.

II) Obedient/Submissive/Accommodating

He cooperates with Azdak who request him to take him to Nuka. He is forced to walk half the night with Azdak to clear the whole thing all by threat. All Shauwa says is, "That wasn't nice of you Azdak" (pg 66)

He takes orders from Azdak even in the circumstances when he has the right to rebel. Azdak shouts at him, "shut your mouth Shauwa," shauwa does not respond to this angry outburst. (pg 67)

He obediently agrees to tell the iron shirts how Azdak had shouted at shoemaker street when ordered to by Azdak. "They confronted him in butcher street...Shoemaker Street. That's all" (pg 67) He is ordered by Azdak to sing with him as he holds the rope around Azdak. He sings.

III) Agreeable/Responsible

He appears to be a pleasant person, quite easy to get along with. During the reign of Azdak as judge, he takes responsibility of the difficult duties as being prosecutor and at the same time sweeping and serving Azdak like a servant.

He reports to Azdak and does what he is ordered to do. "Public prosecutor drop your knife" (pg 78) Shauwa obeys.

Shauwa reports all the cases to Azdak without influencing him and showing any bias. He serves Azdak wine in the tavern. "Shauwa brings him wine" (pg 79) sometimes he reports the cases while sweeping" (busy sweeping) "Blackmail" (pg 76)

IV) Caring/Concerned

When the Grand Duke returns and Azdak is scared that he will face the consequences of his actions, Shauwa warns him when he presumes there is danger "someone's coming" (pg 84)

SIMON SHASHAVA

He is a soldier of the palace guard who remains at the door when the Governor and his family enter the Church. He is ordered to accompany the governor's wife, Natella Abashwili as her guard. He is Grusha's betrothed

He is portrayed as:

I) Loyal/obedient

He accepts to accompany the Governor's wife as her guard to Tiflis. He takes up the responsibility despite the risks involved in being identified with the Governor's family. Grusha warns him, isn't it dangerous to go with her" (pg 21)

When ordered by the Adjutant to move, he stands attention and goes off.

II) Inquisitive/Curious

In his encounter with Grusha, he asks ceaseless questions. "May I ask if the young lady still has parents"-My second question is this," - is the young lady as healthy as a fish in water."

When he comes back from the war and finds Grusha by the river, he wants to know whether she is still faithful to him and whether the child is hers.

III) Faithful

For the two years he is away for war, he remains faithful to Grusha. This explains why he is eager to know the relationship between Michael and Grusha. To show his commitment to Grusha he offers to assist her in the case and even says that Michael is his.

IV) Humorous

His conversation with Grusha on Pg 17-18 is full of humour. “A goose (He feigns suspicion) I’d like to see that goose. I only went for a fish.

V) Loving/concerned/responsible

When he returns from war, he goes to look for Grusha at the Northern Mountains. He asks her “How are things here? Was the winter bearable?”

When the Governor is toppled and killed he comes to look for Grusha: “Grusha! There you are at last! What are you going to do? (pg 21)

When he is delegated to accompany Natella by the Adjutant and Grusha complains. He answers “That woman has nothing to do with me. I have my orders and I go” (pg 22)

He cares about the welfare of Grusha when he acquires about the parents, whether she is healthy and if she is impatient.

He gives Grusha a silver chain to cement their relationship. He is always there for her.

VI) Impatient/Hot tempered

He does not take time to listen to Grusha’s explanation that she has been faithful to him. To him she is married and has a son. He tells her, “Give me back the cross I gave you. Better still throw it in the stream.” (pg 61)

VII) Wise/Prudent

He makes use of several proverbs in answer to Azdak

“A fine day, lets go fishing said the angler to the warm”(pg 94)

“A well can’t be filled with dew, they say” (pg 90)

VIII) Appreciative

When he realizes that Azdak has granted Grusha divorce, he is so grateful that he tells the judge that forty piasters are cheap when one considers what he has gained. “Cheap at your price, your honour. And many thanks.”

LAVRENTI VASHNADZE

He is Grusha's brother and husband to Aniko. When Grusha flees to the mountains, he accommodates her and makes arrangement for her to get married to the "dying man"-Jussup.

He is portrayed as;

a) Fearful/cowardly/timid

The manner in which he quietly and quickly inquires from Grusha whether there is a father to the child indicates that he is fearful. He is intimidated by his wife. Due to this Lavrenti anxiously says that they must think something up.

He fears that the priest had questioned Grusha about the child and only gets relieved to hear that Grusha did not tell him anything.

He is fearful of the people who are already gossiping about the illegitimate child.

Due to the fear of his wife and people he organizes for a fake marriage for Grusha so that people won't talk. "So people won't talk " (pg 49) The singer comments, "The cowardly brother.....giver of shelter" (pg 47)

b) Hospital/ welcoming

When Grusha flees to the mountains and finally lands at his home, he welcomes her cordially despite the initial fears he has on how his wife will react.

c) Deceitful/dishonest/untrustworthy/untruthful

He lies to Aniko that Grusha is on her way to her husband and Grusha says she got married to a man on the other side of the mountain.

He plans to steal Aniko's milk money to use it for Grusha's wedding.

To cover up his wife's weaknesses, he purports she is sensitive and religious.

d) Crafty/cunning/scheming

In order to get rid of Grusha, he plans for her marriage with a dying man. He does this secretly without informing his wife.

He wants to ensure that they do not suffer shame so he makes people believe that Grusha actually had a husband on the other side of the mountain. "People mustn't know anything" (pg 47). He organizes the marriage without consulting Grusha initially, only to inform her later about the arrangement.

He hides the baby from the monk and only brings out the baby when the ceremony is over for he knows very well that the vows cannot be reversed.

ANIKO

She is Lavrenti's wife and a sister-in-law to Grusha. She is portrayed as;

a) Hypocritical/pretentious

She is portrayed as being religious but lacks religious qualities. Grusha arrives at their home worn out and tired, all she is concerned is about Grusha's single status. "If your husband's not in the city, where is he....has your husband got a farm...but when will he come back if the war's broken out again as people say?" (pg 46)

Lavrenti explains to Grusha that she cannot stay for long with them because Aniko is religious. ".....but you can't stay here long with child. She's religious; you see (pg 46)

b) Arrogant/proud

When Grusha faints she says, "Heavens she's ill what are we going to do....as long....as it's not scarlet fever.....if it's consumption we'll get it" (pg 45-46)

She keeps on shouting to the servants Sosso! Where on earth are you? Sosso! (pg 46)

c) Cold/Unwelcoming

When she is introduced to Grusha instead of welcoming her, she asks "I thought you were in service in Nuka....wasn't it a good job? We are told it was.

Lavrenti has to defend her to Grusha "She has a good heart. But wait till after supper (pg 46)

Grusha even has to tell Michael, "Michael we must be clever, if we make ourselves as small as cockroaches. The sister-in-law will forget we're in the house and then we can stay till the snow melts" (pg 47)

MOTHER-IN-LAW

She is the mother to Jussup. She makes arrangement with Lavrenti to have his sister married to her son Jussup on his 'deathbed'

She is portrayed as;

a) Materialistic/greedy

She is to be paid by Lavrenti 400 piasters for having Grusha marry Jussup. When she discovers that there is a child, Lavrenti has to offer 200 piasters more and she readily agrees to have the marriage take place "My Jussup doesn't have to marry a girl with a child...all right make it another 200 piasters. (pg 50). She hires a cheap monk to perform the wedding in order to save. "She saved on the priest the wretch. Hired a cheap monk (pg 50)

b) Opportunistic

Takes advantage of her son's illness to make money by marrying him off on his deathbed. "The son of this peasant woman is going to die.... How much does the peasant want? Four hundred piasters" (pg 49) she also gets a chance to add more money when she discovers that the bride has a child- Lavrenti has to add two hundred piasters more.

c) Hypocritical/dishonest

When she sees Grusha with the child, she weeps, saying that her people are honest and she does not want to live with the shame.

She makes the monk accept that Jussup has accepted the marriage: “Of course he is! Didn’t you hear him say yes?” (pg 51)

d) Pretentious

When she arrives with the monk, she tells the guests “I hope you won’t mind waiting a few moments? My son’s bride has just arrived from the city. An emergency wedding is about to be celebrated (pg 51). Grusha has not arrived from the city nor is she her sons beloved. When the monk and she enter the bedroom, she tells him, “I might have known you couldn’t keep your trap shut” (pg 51). This means she is not amused by the arrival of the guests. When the monk inquires about the child, she tells him, “Is there a child? I don’t see a child...you understand? (pg 52)

ARSEN KAZBEKI

He is referred to as the Fat Prince. He is a brother to the Governor. He plots and stages a coup, with the help of ironshirts that leads to the killing of his brother-The Governor. When the Grand Duke returns after two years he is deposed and beheaded.

He is portrayed as;

a) Hypocritical/insincere

He pretends to be so much pleased with the governor’s family that he bows and remarks sarcastically that Michael is a governor from head to foot.”

He hypocritically terms George’s intention of bringing down slums to pave room for the garden, good news. “Good news after so much bad” (pg 5) He has instigated war against the Grand Duke and the Governor; He intends to overthrow the government. He then claims that the universally loved judge has been hanged. “My friends, we need peace, peace in Grusinia! And justice! So I’ve brought along my dear nephew Bizergan Kazbeki (pg 71)

He pretends that he wants the ironshirts to confer and democratically decide who should be judge yet at the same time informs his nephew, “Don’t worry my little fox. The job’s yours (pg 71). More so he intends to ignore the Ironshirts once the Grand Duke is arrested. He tells his nephew “and when we catch the Grand Duke, we won’t have to please this rabble any longer.” (pg 71)

b) Sadistic/callous/inhuman

He schemes for the murder of the Governor and once he is executed, he orders the drunken soldiers to fasten his head on the wall using nails. He desperately looks for Michael so that he can kill him. He comments, “It’s a pity they took the brat along though, I need him, urgently” (pg 28)

c) Crafty/scheming/ cunning

He schemes to install his nephew as judge by influencing the Iron shirts but they stage a rehearsal with the nephew acting as judge. He tells the nephew. “It isn’t customary....who got there first.” (pg 72)

d) Corrupt

He fights for his nephew to be installed as judge. The iron shirts outwit him in his own game and the position goes to Azdak.

e) Greedy

His plan to overthrow the system run by the Grand Duke is motivated by greed for power. He even kills the Governor, his brother, and act that shows the extent hunger for control and power can push one to. Since evil begets evil, he is executed the same way he killed his brother.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Style in literature can be described as how the author uses literary elements such as words, sentence structure and figurative language to describe events, ideas and objects in their work.

Stylistic devices refer to a variety of techniques used by writers.

PLAY WITHIN A PLAY

Play within a play involves having another play within the main play. It is important as it helps in plot development, bringing out various themes and character traits. The play “The Caucasian Chalk Circle” is three stories presented in one; The story of the Goat Herders and Fruit farmers, The story of Grusha and Michael and The story of Azdak as the judge. These are thus presented as plays within the main play.

The story of “The Caucasian Chalk Circle”, borrowed from a Chinese tale is presented as a play within a play. There is a meeting of the delegates who are trying to resolve the puzzle of who owns the piece of land between the fruit farmers and the goat keepers. When an agreement is reached, the peasant woman on the left invites Arkadi Tscheidse, the singer, to entertain them.

There is also a play within a play when Michael and other children enact the beheading of the Governor. It is used to show the extent of evil in society as the children who are so innocent clearly portray it. Michael refusing to be the one to be beheaded shows he is the chip off the old block-the Governor’s son. It is also a satire of criticism of the senseless and cruel behaviour in the society. The play within a play is used to bring out the self sacrificing nature of Grusha. As seen when she takes care of Michael as her own son, through it various stylistic techniques such as use of song, Irony and flash back are evident. Various themes such as hypocrisy, negligence of duty among others are also brought out.

The story of Azdak the judge is also a play within a play. It begins when Azdak helps the old beggar who later turns out to be the Grand Duke. It ends with Azdak judging Grusha’s and Natella’s case using “The Caucasian Chalk Circle.” This play within a play exemplifies the themes of justice, abuse of power and greed.

Another play within a play is when the Fat Prince wishes to appoint his nephew Bizergan Kazbeki, as the judge. He requests the drunken Iron shirts to vet him. They perform a mock trial which involves Azdak who poses as the Grand Duke and the nephew poses as the judge. The Iron shirts takes up the roles of the people who have come to listen to the proceedings of the case. Azdak is blamed of running the war badly but he instead blames the princes rather than himself. He is able to make several successful attacks on the prince’s corruption. Here, we learn how the princes mismanaged the war and blamed it on the Grand Duke. The nephew fails to make a judgement since

he is out-witted by Azdak and the ironshirts unanimously settle on Azdak as the judge. The first ironshirt tells him, "Go to the judge's seat! Now sit in It! (pg 74)

JUXTAPOSITION/CONTRAST

This is a stylistic feature used by writers to put people or things side by side in order to show the contrast or their differences. This style has been used to enhance dramatic effect.

The act of Governor George Abashwili entering the church is juxtaposed with the image of the soldiers pushing the common people out of the way. This contrast undermines the religious significance of going to church. This is exemplified when the soldier says, "Get back! Clear the church door." (pg 14)

Grusha buys milk for Michael and pays two piasters. This is her week's salary. This amount of money used is a sacrifice for Michael. This contrasts the 100,000 piasters offered to Azdak by the Duke for one night lodging '....persuasion! Pay hundred thousand piasters one night, I tell you...where are they?' (pg 64). This contrast is meant to bring to fore the glaring gap between the rich and the poor. This satirises the society that puts more value on money to show the difference in the levels of wealth in social classes. Consequently, Azdak uses his position to take from the rich and give the poor. Thus, he fines the rich invalid, The Blackmailer, the innkeeper, and the farmers all of whom are wealthy.

During the wedding of Jussup and Grusha, the monk says, "Dear wedding and funeral guests!" (pg 53). This depicts two contrasting life eventualities, one representing continuity and the other- end.

There is also an instance of juxtaposition where the goat and fruit farmers are placed side by side to establish the deserving owners of the valley.

Natella and Grusha are juxtaposed to establish the difference in level of love: true motherly love for a child and love for material wealth out of the peril of the child.

Other characters that have been contrasted are Lavrenti with his wife Aniko, Simon and Grusha, Grusha and other peasants working for the Governor, among others.

HUMOUR

Despite the occurrence of serious issues explored within the play, there are humorous incidents. We are presented with doctors; Mika Loladze and Mishiko Oboladze. They are in charge of Michael and quarrel over trivial issues.

"May I remind you.....that I was against the lukewarm bathmore likely a sight draft during the night. Your Grace....no cause for concern, your Grace." (pg 15-16)

It is humorous that these two doctors described as dignified would quarrel over Michael's coughing. In another comic episode, the two argue over whom will take charge of Natella now that she has fainted after chaos and death erupt in the palace.

“Niko Mikadze, it is your duty as a doctor to attend Natella Abashwili....you neglect your duty.....”
(pg 21)

It is humorous to find the two going to an extent of fighting in the middle of a catastrophe. This humour serves to lessen the tension that is created when George is assassinated. It also brings out the character of the two doctors as incompetent and irresponsible characters.

When Simon encounters Grusha, there is humour when he says he watches over her as she washes linen by the willows, “There’s more. Your toes and more....your foot and a little more....(pg 18)

There is humour when a drunken peasant sings, “There was a young woman who said: I thought I’d be happier, wed but my husband is old and remarkably cold so I sleep with a candle instead” (pg 54)

When Shauwa knocks at the door, Azdak says that he is not in. Azdak explains himself to Shauwa possibly to escape the arrest. “....Shauwa don’t talk about things you don’t understand. The rabbit is dangerous and destructive beast. It feeds on plants especially on the species of plants known as weeds. It must therefore be exterminated, “he adds, “I.....man is made in God’s image. Not So a rabbit....I’m a rabbit-eater, but you’re a man eater...go home and repent.” (pg 65)

SATIRE

Satire refers to the way a writer ridicules an individual or the society in a humorous way, with an aim of bringing desirable change.

The playwright exposes weakness of leaders who have been entrusted with power and fail to do what is expected of them. People are oppressed and live in misery. The beggars and petitioners are crying that they do not have enough to eat and they feel neglected.

The policing administration is criticized for the inhuman treatment of the suffering lot. They lash them with whips to keep them away from the Governor and his family instead of sympathizing with their plight.

The governor and his wife pretend to be religious yet they display their contempt for the lowly class. The governor is a political leader but surprisingly, lacks interest in political matters. He ignores the rider who has confidential papers from the capital in preference to personal matters. Instead, he meets the architects to discuss building plans. The governor is ignorant of serious issues such as a meeting held by princes in the capital in which a coup was planned, ironically, one of the architects is fully aware of the plan to overthrow the Grand Duke and his Governors. (pg 15). His political nature is being ridiculed because being in political position means he ought to accord political matters serious consideration.

The police administration’s brutality is criticized for the inhuman treatment of the suffering lot. They lash them with whips to keep them away from the Governor and his family instead of sympathizing with their plight.

The Fat prince pretends to be so much pleased with the governor's family that he even bows and remarks sarcastically that Michael is a 'governor from head to foot' and yet he had planned to kill the Governor that very day. When he tells the Governor he loves a gay sky, he is not sincere.

Aniko, wife to Lavrenti and sister-in-law to Grusha claims to be religious, However, she is presented as mean, egocentric, selfish and inhospitable. She bullies around her husband and tries to throw Grusha out of the house as she fears what the neighbours will say for hosting an unmarried woman with a child.

The monk's religious hypocrisy is also satirized. He is expected to be religiously inclined but he has many weaknesses. He oversees Grusha's marriage to Jussup while drunk. He is actually paid to perform the ceremony but as a monk, he is expected to devote his life and time to religious matters, which he does not.

The Governor's wife is satirized through her vain behaviour. She does not have time for the poor beggars and her servants and only identifies herself with people of class. After the coup her main concern is the clothes she is going to carry, "only essential!.....the green one! And of course, the one with far trimming....."(pg 24) On the same page she adds, ".....get my little saffron-coloured boots..... I need them for green dress." In haste to save her dresses, she leaves her son Michael as she flees. When Michael coughs Natella's attention is drawn to him and she wants to know what is up. She even asks her husband whether he had heard the baby cough. She then gives a stern warning and advises the two doctors in charge of the child to be more careful. When he sees Michael after he is brought in by the ironshirts, she remarks that "He's in rags" (pg 97)

Natella has very low regard for the underprivileged. (pg 18), she says, 'It's impossible to live in such a slum,,,' When she enters the court, she is relieved that there are no common people: "I can't stand their smell. It always gives me migraine. (pg 88) From the onset, she dislikes Azdak and (pg 89) she says, "I disliked that man from the moment I first saw him." This foreshadows the fact that she may not get a fair judgement from him.

IRONY

Irony refers to an incongruity between what might be expected and what actually occurs or is. It is also the use of words that convey a meaning that is opposite of its literal meaning. There are different types of irony for example verbal irony where the speaker says direct opposite of what is meant. Dramatic irony occurs when the audience knows facts in a text which a character in the text is ignorant of. Other types of irony are situational, comic and tragic irony.

The playwright has used this style in several areas in 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle.' The irony of situation is that George Abashwili, the Governor plans to remodel and enlarge his palace. ".....in the afternoon his Excellency will confer with prominent architects." (pg 19) He even proposes to pull down the peasant shacks on the estate. Natella says, "All those wretched slums are to be torn down to make room for a garden.' (pg 15). This is ironical in that this will be a garden for the privileged at the expense of the poor majority. Irony is further seen when this same estate is confiscated for the state at the court when Azdak declares it would be given to the people and made into a play ground for children. He says, "....your estates fall to the city...Azdak's gardens." (pg 98)

Also the Governor's plans do not pull through because he is executed that afternoon. The Play Wright uses the noble child Michael, to bring out irony. Being the only son to the Governor, he has two doctors for his medical care. It is ironical when the coup takes place, the doctors Niko Mikadze and Nika Loladze abandon the child. Mika says, ".....Do you really thinklittle brat's account?" (pg 21). The situational irony is that the child has two doctors while the common people are suffering. The Governor's wife, who thinks that the Governor pays more attention to Michael than to her, is more concerned with her elegant dresses and forgets her baby. Ironically, Grusha a servant girl saves the child from being killed by the Fat Prince. She is more willing to be a guardian to the infant than her wealthy mistress. The biological mother of the child.

The incident when Grusha plans to abandon Michael at the doorstep of a peasant woman's house has been developed through use of irony. Grusha's plans are well intentioned since she thinks the peasant will be kind enough to give Michael milk and she assumes that are far enough from the city. This is exemplified when she says, "now you have wet yourself again...you can't ask that can you?" (pg 34). Irony is brought to the fore when her thoughts are displayed in the chorus, "because I am single....someone who's newly poor." (pg 35). When she meets the ironshirts she runs back to save Michael. Ironically, her plan with the peasant woman betrays Grusha, who hits the corporal over the head with a log of wood just to save Michael.

When Grusha manages to cross the rotten bridge, she laughs her way to freedom and shows the Ironshirts the child. Ironically, this freedom does not last for long as she suffers in her brother's house because of Michael. She is too weak to walk and her sister-in-law who is portrayed to be religious ironically does not apply the religious principles but uses 'religion' as an excuse to kick Grusha out of her home. Lavrenti only allows Grusha to live in his house over winter. Due to the same reasons he has given to his 'religious wife' over Grusha's marital status, Lavrenti forces Grusha to marry a 'dying man' from the other side of the mountains. This is especially because of the presence of the illegitimate child. The irony of the situation is that the brotherly love that Grusha had expected from Lavrenti is not forthcoming; he ends up complicating Grusha's life when he organizes for the fake wedding.

Jussup, Grusha's dying husband, illness is developed in an ironic manner. The peasants comment on Jussup's health status. They initially thought Jussup was faking illness in order to avoid being drafted in to war. They regret having felt that way because Jussup really appears about to die. When the guests continue to talk and eat, one of them remarks that the army can no longer draft anyone as the war is over. Jussup suddenly sits up in bed; the most ironic possible scenario of his death is no more. He is alive and kicking.

Azdak's judgement at the court is presented in an ironic manner. Brecht has used this style to point out that Azdak is a disappointed man and would not cause disappointment to others. The judgment pronounced on the cases is ironical. The doctor who operates a patient on the wrong leg is acquitted for perpetrating an unpardonable error on his practice. The farmer who accuses the old man for receiving his stolen animal is fined five hundred piasters and ironically the suspect is made to sit the same table with the judge "....you granny and you....and Azdak!" (pg 82)

Natella, the Governor's wife, is using the child Michael as a means of acquiring inheritance. Her claim that she is the mother of Michael is not due to her motherly love. The Chalk Circle brings out an ironic twist when Grusha does not pull Michael. Ironically, Natella the real mother rushes to pull the child but Grusha says, 'I brought him up! Shall I also tear him into bits? I can't! (pg 98) This determined the deserving mother as the one who is motherly.

