

**AN ANALYSIS OF LITERARY TECHNIQUES IN SOME
OF THE PROSE WORKS OF ETHIOPIAN WOMEN
AUTHORESSES 1959-1985 ETH. C.**

**By
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ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.	_____	Addis Ababa
A,A,U.	_____	Addis Ababa University
BA	_____	Bachelor of Arts
Eth. C.	_____	Ethiopian Calendar
MA	_____	Master of Arts

(I have used two Calendar Systems in the thesis. These are: the Ethiopian and Gregorian Calendar Systems. The date of the publications of all Amharic texts and quotations are written in the Ethiopian Calendar whereas the date of the publications of the theoretical and critical books (English) are presented in the latter calendar system.)

Note: All the translations which appear in the thesis are mine.

Key to Transliteration

I have used the following symbols for the transliteration of Amharic sounds not immediately familiar to the English reader.

<u>Consonant</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Vowel order</u>	<u>Symbol</u>
ሸ	š	first	ä
ቀ	q	second	u
ቸ		third	i
ኘ	ñ	fourth	a
ዠ		fifth	é
ጸ	j	sixth	e
ጠ	t'	seventh	o
ጡ	'		
አ	p'		
ቦ	s'		
ጸ			

(Familiar names such as "Addis Ababa", "Asmara", Haile Selassie", and "Amharic" are not transliterated following the above system, but are rendered in their usual spellings.)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to introduce and analyse the literary techniques of some of the prose works of Ethiopian women authoresses. As discussed in the introduction, literary studies and comments both by Ethiopian and foreign scholars about the fictional works of Ethiopian women authoresses that appeared thus far to the public are very scanty and fragmentary.

Hence, the need for introducing and examining some of the prose works of women authoresses arises from this reality. The present study has, therefore, considered the fictional writings of twelve authoresses for critical discussion. The works of these authoresses have been selected based on three different reasons. The first is the availability of the texts in the three major libraries. These are: the libraries of the AAU, the library of Ministry of Culture and Sports Affairs, and the library of the Addis Ababa administrative region. The second reason is the common and unique characteristics of the authoresses in using different kinds of literary devices; and thirdly the literary genres of the works.

Other than the introduction and conclusion sections, the study is divided into three chapters. Included in the introduction were: literary survey and comments which, directly or indirectly, deal with the main concern of the present study. The first chapter focuses on two things. First, it tries to convey the theoretical definitions and explanations of the literary terms: narration and different types of points of view. Secondly, it discusses the outline of seven pre-revolution prose works and analyses some of the narrative methods (including the various points of view) which the authoresses use to unfold the materials of their stories. The texts are examined in the order of their date of publications.

Chapter two dwells on the various narrative techniques employed by the post-revolution women authoresses. Although the focus of this chapter is to analyse the methods of narration, it has a considerable difference from the previous one. Apart from dealing with such technical elements as point of view epistolary and flashback methods, chapter two will also attempt to introduce and examine those new narrative techniques (the employment of telephone conversation, foreshadowing, dream, and a story within story method) which are used only in the works of four post-revolution women authoresses.

The aim of chapter three, on the other hands, is to critically examine whether or not the characterization, plot constructions and language of some of the prose works of women authoresses are appropriate, consistent, coherent, concise, significant and credible. The summary and conclusion part of the study will provide the summary of the work and also try to point out some weaknesses and strengths of the authoresses under consideration. The contribution of women authoresses to the overall development of modern Amharic literature is also discussed in the last chapter. Lastly, the appendixes present the full texts of the interviews conducted with two "literary techniques" and the social educational, material, family and literary backgrounds of Ethiopian women authoresses

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to introduce and examine some of the prose works of Ethiopian women writers from the points of view of the applications of literary techniques. In previous Amharic literature the prose writings of Ethiopian women authoresses have received little attention. Most literary studies and comments have dwelt on the fictional and dramatic works of men authors, namely Afäwärq, Heruye, Mäkonen, Gérma äw, Hadis, Danna äw, Mäng'estu, Tadäsä, S'ägayé, Berhanu and Bä'alu. The fictional and dramatic writings of these authors have dominated the world of most of both the pre-and-post revolution Amharic literature and criticism.

However, some native and foreign scholars have spared some effort, and few studies which dwelt on the works of women writers have appeared on the Ethiopian literary scene both during the pre-and-post revolution eras. Among these literary studies and comments thirteen of them have directly dealt with the prose works of women authoresses. Out of these thirteen critical surveys and comments two of them are presented in the English language, and the rest employed Amharic language. Of these thirteen literary-critical works, however, only three of them are large-scale critical studies which are presented at the level of BA theses. But

the rest are fragmentary comments and appeared on the three state-owned newspapers, namely on the daily Addis Zāmān, the weekly Yāzareyetu Ethiopia, and the daily The Ethiopian Herald. On the other hand, Fāqadā Azāzā (an Assistant Professor in Literature at the A.A.U), has written a theoretical essay entitled The Portrayals of Women in Literature. In his theoretical writing Fāqadā has examined the four major elements that are crucial in delineating woman character. Thus, according to him, oral literatures, tales, The Holy Scriptures and Koran are considered as important sources which determine the portrayal of women characters.

Among the three critical studies, Agarādā Jāmanāh's senior essay is one. In her undergraduate thesis, The Participation of Women Writers in Amharic Literature, Agarādā does two things. First and foremost she introduces some of the pre-and-post revolution Ethiopian women authoresses such as Bālāt'ä Sisaye, Terunāš Yemār, Šeto Māzegābu, Asrat Tadälä, Eyārusalēm Yesmaw, Zāwditu Ašäber, S'egé Adaféré, and Aläms'ähaye Wādajo. Of these eight women authoresses, the first three are dramatists whereas the next three are short story writers and novelist, and the last two are poets. Moreover, Agarādā tries to describe the stories and themes of some selected works. These are S'egé's Yäfegerč'ora (The Rays of Love), Yähebrät Kätäma (A communal Town), Sähaye's Serah

Heyaw Näw (Your work is Eternal), Bälät'äč's Teneše Engefät
Yadärsal Kämot (A Minor Error May Bring About Death), Asrat's
Ewenätänna Yätedar Guwadänna (The True Partner), Eyärusalém's
Beruh Hlina Bäqäna Godana (The Bright Mind on the Right Track),
 Zäwditu's Tegst Mäkärännawa (Tegst the Sufferer).

On the other hand, Aläm Bayäleñe in his senior essay devotes all of his pages to the overall portrayals of some women characters that appeared in the prose works of three female authors, Emewädeše Bäqälä, Yäzena Wärqü, and S'ahaye Mälaku. In his critical essay Aläm has tried to discuss both the similarities and differences which he observed in the delineation of the appearances of heroine characters; and of those few minor characters who are there to convey more information about the external images of female protagonists. It is granted that the questions like how successfully and plausibly do the writers depict their characters, and harmonize with the conflicts and themes of the stories are left without critical explanations.

Feréheyewät Ayaléw is the third person who has directly embarked on the works of woman writer next to Agarädä and Aläm. She has written a BA thesis entitled Senedu Gäbru and Her Literary Works. In the study she investigates the whole literary products of the writer. However, Senedu Gäbru is neither a novelist nor a short

story writer but a poet and dramatist with which the target of the present study has no relation.

Mäkonen Asmamaw has also treated the same subject in his unpublished BA thesis entitled The Style of Beginning and Ending in Amharic Short Stories. This study has entirely dealt with the works of thirteen short story writers with whom the researcher is concerned. As the title of the survey may show, the research is thoroughly devoted to provide the nature of different kinds of beginning and ending styles that are employed in the respective works of the thirteen short story writers.

Of the thirteen short story writers who appeared in the study, Mäkonen has approached two of Yäzena's short stories, Yätäragotä Edmé (The Naked Age) and Zemetayé (My Silence), and has discussed them from the point of view of the method that has been applied by the woman authoress in writing the beginning and ending parts of her narratives.

Tänsaye Yegäzu and Fanta Ayaléw, on the other hand, have written BA theses entitled The Portrayals of Feudal Ladies in the Novels of Four Ethiopian Writers, and Subject Matter and Technique in Amharic Novels (1933-1950) respectively. However, Tänsaye and Fanta have ignored the works of women authoresses and gave sheer attention to the writings of male authors. Likewise, women

characters that are depicted in the novels of five reputed writers have been considered for discussion in Askalä Lämmä's senior paper named Women Characters in Amharic Novels. But, both in the previous studies of Amharic novels and in Askalä's survey, the question of examining the literary works of women authoresses still has not received due attention. The writer discusses the novels of five male authors individually. These are Afäwärq Gäbrä Eyäsus, Asäfa Gäbrä Mariam, Hadis Alämayähu, Berhanu Zärihun, and Bä'alu G'erma.

Another study which could have had some contribution but has never given due attention even to the short stories of a single woman authoress is Olga Yazebec's MA thesis. Its title is The State of the Short Stories in Ethiopia: An Unexploited Genre. In her research, Olga has revealed that the prime concern of her study is to introduce the Ethiopian short stories to the local public. "The main purpose of this research is to introduce the Ethiopian Short Stories to the Ethiopian public, a work that has not been attempted so far" (Olga Yazebec. 1981).

However, though her title refers to the whole short stories produced in Ethiopia, the researcher has discussed only some of the themes and literary techniques that are observed in nineteen short stories written by thirteen different men authors. As most foreign and inland scholars have practised in their studies, Olga has

overlooked the short stories of Ethiopian women authoresses without giving notes which may justify how and why she selects the short stories which she considers for examination.

In his MA thesis, Asäfa Arägähänne has attempted to discuss The Origin and Development of Amharic Literatures. The work summarizes three main literary genres in the area specified: novel, drama and poetry. Nevertheless, it fails to give us an overview of the literary writings of even a single woman authoress. Nor does he try to comment on the contribution of the Ethiopian women authoresses in the development of Amharic literature. The researcher rather investigates the four novels of the four widely known men authors. These are Afäwärq Gäbrä Eyäsus, Hadis Alämayähu, Danna äw Wärru and Berhanu Zärihun.

It is not only Asäfa who has given no attention to the literary outputs of Ethiopian women authoresses, but, having the same general topic for their doctoral dissertations, Fegere Tolosa and Taye Asäfa have also chosen and investigated those novels which have been written by men authors only.

Fegeré Tolosa has written a doctoral thesis on Amharic literature entitled Realism and Amharic Literature (1908-1981). In his study, Fegere has explored the nature of Amharic literature from the period before the second Italo-Ethiopian war (1908-1935)

and the time thereafter. In dealing with the subject matter, Fegere examined the works of fifteen Ethiopian authors who have written a good number of prose fictions. Of the five chapters that Fegere treats in his dissertation, four of them are devoted to a discussion on the fictional works of each of the fifteen authors from the point of view of the notion of Realism. However, here too, the fictional literatures of women authoresses get no attention at all.

