



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

BACHELOR OF ARTS WITH EDUCATION
(B.A EDUCATION)

MODULE NO: 4

LIT 1100 – STUDIES IN WRITING SKILLS AND LITERATURE

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Module Structure

- I. Introduction
- II. The Aim of the Module
- III. Module Objectives [Learning outcomes]
- IV. Assessment
- V. Prescribed and Recommended Readings
- VI. Time frame
- VII. Study skills [Learning tips]
- VIII. Need help [Studying at a distance]

The module is divided into 8 units. Each unit addresses some of the learning outcomes. You will be asked to complete various tasks so that you can demonstrate your competence in achieving the learning outcomes.

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Introduction

Welcome to Module 4 on Studies in Writing Skills and Literature (LIT 1100)

In this module we shall learn about the origins, development and nature of drama, and how it differs from theatre, although the two are closely related. We shall also focus on the various forms of dramatic texts. In addition, we shall study excerpts of two dramatic texts, *The Black Mamba* by Zambian playwright Kabwe Kasoma, and *The Trials of Brother Jero* by Nigerian playwright Wole Soyinka. Another area of focus in this module is that of essay questions, to give you an opportunity to assess your understanding of the contents of the module. We hope that you will, in the course of studying this module, notice the relationship between all the modules and, in particular, between this module and module 5.

Aim

The aim of the course is to provide you with the necessary theoretical and analytical tools for a University study of drama.



Objectives

By the end of the module, you should be able to:

- I. Demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the texts studied in the module.
- II. Explain the various broad types of drama as well as the salient features of the genre.
- III. Explain the main features of ancient Greek drama in general and tragic plays in particular.
- IV. Explain the other forms of drama such as comedy.
- V. Analyse a dramatic text.



Assessment

Your work in this module will be assessed as follows:

- One test worth 10%
- Two essays worth 40%

- A written examination set by the University of Zambia at the end of the module (worth 50% of the final mark).

In summary, you will be assessed as follows:

Continuous Assessment: 50%

2 essays – 20% each

1 test – 10%

Final Examination: 50%



Prescribed Readings

1. Abrams, M H. (1981). A Glossary of Literary Terms, Fourth Edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
2. Kasoma, Godfrey Kabwe (1976). "The Black Mamba," in: Michael Etherton (Ed), African Plays for Playing. London: Heinemann.
3. Roberts, Edgar V. and Henry E Jacobs (2007). Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing, 8th Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
4. Soyinka, Wole (1974). "The Trials of Brother Jero," in: Wole Soyinka: Collected Plays 2. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.



Recommended Readings

1. Abrams, M H and Stephen Greenbelt (Eds.) (2000). The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 7th Edition, Vol 2. New York: W W Norton & Company.
2. Barnet, Sylvan, Morton Berman and William Burto (Eds.) (1981) An Introduction to Literature, Seventh Edition. Boston: Little, Brown and Company/
3. Barnet, Sylvan, William Burto and William E Cain (2004). An Introduction to Literature: Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

4. Gwynn, R S. (2006). Drama: A Pocket Anthology, Third Edition. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

You are encouraged, however, to read beyond the prescribed and recommended readings listed above in order to deepen and broaden your understanding of drama. You may find the references provided at the end of the module beneficial, but you are also encouraged to utilise other sources of information such as the University library, which is a wealthy source of data both from published books and unpublished theses. You may also do well to utilise public libraries, where available. Finally, learn how to use the internet as a vital source of data.



Time frame

You are expected to spend at least 50 hours of study time on this module. However, you will also have contact with lecturers from the University of Zambia from time to time in the course of studying the module. You are advised to maximise the time available for study as well as contact with the lecturers in order to fully benefit from the course.

Study Skills

In case you have not studied by distance before, we shall avail you a number of ideas on how to maximise your learning experience:

1. Set goals such as: I will succeed in this course. At the beginning of the module, break the lessons into manageable chunks. You might not have time to do a full lesson in one night, so plan how much you can do, then stick to it until you are done.
2. Establish a regular study/learning schedule.
3. Determine what time is best for you to study.
4. Have a dedicated study place with all the supplies you might need.
5. Tell people what you are doing because only then are you more likely to stick to a course.
6. Ask someone to proofread your work before you submit it.
7. If you do not understand something ask your local learning centre or your tutor, who will be able to help you.
8. Search for the meaning of principles and concepts instead of merely memorising them.



Need help?

In case you have difficulties during the duration of the course, please get in touch with the Director, Institute of Distance Education, or the resident lecturer in your province.

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Unit 1

Origins of Drama

1.1 Introduction

In this unit we look at how drama originated. This unit is intended to set the foundation for you to understand the units that follow. You will be required to undertake a number of activities.



1.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the meaning of drama.
2. Explain the origins of drama.
3. Discuss the development of drama.
4. Distinguish between drama and theatre.



1.3 Reflection

What is your understanding of the meaning of the word 'drama'? Take a few minutes to write down, in your own words, what you think is the meaning of drama. Many people think drama is the same thing as theatre. Do you also think they are one and the same thing?

Are you satisfied with what you have written on the meaning of 'drama'? This unit will offer you the opportunity to learn the true meaning of drama and how it is related to other genres of literature. We hope you will have a better and clearer understanding of the concept of drama by the end of this unit.

1.4 Definition and Origin of Drama

Many people think drama is theatre and theatre is drama. However, we need to differentiate between the two. While drama refers to the *written* play, theatre refers to the *performed* play. In other words, drama refers to the playscript, which is independent

of the performance. It is possible to have a play without the performance. You are aware that a play may be read in the same way as a short story or novel. However, once the playscript is performed it becomes a piece of theatre. In other words, as Elam (2002:190) argues, the theatre is a 'realisation' of the drama.

We would not be far from the truth if we argued that the drama, generally speaking, precedes the theatre, and remains when the theatre is over. In other words, the play director and actors cannot produce the play without first understanding the script. They use the script to produce the performance. What then is drama?

A variety of definitions of drama are available. Below are some definitions of them:

- 1.4.1 The literary form designed for the theatre, in which actors take the roles of the characters, perform the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue (Abrams 1981).
- 1.4.2 A kind of literature intended to be read as well as performed (Zarrilli et al 2006)
- 1.4.3 An individual play, or plays considered as a group (Roberts 2007)
- 1.4.4 A single play, a body of plays written for the theatre (Barnet 1997)
- 1.4.5 Literature designed for stage or film presentation by people (actors) for the benefit or delight of other people (an audience) (Roberts 2007)

Although none of the above definitions may be said to be the universal standard, it is evident from what they say that drama is associated with the play as a written text, although the word 'drama' derives from the Greek word which means 'to do' or 'to act'. Gwynn (2006) explains that the Greek word 'dran' from which 'drama' is derived can be understood to mean 'a thing that is done'.

Hence, according to Zarrilli et al (2006: xxii), 'a dramatist is an individual who undertakes, singly or with others the act of writing a play intended for performance.' Gwynn (2006) rightly notes that a dramatist is also called a playwright. He explains that the word 'wright' means 'a maker'. A playwright is therefore a maker of plays, in the same way that a 'shipwright' is a maker of ships.

We would like you to recognise the fact that while a piece of drama is a form of literature, it is not written merely for the purpose of reading; it is ultimately intended to

be performed. However, there is a form of drama written specifically for the purpose of being read – this is called a *closet drama*. Examples of closet dramas include John Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*.

1.5 Definition and Origin of Theatre

Since drama and theatre are closely related and are often confused one for the other, it is important for you to know the meaning of theatre. The word 'theatre' is derived from the Greek word 'theatron,' which means 'the seeing place.' In the context of ancient Greece, the word referred to the hillside area where the Greeks gathered to experience plays produced during the religious festival of Dionysia.

In modern usage, theatre may refer to:

1.5.1 The building where theatrical performances take place.

1.5.2 The performance of a play: In other words, once the playscript is being performed on stage, it becomes a piece of theatre. Thus, when you buy a ticket to watch a play at the theatre house, you pay to watch theatre.

1.5.3 A company involved in theatre performances: You may know some in your community or city/town. In the past one of the best known was known as Tikwiza Theatre.

Scholars argue as to the actual origin of theatre, and some of what they say is mere speculation. According to Goldberg (1974:102), theatre has its origins in the imitation of animals and other people, but especially animals because they present totally different patterns for physical exploration: 'The beginning of the theatre lies in the primitive medicine man dancing out the fate of the antelope, generally as a magical device to attract antelope for the forthcoming hunt'.

Lee (1996: 12) puts it this way:

For as long as there have been historians, there has been speculation about the origins of theatre. A commonly held opinion is that early man engaged in camp-fire enactments of scenes from the hunt, for example, perhaps even before the

development of language... It seems clearer than later on, these scenes took on a ritualistic nature, becoming a part of the religion of the people. There would probably have been music, dancing, and chanting, as well as rudimentary costumes, makeup, or masks. The acting out of a successful hunt was possibly expected to bring about success in tomorrow's hunt.

One difference, therefore, between theatre and drama is that, while the former involves acting, the latter does not; the latter provides the script which the actor performs to produce a piece of theatre. While acting is a discipline that is today studied or learnt, you ought to note that, in the broadest sense of the word, everyone is an actor. As Barton (2003: 1) argues, 'Everyone acts almost all the time.' If acting is natural, then, from this perspective, theatre's origins are natural.



1.6 Reflection

Are you aware of any theatre house in your town/city? If there is, what is it called? Do you know any theatre company in your community or city/town? What is its name?

1.7 Drama as a Genre of Literature

Literature is divided into four main genres:

1.7.1 Prose Fiction – also known as narrative fiction: This includes novels, short stories, myths, romances, fables, and parables.

1.7.2 Non-fiction Prose: Consists of essays, editorials, textbooks, news reports, feature articles, biographical and historical works, etc. Such works tend to describe or interpret facts and present judgments and opinions.

1.7.3 Poetry

1.7.4 Drama

We would like you to note that theatre is not included among the genres of literature. However, as a genre of literature, drama has a number of features that are shared with other genres of literature. One of the features drama shares with fiction, for example, is that both are built around one major character or a number of major characters. Another common feature is that both are generally written in prose. However, some plays are written in the form of poetry, such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* or *Song of a Goat* by the Nigerian playwright, John Pepper-Clark. Another area of similarity between drama and poetry is that both develop situations through action and speech.

1.8 Drama and Ancient Egypt

The earliest evidence of regular presentations of religious and civic drama is from ancient Egyptian civilisation. According to Lee (1996) plays were performed to honour the Pharaoh at his coronation, to assist in curing the sick, and to celebrate Egyptian religious beliefs. He states (1996: 12):

No actual scripts have survived the five thousand years or so since the earliest Egyptian plays. Our evidence comes mainly from wall paintings and other artifacts. Most is known about the Abydos Passion Play, which tells the story of the battle between the gods Set and Osiris, ending when Isis (Osiris' wife) steals Osiris' dismembered body from Set and buries it, thus creating the fertile ground of Egypt and making Osiris the lord of the underworld.

Zarrilli et al (2006: 56-7) provide us with a more detailed account of the story:

Arguably the most important Egyptian myth is that of Osiris and his sister and consort, Isis. Before human-time, when Osiris and Isis ruled the world, prosperity and peace reigned. But Osiris' brother, Seth, became jealous. Therefore, Seth killed Osiris by sealing him in a coffin and drowning him in the Nile at a location near Abydos, thereby bringing conflict to the world. When Isis recovered Osiris' body, Seth took the body from her, and dismembered it, scattered it over the far expanses of Egypt. Isis and her sister Nephthys (protectors and restorers of the dead) scoured the kingdom, locating every piece of his body. After reassembling the body, Isis used her great powers to revive Osiris. From their union was born

their son, Horus – raised to avenge his father's death. Osiris left to become ruler of the Duat – the underworld.

The annual Passion Plays of Osiris were celebrated at Abydos, in Upper Egypt towards the end of November. It was celebrated at least from the 12th Dynasty onwards. The celebrations were based on the myth of the murder of Osiris and how his sister wife Isis managed to restore him to life again. Thousands of pilgrims would gather at Abydos to take part in the celebration and watch the play, which included eight acts. The proceedings of the festival were organised by an official called Ikhnofert, who was also the chief priest. Not only was he organiser of the festival; he was also a participant in the performance, playing the role of Horus. The other major roles of the drama were taken by priests and priestesses, supported by a large group of 'extras' who represented the warring sides of Seth on one hand and Horus/Osiris on the other.

1.9 Drama and Ancient Greece

While the Egyptian civilisation shows evidence of the earliest forms of dramatic expression, the Greek civilisation, which was dominant in the world after the Egyptian civilisation, shows evidence of the more advanced forms of drama that lay the foundation for modern European drama – which in turn influenced trends in other parts of the world.

We have already stated that the word drama derives from the Greek word 'dran,' and this demonstrates the Greek roots of drama as we know it today. In other words, modern written drama owes its existence to the dramatic tradition of ancient Greece. Both tragedy and comedy, as genres of drama, have their origins in Greece, as we shall see later.

Watling (1947: 9) says that the origins of the art of drama in Greece 'lie far beyond the reach of literary or even archaeological evidence. At its roots lie not only the human instinct for narrative and impersonation, but also the instinct for the ritualistic expression and interpretation of the power of natural forces, the cycle of life and death, and the nexus of past, present, and future.'

Unit 2

Themes and Forms of Drama

2.1 Introduction

In this unit we focus on the themes and forms of drama. The unit will accord you the opportunity to get a deeper understanding of drama.



2.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. List the major forms of drama
2. Explain the characteristics of the various forms of drama.
3. Discuss the link between the forms of drama and the themes that characterise them.

2.3 Themes of Drama

Genres of literature are built around themes or subjects, and this indeed is the case with drama. If drama were not built around particular subjects or themes, we would not be able to understand it, let alone enjoy reading it. By subject, we mean the topic that a literary work addresses or the aspect of human experience that the work explores. Plays deal with specific topics that are relevant to human experience, and that is why we enjoy them. They deal with topics such as ambition, human relationships, suffering, hatred, love, betrayal or death.

A theme, on the other hand, is the major or central idea of a work of literature. It may also be defined as points or ideas that the writer builds from the subject. Thus, for example, two playwrights may write plays on the same topic and yet highlight different themes. The theme also helps unravel the meaning of the play. However, a play may have more than one theme, although it usually has a main theme and sub-themes.

Some plays may deal with historical issues. In Africa, a number of plays have been written on the life of Shaka King of the Zulus. In Zambia, Godfrey Kabwe Kasoma wrote three plays under the *Black Mamba* series, all based on and inspired by actual historical events in the period leading up to Zambia's independence.

Some plays are called social dramas because of their focus on issues of a social nature. The first dramatist to mark a major shift towards this kind of drama was Henrik Ibsen of Norway, who is the second most frequently performed dramatist in the world after Shakespeare (Ferguson 2006). His earliest social drama was *A Doll's House* which, in fact, was the first of his works to attract attention outside Scandinavia (Sharp et al, trans. 1958: vi). *A Doll's House* is built around the marital challenges faced by the protagonist, Nora, who is forced to abandon her home and family upon realising that her husband, Helmer, has little regard for her opinion as a wife and mother of their children. The social drama has taken root in the world because many playwrights write about social experiences.

2.4 Forms of Drama

In Unit 1 we said modern drama has its roots in ancient Greece. While Greek drama had only two main forms, tragedy and comedy, modern drama has evolved many forms, including tragicomedy and melodrama. In this module, however, our interest is only in the three main forms: tragedy, comedy, and tragicomedy.

Over the centuries, various forms of drama have evolved, some of them out of Christian festivity, in the same way that Greek drama developed out of the religious festivals for the god Dionysus in the sixth century. The Corpus Christi plays, the morality and miracle plays were all products of the Christian faith.

However, you need to realise that all forms of drama that have ever existed or exist have been influenced by the tragedy and comedy forms of ancient Greece. You must be aware, however, that comedy was partly influenced by tragedy, which preceded it.

2.4.1 Tragedy

You are aware of how the word 'tragedy' is used in ordinary situations. However, in the context of this module, it applies to a literary work, especially a play, in which serious and important actions turn out disastrously for the protagonist or chief character. In the classic Greek sense, tragedy is a drama in which a major character undergoes a loss but also attains illumination or a new perspective (Roberts 2007).

The great Greek philosopher, Aristotle, provided an important definition of tragedy as 'the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself' (Abrams 1981: 202). According to Aristotle, tragedy is a dramatisation of a serious happening. Aristotle based his definition mostly on his analysis of the tragedies written by Sophocles, although the other great Greek writers of tragedy were Aeschylus and Euripides. Aeschylus started writing tragedy before Sophocles and is considered the father of Greek tragedy, while Euripides was the last great writer of tragedy. After him came Aristophanes, the father of Greek comedy. Sophocles, an Athenian, was born in 496 BC and lived ninety years. He is the best known tragedian, having produced the three Theban plays, *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Antigone*.

According to Aristotle, tragedy (tragic drama) started with the leaders of the dithyramb, a choral ode performed in honour of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and fertility. The choral odes were performed by the Chorus, which, originally, was a group of performers at the religious festival held in honour of Dionysus – also known as Festival Dionysia (Cuddon 1991: 143). The performances were related to fertility rites, especially because Dionysus was the god of wine and fertility. The Chorus was a group of twelve men, although it was later increased to fifteen (women were not allowed to participate in the performances). The Chorus was not used in the same way by Greek dramatists. For instance, while in the works of Aeschylus the Chorus often took part in the action, in the works of Sophocles the Chorus served as a commentator on the action or events as they unfolded.

Eventually, however, the Chorus was joined by one actor, added by Thespis, as the dithyramb gradually transformed itself into the more familiar tragic drama. Thespis also added the prologue and the set speech, although the set up of one actor and the

Chorus continued for sixty-two years of the performance of tragedy. Aeschylus added a second actor around 472 BC and, later, Sophocles added a third one. You ought to note, therefore, that tragedy was from its development and for the sixty-two year period, was a dithyramb involving only one actor. There was therefore no interaction between actors as the case is with most plays. You also ought to note that some scholars consider Thespis the originator of tragedy.

You need to be aware, however, that as the performances of tragedy were part of religious ritual, it was not possible to watch tragedy in any other context other than the religious context, particularly during the festival of Dionysia. The performances were enhanced by the costume and bearing of the actors, who wore rich robes and shoes which made them appear taller. They also wore a mask. Their movements were dignified and they did not engage in violent action. The Greek word for actor was 'hypocrites,' which meant 'answerer.'

During the festivals competitions would be held to determine the best dramatist, then known as 'poet'. Each dramatist would submit a tetralogy, or set of four plays, which included a trilogy of three tragedies and one satyr play. The trilogy of plays would all be based on the same theme, as is the case with the three tragic plays by Sophocles – *Oedipus the King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*. While the trilogy of tragedies would deal with serious matters of a religious nature, the satyr play would provide comic relief.

The satyr play was a form of burlesque, that is, a derisive or ridiculous imitation of another literary work – in this case the satyr was a burlesque based on the tragic form. It was associated with entertainment. Cuddon (1991: 883) states: 'The satyrs were creatures that were half man and half goat, or half man and half horse, and bore prominent, erect phalluses.'

A lot of satyr plays were written during the time of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the three greatest and most famous tragic writers, with Aeschylus being the oldest. Sophocles came between Aeschylus and Euripides, the last writer of tragedy. Aeschylus is believed to have written 90 plays altogether, with about 20 of them being

satyr plays. Sophocles, on the other hand, is believed to have written about 123 plays altogether, with about 30 satyr plays. Euripides was believed to have written a total of about 80 plays, which included about 15 satyr plays.

2.4.2 Comedy

You have probably heard the word 'comedy' used in a variety of situations. However, in this module we shall use the definition offered by Abrams (1981: 25). He says comedy is 'a work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfitures engage our delighted attention rather than our profound concern, we feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters'. According to Aristotle, comedy began 'as an improvised entertainment that combined satirical skits, bawdy jokes, erotic singing and dancing, and uninhibited revelry' (Cohen 2003: 34-5). The comedy writers developed 'a boisterous, lewd, and fiercely critical type of burlesque comedy' (Roberts 2007:1276) which, according to Barnet (1977: 605) dramatised the joy of renewal and of being reborn.

Like tragedy, comedy originated in the Dionysia festivals of ancient Athens in Greece. Hence, the word comedy is derived from the Greek word 'komos' (or 'komus') – which means 'songs of merrymakers' or 'revel-songs'. Kirby (1975: 92) states that the word 'komos' sounded like the word for 'village' – hence some early commentators argued that comedy came from the village. Greek comedy was from the beginning associated with fertility rites of the worship of Dionysus. The satyr play was a form of comedy, though associated with religious rites.

Eventually, however, comedy was associated with drama, particularly due to the involvement of Aristophanes, who is considered the father of comedy. Aristophanes, who lived between 448-380 BC, wrote a variety of comedies which combined fine lyric verse, dance, social commentary, and remarkable characters. His works include *Knights*, *Acharnians*, *Clouds*, *Peace*, *Wasps*, *Frogs*, *Birds* and his most famous and most-acclaimed play, *Lysistrata*.

Aristophanes set the general recipe, though not the structure, for comedies to come. His work marked a major shift from the tragic plays associated with Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the last great writer of tragedy. Aristophanes' pioneering work belongs to the category called Old Comedy, which was followed by Middle Comedy, a more discreet and international drama. Finley (1963: 107), in fact, argues that Old Comedy can best be judged using the works of Aristophanes. After Middle Comedy came New Comedy, whose most prominent writer was another Greek, Menander who, among other comedies, wrote *Dyskolos*. New Comedy was characterised by the development of situation, plot, and character.