USE OF IMAGERY

Imagery refers to the use of figurative language to represent ideas, objects or actions. It can also be defined as the use of descriptive language that appeals to our senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. This is mainly done through metaphors and similes.

a) Metaphors

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which an expression (word or phrase) which ordinarily refers to one thing is used to denote another in order to suggest a similarity. It suggests the likeness between the two.

The girls Tractorist says, 'I started the fire myself,' This means she started the onslaught herself against the Nazis. (pg 97)

There is also reference to 'a bloody time' (pg 13). This denotes time of war characterized by violence and death.

In the chorus (pg 32), the ironshirts pursuing Grusha are likened to 'bloodhounds', dogs that are known for their powerful sense of smell.

On page 65, Azdak likens the old man (grand prince) to a bedbug to suggest he is a 'pest'

Azdak thinks it is Ludovika who assaults the stable man with a 'dangerous weapon' which means she is provocative.

The Fat prince refers to his nephew 'my little fox' (pg 71) to hint at his traits and to show how confident he is that he will be made the judge.

b) Similes

This is a figure of speech that directly compares two things that are related using connective words such as –"like", "as" or "resembles"

The Governor Georgi Abashwili is described thus: 'He was rich as Croesus,' (pg 7) this compares him to the king of Lydia who was defeated by Persians and was known for his immense wealth, his name is synonymous with wealth.

The singer castigates the insensitive leaders thus: "O blindness of the great! They go their way like gods.....' (pg 20)

After the coup, the servants say among themselves, 'we'll be slaughtered like chickens, as always' (pg 21) . This suggests they are not safe.

Simon asks Grusha, 'Is the lady as healthy as a fish in water?' (pg 22). Grusha is compared to a thief, probably for the reader to pass judgement on whether she is justified to take Michael, we are told: 'As if she was a thief she crept away!' (pg 29)

When Grusha is sheltered at her brother's house, she tells Michael that they should make themselves 'as small as cockroaches' (pg 47) to escape the wrath of her sister-in-law. Indeed, Lavrenti remarks, "why are you sitting there muffled up like coachmen...." (pg 48)

To suggest that she cannot run away from Michael, Grusha tells him, "I came by you as the peat trees comes by sparrows" (pg 49)

Azdak says law is a sensitive organ, '.....like the spleen, in delivering justice, we are told by the singer he, "Broke law like bread he gave them." (pg 82)

SONGS

Many songs have been sung by Arkadi and other characters in the play. Some are at the beginning of the scene, others within the scene and at the end of the scene.

The governor is introduced through a song. Before we meet him, we are told about what kind of a person he is as follows:-

'He was rich as Croesus

He had a beautiful wife

He had a healthy baby' (pg 13)

We learn that he has many beggars and petitioners whom he ignores. This song juxtaposes the rich governor with the majority poor folks who wait for hand outs in form of coins which are distributed by a servant.

Simon Shashava, the soldier, and Grusha, a kitchen maid are also introduced to us before we meet them. We learn of their relationship. The song on (pg 18) is summative. It summarizes the action. The Governor's palace foreshadows restlessness. The palace is said to be a fortress but is surrounded by soldiers. We anticipate the death of the Governor. ".....Noon was the hour to die." These words are followed by the appearance of the Fat Prince.

The stage is set for the execution of the Governor by the Fat Prince. The tension surrounding the Governor's execution is found in the song on (pg 20), in the song, stage directions are given e.g. ".....look about you once more blind man!"

Grusha's action of taking the abandoned Michael is brought out through a song. She is drawn to Michael and decides to save him though this is risky. In the song, she does what the singer says. Grusha's flight into the mountains with Michael is captured in a song. She sang a song and bought milk on the way, The song pre-empts the action of bargaining for milk with the old man.

The risky flight with iron shirts following Grusha is underscored (pg 32). They hunt for the fleeing due, never tire and sleep a little. Iron shirts feelings are captured in their song. They go into war

leaving behind their lovers (pg 33). The song on pg 35 reveals Grusha mixed feelings of happiness and sadness after she abandons Michael at the peasant's doorstep.

Azdak sings the song of injustice in Persia which was sang to him by his grandfather. It shows instances of injustice and the effects of the war: 'why don't our sons breed anymore?...Our men are carried to the ends of the earth, so that the great ones can eat at home.....The battle was lost, the helmets were paid for.' (pg 68)

The song of the chaos in Egypt pg 83 finally brings out the emancipation of the masses from the oppression and misrule of the ruling class. For instance it says, "...who had no bread at all have full granaries..." pg 84

PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

Many proverbs have been used by the playwright. The capability to use proverbs in one's conversation is interpreted as a sign of wisdom. It also shows mastery of one's own language since proverbs and wise sayings require comprehension of metaphors, similes and symbols in one's community.

When Grusha points out to Simon that it must be dangerous for him to accompany Natella Abashwili as her guard on her flight, he replies with a wise saying-'in Tiflis, they say: Isn't the stabbing dangerous for the knife?' (pg 21) means as the knife stabs what it is supposed to, it is also in danger of breaking or bending but it still stabs anyway. Likewise, a soldier protects others despite the danger despite the danger he exposes himself.

When they meet in the courtyard and Grusha is rushing to collect her personal effects, She accepts Simon's proposal long before he even proposes. Simon feels embarrassed and responds, "haste, they say is the wind that blows down the scaffold (a temporary building) built for workers round a building that is being constructed, If they are blown away then the builders will not be able to build the permanent structure as they will have no where to stay just like Grusha and Simon will not have a marriage if she is not patient enough to listen to the information that will cement that relationship.

When Michael and other boys are playing the game of cutting off the Governor's head, the other children want Michael to play the Governor's role of just bending and his head is cut off but Michael adamantly refuses and says he wants to be the person to cut off. The other children disagree but Michael is adamant so when they shout to Grusha that Michael won't play his part, Grusha laughs and says, 'Even the little duck is a swimmer, they say.' (pg 58) Meaning even though Michael is young, you cannot command him since he is the son of a Governor and so others do what he demands and not vice versa.

When Azdak discovers that the fleeing duke is not a peasant but a land owner he orders him out but the Duke make him a proposition. Azdak finds this to be the height of insolence and responds, 'The bitten man scratches his fingers bloody, and the leech that's biting him makes him a proposition!'

(pg 64). This implies that the landowners have been exploiting the peasants and the low class and when a chance comes up for the exploited to free themselves; the exploiters make a proposition so that they can go on exploiting the masses and maintain their status quo.

When waiting for trial, the cook asks Grusha why she is holding on to the child at any price yet the child is not hers. She explains how she first just expected to give the child away but later thought that Natella, the mother, wouldn't come back and the cook responds, 'An even borrowed coat keeps a man warm hm?' (pg 87). This implies that, even if Grusha knows the child was not hers, the feeling that the child belonged to her is fulfilling.

After Azdak is reinstated as a judge and openly demands for a bribe, the prosecutors who have been worried smile with relief. The cook is worried but Simon comments 'A well can't be filled with dew, they say' (pg 90). In his argument to prove that Natella abashwili deserves to be given the child instead of Grusha who claims to have brought him up, he quotes, 'Blood, as a popular saying goes is thicker than water.' (pg 60)

There is a heated exchange of proverbs between Azdak and Simon when Grusha thinks Azdak enacts to give Natella the child simply because she is too poor to pay legal fees. Azdak argues that the poor are able to give the butcher his dues but not the judge, Simon quotes- "When the horse was shod, the horsefly held out its leg.' (pg 94). This means Azdak who is poor as they are or in the same class, is now counting himself among the ruling class.

Azdak replies, 'Better a treasure in manure than a stone in a mountain stream' (pg 94). Although a mountain stream has very clean water an ordinary stone in it is worthless but a treasure in a manure can be retrieved and utilized. When one is poor, no matter how morally upright one is, one is worse off than a rich, corrupt person. Simon replies by saying, 'Let's go fishing said the angler to the worm, (pg 94) meaning that just like the angler would benefit, Azdak would just be used by the rulers to oppress the poor and Azdak might as well end up being devoured just like the worm.

By Azdak replying that, 'I'm my own master, said the servant; and cut off his foot, means one does not have to do outrageous activities to prove that one is independent minded. Simon replies by showing that, people are able to see through their tormentors' hypocrisy when the latter professes to love the farmer and therefore still give them their due. This is proved when he says, 'I love you as a father said the Czar to the peasants, and had the Czarevitch's head chopped off.

Azdak knows that despite the appearance, he is still on the poor people's side yet Simon does not realize this, so that is why he concludes the discussion by saying, 'A fool's worst enemy is himself.' (pg 94)

From all the above, it is important to note that, the cook, Grusha, Azdak and Simon are the only people who portray positive traits in the society. They portray a sense of wisdom as seen when they are highlighted as the only characters that employ proverbs and wise sayings.

ALLUSION

Allusion refers to a passing reference or indirect mention of something or someone the reader is expected to know.

The playwright alludes to the king of Lydia (560 BC-547BC) who was defeated by Persians and was known for his immense wealth on pg 7. We are told that the Governor Georgi Abashwili was,....'rich as Croesus.'

The girls tractorist also quotes the poet (Vladimir) Mayakovsy, pg 10, a Georgian born in 1883. He wrote the poems, 'The Cloud' and 'I' which are among the most popular during his time. Singer alludes to Jesus when he remarks, "And now you don't need an architect, a carpenter will do, " (pg 20). The Governor needs Jesus to save him from his predicament.

The play infers from both a Chinese play (Circle of chalk written in 1300 AD) and a biblical story (The judgement of Solomon- 1 Kings 3: 16-28)

In the Chinese story, a young girl, Hai-tang, bears a child as the second wife of a wealthy man. His first wife claims the child is her own. However, the second wife is judged the true mother when she refuses to pull the child apart in the test of the Chalk Circle.

In the biblical story, two women live in the same house and both bear a child. One baby dies in the night and its mother swaps him for the living baby. Both claim the living child is their own. Solomon orders that the child be cut in two and each half be given to each mother. The real mother of the child gives up the child rather than see him harmed and is judged to be the true mother.

SARCASM

This is the use of humorous language to ridicule or to convey scorn, especially saying one thing but implying the opposite.

The Fat Prince is sarcastic when he says, 'And little Michael is a governor from head to foot! Tititi!' (pg 15). Simon is sarcastic when he tells Grusha: 'Why shouldn't I wash the linen by the willows!' That's good, really good!' (pg 17). On pg 18, the singer says, 'And the goose was plucked and roasted/But the goose was not eaten this time.' This refers to the killing of the Governor and draws an analogy to the goose Grusha kills for the Governor's family.

When the singer says,'And now you don't need an architect, a carpenter will do,' (pg 20), the playwright is sarcastic towards religion as this alludes to the fact that the Governor needs Jesus, who was a carpenter to intervene on this Easter Sunday. This will of course not happen.

The 'dying' man refers to Grusha as, 'A nice thing you've saddled me with! A simpleton for a wife! (pg 57)

When Grusha is fined ten pisters for using 'indecent language' in court, she sarcastically lambasts Azdak and his corrupt ways by saying,'A fine kind of Justice! You play fat and loose with us because we don't talk as refined as that crowd with their lawyers' (pg 94)

SYMBOLISM

Symbolism refers to the use of symbols to represent ideas. The silver chain Simon gives Grusha is symbolic (pg 28). It is a symbol of the bondage between the two. When Grusha hears that the war is

over and the soldiers are back, she kneels down in prayer and kisses the chain. Later, Simon suspects that Grusha is married to another man and he asks for the chain.

On pg 81, Azdak, enacts the old woman as granny Grusinia. She is a symbol of a nation that has fallen prey of the greedy citizens (the three farmers) who deprives it all that it owns (her sons). She symbolises a nation that seeks justice.

The Chalk Circle drawn to help Azdak, the judge, comes up with as a rational decision on who should have the child is a symbol of truth. Ironically, his methods of justice are not by the Book of Statutes he sits on. Therefore, he lets justice reveal itself. Similarly, the play opens with another circle of justice, when members of the two communes sit together to decide who should have the valley. The Delegate, like Azdak, announces the outcome without pushing. Within this friendly circle where the communes have equal social status, they can impartially decide the best use of the valley, and it is peacefully and mutually decided for the fruit growers.

The playwright has also used the Christian symbolism. The Christian church has been used as a tool to support the upper class and keep the lower classes in their places. The historical church subverts the original teaching of Christ who treated all humans with respect.

The garden that Governor Abashwili want to establish for his son by knocking down slums for the poor symbolises oppression and insensitivity of the rich towards the poor. Ironically, Azdak later rules that the Governor's estate should revert to the poor

FORESHADOWING

Foreshadowing is a situation where a writer gives a sign of something that will come later on a work of art, that which is important or appalling.

When the Fat Prince greets his brother Governor Georgi Abashwili, this is quite unusual until the Governor remarks, '.....But did you hear Brother Kazbeki wish me a happy Easter? Which is all very well, but I don't believe it did rain last night.' (pg 16). The relationship between the brothers' is thus foreshadowed by the Governor's comment, in which he expresses surprise at being greeted by his brother. The brother later executes him.

Natella, the governor's wife, seems to have an unstable mind and poses, 'I hardly know if my head's still on. Where's Michael?(pg 24). Later she forgets to carry him as she flees.

Another important moment is when Natella, the governor's wife, tells, her adjutant how jealous of Michael she really is, She is desperate for attention from her husband. 'But Georgi, of course, will only build for his little Michael, Never for me! Michael is all! All for Michael!' This jealousy of her child is important since she abandons him later in the act.

Shortly before Azdak makes the ruling on who should take Michael between Natella and Grusha, the boy smiles at the latter. This foreshadows the ruling made by the judge as Grusha is finally given child.

Azdak tells the old man (Grand Duke) to ‘encircle the cheese on the plate like it might be snatched from him (pg 65) This foreshadows the chalk circle that is drawn to choose a mother for the child, Michael. (pg 97)

REVISION QUESTIONS AND EXPECTED POINTS

Question 1

Justice is an important institution in any well governed community. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Bertolt Brecht’s The Caucasian Chalk Circle (20mks)

- (i) – In the prologue there is the dispute over the ownership of the valley, presided over by the delegate from the capital, Tiflis.
 - Emphasis is laid on fairness in order to avoid the reoccurrence of future disputes.
 - The fruit farmers and the goat herders amicably discuss a resolution to the dispute.
 - It is decided that the land goes to the fruit and vine growers amicably as they would make better use of the land.
 - The agreement is followed by a party to seal the deal
- (ii) – Justice is also portrayed by the test of the chalk circle
 - In the old story, the real mother is revealed by the test.
 - Her feelings for the child are too deep to allow her to gain it by force that injures the child
 - The child is taken from the natural mother, Natella Abashwili who is only after the inheritance and given to the false mother Grusha Vashnadze who has the greatest feelings of love for the boy (Michael Abashwili)
- (iii)– Justice is also shown in the way Azdak’s good turn in protecting and giving shelter to the Grand Duke.
 - Eventually he is rewarded when the Grand Duke appoints Judge just in time to save him from the hangman’s noose
 - Azdak then proceeds to dispense justice to the poor and down trodden in a manner never witnessed before in the land.
- (iv)– Azdak’s two year reign as Judge is treated as an era of rough justice especially for the poor and vulnerable in society.
 - The singer says – he broke the rules to save them
 - At long last the poor and the lowly had someone who was not too holy to be bribed by empty hands.

QUESTION 2

Human weaknesses affect characters negatively. Explain the truth of the above assertion with reference to Bertolt Brecht's The Caucasian Chalk Circle (20mks)

Points of interpretation

The following must come out clearly;

- Weakness of a character
- Details of that weakness
- How it affects that character negatively

WI. Natela Abashwili's weakness on adoring things.

- She forgets her child at the time of war and takes clothes and boots instead, (pg 25)
- The maid escapes with the child to save his life but Natela later goes for the child because she wants to inherit the governor's estate.
- She loses both the child and the estate.

WII – The fat prince greed and hunger for power

- Eliminates his brother to get his power,

WIII – The governor's lack of concern for his subjects.

- He oppresses his subjects forcing people to go to war, charging high taxation.
- He loses his life and power.

WIV- Lavrenti and his wife undermines family values.

- Fails to give Grusha a warm welcome though she comes from town where war has broken out tired and sick

WV The self righteous nature of Aniko shown through her hypocritical actions

WVI. Natela's hatred for the poor. She undermines Grusha during the court case feeling that Grusha is too poor to keep the child.

- She finally loses the child to the poor Grusha due to her arrogance.

Question 3

Discuss the consequences of Fighting and war in any society with evidence from Bertolt Brecht's The Caucasian Chalk Circle.

Introduction

Fighting and war in any society has far reaching consequences. During war people's normal lifestyle/ way of living is disrupted and there is a lot of destruction of property and lives. Bertolt Brecht has shown how war affects people in his play, The Caucasian Chalk Circle.

Body

- During war, **the innocent and the vulnerable suffer** the most from the effects of war and fighting. The servants say this about their employer, the Governor's family: "They even have to have their weeping done for them (p 26). Michael is being hunted down to be killed yet he is not aware of the war, being only an infant.
- There is **disruption of people's normal lifestyles** as farms and homes are abandoned. Resettlement has to be negotiated afresh after the war. See p7 (prologue). As a result of war, there are ruins of a war ravaged Caucasian village, the people orchard is already destroyed and the once beautiful dairy farm is a ruin.
- People's **livelihoods are destroyed** as the goat herders complain of the low quality of cheese they now produce from their new settlement. The old man whom Grusha requests to sell her some milk retorts: "Go to the soldiers if you want milk." The soldiers of the Grand Duke burn the houses of innocent people and kill them making it difficult for them to live peacefully.
- War **creates internal refugees**. The farmers and the goat herders have been displaced from their homes having been uprooted by the Germans. Grusha and her fellow workers flee into the Northern Mountains as a result of fighting in the city.
- Fighting and war **breeds civil wars and counter coups** as warring groups fight for supremacy. The grand Duke is overthrown by the princes who murder his governor but they are in turn rounded up and killed when the Grand Duke takes back powers.
- There is **rampant landlessness** during the war and fighting as seen in the cases presented before Azdak. He has been a thief as Shauwa says. The soldiers and policemen also break the law they are meant to uphold. The two farming groups – goat herders and the fruit growers are landless.
- **War results in exploitation and oppression**. For instance, in "The song of injustice in Persia. It is stated that the kings are driven by greed in their quest to acquire new territories by impoverishing peasants. Their sense of imperialism drives them into unrealistic adventures that Azdak refers to as "the roof of the world" ironically, as the soldiers kill each other, the marshals assault each other.
- There is **fear and apprehensions** which are direct effects of this war. Jussup feigns illness and lies in bed for a long time for fear of being drafted into the war. He only "recovers when he hears that the war has ended. "The song of the centre" clearly portrays the fear among the soldiers at the front line. It says that if one wants to survive the war and come back home one has to remain at the center "p47. The peasant woman at whose door Grusha leaves Michael shows extreme fear and apprehension at the sight of the soldiers. She disowns Grusha's agreement with her to claims that the child is hers and instead falls down on her knees begging for mercy. Grusha has to flee again with Michael.

Accept any other relevant point. Expect 4 well developed / illustrated points.

Question 4.

The society depicted in The Caucasian Chalk Circle is one that ignores important issues and gives priority to less serious ones leading often with disastrous consequences.

Discuss the validity of the statement with illustrations from the play.

Introduction: May be General or Specific

Many people ignore the important things that matter in their lives and instead pay attention to useless things that don't add value to their lives often leading to dire consequences. This is true of characters in the play like Natella Abashwili, the governor and others as discussed below.

The governor

- Immensely rich yet has many beggars, petitioners etc at his door.
- Refuses to hear the message from the wounded rider before the mass and ever after leading to his tragic death. *Page 16 -19*

Natella Abashwili

- **Concerned** about the dresses to pack leading to her abandoning her baby.
- In the court she is interested in getting Michael back only because of the estates left by her husband.
- She ends up losing the baby to Grusha

Aniko and Lavrenti

- Can't stand Grusha with her 'baby'. Aniko is so religious to accept Grusha
- Lavrenti forces Grusha to marry a 'dying' man whom she does not love. He pays the mother of the man a huge sum and later the marriage is dissolved by Azdak.

Jussup's mother

- Interested in marrying her son before he 'dies' and no attempts to treat him
- She has to feed the guests at the wedding, hiring a monk and later her son is divorced.

Black Mailer.

- Interested in knowing whether a certain land owner raped his niece or not and not the plight of the niece.
- Heavily fined.

Invalid

- Gets a stroke when he hears the doctor he paid fees to train is treating free
- Heavily fined.

Prince Kazbeki

- One of the princes who ran down the war
- Wants his unqualified nephew appointed the judge
- Embarrassed by Azdak in the mock trial and later killed on the return of the duke

Question 5

Bertolt Brecht; The Caucasian Chalk Circle

“What there is shall go to those who are good for it”. With illustrations from the play the caucasian chalk circle, write an essay in support of this statement.

i) In the prologue, the valley is given to the fruit governors

- They have plans to build their fruits culture to ten times its original size
- They have prepared a plan for an irrigation project
- The farm will not only grow more fruits but could also support vineyards
- They even present calculations for the project

ii) Michael is given to Gruisha because of her motherly nature

- She rescues him on the Easter Sunday when his mother leaves him behind
- Gruisha takes to a risky journey to the Northern Mountains amid pursuit by the ironshirts
- She marries a man on his death bed in order to give legitimacy to Michael
- In the chalk circle test ,she does not pull Michael from the circle

iii. Azdak is made judge by the iron shirts and later on the Grand Duke

- In the mock court scene he displays better knowledge of the law in comparison to prince Kazbeki's nephew
- His reign as judge is described as a brief golden age, almost an age of justice .In making his rulings he looks from the rich and gave to the poor
- He is later reappointed as judge by the Grand Duke as a show of gratitude for saving his life

iv. Azdak divorces Gruisha and Jessup instead of the old couple

- The divorce paves way for Gruisha's marriage to Simon
- Simon had stood by Gruisha in court claiming to be Michael's father
- The union between Gruisha and Jessup was for convenience
- Simon truly
- Deserved Gruisha for he came back to look for her after the war

Question 6

Drawing illustrations from what Gruisha goes through in order to save and adopt Michael, write an essay on the challenges of being a good person in a rotten society

INTRODUCTION

Even in a rotten society, it is possible to come across a good person. In the Caucasian Chalk Circle, such a person is Grusha. Grusha goes through many challenges in order to save and adopt Michael. Some of these challenges are discussed below.