Taye Asäfa, on the other hand, has dealt with the works of ten 'representative' writers which he has selected from different periods. However, Taye, as Fegere did, has overlooked the prose writings of women authoresses though his doctoral thesis with the title Form in Amharic Novel may be expected to comment on them.

Apart from the above literary studies, a considerable number of literary articles have also appeared on the state owned newspapers, namely the daily Addis Zämän, the weekly Yäzaréyetu Ethiopia, and the daily The Ethiopian Herald. Of course such writing activities have been practiced both during the pre-and-post revolution years.

As has been said earlier, the writer of this paper believes that this study is by no means complete or exhaustive. Therefore there could be more critical articles which the present paper did not consider because of the lack of sufficient time and other social

problems. However, significant effort has been exerted to assess critical studies and comments which seemed to have direct or indirect relations with the present work as much as possible.

Among the major comments which were published on the daily Addis Zāmān during the prerevolution era, Sahlä Selase Berhanä Maryam's article entitled A Review of the Amharic Fictional Writings is one. In his article, Sahlä Selase gives an overview of the prose works of eight authors of whom none of them is women. Another writer who has done the same thing like the previous writer was Bälät'ä Gulema. He wrote an article entitled Authors-Books-Readers in May, 1959 Eth.C. The article of Bälät'ä again discusses the literary outputs of men authors only. Geta äw Ayälä and Amarä Šefäraw have also written three articles on the daily Addis Zāmān with the titles Täfarage Yat'a Dām (The Blood that Fails to Get A Claimant), Yäseqay Saq (The Laugh of Pain), and Tärät Wäyes Lebb Wäläd (Is it a Tale or a Novel), to comment on the prose works of Alämayähu T'elayé, Yelma Habtäyäs and Sisay Sahlé. Here, too, the commentators deal only with the fictional products of men authors.

Of all the critical articles which have been published during the pre-revolution era, only three comments have dwelt on the literary writings of women authoresses. Among this, one is written by Amarä Šefäraw, the other by Bä'alu G'erma, and the third by

Lebsäwärq Berhané. In his article, Amarä has looked at Sänayet, a novel written by Astér Šefäraw in May, 1963 Eth. C. Amarä's article has chiefly dwelt on the language and suspense of the novel. Bä'alu G'erma, on the other hand, has examined Meñoté, a play written by Wäyezäro Dästa Gäbru. He evaluates the work from the points of view of its unrealistic and inartistic characterization, setting, plot and loosely constructed dramatic structure.

The third article which responds to Bä'alu's work and totally rejects his all negative comments is Lebsäwärq's counter writing which appears on the daily Addis Zämän in June, 1963 Eth. C. In his article, Lebsäwärq accuses Bä'alu for his wrong and unfair treatment of the play, Meñoté. In the writing, Lebsäwärq appreciates the dramatist's effort in producing such a good play which uses the indigenous language, Amharic language, and entertains the values of education and culture, and the problems of prostitution. Hence, according to the view of the commentator, the playwright has successfully enlightened the then society through the various themes and ideas of the play.

As has been seen in the previous studies, and as it remained a common practice in the literary comments mentioned above, most if not all articles which were published on the daily Addis Zämän and the weekly Yäzaréyetu Ethiopia, have dwelt on the works of men

authors. It is only Amarä's, Bä'alu's, and Lebsäwärq's writings which briefly describe the fictional and dramatic works of women authoresses. But these still fall short of giving us a complete insight about the shortcomings and successes of the literatures of women authoresses in the employment of literary techniques.

Compared with the pre-revolution era, the authors of literary critical commentaries who entirely focused on the prose works of women authoresses have shown little improvement in the post-revolution. Hence, for example, Zärihun Asfaw, Täsfayé Berhanu, Aräfayené Hagos, Agarädä Jämanäh, Awgu o Täräfä and P'ët'eros Alämu have tried to comment on the works of Yäzena Wärfu and S'ähaye Mälaku on the state owned newspapers. However, most of the comments which appeared thus far on the Addis Zämän, Yäzaréyetu Ethiopia, and The Ethiopian Herald lacked textual evidences and justifications. This is clearly seen in the articles of the last two commentators, Awgu o and P'et'ros.

ደራሲ ፀሐይ መላኩ ሁሉን አወቅ ያተረጎክ ዘዴ
 ብተጠቀም አዲስ አበባ ውስጥ ቁጭ ብላ ጀርመን
 አገር ስላለች ሴት መተረክ አትችልም። መተረክ
 አለብኝ ካለች ከገፀ ባሕሪዋ ጋር ጓዷን ጠቅላ
 መሄድና የዕለት ተዕለት ገጠመጠን ግቅረብ
 አለባት።
 ሌላው ገፀ ባሕሪያቱ ሁሉ እንደሮግንቲክ ዘመን
 ሰዎች በቶሎ የሚያድጉና የሚሻሻሉ ሆነው
 መታየታቸው ነው። ሃሳባቸውን ከገቡ ለግድረሰዎ
 ምንም ችግር አይገጥማቸውም።

Although S'ähaye Mälaku, the novelist, uses an all knowing omniscient point of view, she cannot narrate about a woman who lives in Germany while she still lives in Addis Ababa. If the novelist wants to narrate about the woman, she must have to go with the character and present her day to day activities.

Moreover, we observe that like the people of the period of Romanticism all the characters get develop and change instantly. They don't face any problem in making their plan practical. (Awgu o. 1984 Eth. C.: 3, 9)

In the first paragraph of the above quotation, the commentator tries to mention the type of the point of view which the author uses to narrate her story, Anguz, and criticize her, for she fails to go abroad with her character and present her daily activities. According to his comment, a writer who uses an all-knowing omniscient point of view cannot narrate things outside his vision. However, Awgu o fails to substantiate his comments by citing theoretical and textual evidence. In the second paragraph, too, the writer fails to discuss the personalities of the people of the romantic period and the characters in Anguz by giving textual and theoretical explanations. Moreover, not only are a good deal of the comments pondered over general points but few of them also overwhelmed with contradictory ideas and statements.

Although much of his comment dwells on Jämal Suléyeman's (Yäzena's husband) three latest short stories, Ali Berätu, Yaltämä at Čeg'eñe (The Unprotected Seedling) and Nuzazéw (The Oath), Täsfaye also gives a general, fragmentary and contradictory comment on the themes, characterization, plot and ending style of the two short stories of Yäzena Wärqu, namely Yäqerb Ruq (The Near-far) and Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs (The Graduation suit). The following passages are extracts that attempt to look at the two short stories of the woman authoress.

በመጀመሪያ የምናገኛለት "የቅርብ ሩቅ"
 የተሰኘውን መለስተኛ ልቦለድ ይሆናል። ...
 የቋንቋ ኃይሉ፣ የገፅ ባሕሪ ደህንነት፣ የታሪክ
 አወራረዱና አወቃቀሩ ጠንካራ ነው። ይሁን እንጂ
 አስፈላጊ ያልሆኑ በርካታ ገለጻዎችና ትረካዎች
 ድርሰቱን ከሚገባው በላይ አርዝመውታል።
 ሌላው የደራሲ የዝና "የመመሪያው ልብስ"
 የተሰኘው አጭር ልቦለድ ነው። ... በዚህ
 ድርሰቷ ቀለበኛና መደበኛው አግርኛ እያተናፀሩ
 የደራሲዋ የቋንቋ አጠቃቀም ጎሳ ብሎ
 እንመለከታለን። ድራግዊ አጫራረሱም ሌላው
 ውበቱ ነው።

At first we just come across a short story called 'Yäqerb Ruq. ... its powerful language, characterization, the flow and construction of the story are well accomplished. However, Many irrelevant descriptions and narrations have made the story unnecessarily long. Yäzena's other short story is "Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs" ... In this story, we notice that the author's

use of language gets superb in that the ordinary language is used together with the dialect. Its dramatic ending is also another quality of the story. (Täsfayé Berhanu. 1983 Eth. C. : 18)

In the above quoted paragraphs, Täsfayé expresses his appreciation of the language, characterization and the plots of the two short stories. In his writing, however, Täsfayé seems to contradict himself. This is evidently seen in the second, third, fourth and fifth sentences of the first paragraph. Thus, in the second and third sentences, the commentator asserts that the story, Yäqerb Ruq, is not only a well - knitted one, but also flows smoothly. But, in the fourth and fifth sentences, he puts negative statement which contradicts the previous comment. Täsfayé, therefore, criticizes that the text is covered with many irrelevant descriptions and episodes which make the story unnecessarily long. Moreover, in the second paragraph, Täsfayé again expresses fragmentary comments on the use of language and ending style of Yäzena's other short story called Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs. However, he does not substantiate his suggestions with credible references.

Aräfayené Hagos, on the other hand, writes an article which devotes to appreciate the stories of a young couple, Yäzena and Jämal. In his writing, Aräfayené tries to discuss the themes and

central ideas of Yäzena's three short stories, Samat (Kiss her), Sänayet, and Zemetayé (My Silence). Zärihun Asfaw, too, attempts to look at the various themes of Yäzana's four short stories which appear in the anthology named Yätäšät 'äw Séyet 'an. Thus, according to his critical assessment which deals with the works of the Young Ethiopian Short Story Writers, Zärihum tries to point out the major ideas (jealousy, old age and destitution, love, death and the like) which the woman authoress discusses in her four short stories, Samat, Yätäragotä Edmé, Sänayet, and Zemetayé.

The last three commentators, Agarädä , Awgu o and P'et'eros have also tries to make passing remarks on the settings, themes, characterization and suspense of the story, Anguz. In his article, Anguz is not a bad Work, P'et'eros Alämu has overviewed the delineations of characters in Auguz that lacks objective evidences from the text.

የተሳሉት ገፀ ባህሪያት ለተገነባው አጫቃላይ ታሪክ
የሚያገለብት ድርሻ የሰጡ ናቸው። ጉላህ
ምክንያታዊ ተሳትፎ አቸው ይታያል። የሀይወትን
መንገድ ውስብስብነትና ተደጋጋሚነት ለማሳየት
በሥርዓት የተነደፈ ትንብር ነው። አንጉዝን
ለሚያህል ሥራ ገፀ ባህሪያቱ አልበዙም።
አላነሱም።

The characters have played significant role in constructing the whole story. Their logical participation is clearly observed. It is composed to show the complicated and

interdependent path of life. For such a work like Anguz, the number of characters are neither redundant nor insufficient. (P'ët'eros Alämu. 1984 Eth. C:3)

Among the major studies by foreign scholars Gerard's Four African Literatures is one. Despite the fact that he conveyed the summary of Amharic literature, Gerard has not made any attempt to investigate other literary outputs produced by women authoresses except reporting Senedu's biography and her two works (poetry and drama) in not more than half of a page.