2.4.2.1 Differences Between Comedy and Tragedy

You need to be aware of the following differences between comedy and tragedy:

- (a) Whereas tragedy deals with matters of a serious nature, comedy tends to deal with matters of a light-hearted nature. Thus, while Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* causes us to engage in serious reflection, Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* makes us laugh.
- (b) Whereas tragedy is concerned with the hidden dimensions of the tragic hero's character, comedy is concerned with the protagonist as a social being. As a social being, a human being tends to assume masks of pretension and self-importance. The purpose of comedy is to strip away the masks and show people for who they really are.
- (c) While tragedy reveals the nobility of the human condition, comedy reveals its inherent folly, portraying human beings as silly, stupid, hypocritical, naive, gullible, vain and irrational.
- (d) Compared to tragedies, which tend to have sad endings, comedies tend to have happy endings; while the former end with death, the latter end with an affirmation of life.
- (e) Whereas the tragic protagonist gains our sympathy because of what he goes through, the comic protagonist only attracts our ridicule or derision because of the absurd nature of what he goes through.

2.4.2.2 Types of Comedy

It is important for you to be aware of the fact that there are many types and classifications of comedy, but the main or most common ones are two: romantic

comedy and satiric comedy. However, comedy may also be drawn into such categories as comedy of manners, farce, comedy of the absurd, low and high comedy.

(a) Romantic Comedy

This kind of comedy has its roots in the Elizabethan literature of Shakespeare and his peers and is concerned with a golden world with little difficulty and is generally weaved around a love affair that involves a beautiful and idealised heroine (sometimes disguised as a man). Although the love affair does not flow smoothly, it overcomes the difficulties to end in a happy union. The romantic comedy might occasionally also include a villain, but ultimately good triumphs over evil. An example of Shakespeare's romantic comedy is the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

(b) Satiric Comedy

This type of comedy ridicules political parties or philosophical doctrines. It might also attack some aspects of society by making the people who violate the standards of social and moral rules look ridiculous. Aristophanes was the pioneer of satiric comedy. While romantic comedy is premised on an ideal world, satiric comedy draws its strength and effectiveness from the portrayal of a world dominated by morally inferior people, some of whom would even qualify to be classified as villains.

(c) Comedy of Manners

A form of comedy, usually regular (with five acts or three acts), in which attitudes and customs are examined and satirised in the light of high intellectual and moral standards. The dialogue is witty and sophisticated, and characters are often measured according to their linguistic and intellectual powers (Roberts 2007). The comedy of manners has its roots in the New Comedy of Menander, who lived between about 342-292 BC. It was further developed by the Roman dramatists Plautus and Terence in the third and second centuries BC. Shakespeare also wrote comedies of manners such as *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Much Ado about Nothing*.

(d) Farce

This type of comedy is designed to provoke the audience to simple, hearty laughter by generally employing highly exaggerated or caricatured character types which it puts in ridiculous and improbable situations. In other words, its aim is to produce roars of laughter rather than smiles.

(e) High and Low Comedy

High comedy is designed to evoke 'thoughtful' laughter from spectators who remain emotionally detached from the action. Low comedy, on the other hand, makes little appeal to the intellect – instead, it aims to arouse laughter through jokes or slapstick humour. Clowns fall in this category of comedy.

(f) Comedy of the Absurd

This is a modern form of comedy – also known as black or dark comedy - which dramatises the apparent pointlessness, ambiguity, uncertainty and absurdity of existence. Generally this comedy has no discernible plot but is based on absurd situations.

2.4.3 Tragicomedy

The term tragicomedy, also written as tragi-comedy, is a play containing a mixture of tragic and comic elements. The term was first used by Plautus, the Roman writer (254-184 BC), in reference to the unconventional mixture of kings, gods and servants in his own play, *Amphitruo*, which he referred to as 'tragico-comoedia'. In other words, a tragicomedy is a tragedy that ends happily. One of the best known writers of this genre of drama is Samuel Beckett, author of the famous *Waiting for Godot*.

2.4.4 Other Forms of Drama

It is critical for you to realise that, apart from tragicomedy, many other forms of drama evolved from tragedy and comedy, although, after the Greek empire was overtaken by the Roman Empire in terms of prominence, tragedy and comedy became less significant. The Romans adopted the two forms of dramatic expression, and some of

their dramatists of note included writers of comedy such as Plautus and Terence, and the tragedian Seneca.

One of the genres of drama that have evolved over the years include melodrama, which is an exaggerated drama centred on a simplified and one-dimensional character who tends to be a villain, a heroine, and a hero who must rescue the heroine from the villain. The victim is usually the protagonist, who undergoes a difficulty or disaster caused, not by his own weakness or tragic flaw as in tragedy, but by forces outside or beyond him. The moral character of the protagonist is not essential to the drama. Another genre of drama is the history play, which focuses on the dramatisation of historical events. Shakespeare has written some historical plays such as *Macbeth*. Cycle plays are dramatised stories of the Bible.

The dramatisation of biblical stories, which as you are probably aware is a common phenomenon in the Zambian churches, started in the period of European history known as the Middle Ages or Medieval Period – which, as David (2000: 1) explains, designates ‘the time span roughly from the collapse of the Roman Empire to the Renaissance’. He adds: ‘The adjective “medieval,” coined from Latin *medium* (middle) and *aevum* (age), refers to whatever was made, written, or thought during the Middle Ages. Coming after the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages was a time of enormous historical, social, and linguistic change. It was, however, also a time when the classical works of the Greek and Roman civilisations almost went into oblivion. The great classical plays were almost forgotten. Thus, the Renaissance period, which followed the Middle Ages, was characterised by ‘rebirth’ or revival of, among other things, the great classics of the Greek and Roman civilisations.

However, the Middle Ages were not completely devoid of drama. The Roman Catholic Church, which was the dominant force during this period, started the practice of dramatising biblical stories. Thus were born the popular medieval forms of drama – miracle plays, morality plays, and interludes.

The miracle play was anchored on either a story from the Scriptures, or on the life and martyrdom of a saint. However, some historians use the term ‘miracle play’ only as a

reference to dramas based on the lives of saints, while they use the term 'mystery play' to apply only to dramas based on stories of the Old and New Testaments. Morality plays, on the other hand, were dramatised allegories of the life of human beings, their temptation and sinning, their quest for salvation, and their confrontation with death. Abrams (1981: 108) sheds more light on characteristics of the morality play:

The hero represents Mankind, or Everyman; among the other characters are personifications of virtue, vices, and Death, as well as angels and demons who contest the possession of the soul of man. A character known as the Vice often played the role of the tempter in a fashion both sinister and comic; he is regarded by some literary historians as a precursor both of the cynical and ironic villain and of some of the comic figures in Elizabethan drama... The best-known morality play is the fifteenth-century *Everyman*.

The play *Everyman* was written near the end of the fifteenth century and, in keeping with the allegorical nature of the morality plays, the protagonist is a representative figure called Everyman, hence the title of the play. In other morality plays, the representative figure was referred to as Mankind, because of the fact that he represented all mankind. The allegorical nature of *Everyman* is further highlighted by the names of some of the other characters of the play: Death, Fellowship, Good Deeds, Knowledge, Confession, Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five-Wits (David 2000).

The interlude, on the other hand, referred to 'a variety of short entertainments, including secular farces and witty dialogues with a religious or political point' (Abrams 1981: 108). He adds: 'In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, these little dramas were performed by bands of professional actors; it is believed that they were often put on between the courses of a feast or between the acts of a longer play' (108). The term interlude comes from the Latin meaning, 'between the play'.

However, in the sixteenth century, as the Renaissance took shape, drama began to free itself from the dictates and themes of religion. In England, during the reigns of both Queen Elizabeth and King James, comedy, tragedy and tragicomedy took root. Shakespeare, for example, is well-known for the revenge tragedy – a tragedy based on

the theme of revenge. However, the tragedies of Shakespeare and other later tragedians did not necessarily follow the elements of tragedy as outlined by Aristotle. In the next unit, we shall look at the Elements and Structure of Tragedy.



2.5 Reflection

From what you have learnt about comedy, what is your opinion of Zambian comedy? Does it fit into the characteristics discussed in this unit? Do you think Zambian comedy is of good quality? If you have had the opportunity to watch some Zambian or foreign plays, which one/s do you think could be classified as tragedy and which one/s as tragicomedy?

Unit 3

Elements and Structure of Tragedy

3.1 Introduction

Since the Greek tragic play marks the basis of the modern play, it is important that you get a deeper understanding of what constitutes tragedy. In this unit, therefore, we shall focus our attention on the elements of tragedy, or those characteristics that make a tragedy as it was known in ancient Greece. In so doing, we shall discuss Aristotle's definition of tragedy and his views on the structure of tragedy.



3.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the elements of the Greek tragic play
2. Demonstrate how the various elements of tragedy are related
3. Explain the structure of the Greek tragedy.

3.3 Elements of Tragedy

There are a number of elements which characterise Greek tragedy, and you need to be aware of them so as to be able to distinguish it from other forms of tragedy. Aristotle's book, *The Poetics*, gives helpful guidelines on the elements of tragedy. Aristotle based his observations mainly on the study of Sophocles' tragedies. This is how Aristotle defines tragedy in *The Poetics*: 'Tragedy, then, is an imitation, through action rather than narration, of a serious, complete, and ample action, by means of language rendered pleasant at different places in the constituent parts by each of the aids, in which imitation there is also effected through pity and fear its catharsis of these and similar emotions' (Epps 1970: 11).

Cohen (2003: 31-2) provides some more insight into the definition of tragedy:

A tragedy is a serious play (although not necessarily devoid of humorous episodes) with a topic of universal human import as its theme. Traditionally, the central character, often called the *protagonist*, is a person of high rank or stature. During the play, the protagonist undergoes a decline of fortune, leading to suffering and death. Integral to tragedy, according to Aristotle, is the protagonist's period of insightful self-recognition of some fundamental *hamartia* – or error of sin – and consequent reversal of his or her fortunes. The effect of a tragedy, Aristotle then claimed, is for the protagonist's self-recognition and reversal to elicit both pity and terror in the audience, which are then resolved in a *catharsis*, or purging, of those aroused emotions.

The key elements of tragedy, then, as isolated by Aristotle in his famous definition, are: (a) tragic hero (b) *hamartia* (c) *peripeteia* (d) *anagnorisis* (e) *catharsis*. In other words, Aristotle argues that, for a drama to qualify as a tragedy, it must have the above characteristics, which he arrived at after an evaluation of the tragic plays of Sophocles, whom he considered the greatest of all tragedians.

3.3.1 Tragic Hero

According to Aristotle, a tragedy is centred on a tragic hero whose character is 'complex, not single-minded' (Kitto, 1950:156). In a tragedy, the tragic hero must fall, is doomed to fall. He is marked for destruction, but his downfall is due mainly to a tragic flaw in his character. Usually, the tragic hero is of high social status such as a king, as in the tragedies of Sophocles.

3.3.2 Hamartia

'Hamartia' can be translated variously as 'missing the target,' or 'vice,' 'weakness' or 'flaw'. In most Greek tragedies the tragic hero's *hamartia* is 'hubris,' which translates to 'excessive pride'. According to Kitto (1950:567), the hero 'forgets that he is fallible, acts as though he has the power and wisdom of the gods, and is later humbled for his arrogance'.

In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, for instance, Oedipus is the tragic hero and he exhibits hubris, which in part is evident in his arrogant attitude to Teiresias, the blind prophet who is in essence a representative and mouthpiece of the gods. When the tragic hero falls, he experiences a complete reversal of fortunes, a phenomenon which Aristotle refers to as 'peripeteia'.

3.3.3 Peripeteia

The tragic hero's reversal of fortunes marks his downfall from an exalted position to a lowly one. The downfall, according to Aristotle, must be of such magnitude that it causes us to have pity on the fallen hero. The downfall of Oedipus, for example, is so great and drastic that we feel pity for him.

At the beginning of *Oedipus Rex* Oedipus is a man at peace with himself and his word; he is the King of Thebes, loved by his subjects. By the end of the play, however, he is fallen, shamed, stripped of his honour, pride, power and wealth. The man who lived in the palace now has to wander in the wilderness, a vagabond.

3.3.4 Anagnorisis

The tragic hero's downfall and peripeteia leads to what Aristotle refers to as "anagnorisis," which means realisation or recognition of one's error. In other words, the hero recognises and acknowledges his error.

3.3.5 Catharsis

Catharsis according to Aristotle means the 'purgation' of our emotions as an audience. In other words, as we watch or read the tragic play, we develop pity and fear because of the terrible punishment that the tragic hero undergoes. By the end of the play, the emotions of the audience are purged.

3.3.6 The Three Unities

Apart from the elements of tragedy as identified in the Aristotelian definition, a further important element of tragedy is that of the Three Unities of time, action and place.

(a) Unity of Time

This refers to the fact that all the events of a Greek tragedy would be completed within a period of twenty-four hours. This means from the time of the first scene to the last.

(b) Unity of Action

This refers to the fact that the various actions that constitute the play are interrelated. None of them can be removed or changed without changing the key content.

(c) Unity of Place

All the action of the Greek tragedy occurs in one place – or on the same set. The action does not shift from place to place.

3.4 Structure of Tragedy

What do we mean when we refer to a person's 'structure'? Usually this is a reference to how the various parts of the person's body look in relation to each other. Similarly, when we talk of the structure of Greek tragedy we mean the various parts, or sections, of the tragedy genre. According to Aristotle, the structure of the tragedy consists of a number of recognisable sections, namely, prologos, parados, episode, stasimon, and exodus.

3.4.1 Prologos

This section is sometimes referred as the prologue – the English word derived from the original *prologos*. This was the first or opening action of the play which provided the exposition, or foundational information upon which the rest of the play hinged. In other words, the exposition is that part of a play which informs the audience of whatever they need to know about the past (Barnet 2004: 969). Sometimes the prologos was given by a single actor speaking as either a mortal or a god.

3.4.2 Parados

This is the second section of the tragedy and was characterised by the entry of the Chorus through the front part of the orchestra known as the *parados* – which explains

the name of the section. The section also provided further exposition or background information. Once the Chorus entered, they stayed on until the end of the play.

3.4.3 Episode

This is the main action unit of the drama, and each tragedy had four episodes in which the actors presented both action and speech, including swift one-line interchanges known as *stichomythy*.

3.4.4 Stasimon

Once the first episode ended, the actors withdrew. The section which followed was the *stasimon* – plural, *stasima*. This was performed by the Chorus, who would never leave the orchestra until the end of the play. The stasima, then, provided an interlude between the episodes. In all, there were generally four episodes and four stasimons.

3.4.5 Exodos

This was the concluding section of the play, coming immediately after the last stasimon. It contained the resolution of the drama, the exit of the actors, and the last pronouncements, dance movements, and exit of the Chorus.



3.5 Activity

Write down from memory the main points of what you have learnt in this unit. After you have written down your summary, check the actual content of the unit to see how you have fared

Unit 4

Modern African Drama

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this unit is to enable you to understand the nature of modern African drama so that you see its relationship to what you have so far learnt about drama.



4.2 Objectives

By the end of the unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the main characteristics of modern African drama
2. Demonstrate the relationship between modern African drama and traditional African arts
3. Explain the relationship between modern African drama and European drama.

4.3 Traditional African Art Forms

You may ask: why discuss traditional African art forms when they were largely unwritten and the essence of drama, as discussed in this module, is that it is a written discourse? The reason is that modern African drama, as a written discourse, borrows some aspects of traditional African arts despite the fact that they were orally transmitted.

In acknowledging the fact that modern African dramatists borrow some aspects of traditional African art, Mwansa (1999: 7) states that these traditional forms 'represent the basis for African performing arts in the same way most of the dramas of the west have been fashioned by the Greek mythology and Christian norms'.

Traditional African forms of theatrical expression are associated with rituals. It is important to note, however, that the performances were not script-based and did not

have plots with a pyramid structure as is the case with plays influenced by western conventions.

4.4 The Influence of Western Culture and Civilisation

The colonisation of Africa by European powers was characterised by the imposition of western forms of cultural expression. African forms of cultural and artistic expression were thrown to the periphery of colonial African society. The western way of life became the 'correct' way of life. Hence traditional African forms of artistic performance were among the traditional practices discouraged by the colonial government and the missionaries. Ayandele (1966: 243) says of Nigerian children who attended missionary schools: 'The children were taught to pray, sing psalms, wear European clothes, and assume European manners. They were taught to regard traditional customs and institutions with abhorrence.'

Western civilisation also brought with it the European concept of school. Thus European education became an unavoidable phase in the life of any progressive African. European education, however, also meant that Africans were taught using European languages. They therefore acquired not only the European ways, but also the European languages.

While western civilisation brought some negative aspects into African society, one of the positive influences was the introduction of systems of writing. The new writing tradition was appreciated by Africans, who realised they could now pass on by writing what they previously passed on by oral means. The introduction of writing laid the groundwork for the birth of the modern African drama and dramatist. Africans who acquired western education were able to learn about western drama and the work of western dramatists. They were able to learn about the works of such European playwrights as William Shakespeare, for example.

As a result some African dramatists decided to write plays in line with the western tradition. They applied what they learnt in western schools and universities to write

modern African plays, although some of them, like Wole Soyinka, even made efforts to textualise the ritual dramas of traditional African society.

Modern African drama, therefore, is largely script-based and westernised. It is largely written in the languages of the colonial masters such as Portuguese, French and English.

4.5 Influence of Christianity

You need to understand the role of Christianity both in the colonisation and liberation of Africa. While Christianity paved the way for colonisation, it later also paved the way for liberation. In the process it influenced all facets of African life – including that of the arts. You may recall that the Portuguese were great explorers, and it is no surprise therefore that they were the first Europeans to send missionaries to Africa (Fagan 1970).

You will recall that David Livingstone and other missionaries came to Africa before the European settler decided to make Africa his home. In other words, the missionaries' evangelistic enterprise inspired and even encouraged the colonialist enterprise. The two enterprises in fact, created a mutually beneficial partnership. While the colonialist needed the missionaries to make the African people appreciate western culture and civilisation, the missionary needed the colonial master to impose the western traditions and system of government.

It is worth noting that Livingstone's mission, by his own proclamation, was built around the three C's: Christianity, Commerce and Civilisation. In other words, he was determined to bring all the three to the African people – not at separate times and not in separate baskets, but as one package. Sir Harry Johnston says of Livingstone (Johnston 1967: 7-8): 'Livingstone became obsessed with the desire to open up the interior of tropical Africa to new forms of commerce and Christianity in order to end the slave trade, foster missionary endeavours, and destroy ignorance, poverty and isolation – all obstacles to the "civilisation" of Africa.'

Rotberg (1972: 6) observes that Livingstone 'opened the heart of Africa to white missionaries, settlers, and colonial governments' essentially because he not only wanted Africa to be Christianised, but also to be Europeanised. Thomas Fowell Buxton, a member of the British Parliament in the nineteenth century and, like William Wilberforce, an ardent advocate of the abolition of the slave trade, also advocated a mission that went beyond the interests of the gospel: 'It is the Bible and the plough that must regenerate Africa' (Groves 1954).

The European Christian missionaries were the first to introduce western-type schools in Africa. Their intention was to use the schools as tools to evangelise. They reasoned that literate Africans would be able to read, understand and teach the word of God, hence helping with the spread of the gospel. The missionaries also used the bush churches to convert people to their religious denominations as well as to compete for souls against each other.

The missionaries were for a long time the providers of western-type education in Zambia, and it was some time before the colonial administration ventured into building schools for the indigenous people. In 1923, a 'Report on Education in East Africa' published by the African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps-Stoke Fund of New York stated that literally every school established in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) in 1924 was under missionary control (Coombe 1968).

One of the offshoots of the mission schools is that the Africans who attended them not only learnt how to read, but also developed an awareness of the oppressive nature of colonialism. You will recall that in Zambia most of the freedom fighters were products of mission schools. These include Kenneth Kaunda, Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula, and Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe.

Similarly, some of Africa's early modern dramatists were also products of mission schools, which not only imparted western knowledge, but also Christian knowledge.

Though no longer a practising Christian, for example, Soyinka draws on his Christian education for biblical images, themes and allusions (Schipper 1982:138).

4.6 Influence of African Traditional Performing Arts

One of the characteristics of modern African drama is that it is to a significant extent influenced by African forms of artistic expression, not only in terms of the use of African indigenous expressions and songs, but also in terms of some events. Modern African dramatists have blended western conventions of drama (such as characterisation, plot, scene, stage, directions, setting and point of view) and traditional African art forms (notably dances, songs, and rituals). Some of the dramatists who have successfully blended African and western concepts include John Pepper Clark, Wole Soyinka, Ama Ata Aidoo and Ngugi wa Thiong'o among others.

Ama Ata Aidoo uses an African children's song in *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, whereas Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his *I will Marry When I want*, uses Gikuyu sayings and songs (although the play is originally written in Gikuyu but using western conventions of a play). In *Song of a Goat*, John Pepper Clark successfully blends African concepts and conventions of the classical Greek tragedy.

The most successful and best known African dramatist, Soyinka, has a reputation for experimenting with African and western concepts of theatre. As Ricard observes, Soyinka's plays are an attempt to make theatre using ceremony as a point of departure (Morgan 2007:170). Schipper (1982:138) rightly observes that 'Soyinka's deep roots in Yoruba culture can be seen in all his work. Gods, spirits, powers and ancestors are presented, while traditional music, songs and dances also have a function in his plays.' Soyinka definitely has his roots in Yoruba culture (Jones 1973).

4.7 Themes of Modern African Drama

The themes of modern African drama are generally similar to those of African fiction – the conflict between western and African culture, the effects of colonial rule, opposition

to oppressive rule, corruption and mismanagement in independent African states, historical events, among others.



4.8 Reflection

How many Zambian plays have you watched and what is your assessment of them? What do you think are the dominant themes in the Zambian plays you have watched? How many local and foreign plays have you read, if any, and which one do you think is the best?

Unit 5

Elements of Drama

5.1 Introduction

In this unit we focus on the Elements of Drama. The purpose is to grant you the opportunity to not only understand the main characteristics of drama, but also to provide you with the necessary tools for analysing plays by a variety of writers, whether African or non-African.



