

BETRAYAL IN THE CITY BY FRANCIS IMBUGA

THE AUTHOR – FRANCIS IMBUGA (1947-2013)

Prof. Imbuga was born in 1947 in Vihiga county in Western Kenya. He did B.A. in Literature in the University of Nairobi and later got a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in USA.

He wrote a number of books including:

• The fourth Trial (1973) • The Married Bachelor (1977) • The Successor (1979) • Man of Kafira (1984)	• Aminata (1984) • Burning of the Rags (1989) • Return of Mgofu (2011) • Shrine of Tears (1992)
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1. SETTING

The play Betrayal in the City is set in a fictional African country name Kafira in the post-independence era. During this period, Africans end up disappointed when the African leaders they had hoped to bring change become perpetrators of corruption, dictatorship, nepotism and assassinations.

2. SYNOPSIS

Betrayal in the City is a story of Kafira, a fictional Independent country headed by Boss.

The country is experiencing political upheavals that are a result of an oppressive dictatorial government. Social evils such as corruption, nepotism, arbitrary arrests and assassinations have become common in Kafira.

A demonstration is organized by concerned university students to protest against the influx of expatriate specialists/workers. This leads to the death of a student, Adika, who is shot by a police officer – Chagaga.

It is after Adika's funeral that Mosese, a lecturer is arrested for criticizing the government's actions. After the funeral, Jusper, Adika's brother, kills Chagaga in revenge and throws his body into a river. Jusper is later arrested for the offence.

Two soldiers, Jere and Mulili are sent to Adika's home to prevent his parents from holding the customary shaving ceremony in his wake. On arrival they find Nina and Doga, Adika's parents, preparing for the shaving ceremony.

Confronted by the situation, Jere decides to allow Nina and Doga to continue with the ceremony but Mulili firmly disagrees. The two soldiers quarrel leading to Jere's arrest. Because of an impending visit of a foreign head of state, Boss decides to have a play staged by prisoners as part of the guest's entertainment. Mosese and Jere are therefore approached and requested to take part in the play. Boss promises to set free 600 prisoners if the project is successful.

Mr. Tumbo, Boss' right hand man, approaches Jusper asking him to write a play for the occasion. He promises Jusper good payment in return. Jusper agrees to write a play which is later acted by Jere and Mosese.

A prisoner falls ill before the rehearsals and therefore Boss offers to step in. Later he orders his guards to give him their guns to be used as props after realizing that the props weren't ready.

Using the guns, the actors challenge Boss and his cronies in a cleverly crafted coup. Jusper shoots Mulili in revenge.

3. PLOT SUMMARY

ACT 1 Scene 1

It is set at Adika's grave. The grave appears to have been burnt and there is a bowl of coins on it. Nina and Doga, Adika's parents are approaching the grave in the morning to prepare for the shaving ceremony.

The burning of the grave confirms that the person who killed Adika lives among them. It's revealed that Adika was shot by a police officer during a university demonstration. Chagaga, the sub-chief's brother was implicated in the murder.

Jusper comes back. Since his brother's death, he has been behaving strangely. This has made his parents suspect that he is mad. He is coming from the river where he has thrown Chagaga's body that he

had caught burning Adika's grave to prevent Adika's ghost from haunting him –as the community believes. He asks his parents whether he should go and confess the murder. Thinking that he is raving, they tell him to put on a clean shirt and go confess.

Two soldiers, Jere and Mulili, arrive to ensure that no ceremony is held in memory of Adika. They inform Nina and Doga that Juser is currently in custody. After confessing to have murdered Chagaga an angry mob almost lynched him. He was saved by the police and locked up.

Mulili and Jere argue over whether to allow the ceremony to go on. Jere being from that village understands the importance of a shaving ceremony as a traditional ritual and therefore he wants to let the old couple proceed with it. Mulili differs with him because he has been promised a large chunk of land by Boss in return for his loyalty. They fight. Jere shoots at Mulili.

Scene II

The scene is set in a prison cell. Jere is a prisoner; apparently he was arrested after his fight with Mulili. The other prisoner is Mosese; a university lecturer arrested after Adika's funeral. Like Jere, Mosese is a political prisoner persecuted for criticizing the government.

The scene reveals how Mosese ended up in prison: a man called Nicodemus/Nicodemo planted opium in his vehicle for Mosese to be arrested and falsely accused of possessing illegal drugs.

Following the incident Mosese dropped his Christian name Nicodemus to be called Mosese wa Tonga. Mosese reveals to Jere the government's plan to have prisoners act a play to entertain a visiting head of state. Jere narrates how he was arrested after being deployed in his own village to "restore order".

