

**IMAGES OF WOMEN AND
PLOT STRUCTURE
IN THE FIRST FOUR NOVELS OF
FIKRE MARKOS DESTA**

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BY
MEKONNEN ZEGEYE

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BY


MEKONNEN ZEGEYE

Institute of Language Studies

Approved by:

Dr. Abiye Daniel ----- 

Advisor

Dr. Yimer Kifle ----- 

Examiner

Dr. Akalu Getaneh ----- 

Examiner

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ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates two interrelated literary elements, the images of women and the plot structure in the first four novels of Fikremarkos Desta.

The thesis has three chapters. The first chapter is the review of literature. The second chapter presents the images of women characters in the novels. It presents two types of women characters. The first type of these women characters are portrayed as victims of their respective cultures. They are denied enjoyment, free movement and property right. The second type of women characters are characters portrayed as "strong / liberated" ones. These characters are depicted as thoughtful, imaginative and assertive. They are also free to love and enjoy sex and they are not submissive and dependent on men.

The third chapter deals with the plot structure in the novels. The study reveals the structural arrangement of the stories. And each structural part contains part of the story that a typical story contains. The structural patterns in the trilogies are almost identical. The structural pattern in Achame presents a history of a family from a grand father to a grandson in a chronological order. Filled questionnaires about the author and about Hamar are also appended.

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the two interrelated literary elements, the images of women and the plot structure in the first four novels of Fikremarkos Desta. The novels under study are: ከቡስ በስተጀርባ (1987 E.C.) (Behind the Buska), ኢገንጋዲ (1990 E.C.) (Evangadi) የዘርሰዎች ፍቅር (1991 E.C.) (The LOVE of the Zersis) and አቻሜ (1992 E.C.) (Achame).

There are a number of reasons which justify this study. First "women and not realistically portrayed in literary works" has been a long standing argument and studies on the images of women in literary genres are also common endeavors in academic institutions. These studies are useful as they enlighten readers to understand the role culture plays in portraying fictional characters. In addition, the studies are important as they hint readers to the thoughts of authors towards women. On top of these the studies play a significant role in correcting wrong views about women in society. Especially studies on the images of women in Ethiopian literature have enormous advantages. The studies also reveal the condition and status of women from different cultural backgrounds. They initiate us to take measures to correct our wrong assumptions about women and they also enrich our literature.

The study contains three chapters. the first chapter provides a review of literature. Here an attempt is made to establish an historical and theoretical

background for the study. The second chapter discusses the images of women. This chapter has two parts. The first part presents women characters portrayed as victims of their cultures. The second part reveals "strong / liberated" women characters.

The third chapter tries to portray some structural patterns in the novels. Also a short comparative analysis of the structural patterns of the stories is part of this chapter. Finally, the study ends by summing up its findings. Filled questionnaires on about the author and Hamar are appended.

CHAPTER ONE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature contains two parts. The first part is on the "image of women" and gives an historical background on ideas and concepts related to the topic and some studies done on the image of women. The second part is on plot structure. In this part some basic concepts and definitions of plot and the plot structure are given few points on ethnographic literature and on apocalyptic narrative model are forwarded. As the topic indicates this study has certain similarities with previous studies of its kind, and its own differences. These are discussed in the last part of the review of literature.

1.1 Patriarchal Society and the Gender Issue

The topic images of women implies the existence of certain connections with the two sociological concepts patriarchy and gender. Therefore it is important to state a few words on the relationship of these concepts with the topic.

Sara Mills (1996) defines patriarchy as "... a social organization which produces and guarantees superior status for the male and inferior for the female" (p.310). And gender, as defined by the same author, "...is a socially constructed masculine or feminine role as opposed to the bio-

logically determined difference..." (P.306). Thus gender bias is a characteristic feature of the patriarchal society. The society entertains different views and attitudes towards the sexes. It has its own assumptions. The assumptions consider women as inferior to men in all aspects: physically, mentally and socially. There are duties and responsibilities which are categorically assigned for women and which are considered "to be inferior" tasks. And there are also "superior tasks" assigned for men too. Usually in a patriarchal society the woman is responsible for the household activities, for child bearing and rearing and caring for her husband. The man is assigned to "more responsible duties". This is the norm of the society. And the society perpetuates this norm through different institutional and cultural means.

1.2 Feminism

History attests that women have been protesting against the inequalities of the sexes since the 17th century. And their protest has taken an established theoretical background in the form of Feminism since the late 1960s. According to Magali Michael (1996) Feminism:

... critiques the dominant male-centered culture from a particular position and view point, which takes into consideration the complex power relations-particularly gender/sex relations, between people, institutions, ideologies, languages and other systems that function within culture at large, and aims in various ways (depending on the type of feminism) to end women's oppression. (p.2)

And according to Jones (1989) the feminist theory has passed through three stages to reach its present status. In its early stage its aim was to trace the origin of women's oppression. In its second stage its main concern was to uncover patriarchy's changing phenomena. And recently feminist theory is again examining the nature of sexual differences. Some theories try to emphasize sexual differences while others are trying to eradicate the differences.

1.3 Feminist Literary Criticism

Feminist Literary Criticism is the critical tool for a feminist approach to the patriarchal literary culture. Feminist Literary Criticism, Meese, (1990) says "... analyzes texts with respect to the ideology of gender. In its preoccupation with how women in particular are represented in the system of gender relationships, ..." (p.197).

Feminist Literary Criticism has also passed through three phases since its inception. According to Mills (1996) in the first phase, feminist literary criticism, focused on exploring the images of women in male-authored texts. In its second phase, feminist literary criticism tried to uncover female writers in history and establish the female literary tradition in literature. And in the third phase feminist literary criticism has moved away from sex-based analysis of texts to discovering feminine/ masculine elements in both men and women writings. And the "images of women"

is one branch of the feminist literary criticism. According to Sara Mills this form of criticism "...concerns itself with analyzing the representations of women in visual and verbal texts..." (p.307).

1.4 Some Anglo-American Studies on the Images of women

In surveying studies on the images of women as Sara Mills (1996) says Kate Millet's Sexual Politics is one of the primary books that attracts a surveyor's attention. The book was first published in 1969 and had attracted the attention of popular presses and of the public. Sara Mills says the "... book concentrates on discovering sexist assumptions in male authored texts: identifying patriarchy as the source of women's textual as well as material oppression" (pp.2 - 3).

Also according to Mills, in this book Millet identifies patriarchal elements that help researchers to use in analyzing texts to discover the images of women. And according to the author ideology, class, force, and culture ...are useful tools in feminist readings.

Anne Ferguson's Images of Women in Literature (1977) is another book worth mentioning. In this book the author presents a number of important ideas on the images of women. First she establishes a relationship between the images of women in literature and the social reality. In this connection Ferguson states: "Literature both reflects and helps to create real-

ity. It is through their preservation in works of art that we know what the stereotypes and archetypes have been and are; in turn knowing the images influences our view of reality and even our behavior” (p.10).

Ferguson also stresses how an individual's images of others are influenced by the existing cultural views and conditions of the society. Therefore, Ferguson says; “...to discuss the image of women in literature intelligently, we must know something about women in history, about the psychological and sociological views that have existed...” (p.10).

Toril Moi is another feminist critic. In her book Sexual Textual Politics (1985) like Ferguson emphasizes the significance of cultural and social factors in shaping the patriarchal views of individuals. And she also comments on the images of women criticism by saying that it is “... essentially concerned with nurturing personal growth and raising the individual consciousness by linking literature to life, particularly to the lived experience of the reader” (p.43). And she also stresses that literature has to portray self actualizing women who protest patriarchal domination and play free role in society.

1.5 Some African Studies on the Images of Women, (Excluding Ethiopia)

There are some African studies on the images of the African woman in

African literature. Africa is the home of diverse cultures. And in each culture the role of the African woman is different. The role of the African woman is reflected in the works of both male and female African writers. As Katherine Frank (1987) says:

... Women in male authored African novels tend to fall into a specific category of female stereotypes: girlfriends or good-time girls, workers such as secretaries or clerks, wives and other male appendages and prostitutes... .
(pp.15 - 34)

Thus in African literature too the African woman is presented as a stereotype character. But with the coming of feminist writers such as the Senegalese authoress Mariama Bâ women and women related issues began to be objectively portrayed.

There are also male authors who portray the African woman in a different image. For instance, Soyinka presents (Bryan 1987) the woman as having the "capacity for independent action and some of his women characters are dominating men rather than being subservient to them" (pp 119 - 130). Iriyise in his play entitled Season of Anomy (1973) is one such woman character

1.6 Some Ethiopian Studies on the Images of Women

A number of studies on the "images of women" have been carried in the Institute of Language Studies of the Addis Ababa University. The stud-

ies are done , either for seminar presentations or for academic achievements. Fekade Azeze's paper (1982 E.C) presented at a conference called to discuss on the issue of women, at Addis Ababa University is the first seminar paper. The paper is a theoretical approach. In this paper, Fekade states that the socio-cultural context of a society determines a man's conception of a woman and his attitude towards her. According to Fekade this truth applies to an author too who is also a member of his society. Therefore, Fekade says when one ventures to examine how women characters are portrayed in a literary text one has to know before hand the status of women in that particular society.

Zerihun Asfaw (1988 E.C) has also studied the "images of women" in short stories written in 1949-1985 E.C). The purpose of his study was for a presentation at the 9th Annual Conference of the Ethiopian Studies held at Addis Ababa University. Based on his findings Zerihun states that women characters are portrayed as stereotypes. And are also depicted to satisfy the needs of men and are short-sighted in their views too. Zerihun, says, that women characters are not portrayed in concurrence with the services they provide to the society. But in his other study entitled "Baaluu Girma's women" Zerihun finds independent women characters. According to Zerihun society's view of women is changing so the image of women in literature too. There are also a number of senior essays on the "images of women." and some of them are cited below.

Askale Lema (1974 E.C) has studied the images of girls in eight novels for her senior essay. In her study Askale states that the girls are portrayed as dependents on men. They are also depicted as fearful and weeping characters. Askale says, men are portrayed as courageous and ready to sacrifice their lives for the causes of their country. On the contrary the girls are pictured as being obsessed with personal matters and benefits.

Tensay Yegezu (1978 E.C) has studied the images of Feudal women characters in seven novels for his senior essay. From his study, Tensay has found the Feudal women boastful, cruel and greedy. They are also against any social change and strive to maintain the status quo.

Yeshi Tadese (1978 E.C) has studied the images of women in five plays. The plays are written at different times before 1966 (E.C) According to Yeshi's finding the plays are mainly preoccupied with love as their theme. And women characters are portrayed as feeble, emotional and shallow in their thoughts.

Teferi Melese (1978 E.C) has also studied the images of women in three plays of Ayalneh Mulat. Teferi says that the playwright gives much time to the issue of women in his plays. But according to Teferi women characters are portrayed with a more sense of exaggeration.