Thomas Leiper Kane is another foreign scholar who has given the overview of the origin and development of Amharic literature. In his book, Ethiopian Literature in Amharic, Kane has come across the prose works of two women authoresses. These are Šeto Mäzegäbu's Säw Bämähoné Däkämku (As I am Human being I feel Tire), and Wädäryäläše Ma'yekel's Känfär Mäteč'e (The Kisser). Although he deals with the two short narratives, Kane's works fails to analyse their technical weaknesses and strengths critically. While probing into Šeto's story, he, for instance, examines the portrayal of a single major character, Alämitu, who is born from a poor-family. Moreover, Kane does the same thing when he examines Wädäryäläše's Känfär Mätač'e. Here, too, Kane gives a very short comment on Angagaw's (the heroine's husband) state of emotions and

personalities. He neither describes the works fully nor reviews them critically. In his book review, against Traditions and Change in Ethiopia: Social and Cultural life as reflected in Amharic Fictional Literature Co. 1930-1934, Hailu Fulas has also revealed the weaknesses of the above two literary studies. In his critical essay, Hailu reiterates the same idea which seems to go in harmony with the previous comment that particularly deals with the work of Kane.

Previous studies of Amharic literature (eg. Kane, 1975; and Gerard, 1971) were chiefly bibliographic. Kane and Gerard made few valid statements concerning the literary aspects of Amharic fiction. In the main, however, their attempt at a literary analysis and evaluation was marked by uncritical generalization (Hailu Fulas. 1982: 30-40)

It is puzzling, however, that despite the fact that a good number of fictional texts have been written by Ethiopian women authoresses, no one made significant attempts both to introduce and analyse the literary technical aspects of their prose works fully and deeply. Hence, the need for a substantive study on the works of women authoresses appears to be unquestionable. Thus, in view of the researcher's great interest in the writings of Ethiopian women authoresses, then, this study has been undertaken with the

following two objectives in mind. The first is to introduce the fictional works of Ethiopian women authoresses to the in-land and foreign learned societies. The second is to examine some of the weaknesses and strengths of the twenty - two prose writings of the twelve women author whose works are selected for critical discussion.

Of course, literary techniques /elements (e.g. point of view, characterization, plot, conflict, language and the like) are very essential apparatuses in the construction of fictional literatures. Without them the process of creative writing seems to be very difficult, for they are the backbone and heart of a narrative. They enable a writer to move his/her story forward; to shape the narrative structure; to build suspense; to provoke and grip the reader's emotion and attention. Furthermore, they help a writer to communicate the subtle ideas, substances, and themes of his/her work more beautifully, successfully and convincingly.

Therefore, the present study tries to look at the methods of narration; the credibility, consistency and motivations of characters; the nature (coherence, unity and significanc) of the plot construction... etc of some of the prose narratives of women authoresses under consideration. In doing so, it attempts to reveal some of the similarities and differences that are observed among

the texts in using literary techniques. And lastly, the writer of this paper would like to note that both the local and foreign libraries lack collections of recent reference books on literature. Therefore, he is obliged to use old literary books not only to make the study objective, but also substantiate his comments and explanations with theoretical reference.

CHAPTER ONE

METHODS OF NARRATION IN THE PROSE WORKS OF PREREVOLUTION WOMEN AUTHORESSES

As has been said earlier, Ethiopian women authoresses have produced a good number of fictional texts both in the pre-and post-revolution eras. But, compared with Ethiopian men authors, the former are not widely known in the history of Amharic literature, particularly, in prose writings. Of course, such past reality seems to work at present, too.

The need for introducing and examining the fictional literatures of Ethiopian women authoresses therefore arises from such backgrounds. This chapter aims at discussing some of the narrative methods (the use of points of view, letters...etc) that are employed in the works of the pre-revolution women authoresses such as Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq, Zäwditu Ašäber, Wädäryäläše Ma'yekel, Mästawät Mulu'aläm, Mät 'änäwärq Samuel, Gänät Baheru, and Wedanäše Hailé. Before dealing with the narrative methods of each text, the chapter, however, tries to offer brief theoretical accounts on the various types of narrative points of view. Then, each of the seven fictional works of the aforementioned authors will be discussed from the view points of the applications of the different kinds of narrative stances and other methods as well. Of these seven fictional writings three of them are novels. These are: Yämäkinaw Mist'er, Tegst Mäkäräñawa, and Yäbäkänaw Giize.

1.1. Theoretical Definitions and Explanations of the
Literary Elements: Narration and Points of view

In its more highly evolved forms, such as novels and short stories, narration obviously includes more than a mere report of events. To be more brief, though literary narration is a form of discourse whose purpose is simply to narrate a scene of an event or series of events, the primary and basic feature of every narrative apart from telling a story is that they must appeal to the emotions of the reader or the hearer. To effect this the writer's choice of narrative stance or the way in which a story is narrated has a great role to play. Accordingly, when we consider the method of narration, it is imperative that we examine if the author's choice of narrative stance or stances is/are appropriate to their stories. While doing this, we always focus on two important elements, the angle of narration and the kind of narrator. With regard to this Robert Scholes records:

In the study of narration we need to attend to both the question of perspective (whose vision, how limited, when shifted) and the question of voice (whose expression, how adequate, how reliable). (Robert Scholes. 1974: 167)

As stated by Scholes, the choice of narrative point of view (the choice of a certain perspective and an appropriate voice) has a great role to play in the craft of any fictional work. It gives the literary product harmony, consistency, and unity. Furthermore, the attitude we develop towards the events, characters, and settings that are presented in a given story, and, our understanding of these different materials will usually be controlled by the writer through his technical management of different kinds of points of view. MaCmhan, Day and Funk have also noted that "...learning about point of view in fiction will help you to understand some of the choice that a writer has to make in deciding the best way to represent a story" (MaCmhan, Day, Funk.1986:78)

Several systems may therefore be available for labelling the point of view in any given work of literature. Such a narrative device will of course help the reader to classify the position and identity of the person or narrator who records the actions and/or events of the story.

Based on this premise some literary scholars such as Jaffe and Scott have contended that basically there are four positions from which a story can be told. These are:

1. The Omniscient Point of view,
2. The Central Point of view,
3. The Peripharal Point of view,
4. The Objective Point of view

Of course, of these four narrative approaches, it is in the second and third ones that we may come across a narator who participates in the story. On the other hand, when a writer freely relates many or all of the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the characters, the point of view is considered to be "omniscient". It may also be called the "shifting" or "multiple" point of view; or the "panoramic" point of view as Robert Penn Warren usually calls it. The narrator resembles the Almighty both in his/her ultimate knowleadge and limitless power. With this point of view, as Jaffe and Scott assert:

... the writer assumes the freedom to move at will from one position in his story to another. He may, for example, tell one part of his story through the eyes and mind of one character, another part through the eyes and mind of a second character. He may at any point, shift from a character's position to his own, a shift known as author intrusion; or he may handle part of his material subjectively (that is from the inside, from someone's mind), another part objectively (that is from the outside, as drama is handled). (Jaffe and Scott. 1966:85)

A story can also be told from the point of view of the central character; and such a narrative is called the central or limited narrative stance. A writer who uses this point of view tries to explore the mind of the central character of the story. He does not approach the minds of any other characters in the narrative. Since the purpose of most stories is centered in the experiences, reactions, or changes of the central character, the central/limited narrative stance is said to be the most popular of all points of view. The stories of Yämäkinaw Mist'er, Yäbakänäw Giizé, KänfärMäta 'e, Mesekerenäté, Sänayet, and S'elmät are good examples here. Of course, few authors may tell their stories through the eyes of a minor character than the central one. Thus, we call such a point of view a peripheral narrative stance because the story is told from the edge instead of from the centre of the story. This point of view offers a writer a number of advantages which other narrative stances do not. Therefore, a writer may incorporate comments, interpretations or attitudes by telling his story from the position of a minor character without entering in the story or destroying such other literary effects as emotional unity and aesthetic qualities of the narrative. Of all women authoresses, it is only Yäzena who hardly uses this narrative stance to unfold the

initial material and one of the major themes of her story, Yägerb Rug.

Although, it is the most recent development in fiction, the objective point of view, which approaches a story sheerly from the outside, is employed only in Gänät Baheru's short story, Mistén Bekäda Däräsäbeñe Feda ; and in S'ähaye Mälaku's two novels, Ouwasa and Anguz.

Generally speaking, the choice of an appropriate kind of narrative stance is a very laborious task which every skillful writer may usually face when he/she is about to write a fiction whose literary contents and/or technical components are harmoniously organized and well composed. The application of a suitable narrative point of view will, therefore, have significant contribution in the construction of well-wrought and closely knitted story. As far as the importance of point of view is concerned, Percy, a novel critic records: "The whole intricate question of method in the craft of fiction is governed by the question of point of view" (Lubboc Percy. 1960: 251.)

In the stories of twelve women authoresses under consideration, none of the four types of narrative stances is unused. Thus, each of the seven fictional works of the

aforementioned authors will therefore be examined both from the points of view of the applications of the narrative stances discussed thus far, and other narrative techniques, too. The works are analysed in the chronological order of their publication years.

1.2. The Employment of Points of view and Epistolary Technique in The Seven Prose Works of pre-revolution Woman authoresses.

1.2.1. Yämäkinaw Mist'er (The Secrete of the Car)

Yämäkinaw Mist'er was originally written in 1959 Eth. C., by Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq under the title Yäleje Sedätäña (The Immigrant Boy). It was in 1971 Eth. C. that the novel has been reprinted with its second title. Since the original novel, Yäleje Sedätäña, is available in one copy, I choose the second title of the novel, Yämäkinaw Mist'er. As the original title of this novel may suggest, the work deals with the separation and reunion of a family that comprise three people-a husband, a wife and a son.

In her story, Yämäkinaw Misst'er, Asrat employs the first person (central) point of view as a major narrative stance. The events and incidents of the story are presented through the voice of an "I" view narrator. Yäwebät Ambaye, the immigrant protagonist, narrates the whole story retrospectively from childhood (the moment that a group of armed bandits abduct the young narrator and his mother, Wäizäro Zenaše) to the closing scene of the narrative,

the point where the lost family reunites after long years of separation.