Askari brings Mosese a cup of tea citing that Mosese belongs to his tribe. He observes that "one needs a tall relative to get anything in Kafira". This highlights the wide spread nepotism and corruption in the state.

Mosese is disillusioned by the state of things in Kafira under Boss' leadership. He points out that the political leadership of Kafira has destroyed all the hopes that the citizens had of a better independent Kafira.

Scene III

The scene is set in Regina's small room. Regina is Mosese's sister and Juser's girlfriend. Juser has visited. He, like all university students, is in a red gown to show that they are protesting against the government. He has been released from custody after his parents were murdered.

Juser and Regina argue about the best course of action in Kafira. Obviously an idealist, Juser favours protests and head-on collision with the dictatorial government. In opposition, Regina argues that people should be concerned about survival instead of trying to fight a ruthless regime that is ready to kill. She says that "fighting the government is like fighting stones" –people with no feelings.

Regina's landlord, Mr. Tumbo comes to visit. Tumbo is also a high ranking government official. He confirms about the impending visit by a foreign head of state and that the prisoners are to stage a play in his entertainment.

When Regina tells Tumbo that Juser like writing plays, he asks him to write one for the occasion. Tumbo was supposed to conduct a play writing competition in order to select the best play for the occasion but he fraudulently awards Juser the tender to write the play promising to pay him and publish the news of "Juser's winning" in newspapers.

He encourages Regina to go see Boss and plead for Mosese's release.

ACT 2 Scene I

The scene is set in a conference room where the entertainment committee is set to meet. Kabito, the first member of the committee to arrive, is sleeping. Nicodemus –the one who set up Mosese –is the second one to arrive. Kabito tells Nicodemo how he had gotten a tender through bribery but later lost it to Mulili who had sought Boss' intervention.

They are later joined by Tumbo and the meeting begins. The meeting lacks seriousness as much time is spent discussing payment of the committee members instead of discussing business of the day.

Mulili arrives late for the meeting. He narrates how he was able to get the milk tender that had been awarded to Kabito by seeking Boss' intervention.

They continue to raise ridiculous suggestions as to how the visitor should be entertained. These suggestions give a picture of a nation that is desperate to fool the foreign head of state that its citizens are happy and content with the government.

Mulili and Kabito quarrel in the course of the meeting. The committee members then take a break to return later.

Scene II

This scene is set at Boss' palace. Boss is pulling out grey hairs –an indicator that he may be the kind of leader who wants to rule for life.

Mulili has visited him after the quarrel with Kabito. He lies to Boss that Kabito is slandering his name at the committee meeting saying that Boss is spoiling Kafira's economy by grabbing public property and hiding wealthy in foreign banks.

Infuriated, Boss orders Mulili to kill Kabito and make it look like an accident. Thus, Mulili gets his revenge against Kabito.

Scene III

It takes place in the same room the committee had met in earlier.

Jusper has come to inform Tumbo that he is no longer interested in writing the play for the event. He says it is because Regina was almost raped by Boss when she went to plead for Mosese's release. The conversation reveals that Boss locked up his wife for complaining about the incident. Having just learnt of Kabito's suspicious death, Tumbo warns him that it would be unwise to stop participating in the play.

Mulili comes back after the break for meeting. Tumbo and Nicodemo pretend they did not know anything about the death. He tells them that Kabito was drunk and had been killed in a hit and run accident. He also reports that Boss is so sad and has ordered a road be named Kabito Road.

Scene IV

This is set in Boss' palace where the prisoners are rehearsing the play to be staged for the foreign head of state.

Tumbo and Jusper are making final preparations. Tumbo is understandably scared because of Boss' hot temper. It is revealed that university students have fired Jusper for writing the play for the government.

Boss arrives and asks Jusper to stage the play. In his talk with Jusper, Boss says that students have no right to protest against anything in Kafira. He boasts that their demonstration against expatriate personnel resulted to nothing but the death of a student and the imprisonment of a senior lecturer. He says that after the demonstration he deliberately ordered for three hundred more expatriate workers in defiance to their protests.

Then they learn that one prisoner who was to be actor in the play fell ill and can therefore not take part in the rehearsal. Boss offers to step in for him and he orders the police to surrender their guns to be used as props when they discover that some props were not ready yet.

As part of the play, Jere and Mosese get hold of the guns and challenge Boss and his henchmen. Apparently Jusper and the prisoners had crafted a coup into the play.