Accept any other relevant introduction

CONTENT

- (i) She sacrifices the little she has in order to sustain Michael. She buys milk exorbitantly.
- (ii) She is forced to come up with an ingenious way of eluding the Red Shirts who are after him. She knocks one of them down with a piece of wood, enduring her life in the process.
- (iii) She crosses a dangerous bridge, endangering her life and Michael's.
- (iv) She has to contend with a society that frowns upon single motherhood. She is forced to accept marriage to an invalid called Jussup in order to normalize her status.
- (v) Her relationship with her fiancée, Simon, is endangered.
- (vi) She is forced to go through court processes in order to gain custody of Michael.

Question 7

“True motherhood is not necessarily biological” Write an essay illustrating this statement using Bertolt Brecht's, The Caucasian Chalk Circle.

- Natella Abashvili, the biological mother of Michael, abandons the child as she feels the city. She is more interested in her fine linen and shoes as well as horse carriages.
 - It takes the motherly instinct of the kitchen maid Grusha to retrieve the baby and fend for it, offering protection and nourishment.
 - Grusha adopts the baby and risks being captured by the soldiers and crossing the dangerous and rotten bridge to save the life of Michael from the Red Shirts.
 - The mockery of Grusha's sister-in-law concerning the illegitimate child, Michael, does not affect her affection for the young boy.
 - Vashnadze endures an arranged and difficult marriage on paper to a “dying man, Jussup, for the sake of the child.”

- A mere kitchen help (Grusha) fights for the custody of Michael in court and does not pull him to her side in the test of the chalk circle so as not to tear him up. She fears to destroy the boy she has nurtured and brought up expensively as a real mother.

Conclusion:

Generally mothers are supposed to be motherly for one to be accredited a real mother of a child. This world means not all the biological mothers are sincere parents as to claim the ownership, however the soul that would nurture brings up responsibly deserves the ownership as portrayed in Grusha vashnadze.

THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE BY MARGARET OGOLLA

THE AUTHOR

Doctor Margaret Atieno Ogola was born on 12th June, 1958 and passed on on 21st September, 2011. she was a doctor by profession, a trained pediatrician and a great literary icon.

Margaret Ogola has advocated for women empowerment and she comes out empowered herself. This is seen as she was the best student in Thompson Falls High School; she then went to Alliance high school and later earned a degree in medicine from the University of Nairobi in 1984 and later a master's degree in pediatrics in the year 1990.

In addition to her writing career she worked at the Kenyatta National Hospital until 19994 before she ventured into private sector. As a woman of high position she held various prestigious positions. This is seen as she was the medical director of Cottolengo Hospice for orphans with AIDS. She also held the position of the Executive director of the Family Life Counseling Association of Kenya. She was also the director of the institute of HEALTH Care Management at Strathmore Business School.

Apart from *The River and the Source* she has authored; *I swear by Apollo*, *A Place of Destiny*, *Mandate of the People*, she also co-authored *Educating in Human Love* with her husband Dr. George Ogolla

Of her first novel Ogolla says “The inspiration for this book came from my mother who handed down to me the wisdom and lives of her own mother and grandmother. This strength and support that is found in the African family is the most important part of our culture and should be preserved and nurtured at all costs. “

INTRODUCTION

The River and the Source follows four generations of Kenyan women in a rapidly changing society.

It belongs to a growing body of literary works that follows the feminist literary criticism of literature. They address themselves to issues pertaining to the welfare of women in African societies that are seemingly so patriarchal (male dominated). It captures the Kenyan soul of the future and the need to bring freedom, equality and gender consciousness across ethnic, religious and racial lines.

The River and the Source is a presentation of women seeking liberation from the oppressive male dominated society. Just like a river which originates from a spring; a source of an underground water, the birth of Akoko daughter to chief Gogni of Yimbo signifies the beginning of the river. The river is threatened to drying up by hardships after hardship but the river flows on.

The novel won the Kenyatta prize for fiction in 1995 and also the Commonwealth Writers Prize for best first book in Africa in 1995.

THE TITLE

The title *The River and the Source* suggests the flow of a river from some point to the sea. The novel traces the symbolic journey of women from patriarchal invisibility (where women are ignored and in the background) to autonomous existence (where women chart their own destiny). The river starts as a spring which is Obanda Akoko-the girl child. Akoko is the source of this river.

The river refers to the efforts that Akoko establishes of trying to liberate women from a patriarchal society that looks down upon them.

Akoko faces challenges as a woman in a male dominated society. She overcomes them and the river continues to flow through Nyabera.

Akoko is the source of the liberating force that flows from this oppressive and demeaning social system.

In literature, the river symbolically refers to continuity hence life is a continuum and the struggle for liberation is therefore a continuous process.

Therefore, from Akoko the river gains momentum at every stage through capable and competent women like Nyabera, Awiti, and finally Wandia.

The river and the source therefore refers to the journey of women empowerment that was begun or whose source is Akoko and the continued efforts of other women like Nyabera, Awiti and Wandia in ensuring that women remain empowered hence the river's continued flow.

The novel is thus a message of empowerment and hope for women who must rise up and take up their rightful equal position in society.

This is summarized by Chief Odera Gogni's statement, "A home without daughters is like a spring without a source."

SETTING

Setting refers to the historical moment in time or the geographical location in which the story takes place i.e. the location and time in which a narrative takes place.

The story begins 30 years before the Kenya-Uganda railway reached Kisumu. The story ends in the 1990s at the advent of multiparty politics in Kenya.

The plot covers a number of generations that oscillates between Yimbo and Sakwa Akoko's birthplace and marital home respectively in today's Nyanza Province in Kenya.

It later spread to Gem, Kisumu, Nakuru and Nairobi in succeeding generations of Akoko's family tree.

PLOT SUMMARY

PART 1: THE GIRL CHILD

This part of the novel introduces us to a vibrant Akoko who is vibrant, beautiful and hardworking. This part focus on the Luo cultural practices. The naming traditions, the duties expected to be performed by the different genders, and the preference of the boy child to the girl child. Her father's expectation that a boy will be born and the view that girls ill be married to go and cook in another mans house are evidence of this. The writer uses this part to highlight the importance of the girl child as we not that Akoko manages to gain her father's love and attention, something that was not usual among the luo.

Tradition is further highlighted in the Nak ceremony, that is performed before Akoko's suitor are welcomed to present their suits. Her father's love for her is shown when Akoko's father turns down 12 suitors. He purposely did so because, in the men who flocked his compound, none reached the standards he had set. He wants the best for his daughter thus wants her to get married to a chief as a mikai. It is for this reason he readily accept Owuor Kembo's proposal.

The Girl Child surprises us with the immense strength of a woman. Akoko Obanda is an epitome of wealth. She works hard to set a pedestal that was previously unimagined. , Akoko provided for herself and built her own family wealth. She encouraged and trained her children to be hardworking and disciplined. She promoted self reliance and mutual relationships with her subjects.

CHAPTER 1 AKOKO'S BIRTH

The chapter begins with the birth of Akoko Adoyo Akelo Obanda. Her father, Chief Odero Goggin expected a son because of the value placed by society in boys over girls. The naming of Akoko is done according to tradition and she ends up having four names. Adoyo – born during the weeding season. Obanda- according to dreams by the father and grandmother. Akelo after a step grandmother who had died. Akoko is given to her as she is noisy. The traditional values of the community like polygamy and preference for the male children are also brought out in the fathers desire to have a son. There is insight in to the naming rituals of the community as Akoko is given several names. The belief in superstition is also reflected on in the way Akoko's illness is dealt with and results in Akoko's final name, Akello. Akoko proves to be uniquely determined as she is able to compete with her numerous brothers. This earns her the admiration of both her father and elder brother, Oloo. By the end of the chapter Akoko is grown and of marriageable age and known for her diligence and hard work.

CHAPTER 2: BETROTHAL OF AKOKO

This chapter focuses on the betrothal and marriage of Akoko. We are introduced to the young chief Owuor Kembo, a man of Nyadhi or style, who arrives at Yimbo with his delegation from Sakwa. They are warmly received and all the ways of chik are observed. Chief odero is quite pleased as the daughter is going to be the first wife to chief owuor. According to chik one cannot be chief unless he is married hence necessitating the arrival of the delegation from Sakwa to ask for Akoko's hand in marriage. Negotiations for the bride price are carried out through their spokes people. Chief odero asks for a high bride price out of jealousy for the number of daughter to sons his daughter's suitors had compared to him. Chief owuor Kembo described as a man of style agrees to pay the bride price without bargaining, much to the protest of his brother and delegation. The negotiations are concluded by the presentation of Akoko to her future husband.

CHAPTER 3; AKOKO'S MOVE TO SAKWA

A group of young warriors drive the cattle that had being agreed on as the bride price during the negotiations. They are warmly welcome and well fed according to chik. On the morning of the next day the warriors take off with Akoko after having engaged in mock battles with her brothers before they ran off with Akoko. Akoko herself is also meant to resist so that it may not be said that she went willingly. They rest for a short while before Akoko is delivered to Sakwa. The people of Sakwa admire her and agree that she was worth the thirty head of cattle. Akoko settles in to marriage life and is well accepted by the community. She soon becomes pregnant with her first child. The community is highly superstitious and do not say anything about it. Though the pregnancy is uneventful but the delivery is harrowing. The child is named Obura. However Akoko is under pressure to bear more children as the society expects her to bear as many children as her bride price. Her mother in law even urges Owuor to marry another wife. Later Akoko gets pregnant with Nyabera and then has difficulty during the birth.

CHAPTER 4 AKOKO'S CONFLICT WITH NYAR ASEMBO

As a result of Owuor's refusal to marry another with and Akoko's low birth rate, conflict arises between Akoko and her mother in law. Her mother in law is also offended by the monogamous state of her son and his refusal to take a second wife. They compare him to his younger brother who already had two wives and many more children. One day as she is in the fields, she hears that her mother in law Nyar Asembo accused her of bewitching owuor Kembo so that he would not marry another wife. Akoko who is deeply offended by the accusations stays the night and on the morning of the next day calls for the people's attention to state her case. She defends herself by emphasizing that she has always been hard-working and a good wife. After this she leaves for Yimbo. Owuor returns and is angered by the events

that took place when he was away. He throttles his brother and almost hits his mother. He then starts a reconciliatory mission.

CHAPTER 5 RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT

The delegation from Sakwa arrives in Yimbo and is coolly received. Being accused of witchcraft was no light matter and the people of Yimbo were not pleased. The elders are gathered and Akoko is asked to give her version of events. She presents the accusations made against her that include witchcraft, standing in the way of her husband's marriage to other women, and having given birth at a slow rate. After the presentation of her case, Owuor defends himself stating that he had not been around when the unfortunate event happened and had dealt with those responsible. The Jodongo agree to resolve the issue and warn Akoko against making rash decisions in future. An appeasement of a goat was to be given to the maro.

CHAPTER 6 FAMILY LIFE

After Akoko's return to Sakwa she is soon pregnant again with a son, the delivery of the child is difficult. The child is named Owang Sino. Owang Sino is drawn to his father and they are quite fond of each other. There is a contrast between Owuor and Otieno. Owuor who is monogamous has a happy wife who he treats like a queen. Otieno on the other hand has four wives who he treated like sluts and they obliged him. There are rumours of white men (joroche) and the establishment of a colonial government. Obura gets intrigued and suggests that his mother allow him to tour the world. She reprimands for the thought and advises him to seek a wife. She also reminds him of his role as the first born son Both his father and mother are alarmed at this new development. Chief Owuor forbids Obura from seeing Nyaroche and Ambere and has the later sent away.

CHAPTER 7 OBURA'S DISAPPEARANCE

Obura disappears from his hut, and Akoko is disturbed by the disappearance. Chief Owuor sends out scouts to try and track them. They return and inform the chief that he had left in the company of Nyaroche and Ambere. Akoko prays earnestly that no harm should come to her son. The chief organises for search parties to follow them. Unfortunately they return two days later and report that the three were picked up by white men and could not be traced farther. Akoko who was devastated by her son's disappearance has a sense of foreboding and believes Obura might as well be dead.

CHAPTER 8 DEATH OF OBURA

it has been a while since Obura disappeared. News of the white man and the colonial government continue. One day two strangely dressed men come to deliver news about Obura. They draw the attention of the entire community as they make their way to chief Owuor's compound. They inform the chief of the war between jo-ingreza and jojerman. They inform the chief of the death of Obura and Ambere as they inform him that Nyaroche is crippled. The chief is furious and throws away the bracelet that he was given. Nyabera picks it up as the community begins to mourn. A mock funeral is performed and a banana trunk is buried in place of Obura's body.

CHAPTER 9 DEATHS OF OWUOR AND OWANG

Akoko then goes about helping Nyabera overcome her grief and continue with her life. She takes to wearing the bracelet she had picked when the white men came. Akoko works hard and instils the same value in Nyabera. Thus her herd grows so large that she has to get her own watering hole. Nyabera is now a girl of marriageable age. Suitors come in large numbers and Akoko helps her husband pick an appropriate suitor for their daughter. Okumu Angolo is picked as he comes from a neighbouring village. Their first three children live for a short time and then die. Owang Sino also comes of age and jowangyo are dispatched to look for a suitable wife for him. A suitable girl was found from Uyoma. However, Chief owuor who had been ailing for a long time dies and the marriage negotiations are postponed for the burial. Akoko takes her husband's spear and shield and mourns him in great song and style. Owang Sino who had done his best to make his mother happy dies soon after the birth of his son, owuor Sino. Alando does not stay to defend her son but chooses to get inherited soon after. The chief stool is passed to Otieno Kembo as the young owuor Sino is still a toddler and cannot rule until he is married. Akoko is devastated and Nyabera comes to her side to aid her.

CHAPTER 10 OTIENO BECOMES CHIEF

Otieno takes over the chief stool with greed and arrogance. He squanders the wealth left behind by owuor and even attempts to usurp Akoko's personal wealth. Akoko feels greatly disadvantaged as she has no male sons or relatives who are of age and would come to her aid. Otieno is unwilling to relinquish the seat. He dispenses with the council of Jodongo and snatches Akoko's wealth. Akoko perceives the challenge and decides to seek help from the joroche. She takes her grandchild, owuor, to her brother, Oloo. She then visits her daughter, Nyabera who had lost a number of children before she goes on her journey to Kisumu. She reveals her plans to her daughter.

CHAPTER 11 AKOKO'S JOURNEY TO KISUMA

Her nephews Opiyo and Odongo accompany her. Akoko had earlier tried to send them away but to no avail. They start the journey early in the morning and Akoko takes the opportunity

to educate them on the history of the community through stories. They finally arrive in the town of Kisumu and are struck by the difference in structures and dressing of the people. There, they meet Otuoma, who helps them in by hosting them for the night as it was a Sunday and the court was closed. He also informs them that citizens were no longer allowed to carry weapons. They finally present their case to the D.O. and the tribunal.

CHAPTER 12 AKOKO'S JUSTICE AND DEPARTURE FROM SAKWA

Akoko presents her case to the D.O. and the tribunal. The D.O. asks that the case be postponed for three months so that the claims may be investigated. The twins embellish the story that they tell to the future generations. Akoko returns to Sakwa to find Otieno's greed having grown a great deal and her wealth significantly reduced. Investigators come to Sakwa, and the disgruntled people are only too willing to help. Akoko is summoned soon after and the case is reopened before the D.C. The D.C. Rules that Otieno Kembo be forcefully removed from the chief stool and he council of Jodongo rule. Otieno was also made to pay all that he had grabbed. Akoko then returned to Sakwa and took the remainder of her wealth. She returned to Yimbo to live as a migogo in her brother Oloo's house.

PART TWO: THE ART OF GIVING

The Art of Giving is Self sacrifice. It is putting away all you believed in and embracing the others needs. Akoko in this chapter gives more than she receives. The part I ends when she has lost all that she could have held to in her matrimonial home. She forsakes her happy life as a married woman and goes home to lead a desolate life as a migogo. A migogo meant that, she will be looked down upon by her brothers' wife. She would be ridiculed and if we remember well; Akoko did not take lightly ridicule or sneer. There was a time she shouted down her mother-in-law (maro) for accusing her of being a witch (juok).

Akoko knew very well what she was getting into when she settled down in her brother Oloo's house. She was ready to live with them as long as her grandson Owuor Sino found comfort other than being molested in Otieno's household. She left the wealth she had built in years in Sakwa to live among her paternal household.

Giving involves denial of one's comfort for the sake of others. Nyabera tries in earnest to get and raise children for her and her husband Okumu. When Okumu dies, she tries it with Ogoma Kwach but all fails. In despair and with only one child, she joins Christianity. She leaves her mother, daughter and nephew in Aluor to satisfy her quest but returns having failed. She learns the hard way that, it's better to be content than trying to find happiness where there is none. The biggest sacrifice ever in part II however is when Akoko blesses her grandson Petro Owuor Sino (Peter Owuor Kembo) to take on his vocation.

In accepting to this outrageous decision, Akoko loses her right to reclaim her matrimonial home and the continuity of her and her husband's lineage- given that most African communities were patrilineal. In letting Peter become a vicar, she made him and those of her keen lose the chief stool to the younger family in Sakwa.

Therefore Giving is an art since few people are ready to go to such extremes as Akoko, Nyabera and those around her, to let those they love enjoy their life to the fullest

CHAPTER 1 OKUMU'S DEATH

Nyabera suffers the deaths of her children. She gets pregnant and gives birth to a baby girl. A ritual is performed to aid in the survival of the child. She is left by the entrance to the homestead and an old lady passing by picked her up and brought her to them. She is therefore named Awiti. Okumu falls ill and dies when Awiti is three years old. Nyabera is inherited by a close relative, Ogoma Kwach. He is drawn to Nyabera's wealth and hard work and foregoes his duty to his first wife. As a result he is reported to the council of Jodongo and reprimanded. Nyabera is hurt by their decision and seeks an alternate source of comfort. She has heard a lot about Christianity and seeks out Pillipo to give her more information. Nyabera gives out her wealth then travels to Yimbo to inform her mother of her decision. She leaves Awiti with Akoko then departs for Gem to start her new life.

CHAPTER 2. NYABERA IS BAPTISED

Nyabera travels from Yimbo to Gem and arrives very late. She spends the night in the catechist's house. She explains herself to the catechist on the morning of the next day. He takes her to the chapel and she is inducted into Christianity. She learns the ways of the new religion quickly and thirstily. She is then baptised Maria.

CHAPTER 3 NYABERA'S RETURN

Nyabera returns from Gem and goes to her mother in Yimbo. Though Akoko can tell that she is pleased with the new religion and her new name, she is able to tell that her daughter is uneasy. Nyabera opens up and admits that she felt that something was lacking as she was alone in Aluor. She asks her mother to accompany her to Gem. Akoko agrees and together with her grandchildren travel to Gem.

CHAPTER 4 LIFE IN GEM

On arrival in Aluor the children are enrolled in catechism classes and reading classes where they show determination and zeal in their study. They are baptised into Christianity and they receive new names. Owuor is renamed Peter, Awiti is named Elizabeth and Akoko is named Veronica. Soon after, news reaches Maria that Ogoma Kwach's wife had died. The desire to have children drives her to return to her matrimonial home without an explanation to her

mother. Meanwhile peter develops an interest in priesthood and confides in Awiti. He is afraid to tell Akoko as he does not want to disappoint her. The two decide to wait for Nyabera to return so that they seek her assistance.

CHAPTER 5 THE VOCATION

After a few years, Nyabera returns to Aluor, dejected and beaten by life. She confesses to her mother Akoko, before proceeding to spend the night in church. Owuor proves to be quite helpful to her and she loves him like a son. owuor takes to reading bible verses to Nyabera which she finds quite comforting. He then informs her about his desire to take up the vocation. They then proceed to talk to Akoko. Akoko agrees on the condition that he changes his name to peter owuor Kembo. Owuor is able to pursue priesthood.

CHAPTER 6 AWITI'S EDUCATION

Owuor joins the seminary and his cousin is enrolled into primary school. There are very few girls as the society does not value the education of the girl child. Also a lot of girls get married at a young age. Elizabeth proves to be diligent and tops the class all through. By the time she sits for the final exam she is the only girl in the class.

She excels and is invited to a teachers' training college. Nyabera fears that she might lose her and is unwilling to accept the news. Akoko reprimands Nyabera for her behaviour and urges her to allow her daughter to pursue her dreams. Akoko misses her husband and wishes he were present to help with the decision.

CHAPTER 7 LIFE IN COLLEGE

Awiti work hard in college and unlike the other students, she does not engage in relationships like the other students. She turns down overtures from several men and is therefore feared. This is made worse when it is learnt that her brother is in the seminary and both her mother and grandmother live at the mission. She finally meets Mark Antony Oloo Sigu during an exeat. Mark inquires about her and informs her about himself. He mentions that he was in the army and has been called to work in Nakuru. They part when she agrees to reply to his letters when he writes.

CHAPTER 8 AWITI'S BETROTHAL

Awiti and mark interact through the letters they send each other. They talk about their lives, families and each other. After a few months of the engagements, mark states that he would like to meet her parents. Awiti goes to Aluor to deliver the exciting piece of news. Her

mother, Maria is a bit opposed but Akoko wins her over and preparations are made. Male relatives are sent for from Yimbo and Sakwa. Peter owuor Kembo is also sent for from the seminary. They make preparations for the day and kongó is brewed and several delicacies made. The day arrives and mark Antony arrives with his delegation. He is dressed in military fatigues a monkey head dress and bears a shield. They are warmly welcome and introductions done. To the surprise of mark and his delegation, the bride price is set at a token bull, two cows and six goats. There is much celebration after the negotiations are completed. Akoko is hard laughing with her grandson in law. She dies peacefully in her sleep later in the night

CHAPTER 9 AKOKO IS LAID TO REST

Akoko is buried in Aluor in where she had spent most of life. Peter owuor Kembo is among the deacons who conduct the mass. Her death is hard to accept as she seemed to be full of life. Awiti is so devastated that she almost calls off the wedding. Nyabera comforts her by telling the life story of Akoko. She finally calms down and apologises to Mark, who had been with peter owuor.

CHAPTER 10 AWITI'S MARRIAGE

After the mourning period, peter goes to Rome to complete his studies. He is later ordained a priest and his first duty was to preside over the wedding between Elizabeth and mark. The newly wedded couple moves from Aluor to live in Nakuru. Shortly afterwards, Elizabeth becomes pregnant. Unfortunately she and mark misdiagnose the symptoms for malaria thus leading to the loss of the twins. It takes a long time before she can conceive again. Her mother in law start to complain about the lack of grandchildren but mark stops her from prying. Elizabeth gets pregnant again and this time the couple are happy and cautious to ensure nothing goes wrong.

PART 3 LOVE AND LIFE

Love and Life yanks us from the painful oppression of death into a new realm of love and understanding. Mark Sigu, we can now imagine what they talked about with Akoko, steers his family away from tradition into the new sphere of the evolving world.