However, the young immigrant, at times, tells the story by placing himself both inside and outside of the narrative. While doing this, he presents both his own situations and the lives of other characters as well. Hence, despite the fact that he is depicted as a first person speaker, Yäwebät, seems to enjoy the positions of a peripheral observer and an all knowing narrator. At one moment he tells us about the good personalities of his friend, Sälämon Bägašaw, and, the cruelty of the merciless bandits by observing them from the edge instead of from the centre of the story. And, another time he acts like a God like narrator who can see those things, events and characters that are outside his vision. This is clearly seen when Yäwebät tries to demonstrate the life of his poor mother about whom he has no knowledge, even of her whereabouts.

እናቱም ልባዊ ፀሎቷን ካበቃች በኋላ በዚያው ተጠገታ እመበለት በመሆን ለቤተ መጻሕፍት እያገለገለች ለመኖር መረጠች። ይሁን እንጂ ይህ ዓላግዋ ለመንፈስዋም ዕረፍት ይሠጠኛል ብላ ብትገምት የአባቱ ሀዘን ከልቧ ጨርሶ ሰላላውጣላት በሃላብዋ ብቻዋን ትሰቃይ ጀመር።

After she completed the heart-felt pray, my mother decided to reside in the church and serve as a nun. Though she thinks that her action may give her a spiritual relief, she is unable to forget the death of my father, and, then, her mind suffers from severe sorrow. (Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq. 1971 Eth. C: 33)

Thus, even if Yäwebät is portrayed as a character narrator he has both the power and ability to visualize and feel the physical, emotional, and religious lives and activities of her mother who is outside of his vision and/or environment. It is, therefore, because of his God like power that Yäwebät is able to describe the sordid and uncomfortable life experiences of his own mother, Zenaše, which he neither observes nor hears about. In the following paragraph, for instance, Asrat makes her protagonist an outside observer. He is there only to report or record the actions and situations of his mother and other characters. "እንገዲህ እንዲህ የግሪሆኑት እስከጦቹ ይሆን? እስከ እነሱን እዚህ ላይ እንተዋቸውና ስለእናቱ እያን እንደደረሰች እንከተላት።" "Well, for how long do they behave like this? Anyway, let us forget them and pursue my mother's whereabouts (destination)." (p. 18)

Such a narrative style seems to have technical advantages. Not only does it give the story a sense of immediacy, but serve as a bridge to link different episodes of the narrative as well. Hence, the first one and half lines of the above paragraph may explain that the main idea of the preceding episode is about the life of the bandits whereas the rest try to suggest the major topic of the subsequent narrative or episode. The author seems to have used this paragraph as a bridge to control the flow or movement of the

episodic plot. The use of such a narrative style is recurrently observed in the story, Yämäkinaw Mist'er.

ወደ አዲሲቱ ግሰቱ መለስ አለና "ይኸው ልሽ እኛ
 ተኝተን ስናረፍድ ጎበዞ እህቴ ወደ ቤተክርስቲያን
 ሄዳለች
 ... በይ ተነሺ እስኪ ቅርሳችንን እንብላ" አላት
 ... ያኛ ያሰኪና እናቱ ደግሞ ጭር ባለ ሌሊት
 ... ጎህ ሳይቀድ ወጣ እንዳለች ተርታለች።
 ታዲያ ትመለስ ይሆን? ግን ያውቃል?
 ለግንኛውም እስኪ እንከተላት።

He turned around to his new wife,
 and, "look!" My brave sister has
 gone to the church while we were
 sleeping ... Please wake up and
 let us eat our breakfast" he said
 ... But, my poor mother went out
 and disappeared in the silent-
 dark-night ... before dawn. Do you
 think she will come back? who
 knows? Anyway let us pursue her
 (pp.30-31)

Of course, this method is very common among the prose work of
 the pre-revolution women authoresses. For example, Mästawät
 recurrently employs the same technique in her story, Abrän
 Enmotalän. "እንግዲህ የሱን የተገላለጉን እንተወውና ወደ ከልታግዋ የሺ መቤት እንመለስ"
 "Let us stop talking about his success, and go back to the helpless
 Yäsımabet." (Mästawät Muluálän. 1963 Eth. C.: 38)

Such a shifting of the focus of narration may also have
 disadvantages. It may therefore create unnecessary digression and
 produce negative effects on the credibility of the portrayals of

the personalities of the character - narrator as well as the structural unity and consistency of the story.

On the other hand, Asrat tries to use a number of letters in her story not only to portray the internal personalities of the two educated characters, Yäwebät Ambayé and Sälämon Bägašaw, but also to express national feeling, the importance of education, and the feeling of loneliness. Thus, for example, the two letters which Yäwebät writes to his friend, Sälämon, reflect the social, cultural and technological differences of the people of the two different worlds, Ethiopia and Europe. Moreover, in his second letter Yäwebät has tried to reveal the prevailing racial domain of the white people which he experienced in a certain foreign hotel which forbade the black people to go into. The manipulation of letters as a technical device is also a very common style among the prose works of the pre-revolution women authoresses such as Eyärusalém, Mästawät, Mät'anäwärq, Gänät and Wädäryäläše. Like Asrat, these women authoresses try to apply the epistolary technique to achieve technical and thematic effects. However, none of them uses it as artistically and effectively as Wädäryäläše.

1.2.2. Tegst Mäkäräññawa (Tegst the Sufferer).

Tegest Mäkäräññawa is a novel written by Zäwditu Ašäber in 1961 Eth. C. It deals with a love story which revolves around the experiences of the two young people who marry each other at the close of the narrative. These are; Tegst Ayalqebät and Berhanu Mäng'estu.

The girl protagonist, Tegst, falls in love with Berhanu, a young student, whom she meets at Piassa, the central place of Addis Ababa. This situation compels Tegst to meet both the good and bad fortunes of life. She fails to pass her school examinations, and as a result she loses her poor father in a car accident; and her mother dies of grief. And, she is also dismissed from her elder brother's (Wädem Alämeyé) house. But, lastly she marries Berhanu.

Zäwditu, the novelist, uses an omniscient point of view to narrate the love story, Tegst Mäkäräññawa. In the novel, the all knowing omniscient narrator does not only report the various scenes and events of the story, but also convey his own feelings and evaluative comments on the physical, social, economic and educational backgrounds of both the orphan-protagonist and that of her boy friend. In the subsequent short paragraph, one notes the

ability of the omniscient narrator both to describe and comment on the physical appearances of the two lovers, Tegst and Berhanu. In doing so, the narrator tries to display the incident in accordance with the innermost emotions and reactions of the young protagonist.

"ይህ መጣት በውበቱ ያመረ ከመሆኑም የተነሳ እንኳን አንስታይ ተባዕታይ የሚግርክነበር። ወጣቷ ተግሪ ይህንን ለግላጋ ባየች ጊዜ በሴኮንድ ውስጥ እርዲነቷን ግወት አቃታት።" "The young man was very handsome that he attracted not only women but men as well. The young student, too, became unconscious within a second as she saw this elegant young man." (Zäwditu Ašäber. 1961: 2.)

In the first two lines of the above quotation, we note that the omniscient narrator does not only report the attractive body of the young man (Berhanu) but he also offers his own evaluative comment on the effect that Berhanu's attractive body produces. On the other hand, in the last two lines, the same narrator examines the state of emotion which the orphan girl develops when her eyes suddenly meet an elegant man. The all knowing narrator usually probes deep into the mind of the orphan protagonist and recounts both her sweet and bitter experiences of love, deep sorrow and loneliness. However, at times the narrative stance shifts from the all knowing to the limited first person so as to allow the authoress to enunciate one of the themes of the story. "ልዳገረዶች በቀላሉ የጥንደላላበትና የጥንደረርበት

አውቅሻለሁ (የግድቅሽ መሰሉኝ) በግሉት ቃላቶች ነው።" It is because of the phrases like "I know you" (I thought that I knew you) that we, the girls, can easily be flattered and defeated" (p. 81)

In addition to the above effect, Zäwditu uses the limited or central person point of view so as to enable her to interfere in the story indirectly and pronounce her own view regarding the weak personality of all girls who are in the adolescence stage. On the other level, Zäwditu hardly attempts to apply a flashback technique to provide the reader with brief information which reveals the cruelties of Ayetwa, the wife of the brother of the girl protagonist, and the abject conditions which Tegst practices while she is living in her brother's house.

1.2.3. Känfär Mätäč'e (The Kisser)

Känfär Mätäč'e is a short narrative written by Wädäryäläše Mayekel in 1962 Eth. C. The story revolves around the love and sexual history of three people, Angagaw, Elizabeth and Azebet'é. Angagaw, the protagonist and Elizabeth's husband, receives a letter from his best friend, Azebet'é, in which not only does the latter confess that Elizabeth is his mistress, but also make an

apology for his betrayal and sinful action. Angagaw is offended by Azebet'é's letter. It hurts both his feelings and mind. Then, lastly Angagaw decides to revenge the two traitors, Elizabeth and Azebet'é. The narrative ends when Angagaw kills Azebet'é and throws him into a big river into which Elizabeth drops herself as soon as she hears the death of her illegitimate lover, Azebet'é.

In her short story, Wädäryäläše uses a central point of view whose narrator is the central character of the narrative; and she tries to present all incidents and events in the form of flashback. Angagaw, the central character, unfolds the whole narrative retrospectively. He commences the discourse from the closing incident of the story, a point where Angagaw announces the death of his wife and confesses that he is the cause of her death. In his retrospective monologue which comes at the outset of the narrative, Angagaw reveals that Azebet'é, the protagonist's close friend, abducts the former's wife, Elizabeth, and becomes the cause for her own death.

Like Eyärusalém (the author of Beruh Helina Bäqänä Godana), Mästawät (the author of Abrän Enmotalän), Mät'anäwärq (the author of Yäbakänäw Gizé), and Gänät (the author of Mistén Bekädä Däräsäbeñe Feda), Wädäryäläš^ve also employs letter as technical

device. Hence, for instance, the letter that comes from page seven to eleven does not only expose the main conflict that emerges because of the unlawful sexual relation of the two traitorous characters, Elizabeth and Azebet' , but also demonstrate the physical, social psychological and sexual personalities of the three major characters of the story, Angagaw, Elizabeth, and Azebet' .