Mulili denies any relation with Boss calling him a "distant cousin". He further claims that Boss should be killed because he spoilt Kafira's economy, killed Kabito.

Boss is angered by this act of betrayal so he asks Jere to kill him. However Jere tells him they have no reason to kill him because Kafira needs everybody including Boss. Jusper takes the gun and kills Mulili.

The play ends with Nina and Doga's ghosts mourning their son.

THEMES

The main thematic concerns in Betrayal in the City can be summarized as:

1. Betrayal	6. Fear / Suspicion
2. Revenge	7. Hypocrisy
3. The Role of the Elite in Society	8. Hopelessness / Disillusionment
4. Injustice and Freedom of Expression	9. Oppression / Social injustice
5. Abuse / Misuse of Power	

1. BETRAYAL

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

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

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

Another incident of betrayal is when Kabito, a fellow member of the entertainment committee is betrayed to Boss by Mulili. Mulili comes up with fictitious reasons for getting rid of Kabito. The allegations are outrageous to say the least. He says that Kabito has complained that Boss has robbed him of the milk tender, he has ruined the economy, he hides millions in foreign countries, and that he tried to get Regina by force. In fact, Mulili should be the "green snake on the grass," which he refers to. By having Kabito killed, he betrays both men.

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

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

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

2. REVENGE

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

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

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

After killing Chagaga and being put behind bars, Jusper's parents are found dead an indication that someone had further avenged the killing of Chagaga. Jusper further says, "I will revenge someday..." pg 33 to which we see him killing Mulili at the end of the play who must have been involved in the killings. During the meeting by the committee organizing for the entertainment for the visiting dignitary, there is a quarrel and bitter exchange over an apparent misunderstanding between Kabito and Mulili. Mulili reports Kabito to Boss with many false allegations and this leads to the killing of Kabito.

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

3. THE ROLE OF THE ELITE (The Educated)

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

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

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

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

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

4. CORRUPTION

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

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

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

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

There is tribalism and nepotism within the government. While offering Mosese tea in the cell Askari says, 'Here, tea with milk yet you don't even belong to my tribe. You need a tall relative to get anything these days' (pg 27) only those with relatives working in the government can survive in this state. While the entertainment committee meets Nicodemo tries to find out about what they will make out of it. He asks....."What size of potato per hour?" He is also interested in finding out how many days they would use. "How many working days....." Kabito suggest that they should meet every day until the visiting head of state arrives and even after the visit. Government officials are corrupt. Each is thinking of how to amass wealth.

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

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

5. INJUSTICE AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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

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

The student's lecturer decides to speak the truth during the burial by telling the politicians off when they decide to place restrictions on the mourners. But because speaking one's mind is not a crime, they plant a drug, one kilogram of opium in his car that gets him imprisoned. This is a serious case of intolerance and miscarriage of justice.

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

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

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

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

6. MISUSE OF POWER/BAD GOVERNANCE AND MISRULE

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

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

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

The fact that Boss relies on the likes of Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo to render good and sustainable opinion and advice to the government tells the extent of the rot in this system. Mulili is barely coherent and there are lots of inconsistencies in his utterances. He is a liar and a cheat, a fraud who any right thinking leader should distance himself from. Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo only think about their daily allowances and are determined to meet as long as it takes in order to reap as much.

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

Mulili uses his relationship with Boss to secure tenders and amass wealth. He manages to reverse the termination of his tender by soliciting assistance from boss. Nicodemo says that Mulili bullied his way into securing the university tender (pg 51) Appointments to government positions are based on one's closeness to Boss. Tumbo tells members of the entertainment committee, "I trust gentlemen that you know

why you sit on this committee. You were nominated for one reason: Your unflinching support for our government “(pg 52-53) it is evident that Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo are Boss’ sycophants. Mulili’s unflinching support for Boss is rewarded with farm land and grade cattle.