5.2 Objectives

By the end of the unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the various elements of drama.
2. Demonstrate the relationship between the elements of drama.
3. Illustrate how the various elements of drama relate to actual dramatic texts.

5.3 The Elements of Drama

The main elements of drama are: plot, structure, language, text, tone, point of view, characters, symbolism, and theme. These elements are associated with modern drama, although they have been there for centuries. Earlier forms of drama, particularly poetic drama, included meter and rhyme, which are no longer a big factor in modern drama.

5.3.1 Text

It is important for you to recognise that, since drama has to be read, it needs to have a text, which provides guidelines and direction for performance. There are a number of characteristics by which the text is identified, or defined, these being dialogue, monologue and stage directions.

5.3.1.1 Dialogue

Dialogue refers to the speech of characters in the play. In the general sense, it may also be referred to as the conversation of two or more characters. However, the difference

between 'natural' conversation and dramatic dialogue is that the latter is 'planned' by the author.

5.3.1.2 Monologue

While the dialogue involves at least characters speaking to each other, a monologue is spoken by a single character on stage. The character usually speaks the words while alone, with or without the audience. The speech is usually long and the character speaks it to himself or herself, to the audience, or to an off-stage character. The monologue is similar to the *soliloquy*, which is a speech made by a character, alone on stage, directly to the audience – not to himself or herself, and not to another character off-stage. A soliloquy is characterised by the fact that the character who speaks it does so for the purpose of enabling the audience to know his or her inner thoughts, hopes, intentions or feelings. You will do well to be aware of the fact that all soliloquies are monologues but not all monologues are soliloquies.

However, both the monologue and soliloquy are to be distinguished from the *aside*, which unlike the monologue is usually a short and often witty or satirical comment or speech. The words are normally targeted at the audience or another character also on stage, although only the intended character and the audience can hear them.

5.3.1.3 Stage Directions

Stage directions are the playwright's instructions, within the text of the play, regarding movement, actions, entrances and exits, lighting scene, tone of voice, appearance of character, facial expressions, and body language, among others. These instructions guide the actor as well as director of the play, but depending on the situation they may ignore the instructions or adjust them. Generally the stage directions are italicised and appear in the scene description or within the dialogue/action of the play.

For example, in *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles:

Shapherd. (*Confused, flanking from the Messenger to the King*)

Doing what? – what man do you mean?

Oedipus. (*Pointing to the Messenger*)

This one here – ever have dealings with him?

5.3.2 Tone

Tone refers to the methods by which the playwright reveals his or her attitudes or feelings towards the play's subjects and the readers. Tone is manifested through various techniques and means of presentation that create attitudes.

In everyday life we use the expression 'tone of voice' to indicate the attitude of the speaker to the subject or the audience/listener. In dramatic literature, as in fiction and poetry, tone serves the same purpose as 'tone of voice'.

In order to understand tone in a play, we have to examine how attitude is determined by the language, actions and background of the play. In this way, we are able to determine the playwright's attitude or attitudes toward the play's subject matter. We are also able to determine the playwright's attitude toward the reader or audience.

5.3.3 Plot

By plot we mean writer's arrangement of the events and actions of the play. The actions result from believable and authentic human responses to a conflict or situation and are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects. In order to create plot, the playwright determines an ordered and logical chain of actions and reactions.

You need to be aware that the plot is not the same thing as the story or storyline. Two writers can pick on the same story, but arrange its various parts differently. Thus, for example, one of the writers might choose to start the story from the end and then use flashbacks to develop it; another, on the other hand, might choose to start the story from the beginning and develop it chronologically.

In a play with a double or multiple plot, there are two or more different but related lines of action. In most cases one of the plots is the main plot whereas the other is the

subplot. There might be more than one subplot. A subplot is normally complete and interesting in its own right. In Shakespeare's plays double or multiple plots are common. An example is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The play is about love, but Shakespeare uses more than one plot to develop the plot. In the main plot, for example, the play focuses on the relationship between the two rulers, Theseus and Hippolyta, who have undergone a change from irrational war to rational peace. On the other hand, two other plots are concerned with the adventures of four lovers and the actions of Oberon and Titania.

5.3.4 Structure

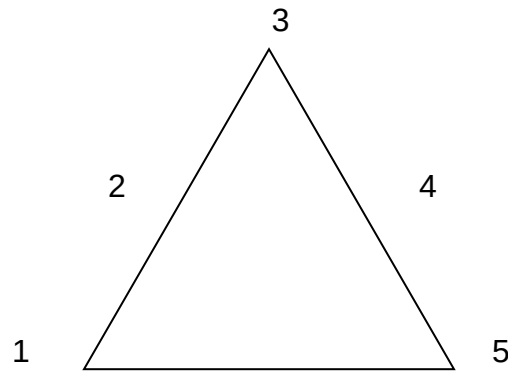
You need to know that, just as plot and story are usually confused, plot and structure are equally confused by many people. You need to know the difference. While the plot is concerned with the connections between actions and reactions, the structure is concerned with the various stages through which the actions and reactions pass.

Generally most traditional plays have a structure consisting of five stages.

- (a) Exposition or Introduction
- (b) Complication and Development
- (c) Crisis or Climax
- (d) Falling Action
- (e) Denouement, Reduction or Catastrophe

The structure of the play is sometimes explained in terms of the Freytag Pyramid, named after the German novelist and critic Gustav Freytag (1816-1895). Freytag was the first person to perceive the structure of a play as a pyramid, although he identified six elements instead of the five that are now more commonly associated with the Freytag Pyramid (see below).

Freitag Pyramid



The numbers in the pyramid represent the following:

1. Exposition or Introduction
2. Complication and development
3. Crisis or climax
4. Falling action
5. Denouement, resolution, or catastrophe

5.3.4.1 Exposition or Introduction

This part is intended to bring out all the information necessary for us to grasp the events in the play as well as the background to or reason for the events. The exposition makes it possible for us to understand the storyline, characters, actions and situations.

5.3.4.2 Complication and Development

This stage is also known as *rising action* as it contrasts the *falling action* (No. 4). At this stage the play develops through complications brought about by conflicts, leading up to the climax.

The complication and conflict are normally sparked off by an event or action called the *inciting incident*. In other words, the inciting incident forces the story to move forward by providing a conflict.

5.3.4.3 Act and Scenes

This refers to the main division in a drama. Each act may have one or more scenes. The shift from one act to another is marked by a major shift in the setting or locale of the action. In the early days, this meant that the set had to be rearranged. A scene is therefore a smaller unit of the act and does not mark a major change in the setting or locale of the action. Most plays these days are one-act plays as they are more economical and easier to produce than plays with several acts.

5.3.4.4 Crisis or Climax

As the conflict and complications develop a crisis is created and suspense mounts. The conflict or complication develops until it reaches its highest point of tension or the *climax*, which is in effect the turning point of the play. At this point uncertainty is removed and an unavoidable course of action follows.

5.3.4.5 Falling Action

The unavoidable course of action leads to the resolution of the conflict, although the stage is also characterised by actions that delay the conclusion. The action that follows is represented by the downward slope of the pyramid. However, the conclusion can only be delayed or temporarily avoided but not prevented.

5.3.4.6 Denouement (Resolution, Catastrophe)

The denouement is the logical conclusion of the events leading up to the climax and falling action. Denouement is a French term meaning 'unravelling' or 'unknotting'. Catastrophe on the other hand is a Greek term meaning 'overturning'.

The term catastrophe should not be understood in the negative sense of a disaster but rather in the sense that, as the meaning suggests, the situation in the play is 'overturned'. In other words, the conflict or complication is resolved and the play ends. The characters that deserve punishment are punished, while the deserving ones are rewarded.

5.3.5 Foreshadowing

There are points, in the course of the plot, where the playwright might decided to drop hints about coming events in the plot, sometimes for the purpose of ensuring that the audience does not feel that certain incidents have happened 'out of the blue'. This is what is meant by *foreshadowing*.

When a climactic incident that helps with the resolution of the play has not been adequately prepared for, the playwright might be accused of resorting to a *deus ex machina* ending, which takes its name from the ending in some Greek tragic plays where a *mechane* carrying a god or goddess would be literally lowered into the midst of the dramatic proceedings. In fact, *deus ex machina* literally means 'god out of the machine'. The purpose of lowering the god in this kind of ending was to get the hero out of difficulties or untangle the plot. Euripides used it a lot, while Aeschylus and Sophocles avoided it. In contemporary usage, the term *deus ex machina* is applied to any unexpected intervener who resolves a difficult situation, not only in drama, but also in other literary genres (Cuddon1991: 257).

5.3.6 Characters

There can be no play without characters – that is, the persons created by the playwright to tell the play's story by way of their actions, ideas and attitudes. In this regard the characters of a play are no different from those of a work of fiction such as a short story or novel. The main difference, however, lies in the fact that, unlike the characters of a novel or short story, those of a play are intended to come alive when the play is performed. On stage, the actor 'lives' the character's life through action and speech.

Every play, except a one-character form, has more than one type of character. Classifications of character include protagonist, antagonist, flat character, round character, stock character, and ancillary characters among others.

5.3.7 Protagonist and Antagonist

The protagonist is the most important or leading character of the play, while the antagonist is the character that opposes, or is the main opponent of the protagonist. Thus, for example, Oedipus is the protagonist of *Oedipus the King* (also known as *Oedipus Rex*).

5.3.8 Flat and Round Characters

By flat character we mean the type that does not undergo any change or growth, and is therefore fixed or static. The flat character is presented without detail and is built around a single idea or quality. A flat character lacks depth and may be described in a single phrase or sentence.

A round character by contrast is complex both in temperament and motivation and is presented in more detail. Unlike the flat character, the round character changes as a result of growth and development. In other words, while a flat character is static, a round character is dynamic. A round character has depth and can surprise us.

5.3.9 Stock Characters

Stock characters are stereotypes and therefore lack individuality. They are found in a variety of plays or works of fiction. Examples include 'corrupt politician,' 'stubborn son,' or 'wayward husband'. In Zambian folk tales, for example, you will notice that Kalulu is meant to be clever and fast while hyena is dull and slow, and therefore ever a victim of Kalulu, who is able to manipulate him.

5.3.10 Ancillary Characters

This refers to characters that set off or highlight the protagonist, making it possible for us to understand not only the protagonist but also his or her actions. The first type of ancillary character is the *foil*, a character that is compared and contrasted with the protagonist. The foil enables us to see the protagonist's strengths and weaknesses more clearly. The second type of ancillary character is the *choric figure*, who bears a distant relationship with the chorus of ancient Greek drama. While the Greek choruses

were many, the choric figure is a single character who is usually close enough to the protagonist as to give us insight into his or her actions, thoughts and motivation. Like the ancient Chorus of Greek tragedy, the choric figure may also comment on events in the play, in which case he or she is a *commentator* or, in French, *raisonneur* (meaning 'reasoner').

5.3.11 Point of View

There is a difference between point of view in fiction (short stories and novels) and point of view in drama. While in fiction point of view refers to the voice that narrates the story, in drama it refers to the play's perspective or focus. In other words point of view in a dramatic text is the manner in which the dramatist (playwright) draws our attention to the play's characters and their concerns.

In many plays the dramatist presents the action from the perspective of an individual character. As a consequence, the audience only sees the events and actions of the play from the character's perspective. Sometimes, however, perspective might take the form of a direct address of the audience by a character, as in the case of a soliloquy.

5.3.12 Language

The language of a play is in part determined by the type of play. For example, plays such as *Oedipus Rex* or Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are written in the form of verse. Hence, especially in Shakespeare meter is an important determining factor of the diction and grammatical constructions. The language of a play also makes up the dialogue and it is a guide to understanding a character's thoughts, actions, temperament and motives. The language might include expressions peculiar to particular characters, imagery or symbolism.

5.3.13 Symbolism

Symbols are an important part of expression in drama, just as they are in poetry and fiction. In a general sense, a symbol is anything that signifies something else. In a dramatic text, however, a symbol may be an object, setting, character, action, situation

or statement. However, the play itself can bear symbolic value if it is characterised by consistent and sustained symbols that refer to general human experience. In this case the play is an *allegory*, or has allegorical qualities.

5.3.14 Theme

Like poetry and fiction, drama is built around themes. In drama the dramatist has a variety of tools with which to develop the theme or themes including characters, setting, actions and words.

Unit 6

Essay Topics and Study Questions

6.1 Introduction

In this unit we shall look at a variety of study and essay questions designed to enable you to assess the level of your understanding of the contents of the module. Some of them might be given to you as tests by the lecturer.



6.2 Objectives

By the end of the unit you should be able to:

1. Discuss the questions with a degree of competence and accuracy.
2. Relate the questions to what you have learnt in units 1-5 of the module.

6.3 Study Questions

1. What is the difference between drama and theatre?
2. What is the difference between plot and story?
3. How do you distinguish between the plot and structure of the play?
4. Write down one of the definitions of drama as provided in the module.
5. How does drama differ from other genres of literature?
6. In what country do we find the earliest evidence of drama?
7. Write down two of the themes of drama.
8. Who was the father of Greek tragedy?
9. Who was the father of Greek comedy?
10. What are the elements of tragedy?
11. What are the main tenets of comedy?
12. How did the term 'tragi-comedy' come about?
13. What is the difference between the exodos and the resolution?
14. Name the sections that constitute the structure of the Greek tragedy.
15. How does the anagnorisis differ from the catharsis?

16. Name the three unities of tragedy.
17. Name three influences on modern African drama.
18. What is the difference between the morality and mystery plays?
19. Name any four elements of drama.
20. What is the difference between soliloquy and monologue?
21. What are stage directions?
22. Name the main parts of the structure of a play.
23. What do you understand by a *deus ex machina* ending?
24. Name any three types of character.
25. What is the difference between point of view in fiction and in a play?

6.4 Essay Topics

1. Compare and contrast the origins of drama and theatre.
2. What is the significance of the role of ancient Greece in the development of modern drama?
3. Discuss the main influences on modern African drama.
4. Highlight the various forms of drama.
5. Compare and contrast the ancient Greek plays and the church plays of the Middle Ages.

Unit 7

The Black Mamba

7.1 Introduction

In this unit we shall look at the text of *Black Mamba Two* as well as a variety of study and essay questions designed to enable you to assess the level of your understanding of the text as well as the contents of Module 1 on drama.



7.2 Objectives

By the end of the unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the contents of the text of *Black Mamba Two*.
2. Relate the contents of the unit to the contents of Module 1.
3. Discuss the questions and essay topics with a degree of competence.



7.3 Reflection

Black Mamba Two is based on Zambia's political history. How much do you know of the major political developments that led to Zambia's independence?

7.4 Context of *Black Mamba Two*

As the title suggests, *Black Mamba Two* is the second in a series of *Black Mamba* plays focusing on some of the key highlights of Zambia's struggle for independence. The events captured in the play cover the period of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, although the action of the play begins some years before the Federation came into being in 1953. By contrast, *Black Mamba One* is concerned with the boyhood, youth and early maturity of first Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda. *Black Mamba Three* focuses on the split in the African National Congress (ANC) party which saw Kaunda separate with ANC President Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula. *Black Mamba Two* is however the best known of the plays in the trilogy (Etherton 1974).

7.5 Text of *Black Mamba Two*

CHARACTERS

In Chibesa Kunda's Village

CHIBESA KUNDA, *the village Headman*

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW (D.O.)

BOMA MESSENGER

THIRD WHITE MINER

AFRICAN CLERK

MIKAELI CHIPAYENI

OLD WOMAN

KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA

FIRST VILLAGER (WAIPAMBE)

SECOND VILLAGER

MULENGA KAMBAFWILE

SHIPILYANO MAIBOLO

OTHER VILLAGERS AND

MEMBERS OF THE CROWD

On the Copperbelt

HARRY NKUMBULA

AFRICAN WAITER

WHITE GIRL WAITRESS

WHITE WOMAN, *cafe proprietor's wife*

CONSTABLE HANTUBA

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW

INSPECTOR GOBLIN

INSPECTOR PENGUIN

SERGEANT KATONGO

FIRST WHITE MINER

SECOND WHITE MINER

FIRST BLACK MINER

SECOND BLACK MINER

THIRD BLACK MINER

SHIMPUNDU KAPWEPWE

MUNGONI LISO

DIGISWAYO BANDA

BETTY KAUNDA

FIRST CITIZEN *in Magistrate's*

SECOND CITIZEN *Court*

F.B.C. ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

WIVES OF BLACK MINERS

CROWD IN MAGISTRATE'S

COURT

SCENE ONE

It is 1948, Chinsali district, a village. Present are Chibesa Kunda, Bwana Kutufelo (the African pronunciation of Captain Goodfellow's name). The District Officer is on a tax-collecting tour.

He is carried in a machila (a stretcher-cum-chair). The village people have all come to meet him outside the village with songs and dances. The village Headman, Chibesa Kunda, is preparing the Nsaka with some villagers. The original is a Bemba song of welcome, but you can use an appropriate song in your own local language. The Villagers' Welcoming Song¹.

Chikoti chakwa Bwana (leader)

Chabe cha pambana

Ichakuti wa chimona

Nomutima munda waya

Waya nalelo (chorus)

Waya

Waya nalelo

Waya

Waya nalelo

Waya

Waya nalelo

Waya

Enter a Boma Messenger in a purple and red uniform, walking with a martial air in front of the machila. He wants everybody to know that he is an ex-soldier. Beside the machila-carriers walks a white-uniformed clerk carrying a tax register with the air of a Financial Secretary carrying a brief; case containing a bud.(et speech. The village Headman is frantic, summoning everyone to the Nsaka.

¹ The Villagers' Welcoming Song:

The Whiteman's sjambok (leader)
Is very strong (and is constantly used)
And when you see it
It makes your heart sink
(The heart) has sunk again today (chorus)
has sunk
has sunk again today
has sunk
has sunk again today
has sunk.

HEADMAN²: Bushe tamuleumfwa mwebali kuJi icho chitente batini?

Indeti Bwana wa Musonko naisa. Iseni bonse ku Nsaka –checha!

checha! Bushe tamwamwishiba Bwana Chilopolopo imwe batini?

Aleni, muleti ilyo mulepita nefikoti pamatako elyo muleishiba.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to the clerk]*: What's he saying?

CLERK: He is call all ze people to come to hear for tax. He say if zey

not come you Bwana Chiroporopo is beat zem on buttocks. *[laughter]*

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: And what does Choroperope mean?

CLERK: It mean, sir, you is fond of beat, beat, beat, everybody who is not follow law for Gavament.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to clerk]*: Ask him how many male adults there are in this village.

CLERK³: Yes sir. *[to the village Headman]* : Bwana alifwaya kulaishiba mulekwata awantu walaume wanga pano pa muzi panu?

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Including those who should start paying tax this year.

CLERK⁴: Kuwikapo wose na walya awaletampa ukusonka umusonko uno mwaka.

HEADMAN⁵: Abachilumerido mukwai?

CLERK⁶ *[gesturing with wide sweep of his hand]* : Wose-fye upende tile wa-fwaya.

HEADMAN⁷: Nabashimakuka kumo?

CLERK *[to Goodfellow]* : He say, even cooks, Bwana?

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[frowning irritably]*: Cooks! What do we want cooks for? I have my own cooks already.

² HEADMAN: Do you hear me you people in that section over there? I have come to tell you that the Tax Collector has come. Will you all assemble at the Nsaka. Hurry up! Hurry up! Don't you know Bwana Chilopolopo? I can see that it won't be long before some of you are seen walking about with sore buttocks. Headman: Do you hear me you people in that section over there? I have come to tell you that the Tax Collector has come. Will you all assemble at the Nsaka. Hurry up! Don't you know Bwana Chilopolopo? I can see that it won't be long before some of you are seen walking about with sore buttocks.

³ CLERK: The Bwana wants to know the total number of all male residents in this village.

⁴ CLERK: Including those who are meant to start paying tax this year.

⁵ HEADMAN: Able-bodied young men, Sir.

⁶ CLERK: We want to know the number of *all* men in this village.

⁷ HEADMAN: Including those who have been exempted from paying tax?

CLERK⁸ *[to the Headman]* : Bwana anena kuti makuku ayo niya-nji?

HEADMAN⁹: Mukwai nshileti ba kuki. Intile abakalamba abaleka ukusonka

CLERK: He say zose too old to pay tax.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: No we want those able to pay tax.

CLERK¹⁰: Baja wameno wakusonka musonko.

HEADMAN: Mukwai banono bashalamo. Abengi baliya kukuwila indalama shamusonko wine uyu kukalale.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to clerk]* : What does he say?

CLERK: He say zey is very little people remain for pay tax.

The D.O. is ceremoniously shown into the Nsaka which has been decorated; the floor is covered with new matting. There is already a ring of villagers clapping and chanting to the accompaniment of the drums.

MESSENGER¹¹ *[to the villagers]* : Funtukeni, funtukeni. Sheni inchende iyikalamba. Nomba mulefwaya muleonta Bwana ngomulilo mwa?

Talusheni ifiko ukutali.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Clerk!

CLERK: Sah!

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: The register. Call the register. What's the name of this village?

MESSENGER: Chibesa Kunda Bwana. *[salutes]* Then pointing to the village headman] And dis is de village man, Bwana.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to the village Headman]*: Are you the village Headman? *[silence]* I say *[with gestures indicating the village]* Are you the village Headman?

HEADMAN¹²: E-e Kanabesa Mulopwe Bwana.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Are you saying these are all the people you have in this village?

⁸ CLERK: The Bwana wants to know what the cooks would be meant for.

⁹ HEADMAN: Sir, I did not say cooks. I said the old men who have stopped paying tax.

¹⁰ CLERK: Only those able to pay tax.

¹¹ MESSENGER: Will you all clear away from here. Move away and leave a very big space. Do you want to warm yourselves at the Bwana as if he were fire? Remove your dirty bodies from here.

¹² HEADMAN: Yes, most respected Great One.

HEADMAN: E-eh, Bwana.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to the clerk]*: The register, please.

CLERK: Mulenga Kambafwile!

MULENGA KAMBAFWILE: Sah!