ከእሮኛህ ጋር የነበረኝን የሰርቆሽ ፍትርና የከገረር
መላመድ ጥኝና ገር በመሆንህ ያወቅህ
አይመስለኝም ነበር። ... እርኩስ ከሃዲ ደካግ
ኃጢአተኛ መሆኔን አውቃለሁ፣ ኤልሳቤጥን
እሮኛህን ከአንተ ከባልገጅራዬ ነጥቄ ላገባት
የግልገልገቦት አገድ ምክንያት አለኝ። ህይወቴን
... ቁስ ሆኜ ... ለግሳለፍ ስለቆረጥሁ ...
ከኤልሳቤጥ ጋር ያለኝን የሰርቆሽ ፍትር ልገፋበት
አልኛልም። ... በኔ ከሃዲነት የተነገ ኤልሳቤጥን
እንደሃጢአተኛ ቆጥረህ እንደወይን
የምትጣፍጠውን ህፃን ልጅ እንደግታሰቃያት
አተግመንብሃለሁ።

Since you are naive and innocent,
I did not think that you were aware
of the unlawful love and kissing
experience that I used to have
with your fianc e. I know that I am
an evil and traitorous and wicked
man. However, I do not want to
abduct and marry Elizabeth, my
friend's fianc e, for one reason.
I cannot continue the unlawful
love which I share with Elizabeth
because I decide to be a priest.
... I believe that you do not
consider Elizabeth, a baby-girl
who sweet like grapes, as a sinner

and torture her because of my
traitarous conduct. (Wädäryäläše
Mayekle. 1962 Eth. C: 7-8)

Azebet'é's letter has a number of technical advantages. It may contribute to construct a plausible and moving story. Thus, in the above quoted paragraph Azebet'é is introduced both as a priest and best friend of the protagonist, Angagaw. Elizabeth is portrayed not only as a beautiful woman, but also traitorous mistress who betrays her legitimate husband. The central character of the story Angagaw, is depicted as a fool and innocent man. Thus, the main conflict of the story arises from the portrayals of such distinct personalities. In his letter, Azebet'é confesses his wrong doings. He tells Angagaw that he commits an unlawful sexual intercourse with Eloizabeth. Azebet'é does not deny that Elizabeth is a very beautiful and attractive woman. Accordingly, it is her beauty that attracts his emotions and forces him to violate the rules and laws of marriage; and the general ethics of christianity and true friendship as well.

Generally speaking, unlike the prose works of other contemporary women authoresses, Wädäryäläše's Känfär Mät'ač'e, appears to be good, particularly, at employing the flashback and epistolary techniques which help the writer to expose the various

backgrounds of the characters and the conflict of the story which gives the whole narrative consistency and unity.

1.2.4. Abrän Enmotalän (We shall Die Together)

Abrän Enmotalän is a short narrative written by Mästawät Mulu'aläm in 1963 Eth. C. The story revolves around the life history of a beautiful foreign educated girl called Yäšimábét Gošu. The woman protagonist quarrels with her parents and runs away from her birth place, Däbrä Marqos, and settles first in Nazerét and then in Deré Dawa where she meets Daniel, her lover, and Asädä, her relative. While she is in Deré Dawa, Yäšimábét gets a scholarship and goes abroad to attend the science of engineering. Lastly, Yäšimábét comes back to her home country, Ethiopia, and marries Daniel. At the outset of her book, Mästawät reveals that her book is a record of the true experiences of a certain woman whom she knows very well. However, she also asserts that the text is the product of her imagination in that she uses technical elements and presents it in the form of fiction.

As far as her methods of narration is concerned, Mästawät employs the third person point of view which allows her to tell her

story omnisciently moving from one event to another, and character to character providing us with important information. The omniscient speaker observes a number of characters (e.g. Yäšimäbét, Grazema e Gošu Bälay, her father, and Wäyezäro Qedest, her mother) and recounts their physical social, political, economic and religious backgrounds. in the following lines, for instance, we see that how the narrator's vision is so wide and his knowledge about the physical, social, and psychological realities of different characters are too broad, too. "በዚህ ተንጅናጥጥ በመላብ የብዙ ወንዶችን ልብ ንዝህላል በግድረጉ፣ ተከታይዋ ስለጊበዛ በሴት ጓደኞቿ ዘንድ ተወፋጅ አልነበረችም።" "She has not been liked by her women friends for the fact that she has many followers and has also attracted the attention of many men by the power of her beautiful body." (Mästawät Mula'aläm. 1963 Eth. C:9)

Thus, in the quoted paragraph the omniscient speaker observes and weighs the power of the beauty of the protagonist. He also offers his own evaluative comment on the effect that the character's attractive appearance has created. In other words, he provides us with the attitudes and feelings that both men and women develop towards the beautiful protagonist.

The omniscient point of view may, in fact, lose its power and other qualities when it is employed in the hands of a less skilful writer. Such a kind of writer will shift his/her point of view needlessly, and create confusion either in pattern or direction or focus, for he/she appears between the reader and the story. This problem of shifting the point of view is, at times, seen in Abrän Enmotalän. The woman - author^{ess} seems to shift her point of view without convincing reasons or purposes. In the following two different paragraphs, for instance, the writer seems to appear between the story. "... እንግዲህ የሱን የተገላለጉን እንተወውና ወደከለታግጥ የሺመቤት እንመለስ ..." "... let us stop talking about his succesful life, and go back to the helpless Yäsimmäbet." (p. 38). "... የሱን ታሪክ እዚህ ላይ ቆጥ እናድርገና ወድኅ ወደተጠላኛው ወደ አፀደ ታሪክ እንመለስ" "... let us stop his story here for a while and go back to As'ädä who is disliked for falling in love." (p. 49).

In these two passages, the reader may face problem to identify whether the perspective is the omniscient or the central or the peripheral one. Hence, such an approach will undoubtedly create confusion in the focus or position of narration.

On the other hand, Mästawät uses the epistolary technique to reveal the themes of the story and the characters internal feelings, wishes and thoughts. Mästawät uses twelve different letters of which only a few of them have technical purposes. Thus, for example, the very first love-letter which Yäšimäbét receives from Mulugeta, a young agriculturalist, evokes the major conflict of the story, a conflict that separates Yäšimäbét from her parents. Mulugeta writes a letter to Yäšimäbét, the young protagonist, in which he expresses his feelings and wishes to be her boy friend. But, Yäšimäbét refuses to accept his request. Mulugeta feels angry with her negative reply. Then, he determines to spread rumour throughout the village against the social and physical integrities of the protagonist. It is this situation that evokes the quarrel between Yäšimäbét and her parents who are very much traditional and conservative. The conflict between the traditional thinking and modern outlook compels Yäšimäbét to run away from her home town, Däbrä Marqos, and dwell in Nazerét and Deré Dawa where she meets Daniel and As'ädä. In addition to such technical contributions, a few of the epistles serve as a means of confession. Most of Daniel's letters are good examples here. Daniel writes a number of letters to Yäšimäbét in which he confesses his wrongdoings. He admits that

he betrays her genuine love by committing an illegitimate and immoral coitus with As'ädä, the protagonist's relative, and asks his lover to forgive his sins.

Although Mästawät attempts to manipulate this technique, most of the letters appear to be redundant. They do not seem to have significant roles either in reflecting the themes of the story or building the conflict which seem to be necessary for the forward movement of the plot. Of course, such technical shortcomings are usually reflected in the works of most of the pre-revolution women authoresses. However, Wädäryäläše's Kämfär Mät'a 'e seems to overcome the defect of the insertions of unnecessary letters in the story.

1.2.5. Yäbakänäw Giize (The Wasted Time)

The third novelist who appears next to Asrat and Zäwditu is Mät 'änäwärq Samuel. She came on the Ethiopian literary stage during the pre-revolution era with her first work called, Yäbakänäw Giizé. It was published in 1965 Eth. C., a year before the 1966 Eth. C. Ethiopian revolution. Yäbakänäw Giizé is an epistolary novel whose story is narrated from the point of view of the central character,

Tegst Ayalegebät. The novel depicts the unsuccessful love story of the two young lovers who are separated after twelve years without being united in marriage.

The narrative is carried forward entirely by a great number of letters written by the two major characters of the story, Tegst Ayalegebät and Tariku Täsäma. As has been noted in the preceding discussion, such a manner of narration was frequently observed in most of the prose works of the pre-revolution women authoresses. Mät'änäwärg also follows the same trend of writing to narrate her story. In her novel, the two major characters exchange a number of letters through which they voice their different wishes and attitudes on the matters of love, marriage and life in general. Hence, despite the fact that she is under age, Tegst wants to conduct marriage with Tariku as soon as possible. But the latter is not willing. In his love letters Tariku always tells Tegst that he loves her but he retreats when the latter asks him to take her hand in marriage.

A good number of their letters are repetitions. Most of the letters entertain the same issues and ideas which, as a result, hamper the development of the plot and weakens the conflict and suspense of the story. No doubt, the epistolary technique gives the

author an opportunity to allow his/her characters to express their emotions, feelings and attitudes without intruding into the narrative. Mät'änäwärq seems to ignore such literary convention, however.

... አሁንም ይቀጥላል፡ ታሪኩን ሳትሰለቅ
አንብቡት ምናልባት ጥቂት ትምህርት ይገኛበት
ይሆናል። ሰው በእርግጥ አንድ ጓደኛ
ያስፈልገዋል። ገን አለዕድሜ ፍቅርን ወጥሮ
መጫነት ስህተት ነው።

... it continues; please read the story without boredom because it may offer you a little lesson. Indeed one needs to have a friend. But, it is wrong to fall in love and suffer at an early age. (Mät'änäwärq Samuel. 1965 Eth. C.: 45)

In this quoted paragraph, the authoress seems to interfere in the story to enunciate one of the themes of the story. Thus, according to the author's view, a girl must not fall in love with a man before she is of an age. If she violates such a general truth, according to Mät'änäwärq, the consequence will not be good.

The use of the epistolary method has also obvious disadvantages in that the reader's knowledge about the characters is so limited and shaped according to the views, attitudes, beliefs and feelings of the correspondents. There are no other characters

or outside observers who comment both on the story and the actions and feelings of the correspondents. Such a technical problem is reflected in Yäbakänäw Giizé, too. Emphasizing the disadvantages of an epistolary manner of narration, Martin Gray records:

Obvious disadvantages are the fact that the correspondents in an epistolary novel become incredible and... the fact that the enforced objectivity of the "editor" shuts the author off from comment on the ACTIONS of the CHARACTERS (Martin Gray. 1984: 78)

Generally speaking, except in few instances, the epistolary method has not often been successfully used during the pre-revolution era. For instance, the story of Yäbakänäw Giizé is constructed with heaps of letters of which a good number of them are repetitions, and as a result hinder the story's progress.

