**REVISION ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

**THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE BY BERTLOIT BRECHT**

**Q1.** **“Having given birth does not qualify someone to be mother of a child, but the care and nurture offered to that child is the one that does so.” With illustrations from Bertloit Brecht’s The Caucasian Chalk Circle, qualify this statement. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

- True motherland is not necessarily biological but it goes beyond that. It is about how someone cares and nurtures for that child she claims to be her mother.

- Accept any other relevant introduction.

**Body**

-Natella Abashwili, the biological mother of Michael, abandons the child as she flees the city.

- The governor’s wife is said to be more interested in her fine linen and shoes as well as horse carriages.

- It takes the motherly instincts of the kitchen maid, Grusha, to retrieve the baby and flee with it offering protection and nourishment.

- Grusha adopts the baby and risks being captured by the soldier and crosses the dangerous and rotten bridge.

- The mockery of Grusha’s sister-in-law concerning the illegitimate child, Michael, does not affect her affection for the young boy.

-Grusha endures an arranged and difficult marriage to a “dying” man Jussup, for the sake of the child.

- She fights for the custody of Michael in court and does not pull him to her side in the test of the chalk circle so as not to harm him. This proves her true motherhood.

**Conclusion**

- True motherhood has indeed been highlighted through Grusha’s tender actions no wonder she is given the custody of Michael.

Accept any other relevant conclusion.

**Q2.** **Write an essay on the disputes that arise in the play, and how each of them is resolved. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

A dispute is a serious disagreement, especially one that involves two parties and lasts for sometime. In this play, there are a number of disputes that arise. Some of the disputes are amicably solved, while others spill over to disaster.

Accept any other plausible introduction.

**Body**

The Grand Duke is involved in war with the Persians. This dispute is resolved by the Grand Duke being overtaken alongside his princess.

- There is a dispute between goat herders and the fruit farmers over the ownership of a certain valley.

- A neighboring group of peasants from another valley intends to utilize the valley under contest by carrying out horticultural farming, while the other people who are the real owners want to herd goats.

- The dispute resolution is mediated by a delegate of the state reconstruction commission from

Tiflis. The valley is given to the fruit growers because they have a good plan of irrigating

it so that it gives high yields. - Another dispute is between the two brothers, the fat prince and the governor Georgi Abashwili. The cause of the dispute is power and authority.

- The dispute is resolved through a crude and cruel way. The fat prince topples (overthrows) the governor and orders him to be beheaded. This leads to a state of fear, impunity and lawlessness. Many people become refugees.

-Another form of dispute exists between Grusha and Lavrenti’s family. Grusha’s brother is

under pressure from Aniko to marry her off to a “dying man”.

- This dispute is resolved through corrupt means. The mother of the “dying man” demands

four hundreds plasters to allow Grusha to be married to her son Jussup. This is after Grusha

is convinced by Lavrenti that she does not need a man in bed but a man in papers.

-There exists a dispute between Natella Abashwili, the governor’s wife and her kitchen maid

Grusha Vashnadze. The dispute is about who is the real mother of Michael Abashwili.

This dispute arose during the time when the governor was overthrown and everybody was

running for their safety Natella Abashwili choose material things over her son, Michael.

Grusha escapes with Michael to the Northern Mountains, she sacrifices so much for him.

- This dispute is resolved in court and judge Azdak has to pass the ruling. A chalk circle is drawn

on the floor. Michael is placed at the center. The plaintiff Natella Abashwili and the

defendant, Grusha Vashnadze step up to the circle. Each gets the child by one hand and

the real mother of the child is the one who pulls him out of the circle Grusha lets go the

child for the two times that they are told to pull, for she declares that she cannot pull him

apart, having brought him up.

- At last Grusha is declared the true mother.

- There exists a dispute between the old couple. They would like to be divorced for they claim that since the beginning they have never liked each other.

- The dispute is supposed to be resolved in the court by judge Azdak. Unfortunately instead

of signing the divorce decree for the old couple, he divorces Grusha.

**Conclusion**

Disputes are apart of life. It is therefore important for the parties to try as much as possible

to come up with amiable resolutions. If not such disputes may lead to fatal states of either parties.

Accept any plausible conclusion.