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

7. FEAR/SUSPICION

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

Beggars feel that the protestors are wasting time.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. HYPOCRISY

Hypocrisy refers to pretense that one has qualities, beliefs or feelings that they do not really have. Prisoners are taking part in the play to entertain the visiting head of state to show national unity. The government is trying to show the impression that prisoners are actively involved in nation building. This may have not been the case earlier since Nicodemo says they are now being treated as if they do not belong to this world. The main reason for Boss’ decision to have the prisoners take part in the play is to

portray the country in positive light to ensure foreign investment. A successful visit will make it possible for the role of the negotiators to be heard.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. HOPELESSNESS/DISILLUSIONMENT

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

The masses in Kafira are disillusioned by the state of affairs in their country. Mosese says that they had waited for the kingdom for years, then it was said it had come but it was all an illusion. He wonders how many people had set eyes on that kingdom and what colour it is. According to Mosese it was better while they waited for the Kingdom because then they had hope, now they have nothing to look forward to. He feels that they have killed the past and are busy killing the future. He says in the past, they had celebrations once a year and they had a reason to celebrate, but now there is nothing to celebrate about. People are busy shedding blood everywhere. (pg 27-28)

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

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

After Kabito's murder, Tumbo and Nicodemo realize that their tenures as government officials hang in the balance. Tumbo says, "We have no choice, like caged animals, we move but only inside the cage."

(pg 62) He says the elimination of citizens has become so rampant that one is not sure of seeing the next day.

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

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

10. OPPRESSION/SOCIAL INJUSTICE

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

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

Freedom of expression is curtailed. Jere says "the outside of this cell may be the inside of another" (pg 21) Prisoners are not allowed to ask questions. It only makes one's life more unbearable. When one asks questions he is subjected to beating as in the case of Jere. Prisoners are denied food only those who co-operate with authorities enjoy certain privileges. Jere is denied tea when Mosese is presented with a cup of tea.

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

In a bid to secure conviction for Mosese, his sister (Regina) is subjected to beating by soldiers as people watch, forcing her to give evidence against him. As a result the beating she loses hearing in one ear. Doga and Nina lose their lives after protesting the government's decision to prevent them from conducting the shaving ceremony for their late son Adika.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHARACTERIZATION AND ROLE

Betrayal in the City features the following as its main characters:

1. Boss	6. Tumbo
2. Mulili	7. Nina
3. Jere	8. Doga
4. Jusper Wendo	9. Askari
5. Regina	10. Mosese

1. **Boss**

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

- **Authoritative/over-strict**

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

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

- **Corrupt**

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

Boss is also notorious for nepotism. He assigns powerful positions to his uneducated and inexperienced kinsmen in order to secure his interests. He also gives jobs to expatriates in return for foreign donations and funding.

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

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

- **Temperamental/impatient/cruel/brutal**

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

- **Proud/conceited**

He says that students do not understand what truth and justice is. He says that their protest against foreign expatriates led to the death of a student leader and the imprisonment of a lecturer. To put them in their place, he brings in three hundred more expatriate personnel just to prove his point. He says that five of them are his own personal appointments.

- **Immoral/amorous**

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

- **Incompetent/ inefficient**

He relies on hearsay and propaganda to run the affairs of the state. He admits that Kabito has been one of his loyal servants. He allows prisoners to handle fire arms during the rehearsal which they use to stage the palace coup.

- **Vengeful/Vindictive**

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

- **Gullible**

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

- **Suspicious**

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

Roles of Boss:

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

2. Mulili

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

- **Unfeeling/inhuman/Callous**

He makes fun of Doga and Nina's sorrow due to the loss of their son and forbids them to carry out the shaving ceremony at the graveside. Even when Nina threatens to strip naked in protest, a traditional curse, Mulili asks, "....How many naked body I have seen and I am still Mulili with my two eyes, natural?" (pg 9) He is insensitive to Doga's feelings that Doga finally tells him, ".....may you die the way Adika did." (pg 10) He has Doga, Nina and Kabito killed in cold-blood.

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

- **Disrespectful**

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

- **Vengeful/Vindictive**

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

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

- **Corrupt**

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

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

- **Comical/funny**

His ungrammatical English makes him a funny character provoking laughter in the reader every time he speaks. For example, in reference to Doga's statement that an innocent man is in prison because of Adika,

Mulili says, 'That no matter, he go against law and order, tell us new thing or make clear out of here. You are trespasser.' (pg 10)

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

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

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

- **Short tempered/temperamental**

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

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

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

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

- **Sycophant/fanatical**

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

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

He does everything to impress Boss and make him think he is loyal. He even suggests that people should go on holiday during the visit by the foreign head of state, so that everyone can line up along the road to receive him. This is against logic because, according to Kabito, this is the final term and most school children will be sitting their exams and cannot afford to line up along the road.