Jemanesh Solomon (1980 E.C) has studied the images of young girls in five plays by different playwrights. In her finding she states that the girls are depicted as unreasonable and sex - driven. Jemanesh, says, there are wide range of options to portray male characters, ranging from the bestial type to the ideal one. But in the case of the girls the options are narrow and fixed only to fill cultural slots. The tastes of men are standards of measurement to approve that a girl is good or bad. She states girls are good as long as they are submissive and dependent on men and bad if far-sighted and assertive.

Alem Bayelegne (1984 E.C) examines the images of women in the works of three authoresses. Alem states the authoresses have raised important social issues such as prostitution and marital problems. And he also says that women characters are portrayed externally as attractive and lovely and internally as purposeful and thoughtful. But he has not mentioned the strengths and weaknesses of the authoresses' techniques.

Assefa Worku's (1987) M.A thesis main objective is to analyze the literary techniques of women writers in their prose works (1959 - 1985). The thesis reveals how characters are portrayed by the women writers. Assefa states that most authoresses fail to depict plausible characters. Their characters are mere representatives of ideas, not living individuals, and are inconsistent in their thoughts and actions. Assefa attributes the authoresses' technical failure to their educational background, age

and lack of skill.

Mulumbebet Zenebe (1988 E.C) in her M.A thesis gives a comparative analysis of women and men characters in some prose fictions of women writers. Her finding indicates that women characters are portrayed with potential strength to confront and overcome problems they face. According to her findings women characters are even courageous enough to confront the society at large. Mulumbebet says that women characters are favored by the women writers. Mulumbebet attributes this to the women writers' lack of skill in creating plausible characters. But she also appreciates the women writers' attempt to write from feminists' perspective.

In Ethiopia the studies on the images of women are scanty. They are scanty in sense that they do not give a complete picture of the image of women in each literary genre.

This study differs from the former studies in a number of ways. First this study differs from most of the previous studies on the images of women in that the four novels under study are by one author. Second the novels are written in a very short gap only five years have passed since the first and the fourth novel. Thus they can give a concentrated picture of the author's attitude towards his women characters and also his conception of the gender issue. Third the novels are ethnographic and some of the women characters under study are from different cultural back-

grounds quite different from the cultural backgrounds of characters in the previous studies. In these novels some women characters are from Europe and some are from a primitive and marginalized society. Therefore, this study is different from previous studies as it tries to examine the images of women from different cultural backgrounds.

1.7 Plot and Plot Structure

Plot (Plot Structure) is also a topic of analysis in this study. Thus, it is essential to trace some basic ideas, and concepts of plot in order to prepare the ground for the analysis.

Plot is one of the fictional elements. Like any of the fictional elements it has literary functions. So it has been a principal topic of discussion since the time of Aristotle to the present. Thus different people at different times have defined plot and described its functions. For example, the following definitions and functions of plot are given by the following people at different times.

Plot is imitation of an action and the arrangement of incidents.

Aristotle

Plot ... is the very beginning live, the thread of design, that makes narrative visible ... (p.4).

Peter Brooks, 1968

Plot is ... a sequence of events ... (p.23).

Marry Rohr Berger, 1968

Plot is... the organization of all the elements into a meaningful pattern (p.31).

Oscar Brockett 1979

The plot is important to a novel much as the skeleton is important to a human body - - - plot is a selection of events arranged in time, and one reason why we go on reading is to see what happens next. A true plot, however, is rather more, it has causality; and another reason why we go on reading a novel is that we are interested in why things happen. A plot has a beginning which leads through a middle to an end; it makes some kind of pattern; the probability must appear not only in events but in their sequence, a plot contains motives, consequences, relationships. (p.45)

Marjorie Boulton, 1979

... ትልም አንድ ልቦጣድ ምን ለምን ተደረገ ብለን ስንጠይቅ የምናገኘውን መልስ የሚያካትት ወይም በጊዜ ቅደም ተከተል የተፈጸሙ ሁኔታዎች የተደረጉበትን ምክንያትና የሚያስከትሉትን ውጤት ጥብቅ ቁርኝት የያዘ የልቦጣድ አካል ... ነው ::

... Plot in a novel is the answer we get when we ask the questions what and why something has happened or it is the cause and effect chain of events in sequences of time (p.158).

Zerihun Asfaw
1992 C.E.C)

From the foregoing definitions of plot and its functions one can deduce the following ideas. First, plot is an element of design that gives definite order, arrangement and meaning to events in a story. Second, it is a thread which gives causal connections between the events in a story. Third, plot contains motives, consequences and relationships. Fourth, a typical plot has three interconnected parts: Beginning, middle and end.

According to Brockett, the beginning part of a story is a place where an author makes pertinent expositions. Here according to Brockett,

the author establishes the scene where the story is going to take place. The background information about the protagonist is provided here. Also the reader becomes aware of the theme, the direction and the mood of the story.

The middle part of a story, also according to Brockett, is that part of a story where the story's complications are unraveled. According to the same author a complication may arise from a discovery of new information, unexpected opposition to a plan, a necessity of choosing between courses of actions, arrival of a character, or from an introduction of a new idea. This middle part of a story has at least two functions. It delimits the direction of the story and previously unknown things are discovered here.

The end of a story also according to Brockett, is a place where the conflicts of a story get their resolutions. This part of the story necessarily contains "an obligatory scene" (Brockett: 36) that answers the story question raised by the reader at the beginning of the story.

But literary history has witnessed time and again where the above mentioned characteristic features and functions of plot have been challenged. This challenge is often associated with the modernist writers of the first quarter of the twentieth century. The modern artists (Wilkie 1988) "...just after world war I (and some in the years just before it)

found themselves in a world deprived of a number of traditional ways of ordering experience" (p.1509). The artists faced a disintegrated society. Thus they searched for a new way to depict the social reality. They ignored the Aristotelian cause and effect mode of presenting and replaced it with the stream of consciousness /unconsciousness and the juxtaposing techniques of literary presentation, But the postmodern tendency is giving order to the disordered reality of the contemporary world.

1.8 The Apocalypse Narrative Model

As investigating the plot structures of the novels is an aspect of this study, it is essential to state a few words on the apocalypse a narrative model. Because the study on the plot structures of the novels has revealed some common characteristic features of this narrative model.

The apocalypse narrative model (ColeHa 1996) is "- - - one of the archetypes for narrative organization" (P.166). This narrative model has its own characteristic features. First, it gives order and meaning to reality in a narrative. Second, a narrative following this model has a beginning, middle and end. The end of the narrative is in harmony with the beginning, and the middle with the beginning and end. Third it provides a sense of unity and concordance. Fikremarkos applies these narrative principles.

1.9 Ethnographic Literature

At this juncture it is also necessary to state a few words on ethnographic literature as it has relevance to the novels under study which manifest some characteristic features of this mode of literature.

Ethnographic literature is a protest literature against the anti-human cultural values and norms of the highly civilized western society. It emerged after the first world war. Because, as Fass (1996) says:

The war eclipsed faith in the forward-moving thrust of unstable progress and eroded the self assurance that they were on the right path. There was a sense that the colonized Other was in possession of something the west had lost: innocence, authenticity, natural rhythms, ties to the earth a religious sensibility, and the stability of collective traditions in the face of, and as an alternative to, a chaotic sterile modernity. (P.4)

Thus the originators of the ethnographic literature too looked outside their societies for better and safer places. And they found the remote places of Africa and Latin America as alternatives. Then they critiqued the cultural poverty of the western society by juxtaposing its inhuman characteristic features: individualism, alienation and conflict against the collective participation and social harmony that prevails in the remote "uncivilized" societies. The characters do the same in the first three novels of Fikremarkos Desta. Westerners arrive to the far South Western part of Ethiopia. They found the cultural values of the natives much better than that of the western society and even characters free from the west to live with the natives in the far remote places. Thus using the actions and reactions of his characters, Fikremarkos criticizes the evils of society particularly the western world.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN CHARACTERS PORTRAYED AS VICTIMS OF CULTURE AND

“STRONG / LIBERATED” WOMEN CHARACTERS

As indicated in the review of literature most women in patriarchal societies are victims of culture. In most literary works, too, women characters are portrayed as stereotypes, languishing under male domination. But in Fikeremarkos' novels women characters are depicted from two perspectives. That is, in his novels there are women characters suffering from patriarchal domination and also there are “strong and liberated” women characters who exercise their will freely. Both types of Women characters are discussed below. Before that synopses of the stories are given.

2.1 Synopses of the stories in the Novels

2.1.1 Synopsis of the Story in Behind the Buska

Behind the Buska is Fikremarkos' first novel. The novel has sixteen chapters and 150 pages. The main story in this novel is about cultural research. Karlet Alfred, an English anthropologist decides to do cultural research on the Hamar society, particularly on the condition of women.

Karlet, arrives in Ethiopia and finds a guide by the name Kelo Hora from Addis Ababa University. After doing some arrangements, Karlet and

Kelo leave for Hamar. In Hamar, in the beginning, Karlet faces cultural problems that prevent her from conducting her research. The people refuse her providing with necessary information. Therefore, she thinks over the problem to seek a solution that narrows the cultural gap between her and the Hamar society.

Karlet finds cultural assimilation as a solution to the problem so she takes off her clothes and shoes and puts on animal skin and starts walking bare foot like the native people. She tolerates physical torture, like the native girls, to facilitate conditions for her research. Gradually the cultural gap narrows and Karlet collects information for her research. At last Karlet discovers some admirable cultural values of the society and the condition of women and finally she reports her findings to Manchester University together with her collaborators Kelo and his wife Goiti.

2.1.2 Synopsis of the Story in Evangadi

Evangadi is Fikremarkos' second novel. The novel has twenty-nine chapters and 254 pages. The story is about searching self-identity. Konchit, a Spanish young woman ventures to be faithful to the last words of her late grandfather Edward Lokaye. Lokaye who is an Ethiopian by origin is taken away as a slave to other parts of the world. By chance he meets with a lady called Agnes in Portorico. They get married and come to

live in Spain. Agnes conceives Konchit's mother Karena. Lokaye knows late in his life that his origin is in south west Ethiopia. At last, as his death approaches he gives his granddaughter Ethiopia's flag and also tells her to search and find his tribe along the Omo river.

Konchit, as mentioned above, to keep the words of her late grandfather decides to come to Ethiopia and find her ancestors. She meets with Sora in Spain. By chance Sora was from south west Ethiopia and agrees to accompany Konchit in her search for her ancestors.

Konchit and Sora arrive in Ethiopia and go to the Omo river. They float on the Omo river and start searching for Lokaye's people. They face a number of natural problems while searching. But at last they find the place where the natives of Lokaye live. Again they also meet with the first team i.e. with Karlet and her group. Lokaye's people take off Konchit's western style clothes and replace them with animal skin. Konchit appreciates the "purity" of the natives and regrets for her late grandfather's isolation from his people and living all his life in the "polluted" western world. At last she believes that some sort of change has to be introduced to these people. In addition, she believes that some promotional work has to be done on Ethiopia world wide. And she promises to do what she can along this line. Thus the story ends when the two teams are exhibiting Ethiopia's historical, cultural and natural wealth in Switzerland.