**Q3.** **It is only through a lot of strive that even the most humble people sustain their existence when faced with difficulties. Using Grusha as an example write an essay to justify this statement basing your answer on The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertloit Brecht. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

* Grusha Vashnadze, a kitchen maid finds herself with the abandoned Michael Abashwili.
* Her kind heart cannot allow her to leave the child behind to be butchered so she takes him on her flight north. An old man refuses to sell her milk without money, and an old couple cannot adopt the child.
* A soldier who threatens to capture the baby is hit on the head as she escapes with the boy and decides to adopt him.
* A dangling bridge over an abyss is no deterrent for Grusha who crosses it despite a warning that it can give in any time.
* Her unwelcoming brother, Lavrenti Vashnadze and his equally antisocial wife, Aniko, are deterrent to her resolve to raise Michael.
* She goes through an embarrassing and humiliating marriage to Jussup for the sake of the child.
* Grusha endures a harrowing trial in Azdak’s court to reclaim the boy through the Chalk Circle test.
* Azdak, a common thief who steals rabbits, hides the Grand Duke and gets ashamed of what he has done.
* His attempts to get tried end up convincing the soldiers to make him judge.
* He is nearly hanged in the course of this after three rich farmers accuse him but the Grand Duke his skin and he is reappointed judge.
* He decides the fate of Michael’s real mother through the ingenious test of the Chalk Circle.

**Q4**. **“A discussion among members of same community in an atmosphere of mutual respect and**

**honesty can achieve so much in such a short time.” Write an essay in support of this**

**statement drawing illustrations from “The Caucasian Chalk Circle” by Bertloit Brecht’s.**

**(20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

- Candidates must show that she/he understands the questions and tie it to the text.

**Body**

- Two groups sit together in a circle.

- Members of the collective farms, mostly women and older men meet to resolve a dispute

over ownership of valley.

- A delegate from the city presides over the disputes.

- The goat herders report is presented by an old man on the right as follows:

- The cheese is no longer the same quality.

- Their goats do not like the new grass.

-the grazing land is not good.

- The land does not smell of morning in the morning.

- The two groups are told the valley belonged to the goat herders from eternity.

-the farmers respond through Kato, the agriculturalist. She says;

- When fighting in those hills, they discussed how they would build up their fruit

Culture ten times the original size.

- They will construct a dam across the mountain lake.

- They will water seven hundred acres of fertile land.

- They will establish vineyards.

Due to the honest atmosphere and mutual respect, the two groups agree, eat together and

get entertained together.

**Q5.** **“A person controlled by greed has no sense of justice” drawing your illustrations from**

**The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertloit Brecht, write an essay supporting this statement. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

It is true that intense and selfish desire for something especially wealth and power causes injustice in the society.

Accept any other relevant introduction.

**Body**

- The princes of Grusinia who are drunk with power overthrow the Grand Duke and take over leadership. They kill the governor including Governor Georgi Abashwili. They beheaded him and hang his head at the centre of the door to his palace.

- Prince Kazbeki’s is hunting for the governor heir, the young Michael in order to kill him and prevent him from ever inheriting his dead father.

- The greedy prince sold the horses and food supplies meant for soldiers on the frontline thus causing the country to lose the war.

- Similarly, the corrupt corporal who pursues Grusha and Michael sells the two soldiers horses. They suffer and limp as a result and taunts them. They cannot move fast and thus are unable to catch up with Grusha whom they watch helplessly as she crosses the rotten bridge and waves from the far end.

- Natella Abashwili is so much interested in her fine dresses that she does not think about her son’s safety. She does not even want to travel on horseback. She prefers a carriage. When time runs out she abandons Michael, her son and saves her skin.

- It is evident that Natella’s desire to get access to Governor Georgi Abashwili’s estate that makes her claim back her son Michael. She ruthlessly snatched Michael from the chalk circle in an attempt to get him back. As a result she losses the case and the estate of her late husband go to the state and Grusha is given custody of the child.

-Governor Georgi Abashwili is so concerned about personal confront including constructing a new wing on the palace that he doesn’t care about his people’s petitions. He even ignores a government messages from the capital and shows no interest to what is happening in the front.

**Conclusion**

From the afore going it is true that greed is the inventor of injustice,

Accept any other relevant conclusion

**Q6.** **Write an essay on the effectiveness of any four songs used in Bertloit Brecht’s**

**“The Caucasian Chalk Circle.” (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

. **Introduction.**

Songs are usually used to communicate as well as relieve tension in the audience during live performances. In the prologue, there is a conflict on the actual owner of the valley. It is through the singer, Arkadi with his song called, “the Chalk Circle,” that the conclusion is arrived at –Things will be given to those who can make use of them.

Accept any other relevant introduction

**Content**

S(i) The first song begins on 13 -14, “ In olden times in a bloody time…………church”

- Introduces the main character and the conflict in the play.