He is blessed with 7 children 4 boys and three girls. Each child has different personality. We see Mark and Elizabeth as capable parents who administer discipline and love to their children. The two parents provide education food and shelter to their new life and work best to establish family unity.

Despite her love for her children, Elizabeth keeps a straight head and clear vision not to spoil her kids. She stands behind when Aoro is punished by his father, though she knew the punishment was punitive and way above discipline, she took a back step until it was time for her intervention. She also steps back when Mark pours his love over their last born Mary but does her best to reign him in so that Mary does not end up too spoiled.

On the other hand, we silently follow the children as they grow into adulthood. From the brave and confident Vera to her timid and self possessed twin sister. The relationship of the two girls sours as they take on different personalities in life. Aoro and Antony also come out strongly shaping their destinies different ways though they show unrivalled level of competence. Aoro takes medicine while Anthony joins the seminary. The twins Opiyo and Odongo also manifest differently.

CHAPTER 1 THE YOUNG COUPLE

Elizabeth delivers twins, Veronica and Rebecca. The two girls have varying personalities. Vera is independent, intelligent and protective of her sister. Rebecca on the other hand, is quite attractive and self-centred. When they are two years old, Elizabeth gave birth to another child, a boy Aoro. Due to the state of emergency, Mark opts to move his family back to Aluor. His mother is quite unhappy about this but he does not change his stand. Mark gets lonely while Elizabeth is away and engages in extramarital affairs. A certain girl stays with him for some time and later claims that she is pregnant. This brings Mark back to his sense and he sends her away. He then goes to Aluor to get his family. Elizabeth hears rumours of the infidelity but says nothing about it.

CHAPTER 2 VERA AND BECKY'S EDUCATION.

Kenya gains independence and the citizens celebrate. The country is faced with numerous challenges but equally numerous opportunities. Mark gets promoted and moves to a bigger house as his family has grown. He now has seven children that include Vera, Becky, Aoro, Antony, Opiyo Odongo and Mary. Vera is an excellent student in school. Becky on the other hand does not give her studies much effort. Vera excels in her primary level exam and is called to a national school which she declines as she wanted that to go to her sister's school. Her parents are concerned but later agree to let her go to a school of her choice.

CHAPTER 3 AORO'S ADVENTURES

Aoro is compared to Obura who was swift bright confident and curious. The company of his younger brothers makes him more adventurous than usual. One day they go fishing at a nearby river. As he and Tony are busy one of the twins, Odongo, almost drowns. Opiyo

screams alerting the older brothers who come to his rescue. They go back home wet, and shaken. The younger boys blame the older ones for the event and Aoro and Tony are punished. The older boys decide to never take their smaller brothers anywhere after the incident. Tony later develops acute appendicitis and is rushed to hospital in the night. Aoro is worried and informs his older sisters. They later receive news that their brother will be well after the operation.

CHAPTER 4. AORO'S EPIPHANY

Aoro is fascinated by Tony's stitches and gains an interest in medicine. He operates on a frog successfully. Uncle Peter comes to visit them and though every child warms up to him, Tony is particularly curious about priesthood and has a lot of questions. Mark is a bit apprehensive as he notices that Tony is eyeing priesthood. Most parents are not comfortable with their children joining priesthood. Peter is getting a promotion to bishop. He stays a while then visits his aunt Maria in Aluor. It is later on decided that Opiyo and Odongo should go to Aluor to keep their grandmother company and attend the school their mother went to. Aoro excels in his studies and is called to the best school in the country. This inspires Tony to work hard so that he can join him. Aoro has difficulty in school and is suspended for indiscipline. Mark deals with him by telling him to seek his own food and shelter. Aoro is remorseful and fears his father. He returns to school and does his best.

CHAPTER 5 MARY'S BIRTH

The chapter takes us back to the birth the pregnancy was difficult for Elizabeth. She developed high blood pressure and threatened miscarriage on several occasions. The doctors feared for both mother and child and they have to be admitted. Mary's birth had to be induced and she is named after her grandmother. Mark loves Mary deeply and gives her all the best. He sends her to private school and makes an effort to personally pick and drop her. This draws envy from Becky who was used to being the centre of attention. Becky tries to complain and gets a scathing response from her sister Vera. This results in an argument that leads the sisters to drift apart.

CHAPTER 6 MARIA'S DEATH

Examination results are announced and Vera has done exceptionally well. Becky attains a second division which she is well pleased with. Antony gets 36 points in his primary certificate examinations and is delighted as he had earned a spot in Aoro's school. Becky suggests that she would like to get a job but Mark insists that she must continue with her education. A telegram is sent from Aluor informing them that Maria is unwell. Elizabeth is picked from the school by Mark as she is beside herself. Mark does his best to leave

everything in order before they leave for Aluor. Elizabeth is beside Maria when he dies in hospital later on that day.

CHAPTER 7 BECKY RUNS AWAY

Opiyo and Odongo return to Nakuru after the burial of Maria. Education is of importance to the Sigu family as examinations approach and everyone is tense as there are 5 candidates in the house. Aoro was sitting for his O- level, Vera and Becky are sitting for their A-level and Opiyo and Odongo for the certificate of primary education. Vera and Becky are now in their prime and boys begin to pay a lot of attention to them. Vera meets Tommy Muhambe who is particularly persistent. She brings up the question on whether she can go to a movie with Tommy to her father during dinner. When the results are announced, Aoro excels with 6 distinctions, Vera got two A's and a B, Becky flunked. After the result Becky runs away from home and leaves a note stating that she had gone to try to be an air hostess. Vera tries to explain to her parents that they should let her be.

CHAPTER 8 CAMPUS LIFE

Vera goes to campus and is struck by the new found freedom. Most campus girls are dating rich affluent men or other campus students. Vera maintains her relationship with Tommy but when he proposes to her she declines ending their 3 year relationship. Vera leaves with a heavy heart and decide to try and find her sister Becky. She accidentally bumps into her at the airport and leave for Becky apartments.

CHAPTER 9 BECKY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH JOHN

Becky takes Vera to an affluent block of apartments. She introduces Vera to her fiancé, John Courtney, a Canadian national who was a pilot. She tells Vera about her plans to get married, but Vera insists that he must first meet their parents. Vera tries to convince Becky to go back home. On John's persistence she finally agrees to visit her parents.

CHAPTER 10 VERA JOINS OPUS DEI

Vera goes back to her room on campus and tells the day's events to her roommate Mary-Anne Ngugi. Vera mentions the heartbreak with Tommy and about her twin sister. The conversation extends to the larger family. Mary Anne then invites her to attend a recollection at Parkview college, which she readily agrees. After mass on Sunday Vera begins to question her religious beliefs. She watches a lay, and goes on with her studies as exams are approaching. When the day comes, Mary -Anne and Vera board a matatu and head for the recollection. Vera is introduced to the members of Opus Dei who had different views about

the church, and work challenges. She got out of the church puzzled and Mary-Anne offered to give her books which will help her understand better.

PART 4: VARIABLE WINDS

Variable winds suggest the changing course of the lives that the family experiences. There are the ups and downs that characterize their lives. Their lives diverge on different paths that bring with them sweet victories like Aoro's marriage, Wandia's doctorate, happy families among other events. There are also the difficulties like Daniel's down syndrome, Becky's death among other challenges that they encounter. There I also the frosting in the relationship between Becky and the rest of her family. The change in the way her children relate to her and the marked improvement they make under the care of Aoro and Wandia.

CHAPTER ONE: AORO TAKES MEDICINE

Aoro starts medicine at the university. The study of Anatomy Biochemistry and Psychology among other subjects. Anatomy happens to be the most of the competitive subjects. In the laboratory, the students are told to the group themselves into groups of six. Group six had Aoro, Wandia, Makau Kithinji, Jeremy Kizingo, Paul Omondi Rakula, and Simon Onyancha. The competition is narrowed to two members of group six. After exams, Wandia beat Aoro with a single point. Aoro takes it in good grace and invites her to have a drink. This signifies the start of a long relationship.

CHAPTER 2. AORO'S INTERNSHIP

The internship is hard for Aoro. He has to work around the clock while at the mercy of the residents and doctors. His rounds include the theatre, round in the wards and filling patient information as well as taking laboratory sample. He rarely gets enough sleep. Wandia is also an intern at Machakos general hospital. They are unable to meet for long periods of time as the rarely have time to meet. Aoro is taking a break to rest when Wandia visits him. They talk about marriage and Wandia proposes to Aoro. Wandia informs Aoro that she was on her way to visit her mother who was sick.

CHAPTER 3 WANDIAS FAMILY

Wandia had been raised by a single mother after her father had died while she was young. Her mother had raised money to educate them by working on her coffee farm. Her siblings were all grown up and engaged in different professions. Her sister Esther is a teacher who is married to the headmaster, Michael. Her brother Michael was a business man in Nairobi, Wandia is a doctor and timothy is described as being a good time boy. Wandia's mother suffers from diabetes and has an ulcer on her leg. Wandia's mother is still worried about her farm even though Wandia tells her that she does not need to work so hard. She spends time with her mother and even talks about Aoro. She then goes to spend the night with her sister Esther. She enjoys the company of her nieces and nephews. Later that evening they get time to talk and the topic of Aoro is brought up again. the rest of her family is concern about the different tribes but Wandia is not bothered.

CHAPTER 4 WANDIA'S INTRODUCTION

Aoro takes Wandia to his parent's farm in Njoro. After the visit to Wandia's family, Aoro wrote his parent a letter informing them that he would be bringing his bride to be home. Elizabeth is eager to meet them and is the one who receives them when they arrive. After the introductions, Elizabeth asks Wandia to help herb in the kitchen, giving mark and Aoro sometime to talk. Mark is concern that Aoro might have made a wrong decision by choosing to marry a kikuyu. Elizabeth and Wandia get along well and become good friends. They return with tea after they feel that the men had enough time to sort out their differences.

CHAPTER 5 AORO WEDS WANDIA

Aoro and Wandia's wedding pulls the family together as that try to make it a success. Becky provides a car and Vera helps them get one of the company houses in Malindi. for the honeymoon. Vera and Wandia grow very close to each other. Becky is separated from john Courtney after he discovered that she was cheating on him. She had custody of their two children, Johnny, and Alicia. Becky lived a promiscuous life and insults Vera when she was confronted about it. Wandia is pregnant with twins and had been asked to stay home due to a cough. Vera visits Wandia and voices her concerns about her sister. They discuss Becky's health which seemed to be on the decline and her children's welfare. Wandia goes into labour.

CHAPTER 6 DANIEL'S DOWN'S SYNDROME

Wandia gets twins, Lisa and Daniel. Daniel has down syndrome and grows at a slow rate. Lisa grows rapidly and makes the contrast between her and her twin brother so much more glaring. Wandia is devastated by his condition while Aoro feel like he had failed. Daniel is a loving child despite his condition and draws love from all around him. Becky dies of AIDS and Wandia and Aoro take in Alicia and Johnny since Vera, who had been appointed their guardian, cannot as her calling does not allow her to have a home. Becky lives behind a

sizeable estate to ensure that they are well provided for. Daniel develops leukaemia as children with Down's syndrome are prone to it. Wandia is shocked by the turn of events. Daniel is taken to hospital and the doctor set about treating him as it is not one of the aggressive forms. Wandia visits church and asks God to save her son and promises to visit church more frequently.

CHAPTER 7 FAMILY REUNION

Wandia pursues her passion in haematology after the recovery of her son Daniel. She receives a scholarship to study in John Hopkins hospital in Baltimore, USA. She is however worried of living Aoro with the task of looking after their now large family. Alicia and Johnny loved them like their biological parents. At the end of the term all the children wanted to show how well they were doing in school, even Daniel who had Down's Syndrome was doing pretty well. The Aoro's take measure to ensure that the family is well tended while Wandia is away. The plan was to call Mary, Aoro's sister, to stay with the children besides hiring another house help. The family goes to Njoro to visit mark and Elizabeth. Odongo is the farm manager while his twin brother Opiyo is a manager at marks former farm. Opiyo visits with his family too, Edna his wife and their two children. Father tony also drops in. Wandia tells Elizabeth about the scholarship and she readily agrees, meanwhile Aoro and tony reminisce about their childhood.

CHAPTER 8 WANDIA'S GRADUATION

Both Mugo's and Sigu's families gather to celebrate Wandia's achievement as the first Kenyan woman to get a doctorate degree in medicine. There is a large gathering at the Aoro's home as relatives and friends join them in the celebration. Alicia, a student of design and music at Kenyatta university shadows her aunt Vera. Johnny and Daniel hover around Aoro and Wandia. Johnny faces an identity crisis and wishes to change his name to Aoro's name. He keeps African friends, speaks, Swahili and eats African dishes. Wandia tries to talk to him and afterwards ask Vera to write to John Courtney. Elizabeth wakes up to check on the children who are still up; she looks in on her grandchildren. She gets an attack of dizziness as she tries to adjust them. The following day Aoro receives a call from Opiyo informing him that their mother had died. She is buried next to her daughter as a large crowd comes to bid her farewell.

THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE

THEMES

Themes refer to the general ideas, messages or lessons the writer has portrayed in his/her literary piece of work. Therefore, under the study of themes, we particularly narrow our perspective to the main ideas in which the story is founded and on whose axis it revolves, and offers an avenue of continuity.

It is important to note that while discussing themes, it is imperative for identification and illustration of the theme to be done, to promote understanding.

A theme can simply be said to be the concern of the writer. It is simply what the writer says.

FAMILY RELATIONS

The novel addresses various issues revolving around family members, their closeness and their interactions. This is seen through various instances as follows;

Chief Odera Gogni loves his daughter Akoko so much as seen through his over protectiveness. He wants the best for his daughter hence turns down 13 suitors he even mentions that a home without daughters is like a spring without a source.

Akoko's brother Oloo too is seen to be so close to Akoko and loves her so much. When travelling to Kisumu he sends his sons Opiyo and Oloo to accompany her for protection. Oloo further does the unthinkable when he welcomes Akoko back when she is a widow and suffering.

Owuor kembo and Akoko's marriage is a closely knit union. On marrying Akoko Owuor never marries any other wife despite pressure from his mother. On Owuor's death Akoko mourns him with so much dignity and with songs of praise recounting their life together and his greatness.

Nyabera on settling at the new mission picks her mum her daughter and nephew Owuor to stay with them since they were so close to each other. They stay together so happily.

Mark Sigu is a hardworking man who loves and fully provides for his family. They are all well educated and trained on responsibility. Mark is concerned when Vera asks for permission to go out with a man and fears for her. When Becky runs away to the city he is so concerned and almost follows her to the city.

Aoro's and Wandia's family are seen to co-exist and thrive in love and friendship. They even adopt Becky's children –Alicia and Johny and even consider them their own. "The Courtney children had become so much part of the family that Wandia never dreamed of excluding them from her calculations" (pg 291)

GENDER RELATIONS

The society in *The River and the Source* is seen to be patriarchal. We are told that: "If it was hard for a boy to get an education – it was well nigh impossible for a girl. The purpose of

female existence was marriage and child bearing.”(P 129) this shows a disregard for women in society and points out to their expectation in society which is pointer to their lowly stature in society.

Akoko is born in a family that is dominated by men and encounters many challenges. In fact the expression the girl child points to her oppressed and exploited and threatened Akoko who is growing up as a girl child. Her struggles are seen even in her assertive and aggressive stance in her first words *dwaro mara* ‘want mine!’(pg 15)

Women are expected to be submissive in this society and it is unheard of for a woman to challenge a man. This is however seen in Akoko’s resistance against Otieno her brother in-law who even gets to fear her. When Otieno threatens to assault her she looks him in the eyes and says, ‘just you die!’(pg 37)

Further when Otieno takes over the chieftaincy and rules with an iron fist, Akoko seeks the intervention of the new administration to protect her wealth. She wins in this and in fact opens new vistas and opportunities for the oppressed especially the women.

Gender inequality is seen further in the sense that out of a class of thirty four, there were only two girls one of whom was Awiti and even so she later got married off at the age of sixteen. It’s only through Akoko’s determination that Awiti is saved from such fate. Awiti is further seen to be exceptional as she maintains first position hence bringing out the success of women despite all odds. She thus wins the envy, admiration and even disapproval by some. As a teacher Awiti manages the children back at Aluor during the emergency without Mark bringing her out as a strong woman.

Furthermore from Awiti’s experience we learn of the important role of women in upbringing in that Awiti is saved from the traditional practices of marriage at seventeen through “the pioneering and daring spirit of her grandmother and mother.” (pg 129) they regarded her as their future and hoped to enhance the continuity of the family through her and this comes to fruition. Akoko and Nyabera thus overcome the obstacles that tend to degrade and suppress women.

Wandia’s mother is further brought out as a strong woman. Though single she does not become destitute and vulnerable. This is further seen through Wandia who is an epitome of great upbringing through her courage and determination and profession as a doctor. She even undertakes further studies to even acquire the role of professor.

The continuity of the river of women empowerment is thus seen through the generations through Akoko, Nyabera, Awiti and Wandia. This is despite the challenges they faced and disregard by society where even for Awiti’s case it is said “A girl! To be so clever...no man would marry her...” (pg 130) despite all these she keeps excelling.

CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE

There are several instances of conflict in marriage pointed out in the novel. They are brought either from misunderstanding between the couple or sometimes from external influence.

There is a conflict in the marriage between Owuor Kembo and Akoko. This is brought out by the allegations by Nyar Asembo that Akoko has bewitched her son and cast a spell on him so that he doesn't take another wife. Further she complains of her inability to conceive regularly despite the huge bride price. Akoko decides to sever their relationship and goes back to Yimbo but not before summoning a crowd and clearing her name against the allegations. It takes the intervention of the Jodongo to bring her back.

Conflict is also seen in the marriage between Elizabeth Awiti and Mark Sigu. This is over her inability to conceive after the miscarriage. She even accuses mark of having given her chloroquin to deliberately make her sterile. The issue is compounded by Mark's mother who demands an explanation for Elizabeth's lack of children. This creates so much tension and mark has to take Elizabeth's side to salvage the situation.

Becky's promiscuity leads to the break-up of their marriage with John Courtney. It is said that she exchanged men at will prompting John to divorce her. It is even the reason she gets infected with HIV.

There was also conflict in the marriage between Aoro and Wandia over their son Daniel's disease Leukemia. Wandia accuses Aoro of spending too much time outside working when they have children to bring up and take care of. Hi explanations are not heard and she even retorts angrily, "Don't honey me. Go to hell." (pg288)

RELIGION

There are aspects of both traditional religion and Christianity in the novel.

In the traditional religion, we are told that the people believed in *Were* the god of the eye of the rising sun and ancestral spirits. They made sacrifices and poured libations. Akoko even mentions that it is *Were* who forms children in ones womb. They even believed that the spirits of the departed influenced the living so much. They could cause dreams to pregnant mothers or relatives to guide in the naming of the young ones.

With the coming of missionaries, Christianity is introduced Nyabera is attracted to this new religion and is further fascinated by various characters in the bible, the suffering of Jesus and baptism through which she is named Maria.

Akoko later joins Maria in the new religion with the children too where Awiti becomes Sacristan assisting nuns and Owuor becoming an altar boy. Owuor later becomes a priest and ascends to bishop. This even influences Tony Sigu who becomes a priest.

Awiti raises her family in religious grounds. This even sees her daughter Vera becoming a non-marrying member of the Opus Dei.

Religion impacts on the traditional aspects of life for the people and we see so much changing. Traditionally Akoko was supposed to be buried in her husband's ancestral home at the left of the entrance but due to her change to Christianity she is buried as a Christian in a church cemetery. Furthermore, marriage rites change and with the advent of Christianity has

introduced church weddings as seen in the Christian church wedding between Mark and Elizabeth presided by father Peter. Vera further becomes an unmarried member of Opus Dei which would not have been accepted traditionally.

DEATH

Throughout the plot of the book, the writer has eliminated many characters through death—some of who never even get a chance to live one day.

Akoko's son Obura Kembo, died at war in Tanganyika. He as well as Ambere K'ongoro died in the First World War between the Jo-Ingereza and Jo-Jerman. The village went into mourning for the chief's son. The mourning was worsened by the fact that there was no body to mourn over and to bury. Pg 55 "The names of the three are Obura KEmbo, Ambere K'ongoso, and Nyaroche Silwal. They went to fight the Jo-Jerman in a place called Tanganyika.....of the three, only Nyaroche Silwal survived and he is....."

Tragedy befalls Akoko again. First, she had to contend with the death of her son Obura. Later her husband, Chief Owuor Kembo passes on after ailing for a long time since his son's death. Pg 62 ".....but before the bride price could be paid the ailing chief Owour Kembo died....." Akoko's other son Owang Sino, dies after choking on a fish bone after having a meal of fish and Ugali.

Akoko's daughter, Nyabera faces several misfortunes as well. Her entire life seems one big disaster. Her other two sons die during an outbreak of measles. She gets pregnant again when Awiti is three years old but she miscarries. The real disaster is when her husband, Okumu dies after complaining of severe headache, pain and stiffness in the neck and he cannot also retain any food.

After being inherited by a second cousin to her husband, Ogoma Kwachm Nyabera gets two children who again, die of sickle cell disease. After returning to the same man, hoping a friendship would grow, she gets a baby boy who like all the others before him die. The man's wife is also said to have died.

Akoko dies of old age peacefully in her sleep late at night, that dark hour just before dawn. Pg 140 "That night she died quietly on her pallet in the corner....."

As a result of state of emergency, the country is becoming more and more dangerous even for ordinary people. As a result of the war between the Mau Mau freedom fighters and the white johnnies. Death could arrive without warning. Things worsened day by day and lorries carrying dead purportedly the mau mau were a common sight.

Maria Nyabera, also dies after she had a stroke and was in a coma before her death early one morning. Pg 190, "At seven O'clock, just before the doctor came for his rounds, Maria Nyabeta daughter of Chief Owour Kembo and Akoko Obanda and wife to Okumu Angolo, breathed her last with her only daughter at her bed side." Her granddaughter, Becky dies of

AIDS. Nyabera's daughter, Elizabeth Awiti, similarly dies after she has problems with breathing aged seventy.

LOVE

The writer has dealt with different levels of love. For example;

- i) Love between man and woman.
- ii) The love between families and within families.
- iii) The love for material, tangible things
- iv) The love for oneself, the one that almost borders on self-centredness.

During Akoko's marriage negotiations, the spokesman for the Jodongo of Sakwa, Aloo K' Olima refers to their hosts (elders of Yimbo) as 'brothers'. This is a pointer to the good *dak* (neighbourliness) that existed between the two groups as well as the great '*wat*' (brotherhood) they shared.

Akoko was committed to the well being of her family. When the survival of the two year old Owuor through whom her family could find continuity was threatened by Otieno, Akoko made an epic journey to Kisumu to petition the colonial government (*sirikal*) to intercede on her behalf.