CLERK: Shipilyano Maibolo!

SHIPILYANO MAIBOLO: Sah!

CLERK: Chekapu Nkole!

HEADMAN¹³: Aliya mukwai.

CLERK¹⁴: Kwi?

HEADMAN¹⁵: Kukalale, Bwana.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: What does he say?

CLERK: He say he go to mines, sah!

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Write in brackets 'Copper Mines' against that name. Next!

CLERK: Mikaeli Chipayeni. *[silence]* Mikaeli Chipayeni!

[a young man in an old King's African Rifles coat, with regimental stripes is seen walking in a leisurely way from his hut to the grain-store as in nothing is happening in the village. He is wearing old army boots, and is carrying a stick under his armpit as sergeants' cane.]

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW¹⁶ *[noticing the cheeky ex-soldier]*: Hey look! *[pointing]* Look there. What does that baboon think he is? You fat pig! You said these were all the people there were in this village. What is that baboon doing there? *[stamping furiously]* I am not going to sit here all day long waiting for undisciplined baboons to come to answer the tax register. If you

¹³ HEADMAN: He is away, Sir.

¹⁴ CLERK: Where?

¹⁵ HEADMAN: To the coppermines, Bwana.

¹⁶ CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Give him five strokes of the sjambok on the buttocks;

can't discipline your people, I will discipline you myself. *[to the messenger]* Give him five fikoti pamatako.

The village headman is cruelly beaten and left lying in a sorry heap.

CAPT AIN GOODFELLOW *[to the Messenger]*: Now for that cheeky baboon in army uniform. Bring him here.

Exit Messenger saluting.

CLERK: Katongo Kalashile. *[silence]*

CLERK: Katongo Kalashile. *[silence]* KATONGO KALASHI

VILLAGERS¹⁷: Aliya Bwana.

CLERK¹⁸: Kwi?

VILLAGERS¹⁹: Kukongo.

ChiPayeni is dragged on to the scene.

CLERK²⁰*[to Chipayeni]*: Are you Mikaeli Chipayeni? *[silence]* I say are you Chipayeni? Shimumvera?

CHIPAYENI: What kind you asking my name?

CLERK: Are you mad?

CHIPA YENI: No me no mad. Dat one dere *[indicating Captain Goodfellow]* is mad.

Every villager is filled with fear for the mad returned soldier. They all watch the Bwana who is now trembling with rage.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: What a cheap baboon this is! Is that the teaching of the stupid war? I have never been insulted by a kaffir. What makes you think you have the right to insult me... a District Officer?

¹⁷ VILLAGERS: He is away, Bwana.

¹⁸ CLERK: Where?

¹⁹ VILLAGERS: To the Congo.

²⁰ CLERK: Don't you understand me?

CHIPAYENI: I am ready for insult the Gavinala imselufu. Why you finki you are?

CAPT AIN GOODFELLOW *[stammering with uncontrollable rage and stamping his foot]*: You... you... you, a nigger, have the cheek to insult the King's representative! You, a stinking baboon, whose tail stump is still showing from late evolution, are insulting the King himself! I cannot judge your case, kaffir. The higher authorities will.

CHIPAYENI: I am insult even King Joliji imselefu. You white people is all liars. You tell us if we fighting for you, we receiving gift from King. Dey say if we fight Germans, the King and Gavinala dey give us farms, money, ploughs, clothes and dose who education a bit to get good job for mines and Gavamant. Where is money, farms, and ploughs and mine jobs now?

The D.O. is taken completely unawares. Chipayeni is speaking the truth, and this increases his anger. He furtively looks around to detect any possible support for the returned soldier. There is none. The crowd is engaged in a general murmur of disapproval.

MULENGA KAMBAFWILE²¹: Aletuletelelafye bonse uyu muntu uyu. Ne fimabange fine fya ku nkondo. Tefyo efyamuchitefi!

[There is a general din of agreement]

CHIPAYENI²²*[angrily to Kambqfwile]*: Ine nalipena bati? Ninoko ampenya? Mwefibantu imwe muli fipuba. Inshita mwayamba ukubepwa ubufi, ukupumwa apabulo mulandu. *[points at the village headman]*: Moneni chilya chilele palya bomine. Ebamwinemushi aba balaumi na mulubansa nga kaiche? Bushe uyu musonko mulesonka mwalishiba indalama shenu uko shiya? *[pointing accusingly at the D.O.]* Shiya kukulisha ichi chimulungulwa chikele apa. Tamumwene nefyochaina chaba ngechichitila mukati. *[he makes faces at the D.O.]* Kuti wamona chachita napamenso ngechikele mumufumbi! *[there is suppressed laughter, and he turns to the crowd]* Muleseka. Twalimweba mwefibantumwe twati joineni Kongeshi tutamfye ba mwisa tukaleiteka nakalya tamumfwa. *[he looks at the still groaning village Headman]* E-e, kano ifi bakulamulopola ifikoti pamatako! *[to the Messenger]* Ine u-ule esha ukunjikatamo alemonaifyo

²¹ MULENGA KAMBAFWILE: This man is going to put us all in deep trouble. This is what is expected from people who started smoking hashish during the War. It is smoking that makes him behave in this manner.

²² CHIPAYENI: Me mad! Is that what you really think. Was it your own mother who made me mad. You are all great fools. You have been cheated for so long without any cause. Look at that beaten-up flesh lying down. Is that what you call Village Headmanship - Headmanship that can be whipped in public like a little child? Do you really know what happens to your tax money? It goes to feed this phantom sitting here. Look how fat it is. ... as if it never excretes anything from the system. Look at its stupid puffed up expression on its face, like one shitting in a bush in the rain. Laughing- is that all you can do. We have told you time and again to join the Congress Party so that we can chase these aliens away, but you never pay heed. Yes, this is what you deserve -slashes on the buttocks. Now, anyone who dares touch me will see what I shall do to him. We shall draw each other's foreskins, If he is not quick enough he will get the worst of it. In this I shall include his so-called Bwana and its clerks.

indemuchita. Tuleponoshanyafye, ngatumpa imuponone. Ngacayafya nakamusungu kakwe pamo natukalaliki tonse imbikepo.

The villagers are filled with fear at these brave but dangerous words. They move a few paces away from the returned soldier as if to disassociate themselves from his words. The D.O. is now worried.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to clerk]*: What does he say?

CLERK: Bwana I can't say. Ziz man he is very bad, sah. He say many zings bad. First zis man *[indicating Kambafwile]* he say Chipayani is go bring trouble for zis village. He is a wise and good man, sah. But zis man he disagree with wise words of Kambafwile. He say you white men are cheaters and ze natives are ze fools because zey go pay taxes to make you Bwana fat. He say ze natives are fools because zey is beaten on buttocks without no case. Zen Bwana ziz man he say more bad things and words, which when you hear Bwana you go very cross.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[impatiently to the Clerk]*: Say it loud! Let's hear all the dirt from that baboon's mouth. What did he say? Say it quick.

CLERK *[shaking his head as he looks at Chipayeni and the D.O.]* : Zis man, sah, he fit for prison for many years. And he. ..

AIN GOODFELLOW *[even more impatiently]* : What terrible things did this native baboon say? Quickly!

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[even more impatiently]*: What terrible things did this native baboon say? Quickly!

CLERK: He tell ze people why zey no join Kongeleshi and ...

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW²³: WHAT? CONGRESS! So even here in the rural areas, this native madness of the urban areas is catching on? What do you natives think such native baboons like Unkumbula, Kaunda, and Kapwipwi can do for you that we white men haven't already done for you? They are thieves. They are going to steal your money, so that they can buy cars and air fares for holidays in Europe, when they ask you for subscriptions to join their no-good Congress. *[to the Headman]* You will be warned now once and for all that I will have none of this Congress nonsense in my district and particularly in this village. If you allow any such political baboons as Unkumbula or Kaunda in the village, it will not be fikoti pamatako²³ but life imprisonment. Do you hear? *[to the clerk]* Tell him.

The Clerk interprets what the D.O. says in broken Nyanja-Bemba to the village Headman.

²³ CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: 'fikoti pamatako' slashes on the buttocks.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to Chipayeni]*: I will show you to be cheeky to a musungu of the Boma, you stinking native baboon! Ten canes on the buttocks with salt! And I want him to feel it. Do you understand? MESSENGER: Yes sah! *[salutes and with ill-concealed caution and foreboding, advances towards the returned soldier, who meanwhile has prepared himself for any eventuality and is looking very wild with red eyes from hemp-smoking]*

The Bwana say lie down. And take off your trousers you skunk!

CHIPAYENI: You will pick up a big miracle today you dog of a white man. I will no lie down. I will fight you. *[then with a marshal air and with a stick for a gun, he booms a command at an imaginary platoon]*.

ATTENTION! Troop, present arms! *[He is even more fear some and ready for battle. The Messenger is meanwhile stalking Chipayeni warily. This angers the big Bwana.]*

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: What? My own messenger afraid of a mad native baboon? I want him down and caned ten times quickly! And stop stalking like an undecided, cowardly cock.

The Messenger and Chipayeni are now stalking each other. The Messenger with a gun while Chipayeni has a stick.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to the villagers]*: Do you baboons let this wild monkey waste my time like this? Do you dare let him put up a resistance against my Messenger! Against me? You will all go to prison if you don't stop your madman wasting my time. DO YOU HEAR? *[to the clerk]* TELL THEM! *At this, an old woman breaks down sobbing and begging.*

OLD WOMAN²⁴: Bwana napapata, uyu mwana wandi, mumenifye ifikoti mukwai. Nomba mwimusenda. Nakwatafye umo mpo ififine Bwana napapata, kanshi ...

MESSENGER²⁵ *[striking the old woman who falls down whimpering with pain, everybody looking at her pitifully and helplessly]* : Talala! Wembushiwe. Mwanawandi, mwanawandi! Chinshi taufundila: mwano ukukanalasalule Boma? Ichofye nimwano echotwingamuleke la nga nalufyanya mukutuke Boma nabasungu?

Chipayeni curses as he is caned. The villagers still look on helplessly, while the old mother wails loudly for her tortured son.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[to the Messenger]*: Tie the beast to the tree. And now I want some food and rest. Tomorrow morning you will go back to the Boma with this prisoner. He will be imprisoned for nine months with hard labour. Will that village Headman supply us with food?

²⁴ OLD WOMAN: Please, Bwana, this is my son. Just have him whipped, but do not take him away. He is my only child. I beg of you, please...

²⁵ MESSENGER: Be quiet, you dog! My son, my son! Why didn't you teach him not to despise the Boma? His being your son does not give him the right to revile the Boma and Europeans.

MESSENGER²⁶ *[to the village Headman]*: Bwana alefwaya inkoko na mani. Chila muntu alete inko namani elyo no bunga. U-ushaleta mailo akaya kakwa pamo nga lilya ishilu lili ku chimuti kulya *[indicates Chipayeni who is tied to the tree]*

CAPT AIN GOODFELLOW *[to clerk]*: What does he say?

CLERK: He tell zero to bring chicken and eggs. Zose who no bring he say go prison like zat mad man over zere to the tree. *[Goodfellow smiles again]*

The villagers go to their huts. Soon they return with hens , cocks, millet flour, eggs ; the village Headman himself brings a goat. It is printed on their faces that they give these gifts begrudgingly and that they hate the Bwana and his Messenger. But the clerk, though an alien, has a somewhat sympathetic face. Big Bwana notices this.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Why do you look at them so kindly? Are you, by any chance, in sympathy with the baboons?

CLERK: I am not sure if I am not a baboon myself?

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[very angrily though alarmed]*: Yes, yes, you are for sure a baboon but a civilized one, and you should thank the British for doing everything to put some civilization into your life. In any case, you will do your duty to a Government that pays you. It's the Northern Rhodesia Government that you should be loyal to and not a pack of baboons whose tail stumps are still showing from late evolution. And remember you are alien here. The Government can deport you to Nyasaland any time. No bloody. John Chilembwe business here. Do you hear, you educated baboon?

The musicians and villagers start singing the following song. You can sing an appropriate song in your own local language.

*Abasungu kuchenjela*²⁷

²⁶ MESSENGER: The Bwana wants chickens and eggs. Each person must bring a chicken, eggs and some flour. Those who fail to do so will be arrested and locked up as will happen to this idiot over there.

²⁷ SONG:

Whitemen are cunning

They have taken over our country.

Sorrow and misery

Oh sorrow

Sorrow and misery What shall we do?

Batupoke chalo chesu

Ubulanda/ubulandaaa

Ubulanda/bushe tukachita shani} twice

As the song is being sung the actors dismantle the tax-collecting scene. At the end of the song the stage is empty, and ready, for the next scene.

SCENE TWO

It is six months later, on a lonely stretch of a sandy road on the way to Chibesakunda village. Kenneth Kaunda is pushing his bicycle up a hill. The bicycle is laden with second-hand clothing from Mokambo which he is going to sell after addressing a meeting. Strapped across his back is an old guitar whose wood shows some white ant scratches. He wears a black shirt and an ugly beard. Enter a lion cutting across his path farther up the road.

KAUNDA *[sighs]*: Oh, I have been feeling bad this morning. Somehow I have a hunch something is going to happen to me to day. *[he suddenly sees the lion]* Ha! It's the king himself! The lion! *[stops dead a few metres from the staring lion. They stare at each other as if each one is afraid of the other]*

KAUNDA: Hey! Hey! Hey! Haaaa! *[the lion continues to stare undisturbed]* Hey! Hey! Hey! Haaa! *[it continues to stare. Then Kaunda hits his bicycle-pump all over the bicycle. It still stares. Desperation and fear for a moment show in his eyes]*

KAUNDA *[almost to himself]* : It might be one of the departed great ones. *[addressing the lion]* :If you are one of those great chiefs ; If you are Mubanga Chipoya, Kapalakasha; If you are Chitapankwa; If you are Nkole -Mfumu -let your'son pass. Let your son go to do your bidding.

Will be honoured when we your children

Are able to stand erect.

Heads high with the dignity and pride of

Free people.

Let me pass, let your son pass.

To free this land, the land you left your children, From the hands of foreign vultures. Then your bones and your names

Takes out millet flour which he came with him for provisions puts some on a plate and offers it to the lion. The lion stoops and eats the flour. But he still does not move out of the way.

KAUNDA: You have revealed yourself O great one. Now let your son pass. *[silence; no movement]* Please let your child pass, great chief.

[silence ...still no movement]

I am going to pass.

Lifts the bicycle as if to cross a stream. The wheels turn loosely in the air. The lion shocked at the spectacle runs off to one side of the stage. Kaunda continues his journey singing a hymn:

Mwechilibwe Chakale

*Kamfisame Muli-imwe ...*²⁸

SCENE THREE

In Chibesa Kunda...s village. The returned soldier Chipayeni is acting as town crier.. calling people to attend a meeting. He has just been released from prison for his insolence to Captain Goodfellow, six months ago.

CHIPAYENI: Alabane endesheni tulongane ku nsaka tumfwe ifyakwa Nkumbula. Bonsefye abakote, abalumendo, abakashana, nabaiche bonse fye iseni muyumfwile. Alaifyakushimikilwa tafyawama. Iseni mumfwe²⁹. Come fathers, and mothers. Sons and daughters of the soil. The son of David of Lubwa has many words from our great leader Ale Nkumbula.

²⁸ SONG (Hymn)

Rock of ages. Cleft for me

Let me hide myself in thee...

²⁹ CHIPAYENI: Yes, brothers and sisters come over quickly to the meeting at the Nsaka to hear great news about Nkumbula. Come all, elders, young men, girls and young children; come and hear for yourself. There is nothing like first-hand information. Come and hear...

He breaks into Congress song. The musicians and actors on and off the stage sing with him. Meanwhile the people are crowding round the stranger , Kenneth Kaunda. Congress Song³⁰

Bane bonse sumineni (leader)

Nkumbula enyinefwe

Uwafyelwe ntungulushi

Yakutulanga amano

Bonse

Mwilalaba, mwilalaba (all)

Nkumbula enyinefwe.

Masansa yanshila ni ndalama (leader)

Bonse mwilalaba

Yalekanye nganda imo

³⁰ CONGRESS SONG:

All brothers and sisters have faith *(leader)*

Believe in our beloved Nkumbula's guidance

He was born a leader

To show us wisdom.

Do not forget; do not ever forget *(all)*

Nkumbula is our beloved leader.

Money is crossroads *(leader)*

Do not forget

It splits up one family

And misleads the country

Do not forget; do not ever forget *(all)*

Nkumbula is our beloved leader

Nokulufyanye chalo

Bonse

Mwilalaba, mwilalaba (all)

Nkumbula enyinefwe.

KAUNDA: Mothers and fathers; brothers and sisters; sons and daughters of the soil. It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity to be with you and to talk to you this afternoon. I have heard so much about this great village and its sufferings at the hands of *bamwisa*³¹. You all know our brother here, Mikaeli Chipayeni, has just returned from prison. What did he do? Did he kill a person? [*a murmur of refusal*] Did he steal mwisa's woman? [*a murmur of refusal with laughter*] Did he steal mwisa's money or clothes?

FIRST VILLAGER [*his voice heard over the murmur*]: It was in fact the *musungu* who was coming to steal our money, our hens and eggs. [*they all laugh and the women break into shrill ululations*]

KAUNDA [*indicating Chipayeni who now stands in front with a swelling chest full of pride*] : This man. This man our own brother has tasted the wrath of the white man. Do you see what clothes he is wearing?

FIRST VILLAGER [*shouting as he stands up*]: ASKARI!

KAUNDA: Yes, Askari. Is he Chitimukulu's askari?

VILLAGERS: NO!

KAUNDA: Nkula's askari?

VILLAGERS: NO!

KAUNDA: Whose soldier is he then my...

CHIPA YENI [*emphatically*]: Was!

KAUNDA [*accepting the correction with a mock bow*]: Thanks, brother. Whose soldier was he?

³¹ Strangers, aliens, usurpers.

FIRST VILLAGER³²: Chinji Joliji of to Englande.

KAUNDA: That's right. Whom did our brother and son, Chipayeni, go to fight?

VILLAGERS³³: Cheleman!

KAUNDA: Did we have any quarrel with Cheleman? *[silence]* Was it our quarrel? *[silence]* Let me now tell you, dear brothers. The white man had the quarrel with the Germans. The quarrel was about who should get what piece of land in Africa. The quarrel was about who should be the big man in the world. Hitler said the Germans were the master race and should control the world. The British said they were and will continue to be the master race. Is that our quarrel?

VILLAGERS *[emphatically]*: No! No! No! It is not our quarrel. It is theirs. FIRST VILLAGER *[fighting hard to be heard]*: We were the foolish wooden spoon that got itself into the hot water.

KAUNDA: Exactly. Exactly. How many of our sons died for King George? CHIPAYENI: Uncountable. Do not remember me of that, sir. It was terrible. You talk of the war with ba Muchime*. That was but child's play. We died like ants -black and white together.

KAUNDA *[his eyes fixed upon an elderly woman who has just started sniffing in a prelude to open sobbing]*: For whom did our sons die? Whose war was it? *[an ominous silence ensues]* Do people sacrifice their lives for nothing? Before you decide to go and die in a war, you must know why you are prepared to die. You must know why you are fighting. Knowing why you are fighting means knowing what benefits it will bring your people. These people *[indicating the returned soldier who instinctively braces himself to attention]* These people were promised land as a price for fighting and dying, for the British. If they had promised them land here in Northern Rhodesia -to whom does the land in Northern Rhodesia belong?

VILLAGERS *[vigorously]*: OURS! IT IS OURS.

KAUNDA³⁴ *[breaking into a song]*:

Abasungu kuchenjela

Batupoke chalo chesu

Abasungu kuchenjela

³² King George.

³³ Germans!

* ba Muchime are the Ngoni, a tribal group in Zambia

³⁴ See Scene One, page 45.

Batupoke chalo chesu

Ubulanda, ubulanda, ubulanda

Bushe tukachita shani?

Bushe tukachita shani?

I ask you countrymen. Whose land were they promising us? Isn't it already ours? And have you got this promised land anyway?

VILLAGERS [*led by Chipayeni and the outspoken First Villager*]: No! No! They are liars.

CHIPAYENI: They have given all good land to the white ex-soldiers. They promised us good jobs. But only whites have good jobs on the mines, bor in the gavament and in lalways.³⁵

KAUNDA: And we still remain hewers of wood like Cain's children that we are. Let me tell you a story a certain askari was telling me the other day. This ex-askari had returned from Burma with high hopes of having a farm near Chisamba with good cattle, ploughs, and a good house. He went to see the D.C. at Lusaka Boma about this. After waiting two days in the cold outside the D.C's office, he was told Chisamba was a Crown land. No Africans were allowed to farm there. Then he asked about the plough and cattle. The D.C. laughed and told him he was mad. You know what happened next? The D.C. called in the police to drag our ex-soldier outside. Our ex-soldier then met his old Captain; this was a man called Goodfellow ...

The villagers are very angry and excited, especially Chipayeni.

CHIPAYENI: Who did you say was this captain?

KAUNDA: Captain Goodfellow.

CHIPAYENI AND THE VILLAGERS: The filthy bad fellow!

CHIPAYENI: He is not a good fellow. I am know what mean de words good fellow. Dat one is evil and cruel. He de one who imprisonment me. I say de same words you talking. And he anger with me. He hit me on buttocks with stick. [*turns to the villagers for approval*] Is that not so my brothers?*

³⁵ railways.

* Chipayeni's speeches must be in consistently bad English.

VILLAGERS: TRUE! TRUE! IT IS TRUE!

KAUNDA: I am glad you too know he is evil. They are all evil. No! Not all of course...

FIRST VILLAGER: The bad musuku tree causes all the other misuku trees to be called bad.

KAUNDA: That may be true, brothers, as our own saying goes. But listen to what I have to say about this good...good fellow...