- The governor though rich, is said to have many beggars and petitioners whom he ignores.

- The governor’s wife, as well as the baby are introduced in this song.

- This song makes the reader/audience anxious for the unfolding events.

S(ii) Another song introduces the reader to the events in the place. (Pages 18-20):

“The city is still, but why are there armed men… Noon was the hour to die.”

- This song prepares the readers/ audience for the coup and the death of governor Abashwili.

S(iii). Another song introduces the flight of Grusha with Michael. (page 30)

“ When Grusha Vashnadze left the city on the Grusinian highway …………… some milk”

-Grusha sings, “the song of the four generals which makes the reader aware of the

volatile political situation at that time. There was war in Iran and she was thinking of

Simon who was in the war.

- She alludes / compares Simon with Sosso Robarkidse and ends up concluding, “

He is our man” which shows her great love for Simon.

S (iv) “The song of the Rotten Bridge” (page 41) shows Grusha’s predicament with

Michael on her back and the angry ironshirts pursuing her.

- To save her live and Michael’s from the Ironshirts, she has to cross the bridge overhanging

a deep ravine.

**“Deep is the abyss, son, I see the weak bridge sway……………… How big they will be.”**

- The song outlines Grusha’s determination and selflessness in an attempt to save Michael’s live.

- The song makes the reader/ audience to sympathize with Grusha and laud her for her daring.

**NB**. Accept any 4 well illustrated and explained songs.

**Conclusion.**

The songs done by different characters help to sustain the suspense in the play.

They give the inside information and prepare the readers for what lies ahead

**NB**. Accept any other relevant conclusion.

**Q7.** **“Azdak is justified in giving Grusha Vashnadze the custody of Michael.”**

**Using illustrations from the play The Caucasian Chalk Circle, discuss this statement.**

**(20 marks)**

**Ans.**

1. -Grusha is not the true mother of Michael.

- During a coup when the child’s father is beheaded, Grusha picks the child and keeps him

company through out the night.

- She is in great danger-no one else is ready to touch or get near the child.

2. Natella Abashwili, who is Michael’s mother, leaves Michael behind.

- She is in a hurry to flee the city.

- She is only interested in her clothes and shoes.

3. Grusha flees with the child to her brothers in the Northern Mountains.

- On the way she faces a lot of hardships.

- The iron shirts are pursuing her looking for Michael.

- Buys the child milk with the only money she had equivalent to a weeks’ pay.

- Carries the child who is heavy on her back.

- Risks closing a dangerous bridge.

- Enters an arranged marriage for the sake of Michael.

4. When before Grusha agrees that she is not the biological mother of the child but she

had taken a lot of care for him.

- She refuses to pull Michael from the chalk circle.

-Natella pulls twice.

- It emerges that Natella wants to have Michael for financial gains.

- One of her lawyers’ divulges that Natella can’t meet the financial obligations since

the estate is attached to the child.

- Natella is eager to pull the child but Grusha lets go off the child’s hand.

-Grusha says she can’t bring him up only to tear him apart.

- She is given the child and ordered to live in the city.

**Q8. “The conflicts and suffering witnessed in The Caucasian Chalk Circle is due to bad governance.” Justify this statement. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

Leaders who don’t responsibly and competently carry out their leadership role are likely to spark off serious conflict and subsequently cause a lot of suffering to the people. Similarly the conflicts and suffering witnessed in Caucasian chalk circle is essentially caused by leadership failure.

**Accept any other plausible introduction.**

**Body**

(i) As the play begins we are introduced to a conflict pitching two groups of farmers where each claims a stake in the ownership of a particular piece of land. There is a heated argument as each side justifies why it should posses the valley. Eventually a delegate from the state construction commission arbitrates the conflict and the land is awarded to the fruit growing farmers.

(ii) The incompetency and inefficiency of the Grand Duke and governor Georgi Abashwili in the Grusinian state of Georgia. People suffer a lot. The governor’s way to the church is lined up with beggars and petitioners who carry emaciated children, and war has left people in crutches. Ironshirts mercilessly brutalise people to prevent them from issuing petitions to their governor. The governor even intends to bring down the slums to create rooms for his garden. The princes and Prince Arsen Kazbeki easily stage a coup. Their poor governance is the source of suffering to this people.

(iii) Poor governance also encourages people to be cruel and inhuman. When Arsen Kazbeki topples his brother, he beheads him. The head is fastened on the wall with nails. The old milk man is indifferent to Michael’s hunger and demands exorbitant prices. The peasant woman discloses to the iron shirt that Grusha is the owner of the child despite the danger of such information. These incidents show that people lack moral conscience due to poor governance.