2.1.3 Synopsis of the Story in The Love of the Zersis

The Love of the Zersis is Fikremarkos' third novel. The novel has thirteen chapters and 233 pages. The novel is the story of a film production in south west Ethiopia. Hollywood selects Konchit as an actress to play in the new film production.

Konchit accepts the proposal with an intention on the basis of promoting the positive sides of Ethiopia. Then she meets a Hollywood film director called Danhom. He checks her physical structure and finds her fit for the film. Then Konchit goes to America to read the film script and sign an agreement with the film company.

The film crew arrives in Ethiopia. In Addis, the crew selects additional actors. Here Tenagne comes and participates in the film production. The story of the Base film develops on a cultural conflict. It's setting is in south west Ethiopia where the Surma tribes live. In the film a family disintegrates, a father dies, a mother and her daughter separate. After wards the latter two meet and start living with the Surma tribes. The story ends at Sheraton Hotel.

Tenagne as an actress and her father Achame as the writer of the film script receive awards. The story has a surprise ending. Because Tenagne did not know until the last moment that the story of the film was

written by her own father. The reader has no hint too.

2.1.4 Synopsis of Achame

Achame is Fikermarkos' fourth novel. The novel has seventeen chapters and 240 pages. The story is about the history of a family line. The quest for self-identity propels the story from beginning to end. In this novel Tenagne bombards her father Achame with questions to know about her past history. She starts by asking "Who are you?" and "Who am I?"

The response to Tenagne's question comes from two sources: from Achame's memory and from a document passed to him from his father, but written by his Indian grandfather Negarshiha. And the story starts from Negarshiha an Indian, from the Habsis (Sidis) tribes. According to the story these people are originated from Africa (Ethiopia). Therefore, they used to come and visit the country. Negarshiha does the same. He enters Ethiopia through Kenya. On his way to the central part of the country he arrives at Dere Shrine.

At Dere Negarshiha meets a girl called Ababa (Yeshi-Emebet) and he loves her. And she conceives for him. But soon their separation comes. Negarshiha, after his separation from Ababa, used to come yearly to the Goba mountain and pray at the bottom of it in commemoration of his love

with Ababa. In one of his yearly travels, Negarshiha meets a lady and he passes a night with her. The lady conceives Achame's father.

Achame also tells his daughter the short history of his father and his own love affair with Tenagne's mother, Emona. The story ends when Achame reveals Emona's death by a car accident.

2.2 Women Characters Portrayed as Victims of Culture

Goiti, is a cultural representative of the condition of women in Hamar society. She is portrayed as a victim of the culture. To start with, the Hamar culture denies her to choose her marriage mate. She likes to marry a husband who is a hero, and courageous enough to pick any simple reason and beat her. And on the basis of her choosing criteria there is a man called Delti whom she loves and wants to marry. But the culture forbids Goiti to marry Delti. Because, as described in Buska, "የካርላ ኅሳ የካርላ ኅሳ የጉላት ኅሳ የጉላት ኅሳ ሊያገባ አይችልም" (A member of Karla tribe, or Gulat tribe cannot marry from the same tribe) (p.10).

Thus Kelo performs some pre-marriage cultural practices and marries Goiti. But Goiti gets no satisfaction with the marriage. Because Kelo is not a hero, nor courageous enough to beat her. In this connection, in Buska Goiti comments on Kelo's behaviour saying, "... እንኳንስ ሲያየኝ እንደ ወንዶች ሊገርፈኝ ይቅርና መንገድ ለቆ አሳለፈኝ ባል እኔ ነኝ እሱ ሚስት ነው" ::

("...When he saw me, he did not beat me like other men do, instead he left the way for me to pass peacefully. I am the husband! He is the wife") (p.118).

So Goiti considers Kelo as a woman and not as a man and a husband. She even bothers about the character of children she begets from Kelo. She worries her children might be womanish like their father. Though Goiti dislikes Kelo the culture enforces her to marry him.

Goiti is also a victim of the Hamar culture in an other way too. In Buska Goiti says, **ከአንግዲህ ልቤ ከከደለው ጋር መጫወት ሊቀርብኝ ነው** ("From now onwards I will have no right to enjoy with any other man one I like") (p. 112).

The Hamar culture does not allow the woman enjoy with man other than her husband. And for Goiti who has passed her girlhood playing and enjoying with different men whom she loved is a great cultural burden.

Goiti not only misses the right to play with different men but she also misses her everyday right to enjoy the evening dance evangadi. Because in Hamar only men and unmarried girls enjoy evangadi. That is why in Buska Goiti expresses her sad feeling by saying, **ከአንግዲህ ...ኢቫንጋዲ ጭፈራ ከልጃገረዶች ጋር እንዳልሄድ መታገዴ ነው** ("From now on I will not be allowed to go to the evangadi dance with the other girls") (p.112).

Furthermore, the culture denies free movements of a married woman. As Goiti expresses it in Buska by saying, “እኔ በራሴ ፍቃድ የትም የትም አልሄድም ...” (“I can not go to any place with my own will ...”) (p. 138).

Goiti is a victim of another cultural factor too. In this case Goiti alone is held responsible for infertility, because two years have passed without Goiti conceiving a child. Therefore elderly men of the community gather and discuss over the issue and give order to Goiti's parents to take the case seriously and seek solution as the culture permits. The condition bothers Goiti's parents and in Zersi her father says to his wife, “ሁለት አመት ሙሉ ይኸው ወልዳ ለመሳም አልታደለችም። የሐመር ሽማግሌዎችም ተነጠፈች በሐመር ደንብ መሠረት ለከሎ ወይ ምትክ ይሰጠው አለበለዚያ ጥሎኸ ይመለስ እያሉ ነው።” (“Two years have passed since Goiti has married, but she could not deliver a baby and be fortunate enough to kiss her own child and the Hamar elders are thinking how he should get another wife or how the dowry be returned”) (p. 44).

Thus the culture drives Goiti to the edge of the Hamar society to let her fall over its cultural cliff. But Karlet interferes between Goiti and the Hamar culture. Karlet brings Goiti to a doctor for a fertility test. And the laboratory result, Proves Goiti's fertility contrary to that of Hamar cultural belief which exclusively assigns infertility to the woman alone. According to the Hamars' belief the man is always fertile. So the laboratory result means nothing for the Hamar society which strictly

follows its cultural and traditional rules. Therefore, Karlet deeply thinks to save Goiti from unfortunate circumstance that she eventually going to face. Thus Karlet uses her intellectual imagination and persuasive power to convince people around her including Goiti herself. She proposes to Goiti and Delit to have sex, and also persuades Kelo for his permission for the proposed sex between Goiti and Delti.

Though against the Hamar cultural law Karlet succeeds in her scheme. Goiti and Delti have sex and as a result Goiti conceives and Goiti is saved from humiliation and reprochement. At this point it is worth mentioning the significance of Karlet's interference. The action seems intended for several purposes. One is to expose the severity of the Hamar culture upon its women. Second it discerns the unscientific nature of the society's association of the issue of barrenness only to the female sex. Third the bending of the rule that a man / woman cannot marry a person of her/his tribe.

The Hamar culture also victimizes Goiti psychologically. This is revealed when a character called Sherenbe beats his wife. The beating being a case in point Karlet and Goiti start a conversation on the issue of a husband beating his wife. In this connection Goiti expresses her view defending the practice as legitimate and essential in correcting the wrong deeds of a woman. And she states the following words in Zersi with out the slightest reservation.

"ሴት ስትገረፍ ጥሩ ነዋ ! " ("It is good when a woman is beaten!") (p.56)

"ልብሽ ወደ ባልሽ እንዲመጣ ከእሱም ጋር እንድትግባቡ ግርፊያ ጥሩ ነው." ("In order to bring your attention to your husband and to cultivate understanding between a husband and a wife beating is very good") (p.60).

" በሐመር ሴት ሁለት ሶስት እስትትወልድ ድረስ ባሏ እንዲመታት ሰበብ ትፈጥራለች" ("In Hamar, a woman until she bears two or three children, creates reasons so that her husband may beat her") (p. 62).

So from the above quotations it is clear that Goiti is victim of the culture for developing such a pattern of thought that is against her own sex.

Kelo's mother is also another victim of the Hamar culture too. She is a victim of the culture in a sense that she has no right to possess any property of her own. Thus when her son Kelo marries she is not able to give him gifts. So she psychologically suffers for being unable to do what she wishes to do for her son. And she complains in Buska, by saying,

"... እኔ ከብት ፣ ፍየል ... ኖሮኝም አያውቅም። ወደፊትም አይኖረኝም። በልጅገረድነ ቴ ከብቶች ፣ፍየሎች ፣በጎች የአባቴ ነበሩ ። ባል ሳገባ ደግሞ የባሌ ነበሩ ። አሁን ባሌ ሞቷል፣ የከሎ አባት ቢኖር ለልጅ ብዙ ሀብት ይሰጠው ነበር" ("...I never had cattle, goat ... I will never have them in the future, too. When I was a girl they were properties of my father. After I married they belonged to my husband. Now my husband is dead. If Kelo's father was alive he would have give enough gifts to my son") (p.130).

In Hamar the culture forbids the woman to possess her own property.

In addition, she has no right to inherit her husband's property when he dies. That is why Kelo's mother is without any property all through her life.

Yeshi-Emebet is also another woman character who is portrayed as a victim of patriarchal culture. And Negarshiha's document in Achame describes her as follows, **“የሺመቤት ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ በሴትነቷ ብዙ ተጽዕኖ ነበረባት ለወንድ ልጅ ፍቅርን ለመግለጽ ካለይሉኝታ ስሜቷን ለማርካት በቀጥተኛው መንገድ ሳይሆን ዙሪያ ጥምጥም መንዝ አለባት ”** ("Yeshi-Emebet had suffered much suppression in Ethiopia because of her womanhood and had to go a long round way rather than the shortest path to express her love for a man and satisfy her emotional need") (p.153).

Yeshi-emebet, according to the story, is from the Amhara cultural setting. But like Goiti she suffers from the brunt of patriarchal culture. As described in the story her father gets killed for refusing to give the under age Yeshi-emebet to a husband. The patriarchal domination follows her wherever she goes. And at a later years another man asks her for marriage but she refuses and runs away to Bale from Ankober. But searchers find and take her by force. Thus the author by portraying Goiti and Yeshi-emebet from different cultural backgrounds reveals how women are victims of patriarchal culture in the multi-cultural society of Ethiopia.

2.3 "Strong / Liberated " Women Characters

Fikremarkos not only portrays women characters that are victims of culture. He also portrays "strong Librated" women chracters too. Karlet Alfred is one of such women characters in the novels. This is true when the characterization of Karlet is brought against a number of patriarchal elements of domination or to the most often customary imaging of women in literary works.

In patriarchal society the number of educated women is less in number compared to the number of educated men. Even if women are educated in most cases they do not advance to higher educational levels. In most cases also all professional fields are not equally open to female as they are to male. When one sees Karlet in this background she is different. She is a highly educated woman and she has masters degree in anthropology.