1.2.6. Mistén Bekäda Däräsäbeñe Feda
(I Encounter Troubles as I Betray My wife).

Mistén Bekäda Däräsäbeñe Feda is a short story written by Gänät Baheru in 1966 Eth. C. It deals with the bitter and sweet experiences of a certain family that comprises three people (a

husband, a wife, and a son) as its members. Ato Mälaku divorces his poor wife, Wäyezäro Manaläše because the latter is unable to give birth after Bägašaw, their only son. Then, Ato Mälaku marries a rich woman called Kuri who bears him four children. But, after few years Wäyezäro Kuri dies and Ato Mälaku becomes beggar. Finally, he meets his former wife, Manaläše Yaläné (who lives with her son, Bägasaw Mälaku, a foreign educated man), and makes a death-bed confession in which he also advices his newly married son, Bägašaw, not to betray his spouse.

Gänät uses the objective point of view to reveal the materials of her narrative. However, she makes use of the voice of the omniscient narrator, too. "በጋሻው ... በቴሌኮሙኒኬሽን ሙ/ቤት በወር ሰባት ሙቶ ብር እያገኘ ሥራውን ተጠለ። ... ከዚያን ቀን ጀምሮ በጋሻውና ሂሩት ፍትራቸውንና ትዳራቸውን እያስፋፋ በተደላና በደስታ ሙኖር ጀመሩ።" "Bägašaw ... is employed in the office of Telecommunication on the basis of a salary of seven hundred birr per month... From that day on Bägašaw and Hirut builds their home and live an excellent and happy life." (Gänät Baheru. 1966 Eth. C. : 39)

In the above quoted paragraph, the omniscient narrator recounts the change of personalities which he observes and feels in the lives of the foreign educated man, Bägašaw. On the other hand,

Gänät attempts to employ the epistolary technique to give her characters the opportunity to describe their physical, social, psychological, educational and economic backgrounds. For instance, the letter which Bägašaw writes to his mother has technical significance in depicting not only the various images of the outside world, but also the social, educational and economic lives of the two major characters, Bägašaw and his mother, Manaläse. Hence, in the letter Wäyezäro Manaläše is described as a loving, humble and illiterate woman. Bägašawa, on the other hand, is portrayed as a poor, loving, kind-hearted, helpful, hopeful and foreign educated man.

Gänät also tried to use "confession" as a technical device. She makes use of such a narrative style at the end of the story, where Ato Mälaku makes a death bed confession. At this part of the narrative, Ato Mälaku acknowledges his wrong doings which he commits against the social, psychological and economic lives of his innocent wife, Manaläše Yaläné. Moreover, Ato Mälaku admits that he violates the social rules and laws of marriage. In fact, the writer seems to employ such a confessional manner of narration intentionally so as to give her story a moral touch, and reflect one

of the major themes of the narrative, "a traitor/sinner should be punished".

In addition, Ganät and Mästawät manipulate this method to reconcile those characters who quarrel one with another and give their stories happy endings. Thus, for example, the two important characters of the two short stories (Mistén Bekäda Däräsäbeñe Feda and Abrän Enmotalän), Ato Mälaku and Daniel admit their wrong actions and ask their respective wives to forgive them. In doing so, the authors try to bring reconciliation among those characters and reflect the moral themes of the narratives.

1.2.7. Mesekerenäté (My Witness).

Mesekerenäté is a short narrative written by Wedenäše Hailé in 1966 Eth. C. Of all the prose works of women authoresses that the present study considers for critical discussion, it is only Wedenäše's Mesekerenäté which entirely devotes itself to religious ideas. In her short story, wedenäše condemns all luxurious things and worldly life. Instead she asserts that Christianity is an eternal truth, wisdom and life, particularly, that of the protestantism. While disclosing this idea, the writer employs a

narrator who is both the subject and the central character of the story. Like Asrat, Wädäryäläse, and Mätänäwäraq, Wedenäse makes use of an "I" point of view to disclose a story which thoroughly demonstrates the religious personality of a single woman character.

The short story, Mesekerenäté, starts by introducing the current social and religious images of the orphan protagonist. Thus, the authoress, portrays her central character as a typist, convert and bachelor woman. As the story progresses, the authoress, however, brings the reader back to the protagonist's life history. The orphan character, accordingly, tells us that she makes bitter struggle to change her secular personalities. In the closing part of the story, the authoress conveys a scene that devotes to show us the possible effects of christianity. Here the convert character realizes that superstitions and other evil spirits are not the creations of what she calls the "human mind". Nor are they the effects of psychological associations. But they are the creations and reflections of Satanic spirit. The character-narrator has disclosed that she suffered from such Satanic spirit when she used to be a worldly woman. However, she came back to health by the power

of Jesus the lord, and as soon as she accepted the doctrine of Christianity as a sole guide to her eternal life.

The point of view which Wedenäše chooses to unfold the above religious story has both advantages and disadvantages. Wedenäše, as is noted earlier, employs the central or first person narrative stance which gives her a chance to portray a character who has great freedom to express herself and other situations in her own ways and views. Furthermore, it enables her not only to dismiss the gulf that separates the reader from the events and incidents of the story, but also establish strong emotional and psychological intimacy between the religious character and the reader.

However, such an approach may have possible disadvantages as not only eliminates the views, comments and suggestions of other characters which may justify the credibility of the actions and thoughts of the orphan-protaganist, but also prevents the author from commencing on and reacting to the story. But this does not necessarily mean that the author's choice of the narrative point of view is wrong or an inappropriate one. Instead, it has a positive impact on the compactness and unity of the story.

To conclude, it could be said that the pre-revolution women authoresses have used a variety of narrative techniques ranging

from the level of an omniscient perspective, a central/first person to an objective point of view. Hence, Asrat, Wädäryäläše, Mät'änäwärg and Wedenäše have employed the central or first person point of view to unfold the various facets of their stories. Moreover, most of them try to use the epistolary and confessional styles of narration to achieve a number of purposes. Thus, for instance, Asrat employs the epistolary method to demonstrate the various images of the outside world, particularly, the racial domain of the white people. Besides, she reveals the social, educational, and economic backgrounds of some of her major characters. Thus, the letters which Yäwebät writes to his friend, Sälämon Bägašaw, portray the former as a black foreign student who loves his home country very well.

On the other hand, Wädäryäläše attempts to employ the same technique not only to introduce the three major characters of the story and the kind of relationship they have, but also reflect the main conflict and themes of the short narrative, Känfär Mät'ač'e. In his letter, Azebeté, the priest and best friend of the protagonist, acknowledges that he commits an unlawful coitus with Elizabeth, the protagonist's wife. It is, therefore, this incident that brings the central conflict of the revenge-story into light.

Wädäryäläše, Gänät, and Mästawät, on the other hand, have used the confessional style of narration at least for three purposes. Wädäryäläše makes use of this narrative technique to expose the various personalities of the characters and the central conflict of the story. The last two authors manipulate the method not only to bring about reconciliation and give their stories a happy ending, but also pronounce the social and moral themes of their short narratives.

Lastly, the conclusion that can be drawn from the foregoing discussion, perhaps, is that except Wädäryäläše Mayekel, none of the authoress employs the epistolary style/technique skilfully and effectively. Unlike her contemporaries, Wädäryäläše tries to use an appropriate epistolary technique which gives her short story consistency and unity. Thus, the letter which she brings at the outset of the narrative has both technical and thematic significances. Not only does it expose the main conflict, and the moral and religious themes of the story, but also introduce the typical traits of the three major characters: Angagaw, Elizabeth, and Azebet'é.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODS OF NARRATION IN THE PROSE WORKS OF POST-REVOLUTION WOMEN AUTHORESSSES.

This chapter focuses on the fictional writings of four post-revolution women authoresses. These are Yāzena Wārqu, Emewādeše Bāqälä, S'āhaye Mälaku, and Elfenäše Bākūrā. Accordingly, as in the previous chapter, an attempt will be made to examine some of the narrative techniques that are exhibited in the works of the four authoresses. The works are discussed both individually and collectively from the points of view of the employment of the various narrative methods.

True, unlike in the prose writings of the pre-revolution women authoresses a number of narrative methods are introduced in the works of the post-revolution women authoresses. Thus, telephone conversation, dream-technique, the foreshadowing, the flashback, and a story within story methods are few examples which are used effectively in the works of some of the post-revolution women authoresses. Among these authoresses Yāzena Wārqu is one.

2.1. The Applications of Narrative Techniques
in the Works of Yāzena Wārqu.

2.1.1. The Employment of a Peripheral
and Omniscient Points of View.

Yāzena, a modern short story writer, appears on the Ethiopian literary arena in 1978 Eth. C. with her four short stories. Samat (Kiss Her), Sānayet, Yātāraqotä Edmé (The Naked Age), and Zemetayé (My Silence). All of these short stories appear in the anthology called Yätäšätä Séyet'an (The Sold Setan). Yāzena has also published two short stories, Yäqerb Ruq (The Near Far) and Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs (The Graduation Suit) in 1982 Eth. C. in the anthology that appeared under the title, Yaltämäčat Čegne (The Unprotected Seedling)

As far as the applications of narrative techniques are concerned, in most of her stories, Yāzena employs the oldest and the most popular narrative stance, the omniscient point of view, in which she approaches the scenes and events of her stories from a constantly shifting position. Of course, such a manner of narration is usually demonstrated in the works of most Ethiopian authors. In addition to the omniscient point of view, Yāzena, at times, uses the central and peripheral points of view. This is evidently seen in her two short stories, Sānayet and Yäqerb Ruq.

In this case, of all women authoresses of this period, none of them has really manipulated such a technique as effectively and artistically as Yäzena. The following paragraph may show us the role of the peripheral narrator that Yäzena depicts in her story, Yägerb Ruq.

"ዓለምዬ ገን ለምን እፈራኸለሁ? መጥፎ ነገር እንድታደርገው ልገፋፋኸ አላሰብኩ..."
"አሸናፊ በጣም ይወድኛል የሚረዳህን ደግሞ ለብልጽግና ግደህን ለገብቻ ነው። ሊጠይቅሽ ስለፈራ እንድጠይቅሽ ለመነሻ፣ እኔ አልኩት በኋላ ገን ፈራሁኸ ለምን እንደምፈራኸ ገን አልገባኝም። የሚነጻሸን ነገር አድርገው አላልኩኸ።"...
"ደግሞ እንዴት ዓይነት ቁም ነገረኛ መሰለኸ። አይጠጣ አያጨስ፣ ከሥራ እንደተመለሰ ከቤት አይወጣ፣ መጠጫዎን ይሰበሰብና ሲያነብ ያመኛል። ለግስትሬቱ ለመቀጠል እንደሚያስብ ፋሲል ነገርኛል።"

"My dear Aläm, but I wonder why I am afraid of you. I have no idea of involving you in something evil..."