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

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

Roles of Mulili:

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

3. Askari

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

- **Cruel/intimidating**

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

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

- **Hypocritical**

He tells Jere that they are giving consideration to his future 'despite his contribution to the national headache.' He pretends to be doing Jere a favour and says he should be filling in forms for his rehabilitation. He says that experts have to be called in to give meaning to data collected in the various research centres that the government has put up and which show that rehabilitation of prisoners is invaluable. He goes ahead to say that this is not the type of work 'any of these local pretenders would handle.' (pg 17)

4. **Mosese**

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

- **Friendly/sociable**

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

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

- **Intelligent/observant**

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

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

- **Principled**

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

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

- **Selfless**

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

- **Daring**

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

- **Sceptical/Hopeless/pessimistic**

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

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

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

Roles of Mosese:

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

- He also highlights play within a play, satire and suspense among other stylistic devices.

5. Regina

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

- **Fearful/cowardly**

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

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

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

- **Principled**

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

- **Trusting**

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

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

Roles of Regina:

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

6. Doga

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

- **Suspicious**

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

- **Forthright/open/candid**

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

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

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

He also curse Mulili when he proves adamant about allowing them to carry on with the shaving ceremony.

He tells him, 'May you die the way Adika did.' (pg 10)

- **Optimistic**

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

- **Perceptive**

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

- **Dishonest**

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

- **Stubborn/determined**

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

- **Grateful/appreciative**

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

- **Rational/realistic**

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

- **Devoted/religious**

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

4. Nina

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

- **Motherly/concerned**

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

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

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

- **Emotional**

She weeps besides her son's grave

- **Determined/daring**

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

- **Honest**

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

- **Religious**

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

- **Fearful**

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

5. Jere

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

- **Reasonable**

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

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

- **Patriotic**

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

- **Friendly/Sociable/Understanding**

He hits it off with the other prisoner with whom he enacts the episode of Pilate and Jesus from the Bible. He easily makes friends with Mosese in prison. They quickly find that they have a lot to talk about because they are like minded as far as the administration of Kafira is concerned. He empathizes with the old couple and wishes to allow them to carry out their shaving ceremony.

- **Secretive/cautious**

He does not let out the secret that Mulili allowed Mustafa to escape across the border. When Mosese tells him about the circumstances that brought him to prison, the events of Adika's funeral, Jere does not let Mosese know that he knows Jusper.

- **Daring**

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

- **Intelligent/Cunning/clever/tactful**

He and Mosese clearly carry out a palace coup to expose the villains like Mulili in the government. He says they have no intentions of getting rid of Boss because they want the act to be 'A mirror that will reflect the real faces of Kafira's front men.' He compares the prison department with Meteorological Department which confuses the public by giving contradictory information.

- **Philosophical**

After observing Mosese's reverie, Jere aptly summarizes the state of the society thus, "When the madness of an entire nation disturbs a solitary mind, it is not enough to say the man is mad." Mosese's behavior is a result of what the authority has put its citizen through-that is, oppression to the point of madness.

Roles of Jere:

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

6. Jusper Wendo

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

- **Arrogant/disrespectful**

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

- **Vengeful/vindictive**

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

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

- **Sarcastic**

When asked by Tumbo what achievement he is going to highlight in the play meant for entertaining the visiting head of state, he says, "the number of expatriate professionals had steadily increased over the year, signifying the full extent of our potential progress..." (pg 48) On the issue of name changing, he says, "but there is nothing wrong with that. Changing names is item number three in the new development plan, isn't it? In fact, Boss himself gave us a fine example when he substituted his Christian name with something none of us can pronounce." (pg 40)

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

- **Open/Outspoken/candid**

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

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

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

- **Intelligent/creative**

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

- **Stubborn**

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

Roles of Jusper Wendo:

- Major events in the play revolve around him
- His experiences expose the Boss' regime.
- His brother Adika is brutally murdered during a student's demonstration. He is arrested when he revenges his brother's killing and is released in exchange for his parent's murder.
- His unstable state of mind points to an individual who has undergone both physical and emotional trauma.
- He highlights the themes of suffering, disillusionment, betrayal and self-sacrifice. The writer has used Jusper to highlight aspects of style such as play within a play, allusion and satire.

7. Tumbo

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

- **Hypocritical/insincere**

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

- **Corrupt**

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

He pretends to be a socialist when he offers Jusper the chance to write the play to entertain the visiting head of state. He says, 'You see, the whole program has cost the government some quarter of a million shillings. In fact, I had a mind of writing the play myself, but I thought better of it.....eat and let eat.' (pg 44)

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

- **Sycophantic**

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

- **Cowardly**

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

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

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

- **Ignorant/inefficient/careless**

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

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

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

- **Gullible**

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

- **Illiterate**

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

Roles of Tumbo:

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

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

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

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

Stylistic devices refer to a variety of techniques used by writers. In *Betrayal in the City*, Imbuga Francis uses a variety of such devices to complement the plot of the story.