Karlet is not depicted to perform the common stereotypical duties of female characters: as a wife, mother or as a sex - object for the male characters. The reader first meets karlet preparing herself to conduct an anthropological research in a very remote and marginalized society in Hamar. She engages herself in a very demanding and exacting task. But she manages it. She uses her intellectual capacity properly to overcome the cultural obstacles she encounters along her research endeavor. Karlet pays

all the sacrifices that her research requires. She takes off her cultural clothes and clads in animal skin, walks barefoot, lives in a hut and receives physical torture to assimilate herself with the natives. And bearing all these hardships Karlet brings her research to a conclusion. In a true sense Karlet is an ideal character who symbolizes the future liberated woman.

As indicated in the review of literature, in patriarchal societies it is common to consider women as inferior to men. And most often female characters in literary works are portrayed following the social reality. But the case is different with Karlet. Her lover Stieve, in Evangadi tries to ridicule Karlet's research endeavour and the sacrifices she is paying to undertake the research by saying, “ካርሊት ! በህልም ዓለም ያለሽ ገና ከመኝታሽ ያልነቃሽ ነሽ ” (“Karlet ! you are in a world of dream not awake yet”) (p.142). Karlet, in the same book, reacts against Stieve's opinion in a modest way saying, “እኔ በእርግጥ በህልም አለም ያለሁ ገና ህልሜን ለመፍታት ብዙ የሚቀረኝ ለብዙ ዕውቀቶች ያልታደልሁ የዓለም ሚስጥር ያልተገለጠልኝ ነኝ። አንተ ግን ህልም የለህ ቅዠታም ነህ !” (“Really I am in a world of dream and I have to do more to be able to interpret my dream, I am also not fortunate enough for much knowledge and the secretes of the world are not revealed to me, yet. But you are without a real dream instead you are in a nightmare.”) (p. 142).

And she further tells him her goal. She says as an anthropologist her place is not in an embassy compound but in a field, to the people and

to nature. And she also in Evangadi opposes his view of considering her as an incapable woman by saying "...ዓላማዬን ለማሳካት የምቸል ሴት እንዳልሆንሁ አድርገህ አትመልከተኝ" ("...Do not consider me as a woman who cannot realized my goal") (p.143).

Karlet also assures her indomitable spirit in the following instance with another man too. Seyoum is a dramatist by profession. Karlet and Seyoum meet by chance and create a condition to exchange their views and opinions. Seyoum expresses his disappointment on the condition of creative work in the country. Thus he prefers to be a mechanic instead of being a man of art in the country. But Karlet in Evangadi, strongly opposes Seyoum's opinion. She tells him that a better world does not come of its accord. People must struggle to change worse conditions to better ones. Furthermore, she says to him that the world is a place only to live together. But not a place to invent new things together. Thus through her sharp comments Karlet encourages Seyoum to bring change and in the area of creative works in Ethiopia. Karlet is a visionary and perseverant character. In this particular case she is better of in her thinking than Seyoum who is presented as submissive in his thinking.

Karlet is a sophisticated female character. Her sophistication reaches to a level of peculiarity. For example, she is not interested with people having common characters. She is attracted to people with complex nature. For example, Kelo's close nature attracts her very much and

she decides to understand him and study his background. It is also her liking for a complex nature of people that makes her revolve around Seyoum. As stated in Buska Karlet says “**ዘመናችን የሚመርጠው ልዩና ውስብስብ አስተሳሰብ ያላቸውን ነው። ምክንያቱም የነገው ፈጠራና ብሩህ ሕልም ህላዊነት በመዳፋቸው ያለው በእነዚህ ዓይነት ግራ አጋቢ ባህሪ ባላቸው ሰዎች ነው።**” (“Our age prefers people having special and complex thought. Because tomorrow’s Creativity and the realization of bright dream is in the hands of people having such a complex nature”) (p.21).

Karlet is not created as a sex-object for male characters. She is not a character to be called upon only to satisfy the needs of male characters. That is a character who can say “no” and at the same time she is courageous enough to express her sexual feelings to men. This happens in several instances in her dealing with Stieve and Delti.

Above all things, Karlet is depicted as a non - racial young English woman. Her lover Stieve tries to cultivate a racial attitude in her mind. But his effort fails because of her strong non-racial views. Ultimately Karlet being free of racial discrimination decides to live with the Hamars and departs from her relatives. In a true sense her actions and decisions are the ideal actions and decisions of the future society of humankind. Her actions and decisions are for integration of human kind which is contrary to the existing condition of disintegration.

Konchit is another “strong Liberated” woman character in Fikremarkos’ novels. There are a number of evidences which support this assertion. To start with, Konchit is an educated woman character who is a “strong liberated” character to the extent of revealing feminist views. For example in Evangadi she expresses her feminist view when conversing with Sora as follows: “ለሴት ልጅ ቅርፅ ብቻ ወሳኝ አይደለም። ሕሊናዊ ይዘትንም የመፈተሽ ተፈጥሮአዊ ፀጋ አላት ” (“Posture alone is not an important issue for a woman, A woman has also a natural gift to assess mental capacity too”) (p.75).

Also in another instance in Evangadi Konchit reaffirms her feminist view by criticizing men by saying: (“ወንዶች ሲበዛ ስሜታዊ ናቸው። ወደስር ለመጥለቅና የፍቅር ሉል ለማግኘት የዋና ስልት የላችሁም። ላይ ላይ ያዝ ለቀቅ ማድረጉን ትመርጣላችሁ። ይህ ደግሞ የተፈጥሮ ችግራችሁ ነው። ጥልቁን የፍቅር ሉል የምትፈልጉት በሆዳችሁ እንጂ በልባችሁ አይደለም”) (“Men are extremely emotional. You lack the skill to dive deep and find the pearl of love. You prefer the surface and you are not persistent. This is your natural problem. In case of love you follow your emotion instead of your reason. ”) (p.77).

At other times, in Evangadi a boy friend of Konchit, Pedro, takes her to a bar, where so many people are gathered talking and shouting. In the bar Pedro mis-behaves. He shouts at Konchit saying “ጩኸትና ሁካታ አልወድም” (“I do not like shouting and disturbance”) (p.126). But Konchit does not tolerate his shouting. Rather she reacts to his mis-behaving saying “...ማን ለምናህ መጣህ ? ደግሞ ማንስ ጩኸት ይወዳል እንዳንተ ካለው ደደብ

በስተቀር ... (“...who begged you to come here? who else likes shouting and disturbance, except the one who is a stupid like you...”)(p.126). And at another time Knochit finds a job in Africa and asks her friend Pedro to go to Africa with her. But he refuses to accompany her, because he does not want to leave his beautiful country. And Konchit reacts to his unwillingness more severely by saying **“ገሃነም ግባ”** (“Go to hell”) (p.127) and she departs from him for good.

On many issues Konchit has her own opinions and views. For example, the importance of visiting historical places and natural sites and the proper utilization of time are some of the topics of discussion between Konchit and Sora. In connection, with these topics Konchit forwards sensible opinions. and she, in Evagandi criticizes Africans for their misutilization of time: **“የምዕራቡ ዓለም ጊዜን በቁጥጥሩ ስር ከማዋል አልፎ እያስገበረው ነው። እናንተ ደግሞ ለጊዜ ጊዜያችሁን ከሚገባው በላይ ትገብራላችሁ”** (“The western world not only has brought time under its full control and properly using it. But you (Africans), on the contrary, are wasting time un wisely”)(p.110).

Konchit is not a simple sex-object. This is true because she is free and open in matters of love and sex. She in her own words says, **“ለማፍቀር ... ቅንጣት ታክል ፍርሃት የሌለኝ ደፋር ነኝ”** (“I have no the slightest fear to love ”) (p.203).

In this connection, it is worth mentioning her love relation with Sora. He is the one who first proposes his love for her. But she does not simply accept Sora's love proposal. She warns him right from the beginning that there are so many cultural differences among them so not to take their love affair seriously. As she expected before, in the long run Konchit finds Sora unfit to stay in love with him.

Because according to her Sora does not know that love means "giving out". Also he is not ready to accept new things. He fears to ask excuses and lacks openness. So Konchit severs her love relation with him. In another instance, Konchit, on her way to Hollywood, meets with a man called Thomas. She loves the man and needs him for sex. But she does not hide her feeling or go round way like most other women characters. Konchit approaches the man and creates the condition that enables her to satisfy her sexual desire.

Konchit is not a character whose activity is contained only to the household. In the first place she is a character who has won a beauty contest to be called Miss Catalonia. Second, Konchit is an adventurous woman, because to keep the words of her late grandfather she travels South west Ethiopia and floats for eight days on the Omo river searching her ancestors. Finally after so many hardships she finds them. On top of these Konchit is a character who is chosen by the world famous film company Hollywood to participate in a film production on Ethiopia, entitled Base.

Emona is another “strong /liberated” woman character in Achame. Emona is Achame’s wife. Achame falls in accidental love with Emona. Achame first sees Emona in a library in Kenya. Achame intercepts Emona’s reading to express his love for her. But she reacts in an unusual way both in the real and in the fictional world. Emona gives him a nice slap in his face. The usual thing is a woman’s receiving all sorts of beating from a man. But Emona acts to the contrary and her action is a clear indication of that she is a “strong/ liberated” character who does not accept male domination.

In another instance, too, Emona expresses her liberated behavior. After some disagreement, there comes a time where Achame and Emona understand each other and start a smooth love affair. But Emona’s father Horest Striker tries to intervene in the love affair of Emona and Achame. Striker taking racial background as a reason tries to underestimate Achame and considers him as unequal to fall in love and marry his daughter Emona. But at this time too Emona reacts in an unusual way. She does not simply accept her father’s opinion. Instead she challenges her father not to interfere in their love affair. In connection to this in Achame Emona says to her father, “ ስለምታስብልኝ አመሰግናለሁ ... የማፈቅረውን የመምረጥም ሆነ ጥቁር ነጭ ነው... የማለት መብት ያለህ አይመስለኝም፤ ይህ የግል መብት ነው. . . እኮ ከእናቱ የወሰድኩት እኩል በኩል የሆነ አፍሪካዊ ጂን በውስጤ እንዳለኝና በጥቁርነቴ የምኮራ መሆኔን ልታስብ ይገባል” (“You think for me, and I appreciate you for that ... but I think you do not have the slightest right to choose the one whom I love. This is

my personal right ... also you must know that there is an equal African gene in me that I have taken from my mother and you must also know how I am proud of my color") (p 234).

CHAPTER THREE

THE PLOT STRUCTURES IN BEHIND THE BUSKA, EVANGADI, THE LOVE OF THE ZERSIS AND ACHAME

3.1 The Plot Structure in Beyond the Buska

Behind the Buska is a story of cultural discovery. The story as a spatial movement covers three nodal places: London, Addis Ababa and Hamar. And as a narrative it has three structural parts: Beginning, middle and end. Some of the important events contained in each structural part are indicated below.