"Look! Ašänäfi is very much in love with you. And he needs you for not mere sexual affair, but for marriage. Because he could not personally dare to propose to you, he begged me to do that for him. But I am not courageous to do that either. I wonder why I am afraid of doing that, knowing well that I am not driving you to do something crazy..."

"I can't tell you how nice he is. He never takes alcohol, nor does he smoke. Right after work, he goes home and spends his time

reading books. Fasil has also told me his plan of pursuing his studies at a master's level. (Yäzena Wärfu. 1982 Eth. C: 104-105)

In the above passage, the peripheral observer reports the speech of the characters from outside. The authoress does not try to enter her mind to sense her emotions and feelings; and comment on what they say. However, she seems to incorporate her attitudes and comments by narrating incidents from the position of a minor character, Tegt, without intruding into the narrative. Thus, the reader hears what Tegt says no later than the peripheral observer does. She seems to be very intimate to the reader. And so does the reader. Hence, the reader may understand that not only is Tegt genuine and sincere but also loves and respect 'true marriage'. However, the problem of such a narrative stance is that there is none, except herself who asserts or witnesses that Asänafi is as good and nice man as Tegt may say so.

As has been clearly seen in the above quoted paragraphs, dramatic dialogue is also the chief narrative style in most of Yäzena's short stories. The authoress usually makes use of the omniscient narrator, too. She employs the voice of the all knowing narrator whenever her characters face difficulties in expressing

their internal feelings, emotions, thoughts and invisible attitudes. The subsequent paragraph is a good example to observe the narrator's great ability and limitless freedom not only to reveal the character's innermost sorrow but also offers his own comment on it.

ሰንቄ ገን እስኪረዷት ድረስ አዘነች፣ አለቀሰች እንጂ
... ጡር እንደዋለችባቸው እየተሰማት ተጠነቀች እንጂ
... ገፍ ሠራሁ ብላ ለሰማዩም ለዎድሩም ተፀፀተች እንጂ
... በዕድሜ የደከሙትም እንደሕፃናት እንክብካቤ
እንደሚያስፈልጋቸው አልተገነዘበችም።

Though Senqe wept seriously and felt sorry for a long time until they disappeared from her memory... .. though she felt trouble for the fact that she had ill-treated them ... though she confessed her sin both to the earth and the heaven ... she did not realize that the old people needed as great attention as children. (emphasis is mine)
(Yäzena Wärqu. 1978 Eth C. : 56)

Yäzena uses the omniscient narrator not only to probe deep into the character's mind and record Senqe's innermost feelings and grief, but also get the opportunity to enunciate the central themes of the story. Therefore, the underlined phrase in the above quoted paragraph reflects the major theme of the narrative, Yätäraḡotä Edmé. Such a narrative style (expressing the central theme of the

story through the voices of the omniscient narrator) is also evidently observed in Yäzena's other works, too. In this case, the short story, Zemetayé is a good example. "ለየት ባለ አስተዳደግ ምክንያት የተገኘ ለየት ያለ ፀባይ፣ በሰፊው ተቀባይነት ባገኘው ፀባይ እየተዋጠ ለጥሩ ገፊዎቹ እንኳን ቁብ የሚሰጣቸው አጥቶ ለሰንቱ ሕይወት መበላሸት ምክንያት ሆኑ . . . ።" "Not only will a unique character which develops through a different way (style) of rearing be absorbed by the one which is widely accepted, but its good qualities are also overlooked and becomes the cause for the loss of the lives of many people." (p. 285)

Thus, in the above quoted paragraph, not only does the omniscient speaker comment on and express his own feelings about the unique dispositions of the orphan-character, Yergädu, but the authoress also seems to reflect her own attitudes and the major theme of the story.

2.1.2. The Employment of Flashback and Epistolary Techniques.

A flashback is a very common technique that recurrently appears in most of Yäzena's fictional discourses. Of all her six published stories, it is, however, in Samat, Zemetayé, and Yägerb

Rug that Yäzena uses the flashback method more skilfully and effectively.

In her story, Yäqerb Rug, Yäzena formulates a number of different scenes which focus on past relationships and experiences of some of the important characters such as Alämšät, the protagonist; Ašänafi, the husband of the protagonist; Feqertä, Alämšät's school friend; and Tegst, Alämšät's ex-neighbour. For example, the long retrospection that appears from page ninety-eight to one hundred and fourteen provides the reader with important expositions. The omniscient narrator offers detailed information about the physical, social, educational, religious and economic backgrounds of the two married people, Ašänafi and Alämšät. The flashback starts with the incident that took place four years back in the house of Tegst, the protagonist's ex-neighbour. Here, Ašänafi meets Alämšät, and then Tegst introduces the former to the latter. At the time she met Ašänafi, Alämšät was seventeen and a ninth grade student. Ašänafi, on the other hand, had already graduated from the Alämayä Agricultural University some six years ago.

Not only does the flashback expose the backgrounds and relationships of the two-prominent characters, but portray their

unique characteristics, too. Hence, Asānafi is presented as a voracious reader who loves fictional books and other writings. More than anything else, however, Ašānafi loves educational studies which, according to him, is the sole tool by which one may improve and/or change both his/her spiritual and material lives. Therefore, he wants Alāmšāt, to be a clever student than a 'good women' at house management. Alāmšāt, on the other hand, is absolutely against her husband's ideas, attitudes and feelings. Despite the fact that she is currently a twelve grade student, Alāmšāt is interested neither in education nor in the act of reading. On the contrary, she is very much interested in love, sex and other luxuries which, according to her, are the hearts of marriage and these are the fundamental disparities which evoke the major conflict and the tragic ending of the story, Yāqerb Ruq.

The second flashback that comes at the middle of the same narrative demonstrates not only the reminiscence of the sweet and bitter love experience of the third important character, Feqertä, but also portrays her current physical, sexual, and educational backgrounds. Yāzena tries to go as far back as eight years to record a scene that influences the social, psychological and sexual lives of the character under discussion. Unlike the previous one, the

second flashback is presented through the voice of the subject of the reminiscence, Feqertä. At the very first paragraph of the scene, Feqertä tells us that she starts sex at the stage of sixteen. At the time she was an eight grade student. However, after a year she quarrels with her former lover and meets her second boy friend, Kahsaye, a man with whom she lives together as lover for four years.

Although much of the flashback deals with the love story of these two characters, it attempts to effect two advantages. First, it intends to show the reader the sweet and bitter experiences of Feqertä. Second, it illuminates the present theme and build the conflict that centers on the lives of the two married people, Ašānafi and Alāmšāt.

Yäzena manipulates the same narrative technique in her other short story called, Zematayé. The story portrays the life of a young orphan whom her own society allienates her from any social activities and interactions for the fact that she is regarded as a garulous girl. According to the social norms of the society, a girl has to be quiet, decent and respectful. She is not allowed to expose herself to the public. She must rather confine herself to the kitchen and/or closets.

Despite such social obligations, the young-orphan-protagonist presents herself freely to the public. However, at last, the orphan protagonist runs away from her home village, because she fails to subdue her 'strange' and 'bad' dispositions. Of course, until the last part of the story such information and the true identity of the young character are kept secret from the knowledge of other characters. It is the flashback narrative that appears at the end of the story, Zemetayé, which unveils the secret life of the protagonist and makes other characters (Géta Sät'arga aw Mäsäsa and his young brother) understand who Yergädu, the orphan protagonist, really is.

Yäzena also employs the flashback technique in her other short story, Samat. The flashback scene that appears at the outset of the story provides the reader with the protagonist's (Mäsfen) particular traits of characters. The character-narrator, Mäsfen, exhibits his jealous-mind and ardent sexual desire, in the retrospective monologue, which motivated him to separate the two lovers, T'elahun and Meseke, and make the latter-character his wife. Not only does the flashback expose the conflict within Mäsfen, the protagonist, which is, of course, the main cause for the short story to begin with, but also reflect the major themes

(jealousy, love, and cruelty) of the story. Accordingly, from the foregoing discussion, it could be said that the flashbacks in Yäzena's short stories have technical significance in the construction of the plots and the expositions of characters and the various themes of the discourses.

On the other hand, of all the prose works of the four post-revolution women authoresses it is only in the writings of Yäzena and Elfenäse that we come across such a narrative device, the epistolary technique. Yäzena tries to employ this method in her story, Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs (The Graduation's Suit). In the story, Askälämaryam, a poor university student, writes a letter to her father, Ayewa Gosu, in which she asks him to send her two-hundred birr which may enable her to buy new clothes for her graduation.

Despite his poor economy, Ayewa Gošu responds to Askälämaryam's request by selling his four cattle on which his entire family depended. However, at the close of the narrative we are told that Ayewa loses all his money before he meets Askälämaryam, his elder daughter, at the main gate of the A.A.U, because a certain woman thief takes him to her dark house as soon as he arrives at the A.A. Bus Terminal and robs all what he has in his pockets.

Unlike the novel of Elfenäše (whose discussion comes later), in Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs, the epistolary technique is artistically and effectively used. Although it occupies only three-fourth of a page, the letter which Askalämaryam writes to her father brings the whole story into light. Not only is it the main cause for the short story to begin with, but also triggers the psychological conflict (which evolves within the above two characters) that evokes the tragic ending. In addition to this, it exposes the different aspects of the backgrounds of the two major characters, Askalämaryam and her father, Ayewa Gošu. Thus, from the letter the reader may come to understand not only that Askalämaryam is a poor-young woman and final year student at the A.A.U., but also Ayewa Gošu lives in the rural area called Dämbiya.

2.1.3. The Employment of Dream and Telephone Conversation Techniques

Dream is also another narrative technique which Yäzena uses in the same short story, Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs. The authoress makes use of the technique at the start of the story where Ayewa Gošu tells his dream experience to his wife, Wäyezäro A amyäläše, which he had a day before he receives his daughter's letter.