CHIPA YENI: Badfellow. *[laughter]*

KAUNDA: Our ex-soldier got employed as a cook for Goodfellow. A cook; not a farmer. One day Goodfellow went on a journey in his vanette. You know what he did? He took his dog with him. You know where the dog sat? It sat in the front cabin with the Bwana. And do you know where the human being, our ex-soldier sat? In the back of the van. And this was in the month of Kabengele!³⁶ Are you going to ask if it rained?

CHIPA YENI: Oh no! That is like wanting to know whether a dog is clothed or naked. We all know what happens in the month of Kabengele.

KAUNDA: Right. It rained heavily and the bwana did not ask his servant to even share a seat with the dog! He, our brother, was too dirty for the front seat. Who was more important, the dog or the human being? Of course, it was the human being. At a wayside hotel, the bwana and the dog went off to eat. Our brother, a human being, was left to guard the baggage and to eat his frowns. And yet this very man, the ex-soldier, now cook, who was being despised, had fought side-by-side during the war with the very same Captain Goodfellow. *[murmur of approval as well as ridicule]* He had not only fought side-by-side with this white man, but had actually saved his life when he, the white man, had fallen wounded, and a lap would have finished him off. Our brave brother risked his life. He killed the lap in a straight combat and carried off the wounded bad fellow to safety amidst a volley of guns and mortar fire;

VILLAGERS: That's a true soldier. A very brave act. He could have left him to be killed.

KAUNDA: And now, the man who carried him to safety stinks. Again this man is cooking the Bwana's food. Makes his bed, washes his clothes, and you can almost say brushes the Bwana's teeth. And yet the Bwana cannot eat with him, to say nothing of sitting with his dog in a van cabin. Is this the thinking of a normal human being?

VILLAGERS: Shame! Shame! Shame! It is shameful!

CHIPA YENI: He is mad that Captain Badfellow.

³⁶ Wettest period of the year: January-February.

KAUNDA: Yes my brother, he is indeed mad. But do the things I have told you happen?

VILLAGERS [*vigorously*]: EVERY DAY SIR! EVERY DAY!

FIRST VILLAGER: I had been a cook myself to an agricultural officer at Kasama. When he went on tour he did exactly the same to me. Only instead of a dog he had a small pet monkey in the cabin.

CHIPAYENI: Can you hear! Can you hear, friends? He was even starving you while he played with meat!

VILLAGERS: The royal delicacy!

KAUNDA³⁷: Batini! Have you ever heard of such a thing before? VILLAGERS: Never!

KAUNDA: Now I have come to very important and heavy words. The words that own this journey. I have been all over the Northern Province from Mweru to the Luangwa, and from Tunduma to Serenje. I have faced many hardships, but I don't care. Just now, as I came to this village, I ran into a lion, but like Daniel, the lion did not touch me. VILLAGERS: The spirits of your forefathers, and our forefathers stopped it harming you.

HEADMAN: At what place did you meet it? Is it not at that sandy hill?

KAUNDA: That's the very place.

HEADMAN: Oh, that was Makumba.* That is his haunt. He was welcoming you. You have the spirit of the Great Departed Ones. You are blessed. Your work shall go far, my son. Keep on going. [*He spits on the ground. He touches ground with both hands and lifts them heavenwards as he says these words.*]

KAUNDA: Thanks my father. And now, as I was saying, all your friends in all the villages have become members of the African National! Congress. They have even formed branches by combining three or; four villages into one branch. [*takes out a large photograph of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula*]

Do you see the man in this picture? Do you know his name?

CHIPAYENI: Ale Nkumbula! Ale Nkumbula! Yes, that's Ale. I have seen him in Lusaka. He lives in Chilenje. Is that not Ale Nkumbula?

KAUNDA: Himself. Our dynamic and great leader. May God bless him.

³⁷ Surely, indeed!

* Makumba was one of the dead Chitimukulus.

ALL: And may he lead us kindly.

KAUNDA: This man Mwaanga Nkumbula, son of the Tonga, is prepared to die for us all. Why is he prepared to die? In order that you and me are free in the land of our birth. In order that we chase away all the white thieves who have stolen our land. They are planning to make us their slaves forever by tying us to Southern Rhodesia where Africans have no land of their own. There are no villages there like ours. In Southern Rhodesia, Africans live on European farms and pay rent to the Europeans as if it was the ancestors of the Europeans who had owned the land from the days of old. This is what the Europeans want to do to us here in Northern Rhodesia. And this is what Mwaanga Nkumbula is fighting against. He wants the African to rule himself. We shall have our own sons as the D.C.s and P.C.s. Indeed, even as Governors. [*incredulous murmur*]

SECOND VILLAGER [*aside*]: I would have believed him. But when he says our own sons, Africans, can become D.C.s, he makes me doubt his sanity. That will never be. Can the African be capable of running a D.C.'s office? Where in the world have you heard of such a thing? In any case, will the white man, with all his guns and aeroplanes, let the black man take over his offices? Impossible! These are but dreams of a madman. I have always thought these schools our young men are going to are making them mad. And you...

FIRST VILLAGER: Sh! Sh! Sh! He is speaking.

KAUNDA: Our friends in the Gold Coast will soon be ruling themselves. This is what Nkumbula, who has been to many lands including those of the white men, has told us. And Nkumbula knows the ways of the white man, just as much as his friend Nkrumah who is soon to get Independence for the Gold Coast. For Nkrumah has been to the land of the white men too, and understands their ways.

SECOND VILLAGER [*even more incredulous*]: I told you this man was mad. A black man in a white man's country? Can that ever be true? And would he ever come back alive after sojourning into the land of these white ghosts? Never!

FIRST VILLAGER: Shut up, you bushman! You must travel to the line of rail and widen your horizon, villager. Many Africans, even of our land, have been to Engalande already. I hear Paskale Sokota was the first ever Mrican from this country to go to the white man's country.

CHIPAYENI: No! It was King Lewanika of the Barotse who was the first to go to England. He went to see the white man's great chieftainess installed on the stool of her ancestors.

FIRST VILLAGER [*very knowledgeably*]: Yes, yes. But still Sokota was the first among commoners.

CHIPAYENI: He wasn't alone though. Nabulayto. Nalumango and Safeli Chileshe had also been there at that time. But it was the soldier, Chisengalumbwe who had been to England first.

But as far as the black man of this country is concerned, the first ever to sojourn into the white man's country was King Lewanika of the Lozi. But, sh ... sh ...sh! Kaunda is speaking!

KAUNDA: O my brothers, so many of our brothers have been there already. They say the white man has no room there. He lives in hotels and boats, and that's why he comes here to get your land. Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula wants to stop this. Will you support Ale, or will you not?

ALL: ALE NKUMBULA! ALE NKUMBULA! ALE NKUMBULA!

The spirits of our forefathers be with him. Let him lead us kindly. We are all his children. We are all for Ale Nkumbula.

KAUNDA [*above the noise*] : If you let Ale Nkumbula down, then you are letting down yourselves and your children. Do you want to dam up the puss in the wound?

CHIPAYENI: From this minute everyone here must become a member of the African National Congress, young and old.

KAUNDA: Good! Now, how many want to support Ale Mwaanga Nkumbula? How many want to become members of the dynamic African National Congress and so fight for the liberation of our dear country, Northern Rhodesia?

A forest of waving hands, with thumbs raised, plus a drowning cry of 'All of us !' greets these questions.

KAUNDA: Very well, countrymen. The conditions are simple. You pay the white man £1 to feed his ever hungry belly. But it costs you only 1/6d. to become a member of the A.N.C. and to thus help bring about the freedom of your country. The annual subscription is 1/- for men. This adds to 2/6d. as an initial payment. For our mothers, the membership fee is 1/- plus 6d. for the annual subscription \which adds up to 1/6d. For our children, 6d. is the membership fee, c while they pay 3d. as their annual subscription, which adds up to 9d. Pay these animal sums and leave everythIng to the A.N.C. to free r you from the yoke of the white man. May I further suggest that you form a branch between four or five of your neighbouring villages. Chibesakunda, your own village here, will be the branch headquarters J and brother Chipayeni here can organize the interim committee, helped perhaps by brother Maipambe [*indicating First Villager*]. The other villages with which you will form a branch are Kasomo, Pensulo, Masandiko, and Mwansabamba Chitulika. Here are the membership cards. If you want more, you can contact brother Robert Makasa at Chinsali Upper Primary School. He is our Provincial Treasurer. You can buy the cards now. [*there is a rush for the cards*]

SECOND VILLAGER: I have no money. But here is a hen. You can sell it if you like. But let me please have the A.N.C. card.

Many others who have no money to buy their membership cards pay in kind; they bring hens, eggs, millet in baskets, and beans and groundnuts in pots.

KAUNDA: Thank you, countrymen. Now I have many villages to talk to. Let us close the meeting with prayer.

Almighty God

Giver of all land,

Our Ancestors to whom

You entrusted this land

We pray you to deliver us from

The yoke of the white satan

Welensky and his Boer henchmen.

Amen.

Let us sing:

*Mwechilibwe chakale*³⁸,

Kamfisame mulimwe ...

SCENE FOUR

The A.N.C. has intensified the fight against the colour bar in public places and shops. Harry Nkumbula, President General of the A.N.C., and Kenneth Kaunda, Secretary General, pay a surprise visit to a 'Whites Only' cafe in Kitwe. A notice announcing this is brought onto the stage, as are eating tables and chairs; a cluster of white customers come in and sit down. A young man is talking intimately to a white girl behind a board which represents the counter. Also behind the counter and in attendance is the wife of the proprietor. An African waiter in a white uniform with a red sash and a white cap is laying the tables.

³⁸ See Scene Two, page 46.

NKUMBULA *[to Kaunda]*: Let's go in this cafe, boy. I will sit at a table while you order sandwiches at the counter. *[he sits at a table next to the frowning and disgusted white miners. He takes no notice of them as he leans back to read his paper. One hand rests importantly on his tummy. His head is engulfed in a heavy cloud of cigar smoke.]*

KAUNDA: Two portions sandwiches, please.

GIRL *[shocked]*: Boys are not served from the counter, you kaffir!

KAUNDA: I am not a boy. *[shows his beard]* Do boys in your country grow beards? Please may I have a dozen sandwiches?

GIRL *[sulkily]* : You can stand there till Christmas, I will not give you the , sandwiches if you don't go to the pigeon-hole where boys are served.

WAITER³⁹: Tata nemwe fumeni muno kabiyezi kuwindo what kind?

KAUNDA *[ignoring the waiter and glancing at the wall calendar]*: Hey - this is May! It will be a long wait to Christmas. I have no intention of Waiting that long, my dear girl

GIRL *[very red]*: What? You...You...a kaffir addressing me as 'girl'? GET OUT OF HERE YOU BLACK MAMBA! *[the elderly white woman comes to girl's rescue]*

WOMAN: What's the matter here now? What does this native want?

KAUNDA: Madam, all I want is twelve sandwiches...

NKUMBULA *[shouting from his table with a cigar dangling from his mouth]* AND COFFEE, BOY. SEE IF THE WOMAN HAS GIN ALSO.

The white customers look at him incredulously. They heave their chests and clench, their fists which they wave at Nkumbula, who meanwhile has casually returned to his paper with his head buried in the smoke of the cigar. The situation is becoming tense.

WOMAN *[after glancing appealingly at the white customers]*: BOYS ARE

NOT SERVED AT THE COUNTER. Haven't you seen the window behind this...?

KAUNDA *[with dignified calmness]*: But, madam, I am not a boy. *[touches his beard]* Do boys grow beards in your country?

FIRST WHITE MINER *[to Nkumbula]*: Hey, you big ape there! What do you think you are doing here? *[silence]*

³⁹ Hey! Old man get out of here. Go and get served at the pigeon-hole.

SECOND WHITE MINER: The baboon can't even understand English. Speak to it in Chilapalapa, Jim.

THIRD WHITE MINER⁴⁰: Hey you bobjana, Ini wena funa lapa cafe kalo ba zungu. Wena stinka man! [*Pinches his nose*]

NKUMBULA [*looking up from his paper*]: Are you addressing me my good friends?

FIRST WHITE MINER: Good Heavens! What, kaffir? Who are your good friends?

NKUMBULA: Who are your good friends? Are you not my fellow human-beings and therefore good friends?

ALL THE WHITES: Shut up!

NKUMBULA [*shrugging*]: O.K. Bad friends then. So what?

39 Hey! Old man get out of here. Go and get served at the pigeon-hole.

40 Hey you fool! What-are you doing in 'Whiteman's Only' cafe. You

SECOND WHITE MINER: We say get out. YOU stink!

FIRST WHITE MINER: YOU can speak English all right, you spoilt mission kaffir, but you are not literate enough to read the notice on the door that says: No dogs allowed,

NKUMBULA: I read it all right...

SECOND WHITE MINER: Then what did you think, it said kaffir? NKUMBULA: They didn't tell me I was a dog.

ALL THE WHITES: YES, YOU ARE! GET OUT OF HERE NOW!

A scuffle ensues. Nkumbula is frog-marched outside.

KA UNDA [*still touching his beard*]: Have you ever seen a boy with a beard?

WOMAN [*encouraged by the presence of the white miners and their action against Nkumbula*]: GET OUT, NIGGER! YOU BLOODY FUCKIN' KAFFIR.

She goes out to call the police.

GIRL: I say get out you stinking ill-mannered black boy before you are in more trouble.

FIRST WHITE MINER: Leave the ape to us, girlie, will you?

⁴⁰ Hey you fool! What are you doing in 'Whiteman's Only' café. You stink man!

They frog-march Kaunda outside where Nkumbula is already nursing his bruises. A general fight ensues in which the passing Africans join. Enter Constable Hantuba.

CONSTABLE HANTUBA: Hey hey hey, there. What's the matter here? *[He salutes the white men and grabs the two Africans, Nkumbula and Kaunda]* I charge you with public disorder. You will come with me to the charge office *[he turns to the white roughs]*. My sirs, come to the police station at your earliest convenience please.

The white roughs simply nod assent. The two cheeky 'native boys' are led away handcuffed and the cafe scene is cleared. In the meantime, enter Captain Goodfellow in another corner of the stage, to sit behind a desk. This is the charge office. Captain Goodfellow is the Officer Commanding Kitwe District. He has been transferred from the Provincial Administration Department to the Police Force.

CONSTABLE HANTUBA *[saluting]*: I found these two natives disturbing public peace at the Rhokana Mine Mess, sir. The lady manager had telephoned us for help, sir. *[salutes]*

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[eyeing Kaunda very keenly]* : I think we have met before. Now I can't remember where. *[smacks his forehead]*

KAUNDA: Lusaka, sir. The Army Barracks. King's African Rifles, sir.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Oh yes That's right. And where's that very cheeky friend of yours? That's not him *[indicating Nkumbula]* is it ? KAUNDA: YOU mean Kapwipwe?

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: That's it. Kapwepwe. Where's the fellow?

NKUMBULA: He is with us. He is back in Lusaka. He is our National Treasurer.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: I see. And who's this fellow?

NKUMBULA: Mwaanga Nkumbula, sir.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Ah, so you are that notorious and noisy f Nkumbula eh? *[to the Constable]* And what happened?

CONSTABLE HANTUBA: I found them fighting Europeans outside the Rhokana Club, sir. I mean the Mine Mess, sir.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: And why were you fighting white men, Nkumbula?

NKUMBULA: You see, I and my friend Kenneth here wanted to buy food I from the Mess. But the white girl at the counter...

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: You cannot call a white lady 'girl' you insolent r native boy...

NKUMBULA: As my friend picked a quarrel with this disrespectful white! girl ...

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[even more angry]*: WHITE LADY YOU CHEEKY NIGGER!

NKUMBULA: An elderly white woman told us she could not serve...

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW *[complete~ red]*: I say you cannot call a white lady woman. Were those ears put there for decoration? Constable, give this baboon three canes for his impudence.
[Nkumbula is caned on the body and the back]

NKUMBULA *[swearing]*: If you had not been wearing the Queen's uniform you would have known death today. You can consider yourself lucky my boy.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: Next time you behave like that you will go inside, you spoiled mission nigger. *[to Kaunda]* And you too. Your appearance should be that of a well-behaved kaffir. I think it's bad company. That Kapwipwi and this swollen-headed Unkumbula are bad company for you. Now get out of here quick!

NKUMBULA: But we have been publicly assaulted, sir.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: I am not the court. If you go mis-behaving in European-owned places, you should expect to be manhandled. You don't go forcing your stinking company on the Europeans do you?

KAUNDA: And to think you are the Queen's servant speaking to us thus. You, who should rather be our protector, are in fact an enemy. Would you wonder therefore if we don't trust the Queen's Government itself? *[to Nkumbula]* Let's go. This is our battle.

CAPTAIN GOODFELLOW: The Queen's Government is not going to listen to ... and what do you mean by...

Kaunda and Nkumbula exit banging the door.

STINKING SPOILED MISSION KAFFIRS!

SCENE FIVE

The action moves to an African Mine Township at Nkana Mine. Black miners are on strike. Boots and protective clothing lie neglected about the Place. The miners while away the hours playing solo or cards, while others lie about drunkenly. Their womenfolk go about their usual domestic chores, chatting, gossiping, and calling to each other or to the children. A group of other miners are listening and dancing to music from a radiogram. Most of them are discussing the politics of the day. Actors playing the parts of the striking miners must improvise their own lines here.

VOICE FROM THE F.B.C. RADIO* This is the Federal Broadcasting Corporation, broadcasting from Salisbury. *[all collect round the radio to listen to the latest news, except those who do not understand English]* Here is the news read by Len Miles. The Federal Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky has warned that any attempt on the part of the African agitators to interfere with the smooth running of the happy and multi-racial Federation of Central Africa will be dealt with very firmly. The general strike by members of the Northern Rhodesia African Mine Workers' Union entered its second week this morning, with the President General, Mr Lauwrence Katilungu, appealing to his members to refrain from any disorderly behaviour. The general boycott of European and Indian shops continues for the fourth week running. The boycott has been called maliciously by the President of the African National Congress, Mr Harry Unkumbula, in order to force recognition of his party by the Government of Northern Rhodesia. Mr Mungoni Liso, Provincial Vice-President of the African National Congress in the Western Province (Copperbelt), is to stand trial in Mufulira for unlawfully picketing outside the European and Indian shops. The African National Congress has hired a South African lawyer to represent it against the Northern Rhodesia Government, who charges it with organizing the boycott with malicious intent. The Nyasaland Secretary for Native...

The crowd breaks up noisily.

FIRST MINER: We will go to Mufulira tomorrow to hear our leader's case.

SECOND MINER: I hear Nkumbula and Kaunda are going to be there too.

THIRD MINER: All, including Shimpundu Kapwepwe. Let's all go to Mufulira tomorrow to hear Liso's case. Let's go to hear the Congress case everybody.

ALL: Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda lead us kindly.

THIRD MINER: All, including Shimpundu Kapwepwe. Let's all go to Mufulira tomorrow to hear Liso's case. Let's go to hear the Congress case everybody.

ALL: Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda lead us kindly.

They break into the Congress song and march around the stage singing it as the mine compound props are cleared; a table and a high chair are brought on to represent Mufulira Magistrate's Court. Nkumbula, Kaunda and Kapwepwe are addressing their supporters before the court begins.

* F.B.C. were the initials of the Federal Broadcasting Corporation.

KAPWEPWE⁴¹: Ngefyo nachiba ndelanda ba mboswa, umusungu ena icho emininepo kukuteko busha iwo we muntu wafita. Ukukuteko busha bwamuyayaya. Ingamwakwata indalama ishing, umusungu aletina ati ninshi tukalingana nankwe amaka. Mwalishiba ifunde lyatila pakuti ube kasala, kano ngofola indalama ishing pa mwaka. Batila shinga shilya?

CROWD: £120 per year.

KAPWEPWE⁴²: E ...eee! Nomba imwe iyi stalaka muchitile ngabamupela ilya 2/8d. ninshi mwebengi mukafika kuli £120 pamwaka. Echo tu Fupu fupu, (U.F.P.) ngatwaumfwo kuti, bawishi kwa Maini nabakalipa, tuletutuma ututwaume tupemena mumutanta. *[shouts of approval and ululations]* Elyo kaili chimbi icho tulemutashako mwebwabesu cha kutana aba ba fyatile impiya isho ...*[shouts]*

CROWD: Shimpundu Kapwepweeeeeeeeeee! Sense. Sense Sense.

KAPWEPWE⁴³: Nati namutasha pakutwalilila boycott wa mashitolo yaba mwisa. Ifingi mwalaumfwa kuntungulushi shesu shiskalamba. Ala mwebaumemwe twalileni. Batila 'Akapapa balwila akali pamenso.' Thank you bwana Provincial President. *[sits]*

DINGISWAYO BANDA: Thank you very much, Bwana National Treasurer. I now can call upon the National General Secretary Bwana Kenneth Kaunda, sir.

KAUNDA *[shouts and ululations]*: Thank you, Bwana Provincial President. I haven't got much to say today as you know much time must be reserved for our dynamic National Leader, the President General Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula who is here with us *[applause]*. But I have one or two words to speak to you. We are gathered to hear our own case. Your Congress has been sued court what the Government calls 'organising a boycott of white Indian shops with malicious intent'. Haven't you people stood insults long enough? Why can't you be treated like human beings when you go to buy at the European shops? If you want anything from these shops you must buy it through the pigeon-hole at the backyard. Is that right? Are you going to allow yourselves to be treated like second-class citizens in the land of your birth?

CROWD: NO! NO! NO! NEVER. TO HELL WITH TO HELL WITH THE BOERS. TO HELL WITH WELENSKY.

⁴¹ KAPWEPWE: As I was saying my dear friends, what the white man stands for is to make us black men slaves. To keep us perpetually in slavery. The white man is frightened of you getting more money as this would give equal power. You know that the law says that in order to be eligible as a voter you have to earn a lot of money. Do you know how much it is?

⁴² KAPWEPWE: Indeed. That is why this strike is very significant. If you win a rise of 2/8d. each, most of you will be earning £ 120 per annum. You can see now why U .F .P .members feel threatened by your action. And another praiseworthy action, my dear brothers and sisters, is your withdrawal of your money from...