In the beginning part of the story Karlet Alfred the major character decides to conduct her research in Hamar . Also background information about Karlet is given here too. As revealed in this part of the story Karlet is an English young anthropologist who has obtained her B.A in sociology from Oxford University and M.A in anthropology from Manchester University. She has read a number of research papers on anthropology and she is prepared to do more research for her further studies. Additional information about Karlet's childhood is also given. Her training in music and photography is part of her background information. She has visited a number of places with her father: France, German, Spain, Canada, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Zimbabwe.

Karlet's physical features are described here too. Her hair is golden and her face is fatty and her medium size body is built up with physical exercise. Her mental attitudes and beliefs are also indicated in this part. “በህይወቷ ሽንፈት ደጋግሞ እንደሚገጥማት ታምናለች። የምትፅናናበት ግን በፍላጎቷ ወደ ውድድር መድረክ መቅረቧንና ከማን ከማን ጋር እንደምትወዳደር ማወቅ ነው።” (“She believes that she will face constant failure in her life but what encourages her is her participating in a competition and knowing with whom she is competing”) (p.11).

The reader also knows here that Karlet is a perseverant person who does not lose hope easily and does not evaluate herself with her results alone. Even if she fails she appreciates her participation. Thus her character hints that she will face the challenges of the research that she is going to undertake. In an other instance, Karlet states the following words:- “ማፍቀር ያለብህ እኔን ብቻ ሳይሆን ፍላጎቴንም እንዲሆን እፈልጋለሁ። ትልቁ ውበት ደግሞ ሥራ መሆኑን አትዘንጋ” (“You must love my interest too. And also don't forget that the biggest beauty is work”) (p.13).

Karlet states these words during a conversation with her lover Steve and it reveals the respect she has for work. For Karlet work is more than anything else. And according to her belief a lover must respect the interests of the beloved. Thus her opinion adds to a reader's understanding of her character.

Karlet and her guide Kelo meet here. Kelo's background information is also given too. Kelo is a fourth year student of sociology at Addis Ababa University. He is physically strong. Reservation, pride and suspicion characterize his behaviour. Because of these characters his classmates at the university have nick-named him as "tigre." Kelo as revealed in this part of the story had a tragic background. He in his childhood, was thrown over a cliff being considered as a "mengei", (one liable to cause bad calamity to society), by the Hamar people. And when he first meets Karlet he has been suffering from the psychological effect of his tragic past: **“የልጅነት ጊዜው መጥፎ ትዝታ ጥርሱን አግጦ ጥፍሩን አሹሎ የታባክ ይለዋል”** (“His bad childhood memory is insulting him, forwarding its teeth and pointing its claws”) (p.15).

As the above short analysis indicates, the beginning part of this novel like the beginning of any typical story provides information on essential elements of the story: the characters and the setting of the story.

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The middle part of the story covers the arrival of Karlet and Kelo at the research site and the departure of the whole team (Karlet, Kelo and Goiti) from Hamar. Like in any typical story, in the middle part of

this story conflict arises and takes shape and intensity leading to its climax. The conflict arises out of cultural differences. The anthropologist Karlet wants to conduct her cultural research but members of the society exclude her. Because culture stands as a barrier between the researcher and the society to be researched. Whenever Karlet tries to approach them and get some information they feel unhappy and try to avoid her.

For example, in one instance, men sit for a meeting to discuss issues of societal concern. Then as the meeting is in progress Karlet tries to join the men and attend their meeting. But they prevent her from participating at their meeting. In this connection, Kelo says,

ካርለት አንድ ወንድ ብትሆኑ ኖሮ ምንም ችግር ላይገጥምሽ ይቻል ነበር። ሆኖም አንድ ሴት ነሽ። ለሐመር ሴቶች የወጣው ደንብ ማንኛውንም ሴት ያጠቃልላል ብለው ስለሚያምኑ በስብሰባቸው እንደ ትካፈይ አለመፍቀድ ብቻ ሳይሆን የምትጠይቁያቸውንም ሙሉ በሙሉ ለመመለስ ፍቃደኛ አይሆኑም።

Karlet, if you were a man, you would not have faced any problem. But you are a woman. So they believe that the law for the Hamar women should apply equally on other women too. So not only they forbid you from participating at their meeting even they will not be willing to respond to the question you forward to them.(p.41)

From the above quotation it is evident that the culture is the barrier between Karlet and the men. Because, as Kelo has explained it, according to the Hamar traditional law a woman has no right to sit with men and discuss societal issues. That is why the men have prevented Karlet from their meeting.

የሀመር ልጃገረዶች በውሃ አይታጠቡም “ ብልታቸውን ውሃ ከነካው መካንይሆናሉ።” ስለሚባል በጣም ነውር ነው። ይህችኛዋ እንግዳ ግን አልፎ አልፎ ብቻ ሳይሆን ዘውትር ስትተጣጠብ ያያታል። “መካንነቷ መቼም የማይቀር ነው። ግን ሴት ሆና ስትተጣጠብ የማታፈር ምኒቱ ባለገናት? እያለ ኮንኗታል። ሌላውም እንደሱ በድርጊቱ ጠልቷታል።

In Hamar girls do not wash themselves with water. Because they believe that “ if water touches their vagina they will become infertile. But he sees this one using water not sometimes but always. Her infertility is certain. Though a woman she does not feel ashamed of washing herself with water. How rude she is ? he condemned her. The others have hated her too. (p.55)

For Karlet, such a belief is alien. And it becomes an obstacle for her research activity. So she worries much. “በአእምሮዋ አውጥታ አውርዳ የወሰነችው ውሳኔ እስከ አሁን ያደረገችው ጥረትና ጉዞ በድንጋይ ምት እንዳረፈበት መስታወት ከሽ ብሎ ሊሰበር የተቃረበ መሰሎ ታያት” (“She felt the decision she has reached at after deep thought and her effort and journey up to now, approaching to be shattered like a mirror hit by a stone”) (p.42).

Therefore, Karlet starts seeking a means that helps her penetrate the cultural barrier and study the society from within. Then after deep thought and imagination Karlet decides that professional dedication and cultural assimilation are the only solutions to the problem that she has faced. And she starts taking measures step by step. As an entry point to assimilate with the Hamar people she learns their language. Then she spreads news about herself, saying that she is a girl, so that she might be able to exercise the right that girls of the community do. As a next step she starts going to an evening dance called evangadi. These measures

contribute much in bringing together the researcher and the community.

But an open gap still remains and has to be filled to bring Karlet's assimilation to its maximum level. Thus she does more cultural assimilation. She takes off her clothes and puts on animal skin, walks bare foot wearing beads and bracelets on her neck and arms. As an outcome of her assimilation measures the cultural gap begins to narrow and the people start opening themselves to Karlet. Hence she inquires and gets all the necessary information about the Hamar society in general and that of the condition of women in particular. As a result of her investigation she discovers that women are in a subordinate position to men in all respects in the society. Her investigation also reveals though Hamar is a traditional and marginalized society it possess social values and norms which are non-existent in the so called modern and civilized world. **“ዘመናዊ ሕይወቷን በመዘንጋት በሐመር ንጹህ ሕይወት ረክታለች። ዛሬ የሐመር ሕዝብ ለሷ የለንደን ህዝብ ነው። ከእንግሊዝ ወዲያ ካርለት ኢትዮጵያዊት ነች። ለንደን የሥጋ ዘመዶቿ ፤ ሐመር ደግሞ የመንፈስ ወዳጆቿ የሚገኙበት ነው።”** (She has forgotten her modern life and satisfied with the pure Hamar life. Today the people of Hamar are the people of London for her. From now onwards Karlet is an Ethiopian. London is where her blood relations live, Hamar is where her spirit relations live) (p.139). Thus she is satisfied with the way of life of the Hamar people. And this satisfaction has brought change upon her. This change extends in her to the extent of considering herself as an Ethiopian.

But the change that takes place in this middle part of the novel is not limited only upon Karlet. Kelo Hora also undergoes a significant change. “የትላንቱን ከሎን ትናንት ከልብሱ ጋር አውልቆ ጥሎታል። . . . ከሎ ሆራ ዛሬ አምርሮ የሚጠላው የለም። አዲስ ልምድ አዲስ የሕይወት ተሐድሶ አዲስ ወኔ በህሊናው ታጭቋል። አዲስ የተሰፋ ህይወት መኖር ጀምሯል” (“He has taken off and thrown away yesterday’s Kelo with his old clothes. . . . Today there is no one that Kelo’s mind strongly hates. New experience, new life, new courage are filled in his mind. And he has started a new life of hope”) (p.111).

So it is clear that Kelo has also undergone change like Karlet. His change is both external and internal. In the former case, he has thrown away his city clothes like Karlet so as to assimilate with his people. As a change of attitude formerly he was full of hatred against his people. But this time he is free from hatred because he has learned that his people threw him away over a cliff because they were forced to do so by their culture. When he returned to them they accepted him because the traditional law allowed them to do so.

Thus as in any typical novel all the conflicts, confrontations, discoveries and changes are contained in this middle part of the story.

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Chapter fifteen ends the story in this novel. The researcher Karlet and her close friends Kelo and Goiti are at Manchester University to pre-

sent the research findings. And according to Karlet's findings the Hamar has a rich culture. Its natural surrounding is clean, uncontaminated with the modern world pollutants. The people have rich experience in cattle rearing and feeding practices. Hamars' are open, happy and have strong love among themselves. Thus the end part of "Behind the Buska" brings the story or the research to a logical conclusion satisfying the interest of the reader.

3.2 The Plot Structure in Evangadi

Evangadi is a quest for identity. As a spatial movement the characters in the novel move between Europe Canada and Africa (Ethiopia). As a narrative the story has three structural parts : Beginning, middle and end and each structural part contains some what a similar story that is contained in Behind the Buska .

In the beginning part of the story the reader gets essential information about the story. It is here that a reader comes across the major character Konchit. The goal of the story is also revealed here. That is, the major character Konchit decides to go to Ethiopia, particularly to south west Ethiopia, to the Omo river, in keeping the last words of her late grandfather Edward Lokaye. Because the late Lokaye has told his granddaughter Konchit the following words in his life time:

የዘመዶቹን አገር አላውቀም ነበር። በጠንካራነቴ አሁን የነበረውን ፍንጭ የዛኔ ቢኖረኝ ኖሮ ምን ነበረበት። ግን አልሆነም። የኔ ልጅ ይህችን ትንሽ ባንዲራ በልጅነቴ አሁን ስሙን ከማላውቀው የገጠር ከተማ ከአባ ቴ ጋር ሂጂ አይቻት ነበር። በሀፃንነት ልቦናዬ ያን ጊዜ ስትውለበለብ የአየኋትን ባንዲራ ሮም ላይ ሯጩ ይዟት አየኋት። እና እንኪ ያገኙት በጥንቃቄም አስቀምጫት ሲሆንልሽ ግን አረንጓዴ ! ቢጫ! ቀይ ባ ንዲራ ወደ አለበት ኢትዮጵያ ወደ ሚላት ሃገር ሂጂ።

I did not know earlier the country of my relatives. How it was good if I had the hint when I was young and strong. But it did not happen so, my child, I saw this flag, in a country town, with my father, when I was a child. That flag, which I saw then, I saw it for the second time in Rome, being carried up to the sky by that marathon runner . Take it, take hold of it, keep it carefully. And in the future when you can, go to that country Ethiopia which has green, yellow and red colors of flag (pp. 99-100)

Apart from knowing the story goal it is in this part of the story that the reader comes to know the background information about Konchit. Her late grandfather Edward Lokaye was an African by his origin but was taken away as a slave to an other part of the world. Also it is here that Lokaye and Knochit's grandmother Agnes meet by mere incident and the latter conceives Konchit's mother Karena. Then Lokaye and Agnes come to Spain and start a new life as a husband and wife. The beginning part of this story also contains information about Konchit's parents. Her father is a ship captain and is away most of the time from his family. And her mother has a knowledge of psychology and has been bothering Knochit by commenting on her boy friends.

In this part of the story information is also contained about Kon-

chit's background. In her school days, she was a singer, dancer and was playing the guitar. She has completed secondary school and also trained in home economics. Konchit is a modelist and won a beauty contest to be called Miss Catholonia. Her colour is chocolate and her hair is blonde. Her body shape is attractive and her stature is elegant. She is fast in her thinking and needs sound reason for what she does.

Also it is in the beginning of this story that Knochit and Sora meet. Sora is an Ethiopian that guides Konchit to South Omo and helps her in searching her ancestors. Like Konchit background information about Sora is also given here. Sora is an Ethiopian young man from Erbore, south western Ethiopia. He is a graduate from Addis Ababa University. After his graduation he has worked in different governmental and non governmental institutions and donor agencies. Since then his stomach is bulging out though his mind is not satisfied. As a result he has been suffering from mental crisis when he first meets Konchit. “**ማንነቱን ከአጣ ቆይቷል። ከርሱ ቢሞላ ም ሀሊናው ግን በፍርፋሪ ማንነት ሊጠግብ አልቻለም**” (“A long time has passed since he lost his identity. Though his stomach is full his mind is unsatisfied with bits of left-over identity”) (p.57). Sora is an important character who contributes much in Konchit's search for her ancestors.

Thus the beginning of this novel gives important information about the story. it provides the theme, the goal and the setting. The mental characteristics of the major characters is also portrayed here. It pre-

pare the readers mind for the events, that are going to follow,

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The middle of the story in Evangadi starts with the arrival of Konchit and Sora at Omo river. In their searching endeavour Konchit and Sora face a number of difficulties. The difficult journey is described in Konchit's own words: -“አሰቸጋሪውን ጉዞ ብንጋፈጠው ይሻላል” (“We better face the difficult journey”) (p.192). For Sora, too, floating on the Omo river is threatening. Especially the second night at Omo had not been easy for them. They have passed the night shocking with terror. Because lions have been roaring at a very close distance to their tent. Heavy rain had also contribution to their difficulties on top of all these problems.

ድንገት እነሱ ከሥር ጀልባዋና ውሃው ከላይ ሆኑ። ከሁሉ የከፋ አዲስ መከራ ተጀመረ። ኮንቸትና ሶራ ውሃው ያላጋቸዋል። ያሰጥማቸዋል ዝናቡ ከላይ ደፋን ያወርደዋል። ሰማዩ አልበቃውም። ያጉረመርማል! ይጮሃል ! ዝናቡ ይወርዳል ... አሞ ወንዝም እርጋታው ጠፍቶ ይደነፋል ! ይሽከረከራል እላይ ደርሶ ይፈርጣል። ... ኮንቸትና ሶራ ግን አበሳቸውን ያያሉ በኒያ ወጣቶች መሃል ውሀ ገባ በቅፅበት እንደተራራ የገዘፈ ችግርና መከራ ላያቸው ላይ ተከመረ ... ።

Suddenly they were beneath, the boat and the river water floated above them. A new phase of, a more severe problem started. The water is knocking and drawing Konchit and Sora and heavy rain is falling down. The sky is not satisfied. It is murmuring, crying, the rain falling.--- Omo's serenity has disappeared, too, it is shouting, rotating and falling down from high up. ... But Konchit and Sora are suffering, water has separated them apart and in an instant heavy problem has fallen upon them. (p.195)

As indicated above, Konchit and Sora. suffer from a number of natural obstacles. They pass eight days floating on Omo river. At last, with

the help of Konchit's perseverant character they find Lokaye's ancestors. Here also a cultural conflict arises. Thus “ልጃገረዶች ኮንችትን ወደ ኅጅው ቤት ውስጥ ይዘዋት ገብተው ውስጥ ሱሪዋንና ጡት ማስደገዋን ሳይቀር አስወለቋት። ... ልጅአገረዶቹ በአኖና የዱር እጣን አላቁጠው ፀጉሯንና ሰውነቷን ቀብተው የፍየል ቆዳ አለበሷት” (“Girls took Konchit to a hut and took off her pants and her breast holder. ... the girls mixed ano (soil) with forest - incense and smeared on her hair and body and dressed her a goat's skin”). (p.227). This indicates Konchit like Karlet in Behind the Buska faces a cultural difference. The girls made Konchit to assimilate with their culture. They took off her western style clothes and dressed her in their own way.

Konchit loves her ancestors and appreciates them and regrets for her late grandfather Lokaye. “ለካ አያቱ ከነዚህ የዋህ ህዝቦች መካል ወጥቶ ነው ከተበከለው ዓለም ሲደናበር የኖረው !” (“My grandfather born from these ‘pure’ people has lived groping in the contaminated world”). (p.226). Konchit loves not the people alone she also loves the natural surrounding too. “ ተረጎሮን አትወድም ? ሶራ - እስኪ እየው ይህን ውበት ? የሰው ኪነታዊ ጥበብ ምን ብሎ ሊገልፀው ይችላል” (“Do not you love nature? Sora - Look at this beauty, please ? can man's artistic creation describe it?”) (p.212). Thus it is evident that the natural surrounding, at Omo is so beautiful and Konchit is impressed with it, and she appreciates it. According to her the surrounding beauty is inexpressible by human creative talent.

Konchit does not limit herself to loving her ancestors culture and

surrounding nature. But she recognizes that some change has to be introduced to these people too. Thus she vows,

ሰለኢትዮጵያ የዓለም ህዝብ እስካሁን የሚያውቀውን ግልባጭ ...
ለማሳወቅ አንደበቴን ከፍቼ ለመጮህ እፈልጋለሁ። እነህ ንፁህ ማህ
በረሰቦችም ሳይረበሹና ሳይደናገጡ የምርት መሣሪያዎቻቸውን
በማሳደግ ትምህርት በማስተማር ሰው መሆናቸው ተረጋግጦ ቀስ
በቀስ የተሻለ ህይወት እንዲያገኙ በሚደረገው ጥረት ግንባር ቀደም
ተሰላፊ እሆናለሁ ።

I want to speak loud, to make the world know. the other side of Ethiopia. These clean tribes, without being disturbed their production tools must be improved and they must be educated, So that gradually their humanity be recognized and be brought to an improved way of life. And towards this end I will be a front line participant. (p.232)

According to Konchit the world knows only the negative sides of Ethiopia. Therefore the world has to know the positive side of the country too. And in this regard Konchit promises to play a role. In addition, Konchit believes that some sort of change has to be introduced to the Omo people, to her ancestors. According to her the change has to be evolutionary. And has to improve their production tools. The people must be educated so that they may be brought to an improved way of life. And in this connection Konchit promises to contribute her share in bringing the change.

* * *

In this novel the end of the story is the last chapter. In this part Konchit's promise is realized. That is as mentioned in the middle part of

the story Konchit promises to promote Ethiopia to the world - to make the world understand the positive sides of Ethiopia. So the two teams, Konchit and Sora, Karlet and Kelo venture in a promotional activity, under the title " Let us know Ethiopia." The two teams tour Canada, England, France and Spain and at last the reader finds them in Switzerland conducting the same promotional activity.

The exhibition is organized to promote Ethiopia from different perspectives: historical, cultural and natural. It declares that cultural diversity is a source of beauty for Ethiopia. Hence a fashion show is displayed that acquaints observers with different dressing styles of Ethiopians. In addition, the exhibition displays the different dancing patterns of the different Ethiopian Ethnic groups. Thus the two teams use promotion as an instrument to make the world understand more about Ethiopia. And they propose to continue the promotional activity Like Behind the Buska, this novel too searches for what is good in Ethiopian culture. Thus the end part of this novel brings the story to its logical conclusion and satisfies the readers interest.

3.3 The Plot Structure in The Love of the Zersis

The Love of the Zersis is a story about cultural revelation and integration. As a spatial movement the story covers Europe, America and Africa (Ethiopia). And as a narrative the story has three structural parts:

Beginning, middle and end. Each structural part of the novel contains that part of the story which a typical story structure can hold. Important events of each part are described below.

The beginning part of the story provides essential information to the reader. The goal of the story is revealed. The goal of the story is Hollywood's wanting to produce a film entitled Base in South Western Ethiopia. Also in this part of the story Konchit is chosen to play an actor in the new film production. **“... ከሙያዬ አንገር ዐይኖቼን በዚህች ሰፊ ምድር ላይ ከፍቼ ስለነበር ለፊልሙ ስራዬ ከሚያስፈልጉኝ ሰዎች እንዲ ልትሆን ትችላለች ብዬ አጨሁኸ”** (“... From my professional perspective, I have been watching this land opening my eyes, so I have chosen you to be one of those people I need for my film production”). (p.93). This is revealed to Konchit in a telephone call from a Hollywood film director called Donham. And Konchit accepts the role provided that the film promotes Ethiopia and its presentation is fair and balanced. And in connection to this Konchit says

ኢትዮጵያ የአያቴ አገር በመሆኗ ሳይሆን በዚህች ፕላኔት አካልነቷ ድንቅ ተፈጥሮና ባህል እያላት በግፍ ላይዋ ላይ የተቆለፈባት በመሆኗ ...መርዳት በምችለው ሁሉ ለመሳተፍ ሙሉ ፍቃደኛ ነኝ። ... እውነት ...እውነት የሚል መጻዛ ካለው የተቆለፈባትን ሀገር ይበልጥ እንድትተዋወቅ የሚያደርጋት ከሆነ ...አቀራረቡ ሚዛናዊ ከሆነ ... ፍቃደኛ ነኝ ለመሳተፍ”

Not because Ethiopia is my grandfather's country, as a part of this planet the country has an admirable culture and nature but unfairly locked upon her... Therefore, I am ready to participate in any thing that I can be helpful ... and if the film is going to introduce this locked country and if it's presentation is going to be a balanced and fair one. (p.95)

This reveals Konchit's concern for the image of Ethiopia. She believes that Ethiopia has admirable culture and nature. But according to her Ethiopians admirable culture is not made known to the rest of the world and its natural wealth is also not utilized. It also reveals her readiness to participate in any activity that promotes Ethiopia, so this part of the story gives information how Konchit loves Ethiopia. Even for Hollywood she sets, conditions to be fulfilled if she is going to participate in the film. Next time Donhan and Konchit meet and he checks her physical fitness. Finally Konchit goes to America, reads the film script and reaches to her final decision to participate in the new film production.

Then she signs a contract agreement with the Hollywood and the film crew comes to Ethiopia. Here also a very critical Ethiopian girl Tenagne, too, joins the crew. So it is easy for the reader that the film that is going to be produced will benefit Ethiopia. Thus the beginning part of the story gives very essential information about the story. It informs the story goal, introduces characters and the setting in which the film is going to be produced.

* * *

The middle part of the story is the film. The story of the film develops around a cultural conflict. A character called Waston Penda helps a

Surma girl deliver her first baby. As a result a conflict arises. The native people encircle Penda and his companion pointing spears at them. Penda's companion shoots and kills a native. The natives retaliate by killing the killer. Then the native's elderly men ask Penda to confess that he did wrong. But he defends himself. Here the Surma's cultural conviction for persuasion rather than enforcing is revealed. Because they allow Penda to leave their place safely. Though he defends himself for doing right (part 8 - 12) which is contrary to their cultural belief.

In part eleven of the film Penda dies and his daughter Maria disappears and his wife leaves for her country. Maria (part 12) dresses like the native Surmas and dances like the way they dance. She then meets a white young man among the natives. They dance together and love each other. Maria gets accustomed to the Surmas way of life. Then Maria's mother arrives at Surma to take away her daughter. But Maria refuses to leave the Surmas and her friend.

Not only Maria but her mother too is convinced to join the Surmas (part 15). So in this novel Maria and her mother join the natives like Karlet in Behind the Buska. Thus conflict and change characterize this middle part of the story like in the above discussed two novels.

The story ends at the Sheraton Addis . More than one-thousand and five-hundred people have gathered to celebrate the inauguration of the Base film.

On the occasion actors who have participated in the production receive awards. But a surprise occurs which distinguishes this ending from the endings of the other three novels. The surprise is that the person Achame Tilahun is called to receive a reward for writing the script for the "Base" film. Though his daughter Tenagne has taken part as an actor in the film production she had not the slightest hint that her father was the writer of the film script. Thus the story ends in hilarious mood.

3.4 Plot Structure in Achame

Achame is a quest for self - identity. The novel as a spatial movement links the sub - continent India and Africa (Ethiopia). And as a narrative it is a history of a family line which runs from a grandfather to a grandson, from Negarshiha to Achame. The story unravels itself in a chronological arrangement from Achame's memory and from Negarshiha's document.

Tenagne's inquisitive mind is the driving force of the story. She constantly bombards her father with questions seeking to know her background. Tenagne begins by asking her father "Who are you ?"and "Who am I?"

* * *

Achame's memory goes back and starts from his grandfather and he supplements his oral narration with Negarshiha's document passed on to him from his father. This part of the story covers the longest part of the novel. Tenagne raises her question in chapter three. The response runs from chapter four to chapter thirteen, which covers 139 pages. In this part of the story the author establishes an historical link between Africa, and India, particularly between Ethiopia and India.

According to Achame's narration his grandfather, Pier Negarshiha, was an Indian whose origin was from Ethiopia. Negarshiha was living in western India, Gujerat. And was from a tribe called Habsis (Sidis). According to the story these people went to India from Ethiopia. And the novel establishes a historical link as follows:

...ከክርስቶስ ልደት አምስት ሺ አመት ዓለም ላይ ንግስት ሳባ ሀንደኬ የተባለች ወ. የኢትዮጵያ ንግስት ግዛት ከኢትዮጵያ እስከ ሀንድ ድረስ በነበረበት ወቅት ኢትዮጵያውያንን ሕንድ አገር በወታደርነት ልካ በዘጠኝ የሕንድ ግዛቶች ሲኖሩ ነበር። ከክርስቶስ ልደት በኋላም በንግድ በባርነት ኢትዮጵያውያንና ሌሎች ኢትዮጵያውያን ተብለው የሚጠሩ አፍሪካውያን ወደ ሀንድ ገብተዋል ።

Five thousand years before the birth of Christ, during the reign of Empress Saba, Ethiopia's territory was reaching to India. During her reign the Empress sent Ethiopian soldiers who lived in nine provinces of India). Also after the birth of Christ by way of trade and war Ethiopians and other Africans who were then called Ethiopians have also entered India. (p. 45)

As can be understood from Achame's narration there was a time in

history where Ethiopia and India were under one government. And Ethiopians and other Africans were then going to India for different reasons. That is why the Habsis tribes living in India consider Ethiopia as their origin and as their holyland and show interest to travel and visit the country.

The Habsis (Sidis), according to Achame's narration are tribes who live in a jungle. Their life is based on farming, fishing and selling forest products. They are governed by their own traditional law and defend themselves from the enemy together. According to Nigarshiha's document.

ማንም ሲዲ የዘውትር ፀሎቱ ሐብት ማግኘት አይደለም። የሲዲዎች ትልቁ ሀብታችን ፍቅርና መተሳሰብ ነው። ለሲዲ ህይወት ዋናው መሠረቱ መረዳዳት ነው። ከገነት ተፈጠርሁ ለሚል የጫካ ሰው ተጨማሪ ገነት አያሻውም ደስብሎን እንኖራለን፤ በሽታ በቀላሉ እኛን አይደፍርም፤ የአገኘነውን ተካፍለን ከበርአችንን እየመታን ፤ በፒኮክ ላባ ተውበን እንደንሳለን ... በሰማንያ አመቱ የሞተን ካለ ዕድሜው ተቀጩ ብለን የምናዝን ነን እኛ ሲዲዎች ለዚህ ደግሞ ዋናው ምክንያት አፍሪካዊ መሰረታችንን አለመልቀቃችን ነው።

For a "Sidi" his daily prayer is not to get wealth. Our big wealth is loving and thinking for others. - - - for a Sidi life's basic foundation is helping each other. One who thinks as created from paradise needs no other additional paradise. We lead a happy life, disease does not easily attack us. We share what we have and beat our drum and dance decorated with the pea-cock's feather - - - death at age of eighty is too early for us so we deeply grief. This so happens because we Sidis have not deviated from our African origin. (P.122)

Negarshiha as a member of the Sidis tribe travels to Ethiopia to know about the people and its culture. He enters through Kenya and travels from the south to the center. On his way he arrives at Dire shrine (in Bale) and meets with a beautiful young lady called Ababa (Yeshi-emebet)

and ^{rise} falls in love with her. Negarshiha because of his love for Ababa remains behind from his companions and gradually he persuades Ababa and at last they have sex at the bottom of Goba mountain. But unfortunately searchers come and take Ababa away by force causing the separation between Negarshiha and Ababa. But according to the author Ababa departs conceiving from Negarshiha. Thus this part of the story establishes historical and blood links between Ethiopians and Indians.

* * *

The middle part of the story is the story of Achame's father. This part of the story is the shortest compared to the beginning and the end. It is contained in chapter fifteen, covering thirteen pages only. Here also Negarshiha's travel is the link. Negarshiha after his separation from Ababa he used to come to Ethiopia every year to pray at the bottom of Goba mountain in commemoration of his love affair with Ababa. In one of Negarshiha's yearly travels to Ethiopia an incident occurred which was similar to the earlier one. Negarshiha being forced by a rainfall arrives as a guest at a lady's home. The lady and Negarshiha pass the night together enjoying sex. As a result the lady conceives Achame's father from Negarshiha. Not much information is given about the life of Achame's father. Achame's father, considering himself morally spoiled runs to a monastery called Waldeba to cleanse himself. At last he flees to Gujerat and joins the Sidis of India. This part of the story again strengthens the blood relations and ties of Ethiopians and Indians.

* * *

“Who is my mother ?” gets answer in this third part of the story. And it brings the story to its satisfactory end. It is a narration from Achame’s memory and covers eighteen pages. And the father narrates the following, important events between his wife and himself to his daughter.

According to Achame some twenty - three years back he was living as, a refugee in Kenya. There at one time, when he was in a library, sees a woman called Emona and falls in love with her. Though initially there were some problems gradually he convinces Emona and their relation changes to love and then to marriage. Of course, Achame had to overcome Horust Striker’s, confrontation. Striker tries to challenge Achame’s strong love for Emona and also his self confidence and approves their marriage. Emona’s father was a German and her mother was a descendant from the Masai and Kukuyou tribes of Kenya and Tanzania respectively. Tenagne astonished when she heard from her father that her blood is a product of several tribes. At last Achame reveals to his daughter the death of her mother Emona and the story ends when Achame. and Tenagne, “ ሁለት የዚህ አለም ባይተዋርኙ” (“two foreigners of this world”) (p.207) weep hugging each other in a tragic mood.

3.5 A Comparative analysis of the Plot Structures in Behind the Buska, Evangadi, The Love of the Zersis and Achame

Proportion of the structural parts; the stories in the four novels under study are organized in observable plot structures. Especially the trilogies, Behind the buska, Evangadi, and The Love of the Zersis are almost identical in their plot structures. The beginning parts in the trilogies as discussed above are preparatory phases.

There is variation in the space that the beginning part in each novel covers. In Behind the Buska the author gives background information about the major character and about essential preparations and arrangements in about thirty-eight pages. Then karlet is at the research site in Hamar. On the contrary, in Evangadi the beginning part covers more space in the novel. The author spends much time here. He gives an extended background information about the grandparents and parents of Konchit. The conversation between konchit and Sora seems to run to the extent of boring. The reader finds Konchit and Sora at the Omo river on page 184, in chapter twenty-three. In The Love of the Zersis too the beginning part covers more space than Behind the Buska but less than the beginning in Evangadi. The reader learns the film crew's coming to Ethiopia on page 201 in chapter 11. The beginning in Achame is almost the story of Negarshiha, and covers a large portion of the novel.

The middle part of Behind the Buska is a research activity and this part of the story covers much space as compared to the beginning and end of the novel. In Evangadi the middle part of the story is shorter than the middle in Behind the Buska.

In The Love of the Zersis the middle part of the story as mentioned above is the production of the Base film. This middle part of the story covers more space than the middle in Evangadi. In Achame the middle part of the story is the history of Achame's father. This middle part of the story is much shorter compared to the middle parts in the trilogies. The ends parts of the stories in the four novels are more or less proportional in the space they cover.

Meanings of the plots: the meanings of the plots in the trilogies are almost similar in their intent. They communicate useful messages to readers. They initiate Ethiopians to look inwards and appreciate their cultural values. They also criticize Ethiopians for uncritically receiving the cultural values of the Western society. The meanings of the plots also expose the West's unethical ness towards the developing nations. Above all the novels expose the cultural poverty of the West. The fourth novel Achame initiates readers to look back into history. Its message is "let us not confine ourselves to cultural, racial and geographical boundaries". If we look back in history we may come to a common point from where all mankind is diverged. And it seems to say no one's blood is pure that is anyone's blood is the admixture of several blood types. The messages in the novels are serious and pinching. Also the novels take the issue of women as an important social topic.