(iv) Incompetence and inefficiency gives birth to socio-political as well as economic instability. Coup and counter coups are common phenomena. These coups perpetuate suffering of people since they are forced to relocate to other places as internally displaced people. This is witnessed when the Grand Duke escapes arrest and has to be hosted by Azdak. Natella has to be whisked away to safety by the adjutant while Grusha and Michael relocate to the Northern Mountains for safety. The princes are also dethroned by the Grand Duke with the assistance of the Shah of Persia. It is said that the Grand Duke has to reinstate an incompetent person- Azdak- as the judge in Grusinia.

[Accept other plausible well developed points

**Conclusion**

Therefore it is evident that poor governance causes suffering and pain to people as it is illustrated by what leads to suffering in The Caucasian Chalk Circle.

**Accept other plausible conclusion.**

Q9. “Human weaknesses affect characters negatively”. Write a composition in support of the above statement drawing your illustrations from The Caucasian Chalk Circle. (20marks)

**Ans.**

Human beings have various types of weaknesses which have had negative effects on their living in society as shown in the play.

Accept any other relevant introduction.

W1. Natela Abashwili’s weakness on adoring things.

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

WII – The fat prince greed and hunger for power

Eliminates his brother to get his power,

WIII – The governor’s lack for concern for his subjects.

He oppresses his subjects forcing people to go to war, charging high taxation.

He loses his life and power.

WIV- Lavrenti and his wife undermines family values.

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

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

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

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

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, people should learn to appreciate others and avoid putting their interests first.

**Q10. “What there is a hall go to those who are good for it”. With illustrations from the play The Caucasian Chalk Circle, write an essay in support of this statement. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

The statement means that if someone has to be given something, it should be on the basis that they are best suited for it or must have shown similar ability

(Accept any other relevant introduction, general or contextualized, making reference to the text

**c. i) in the prologue, the valley is given to the fruit governors**

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

**ii) Michael is given to Grusha because of her motherly nature**

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

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

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

**iv. Azdak divorces Grusha and Jussup instead of the old couple**

* The divorce paves way for Grusha’s marriage to Simon
* Simon had stood by Grusha in court claiming to be Michael’s father
* The union between Grusha and Jessup wars for convenience
* Simon truly
* Deserved Grusha for he came back to lack for her after the war

**Conclusion**

It is clear from above that those who emerged victories deserved the victory (Accept any other relevant conclusion)

**Q11.** **Drawing illustrations from what Grusha goes through in order to save and adopt Michael, write an essay on the challenges of being a good person in a rotten society. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

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

Accept any other relevant introduction

**Content**

(C)(i)She sacrifices the little she has in order to sustain Michael. She buys milk expensively.

(ii)She is forced to come up with a ingenuine way of eluding the iron shirts who are after him. She knocks one of them down with a piece of wood, enduring her life in the process.

(iii) She crosses of dangerous bridge, endangering her life and Michael’s

(iv) She has to contend with a society that frowns upon single motherhood. She is forced to accept marriage to an invalid called Jussup in order to normalize her status

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

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

**Conclusion**

Accept any valid conclusion.

**Q12.** “**True motherhood is not necessarily biological” Write an essay illustrating this statement using Bertloit Brecht’s, The Caucasian Chalk Circle”. (20 marks)**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

You need not be a biological mother to become motherly. Strangers can act more responsibly than real mothers. This is clearly illustrated by Grusha, a kitchen maid, in the play, The Caucasian Chalk Circle as shown below;

**Body**

- Natella Abashwili, the biological mother of Michael abandons the child as she flees the city .She is more interested in her fine linen and shoes as well as horse carriages

* It takes the motherly instinct of the kitchen maid Grusha to retrieve the body and fide with it offering protection and nourishment
* Grusha adopts the body and risks being captured by the soldiers and crosses the dangerous and rotten bridge to save the life of Michael from the iron shirts
* The mockery of Grusha’s sister-in-law concerning the illegitimate child, Michael does not affect her affection for the young boy
* Vashnadze endures an arranged and difficult marriage on paper to a “dying man, Jussup: for the sake of the child
* A mere kitchen (Grusha fights for the custody of Michael in court and does not pull him to her side in the test of the chalk circle so as not to tear him up. She fears to destroy the boy she has nurtured and brought up expensively as a real mother.

**Conclusion**

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