Akoko also loved her husband Owuor Kembo. When he dies, she mourned carrying it well into the village. Pg 62-63. 'She donned his monkey skin head dress that he had and his shield in the other. She sang dirges in his honour with her powerful voice. She sang his famous courtship of her, the great honour he had accorded her throughout their life together, the friendship that existed between them.'

Akoko instilled in her children and grandchildren a strong sense of loyalty to the family. This value of love and loyalty in the family is seen in Sigu's family. They (Mark and Elizabeth) work in unison to bring up their seven children.

There also exists a relationship of love and care between Mark and Elizabeth. This is evident from the courtship the two has at the beginning of a period of six months. "pg 132.....Their courtship went on in this gentle offhand manner, but at the end of six months, they knew each other pretty well, at least she knew she liked him and he who impetuous knew that he was he was in love and wanted to get married.'

It is also indicated in the book that Sigu family was a family full of love. Pg 162 "All in all, the Sigu family was a happy one. There was money, but not too much and plenty of love-simple and unpretentious.'

There is also love between Wandia and her brother's and sisters. "She and her brother and sisters had always been very close, a closeness born of not just blood ties, but of many hardships faced together.'

Wandia also enjoys a warm relationship with her two nephews and niece. "The other children arrived from school and Wandia was lost in hug and demands for sweets and chocolates. (pg 263)

In a show of family unity, Wandia and Aoro adopt two children who were Becky's. These are Alicia and Jonny following Becky's death.

CHANGE

In the novel, "The River and the Source" nothing remains the same. The continuous cyclic pattern of human life and nature bedecked by numerous changes of both conscious and unconscious orientation. Through these changes, life continues or events continue at different levels affected by changes. Consider these illustrations:-

Akoko is way ahead of her time and is appreciative of the need to embrace change early enough. The author says that the clarity of vision and strength of character of Akoko could have been 'a discomfiture to all men of all ages and she was therefore never really fitted in that, this or any other century (pg 142)

The coming of the Jorochere (whitemen) marked the first real threat to the formerly tranquil and cohesive traditional African society. A footloose wanderer called Ambere K'Ongoso brought stories of the white skinned people (pg 48). Similarly Nyarochere came back with stories about pesa (money) pg 49.

The effect of the coming of the white man in relation to administration of justice, enforcement of law and order, mode of dressing and language is now evident especially in Kisumu. The clerk at the D.O.'s office could speak the language of the White man as well as his own. He wore a dazzling white shirt, a thin black tie and white shoes.

Opiyo and Odongo while accompanying their aunt Akoko to Kisumu were dressed in skins covering only their loins and Akoko was dressed in the traditional skin called "chieno." This mode of dressing is contrasted with that of a passer-by they met on their arrival in Kisumu who wore a pair of long shorts and a singlet. The said passer-by had also attended mission school for one year.

While in Kisumu, Akoko, Opiyo and Odongo are informed that Kisumu had been renamed Kisumu by the whiteman.

The house belonging to Akoko's host is an indicator of changes taking place in the society. His house was a variation of the traditional hut since it had square windows made of wood and a neat wooden door, all painted bright green. Also the buildings in Kisumu looked large and most had white walls and red roofs. Others had tin wall.

Akoko's host in Kisumu advises Opiyo and Odongo to leave their weapons at home since people were now prohibited from carrying weapons since the 'Sirikal' had 'askaris' who offered protection to everyone and kept the peace.

The white DC in Kisumu listens to Akoko's position and rules in her favour. A contingent of 'Askaris' is dispatched to the village to forcibly remove Otieno from his position as chief. He is also made to return all property he had grabbed from his sister-in-law and his grand nephew. This episode shows that the influence of the 'Jodongo' in the administration of justice is gradually waning and in its place is the white man's administrative structures. In fact the author acknowledges this reality when she says "In spite of the DC's decision, it was only a matter of time before the hereditary chiefdoms were done away with totally. It was a changing world. (pg 93)

Christianity is gradually taking root. After being baptized, Nyabera acquires a new name, Maria. (pg 110)

By agreeing to accompany Nyabera to Gem (mission of Aluor, Akoko has made the decision to move from one life to another. her pioneering and daring spirit enabled her daughter Awiti to acquire education.

By acquiring formal education, Awiti is able to disentangle herself from the yoke of traditions and customs of her people pertaining to the role of women. This conservative mind set of Awiti's people is evident in the statement, "The purpose of female existence was marriage and child bearing." According to the community, it was superfluous to educate girls. Awiti's desire to acquire education was made possible through the pioneering and daring spirit her grandmother and mother had (pg 129)

The impact of formal education is evident in Mark Sigu's ability to speak fluently in perfect English. During his encounter with Elizabeth he tells her that he went to school in St. Mary's Yala and was conscripted into the army while job hunting in Nairobi. The advent of formal employment is a result of formal education. (pg 137)

While conversing with Elizabeth, Mark Sigu switches to a combination of English and vernacular-a common manner of speech is an emerging bilingual and tri-lingual Africa.

Money was replacing barter trade as a tool of exchange of goods and services. Awiti successfully sat her examination at the teacher training college and received her teacher's certificate. She is then posted back to her old school. She earns a salary of fifty shillings a month. Maria initially opposes the idea of her daughter accepting the invitation to join the teacher training college but Akoko prevails upon her.

When Awiti informs her mother that she does not know the names of Mark's parents, an appalled Maria laments, "What do you mean you don't know! How can you even consider having friendship with a man whose roots and antecedents you don't know?" Contrary to dictates of 'Chik', Elizabeth's relatives did not send a 'Jawangyo' (spy) to check out Mark Sigu's background. Akoko reasons with Maria by telling her, "Accept it Maria, the world is changing." (pg 143)

Akoko has changed the concept of bride price. Contrary to the expectations of Elizabeth's suitors from Seme that a heavy bride price was going to be demanded for Elizabeth, no price is asked except for a token bull, two cows and six goats. (Pg 148)

In a break from traditions, Akoko was not buried in her husband's ancestral home to the left of the entrance to her house but on the burial ground which the church had prepared.

Mixed (inter-tribal) marriages have started to take root. Elizabeth's flexibility and accommodating nature is evident when she convinces her husband to allow their daughter Vera to accompany Tommy Muhambe, a twenty one year old young Luhya man studying veterinary medicine to the movies. Becky's husband (John Courtney) is a white man. Wandia's sister (Esther) points out some of the challenges of inter tribal marriages that Wandia and Aoro may experience. "For example few in-laws are endearing, but I can't imagine anything more annoying than their talking to their son, and your children in a language you cannot understand." Aoro (a Luo) marries Wandia (a Kikuyu). Prior to their marriage each introduces his/her would be spouse to his/her parents.

Change is also experienced in the arena of politics. Mention is made of the recently concluded multi-party elections (1992) which marked the end of the single party rule. People hope that the new political dispensation would usher in a new era. Instead it is characterized by confusion and cries of foul by the opposition and declarations of total transparency by the winners. (pg 304)

Vera also changes from unbelieving Christian to a member of Opus Dei during her encounter with Maryanne.

The two epic journeys Akoko makes are quite significant as far as change is concerned. The first one is her journey to Kisumu accompanied by Opiyo and Odongo. This story elevated Akoko to heroine and legendary status. It was to be passed down from generation to generation. The second one is Akoko and Nyabera's journey to ALuor. "The children were the future and the future had to be protected." The writer seems to suggest the merging of the past and the present, "Akoko told them stories of the heroes of old and the history of baby Jesus." Father Tony, Akoko's grandson says of Akoko, "To her life was like a river, flowing from eternity to eternity."

TRADITION AND CUSTOMS

'Chik' (traditions) governed every aspect of the life of the people. It was the glue which held the people together thus preventing disintegration of the fabric of the society and chaos.

The naming system in the community is quite elaborate. The children are given more than one name. For instance, Chief Odero Gogni's newly born child is first called Adoyo since she was born during the weeding and hoeing season. The ancestral spirits usually send vivid dreams to the new born baby's parents and in Adoyo's case the child's great uncle, recently dead, a medicine man of great renown sent dreams to both the father and grandmother of the child, resulting in the baby being named Obanda. Since the baby had an extremely powerful set of lungs she was given the third name, Akoko. (pg 14)

Akoko's son is first named Obura (the wise one). On the second night after birth the child's father dreamt that Kembo K' Agina the late chief was handing him a baby boy from his right hand side; therefore the child was named Obura Kembo.

When Adoyo was two weeks old, she suffered a prolonged bout of colic and screaming that went on all night. A reason and solution is sought to the baby's crying. Grandmother- Nyar Alego implores were to spare the child's life. She pleads with her departed mother (Achieng) to intercede. She also seems to imply that the child's condition may be attributed to Akelo, her departed sister who died childless. (pg 12 and 13)

It was a common practice for potential suitors to send spies (jowang'yo) to check out the background of a would be bride. In the case of AKoko, they reported that she had impeccable antecedents.

Chik (tradition) dictates that a chief must be married. This is what prompted Owuor Kembo having inherited the chieftainship to get married at a relatively young age of twenty years. (pg 19)

Marriage negotiations are conducted by elders, Chief Gogni chooses Aloo K' Olima (an accomplished negotiator) as their spokesman. They set a high bride price at thirty head which to everyone's surprise Owuor Kembo promptly accepts without bargaining. (pg 20)

The first wife's house (Mikai's house) holds the centre stage directly facing the gate.

Chief Odero Gogni welcomes the visitors (prospective suitors) and offers them brew (Kong'o) to be sipped through a long reed like straw after libations are first offered to *Were*. (pg 19) Kong'o is once again drank after libations are poured to *Were* to signify the culmination of successful marriage negotiations. Feasting then goes on into the late afternoon. (pg 25)

Traditions dictate that a woman should present a picture of demure shyness when she encountered her future husband for the first time, but Akoko defied this practice by walking in measured steps, heald held high, hands at her side. (pg 24)

Chik (traditions) did not allow suitors to spend the night at their in-laws homestead as witnessed in Akoko's case. The suitors had to leave when evening came. (pg 25)

A mock wrestling duel ensues between the young men from Sakwa and those who resit the efforts to spirit her away. Eventually the men from Sakwa succed in grabbing Akoko and taking her to her matrimonial home. (pg 27)

Chik also dictated that men sent on a mission to deliver bride price must be granted hospitality without question. As a result when the young men from Sakwa stopped for rest and food at the nearest homestead they were warmly received. (pg 27)

According to 'Chik', if a man dies, his body lies in his mikai's hut (first wife's hut) before he is buried on the right hand side of the hut. (pg38)

In order to pave way for elders to go to Yimbo following Akoko's decision to go back to her parent's home, four young men are dispatched with a cow and an ox, a he-goat and two nanny goats. 'Chik', also dictates that whatever the circumstances, a messenger should not be victimized hence the young men are only received coldly. (pg 40)

The traditions of the community dictated that during deliberations centering around marriage disputes, both sides of the story had to be heard before a decision was arrived at. When the Jodongo (elders of Seme) went to Yimbo to negotiate the return of Akoko (their wife), being a grave matter, kong'o was not allowed unless until an agreement was reached.

Chieftdom is hereditary, Owuor tells his son, "do not take your duty practically my son, for the chieftdom has been in my family for generations."

The role of the chief is well outlined. His main job was to lead the council of Jodongo (elders) in their arbitration and his final word was law. He was also a sort of priest who led the whole community in sacrifice and libation on public worshipping days. He also led his people to battle, and if he is too old, his eldest son. (pg 57)

The community abhorred bloodshed. To them, bloodshed even in battle was a great taboo and required much cleansing. (pg 58)

In compliance with the dictates of 'Chik' upon delivering of the message that Obura had died at war in Tanganyika, his mother Akoko came out of her son's hut with his spear in her right and his colourful ox-hide shield in her left- the traditional salute of the fallen warrior. For four days the villagers wailed, sang dirges and the young men staged mock battles. A banana trunk was symbolically buried in the absence of Obura's body. (Pg 62)

Suicide was considered a great taboo and would bring a great curse among the people. (pg 62)

Upon the death of chief Odero Gogni, the clan went into sixty days mourning mandatory for a chief. Akoko also mourned her husband, She sang dirges while donning his monkey skin headdress and brandishing his spear in one hand and his shield in the other.

'Chik' did not allow a mother to spend the night in her married daughter's house. When Akoko visits her daughter Nyabera before she leaves for Kisumu, Nyabera conducts her to her mother-in-law's house. (pg 78)

Akoko presents a petition to the white D.O. in Kisumu about her oppression in the hands of Otieno. Thereafter the D.O sends his messengers to discreetly carry out investigations to ascertain the allegations. Akoko is summoned back to Kisumu to appear before the D.C. The messenger informs the D.C that the chieftdom is hereditary and passes from father to his eldest son. In the absence of a son, the closest male relative takes over. In case the son is not yet of the age of marriage, the chieftdom is held in custody by the closest male relative with the council of elders. When the rightful heir comes of age, he ransoms his seat with twelve head of cattle, the price of a bride, payable to the custodian. In the event that he cannot raise

the ransom his seat within two years of getting married, then the council of elders may decide that the seat remains with the custodian. (pg 92)

Having already lost three children, a little ceremony is preformed to confuse evil spirits and enhance Nyabera's son's chances of survival. (pg 92)

'Chik' dictated that a husband had to be found from close relatives of the dead man for the widow. "His job being that of siring children to maintain the dead man's name and to keep his widow from wandering from man to man." (pg 99) this is called 'tero'. Therefore, Otieno, chief Owuor Kembo's brother should have married his brother's widow, AKoko and become a guardian of the grandson and custodian not owner of the chief's stool." (pg 87)

DETERMINATION AND HARDWORK

Throughout the novel, instances have been vividly brought to life of determined personalities trying to achieve on thing or the other. For example:-

Obura is determined to leave home and explore a whole new life outside that no amount of persuasion not to do so deters him. He finally flees home to unknown destinations.

Akoko is determined to find intervention of the white man's government in a bid to alleviate the atrocities committed by her brother-in-law. To an unknown place, she sets off with hope that one day her people will be liberated.

Akoko is depicted as a hardworking and determined woman. AS a young woman she is known to rise early and till her lands and uses the left over to barter in exchange for cattle, sheep and goats. (pg 35) Her hers is impressive and her granaries were always full. (pg 66)

Akoko also tells her daughter that laziness opens the door for evil to rule one's mind and body. She also tells her to work tirelessly and that it is shame for an able bodied person to feed on sweat of others. (pg 86)

Nyabera is also determined to join the new faith. To the catechist at the mission, she says, ".....teacher, I have come a long way for this, I doubt there will be a going back. I have nothing to go back to." (pg 97) She leaves behind her daughter and mother to the unknown....Nyabera left the two dearest people to her with a heavy heart but determined feet....." (pg 103)

When they (Akoko and Nyabera together with the children) arrived at the mission, we are told that Akoko started working hard to form some kind of base for the children. ".....she had never begged for food and she was not about to begin.....she was untiring and unsparing of herself." (pg 117)

Awiti also worked hard in school. She is given an admission to college. ".....this letter comes from a head teacher of a school called a college, where they teach teachers how to teach children. He says he is happy to offer me a place in his college so that I an also learn how to be a teacher." (pg 123)

Peter Owuor also worked very hard. Things in the seminary were not that east. It is said, “.....And so he entered the vigour and splendour life in the seminary. Sometimes when things were particularly tough, he would wonder whether mere flesh and blood would survive it, but it never entered in his mind to leave.....he was no quitter. He would survive. He would see it through.” (pg 127) Peter had learnt from his grandmother that once a job begun it had to be completed.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERIZATION

CHARACTER-Are people, animals or objects taking a specific role in artistic work like a story, play, novel narrative.

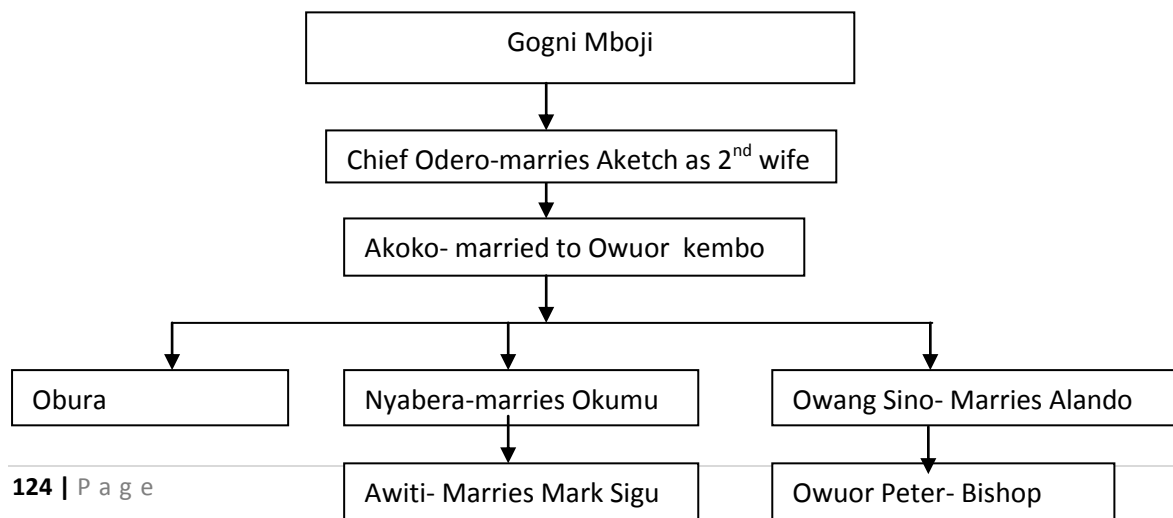
CHARACTERIZATION- Is the author’s presentation and development of the characters. Explaining character traits of characters is what characterization entails.

How to determine a character

- What the character says or does
 - What the author says about him
 - What other characters say about him/her
- We describe a character using an adjective
- There also **MUST** be an illustration to the character identified
- e.g.

Akoko is **determined** and **courageous**, she challenges Otieno and dares him to strike her. Determined and courageous are adjectives, and Akoko’s character traits.

AKOKOS FAMILY TREE



AKOKO

She is the wife of Chief Owuor Kembo. She is the most prominent character. She is portrayed as the source of the river and the source of great successful future generation. Akoko's character can be illustrated as follows:-

1) Determined

She amazes everybody when she utters her first words 'dwara mara' (want mine). The author comments, "Akoko grew fairly slow but she made up for her lack of height....a determination that would be the hallmark of her entire life....everybody.....she would be a very determined person someday.(pg 14-15)

Despite the many challenges that Akoko faces she is not weighed down by the she over obstacles but she overcomes them and moves forward.

2) Hardworking /industrious/enterprising

Akoko believes in hardwork and learns that the way to make a husband happy is by the work of her hands.

She tells Nyabera, ' My daughter, should it ever be said that you are as lazy as your mother, I will tun in my grave.'(pg 66)

Her herds at Sakwa is said to have been so vast that a special dam separate from the rest is built, "It was said of the herds that should you get to the water to drink before you drew your water then you had to wait for almost two hours before they drunk their fill."(pg 66)

Akoko's granaries are full to bursting so that during the lean season, ".....people coming to barter their cattle in exchange for food were rested and fed."(pg 66)

When Akoko returns to Yimbo with all her property she has salvaged....."It was a mighty herd which moved in three cohorts." (pg 93-94)

She advises Nyabera that laziness opens the door for evil to rule one's mind and body. She says, "It is a shame for an able-bodied person to feed off the sweat of others." (pg 93)

When Akoko moves to Aluor mission with daughter and grand children, she continues to work hard. The writer says, "She had never begged for food and she was not about to begin....."(pg 117)

"God has no time for the lazy, but the devil has, was a favorite saying of hers. (pg 145)

3) Daring/bold courageous

She faces her brother head on when he takes something she is playing with at a very tender age. During the marriage negotiations she stares straight into the eyes of the husband to be and Otieno wonders at her courage.(pg 24)

In another incident when Otieno Kembo gets wind of some people nosing around with his affairs and confronts Akoko, she responds courageously, "Go away you fool.....Are you the village chief or the village fool?" (pg 90)

It is out of courage that she dares trek to Kisumu. She is not scared of the hazards of the journey that has wild animals and worse still the killing and maiming Lang'o tribesmen.

4) Understanding/supportive/concerned

Akoko is responsible and supportive as a mother; she understands Nyabera's suffering after the loss of her brother Obura. She snaps out of her personal grief and pays attention to her.

She understands that people are different and accommodates Alando Nyar Uyoma's weakness. "She leaned over backwards to accommodate her weakness some of which she found irritating like her tendency to idleness."(pg 70)

She lets Owuor Sino join priesthood even though she has hopes that one day he would sit on the chief's stool, she consents him to take the new path. She tells him, "I will not stand in your wayDo whatever the spirit bids you."

She stands by Nyabera during her trying moments and ensures that her grandchild Awiti is well taken care of.

5) Decisive/ Independent minded

When her mother-in-law accuses her of witchcraft, Akoko takes her and Otieno head-on in front of the village. She makes a hasty decision to go back to her people in Yimbo.

Soon after Otieno Kembo takes over the chief's stool with glee and arrogance, Akoko decides that, "...the time had come for battle lines to be clearly drawn." (pg 73) She treks to Kisumu to seek justice from the sirikal.

6) Intelligent/wise

She grows up as an intelligent woman and is full of wisdom. “She believed that a young woman had to be intelligent.....”(pg 65)

She offers wise counsel to her daughter who is mourning the loss of her sons through an outbreak of measles. She tells her, “cry my child, for one does not bury a child without burying a part of ones’s soul with it,...Yesterday is not today and today is not tomorrow for each day rises fresh from the hands of Were....”(pg 75)

Her wisdom is further illustrated during her visit to Kisumu to appeal against her brother-in-law. Where else the twins are dissatisfied with the verdict of the D.O, Akoko tells them,” Do not decide the wisdom of a man by the brevity of his quiet or the multitude of his words.....A fool knows everything.”(pg 88). She discovers that she cannot physically confront Otieno Kembo who has reduced her head of cattle and decides to wait for the D.O’s intervention. She says, “There was no advantage in knocking one’s head against a tree trunkif you want to cut a tree, take time to sharpen an axe.”(pg 89)

She encourages Nyabera to seek a new life at the mission in Aluor with these words, ”Bitterness is poison to the spirit.....if you are walking along and you find your path leading nowhere, then it is wise to try other path.”(pg 103)

She plays the voice of reason when a conflict arises between Nyabera and Awiti over her fiancé whose background she has not investigated. Akoko tells Nyabera, “Accept it Maria, the world is changing.” (pg 143) She supports Peter Owuor’s decision to become a priest despite the fact that he is the chief in waiting. She says, “Things have changed and people are turning to different things.”(pg 126)

7)

Kind and generous

The people who come to barter their animals are rested and fully fed before they being dispatched to their homes. Nyabera, in lamenting her mother’s misfortunes, describes her as one who had never looked at any one with an evil eye, never denied anyone food, had been quite generous in sacrifice and libation

8)

Rash/impatient/short-tempered

Despite her positive personality, Akoko at times behaves in a rash manner. She reacts with temper when her mother-in-law accuses her of witchcraft and does not wait for her husband to return. She goes home to her people in Yimbo. Chief Kembo comments, I know all your virtues, but your weakest point is your temper and impatience.....you must exercise self-control.”(pg 44-55)

AKOKO’S ROLES

1. She is the main character in the story.
Without her there would be no story

2. She is symbolically referred to as the source of the river. She is also a symbol of change, wisdom, determination, hardwork and focused people.
3. Through Akoko several themes are highlighted; Tradition, change, education, religion and death.
4. She helps develop other characters e.g. through her Owuor Kembo is brought out as loving, committed, wise. Through her Otieno kembo is portrayed as abusive, cowardly, selfish, greedy and chauvinist.
5. Through her several aspects of style such as proverbs, similes, vivid description, songs, myths and legends are brought out.

MARIA NYABERA

She is the second born of Akoko, born three and a half years after Obura. She is the only daughter of Akoko and Owuor Kembo; the only surviving among the three born. She is always merry and always meets people with a sunny smile. This is how she earns her name Nyabera-meaning the good one. She can be described as;

1) Hardworking

Her husband confesses that, she never neglects her duty to go traipsing off to her home for she is industrious.

In Aluor, she would always accompany her mother to till the land and together they have granaries of food and a big herd of cattle. "The two women became some sort of a fixture on the green sloping countryside, and the locals, not as motivated as they were made endless jokes about their iron backs and caked feet." (pg 117)

Even when she is told how hard it is to master Christian concepts, she does not hesitate to go to Aluor. She memorizes all the stories which she later recounts to her daughter, nephew and mother, "After she mastered the basics of religion she started attending mass every morning before class." (pg 107)

2) Likeable/Loveable/ adorable

Due to her jovial nature, she is easily likeable. She has, ".....a personality to charm the birds off the trees." (pg 33) Right from a tender age, her mother does not have to worry about baby sitters for young girls line up to hold the baby. "Obura was very jealous for he would have liked to have more of his sister to himself." (pg 33)

3) Preserving/enduring

She undergoes a lot of suffering. Her first child dies at the age of two. The child suffers from fever, jaundice and swelling of the tummy. She loses her two sons to a ferocious outbreak of measles. She loses her father, and miscarries when Awiti is three years and soon after her husband dies. She is inherited by Ogoma Kwach and they have two children, but they both die. When in Aluor, she hears that Ogoma's wife has died so she goes back to him. They have

another child who dies soon after. The man also start to court a younger girl and feeling rejected, she goes back to Aluor.

4) Loving/caring

As a sister, she loves her brother, Obura, that his death devastates her. She becomes a loner wandering away by herself, mute and quite for days.

After she settles in Aluor she remembers to go for her daughter, nephew and mother whom she loves in a special way. She loves Owuor like her own son”.....formed such a solid wall of love around the children.” 9pg 116)

She supports Owuor in his decision to join priesthood. She leaves some of her cattle with her mother-in-law since she has been her friend.

5) Humble /modest

Although she marries a poor man, Okumu, and brought with her a sizeable herd of cattle, sheep and goats, she respects her husband and shows him humility although he could hardly raise the bride price. She treats him with the utmost respect and politely seeks his permission to go visiting her old home.

6) Secretive/Discreet

When she decides to go back to her matrimonial home Aluor, she offers no explanation and her mother looking into her eyes, lets her go without demanding one. “There are many longings and fears which can never be put fully into words.”(pg 118)

7) Weak-willed/indecisive

Even after making a break with tradition to join Christianity at Aluor, she still comes back to her matrimonial home to seek her inheritor, Ogoma Kwach in order to get a son. This is a breach of the the Christian doctrine that she now professes.

In most cases she depends solely on Akoko to make decisions.

NYABERA’S ROLES

1. She helps in the development of the story as she is Akoko’s child.
2. She brings about change by seeking the Christian religion and gives birth to Awiti who pursues the white man’s education.
3. Through her the following themes are highlighted; change, religion, education, family relationships and death.
4. She helps in portraying several aspects of style like; rhetorical questions, dialogue, allusion.

5. She helps develop other characters e.g. through her Akoko's character traits as caring, comforting, independent minded and religious.

ELIZABETH AWITI

She is Nyabera's only surviving daughter. She is also the wife of Mark Sigu. She can be described as;

1) Intelligent/Brilliant

"She mesmerizes the class with her powers to recall...."(pg 115) She is good at memorizing prayers both in Latin and vernacular. The villagers wonder at her intelligence. "A girl! To be so clever..... to receive commendation after commendation!"

In class where she is the only girl, she holds her position quite well even in mathematics which she dislikes. She emerges top of her class and is invited to join the first teacher's college near Aluor.

2) Industrious/hardworking/determined

She inherits her grandmother's industry and determination. While so many girls drop out of school, she reaches the top class at eighteen. She receives a certificate on passing a tough examination at the end of the year.

She works hard on mathematics which she dislikes and passes well. Amongst ten boys, she is the only girl who holds top position in class.

She does so well at school and gets admitted to a teachers training college. Upon graduation she becomes a teacher.

3) Loving/ passionate/caring

She her mother at least once every two months, but still she feels that she has not done enough. She also sends her two sons, Opiyo and Odongo to keep her company.

She loves her grandmother Akoko and writes about her to Mark. "She had loved her grandmother desperately....Had admired her unreservedly." (pg 151)

When Aoro and Tony are punished by being denied food at night, after risking the life of the twins, Elizabeth hears them in the kitchen trying to steal food. However, she goes and gives them *chapatis* and *dengu* smiling at them.

4) Firm/ Decisive/Resolute

When she gives birth to Mary, she decisively asks the nurse for water and baptizes the child in hospital, "I baptize you Mary....."(pg 194) She decides she is going to get admitted in

hospital. She asks Mark to go back to the children and only come to visit her at the weekend or whenever she can.

Elizabeth ensures Mary does not get spoilt.....mother kept her head prevented the young lady from being completely spoilt.”(pg 195)

5)

Principled/dignified/self-controlled

Although many of the male students at the Teachers Training College are attracted to her and go to great lengths including throwing love notes wrapped around stones to her room to win her over, she does not yield. She remains the odd one out when all the other girls have paired up, either from within college outside.

She is variously referred to as the nun, Virgin Mary and church mouse. She is shunned by both men and women for being a non-conformist. She is so cold towards men that when Mark talks to her asking her why she is always alone she retorts,”What is that to you.”(pg 137)

6)

Motherly/responsible/compassionate

e

When Mark feels so guilty for having been so ignorant as to give her anti-malaria drugs that makes her abort, Elizabeth comforts him.”Don’t worry, God will give us another. She didn’t bother telling him they had been twins. The poor man had suffered enough.”(pg 160)

As a mother, she” sleeps without sleeping.” Aoro’s scream when Tony falls sick at night gets her out of bed even before Aoro reaches her bedroom to report his brother’s ailment. Tony is taken to hospital “..... Held on his mother’s lap.....”(pg 180)

When Aoro faints for not having eaten for long, which is a punishment for his being undisciplined, Elizabeth,”.....was watching secretly.....rushed out to her son.”(pg 190)

ELIZABETH’S ROLES

1. She helps in development of plot- She moves with her mother and grandmother to Aluor mission, gets educated, marries Sigu and together they have seven children.
2. Through her we see change- She acquires the white man’s education and gets employed.
3. She helps highlight several aspects of style; dialogue and humor.
4. Through her, Akoko’s river continues to flow
5. Helps develop other characters e.g. through her we see Maria Nyabera as loving, Mark Sigu is portrayed as loving, caring and naive

VERA

She is Becky's twin sister. The two are Elizabeth and Sigu's first children. She is the first born of the two twins. She is a lady with many positive points, a replica of her mother and great grandmother, Akoko. She can be described as;

1)

Brilliant/Intelligent

She carries off trophy after trophy. She is into everything like debate and sports. After primary national exam, she gets an almost perfect score and wins a place at a top national school. In her secondary national school. In her secondary national exams, she gets distinction in Math, Biology, Physics and Geography. In her A-level, she gets As in Mathematics and Physics and a B in chemistry. She opts to go for engineering.

2)

Loving/friendly

She has a great capacity for love. She has a passionate nature and is completely loyal and her sister is the object of her love and protection. "She was willing and ready to do battle with anyone who crossed Becky's path and was a fearless fighter."(pg 166)

At five, she almost tears a playmate apart before anyone realizes what is happening, because she is screaming while pummeling him. She loves her sister and shows her off to all. She opts to go to her sister's school rather than a top national school. She still goes to look for Becky at the airport even when she thinks that Becky might not want to see her. She confesses to Becky that she actually loved Tommy only that she cannot marry him. She and Wandia become automatic friends.

3)

Responsible

She is made a captain in class seven, a position only held before by boys. Her mother allows her to join Becky's secondary school so that she can look after her twin sister.

She talks to Becky until she agrees to go and inform her parents about her impending marriage. Although she is not married and does not have children, Becky entrusts the care and future of her children to her.

4)

Hardworking/ industrious

After form six, when Becky decides just to stay at home, Vera gets a job as a teacher in a nearby harambee school.

Her excellent grades are always due to brilliance and hardwork.

With her tremendous energy, she participates in many school activities and carries trophy after trophy.

She chooses engineering because she thinks it is more challenging than architecture.

5)

Emotional

Her tears are ready to fall at the slightest provocation. She is about to cry when her mother tries to persuade her to consider refusing to go to a national school. When she has an argument with her sister, tears well in her eyes and she dashes them away angrily with her fist. She almost engages in a physical fight with her sister.

6)

Religious

Although she treats church going as a formality, and is a good Christian throughout her childhood, she becomes very religious while in college after Mary-Anne introduces her to a “recollection”. She starts a hungry search for religious enlightenment and dedicates her life to God as an unmarried member of the Opus Dei.

Vera’s Roles

1. She is used to develop themes such as; change, education, women empowerment, conflict and religion.
2. Through her Becky is portrayed as jealous and hateful, while Wandia is portrayed as loving and concerned.

BECKY

She is one of the twin daughters of Mark Sigu and Elizabeth Awiti. They are the eldest. Becky is brought out as follows;

1)

Loveable/Adorable

She draws love from one and all from a very early stage, just plain irresistible. She has very many admirers from her childhood up to almost the time she dies. She even marries a white man.

2)

Selfish/Egocentric

She is utterly selfish. Even after being informed of Tony’s illness, she continues to lie in bed. “Few things bored her much as sickness, suffering and death.” She just “.....stretched luxuriously in bed enjoying the feel of her young lithe body.”(pg 181)

After her A-levels, she disappears to Nairobi without informing her parents. She just leaves a note and leaves Vera to do the explanation.

3)

Jealous/Envious

She is jealous of the attention Mary is given and wonders whether the latter has to murder to be punished. When Vera turns from a gawky faced teenager into a striking young woman and boys start noticing her, Becky notices this and becomes jealous.

When Vera goes to visit her at the airport and she takes her to her home, she confesses that she has been jealous of Vera all her life

4)

Unfaithful/Promiscuous/ immoral

Becky has an illicit love affair while her husband, John, is out of the country. This leads to their divorce when John finds out. Vera complains about her changing of men frequently as she changed clothes! She throws herself at every man as if she hates herself. This distances her from her children and she ends up dying of AIDS.

5)

Materialistic

Becky loves the things of this world. She loves money and what it can buy.

6)

Responsible/organized

Even if she lives an irresponsible life, she financially caters for her death; the family is surprised to find that she has left her own children very well financially off. She has left a hefty insurance, a string of maisonettes, two bungalows in Spring Valley and a block of offices and shops in west lands. She has also left clear documents and things legally tied up. She had appointed a firm of trustees to run her affairs on behalf of the children and of their benefit. Her sister Vera has been appointed guardian of the children and is allowed to choose which family member they would live with.

Becky's Roles

1. She is used to develop themes such as; Education, relationships, change, immorality, conflict and materialism.
2. Through her interaction with other characters, their character traits are brought out. For instance Vera is portrayed as loving, concerned and hardworking. Her father is depicted as strict and concerned while Wandia is portrayed as concerned and selfless.

WANDIA

Wandia is Aoro's wife, she is a doctor. She comes from a different community from her husband. The writer uses her to demystify inter-tribal marriages. She is developed as a character that is;

1)

Intelligent

The battle for the top position in the anatomy class is between her and Aoro, and she finally beats him. The writer says, "But Wandia had beaten him.....she had 78 points."(pg 127)

2)

Hardworking/ambitious/pioneering

She portrays several incidences of determination and ambition in life, at her early age that she wants to be a doctor. She later achieves this through her determination when after her second degree; she gets a scholarship to study haematology at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore Maryland.

3)

Bold/courageous

At the school of medicine, when told to stand in groups before the cavader, she is the first person to gather courage to move towards it. She courageously asks the group members to make introduction which helps them to ease the tension.

Her boldness is also shown when she takes the first step towards cementing their relationship. She goes ahead and proposes to him. She, “When are you going to propose if at all.....”(pg 256)

4)

Loving/caring/understanding

Her mother, to whom she has always been close, means a lot to her. She has fond memories of her childhood with her mother. When she learns that her mother is admitted in hospital, she asks her friends to cover for her at Machakos Hospital where she is an intern so that she can visit her.

Her love, care and understanding are exhibited when she adopts Becky’s children: Alicia and Johnny. She handles them better than their real mother.

Though she is a doctor with a tight schedule her love and care for her children and husband are not affected. She finds that she has time for them and understands them well and their academic potentials.

She loves her mother-in-law, Elizabeth, and always consults her. “The relationship between her and her mother was a constant source of amusement.....other’s guts? (pg 294-295)

5)

Wise

Though Wandia is younger than Vera, Vera seeks advice from her due to their mutual understanding. This is seen when Vera seeks advice on Becky’s behavior towards her children after divorcing John.

She cautions Aoro, her husband, that though they have busy schedules as doctors, they have children and should not forget they need them.

6)

Observant/Keen

She has observed that Becky has lost significant weight and advises Vera that they have more cause to worry due to Becky’s promiscuity.

She is the first to realize that their son Daniel, though a happy child, has a problem because at the age of four he still drools a little. He has down syndrome. Later through close observation and keenness as a mother she realizes that Daniel has Leukemia. The writer says, “But today her keen eyes watched him frantically.....”(pg 286)

Wandia’s Role

1. She is used by the writer to portray the theme of change, Education and relationships
2. Through her Aoro is portrayed as determined and supportive.
3. She is also used to bring out humour and dialogue as a feature of style.

Mark Sigu

Mark Sigu is Elizabeth's husband and an Ex-soldier. He studied at St. Mary's Yala. He works as a manager in a firm in Nakuru. He is portrayed as a determined father who is ready to work hard and provide, bringing up his family in the best way possible.

1) Loving/Caring

His life revolves around his wife and seven children. Every time he attains promotion he gathers his family protectively under his wing and resettles them to a bigger house.

He also takes a helping hand in the house since, though they have a house help, his wife is overworked with seven children at home and others in school.

He loves his wife and when he realizes he has been unfaithful to her, he weeps.

2) Firm/strict

When Becky leaves home, she writes a note because she is scared of facing him. She also follows his father's instructions of going back to school for her A levels without much questioning. She is also afraid to introduce her white fiancé to his father for she feared him.

When Aoro is sent away from school, Oloo does not only deny him food, but also gives him a month's notice to get himself a place of his own. Aoro grows up knowing that his father is a man to be respected and feared.

3) Respectful/Liberal/Just

His family loves him because he is just and fair, firm but understanding. This is evidenced when he accepts Vera's vocation to the Opus Dei and Tony's vocation to priesthood. He also accepts with respect Aoro's and Becky's wish to marry out of their tribe.

4) Promiscuous/Unfaithful

At the peak of the State of Emergency that brings insecurity in Nakuru, Elizabeth and the children leave Oloo in Nakuru and go back to Aluor for safety. Left alone in Nakuru, Mark develops an illicit love affair with another woman and ignores his family for some time. He gets so involved in the affair that he does not reply to his wife's letters including those that inform him of the children's illness.

5)

Naïve

Together with his wife Elizabeth, they wrongly diagnosis her attacks of nausea and dizziness as malaria and he proceeds to buy her anti-malaria tablets which end up causing an abortion to their twins.

Sigu's Roles

1. Marries Elizabeth and together they have seven children thus he develops the plot.
2. Helps develop themes such as family relationships, change, education, sexual immorality and conflict.
3. Helps develop other characters like through him Elizabeth is brought out as emotional, wise, caring and loving

OWOUR KEMBO

1. Admirable/lovable/impressive
2. Loving/caring/faithful/devoted
3. Responsible/protective
4. Wise/authoritative

OTIENO KEMBO

1. Greedy/jealous/selfish
2. Contemptuous/hateful
3. Lazy/dependent/opportunistic
4. Arrogant/harsh
5. Cowardly/ timid/fearful

OBURA KEMBO

1. Admirable/lovable
2. Pleasant/cheerful
3. Loving
4. Protective
5. Industrious/hardworking
6. Decisive/resolute
7. Adventurous/outgoing

AORO SIGU

1. Responsible
2. Intelligent/bright
3. Remorseful/repentant
4. Admirable
5. Caring/loving
6. Determined/resilient

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

These are techniques through which a writer communicates his/her themes. Style involves the use of artistic language or feature in a literary work for effective communication of feelings, opinions and ideas.

The novel is divided into four parts that describe the life of Akoko and the generations that follow her. The language used at each historical time is unique to that period.

Part I and II make reference to Luo expression, proverbs and words while in part III and IV there is use of modern expressions, Kiswahili words, modern way of naming, academic terms, Christian religious allusions as change is already felt in the land in different areas of life.

DREAM MOTIF

Various dreams are presented and which carry with them various messages and implications.

It is through dreams that the living are connected to the dead. This is seen for instance through Akoko's great uncle, Obanda who sends a dream through her father and grandmother and the child is given a name.

Dreams also bring hope from the spirit world. This is seen through Maria's dream where she dreams that Obura comes to her with a beetle which turns into a beautiful bird, the colour of the sky. This is interpreted that the dead brother wants the unborn baby named after him.

Dreams have also been seen to influence characters' action and hence build the plot. This is seen in Vera's dream after breaking up with Tommy where she feels herself moving so fast towards the horizon and hangs at the edge which falls into a bottomless abyss. Perhaps an indication that she needs to take a grip over her life. She feels empty and hence accepts to join Anne to the recollection to fill the emptiness in her life.

CONTRAST

Contrasting characters and incidents are used severally in the novel.

There is a contrast between Owuor and Otieno. Owuor was hardworking whereas Otieno was very lazy. Otieno married many wives i.e. six whereas his brother Owuor only had one. We are further told that Otieno treated his wives like sluts and they did not fail him whereas Owuor treated his wife like a queen.

There is also a contrast in Akoko's sons. Obura was an active and inquisitive son while his brother Owang Sino was very quiet and reserved.

There is also a contrast between Vera and Becky. Vera is generous, loving and caring whereas Becky is egocentric and jealous. For instance Vera is concerned that she is not woken up when Aoro is taken ill but for Becky these are boring stories.

The marriage between Akoko and Owuor is contrasted to that between Mark and Elizabeth. In Akoko's so much bride price was paid but in Elizabeth's she is given out almost for free.

a)

LOCAL DIALECT

The author uses this style to give authenticity to the story. Examples of local dialect are;

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Jorochere- The white people |
| 2. | Were- The god of Ramogi |
| 3. | Chik- The way of the people. The laws which govern behavior |
| 4. | Dwaro mara- want mine |
| 5. | Dak- neighbourliness |
| 6. | Wat- brotherhood |
| 7. | Nak- initiation, removal of six lower teeth |
| 8. | Juok- witchcraft |
| 9. | Nyadhi- style |
| 10. | Sirikal- government |
| 11. | Turudi mashambani |
| 12. | Uhuru |
| 13. | Ruguru- man from the west(refers to a non-kikuyu, or a person outside the central province) |
| 14. | Daktari |
| 15. | Mwalimu |
| 16. | Muthoni- to mean in-law |
| 17. | Mikai- first wife |

b)

FORESHADOW

This is a feeling or sign of an event set to happen in future.

".....he did an unheard of thing by taking her, a widow, beaten and bruised by life back into his house."(pg 15) This heightens suspense as one would want to read on and find out what made Akoko go back to her brother's home after being widowed.

Obura's disappearance and death marks the beginning of a series of misfortunes that will haunt Akoko and her children. "The family had been touched by tragedy and tragedy can sometimes be a habitual drunk who keeps coming back for more." After Obura's death, others in Akoko family who follow not so long later are;

- a) Nyabera's first born child at only two years
- b) Chief Owuor Kembo
- c) Akoko's other son, Owang' Sino
- d) Nyabera's two sons
- e) Nyabera's husband, Okumu Angolo
- f) Nyabera's two other children she had with Ogoma Kwach
- g) Nyabera's Other child

While Elizabeth and Mark Sigu are being weeded by Peter Owuor, it is said, ".....she was a radiant a bride as only that had ever walked up the aisle to begin a marriage that would last forty six years."(pg 157)

When Obura disappears to go and know about the white man, it is said of the mother, "A low moan from the direction of the main hut was heard, the first sound in three days.....The fearful premonition of doom that only a mother, closely connected as she is to the child, can sense , was in the air." (pg 57). The premonition eventually fluids to fulfillment in the death of Obura. The family later receives the news that Obura died in the white man's war.

When Nyabera tells Akoko of her dream about Obura, Akoko tells her "I think your brother is trying to tell you something, to bring a message of hope from the spirit world.....May Were find it in his heart to fill our hearts with laughter again.(pg 76). This later becomes true or is fulfilled when Akoko and Nyabera head to the mission in Aluor together with Elizabeth and Peter. Their lives are improved and they become happy again.

When Odongo and Opiyo (Oloo's Sons) took Akoko to make an appeal before the D.O, a foreshadow into the future is given. "When my brother and I took my aunt to make an apil (appeal) to the big white chief whose name was Diyo, would begin Odongo to some round eyed grandson many years later."(pg 89). This is later fulfilled when they visited Akoko at the mission as married men.

When Mark hands Elizabeth a telegram, "Firm, decisive Elizabeth was standing there looking confused and unsure of her next action....she had the most oppressive premonition of doom pressing in on her from all sides and she simply could not make any sensible move."(pg 200). Eventually, just as she feared, her mother dies.

c) **FLASHBACK'**

Flashback refers to the author's regression to the past. Events that took place sometime ago are relived to elaborate the present or the future.

After the death of Akoko, Awiti is deeply affected and inconsolable. The mother, Nyabera, tries to console her by telling her of how Akoko grew in a flashback. "She was the most beautiful girl in the whole village and the eldest daughter of the great chief Odera Gogni and the apple of his eye. Twelve suitors came.....he was a young chief and single and his name was Owuor Kembo...."(pg 154)

Another instance of flashback focuses on the difficult birth of Mark and Elizabeth's last born child, Mary. Mark was more attached to this particular child than the others because it was as if she was grabbed from the jaws of death. "This last one had come unexpectedly and has threatened miscarriage after miscarriage needing frequent hospitalization of the mother....."(pg 192)

Wandia during a visit to Aoro when he was an Intern, remembers her childhood.".....she was lost in thoughts of her childhood, running bare foot in the red fertile volcanic soil, after her mother- going home after a hard days work. She and her mother had always been very close and having been named after her maternal grandmother, her mother had never referred to her as anything but mami...."(pg 255)

There she was a very little girl, clothed in nothing but the love of Were-the god of the rising sun; then she was sitting in the shadow of grandfather. Oloo's largest bull missing her mother who had gone away to seek the new way....."(pg 305-306)

d) ALLUSION

This is making reference to a statement, person, place, event or thing that is well known from literature, history, religion, myth, sports or politics.

The bible has been alluded to on several occasions. For example, when Nyabera goes to the mission at Aluor to seek the new religion, she wants to go back and get her mother to as well join it. "It offered such consolation for one could identify oneself easily with the desolation of Mary(a sword shall pierce your heart), with the joy of Elizabeth (whose barrenness was removed by God), the warm love of weak Peter (Lord you know everything, you know that I love you!)(pg 108)

Maria gets baptized and during baptism it is said, "I baptize you Maria in the name of the father, and of the son and of the Holy Spirit." There is mention of Misri (Egypt) and the bad King Herodes, plus birth of Yesu Kristo. (pg 109-110)

Akoko and Nyabera's leaving their homes to go to the mission center at Aluor is compared to the Biblical epic journey of Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, "Like the children of Israel, they left the fresh pot of Egypt for uncertainties of Canaan," (pg 113)

Maria alludes to the story of Daniel and the lions, Elias, the man who went to heaven on a bicycle of fire and great friendship of Daudi and Jonathan (pg 113)

Other quotations from the bible and the catholic belief are; “This is my body which will be given up for you.” The story of the prodigal son is also alluded by Aoro when his father punished him he says,” Father I have sinned before you and God.”(pg 190),

When MaryAnne and Vera attend a mass at the recollection the priest says, “The mass has ended go in peace to love Lord and serve one another.”(pg 132)

The students studying medicine together with Aoro are said, “.....appeared to have been turned into Pillars of salt of the Mrs. Lot variety.” (pg 244)

Another example of allusion is a statement used during graduation. “By the powers conferred to me by the University of Nairobi I give you the powers to do all that appertains to this degree.” (pg 300). This statement is made by the chancellor of the university when conferring a doctor in medicine degree on Wandia.

In the novel, historical allusion comes out. For example, the First World War has been alluded to. The year is 1918 and the Jo-ingresa (the English are at War with the Jo-Jerman (the German) for the last four seasons. The three young men from sakwa go to fight the Jo-Jerman (The Germans) in a place called Tanganyika(Tanzania) of a country of black people ruled by Jo-Jerman.(pg 60-61)

e) SYMBOLISM

Symbolism is the use of a person, an object, an event to represent or stand for an idea .

The title, “The River and The Source” is symbolic. Akoko represents the source of this river, as Chief Odero comments, “.....that a home without daughters is like a spring without a source.”(pg 11) She is symbolic of the beginning of a new generation of women in society. She is a pioneer of women’s position and change in the society. Among the many positive qualities found in her and in the women she inspires are; intelligence, hardwork, courage and determination. In the course of her life the river is threatened by obstacles among them deaths causing it to meander. However, the stream continues to flow and gains momentum. The writer comments, “She it was who had been the source of this river which at on time tricked to a mere rivulet in danger of petering out.....momentum.”(pg 204) She is indeed a source of inspiration in the family for through her guidance and wisdom she counters all most all the obstacles that come her way and that of her children and grandchildren.

Akoko’s name which means “noisy one” implies that the female gender should not keep quiet when

They are denied what is rightfully theirs. Her first words *dware mara* means want mine signifies that women should stand out to what is theirs.

Otieno Kembo is symbolic of male chauvinism. He is also symbol of greed, opportunism and arrogance of men who cling to tradition in the name of defending male interests. (pg 73)

The journey by Akoko, Nyabera, Awiti and Owuor to Aluor mission, is symbolic of a new way of life and severance from the old way of life. They now live far away from their matrimonial homes. Akoko and her grandchildren are also introduced to the Christian religion. Living away from home means starting life a fresh, building a new home and not much food to eat, the children also get formal education. The journey is also symbolic of the hope that Akoko's family must have in order to survive. Having lost her husband, Nyabera has to be inherited as tradition dictated. This doesn't satisfy her and she yearns for something different that will give her hope to live; the Christian religion. This gives them hope and as a result, Awiti acquires education and eventually becomes a teacher while Owuor joins priesthood.

At Aluor mission, it is said there was the church with its steeple bearing, a cross at the top and the school. These symbolize Christianity and colonialism. There is gradual change from tradition to modernity. Also the construction of the railway line long before the birth of Akoko is an indicator of colonial penetration and subsequent introduction of the white man's government. This penetration has brought with it positive and negative changes in the society. There is positive in the sense that Akoko gets justice and negative in the sense that the beautiful cultural values of the people are washed away. In addition, hereditary leadership withers when Obura Kembo dies in Tanganyika and the baby Owuor finally opts for priesthood.

f) HUMOUR

This is something that amuses or that which has the quality of making somebody laugh. There are several humorous instances in the "The River and The Source." Humour makes the story more interesting and also eases tension in very serious and tragic situations.

Akoko's beauty is described in a humorous manner. The writer comments, as for her legs, *Were* must have carved them out personally rather than one of his apprentices (pg 28). It is interesting to note that *Were* did not delegate to create Akoko's legs.

Akoko's conflict with Otieno Kembo is humorous especially where he calls her she-wolf. Akoko hisses at him and he retreats. It is humorous to see a man who had dared Akoko backing off in fear.

When Akoko and her two grandsons go to Kisumu to lodge a complaint to the white chief (The D.O), the word D.O, sounded like "diyo" which to them meant to squeeze. They wondered whether he might squeeze their brains.

The people of Sakwa are amused by the god of the white man who has a son and died to save them. It is exciting that the ignoramus interprets this as sheer madness. It is also interesting that one can sleep on both ears. "I keep my ears open, my friend; I am not like you who sleeps on both your ears. I keep one open and sleep on the other one!" (pg 59)

Awiti's beauty is humorously described, "Her nose sat on her face as if the creator had really thought hard before placing it carefully in place." (pg 135) It is laughable that Awiti receives notes in college using the most unorthodox means, "a love note would come flying into the room wrapped around a stone." (pg 136)

The responses that Nyabera gets from Pilipo who seems to have some knowledge in the Christian religion introduced by the white man are humorous. She had expected to get some information about this religion so that she could pursue it. ".....They said something about God being three but only one but didn't understand that very well." ".....There were laws which said do not kill.....and to take on one wife. The laws were too hard for me so I came home. (pg 102). This humour eases the tension that is created by Nyabera's situation. She has lost hope and is interested in the Christian religion which might give her hope. This humour also points to the dilemma faces by the new converts who still wished to cling to aspects so their traditional culture and could not cope with stringent requirements of the new religion.

When Wandia enquires about the well being of her relations Kamau and Timothy, Ester tells her; "Timothy is still waiting for the beautiful ones to be born. Meanwhile he chases whatever else is available." (pg 262)

Before Elizabeth's death, she recalls her life as a child and when many suitors were pursuing her. The description of the suitors is humorous: "A love letter comes flying in through the open window; it was from a fellow student whose name was Cosmas somebody or other and like so many others it declared willingness to climb mountains, fold rivers and swim oceans in order to reach her and win her love. The guy must have drowned by now, thought Elizabeth her lips twitching. (pg 306)

g) IRONY

Irony is the opposite of the expected. The writer has brought to the forth several instances of irony in the text.

It is ironical for chief Odero's spokesman. Aloo K'lima to assure the chief's in-laws that since they (in-laws) are their brothers they would not make things difficult for them during Akoko's bride price negotiations, they in fact make things difficult for the in-laws from Sakwa by setting the bride price at thirty heads of cattle which was two and half times the usual bride price. (pg 21-22)

Peter Owuor Kembo is Akoko's only living grandson. He is expected to assume the chieftainship when he grows up but he develops an interest in priesthood. The writer says of him, "he who has never really known his father or the joys of father-son relationship, now dreamt of being a spiritual father of many." (pg 127)

It is also ironical that Owuor Peter Sino expected Akoko to reprimand him and reject his proposal of wanting to become a priest and yet she accepts without any argument. She tells him to do what the spirit bids him because the world is changing (pg 126)

Irony is similarly evident when Mark Sigu tells Elizabeth, “it is easier to fight Germans and their allies than to get the courage to talk to a girl.” (pg 138) He has waited to meet her for the last six weeks and this time round he had to gather enough courage to do so.

Akoko had lost her first born son, Obura to the white man’s war. Before she dies, she regards her grandson-in-law as a replacement for her son; “She had lost one son to the whiteman’s war; and by grace of God she has gained another from the white man’s army.” (pg 149)

In defiance to a sticker stuck on the windscreen just next to the driver of a matatu Vera and Maryanne are travelling in to Kangemi, the driver over speeds. One would have expected the driver to be reminded of the effects of dangerous driving by the sticker aptly entitled, “a speed song.”(pg 235)

Betty confesses to Vera that she loves money and all that it can buy. Despite living a lavish lifestyle, the carpet on the floor, the pictures on the wall spelled one word-money. She ends up having affairs during the husband trips abroad and they finally divorce. She lives alone with her children, well off but unhappy.

When Obura and Owang Sino die, Otieno, their uncle is supposed to assume the chieftdom but in the custody for the young Owuor Sino. He does not keep it in custody but instead usurps his nephews chieftainship. He even grabs his brother’s as well as Akoko’s wealth.

When Obura and two other men are killed in a war against the Germans on Tanganyika, the white man’s messenger”.... presented the chief with a bracelet which they said was sent by the white people as a thank you and in memory of the fallen men” It is ironical that after a selfless struggle by Obura on behalf of the whites, through which he loses his life, they can exchange life with a bracelet.

When we study the character of Vera, we discover yet another irony. She had been brought up embracing all the basic Christian values and beliefs and we expect that she can find it quite simple to comprehend and understand the existence of God. But when she becomes opposed to this belief and fails to understand the being of God given such a background, it becomes ironical.

h) VIVID DESCRIPTION

Owour Kembo is vividly described; “Even without his black and white Columbus monkey headdress, he stood head and shoulders above most men. He was obviously a man of nyadhi.....he has a spear in one hand, a shield in the other and splashes of white war paint across his body. His face was virtually tattooed, his head set proudly on his shoulders and he wore only a tiny piece of leopard skin.....(pg 18)

Akoko’s beauty is brought out through vivid description; “her eyes were set apart and neither too small nor too big, her teeth were white and even with a bewitching gap at the centre of the upper set. Her ears with earrings dangling from tiny holes were perfectly shaped standing just at the right angle from her head. And that neck! It was fit to inspire praise songs from nyatiti

players! And were those two whole rings on her navel?As for her legs, We must have curved them out personally rather than one of his apprentices.” (pg 28)

i) ORAL LITERATURE DEVICES

The writer had used some oral literature in “The River and the Source.” These include:

- Proverbs
- Songs
- Myth
- Legends

a)

PROVERBS/WISE SAYING

Akoko’s father said of her birth, “A home without daughters is like a spring without a source”(pg 11). This indicates the chief’s flexibility. He hears the baby cry and thinks it is a boy, “another rock for my sling.” The fact that the baby is a girl does not dampen his spirit whatsoever.

Akoko’s family spokesman, Oloo, convinces the audience about a woman’s worth to her husband during the dispute between Akoko and her mother-in-law and brother-in-law “.....who knows the goodness of a tree but he who sits under its shade and eats its fruits?” (pg 44)

Other examples of proverbs found in the story are;- “ Good manners is the fabric that holds the community together used in respect to the search parties to mean that even if they did not find Obura, it was a sign of respect to the search parties to mean that even if they dis not find Obura, it was a sign of respect to go and report to the chief.

“Yesterday is not today and today is not tomorrow.” (pg 75) This proverb is used by Akoko to encourage her daughter Nyabera who had suffered greatly by losing her children.

“It was disquieting to have all one’s eggs in this one tiny frail basket.” (pg 74). This is in reference to Akoko’s family’s hopes of that long over the chieftdom which has now been placed in the hands of the little boy, her grandson.

“Bitterness is poison to the spirit for it breeds nothing but vipers some of which might consume your very self.” (pg 103) Akoko uses this proverb to encourage Nyabera to try new religion so that all bitterness in her can end.

“.....Beggars cannot be choosers.” (pg 107) Nyabera had to make do with the place shown to her to put a house at Aluor mission.

“.....you don’t have to be good, all you have to be is lucky.” (pg 281). Vera uses this saying in reference to his brother who is lucky to have a good girl like Wandia.

“Laziness opens the door for evil to rule one’s mind and body.” (pg 93). Akoko uses this proverb to chide her brother-in-law Otieno, who because of his laziness, ends up grabbing her wealth and inheritance.

b) SONGS

The young men who come to escort Akoko from Yimbo to her husband's home in Sakwa compose chants to praise certain qualities in themselves. The song also creates humour. It also breaks monotony of narration. **(pg 26) (quote the song in page 26)**

Akoko sings a dirge full of praise for her husband as she mourns him (pg 69) **.(quote the dirge in page 69)** The song breaks monotony of narration, makes the story interesting and also indicates how the two; Akoko and Owuor Kembo loved each other.

c) MYTH

A myth is story that talks about the origin of a group of people or a phenomenon. AKoko narrates the story of the origin of the Luo to her grandson twins, Opiyo and Odongo as they embark in their epic journey. "In the beginning, *Were* was alone in the world which was beautiful. *Were* is a spirit and a spirit is like a flame.....so he created Ramogi and his brothers who were men.....(pg 81-82)

This myth highlights the role of elders in this community, which is to impart knowledge on the history of the tribe to all young ones. ".....How can you know where you are coming from?" (pg 81)

d) LEGENDS

A legend is a story that talks about a heroic historical character. "Of the children of Ramogi many great brave men have arisen. They are called, "thuondi" the brave ones. These men of renown include Lwanda Magere. So strong and brave a warrior was he that it is rumoured that sharp spears of Lang'o warriors could not pierce his skin.

Then there was Gor Mahia, the wily one who could change his form into anything at all..... (pg 82)

THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE: SAMPLED POSSIBLE EXCERPT QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

Akoko returned to her village having won more than a victory for her infant grandson. She had opened new vistas for her family, which showed another world and the possibility of a different way. She talked about her journey to her daughter Nyabera, who sat on a mat nursing her newborn daughter; she **drank in her mother's every word.**

"You know my child, human beings are all the same the world over, with good ones and bad ones. The bad ones serve to highlight the goodness of the good ones. To allow oneself to sink unresistingly into evil is a bad thing. Take those white people, they are not of my colour, or of my blood but they are just, but your uncle is ruled by his stomach and directed by his loins.

He forgot everything that his brother had ever done for him and his greed turned into vindictive hatred. It would have been something if he had worked to support his appetites, but he is lazy. Laziness opens the door to evil to rule one's mind and body. Work tirelessly my child. It is a shame for an able bodied person to **feed off the sweat of others**. It becomes like a sickness of the blood which transmits itself to generations and becomes a curse forever."

Akoko left the clan of her husband Owuor and returned to Yimbo with all the property she had salvaged from her brother-in-law, Otieno. It was a mighty herd which moved in three **cohorts**. Of the three children she had borne, there survived only one; of the grand children only two still lived; and she dwelt in the household of her brother Oloo. She was fifty seasons of age, a middle aged woman. Sometimes she remembered how it had been and this was painful, for now she, a migogo, was reduced to living with her brother. She wondered how long it would be before his wives started making insinuations, but she did not allow herself to descend to bitterness; for yesterday is not today and today is not tomorrow. Each day rises from the hands of were and brings with it whatsoever it will.

- a) Outline events immediately before the extract. (4mks)
- b) In what two ways is Akoko's journey important? (2mks)
- c) How does Otieno's weakness serve to highlight Akoko's strength? (2mks)
- d) Name Akoko's children not mentioned in this passage. How did they die? (4mks)
- e) Comment on **ONE** feature of style evident in the extract. (2mks)
- f) Explain ONE theme coming out in this extract. (2mks)
- g) State and explain lesson you learn from the passage. (2mks)
- h) What does the last paragraph tell us about Akoko? Explain (2mks)
- i) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. (3mks)
she drank in her mother's every word
feed off the sweat of others.....
cohorts
- j) "He forgot everything that his brother had ever done for him". What is it that Otieno forgot? (3 mks)

Possible Responses

- a) - Akoko is escorted to Kisumu by the messenger and two 'askaris' the DO has sent.
 - She makes her appeal before the DC who bears the petition. 1mk
 - The DC makes judgment in which Otieno Kembo is made to relinquish the stool and return that entire he had grabbed from Akoko. 1mk
- Marking points
- Journey to Kisumu √1mk
 - Appeal before the DC √1mk
 - Judgement by the DC/verdict √1mk
 - Justice √1mk
- b) - It has opened way for a newness e.g leadership
 - It serves to enhance the reservation of human right irrespective of gender. e.g right to ownership
 - It serves to reduce wrong doing while upholding morality e.g Otieno is punished
 - c) - His injustice√ 1mk greed, etc makes Akoko's decisive and pioneering √1mk characters to come out.
 - d) - Obura Kembo √1mk who died in the world war √1mk

- Oway Sino √1mk who died choking with √1mk a fish bone.
- e) - Dialogue √ 1mk – Akoko talking to her daughter Nyabera √1mk who is listening...
“You know my child.....”
Comment : - Reveals Akoko’s character of being wise
-Reveals the themes of justice and equality
- Reveals Otieno’e character – lazy and greedy
- f) - Justice – The DC gives Akoko justice by punishing wrong doing.
- Equality – The DC provides justice irrespective of gender or race.
- g) - We should work hard – Akoko tells Nyabera that laziness is a disease.....
- We should fight for our right/justice. Akoko looks for justice and gets it.
- We should have hope and determination and live for have a better future/ no
Situation is permanent.
- h) - She is determined/ enduring
- She is optimistic
- Despite the challenges she expects to meet in her brothers household, she braces herself and hopes that all will end one day.”Yesterday is not today.....”
- i) - She understood all that her mother told her
- Depending on other people for survival
- Large groups
- j) - He forgot that it is his brother the late Owuor Kembo who supported him by feeding √1mk his entire household.√1mk

2. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

“Mother, I have decided to seek the new religion which you have heard about. You know my life is a painful wound to me and much as I try my heart fills with bitterness- for me and for you”.

“ My child, do not feel bitterness for me for I am an old woman who has lived her life. As for you it is better that you seek this new way. It might give you hope and rescue you from bitterness. Bitterness is poison to the spirit for it breeds nothing but vipers some of which might consume your very self. Pain and sorrow all human being feel; but bitterness drops on the spirit like aloes- causing it to wither. I give you my blessing my child. If you are walking along and you find your path leading nowhere, then it is only wise to try some other path.”

“ Thank you mother. I will bring you news as soon as I can. May We protect you.”

Questions.

- (i) Place the above extract to its immediate context.
- (ii) “You know my life is painful wound.” What made Nyabera regard her life as a painful wound?
- (iii) In what way was Nyabera’s life similar to that of Akoko according to the rest of the novel.
- (iv) Identify and illustrate one characters trait of Akoko and Nyabera as brought out in this extract.
 - i. Akoko
 - ii. Nyabera

(v) Identify **two** features of style used in this extract

(vi) Pain and sorrow all human being feel. Rewrite this sentences making “human” the subject of the sentence.

(vii) Briefly explain **one** theme that is brought out in this extract.

Possible Responses

i. **Before**

Nyabera had gone to philipo to inquire about the new religion. She had then gathered her things and decided to leave her daughter with her mother n Yimbo. Shei informs her mother of her decision to seek the new religion .Her mother encourage her to go ahead and join the new religion and forget her bitters .**Immediately after** this Nyabera t ravel s to Aluor mission and join the new religion .

ii. Nyabera had suffered a lot in her life because her children had died mysteriously leaving her with only a girlchild (Awiti). Her husband had died .Ogoma Kwach who had inherited her had back gone to his family.

iii). (i). Both had lost their husbands through death

(ii). Their children had died

(iii). They were both sonless

(iv).(i) Akoko – philosophical/Reasoning – Bitterness is poison to the spirit for it breeds nothing but viper

(ii). Nyabera

- Bitter – ‘ You know my wife a painful wound and much as my heart fills with bitterness ‘

- Religious – Decides to seek solace n the new religion “May Never protect you”

v). Dialogue – “Mother I have decided Nyabera-Thank you mother

Simile – “but bitterness drops on the spirit like aloes

Use of Local dialect- Were

(vi). Religion – Nyabera decides to seek new religion....

Death and suffering - You know my life is a painful wound

3. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

“Good. Very good. How about this marriage business-don’t you think it is too soon? I mean you’re only worked for a year – do you really have anything to offer a wife?”

.....

Things like language to be spoken at home, the religion to be practised – and by the way to what faith does she belong?

(a) Place this excerpt in its immediate context (4 marks)

(b) Illustrate any two themes brought out in this extract (4 marks)

(c) Comment on any **TWO** stylistic devices used in the excerpt (6 marks)

(d) Illustrate two aspects of Mark Sigu’s character shown in this excerpt (4 marks)

- (e) Where else in the novel is Aoro in conflict with his father? (2 marks)
- (f) In about 40 words, explain how Aoro defends Wandia as his choice for a wife. (3 marks)

Possible Responses

(a) Before

- Aoro and Wandia have gone to Aoro's home
- They meet the parents of Aoro and exchange pleasantries
- Aoro tells his father of his plans to go back to study surgery – his area of interest.

After

- Aoro's father is skeptical about Aoro's marriage to Wandia
- He cites religion as one of the problems likely to arise if the two get married
- Aoro tells his father they will sort out issues like religious differences and language to be spoken as Wandia is a rational person.

(b) Themes

Religion - Aoro's father wanted to know Aoro and Wandia's religious differences could cause them problems.

Tribalism – Aoro's father asked Aoro why he could not get a nice Luo girl to marry instead of Wandia who is a Kikuyu

(c) Dialogue

- Mark Sigu and Aoro are conversing concerning Aoro's intention to marry Wandia.

Mark Sigu: How about the marriage business

Aoro : I guess not –

Comment – dialogue makes the conversation interesting and lively

Use of dashes-She is a Kikuyu after all – they have a thing about money

Comment – to indicate pause or deep thoughts creates suspense

(d) Mark Sigu's character

- Prejudicial/stereotyping/tribalistic-He regards all Kikuyus as money lovers
- Loving -He told Aoro that he loved him and was proud of him
- Caring-He told his son Aoro that he was trying to forestall any possible misery which may arise in future.

(e) When Aoro and his brothers went to swim and his young twin brother almost drowned.

- When Aoro was suspended from school for being rude to the prefects in his school. His father denied him food for 36 hours and he passed out.

(f) Aoro says he doubts that Wandia, irrespective of being a Kikuyu, is materialistic; that he has feelings for Wandia which he could not transfer to any other person; everyone, irrespective of the tribe, was the same beneath the skin.

4. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

“Brothers, we greet you and bring you many greetings from the people of seme. My nephew, Oloo, son of my late brother Sigu, came to me and said: “Father, I have found a girl and I want to get married. Now I am a reasonable man and I know the ways of *chik*,so I asked him: ‘Son I asked him one does not just find a girl in the air. One sends *ajwanyoto* go and spy a girl and find out her antecedents and character. Is she a thief or a witch? Is she lazy or shiftless? Might there be consanguinity between you and her? Who is her mother and father? I tell you my brothers that I was flabbergasted to hear that none of these things had crossed his mind. He knew that her mother’s name was Maria and her grandmother’s name was Akoko and that was all. You will therefore forgive us because we do not know you and you do not know us. We only came because we have faith in our son who has always been a reasonable man. We therefore wish to introduce ourselves before we go on. Iam SemoRakula of Seme,our village is near that strange rock- upon-a-rock,*Kit-Mikai*. We are the descendants of that wear warrior, NyagudiKogambi.Oloo and these young men are my sons and nephew .Oloo is a man of learning and what is more a soldier who has fought for the white man in distant landa Now he is a clerk with a big *kambi*(company)inNakuru, where he gets a good salary. So should this suit be acceptable to all you need have no fear that your daughter will starve. I tell you these things because there are things *jawang*’you would have found out for you. Thank you brothers.” A pot of *kong*’owas moved near him and he drew a long refreshing draught. Some things never change-a spokesman needs to irrigate his throat.

“Brothers, people of Seme. My name is OyangeSilwal The girlAwiti is the only child of my late brother Okumu. We are from Sakwa from the village of Gombe, The girl has group in Gem because her mother being a widow and having converted to Christianity decided to settle here which a good thing is because now she is like light for the rest of us. She is highly educated and a teacher of children.

(a) Place this excerpt in its immediate context.

(4marks)

(b) Identify and illustrate any **three** thematic concerns evident in this excerpt.

(6marks)

(c) Describe the character of Awiti as brought out in this excerpt,

(2marks)

(d) Apart from the case in this excerpt, explain where again there is a compromise in the bride

price later on in the novel.

(2marks)

(e) In one sentence,paraphrase the statements below

(2marks)

“Brothers, people of Seme. My name is OyangeSilwal The girl Awiti is the only child of my late brother

Okumu. We are from Sakwa from the village of Gombe.

(f) 'You will therefore forgive us brothers because we do not know you and you do not know us.' In light of what happens in the novel, why is the speaker begging for forgiveness.

(2marks)

(g) Identify and illustrate any **two** stylistic devices evidently used in this excerpt.

(4marks)

(h) Give the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the excerpt.

(2marks)

Consanguinity;

irrigate his throat;

Possible Responses

a. Awiti Elizabeth begins a relationship with Mark Sigu; she introduces the matter to Akoko and Nyabera; Akoko invites her relations and negotiation is fixed. Mark Sigu comes also with his relations. They meet, talk and are entertained. They agree on just a token as a bride price. The talks are concluded and Akoko calls Mark for a close talk, they joyously talk. Later on in the night Akoko dies.

b. Love and friendship: Awiti and Mark fall in love and marry; Family ties and relations: Akoko's close relatives must be invited for the negotiation so is the family of Mark Sigu. Changes; Mark and Awiti want to marry yet they do not know one another's family background; religion: Awiti's mother is said to be converted to Christianity and went to live in the mission; Education: Awiti is said to be an educated girl and is a teacher.

c. Hardworking; she studies very hard and becomes a teacher

d. Wandia's mother does not demand any bride price but only asks Aoro to stay in peace with her daughter.

e. Oyange Silwal tells the people of Seme that Awiti is the only child of his late brother Okumu and that they are from Sakwa from the clan of Gombe

f. Because it is not customary to get into marriage negotiations without full knowledge of one another's background.

g. Rhetoric questions: Is she a thief or a witch? Is she lazy or shiftless? Might there be consanguinity between you and her?

Direct address "Brothers we greet you and bring you man greetings.

h. **Consanguinity**; - close relationship **To irrigate his throat** – to take a drink to so as to talk with ease.

5. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

My fathers, "It is a shameful thing for my wife to leave her husband's house and return to her father's house. This outrageous thing had occurred only because I was not here to prevent it."

"Our chief, we are saddened by this unfortunate state of affairs, but you must admit that your mother has a point or two. Long have we pleaded with you to take another wife for two. Long have we pleaded with you to take another wife for yourself and you have adamantly refused. Now she has left you, you are like a misumba, a bachelor which would not have been the case if you had another wife. We beg you take another wife for yourself." This was from Oyier, a grizzled old man who had been his mother's greatest champion in her quest for a wife for Owuor. He realized that the old geezers were going to give him a hard time of it, so he changed his tactics.

“Fathers, you are the wise men of this community. That is why you sit in the council. Is it that you have forgotten the ways of chik or that your determination to get me to marry other wives has clouded your judgement? Do you not know that a man’s mikai is the greatest jewel that adorns his compound? That her position is maintained and protected by taboos imposed by the ways of chik? That if I die, Were forbid, my body can only lie of her hut? And this would do so even if she herself were dead? To lose one’s mikai is to lose one’s right hand.”

The Jodongo nodded sagaciously at the wisdom uttered by the chief. It is true that the mikai is the centre post that holds up a man’s hut. Without her, or if she were stupid, only Were could rescue such a man from being blown away from among the people like so much chaff. She it is who saves a young man from the follies and stupidities of youth. Indeed the people of Ramogi has a saying which declared that ‘The medicine for stupidity in marriage’. Yes, the chief had spoken wisely. But Oyier would not give up so easily

- (a) Explain what happens just before this excerpt (3mks)
- (b) What is the bone of contention between Akoko and her mother-in-law, Nyar Asembo (3mks)
- (c) “The girl child” briefly explain the relevance of this sub-heading to the whole novel (2mks)
- (d) Oyier sounds sarcastic in his speech. Identify and explain the sarcasm (2mks)
- (e) From the excerpt, contrast the character of Owuor with that of his brother Otieno (4mks)
- (f) Explain the meaning of “It is true that “Mikai” is the centre post that hold up a man’s hut” (2mks)
- (g) Identify parenthesis in the last paragraph of this excerpt (1mk)
- (h) Explain the main theme that comes out in this excerpt (2mks)
- (i) From your knowledge of the novel, describe the role of ‘Jodongo’ in the community represented in this novel Write your answer in note form (3mks)
- (i) Local language is used in this excerpt. Give two examples and explain its significances (2mks)
- (k) Discuss the mood that is prevalent in this extract (1mk)

Possible Responses

- (a) Owuor returns his journey only to find an empty house
He tries to inquire from neighbours and from his children what had happened
He gets very angry/locks himself up in his ‘simba’
He sermons the council; ‘jodongo’ to convene the following day (3mks)
- (b) Nyar Asembo alleges that Akoko is unable to conceive regularly/her rate of procreation is slow
She accuses Akoko of practicing witchcraft against her son
She also accuses Akoko of standing between Owuor and his marriage to other women by casting a spell on him
- (c) “The Girl child” This refers to AKoko
She is the source of the family tree (river) that extends for many generations for her, Nyabera, Elizabeth and her great grandchildren. Akoko is the source of life. She represents women as natia, Awiti, Vera and Wandia
As a source, her family survives due to her determination, wisdom, hardwork and clarity of vision as a girl-child
She plays a role of those who have been wise in their time, pioneers through whose daring actions bring progress to the whole society (2mks)
- (d) Oyier says that they are saddened by the disappearance of Akoko but in the real sense he capitalizes on this opportunity to advance Owuor’s mother’s quest of getting him (Owuor)

marry another wife. Oyier calls him a ‘misumba’. This is meant to hurt and humiliate Owuor so that he can marry another wife

(e) Look for the following points

Owuor

- (i) wise
 - (ii) Reasoning
 - (iii) Faithful
 - (iv) Responsible
 - (v) Generous
 - (vi) Tactical
- (4mks)

Otieno

- Foolish
- Irrational
- Immoral
- Irresponsible
- greedy
- tactless

NB- Contrasting words and phrases must be used.

One character trait of Owuor must come from the excerpt but that of Otieno from elsewhere in the novel

(f) It expresses the importance of the first wife (Akoko0 to Owuor Kembo. Just like a central post holds up a hut, the “Mikai” prevents a homestead from falling apart. Akoko supports her husband and gives dignity.

g) Without her, or if she were stupid only We could rescue suh a man from being blown away from among the people like so much chaff

(1mk)

(h) Tradition-If a man dies, his body lies in his house before burial in the right hand side of Mikai’s house

The council of ‘Jodongo’ arbitrates in marriage disputes

Position of ‘Mikai’ is protected by taboos

Losing a ‘mikai’ is like losing one’s right hand

(mikai referred as a ‘jewel’)

The society is polygamous

It was a taboo for a man and such a chief to be a ‘misumba’ bachelor

(2mks)

(i) Involved in marriage negotiations/solved marriage disputes

Arbitrate in social matters/judges cases

Assists the chief in running the affairs of the community

Assists in the removal of a bad chief

(3mks)

NB- Notes are shown through letters, arrows, a star, a dash, a dot and use of incomplete sentences.

(j) :”Mikai’, Chik’, Misumba,

Has aesthetic value

Gives the story its local flavor thus providing variety

Add colour and flavor to the novel

It authenticates and pin points the setting of the novel as Kenyan

It injects life in the narration thus making the story enjoyable

It provides a social and geographical setting (2mks)

(k) Solemn/serious /grave/somber/melancholic mood. “My fathers..it is a shameful thing from my wife to leave.....prevent it” (1mk)

6. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

“wolololoyaye

“Mama yoo!”

“Biuru une! Come and see!”

The strangers were taken to the chief's house and the older people saw that their faces were solemn .they couldn't be bearers of good news.

"We greet you, o chief Owour .We are people sent by sirikal, the government, with a message for you." The white garbed one who was obviously the spokesman declared.

"And who, may I ask, is this sirikal? I've never heard of him." Said the chief baffled.

"You may have heard that the country is being ruled by white people now .They, with the help of some black people, have formed something like the council of jodongo, only much bigger, to make sure that everyone lives in peace according to the new law .This is sirikal."

"Is that so?"

- (a) Explain what had caused the outburst at the beginning of the extra? (2marks)
- (b) What is strange about the chief's question? (2marks)
- (c) Comment on the use of local dialect in this excerpt. (4 marks)
- d) Describe the different moods depicted in the excerpt. (4 marks)
- e) Identify with illustrations one theme from the excerpt. (2 marks)
- (f) Illustrate a character trait of the strangers and of the older men. (4 marks)
- (g) In note form state what the messengers had to say to the chief in this excerpt. (5 marks)
- (h) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the excerpt: (2marks)
- (i) solemn(ii) garbed

Possible Responses

- a) Strange men in strange dresses .Long garb reaching his ankles and a skull cap –had arrived in the village .The children, who were naked, thought this was funny.
- b) The chief thinks sirikal is a person /the chief is part of the sirikal but he does not know it .
- c) The local dialect "Wolololoyaye!/mama yoo !/Biuru une!"
 - Injects life into the narration making it enjoyable.
 - It adds local flavour and provides variety.
 - It provides social and geographical setting.
- d) First there is excitement when people see strangers dressed in a funny attire .Then there is tenseness as the elders notice the strangers look sad /solemn (They conclude that they cannot be bearers of good news.
- e) Theme of change –anew form of government is in place.
- f) Strange men –respectful/ courteous –they greet the chief in a respectful manner
Wise –they first give background information before breaking the bad news.
Older men-observant /discerning –they notice that faces of the strangers are sad and conclude that they cannot be bearers of good news.
- g) The message is that:
 - A clan of Jo-jerman and Jo-ingreza had been hard at war against each other.
 - Young people had joined to help and from the chief's village, Obura, Ambere Kongoso and Nyaroche Siwal, had gone.
 - They went to fight Jo-jerman in a place called Tanganyika
 - Only Nyaroche survived and is a beggar at Kisumu.
 - The government /the white people had given a bracelet as a 'thank you' in memory of the fallen men
- h) Solemn-sad /serious

7. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

The envelope had been addressed to mark who opened it, read the letter and passed it to her. “At least she is from the country,” he said sounding a bit odd.

She looked at him and then lowered her eyes to the letter. It was characteristically Aoro – brief and to the point. She felt kind of sorry to Mark. First there had been Becky who had left home unceremoniously only to return with a white man in tow. A very nice man but apparently not nice enough for Becky. He had found out that she was having an affair during his trips abroad and had sued for divorce. Now she was living alone with the children, financially well off, but unhappy. It was one thing to enjoy the thrills of an affair, but a different thing altogether to have a carte blanche to do exactly as you pleased. John had been terribly hurt of course and mark had been furious with her.

Then Tony had joined priesthood – Mark resisted it at first but recently, during Tony’s ordination he had been full of pride for his son – whose face had shone with joy and youthful dedication. Vera’s case had been the hardest to accept. Mark thought of the world of Vera, and deferred to her in everything. Then she had arrived home one day and declared that she wanted to join the catholic prelature of Opus Dei as a non – marrying member. But he had eventually accepted because he loved her. Because she looked so radiant. Anything that could bring such joy and serenity could not be that bad. It was a pity though that she did not wear a veil or a habit. That way he could at least have bragged about her a little to his friends. His children were a source of great envy to his less lucky friends. Vera for one was a fully qualified electronics expert and had a lucrative job in the city with large salary and all sorts of benefits. Women like that tended to marry the most amazing wimps and Mark had held his breath in fear. But in the end all Vera wanted was to dedicate her life and her work to God, and there was no turning her back. So Elizabeth secretly hoped that Aoro would bring home a nice girl – naturally a Luo like himself – who would proceed to have many children – all a nice, ordinary black colour.

- a) Briefly state the contents of the letter mentioned. (3marks)
- b) In point form summarize why Elizabeth pities Mark in this excerpt. (4marks)
- c) Discuss the irony brought out in this excerpt (4marks)
- d) Identify and illustrate three character traits of Mark evident in this excerpt. (6 marks)
- e) Comment on the thematic concerns that are depicted in this extract. (4 marks)
- f) His children were a source of great envy to his less lucky friends.
(rewrite as an interrogative statement) (1mark)
- g) Elizabeth secretly hoped that Aoro would bring home a nice girl, Does he?
Discuss with illustrations from elsewhere in the novel. (3 marks)

Possible Responses

- a) - Aoro has finished his internship successfully √1
- He has one month leave √1 and will visit home / on 28th √1
- He will bring along wandia, √1 (a doctor the girl he intends to marry)
- b) - Becky leaves home unceremoniously and marries a white man √1
- She (Becky) gets into an affair and is divorced √1

- Vera joins the Opus - Dei as a non – marrying member ✓1
- Tony joins priesthood ✓1
- Aoro intends to marry a girl from another ethnic tribe ✓1
- c) - Mark expects Vera and tony to marry but they don't ✓ ½
- It is ironical that John ,Becky's husband is a good husband yet she gets into an affair that leads to divorce ✓ ½
- It is ironical that Becky is financially well off yet she is unhappy. ✓ ½
- It is ironical that well educated women with good jobs end up marrying the most amazing wimps instead of men like them.(men who are well educated)
- d) i) Accommodating ✓1 – “Mark resisted it at first He had been full of pride for his son but he had eventually accepted” / He eventually accepts Tony's and Vera's choices ✓1
- ii) Concerned – “women were like that..... Mark held his breath in fear,”/
 - He fears that Vera might marry a wimp like the other educated women.
- iii) Supportive – “... anything that could bring such joy and serenity could not be that bad” He allows Vera to join the Opus Dei because she is happy there.
- iv) Loving /caring - “...he had eventually accepted because he loved her,”
- v) Boastful – “That way he could at least have bragged about her a little to his friends,”
- e) i) Religion - Vera joint the catholic prelature of Opus Dei as a non – marrying member.
 - Tony had joined priesthood
- ii) Betrayal / unfaithfulness / immorality – Becky moves around with other men when her husband is not around.
- iii) Gender parity /equity – Vera is a fully qualified electronics expert (works in a male dominated career)
 - Vera does not marry.
- iv) Love – Mark loves his children and wants the best for them, which makes him accept the choices they make in life.
- f) Were his children a source of great envy to his less lucky friends?
- g) Yes, ✓1 (Aoro brings home a nice girl) for Wandia is:
 - i) Respectful - during her first visit, she interacts with both mark and Elizabeth with lots of respect ✓1
 - ii) Dependable – Takes care of Becky's children after her death. ✓1
 - iii) Friendly – she becomes very good friends with Elizabeth and Vera. ✓1
 - iv) Loving/ caring – She takes good care of her large family despite being a career woman ✓1

8. Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow:

“Thirty head!” exclaimed Aloo in disbelief.

“Yes, thirty head!” declared the uncompromising chief.

“But that is two and half times the usual bride price.”

Even for Akoko, it was too much.

“Let them show us that my daughter is not going to starve in that wasteland they call a home”.

They trooped back into the hut and the negotiations began in earnest.

“Brothers, people of Sakwa, we are pleased to welcome you to Yimbo. It is customary, because of the good *dak* between us, for you to marry our daughters and we yours. We are therefore more than neighbours, we have great *wat* between us because of the intermingling of blood though this has not occurred between our two lines so there is no danger of brother marrying sister - great taboo. Since you are our brother, we will not make things difficult for you.” Here he stopped to take a sip of kong’o and you could have heard the ants talk, so great was the silence. However, nobody was fooled by his sweet words.

He continued, enjoying immensely the tension he was creating. “Our daughter, Adoyo Obanda is a great beauty whose assets have been praised and sung by many a nyatiti singer from here to Chumbu Kombit, from Sakwa to Loka Nam. She is as fleet as a gazelle and her flying feet have been incorporated into the saying of our village so that mothers sending their daughters on errand tell them to run like Adoyo of the flying feet. She has been carefully brought up and has been taught all the requirements of chik. She is a very apt pupil and will therefore not bring shame and ruin to her husband by improper conduct.

Her antecedents are peerless for she can trace her blood line clear to Ramogi our great father and her blood is pure for we have always taken care to marry correctly. She is also the eldest daughter of our great chief, a man of whose fame is known throughout this land. After careful consultation, we have therefore decided that thirty head of cattle should be the proper bride price.” Was that an inaudible gasp from someone at the back? Chief Owuor Kembo signaled to his uncle and the old man spoke.

- a) Explain briefly what happens first before this excerpt. (2Marks)
- b) State briefly what happens after this excerpt (2Marks)
- c) Briefly describe the nature of the ceremony going on in this excerpt (3Marks)
- d) Identify and illustrate two character traits of Aloo K’olima in this excerpt. (4Marks)
- e) Identify and illustrate any two themes evident in this excerpt. (4Marks)
- f) Make notes on the qualities of Adoyo Obanda as revealed in this excerpt. (5Marks)
- g) Identify and illustrate any two features of style used in this excerpt. (4Marks)

Possible Responses

- a)
 - Chief Odera Gogni calls the councils of Jodongo from Sakwa outside his house for consultation about Akoko’s betrothal
 - Chief Odera Gogni discloses to the council of Jodongo that he has already sent away 12 suitors
 - Chief Odera Gogni discloses that he likes this group of suitors because the bride is of a good stock and his uncle a good spokesman
 - Chief Odera Gogni tells Aloo K’ Olina to set Akoko’s bride price at thirty head
- b)
 - Elders from Sakwa ask to be allowed to consult with each other outside chief Odera’s house

- Akoko watches what is going on from her mother's kitchen, asks to be given a piece of land to settle for she feels she might never get married
 - Otieno Kembo argues against the high bride price
 - Owuor Kembo accepts to pay the thirty head of cattle as bride price
- c)
- Formal negotiations of Akoko's bride price between the people of Sakwa and the people of Yimbo
 - The bride price has to be set depending on Akoko's outstanding attributes
- d) **i) Tradition**
- Akoko has been taught all the requirements of chick (tradition)
 - Traditionally a brother marrying a sister is a great taboo
 - Traditionally elders drink Kong'o during marriage negotiations. Alo K'Olima stopped to take a sip of Kong'o
- ii) **Role of elders**
- The council of Jodongo (elders) from Sakwa and that from Yimbo negotiates for Owuor Kembo's and Akoko's marriage
 - Chief Owuor Kembo's uncle (an elder is the spokesman for the council of Jodongo from Sakwa).
 - Aloo K'Olima (an elder) is chief Odera's spokesman.
- iii) **Marriage**
- Akoko's marriage negotiations begin in earnest
 - Aloo K'Olima sets Akoko's bride price at thirty head of cattle
 - It is customary, because of the good *dak* between us, for you to marry our daughters and we yours.....There is no danger of brother. Marrying a sister – a great taboo.
- e) **Aloo K'Olima**
- Considerate – exclaims at the high bride price (thirty head) chief Odera wants set for Akoko
 - Respectful – Address the people of Sakwa as; “Brothers, people of Sakwa
 - Informed - quotes from Chik that brother marrying a brother is a great taboo and Akoko has been taught all the requirements of chik.
 - Intelligent / skillful – skillfully addresses the people of Sakwa using sweet words.
 - Skillfully describes Akoko's attributes to the people of Sakwa.
- f)
- A great beauty – is praised by many Nyatiti singers
 - Fast / swift – she is as fleet as a gazelle
 - A good role model – mothers sending their daughters on errands tell them to run like Akoko
 - Apt – she is very apt pupil
 - Pure – her blood is pre.....
- g) Direct address – brothers
- Local dialect – da, k wat, kong'o, nyatiti, chik
 - Suspense So great was the silence
 - Simileas fleet as a gazelle
 - Personification – you could have heard the ants talk
 - Metaphor – her flying fleet