⁴³ I say we thank you greatly for your support of the boycott of all aliens' shops. Wait now for more important words from our great leaders. I beg of you my friends, keep it up. It is said: 'The small skin one fights for most is one that can be seen clearly.'

KAUNDA: This is why we must fight for self-government. This is why we want a Constitution that is based on the dignity of man. ONE MAN!

CROWD: ONE VOTE!

KAUNDA: This is *why* you must all join the African National to ensure you gain your freedom in the foreseeable future. I leave more time to our National Leader. *[applause and ulluations]*

DINGISWAYO BANDA: Before I can upon our National Leader Bwana Nkumbula, let's an sing our National Congress solidarity song, I want everyone to stand, *[they all stand and sing]* Thank you. Will you now sit down quietly. I now call upon our beloved leader, Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula, *[applause, and ululations with drumming and singing]*.

NKUMBULA *[voice a bit thick]*: Thenkju, Bwana Provincial President. Many things. have already been said by my friends. I have a few things and points of grave importance to add to what my brothers have already told you. *(puffs at cigar once or twice; throws away the stub)*. The A.N.C., your own dynamic party, is bent upon bringing you self-government by 1958 at the latest ...

[Applause and ululations. Nkumhula lights another cigar in the meantime]

We intend to bring you self-government by 1958 through the machinery of Universal suffrage, and that is by ONE MAN ONE VOTE *[re-lights the cigar]*

FIRST CITIZEN: This man he speak big English of the top. What did he say about universal ...

SECOND CITIZEN: He Say he go bring self-governments sru universal suffering, ONE MAN, ONE VOTE. Sh ...sh ...sh ...he is speaking.

NKUMBULA: It is because the Boers see our determination that they begin to tremble and to put all sorts of obstacles in our path in order to arrest our progress. On our part we have, thanks to you, organized the most successful boycott of the settler shops for the reasons which our beloved Secretary General has outlined to you already. We are particularly gathered here to hear our own case. The Government has charged that we have a malicious intent in calling this boycott. Perhaps the miners too have a ntalicious intent in going on strike? But we say we have genuine grievances for taking this action. We are again gathered here in particular to hear the case of our beloved leader Mungoni Liso, who has been falsely accused of picketing at the settler shops. May I say that we should refrain from any acts of disorder that will give Welensky and his police an excuse for harassing us. And now may I thank the Mine Workers' Trade Union for its heroic stand and efficient organisation of the general strike which is lending more power to the Congress case. However, I regret to announce also that the Secretary General of the Northern Rhodesia Mine Workers' Union, Mr Mathew Delux Nkoloma has been arrested and ...

At this moment as people lament the arrest of Nkolama, enter Mungoni Liso handcuffed to two constables and being almost pulled to the court-house. Angry shouts greet this spectacle and disorder ensues briefly.

NKUMBULA: You see why we want you to support the A.N.C.? Is that the way you treat a human being?

KAUNDA: One Man!

CROWD: One Vote!

KAUNDA: One Man!

CROWD: One Vote!

KAUNDA: Let us all be quiet. The President General and I, and the Treasurer General, will enter the court-room. We will come back to report to you. As you know the court-room is small and they cannot allow us all in. So please wait here.

Exit Nkumbula, Kaunda and Kapwepwe. The crowd breaks into commotion, with chest-beating and threats. Then they start drumming, singing, and dancing traditional dances. They dance the Ngoni war dance, and later the Siomboka; the first to signify the fight for Independence, and the second the crossing of the colonial river to the land of Independence. Re-enter Kaunda and Kapwepwe smiling.

CROWD: Sh ...sh ...sh ...sh ...be quiet. Let's hear the judgement. Let's hear our fate. Speak, Kaunda; speak, Kapwepwe. What's our fate?

KAUNDA: One Man!

CROWD: One Vote!

KAUNDA: We have won the case! The court ...*[jubilation]* Please, countrymen, listen to the rest of the story.*[silence]* The President General will be coming out soon to announce the court decision. All I can tell you now, is that Congress has won all the cases. The judge was still winding up the case. But Kapwepwe and I could not wait to come and tell you the happy news.

Enter Nkumbula and Lisa. Jubilation, emotional sobs and ululations.

NKUMBULA: Peace, countrymen. *[silence]* The dynamic A.N.C. has shown the Boer settler it means business. The court has ruled that our boycott has been genuine and therefore had no malicious intent. Our brother here and the hero of the day, Mungoni Liso, has also been acquitted, as it could not be proved that he is guilty of picketing near the settler shops. *[swelling with pride]* FROM HERE COUNTRYMEN, CONGRESS MUST MARCH FORWARD TO EVEN FURTHER VICTORY. AND WE WILL DRAW UP OUR CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS SOON WHICH WE WILL HAND TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

The cheering crowd carry the leaders shoulder-high, singing.

SCENE SIX

Some months later, in Chilenje African Township. It is 2.30 p.m. Two policemen, one white, Inspector Goblin, and an African, Sergeant Hantuba, who has been transferred from Kitwe on promotion, come to Kenneth Kaunda's house. Kaunda and his family are sleeping. 11Ie children are sprawled on the floor. The police hammer on the door. Betty Kaunda, wrapped in a sheet, opens the door.

BETTY: Who are...? What is it?

HANTUBA: Is your husband in? I mean Kaunda?

BETTY *[hesitant]*: He... he... is in bed. Why do you want him at this hour?

GOBLIN: Will you wake him up, woman!

BETTY *[with much anxiety]*: But please, what has he done? Tell ...

GOBLIN: WAKE THE FELLOW UP WILL YOU WOMAN! We have business with him, not with you.

BETTY: But... but ...

HANTUBA: *[taking out a notebook and pencil]* : Hey woman, you are obstructing police officers in their duties. Wake your husband up. He has some questions to answer. *[Betty gives in. She goes to wake Kaunda up with a heavy heart.]*

BETTY⁴⁴: Bashi Panji. Bashi Panji! Bukeni bakapokola baisa.

KAUNDA *[rolling with heavy sleep]*: Umhu?

⁴⁴ BETTY: Panji's father! Panji's father! Wake up, the police have come.

BETTY⁴⁵: Ala ni ba kapokola!

KAUNDA [*waking up suddenly*]: Police? Why?

BETTY⁴⁶: Kaya. Kapena ni vyamene ivi vimapolitikishi. Amufunani pabwalo.

KAUNDA [*putting on shorts*]: But why? Anyway, don't you worry, dear. This is usual. They will explain I am sure. [*to the Inspector*] What is

GOBLIN: Kenneth? Are you Kenneth Kaunda?

KAUNDA: Yes.

GOBLIN: Kenneth, we want you to come with us to your office right now, Please put on your shirt and shoes.

Exit Kaunda, and the police. Betty remains rooted to the spot, her eyes following the retreating men and her husband.

BETTY [*bitterly*]: Beasts! They have taken him. Will they return him today? Next week? Next year? Perhaps he will never return.

As she engages in this soliloquy, a child sits up trembling with cold. He stares at his mother who is still standing in the doorway talking to herself.

CHILD: Mother. [*Betty starts*] Who will never return? Where is father?

BETTY: Oh! Well ...nothing. I ... I ... but you are shivering my child, lie down and sleep. Your father is having a meeting. He will be here soon. Go to sleep my child.

She covers the child with a blanket still muttering to herself; then she clears the scene, which becomes Congress Headquarters. Nkumbula is being interrogated by Inspector Penguin and Sergeant Katongo.

PENGUIN: Do you keep all your papers here, Mr Nkumbula, or do you keep some at your house and elsewhere?

NKUMBULA: We keep them all here.

Enter Kaunda with Inspector Goblin and Sergeant Hantuba.

⁴⁵ BETTY: Look, it is the police

⁴⁶ BETTY: I do not know. Anyway what do you expect with all your political activities. You are wanted outside.

PENGUIN [to Nkumbula] : We have a warrant to search your office, gentlemen. [shows the warrant. They search the office]

NKUMBULA [to Kaunda, aside]: Have you dealt with those magazines t from the British Labour Party, Kenneth?

KAUNDA [with much apprehension]: No I am afraid I have not been able to deal with them yet
NKUMBULA: That's bad, boy. We have had it. I am sure they are looking for some proscribed literature. [soon the search ends satisfactorily]

P E N G U I N [triumphantly] : Yes I thought so. Here they are: *Africa and the Colonial World*. This is the magazine we are looking for. Why have you been keeping this prohibited literature in your office, Mr Unkumbula and Kaunda?

KAUNDA: As you can see for yourself, I have already packed them in readiness to send them off to...

GOBLIN: They are here now. That's all that matters. Don't you know it is against the law to keep prohibited literature?

PENGUIN: Harry Unkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda, I arrest you on the charge of keeping proscribed literature in your office. Will you two come with us to the charge office.

HANTUBA⁴⁷: Nimwamene bachitila ma straka nama boycoti. Is because they read news papers from Russia. Muzamangidwa leto.

Enter four other armed policemen with Kapwepwe, Kamanga and Kalulu in handcuffs

KAUNDA⁴⁸: [to Kapwepwe]: Hallo, Shimpundu. Nishani mboswa bakukulula nobe bati. Chinshi chakuleta kuno ? [laughter]

KAPWEPWE⁴⁹: Mboswa ninshiku eshandeta pano. [notices Nkumbula still smoking his cigar]
Ba Mwaanga bena baleti nga ba fokola fwaka elyo baleumfwa bwino. Ala shamupelelafye tata. Uku tuleya takwaba kupepa fwaka mboswa ukalapepa inkanshi. What charge have they given us chaps?

KAUNDA: Keeping proscribed literature: *Africa and the Colonial World*. NKUMBULA⁵⁰: Bushe bane baletutwala kwi?

KAPWEPWE: Where else do you expect us to go, Mwaanga? To

⁴⁷ And you are the instigators of the strike and the boycott. You are going to be locked up today.

⁴⁸ Hello 'Shimpundu' (Father-of-twins). So you too have been rounded up. What brings you here?

⁴⁹ Well, old chap. Fate has transported me here. I suppose Old Mwanga thinks that puffs of smoke will help his plight. Well, your days are over. You have had it. Since there will be no smoking where we are going, you will only be smoking frowns on your face.

⁵⁰ NKUMBULA: And where do you think they will take us chaps?

the bar? We are, of course, going to prison after a show of court proceedings against us.

GOBLIN: Stop that silly chit-chat there.

KAPWEPWE⁵¹ [Furious] : Wabiye chatile. Bushe tuli bakaili abakuti uleshe kulanda ? Kanwa kakwanoko tulekalifya musa?

GOBLIN: What does this chap say? Has he ever known a word of English?

HANTUBA: He is very educated, sir, but he is very cheeky. He was insulting you, sir. PE-

NGUIN: What? Insulting a police officer on duty? You chaps are playing with Government, eh? You will not see your wives and I children again for quite some months, I am afraid. You will be the guests of Her Majesty's hotel. Prisoners! Do you hear, you African politicians? *[laughs mockingly]*

KAPWEPWE *[in a mock salute]*: Yes, sir.

He is slapped for his salute. They all go off. In the theatre an F.B.C. announcer's voice is heard very loudly:

ANNOUNCER: This is the Federal Broadcasting Corporation broadcasting from Salisbury. Here is the news, read by Len Miles. Five top A.N.C. leaders of Northern Rhodesia have been arrested in a police dawn raid on their Chilenje and Matero homes. They are Mr Harry Unkumbula, President General; Mr Kenneth Kahunda, Secretary General; Mr Simon Kapwipwi, Treasurer General; Mr Solomon Kalulu, National Chairman; and a Provincial President Mr Reuben Kamanga. They are to appear in court later in the day. An A.N.C. leader of Chinsali had been sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labour in the Kasama Magistrate's court for setting fire to a school building near Chinsali Boma. The Governor of Northern Rhodesia, Sir Arthur Benson, opened a new wing of hostels at the Oppenheimer College of Social Work this morning. And here is the late news item: Harry Unkumbula, Kenneth Kahunda, Simon Kapwipwi and Reuben Kamanga have all been sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour. The other politician, Solomon Kalulu has been acquitted by the Lusaka Magistrate's court.

Sir Roy Welensky, the Federal Prime Minister has congratulated the Northern Rhodesia Government for taking a firm action against the African political agitators, who, he said, have been trying to confuse the peace-loving Africans of Northern Rhodesia, who want nothing but progress under responsible government. Sir Roy said: 'with the removal of these evil men, a new era of reconstruction has been opened in Northern Rhodesia in which the United Federal Party has a major role to play.' The U.F.P., he said, must spare no effort to explain to the

⁵¹ KAPWEPWE: You and your ugly old 'thing'. Are we your prisoners that we may not talk to each other. One would think that we were talking using your own mother's mouth. *[insulting]*

Africans its healthy and realistic policy of Partnership. Sir Roy Welensky, however, regrets that the A.N.C. has not been banned altogether by the Northern Rhodesia Government.

The choir backstage picks up the cue to sing the A.N.C. solidarity song. Enter Nkumbula, Kaunda, Kapwepwe, and Kamanga being marched across the stage left to right. They are wearing prisoners' uniform, and they are carrying picks and shovels, rakes and a wheelbarrow. They are dirty all over. Two armed policemen bring up the rear. The choir sings the song as the prisoners are marched slowly across the stage.

Bane bonse sumineni⁵² (leader)

Nkumbula enyinefwo

Uwafyelwe ntungulushi

Yakatulanga amino

Bonse

Mwilalaba, mwilalaba (all)

Nkumbula enyinefwe.

Masansa yanshila nindalama (leader)

Bonse mwilalaba

Yalekenye ng' anda imo

Nokulufyanye chalo

Bonse

Mwilalaba, mwilalaba (all)

Nkumbula enyinefwe.

⁵² For English translation, see Scene 3

7.6 Study Questions and Essay Topics

7.6.1 Study Questions

- (i) The black mamba is a deadly poisonous snake. It is said that the nickname Black Mamba was given to Kaunda by the colonialists. Do you think, from your reading of the play, that the name suited Kaunda?
- (ii) Does the fact that the play is a reflection of historical events make it more interesting or boring?
- (iii) Would you say some parts of the play are not historical fact but mere exaggerations? Give examples.
- (iv) Would you say Chipayeni is actually mad? If yes or no, what are your reasons?
- (v) Which characters in the play would you classify as stupid and which ones as clever?
- (vi) Do you think it is correct to describe Goodfellow as selfish, greedy, manipulative and cruel? Why?
- (vii) Would you describe Kaunda and Nkumbula as 'fearless' or 'arrogant'?
- (viii) Would you say Kaunda's encounter with the lion foreshadows victory for the oppressed?
- (ix) Identify four major themes of the play, apart from the liberation theme.
- (x) Explain the main divisions of the structure of the play.
- (xi) To what extent do you think the setting of the play reflects the Zambian situation as it existed during the time of the independence struggle?

7.6.2 Essay Topics

- (i) In what ways does the use of vernacular enrich the content of the play?
- (ii) To what extent does racism influence events in the play?
- (iii) From your reading of this play and other literature dealing with colonialism in Africa, in what ways would you say Goodfellow represents the typical colonial attitude?
- (iv) Discuss the various ways in which African characters in the play exhibit unity.
- (v) "The Messenger and Clerk cannot be condemned for their behaviour because they are only trying to earn a living." Discuss.

- (vi) Discuss the significance of symbolism in the play.
- (vii) How would you describe the relationship between Kaunda, Kapwepwe and Nkumbula as shown in the play?
- (viii) What is the significance of the use of songs in the liberation struggle?

Unit 8

The Trials of Brother Jero

8.1 Introduction

In this unit we shall look at the text of *The Trials of Brother Jero*. In addition we shall look at a variety of study and essay questions designed to help you revise the text.



8.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the contents of the text of *The Trials of Brother Jero*.
2. Relate the contents of the unit to the contents of earlier modules.
3. Discuss the questions and essay topics with a degree of competence.

8.3 Context of *The Trials of Brother Jero*

Wole Soyinka is one of the world's leading playwrights, having won the Nobel Prize for Literature. He has written two Jero plays – *Jero's Metamorphosis* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*, on which this unit focuses. *The Trials of Brother Jero* is a poignant portrayal of religious hypocrisy and commercialisation of the gospel.

8.4 Text of *The Trials of Brother Jero*

CHARACTERS

JEROBOAM a Beach Divine
OLD PROPHET his mentor
CHUME assistant to Jeroboam
AMOPE his wife
A TRADER
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

PENITENT
NEIGHBOUR
WORSHIPPERS
A TOUGH MAMMA
A YOUNG GIRL

SCENE I

The stage is completely dark. A spotlight reveals the Prophet, a heavily but neatly bearded man; his hair is thick and high, but well-combed, unlike that of most prophets. Suave is the word for him. He carries a canvas pouch and a divine rod.¹ He speaks directly and with his accustomed loftiness to the audience.

JEROBOAM: I am a Prophet. A prophet by birth and by inclination. You have probably seen many of us on the streets, many with their own churches, many inland, many on the coast, many leading processions, many looking for processions to lead, many curing the deaf, many raising the dead. In fact, there are eggs and there are eggs. Same thing with prophets. I was born a Prophet. I think my parents found that I was born with rather thick and long hair. It was said to come right down to my eyes and down to my neck. For them, this was a certain sign that I was born a natural prophet. And I grew to love the trade. It used to be a very respectable one in those days and competition was dignified. But in the last few years, the beach has become fashionable, and the struggle for land has turned the profession into a thing of ridicule. Some prophets I could name gained their present beaches by getting women penitents to shake their bosoms in spiritual ecstasy. This prejudiced the councillors who came to divide the beach among us.

Yes, it did come to the point where it became necessary for the Town Council to come to the beach and settle the Prophets' territorial warfare once and for all. My Master, the same one who brought me up in prophetic ways staked his claim and won a grant of land. ... I helped him, with a campaign led by six dancing girls from the French territory, all dressed as Jehovah's Witnesses. What my old Master did not realise was that I was really helping myself.

Mind you, the beach is hardly worth having these days. The worshippers have dwindled to a mere trickle and we really have to fight for every new convert. They all prefer High Life to the rhythm of celestial hymns. And television too is keeping our wealthier patrons at borne. They used to come in the evening when they would not easily be recognised. Now they stay at home and watch television. However, my whole purpose in coming here is to show you, one rather eventful day in my life, a day when I thought for a moment that the curse of my old Master was about to be fulfilled. It shook me quite a bit, but ...the Lord protects his own ...*[Enter Old Prophet shaking his fist.]*

1. A metal rod about eighteen inches long, tapered, bent into a ring at the thick end.

Mind you, the beach is hardly worth having these days. The worshippers have dwindled to a mere trickle and we really have to fight for every new convert. They all prefer High Life to the rhythm of celestial hymns. And television too is keeping our wealthier patrons at borne. They used to come in the evening when they would not easily be recognised. Now they stay at home and watch television. However, my whole purpose in coming here is to show you, one rather eventful day in my life, a day when I thought for a moment that the curse of my old Master was about to be fulfilled. It shook me quite a bit, but ...the Lord protects his own ...

[Enter Old Prophet shaking his fist.]

OLD PROPHET: Ungrateful wretch! Is this how you repay the long years of training I have given you? To drive me, your old Tutor, off my piece of land. ... telling me I have lived beyond my time. Ha! May you be rewarded in the same manner. May the Wheel come right round and find you just as helpless as you make me now. ...

[He Continues to mouth curses, but inaudibly.]

JEROBOAM *[ignoring him]*: He didn't move me one bit. The old dodderer had been foolish enough to imagine that when I organised the campaign to acquire his land in competition with *[ticking them off on his fingers]* - The Brotherhood of Jehu, the Cherubims and Seraphims, the Sisters of Judgement Day, the Heavenly Cowboys, not to mention the Jehovah's Witnesses whom the French girls impersonated-well, he must have been pretty conceited to think that I did it all for him.

OLD PROPHET: Ingrate! Monster! I curse you with the curse of the Daughters of Discord. May they be your downfall. May the Daughters of Eve bring ruin down on your head! *[Old Prophet goes off, shaking his fist]*

JEROBOAM: Actually that was a very cheap curse. He knew very well that I had one weakness-women. Not my fault, mind you. You must admit that I am rather good-looking ...no, don't be misled, I am not at all vain. Nevertheless, I decided to be on my guard. The call of Prophecy is in my blood and I would not risk my calling with the fickleness of women. So I kept away from them. I am still single and since that day when I came into my own, no scandal has ever touched my name. And it was a sad day indeed when I woke up one morning and the first thing to meet my eyes was a Daughter of Eve. You may compare that feeling with waking up and finding a vulture crouched on your bedpost.

BLACKOUT

SCENE II

Early morning

A few poles with nets and other litter del1ote a fishing village. Downstage right is the corner of a hut, window on one side, door on the other. A cycle bell is heard ringing. Seconds after, a cycle is ridden on stage towards the hut. The rider is a shortish man; his feet barely touch the pedals. On the cross-bar is a woman; the cross-bar itself is wound round with a mat, and on the carrier is a large travelling sack, with a woman's household stool hanging from a corner of it.

AMOPE: Stop here. Stop here. That's his house.

[The man applies the brakes too suddenly. The weight leans towards the woman's side, with the result that she props up the bicycle with her feet, rather jerkily. It is in fact no worse than any ordinary landing, but it is enough to bring out her sense of aggrievement.]

AMOPE *[Her tone of martyrdom is easy, accustomed to use.]*: I suppose we all do our best, but after all these years one would think you could set me down a little more gently.

CHUME: You didn't give me much notice. I had to brake suddenly.

AMOPE: The way you complain-anybody who didn't see what happened would think you were the one who broke an ankle. *[She has already begun to limp.]*

CHUME: Don't tell me that was enough to break your ankle.

AMOPE: Break? You didn't hear me complain. You did your best, but if my toes are to be broken one by one just because I have to monkey on your bicycle, you must admit it's a tough life for a woman.