Some of the devices he employs include:

1. Satire	7. Proverbs
2. Irony	8. Foreshadow
3. Imagery	9. Play within a play
4. Allusion	10. Songs
5. Symbolism	11. Cross Purpose
6. Humour	

1. Satire

Satire is a form of writing where an individual or society is ridiculed or where the foolishness of an idea, practice or custom is shown. It's a form of criticism of vices through or by use of humour. The writer portrays the evils of the society in a rather humorous way. From the beginning of the play, he depicts the government as insensitive to the needs of its own people. Adika is shot dead by the sub-chief's brother for leading a demonstration against the employment of many expatriates. Chagaga is jailed and later released because he shot Adika in 'self-defense' other than listen to the protest of the people and consider their demands; the government executes those who oppose its ideas.

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

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

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

Tumbo is happy when Juser highlights in the play the influx of expatriate is a sign of potential progress. Mulili is satirized for being insensitive to the rights of children. He suggests that during the head of state's visit, all children and adults should line up on the road to welcome the visitor despite the fact that it's the final term and most of the children will be sitting for exams.

2. Irony

• Situational Irony

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

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

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

According to Jere, the character in the Pilate story (his fellow inmate) did not want to be Pilate and instead insisted on being Jesus. The said character did not know that being Jesus meant receiving

canes and when Jere caned him, he wailed and Jere was subsequently punished (it was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth) (pg 23)

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

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

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

Kabito's attack on the government that Mulili and his likes choke Kafira is ironical since he is a major beneficiary of the system. His appointment to the entertainment committee is reward for his loyalty to Boss. It is also ironical that by pointing out the truth, he is accused of sowing seeds of discord among the other people. According to Boss, grey hair symbolizes wisdom. It is therefore ironic that he is determined to remove all strands of grey hair, claiming that a leader should have grey hair. (pg 58)

- **Dramatic Irony**

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

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

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

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

3. Imagery/ Figurative Language

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

- **Similes**

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

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

Juser goes on to say, "I defended his remains like a man." (pg34) This shows his determination and bravery in ensuring that his brother's grave was not desecrated.

- **Metaphor**

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

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

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

Mulili refers to Jere as chicken hearted (pg 44)

4. Allusion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Symbolism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Humour

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

- The green grass in the snake instead of the green snake in the grass to refer to hypocrites.
- Sometimes I wonder why you possession that thing between your legs
- You must apology to me this, now (pg 57)
- You plays with fire you goat!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. Proverbs

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

The writer has used proverbs to illustrate the wisdom of Doga and his realistic nature. He says, "a mouse does not share a bowl with a cat." (pg 3) which implies that they cannot share mutual relationship with the sub-chief whose brother, Chagaga, is responsible for the death of Adika. When Nina suggests that they should report to the sub-chief what has just happened to the grave, Doga uses a proverb to explain her failure to see the futility of her actions. Thus he says, '....when dry thunder tears the sky before our eyes, do we forget the storm of yesterday?' (pg 3) Doga insists that the shaving ceremony must go on regardless of the obstacles that they face. He uses a proverb. "A cloudy sky does not always cry rain" (pg 3)

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

8. Foreshadow

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

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

After his parents are murdered in exchange for his release, Juser says, “I will get my revenge someday, even if it means going alone” (pg 33) His words are fulfilled when he shoots Mulili dead. While reacting to Tumbo’s insistence that she must personally see Boss to secure her brother’s release, Regina says, “I have this funny feeling that something will go wrong’ (pg 45) Her fears are justified when later on Boss forcefully tries to get her and she is only able to escape by jumping out of a ten foot high window.

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

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

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

9. Play within a Play

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

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

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

10. Songs

The writer has used a song on pg 8;

When we walk with the Lord

In the light of his way...

.....But trust and obey.

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

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

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

11. Cross Purpose

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

The first incident of cross purpose is when Doga, Nina and Juser appear not to communicate and their statements overlap. When Juser is at cross purpose with Doga and Nina. Juser appears not

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

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

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

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

Sample Questions

Sample English Paper 3 Essay-type questions

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

15. Oppression breeds misery and conflict. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga.
16. The situation in Kafira has bred despondency amongst its citizens. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga.
17. Many events and actions in *Betrayal in the City* are triggered by the need for revenge. Write an essay in support of this statement drawing illustrations from the play *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga.