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 citizeship 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 re-union.

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 pursed 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 bother 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 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 the two character's thought, reveals much of the information to us. Simon demands that she gives 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 J UDGE

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 fort 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 mover 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 i 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.

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 id religious, you see."

(pg 46). Aniko id 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 illess 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 Bretcht 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

AI) Azdak and landowners

BI) 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 J anga-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 alredy engaged to Simon and has promised to await his return ends up getting married to a 'dying man' – J ussup-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 her 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 that 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 hid governors are overthrown. Although the legal system use to punish people like the Governor and the Fat prince is crude, the people engage 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 shred 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 seats 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. J ustices 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 lain 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 crossses 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 Michaels. 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 gooses 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 he 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.....and ....outs 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 then 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 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.

BI) 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)

AI) 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)

BI) 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 policeman ....should 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.

AI) 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.

BI) 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.

AI) 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 sill faithful to him and whether the child is hers.

BI) 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 potrayed 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 tires, 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 its 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 J ussup 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 J ussup 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 he 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 late turns out to be the Grand Duke. It ends with Azdak judging Grusha's and Natella's case using "The Caucassian 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 blames 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 bath ....more 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 Natellla 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 drank. 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 givens 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 think .....little 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 live 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 in 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 justifies 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 king 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 captures 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 masterly 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 deservers 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 that 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 wisom 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 his 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) – Adzak'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

W1. 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 Bretch 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 Azkak. 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 <u>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</u> 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

- **Con**cerned 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 Bretch; 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 rescuers 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 could scene be 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 the look from the rich and gave to the poor

He is late 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 wars for convenience Simon truly

Deserved Gruisha for he came back to lack for her after the war

Question 6

Drawing illustrations from what Grusha 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, if 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 discusses 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 ingenuinenes 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 of 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 J ussup in order to normalize her status

(vi) Her relationship with her fiancée, Simon , is endangered.

(vi) She is force to go through a court processes in order to gain custody of Michael

Question 7

"True mother hood is not necessarily biological" Write an essay illustrating this statement using Bertolt Brecht's , The Caucasian chalk Circle".

– NatellaAbashiwili, 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 body and risks being captured by the soldiers and crosses the dangerous and rotten bridge to save the life of Michael from the iron 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, J ussup: 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 suppose to be motherly for one to be accredited a real mother of a child .This world mean not all the biological / mothers are a sincere parents as to claim the ownership, however the soul that would nurture brings up responsibly deserves the ownership as portrays in Grusha vashnadze.