Literary techniques: dialogue, description are predominantly used techniques in the trilogies. There are instances where flashback is used to give background information about major characters. Also one can say that Achame is a story in flashback because all the history of the family is revealed from Achame's memory and

from Negarshiha's document. Coincidences and incidences have significant roles in the four novels. In Behind the Buska, Karlet finds a Hamar guide by mere chance and coincidence. In Evangadi, too, Konchit meets Sora, by chance and coincidence. In The Love of the Zersis, Karlet and Konchit meet by chance. Achame is full of coincidences. Negarshiha by mere chance meets Ababa and falls in love with her. Again in another time the same Negarshiha by mere chance arrives as a guest at a lady's home and the lady conceives Achame's father from him. Again Achame and Emona meet by chance and they marry each other.

Complexity: the trilogies are all complex. They are complex in that the plots run more than one story in each novel. In Behind the Buska the stories are Karlet's research activity and Kelo's reunion with his natives. In Evangadi the plot runs Konchit's adventure to find her ancestors and at the same time the activities of Karlet and her team members. In The Love of the Zersis the plot runs the story of the production of the Base film and the story of Goiti's barrenness. The trilogies are also complex in that the stories bring changes and transformations in the characters involved. The story in Behind the Buska is tighter than the stories in Evangadi and The Love of the Zersis. Achame is a relaxed presentation. In each novel the major events are chronologically arranged.

CONCLUSION

The patriarchal social system is characterized by the inequalities of the sexes. That is women are less equal than men. And the society sustains these inequalities of the sexes by different institutional and cultural means. The literature of the society is one of the means in perpetuating these sexual differences. Most writers portrayed women characters as passives, submissive, dependents, and playing fixed roles as wives, mothers and sex objects to men. But in some cases writers have too portrayed women characters as actives, independent and as "strong / liberated" ones.

Fikremarkos portrays both types of women characters in Behind the Buska, Evangadi, The Love of the Zersis and Achame. Some of them are victims of the cultures of their societies and the others are strong and liberated ones. In these novels the former types of women characters are found to be denied even their natural right of free movement and enjoyment, which their marital partners exercise unequivocally. These women characters lament for not getting proper responses from their male counter parts. Their pattern of thought is trained to accept their inferiority to men. They are characters that are denied the right to possess their own property.

The "strong / liberated" women characters are mostly educated. And their roles are not limited to the households. For instance, there is a women researcher, a mode list and actress. They are highly experienced and extensive world travelers. They are not depicted as simple sex objects for men. They know to decide when to love and whom to love. Farsightedness and imaginative thinking characterize their behaviors.

They are courageous and perseverant and ready to confront problems and achieve their goals. They are more concerned with much serious issues. They act and react according to their own feelings and desires.

The story in each novel has recognizable structural patterns. Each story has beginning, middle and end. The structural patterns of the stories in the first three novels (trilogies) are almost identical except their differences in the space they cover. In these novels the beginnings provide necessary information about the characters backgrounds, the goals of the stories and their settings. The middle parts of the stories are where cultural and natural conflicts arise and get resolutions. In these parts of the stories changes and enlightenments take upon the characters involved. Integration of the races is a common characteristic feature of the middle parts of the stories. They are laden with deep meanings. The ends of the stories bring the narratives to their logical conclusions. Achame is a story about a history of a family, which runs from a grand father to a grand son. The stories in the four novels are end oriented. Events are logically arranged and different literary techniques are employed.

The novels are ethnographic literatures. Because they depict facts of different cultures and at the same time they are imaginative works. They are subversive in the sense they condemn and criticize the moral decay, isolationism, individualism and conflict of the western society. On the contrary the novels appreciate some values of the uncivilized and marginalized societies of Africa (Ethiopia). Such ethnographic literature is a new creative venture in Ethiopian literature and it has to be encouraged. Because it records and acquaints readers with varieties of the Ethiopian cultures. As

it depicts the goods and the bad of our different cultures it initiates measures to be taken. Also it encourages writers to appear with new ethnographic literature from their respective cultural backgrounds. Thus Fikremarkos has done his best both to enlighten and entertain his readers.

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QUESTIONNAIRE - 1

I. PERSONAL

1. Name Fikeremarkos Date of Birth 10 October 1967

Place of Birth Bhair Dar

2. Father's Name Desta

3. Mothers Name Shigultish

4. Martial status Married

II. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

5. Elementary Education

5.1. Name of the school _____

5.2. Grades attended _____

5.3. From 19 _____ to 19 _____

6. Secondary Education

6.1. Name of the School _____

6.2. Grades attended _____

6.3. From 19 _____ to 19 _____

7. Higher Education

7.1. Name of the College _____

7.2. Stream _____

7.3. From 19 _____ to 19 _____

III. WORK EXPERIENCE

8.1. Which ministry employed you first? _

Ministry of Education

8.2. Are you a government employee by now ? Yes _____ No

8.3. If your answer for 8.2. is no. What are you working now ?

Inmy private enterprise.

IV. LITERARY ENDEAVOURS

9.1. What initiated you to write your first novel Behind the Buska ?

The breath taking culture and nature of the S. West Ethiopia .

9.2. Have you lived in Hamar?

9.3. Is there an author / authoress in your family ?

May be or may not. However, fate did not assist them to be.

9.4. Which of your novel is more artistic for you ?

Difficult to say I like them all.

9.5. Are there characters in your novels whom you know in the real life ? which character ?

Being learnt from real life there are real characters in different circumstances.

9.6. People comment Behind the Buska is artistically much better than Evangadi and The love of the Zersis. What is your response ?

I have no objection for that meanwhile in my opinion my first novel was the first insight of the natural life of the Hamar. But from literary and artistic angle, I couldn't say the first work had deeper depth. When things look familiar their beauty can be overshadowed. I know, even logically, the first impression will give us unforgettable memory. Therefore I really don't agree

with the comment which gives the highest mark to my first novel.

9.7. Do you think ethnographic literature contribute to or enrich the Ethiopian literature?

I believe in that way. We should have to explode our impression from cultural aspect so this will drive our literature to a higher grade in many ways.

9.8. What do you say on the condition of the contemporary Ethiopian literature ?

I am out of the individuals who worship the past only. Having all problems there are some literary works who divert even the old prejudicial out looks. If we see the present situation free from such out look definitely the drive is going on.

9.9. How did you find being an author in Ethiopia ?

Challenging. But I like challenging work. so I am enjoying it.

9.10. People complain saying " the return from writing is not encouraging" how is it in your part ?

In what way? The printing problem or other reasons. Anyway one should be courageous to accomplish his mission no matter what the problem be. Otherwise. I think defeat would be bad.

9.11. Do you remain an author the rest of your life ?

Definitely. I will.

9.12. Whom do you appreciate from Ethiopian writers ? from foreign writers? Baalu Girma and Haddis Alemayehu.

9.13. Which time of the day you are inspired to write?

Usually in day time. Exceptionally in the morning.

9.14. What inspires you to write?

Extreme feelings, such as happiness, admiration, beauty and etc.

I. Any additional idea?

Literature should have a portion of responsibility, as any creative work, to bring something better. It should also assist develop the image of our out look. The future mission of literature would be better if it is targeted to unveil our cultural fence. To magnify the magnitude of our wealth, including our brain. We need some sort of strength and maximum effort. Being a very historical country citizen we have to scrutinize our potential literary collections. Besides, art is life, to prove this fact we should have to minimize our draw-backs to artistic approach. Apart from this we have to cultivate new outlook resection, appreciation and we must be ready to learn new ideas.

QUESTIONNAIRE-2

(About Hamar)

Name: Tedla Mitiku

Sex: Male

Age : 34

Occupation: Editor

1. Do you know Hamar?

A. Yes I know ,

2. If you know Hamar since when do you know it?

A. I know Hamar since my childhood.

3. Where is Hamar situated?

A. In South Omo Zone in Hamar woreda.

4. On what is the livelihood of the Hamar people based?

A. The livelihood of the people is mainly based on cattle raring with small agricultural activity.

5. What is the main agricultural product?

A. Maize and sorghum.

6. How is marriage arranged in Hamar?

A. first a bride-groom should get permission from the bride's parents. So elderly men go to the bride's family to ask permission for the desired marriage. There are also other traditional practices which the bride-groom should accomplish before marriage, for example, he should jump over the backs of a line of oxen.

7. Are a husband and a wife equal in a Hamar household?

A. They are not equal. A wife is just considered as an article bought from a market place.

8. Do a husband and a wife have equal rights on their household properties?

A. No they do not have equal rights. All the property right is in the hands of the husband. The wife has no right at all.

9. Is there division of labour between man and women in Hamar?
A. Yes, hunting herding cattle and marketing is for the man, in rare cases farming. The household responsibility and farming is for the woman.
10. Dose the society treat a boy and a girl equally?
A. No, the society has more respect for the boy rather then for the girl.
11. What is the staple food in Hamar?
A. Milk, meat, blood, honey, maize and sorghum.
12. What do men wear?
A. Mostly they go naked, but there is a piece of cloth called "sedegora" which men use to cover their penis.
13. What women do wear?
A. They go naked above their waists, but they wear a smooth animal skin below their waists.
14. How is conflict resolved among the Hamar?
A. Conflicts among the Hamar people are resolved through dialogue and the elderly people have major role in this case.
15. What is the attitude of the people of Hamar towards the non-indigenous people?
A. The attitude of the Hamar people towards non-indigenous people is positive. but the highly need honesty and truthfulness from new comers.
16. Do the Hamar people have belief?
A. Yes, they believe in God, but there is no church or mosque around.
17. How do the Hamar people see civilization /modernty/?
A. the Hamare people live in a backward society. They are far from modern technology. But they are far advanced in their thoughts. They are very close to nature and they learn from it.
18. Do the Hamar people live in peace with other tribes around them?

A. Frequently there are conflicts with other tribes. But the Hamars have "an organized force" for defense. Usually Conflicts broke out with Geleb, Konso, Male, Mursi...tribes.

19. Do you have anything to say on the self-confidence of the Hamar people?

A. They are people who have strong self-confidence in themselves. always they feel that they are respected and superior.

20. Have you read the novel Behind the Buska written based on the Hamar society? If you have read the book, what is your comment?

A. I have read the novel and, I loved it. Because the novel beautifully and realistically portrays the society; It also initiates writers to focus on other tribes with rich culture but hidden from the rest of the world. So I very much appreciate the novel's originality in giving a reply to the question "who are the Hamars?"

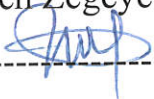
21. If you have any thing to add?

A. The Hamar people are people who are living in a backward society. But the society has admirable peculiar qualities of its own. For example they have their own ways of knowing the causes of diseases the whereabouts of a lost person or animal.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare this thesis is my work and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Mekonnen Zegeye

Signature: -----

Place: Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa

Date: June 5, 2001