CHUME: I did my...

AMOPE: Yes, you did your best. I know. Didn't I admit it? Please ... give me that stool. ...You know yourself that I'm not one to make much of a little thing like that, but I haven't been too well. If anyone knows that, it's you. Thank you *[Taking the stool.]* ...I haven't been well, that's all, otherwise I wouldn't have said a thing.

[She sits down near the door of the hut, sighing heavily, and begins to nurse her feet.]

CHUME: Do you want me to bandage it for you?

AMOPE: No, no. What for?

[Chume hesitates, then begins to unload the bundle.]

CHUME: You're sure you don't want me to take you back? If it swells after I've gone...

AMOPE: I can look after myself. I've always done, and looked after you too. Just help me unload the things and place them against the wall ...you know I wouldn't ask, if it wasn't for the ankle.

[Chume had placed the bag next to her, thinking that was all. He returns now to untie the bundle. Brings out a small brazier covered with paper which is tied down, two small saucepans...]

AMOPE: You haven't let the soup pour out, have you?

CHUME *[with some show of exasperation.]*: Do you see oil on the wrapper? *[Throws down the wrapper.]*

AMOPE: Abuse me. All right, go on, begin to abuse me. You know that all I asked was if the soup had poured away, and it isn't as if that was something no one ever asked before. I would do it all myself if it wasn't for my ankle anyone would think it was my fault ... careful ... careful now ... the cork nearly came off that bottle. You know how difficult it is to get any clean water in this place...

[Chume unloads two bottles filled with water, two little parcels wrapped in paper, another tied in a knot, a box of matches, a piece of yam, two tins, one probably an Ovaltine tin but containing something else of course, a cheap breakable spoon, a knife, while Amope keeps up her patient monologue, spoken almost with indifference.]

AMOPE: Do, I beg you, take better care of that jar. ...I know you didn't want to bring me, but it wasn't the fault of the jar, was it?

CHUME: Who said I didn't want to bring you?

AMOPE: You said it was too far away for you to bring me on your bicycle. ...I suppose you really wanted me to walk ...

CHUME: I ...

AMOPE: And after you'd broken my foot, the first thing you asked was if you should take me home. You were only too glad it happened ... in fact if I wasn't the kind of person who would never think evil of anyone even you I would have said that you did it on purpose.

[The unloading is over. Chume shakes out the bag.]

AMOPE: Just leave the bag here. I can use it for a pillow.

CHUME: Is there anything else before I go?

AMOPE: You've forgotten the mat. I know it's not much, but I would like something to sleep on. There are women who sleep in beds of course, but I'm not complaining. They are just lucky with their husbands, and we can't all be lucky I suppose.

CHUME: You've got a bed at home.

[He unties the mat which is wound round the cross-bar.]

AMOPE: And so I'm to leave my work undone. My trade is to suffer because I have a bed at home? Thank God I am not the kind of woman who ...

CHUME: I am nearly late for work.

AMOPE: I know you can't wait to get away. You only use your work as an excuse. A Chief Messenger in the Local Government Office do you call that work? Your old school friends are now Ministers, riding in long cars ...

[Chume gets on his bike and flees. Amope shouts after him, craning her neck in his direction.]

AMOPE: Don't forget to bring some more water when you're returning from work. *[she relapses and sighs heavily.]* He doesn't realise it is all for his own good. He's no worse than other men, but he won't make the effort to become something in life. A Chief Messenger. Am I to go to my grave as the wife of a Chief Messenger?

[She is seated so that the Prophet does not immediately see her when he opens the window to breathe some fresh air. He stares straight out for a few moments, then shuts his eyes tightly, clasps his hands together above his chest, chin uplifted for a few moments' meditation. He relaxes and is about to go in when he sees Amope's back. He leans out to try to take in the rest of her but this proves impossible. Puzzled, he leaves the window and goes round to the door which is then seen to open about a foot and shut rapidly. Amope is calmly chewing cola. As the door shuts she takes out a notebook and a pencil and checks some figures. Brother Jeroboam, known to his congregation as Brother Jero, is seen again at the window, this time with his canvas pouch and divine stick. He lowers the bag to the ground, eases one leg over the window.]

AMOPE *[without looking back.]*: Where do you think you're going?

[Brother Jero practically flings himself back into the house.]

AMOPE: One pound, eight shillings, and nine pence for three months. And he calls himself a man of God.

[She puts the notebook away, unwraps the brazier, and proceeds to light it preparatory to getting breakfast. The door opens another foot.]

JERO *[Coughs.]*: Sister ...my dear sister in Christ ...

AMOPE: I hope you slept well, Brother Jero.

JERO: Yes, thanks be to God. *[Hems and coughs.]* I-er-I hope; you have not come to stand in the way of Christ and his work.

AMOPE: If Christ doesn't stand in the way of me and my work.

JERO: Beware of pride, sister. That was a sinful way to talk.

AMOPE: Listen, you bearded debtor. You owe me one pound, eight and nine. You promised you would pay me three months ago but of course you have been too busy doing the

work of God. Well, let me tell you that you are not going anywhere until you do a bit of my own work.

JERO: But the money is not in the house. I must get it from the post office before I can pay you.

AMOEPE [*fanning the brazier.*]: You'll have to think of something else before you call me a fool.
[*Brother Jeroboam shuts the door. A woman trader goes past with a deep calabash bowl on her head.*]

AMOEPE: Ei, what are you selling?

[*The trader hesitates, decides to continue on her way.*]

AMOEPE: Isn't it you I'm calling? What have you got there?

TRADER [*Stops, without turning round.*]: Are you buying for trade or just for yourself!

AMOEPE: It might help if you first told me what you have.

TRADER: Smoked fish.

AMOEPE: Well, let's see it.

TRADER [*hesitates.*]: All right, help me to set it down. But I don't usually stop on the way.

AMOEPE: Isn't it money you are going to the market for, and isn't it money I'm going to pay you!

TRADER [*as Amoepe gets up and unloads her.*]: Well, just remember it is early in the morning.

Don't start me off wrong by haggling.

AMOEPE: All right, All right. [*Looks at the fish.*] How much a dozen?

TRADER: One and three, and I'm not taking a penny less.

AMOEPE: It is last week's, isn't it?

TRADER: I've told you, you're my first customer, so don't ruin my trade with thee ill-luck of the morning.

AMOEPE [*holding one up to her up to her nose.*]: It does smell a bit, doesn't it?

TRADER [*putting back the wrappings.*]: Maybe it is you who haven't had a bath for week.

AMOEPE: Yeh! All right go on Abuse me Go on and abuse me when all I wanted was a few of your miserable fish I deserve it for trying to be neighbourly with a cross-eyed wretch, pauper that you are ...

TRADER: It is early in the morning I am not going to let you infect my luck with your foul tongue by answering you back. And just you keep your cursed fingers from my goods because that is where you'll meet with the father of all devils if you don't.

[*She lift, the load to her head all by herself.*]

AMOEPE: Yes, go on. Carry the burden of your crimes and take your beggar's tags out of my sight ...

TRADER: I leave you in the hands of your flatulent belly, you barren sinner, May you never do good in all your life.

AMOEPE: You're cursing me now, are you!

[She leaps up just in time to see Brother Jero escape through the window.]

Help! Thief! Thief! You bearded rogue Call yourself a prophet! But you'll find it easier to get out than to get in. You'll find that out or my name isn't Amope. ...

[She turns on the trader who has already disappeared.]

Do you see what you have done, you spindle-leg toad? Receiver of stolen goods, just wait until the police catch up with you. ...

[Towards the end of this speech the sound of 'gangan' drums is heard, coming from the side opposite the hut. A boy enters carrying a drum on each shoulder. He walks towards her, drumming. She turns almost at once.]

AMOPE: Take yourself off, you dirty beggar. Do you think my money is for the likes of you?

[The boy flees, turns suddenly, and beats a parting abuse on the drums.]

AMOPE: I don't know what the world is coming to. A thief of a Prophet, a swindler of a fish-seller and now that thing with lice on his head comes begging for money. He and the Prophet ought to get together with the fish-seller their mother.

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE III

A short while later. The beach. A few stakes and palm leaves denote the territory of Brother Jeroboam's church. To one side is a palm tree, and in the centre is a heap of sand with assorted empty bottles, a small mirror, and hanging from one of the bottles is a rosary and cross. Brother Jero is standing as he was last seen when he made his escape-white flowing gown and a very fine velvet cape, white also. Stands upright, divine rod in hand, while the other caresses the velvet cape.

JERO: I don't know how she found out my house. When I bought the goods off her, she did not even ask any questions. My calling was enough to guarantee payment. It is not as if this was a well-paid job. And it is not what I would call a luxury, this velvet cape which I bought from her. It would not have all been necessary if one were not forced to distinguish himself more and more from these scum who degrade the calling of the Prophet. It becomes important to stand out, to be distinctive. I have set my heart after a particular name. They will look at my velvet cape and they will think of my goodness.

Inevitably they must begin to call me ... the Velvet-hearted Jeroboam. [*Straightens himself.*] Immaculate Jero, Articulate Hero of Christ's Crusade ... Well, it is out. I have not breathed it to a single soul, but that has been my ambition. You've got to have a name that appeals to the imagination-because the imagination is a thing of the spirit-it must catch the imagination of the crowd. Yes, one must move with modern times. Lack of colour gets one nowhere even in the Prophet's business. [*Looks all round him.*] Charlatans! If only I had this beach to myself. [*With sudden violence.*] But how does one maintain his dignity when the daughter of Eve forces him to leave his own house through a window? God curse that woman! I never thought she would dare affront the presence of a man of God. One pound eight for this little cape. It is sheer robbery.

[*He surveys the scene again. A young girl passes, sleepily, clothed only in her wrapper.*]

JERO: She passes here every morning, on her way to take a swim. Dirty-looking thing.

[*He yawns.*]

I am glad I got here before any customers - I mean worshippers-well, customers if you like. I always get that feeling every morning that I am a shopkeeper waiting for customers. The regular ones come at definite times. Strange, dissatisfied people. I know they are dissatisfied because I keep them dissatisfied. Once they are full, they won't come again. Like my good apprentice, Brother Chume. He wants to beat his wife, but I won't let him. If I do, he will become contented, and then that's another of my flock gone for ever. As long as he doesn't beat her, he comes here feeling helpless, and so there is no chance of his rebelling against me. Everything, in fact, is planned.

[*The young girl crosses the stage again. She has just had her swim and the difference is remarkable. Clean, wet, shiny face and hair. She continues to wipe herself with her wrapper as she walks.*]

JERO [*following her all the way with his eyes.*]: Every morning, every day I witness this divine transformation, a Lord.

[*He shakes his head suddenly and bellows.*]

Pray Brother Jeroboam, pray! Pray for strength against temptation.

[*He falls on his knees, face squeezed in agony and hands clasped. Chume enters, wheeling his bike. He leans it against the palm tree.*]

JERO [*not opening his eyes.*]: Pray with me, brother. Pray with me. Pray for me against this one weakness ... against this one weakness, a Lord ...

CHUME [*falling down at once.*]: Help him, Lord. Help him, Lord.

JERO: Against this one weakness, this weakness, O Abraham ...

CHUME: Help him, Lord. Help him, Lord.

JERO: Against this one weakness David, David, Samuel, Samuel.

CHUME: Help him. Help him. Help am. Help am.

JERO: Job Job, Elijah Elijah.

CHUME [*getting more worked up.*]: Help am God. Help am God. I say make you help am. Help am quick quick.

JERO: Tear the image from my heart. Tear this love for the daughters of Eve ...

CHUME: Adam, help am. Na your son, help am. Help this your son.

JERO: Burn out this lust for the daughters of Eve.

CHUME: Je-e-esu, J-e-esu, Je-e-esu. Help am one time Je-e-e-e-su.

JERO: Abraka, Abraka, Abraka.

[*Chume joins in.*]

Abraka, Abraka, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra, Hebra ...

JERO [*rising.*]: God bless you, brother. [*Turns around.*] Chume!

CHUME: Good morning, Brother Jeroboam.

JERO: Chume, you are not at work. You've never come before in the morning.

CHUME: No. I went to work but I had to report sick.

JERO: Why, are you unwell, brother?

CHUME: No, Brother Jero ...I ...

JERO: A-ah, you have troubles and you could not wait to get them to God. We shall pray together.

CHUME: Brother Jero ... I ...I [*He stops altogether.*]

JERO: Is it difficult? Then let us commune silently for a while.

[*Chume folds his arms, raises his eyes to heaven.*]

JERO: I wonder what is the matter with him. Actually I knew it was he the moment he opened his mouth. Only Brother Chume reverts to that animal jabber when he gets his spiritual excitement. And that is much too often for my liking. He is too crude, but then that is to my advantage. It means he would never think of setting himself up as my equal.

[*He joins Chume in his meditative attitude, but almost immediately discards it, as if he has just remembered something.*]

Christ my Protector! It is a good job I got away from that wretched woman as soon as I did. My disciple believes that I sleep on the beach, that is, if he thinks I sleep at all. Most of them believe the same but, for myself, I prefer my bed. Much more comfortable. And it gets rather cold on the beach at nights. Still, it does them good to believe that I am something of an ascetic ...

[*He resumes his meditative pose for a couple of moments.*]

[*Gently.*] Open your mind to God, brother. This is the tabernacle of Christ. Open your mind to God.

[*Chume is silent for a while, then bursts out suddenly.*]

CHUME: Brother Jero, you must let me beat her!

JERO: What!

CHUME [*desperately.*]: Just once, Prophet. Just once.

JERO: Brother Chume!

CHUME: Just once. Just one sound beating, and I swear not to ask again.

JERO: Apostate. Have I not told you the will of God in this matter?

CHUME: But I've got to beat her, Prophet. You must save me from madness.

JERO: I will. But only if you obey me.

CHUME: In anything else, Prophet. But for this one, make you let me just beat am once.

JERO: Apostate!

CHUME: I n' go beat am too hard. Just once small small.

JERO: Traitor!

CHUME: Jus' this one time. I no' go ask again. Jus' do me this one favour, make a beat am today.

JERO: Brother Chume, what were you before you came to me?

CHUME: Prophet. ..

JERO [*sternly.*]: What were you before the grace of God?

CHUME: A labourer, Prophet. A common labourer.

JERO: And did I not prophesy you would become an office boy?

CHUME: You do am, brother. Na so.

JERO: And then a messenger?

CHUME: Na you do am, brother. Na you.

JERO: And then quick promotion? Did I not prophesy it?

CHUME: Na true, prophet. Na true.

JERO: And what are you now? What are you?

CHUME: Chief Messenger.

JERO: By the grace of God! And by the grace of God, have I not seen you at the table of the
Chief Clerk? And you behind the desk, giving orders?

CHUME: Yes, Prophet ...but ...

JERO: With a telephone and a table bell for calling the Messenger?

CHUME: Very true, Prophet, but ...

JERO: But? But? Kneel! [*pointing to the ground.*] Kneel!

CHUME [*wringing his hands.*]: Prophet!

JERO: Kneel, sinner, kneel. Hardener of heart, harbourer of Ashtoreth, Protector of Baal, kneel,
kneel.

[*Chume falls on his knees.*]

CHUME: My life is a hell ...

JERO: Forgive him, Father, forgive him.

CHUME: This woman will kill me ...

JERO: Forgive him, Father, forgive him.

CHUME: Only this morning I ...

JERO: Forgive him, Father, forgive him.

CHUME: All the way on my bicycle. ..

JERO: Forgive ...

CHUME: And not a word of thanks. ..

JERO: Out Ashtoreth. Out Baal ...

CHUME: All she gave me was abuse, abuse, abuse. ..

JERO: Hardener of the heart ...

CHUME: Nothing but abuse ...

JERO: Petrifier of the soul ...

CHUME: If I could only beat her once, only once ...

JERO [*shouting him down.*]: Forgive this sinner, Father. Forgive him by day, forgive him by night, forgive him in the morning, forgive him at noon ...

[A man enters. Kneels at once and begins to chorus. Amen', or 'Forgive him, Lord', or 'In the name of Jesus (pronounced Je-e-e-sus)'. Those who follow later do the same.]

...This is the son whom you appointed to follow in my footsteps. -Soften his heart. Brother Chume, this woman whom you so desire to beat is your cross-bear it well. She is your heaven-sent trial-lay not your hands on her. I command you to speak no harsh word to her. Pray, Brother Chume, for strength in this hour of your trial. Pray for strength and fortitude.

[Jeroboam leaves them to continue their chorus, Chume chanting, ' Mercy, Mercy' while he makes his next remarks.]

They begin to arrive. As usual in the same order. This one who always comes earliest, I have prophesied that he will be made a chief in his home town. That is a very safe prophecy. As safe as our most popular prophecy, that a man will live to be eighty. If it doesn't come true, *[Enter an old couple, joining chorus as before.]* that man doesn't find out until he's on the other side. So everybody is quite happy. One of my most faithful adherents- unfortunately, he can only be present at week-ends-firmly believes that he is going to be the first Prime Minister of the new Mid-North-East-State-when it is created. That was a risky prophecy of mine, but badly needed more worshippers around that time. *[He looks at his watch.]*

The next one to arrive is my most faithful penitent. She wants children, so she is quite a sad case. Or you would think so. But even in the midst of her most self-abasing convulsions, she manages to notice everything that goes on around her. In fact, I had better get back to the service. She is always the one to tell me that my mind is not on the service ...

[Altering his manner.]

Rise, Brother Chume. Rise and let the Lord enter into you. Apprentice of the Lord, are you not he upon whose shoulders my mantle must descend? *[A woman (the penitent) enters and kneels at once in an attitude of prayer.]*

CHUME: It is so, Brother Jero.

JERO: Then why do you harden your heart? The Lord says that you may not beat the good woman whom he has chosen to be your wife, to be your cross in your period of trial, and will you disobey him ?

CHUME: No, Brother Jero.

JERO: Will you?

CHUME: No, Brother Jero.

JERO: Praise be to God.

CONGREGATION: Praise be to God.

JERO: Allelu ...

CONGREGATION: Alleluia.

[To the clapping of hands, they sing 'I will follow Jesus', swaying and then dancing as they get warmer.

Brother Jero, as the singing starts, hands two empty bottles to Chume who goes to fill them with water from the sea. Chume has hardly gone out when the drummer boy enters from upstage, running. He is rather weighed down by two 'gangan' drums, and darts fearful glances back in mortal terror of whatever it is that is chasing him. This turns out, some ten or so yards later, to be a woman, sash tightened around her waist, wrapper pulled so high up that half the length of her thigh is exposed. Her, sleeves are rolled above the shoulder and she is striding after the drummer in no unmistakable manner. Jeroboam, who has followed the woman's exposed limbs with quite distressed concentration, comes suddenly to himself and kneels sharply, muttering.

Again the drummer appears, going across the stage in a different direction, running still. The woman follows, distance undiminished, the same set pace, Jeroboam calls to him.]

JERO: What did you do to her?

DRUMMER *[without stopping.]*: Nothing. I was only drumming and then she said I was using it to abuse her father.

JERO [*as the woman comes into sight*]: Woman!

[*she continues out. Chume enters with filled bottles.*]

JERO [*shaking his head.*]: I know her very well. She's my neighbour. But she ignored me ...

[*Jeroboam prepares to bless the water when once again the procession appears, drummer first and the woman after.*]

JERO: Come here. She wouldn't dare touch you.

DRUMMER [*increasing his pace.*]: You don't know her ...

[*The woman comes in sight.*]

JERO: Neighbour, neighbour. My dear sister in Moses ...

[*She continues her pursuit offstage. Jero hesitates, then hands over his rod to Chume and goes after them.*]

CHUME [*suddenly remembering.*]: You haven't blessed the water, I Brother Jeroboam.

[*Jero is already out of hearing. Chume is obviously bewildered by the new responsibility. He fiddles around with the rod and eventually uses it to conduct the singing, which has gone on all this time, flagging when the two contestants came in view, and reviving again after they had passed. Chume has hardly begun to conduct his band when a woman detaches herself from the crowd in the expected penitent's paroxysm.*]

PENITENT: Echa, echa, echa, echa, echa ...eei, eei, eei, eei.

CHUME [*taken aback.*]: Ngh? What's the matter?

PENITENT: Efie, efie, efie, efie, enh, enh, enh, enh ...

CHU ME [*dashing off*]: Brother Jeroboam, Brother Jeroboam ...

[*Chume shouts in all directions, returning confusedly each time in an attempt to minister to the penitent. As Jeroboam is not forthcoming, he begins, very uncertainly, to sprinkle some of the water on the penitent, crossing her on the forehead. This has to be achieved very rapidly in the brief moment when the penitent's head is lifted from beating on the ground.*]

CHUME [*stammering.*]: Father ... forgive her.

CONGREGATION [*strongly.*]: Amen.

[*The unexpectedness of the response nearly throws Chume, but then it also serves to bolster him up, receiving such support.*]

CHUME: Father, forgive her.

CONGREGATION: Amen-

[*The penitent continues to moan.*]

CHUME: Father forgive her.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Father forgive am.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME [*warming up to the task.*] : Make you forgive am. Father.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

[*They rapidly gain pace, Chume getting quite carried away.*]

CHUME: I say make you forgive am.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Forgive am one time.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Forgive am quick quick.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Forgive am, Father.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Forgive us all.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CHUME: Forgive us all.

[*And then, punctuated regularly with Amens ...*]

Yes, Father, make you forgive us all. Make you save us from palaver. Save us from trouble at home. Tell our wives not to give us trouble ...

[*The penitent has become placid. she is stretched out flat on the ground.*]

...Tell our wives not to give us trouble. And give us money to have a happy home. Give us money to satisfy our daily necessities. Make you no forget those of us who dey struggle daily. Those who be clerk today, make them Chief Clerk tomorrow. Those who are Messenger today, make them Senior Service tomorrow. Yes Father, those who are Messenger today, make them Senior Service tomorrow.

[*The Amens grow more and more ecstatic.*]

Those who are petty trader today, make them big contractor tomorrow. Those who dey sweep street today, give them their own big office tomorrow. If we dey walka today, give us our own bicycle tomorrow. I say those who dey walka today, give them their own bicycle tomorrow. Those who have bicycle today, they will ride their own car tomorrow.

[*The enthusiasm of the response, becomes, at this point, quite overpowering.*]

I say those who dey push bicycle, give them big car tomorrow. Give them big car tomorrow. Give them big car tomorrow, give them big car tomorrow.

[*The angry woman comes again in view, striding with the same gait as before, but now in possession of the drums. A few yards behind, the drummer jog-trots wretchedly, pleading.*]

DRUMMER: I beg you, give me my drums. I take God's name beg you, I was not abusing your father ... For God's sake I beg you ... I was not abusing your father. I was only drumming. ...I swear to God I was only drumming. ...

[They pass through.]

PENITENT *[who has become much alive from the latter part of the prayers, pointing ...]*:
Brother Jeroboam!

[Brother Jero has just come in view. They all rush to help him back into the circle. He is a much altered man, his clothes torn and his face bleeding.]

JERO *[slowly and painfully]*: Thank you, brother, sisters. Brother Chume, kindly tell these friends to leave me. I must pray for the soul of that sinful woman. I must say a personal prayer for her.

[Chume ushers them off: They go reluctantly, chattering excitedly.]

JERO: Prayers this evening, as usual. Late afternoon.

CHUME *[shouting after.]*: Prayers late afternoon as always. Brother Jeroboam says God keep you till then. Are you all right, Brother Jero?

JERO: Who would have thought that she would dare lift her hand against a prophet of God!

CHUME: Women are a plague, brother.

JERO: I had a premonition this morning that women would be my downfall today. But I thought of it only in the spiritual sense.

CHUME: Now you see how it is, Brother Jero.

JERO: From the moment I looked out of my window this morning, I have been tormented one way or another by the Daughters of Discord.

CHUME *[eagerly]*: That is how it is with me, Brother. Every day. Every morning and night. Only this morning she made me take her to the house of some poor man, whom she says owes her money. She loaded enough on my bicycle to lay a siege for a week, and all the thanks I got was abuse.

JERO: Indeed, it must be a trial, Brother Chume ...and it requires great ...

[He becomes suddenly suspicious.]

Brother Chume, did you say that your wife went to make camp only this morning at the house of a ... of someone who owes her money?

CHUME: Yes, I took her there myself.

JERO: Er ...indeed, indeed. *[Coughs.]* Is ...your wife a trader?

CHUME: Yes, Petty trading, you know. Wool, silk, cloth, and all that stuff.

JERO: Indeed. Quite an enterprising woman. *[Hems.]* Er ...where was the house of this man ...I mean, this man who owes her money?

CHUME: Not very far from here. Ajete settlement, a mile or so from here. I did not even know the place existed until today.

JERO [*to himself*]: So that is your wife ...

CHUME: Did you speak, prophet?

JERO: No, no. I was only thinking how little women have changed since Eve, since Delilah, since Jezebel. But we must be strong of heart. I have my own cross too, Brother Chume. This morning alone I have been thrice in conflict with the Daughters of Discord. First there was ... no, never mind that. There is another who crosses my path every day. Goes to swim just over there and then waits for me to be in the midst of my meditation before she swings her hips across here, flaunting her near nakedness before my eyes ...

CHUME [*to himself; with deep feeling*]: I'd willingly change crosses with you.

JERO: What, Brother Chume?

CHUME: I was only praying.

JERO: Ah. That is the only way. But er ...I wonder really what the will of God would be in this matter. After all, Christ himself was not averse to using the whip when occasion demanded it.

CHUME [*eagerly*]: No, he did not hesitate.

JERO: In that case, since, Brother Chume, your wife seems such a wicked, wilful sinner, I think.

..

CHUME: Yes, Holy One ...?

JERO: You must take her home tonight. ..

CHUME: Yes...

JERO: And beat her.

CHUME [*kneeling, clasps Jero's hand in his*]: Prophet!

JERO: Remember, it must be done in your own house. Never show the discord within your family to the world. Take her home and beat her.

[*Chume leaps up and gets his bike*.]

JERO: And Brother Chume ...

CHUME: Yes, Prophet ...

JERO: The Son of God appeared to me again this morning, robed just as he was when he named you my successor. And he placed his burning sword on my shoulder and called me his knight. He gave me a new title ... but you must tell it to no one-yet.

CHUME: I swear, Brother Jero.

JERO [*staring into space*]: He named me the Immaculate Jero, Articulate Hero of Christ's Crusade.

[*Pauses, then, with a regal dismissal*-] You may go, Brother Chume.

CHUME: God keep you, Brother Jero-the Immaculate.

JERO: God keep you, brother. [*He sadly fingers the velvet cape.*]

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE IV

As Scene II, i.e. in front of the Prophet's home. Later that day. Chume is just wiping off the last crumbs of yams on his plate. Amope watches him.

AMOPE: You can't say I don't try. Hounded out of house by debtors, I still manage to make you a meal.

CHUME [*sucking his fingers, sets down his plate.*]: It was a good meal too.

AMOPE: I do my share as I've always done. I cooked you your meal. But when I ask you to bring me some clean water, you forget.

CHUME: I did not forget.

AMOPE: You keep saying that. Where is it then? Or perhaps the bottles fell off your bicycle on the way and got broken.

CHUME: That's a child's lie, Amope. You are talking to a man.

AMOPE: A fine man you are then, when you can't remember a simple thing like a bottle of clean water.

CHUME: I remembered. I just did not bring it. So that is that. And now pack up your things because we're going home.

[*Amope stares at him unbelieving.*]

CHUME: Pack up your things; you heard what I said.

AMOPE [*scrutinising*]: I thought you were a bit early to get back. You haven't been to work at all. You've been drinking all day

CHUME: You may think what suits you. You know I never touch any liquor.

AMOPE. You needn't say it as if it was a virtue. You don't drink only because you cannot afford to. That is all the reason there is.

CHUME. Hurry. I have certain work to do when I get home and I don't want you delaying me.

AMOPE: Go then. I am not budging from here till I get my money.

[Chume leaps up, begins to throw her things into the bag. Brother Jero enters, hides, and observes them.]

AMOPE *[quietly]*: I hope you have ropes to tie me on the bicycle, because I don't intend to leave this place unless I am carried out. One pound eight shillings is no child's play. And it is my money not yours.

[Chume has finished packing the bag and is now tying it on to the carrier.]

AMOPE: A messenger's pay isn't that much you know-just in case you've forgotten you're not drawing a minister's pay. So you better think again if you think I am letting my hard-earned money stay in the hands of that good-for-nothing. Just think, only this morning while I sat here, a Sanitary Inspector came along. He looked me all over and he made some notes in his book. Then he said, I suppose, woman, you realise that this place is marked down for slum clearance. This to me, as if I lived here. But you sit down and let your wife be exposed to such insults. And the Sanitary Inspector had a motor-cycle too, which is one better than a bicycle.

CHUME. You'd better be ready soon.

AMOPE. A Sanitary Inspector is a better job anyway. You can make something of yourself one way or another. They all do. A little here and a little there, call it bribery if you like, but see where you've got even though you don't drink or smoke or take bribes. He's got a motor-bike ...anyway, who would want to offer cola to a Chief Messenger?

CHUME. Shut your big mouth!

AMOPE *[aghast]*: What did you say?

CHUME: I said shut your, big mouth.

AMOPE: To me?

CHUME: Shut your big mouth before I shut it for you *[Ties the mat round the cross-bar.]* And you'd better start to watch your steps from now on. My period of abstinence is over. My cross has been lifted off my shoulders by the Prophet.

AMOPE *[genuinely distressed]*: He's mad.

CHUME *[viciously typing up the mat.]*: My period of trial is over

[Practically strangling the mat] If you so much as open your mouth now ... *[Gives a further twist to the mat.]*

AMOPE: God help me. He's gone mad.

CHUME *[imperiously.]*: Get on the bikle.

AMOPE *[backing away.]*: I'm not coming with you.

CHUME: I said get on the bike!

AMOPE: Not with you. I'll find my own way home.

[Chume advances on her. Amope screams for help. Brother Jero crosses himself. Chume catches her by the arm but she escapes, runs to the side of the house and beats on the door.]

AMOPE: Help! Open the door for God's sake. Let me in. Let me in ...

[Brother Jero grimaces.]

Is anyone in? Let me in for God's sake! Let me in or God will punish you!

JERO: *[sticking his fingers in his ears.]* Blasphemy

AMOPE: Prophet! Where's the Prophet?

[Chume lifts her bodily.]

AMOPE: Let me down! police! Police!

CHUME *[setting her down.]*: If you shout just once more I'll ... *[He raises a huge fist.]*

[Brother Jero gasps in mock-horror, tut-tuts, covers his eyes with both hands, and departs.]

AMOPE: Ho! You're mad, You're mad.

CHUME: Get on the bike

AMOPE: Kill me! Kill me!

CHUME: Don't tempt me, Woman!

AMOPE: I won't get on that thing unless you kill me first.

CHUME: Woman!

[Two or three neighbours arrive, but keep a respectful distance.]

AMOPE: Kill me. You'll have to kill me Everybody come and bear witness. He's going to kill me so come and bear witness. I forgive everyone who has ever done me evil. I forgive all my debtors especially the Prophet who has got me into all this trouble. Prophet Jeroboam, I hope you will pray for my soul in heaven ...

CHUME: You have no soul, wicked woman.

AMOPE: Brother Jeroboam, curse this man for me. You may keep the velvet cape if you curse this foolish man. I forgive you your debt. Go on, foolish man, kill me. If you don't kill me you won't do well in life.

CHUME *[suddenly.]*: Shut up!

AMOPE *[warming up as more people arrive.]*: Bear witness all of you. Tell the Prophet I forgive him his debt but he must curse this foolish man to hell. Go on, kill me!

CHUME *[who has turned away, forehead knotted in confusion.]*: Can't you shut up, woman!

AMOPE: No, you must kill me. ..

[The crowd hub-bubs all the time, scared as always at the prospect of interfering in man-wife palaver, but throwing in half-hearted tokens of concern-]

'What's the matter, eh?' 'you two keep quiet.'

'Who are they?' 'Where is Brother Jero?' 'Do you think we ought to send for the Prophet?' 'These women are so troublesome! Somebody go and call Brother Jero.'

CHUME [*lifting up Amope's head. She has, in the tradition of the Kill me' woman, shut her eyes tightly and continued to beat her fists on the Prophet's doorstep.*]: Shut up and listen. Did I hear you say Prophet Jeroboam?

AMOPE: See him now. Let you bear witness. He's going to kill me ...

CHUME: I'm not touching you but I will if you don't answer my question.

AMOPE: Kill me. ..Kill me. ..

CHUME: Woman, did you say it was the Prophet who owed you money?

AMOPE: Kill me ...

CHUME: Is this his house? [*Gives her head a shake.*] Does he live here ...?

AMOPE: Kill me. ..Kill me ...

CHUME [*pushing her away in disgust and turning to the crowd. They retreat instinctively.*]: Is Brother Jeroboam ...?

NEAREST ONE [*hastily.*]: No, no. I'm not Brother Jero. It's not me.

CHUME: Who said you were? Does the Prophet live here?

SAME MAN: Yes. Over there. That house.

CHU ME [*Turns round and stands stock still. Stares at the house for quite sometime.*]: So ... so ... so ...SO ...

[*The crowd is puzzled over his change of mood. Even Amope looks up wonderingly. Chume walks towards his bicycle, muttering to himself*]

So ... so ... Suddenly he decides I may beat my wife, eh? For his own convenience. At his own convenience.

[*He releases the bundle from the carrier, pushing it down carelessly. He unties the mat also.*]

BYSTANDER: What next is he doing now?

CHUME [*mounting his bicycle.*]: You stay here and don't move. If I don't find you here when I get back ...

[*He rides off. They all stare at him in bewilderment.*]

AMOPE: He is quite mad. I have never seen him behave like that.

BYSTANDER: You are sure?

AMOPE: Am I sure? I'm his wife, so I ought to know, shouldn't I?

A WOMAN BYSTANDER: Then you ought to let the Prophet see to him. I had a brother once who had the fits and foamed at the mouth every other week. But the Prophet cured him. Drove the devils out of him, he did.

AMOE: This one can't do anything. He's a debtor and that's all he knows. How to dodge his creditors.
[She prepares to unpack her bundle.]

LIGHTS FADE

SCENE V

The beach. Nightfall.

A man in an elaborate 'agbada' outfit, with long train and a cap is standing right, downstage, with a sheaf of notes in his hand. He is obviously delivering a speech, but we don't hear it. It is undoubtedly a fire-breathing speech.

The Prophet Jeroboam stands bolt upright as always, surveying him with lofty compassion.

JERO: I could teach him a trick or two about speech-making. He's a member of the Federal House, a back-bencher but with one eye on a ministerial post. Comes here every day to rehearse his speeches. But he never makes them. Too scared. *[Pause. The Prophet continues to study the Member.]* Poor fish. *[Chuckles and looks away.]* Oho, I had almost forgotten Brother Chume. By now he ought to have beaten his wife senseless. Pity! That means I've lost him. He is fulfilled and no longer needs me. True, he still has to become a Chief Clerk. But I have lost him as the one who was most dependent on me. ... Never mind, it was a good price to pay for getting rid of my creditor. ... *[Goes back to the Member.]* Now he. ..he is already a member of my flock. He does not know it of course, but he is a follower. All I need do is claim him. Call him and say to him, My dear Member of the House, your place awaits you. ... Or do you doubt it? Watch me go to work on him. *[Raises his voice.]* My dear brother in Jesus! *[The Member stops, looks round, resumes his speech.]* Dear brother, do I not know you? *[Member stops, looks round again.]* Yes, you. In God's name, do I not know you?
[Member approaches slowly.] Yes indeed. It is you. And you come as it was predicted. Do you not perhaps remember me? *[Member looks at him scornfully.]*

Then you cannot be of the Lord. In another world, in another body, we met, and my message was for you. ... [*The Member turns his back impatiently.*]

MEMBER [*with great pomposity.*]: Go and practice your fraudulences on another person of greater gullibility.

JERO [*very kindly, smiling.*]: Indeed the matter is quite plain. You are not of the Lord. And yet such is the mystery of God's ways that his favour has lighted upon you. ... Minister ...

Minister by the grace of God ...

[*The Member stops dead.*]

Yes, brother, we have met. I saw this country plunged into strife. I saw the mustering of men, gathered in the name of peace through strength. And at a desk, in a large gilt room, great men of the land awaited your decision. Emissaries of foreign nations hung on your word, and on the door leading into your office, I read the words. Minister for War [*The Member turns round slowly.*] ...It is a position of power. But are you of the Lord? Are you in fact worthy? Must I, when I have looked into your soul, as the Lord has commanded me to do, must I pray to the Lord to remove this mantle from your shoulders and place it on a more God-fearing man? [*The Member moves forward unconsciously. The Prophet gestures him to stay where he is. Slowly-*] Yes ...I think I see Satan in your eyes. I see him entrenched in your eyes ... [*The Member grows fearful raises his arms in half-supplication.*] The Minister for War would be the most powerful position in the Land. The Lord knows best, but he has empowered his lieutenants on earth to intercede where necessary. We can reach him by fasting and by prayer ... we can make recommendations ... Brother, are you of God or are you ranged among his enemies ...?

[*Jeroboam's voice fades away and the light also dims on him as another voice-Chume's-is heard long before he is seen. Chume enters from left, downstage, agitated, and talking to himself*]

CHUME: ...What for. ..why, why, why, why 'e do am? For two years 'e no let me beat that woman. Why? No because God no like am. That one no fool me any more. 'E no be man of God. 'E say 'in sleep for beach whether 'e rain or cold but that one too na big lie. The man get house and 'e sleep there every night. But 'in get peace for 'in house, why 'en no let me get peace for mine? Wetin I do for am? Anyway, how they come meet? Where? When? What time 'e know say na my wife? Why 'e dey protect am from me? Perhaps na my woman dey give am chop and in return he promise to see say 'in husband no beat am. A-a-a -ah, give am clothes, give am food and all comforts and necessities, and for exchange,'in go see that 'in husband no beat am. ..Mmmmmm.

[*He shakes his head.*]

No, is not possible. I no believe that. If na so, how they come quarrel then. Why she go sit for front of 'in house demand all 'in money. I no beat am yet ...

[He stops suddenly. His eyes slowly distend.]

Almighty! Chume, fool! O God, my life done spoil. My life done spoil finish. O God a no' get eyes for my head. Na lie. Na big lie. Na pretence 'e de pretend that wicked woman! She no' go collect nutin! She no' mean to sleep for outside house. The Prophet na 'in lover. As soon as 'e dark, she go in go meet 'in man. O God, wetin a do for you wey you go spoil your life done spoil. Your life done spoil. Yeah, ye. ..ah ah, ye-e-ah, they done ruin Chume for life. ..ye-e-ah, ye-e-ah, ...

[He goes off, his cries dying offstage.]

Light up slowly on Jero. The Member is seen kneeling now at Brother Jero's feet, hands clasped, and shut eyes raised to heaven ...]

JERO *[his voice gaining volume.]*: Protect him therefore. Protect him when he must lead this country as his great ancestors have done. He comes from the great warriors of the land. In his innocence he was not aware of this heritage. But you know everything and you plan it all. There is no end, no beginning ...

[Chume rushes in, brandishing a cutlass.]

CHUME: Adulterer! Woman-thief! Na today a go finish you!

[Jero looks round.]

JERO: God save us! *[Flees.]*

MEMBER *[unaware of what is happening.]*: Amen

[Chume follows out Jero, murder-bent.]

MEMBER: Amen. Amen. *[Open his eyes.]* Thank you, Proph ...

[He looks right, left, back, front, but he finds the Prophet has really disappeared.]

Prophet! Prophet! *[Turns sharply and rapidly in every direction, shouting.]* Prophet, where are you? Where have you gone? Prophet! Don't leave me, Prophet, don't leave me! *[He looks up slowly, with awe.]*

Vanished. Transported. Utterly transmuted. I knew it. I knew, I stood In the presence of God. ...

[He bows his head, standing. Jeroboam enters quite collected, and points to the convert.]

JEROBOAM: You heard him. With your own ears you heard him. By tomorrow, the whole town will have heard about the miraculous disappearance of Brother Jeroboam. Testified to and witnessed by no less a person than one of the elected Rulers of the country ...

MEMBER *[goes to sit on the mound.]*: I must await his return. If I show faith, he will show himself again to me. ... *[Leaps up as he is about to sit.]* This is holy ground. *[Takes off his shoes and sits. Gets up again.]* I must hear further from him. Perhaps he has gone to learn more about this ministerial post. ...*[Sits.]*

JEROBOAM: I have already sent for the police. It is a pity about Chume. But he has given me a fright, and no prophet likes to be frightened. With the influence of that nincompoop I should succeed in getting him certified with ease. A year in the lunatic asylum would do him good anyway.

[The Member is already nodding.]

Good ... He is falling asleep. When I appear again to him he'll think I have just fallen from the sky. Then I'll tell him that Satan just sent one of his emissaries into the world under the name of Chume, and that he had better put him in a strait-jacket at once ... And so the day is saved. The police will call on me here as soon as they catch Chume. And it looks as if it is not quite time for the fulfillment of that spiteful man's prophecy.

[He picks up a pebble and throws it at the Member. At the same time a ring of red or some equally startling colour plays on his head, forming a sort of halo. The Member wakes with a start, stares open-mouthed, and falls flat on his face, whispering in rapt awe -]

'Master!'

BLACKOUT

THE END

8.5 Study Questions and Essay Topics

8.5.1 Study Questions

- (i) Jeroboam is one of the Old Testament prophets in the Bible. How significant is Jero's use of this name?
- (ii) How important is the beach to Jero's ministry?
- (iii) Why is it important for Jero to keep Chume from beating his wife?
- (iv) Would you say Jero is a product of the Old Prophet?

- (v) List three other themes of the play apart from hypocrisy.

8.5.2 Essay Topics

- (i) The play opens with a soliloquy by Jeroboam. In what ways does the soliloquy foreshadow the contents of the play?
- (ii) What factors make it possible for Jero to deceive his flock for so long?
- (iii) What is the significance of female characters in the play?
- (iv) Discuss how the play exploits the tension of the relationships between Jero and the Old Prophet and between Chume and Amope.
- (v) How does Jero use language to manipulate people?
- (vi) Compare and contrast the characters of Jero and Goodfellow in *The Black Mamba Two*.
- (vii) Compare and contrast the nature of oppression in *The Trials of Brother Jero* and that in *The Black Mamba Two*.
- (viii) Compare and contrast the theme of exploitation in the two plays.

Module Summary

Now that you are done with the module, it is appropriate that you remember what we have discussed in the eight units. In Unit 1 we have looked at the definition and origins of drama, particularly as relates to ancient Egypt and ancient Greece, while in Unit 2 we have learnt about the themes and forms of drama especially tragedy, comedy and tragicomedy. In Unit 3 we have focused on the elements and structure of tragedy as postulated by Aristotle, while in Unit 4 we have been concerned with modern African drama, with the purpose of giving you an idea of the nature of African drama and how African drama relates to western drama; and in Unit 5 we have learnt that drama has a number of key elements such as text, dialogue, stage directions, plot, tone and structure. In Unit 6 we have focused on essay topics and study questions to help you consolidate what you have learnt in the module. In the last two units, 7 and 8, our focus has been on the excerpts of the two dramatic texts, *The Black Mamba* and *The Trials of Brother Jero* respectively. We hope, therefore, that you are now able to relate the various units of the module to each other – for example the relationship between the theories as presented to you in units 1-6 and the dramatic texts in units 7 and 8. We further hope that, having been exposed to the contents of the module, you are now able to confront any play with a degree of confidence and competence.

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