"እንደ ትና ለምን እንደሄድሁ በውል
አይከሰትልኝም ብቻ እየተንደረደርኩ ሰፊ ባህር
ውስጥ ከነልብሴ እዘፈቃለሁ። ባህሩ ሰፊ ነው...
የትየለሌ! ዋናቶ መውጣት አትቶኝ ስፍራት
ተቆየሁ በኋላ እንደምንም ተውተርትሬ ሰወጣ
መለመላዩን ነኝ..." "...ደንገጥ ገራ ተኝ
ሰመለከት ሰው የለም። ጊዜው ድንገገገገ በግለቱ
አጋልጦ የግሰጠኝ አልነበረም... ተዚያ ወዲያ ግ
ምኑን ትጡን አውቄው። እንደተጨነቅሁ፣
እንደተጠበብሁ የረባ እንትልፍ ሳይወሰደኝ ወገን
ብሎ ነጋ።"

"I could not in fact remember how
and why I went there. I just rushed
and plunged into a big sea without
taking my clothes off. It is a big
sea ... too big! I failed to get out
of the sea, but after tedious
efforts I came out and found
myself naked... "... "... I felt
frightened and looked around but
none was there. It was dark and did
not expose one's identity ... But
after that I do not remember
anything. The sun had risen up
when I woke in full trouble and
tension and without having a good
sleep throughout the night"
(Yäzena Wärqu. 1982 Eth. C: 265-
266)

In the quoted paragraph, Yäzena tries to suggest two important things. First, she attempts to show the reader Ayewa's innermost mind which suffers from the pains of mental stress. On the other hand, Yäzena tries to foretell the tragic incident which is going to take place at the end of the story. According to the tradition of

the Amhara People, a sea or an ocean that appears in a man's/woman's dream world represents a big city or a large town in the real world. Furthermore, Ayewa Gošu's naked body and the half-dark setting (the dusk) have a telling impact which may be directly associated with the tragic outcome of the conflict which is going to be realized in the end. In general, although she uses the dream technique only once, Yäzena employs the incident effectively. In the dream incident, the authoress provides the reader with the psychological personality of the poor peasant character, Ayewa Gošu. She also subtly suggests the final outcome of the discourse, the loss of Ayewa Gošu's money.

The use of telephone conversation is also a new and common phenomenon among the post-revolution women authoresses. Most authors employ it to convey the themes and subject matters of their respective stories. Furthermore, some writers use the technique to portray the relationships of different characters and comment on both the strong and weak personalities of some of the major and minor characters of their narratives. Among these authoresses, Yäzena Worqu is one who is really at the forefront of the manipulation of such a narrative method.

In her two stories, Sänayat and Yäqerb Ruq, Yäzena makes use of such a narrative device to produce those technical effects which seem to be important not only to reveal the relations of some of the major characters, but also enhance the forward movement of the plots. The telephone conversation that appears in the short story, Yäqerb Ruq, for instance, expose the kind of the relationship of the two illegitimate lovers, Alämšät, Ašänafi's wife, and Tewodros, a university student.

የሰልጡን መነጋገሪያ . . . አንስታ፣
"ሀሎ" . . . የጠበቀችው የፍቅርተን ንግግር
ነበር። . . .
"የፍቅር እመቤትን ደህና ግደር ለመጠየቅ
ሰል . . . ደወለሁ" . . .
"ቴዎድሮስ ነህ እንደ" አለችው።
"አይደለሁም ቴድሮ ነኝ" አላት። አነጋገሩ . . .
አላቃትና፣
"ትላንት በደህና ደረሰክ" አለችው . . .
". . . መጥቶ የመጠየቅ ፍርድ ተበይኖብኛል።"
"የት ነው የምመጣው?" አለችው . . .
"እነሙክታር ጋ እጠብቅሽና አብረን እንውላለን፣
ፍእርትም አብራን አለች" አለ . . .
"እመጣለሁ" አለችው።
"ፈጠን በይ . . . ዓለምዬ" . . .
"እሺ . . . ጆም" አለችው።

She picks up the receiver of the telephone and she says,
"Hello." . . . She expected Fegertä's voice.
"I phone to say my dear lover, "good morning" . . ."
"Are you Tewodros?" She said.
"No. This is your beloved Tewodros, " he said.

The style of his expression makes her laugh and,
"have you met any trouble yesterday," she said...
"... You should come and visit me."
"Where shall I come?" She said...
"Well, I will wait for you at Muktar's house,
and then we shall pass the time of the day with Feqertä," he said.
"Alright! I will come". She said.

"Hurry up... my dear, Alämšät"...
"Ok. Goodbye," she said. (pp. 166-167)

The above telephone conversation has also other technical significances, for not only does it portray the four young characters, Alämšät, Tewodros, Feqertä, and Muktar as close friends, but also serve as a bridge to bring these young people together and move the plot forward. Moreover, in Sänayet, Yäzena employs similar technique not only to introduce the major characters, Sänayet and Sälämon, but also tell us the kind of relation they have. Yäzena attempts to show Sänayet's (the character narrator) innermost mind which is obsessed with tension, insecurity, and loneliness. The telephone conversation that goes between Sänayet and her lover, Sälämon, reveals the protagonist's internal troubles which are caused by the feelings

of loneliness and sterility. In their conversation, Sānayet expresses that the main cause for her loneliness is that the quarrel between her and Wāyezāro Qonjit, her aunt. Sānayet also confesses that she commits sin against Wāyezāro Qonjit in that she snatches Sälāmon, the man whom the latter was in love with. Furthermore, Sānayet utters that she always feels sad, for she considers herself as a sterile woman. Thus, this internal troubles and feelings of insecurity establish the psychological conflict of the story which is in fact the engine of the plot.

On the other hand, Emewādese Bäqälä also tries to manipulate the telephone method in her short story, Anagaw. Though she attempts to employ the technique twice, it is not as useful and purposeful as is in Yäzena works, because both conversations are not well linked with the story. They are not in harmony either with the characterization, or the conflict, or the theme ... etc. The vapid conversation that goes between Anagaw, the protagonist, and Elizabeth, an off-stage character is worth mentioning.

እናጋው ተሽከርካሪ ወንበሩ ላይ ትኩ ብሎ እያዛጋ
ሰልክ ተደወለ። ሰልኩን አንስቶ "ሁሉ! ሁሉ!
ግን ለበለ?" አለ
"ኤላሳቤጥ" ከወዲያ የሚሉ አቅጣጫ ያላሸ አገኘ
"ኤላሳቤጥ ደህና ነሽ?"
"ደህና ነኝ፣ ደህና ነህ"
"ጠፋሽ አይደለ"
"የጠፋሽውስ አንተ!"

"ምን እባክሽ ሥራ ይበዛል ጊዜ የለም" "እሱስ ከልብ ካሰቡ ጊዜ አይጠፋም" "ኤልሲ ሙኛ!..." "ዛሬስ?" "ዛሬ እንኳን ግታ ብት እላለሁ" "እሺ በል ... ቻም!" "ቻም"

There comes a telephone call as Anagaw yawning, sitting on his revolving chair. He picks up the receiver and says, "Hello! Hello! who is it?"

"This is Elizabeth," he gets response from the other side.

"How are you, Elizabeth?"

"I am fine, and you?"

"You disappeared!"

"Not me! It is you who disappeared."

"You know, these days I have a lot of work to do and I do not have time."

"I am afraid, it does not sound convincing."

"I am not lying my dear, Elizabeth!"

"What about today?"

"Well, I will come in the evening."

"Ok. Goodbye!?"

"Goodbye!" (Emewädese Bäqälä. 1982 Eth. C.: 2)

The conversation of the two people in the above paragraphs fails to expose who Elizabeth is. It does not also demonstrate Anagaw's particular personalities which the authoress conveys in the other part of the story. Neither are the kinds of the relationships of the two characters nor the conflict and the theme

of the story revealed through this conversation. Therefore, though Emewädeše uses the telephone conversation in her short story, she fails to link it with the story as effectively as Yäzena.

2.2. The Applications of Narrative Techniques in the Novels of S'ähaye Mälaku

2.2.1. The Employment of the All knowing Omniscient and the Objective points of view.

S'ähaye Mälaku is another woman authoress who appears on the Ethiopian literary stage in the post-revolution era with her two novels, Quwasa and Anguz. S'ähaye is considered as the first modern Ethiopian novelist. She wrote her first novel, Quwasa in 1982 Eth. C; and, the second novel, Anguz, in 1984 Eth. C.

The story of Quwasa revolves around the lives of three major characters Webešät; Mentäsnot, his ex-lover; and Wede, their illegitimate daughter. On the other hand, the story of Anguz unfolds the destruction of a poor family whose members are all punished in death except one woman. Sänayet, the only woman who is saved from political punishment, is the central character of the novel, Anguz.

Sänayet, a young teacher, has lost her father, Ato Beru, and two young brothers, Täfära and Däräjä, by the red terror group which

was prevalent in the then Derg regime. Sänayet, an orphan protagonist, marries Käbädä Wami, the killer of her father and two brothers, so as to revenge the death of her parents. At the close, Sänayet kills Käbäda, a revolutionary squad, with poison and marries her former boy friend, Abära Est'ifanos.

While revealing the life history of Sänayet, the novelist uses different kinds of narrative stances, although the all knowing omniscient point of view is the predominant one. Of course, such a perspective is common in her both novels. Below is an extract which may show us the employment of the omniscient point of view with the voice of the narrator being a third-person.

ረዥም ቁመናዋ ገዙፍ ሰውነቷና ብሩህ ቀለጧ ተጋገዘው ከሰዎች መካከል በሩቁ እንድትለይ ጎልታ እንድትታይ ያደርጋሉ። ዓይኖችዋ፣ ጉንጮችዋ፣ አፍንጫዋዎ ሥጋ የተደራረበባቸው በመሆኑ ፊቷ ያበጠ ቢመስልም የቆዳዋ ጥራት ግግር ይጋርደዋል። አካሄድ መልካም፣ አለባበስ አዋቂ በመሆኗ ዓይን ያርፍባታል።

ትክለ ሰውነቷ የአካሄድና የአለባበስ ሥርዓቷ፣ መልካ ወይም ጠባይዋ፣ በሃብትና በቤተዘመድ ብዛት የደረጃው ቤተሰብዋ፣ ብቻ አንዱ ወይም ሁሉም ተጠቃለው ግርክውት ይሆናል፣ ውብሽት እንዳይላሉ መንፈሱ የሰከነባት ሴት ነች።

Her tall, bright and magnificent body has made her to be singled out from a big crowd in a distance. The colour of her skin appears so nice and veils the unpleasant look on her eyes, cheeks, and nose. Her manner of

walking and dressing, with which she meets the eyes of her admirers, are so special and beautiful.

Hence, it seems that her beautiful body; splendid physical appearance and dressing; her good behaviour and family background, one of these or all have attracted Webešät's feeling and she has become a chosen woman with whom he decided to live together. (S'ähay Mälaku. 1982 Eth. C: 7)

The physical appearance as well as the economic and family backgrounds of the characters, Abäbayähu, the protagonist's wife, are demonstrated after a critical examination by the omniscient speaker. In the passages, the all knowing narrator conveys not only the physical and social status of the character, but also he goes further and comments on Webešät's (the protagonist) feelings and emotional reactions. Thus, the narrator seems to be available here and there and everywhere to disclose both the internal and external features of the characters and give a lesson to the reader to promote him/her to have a rightful evaluation about the credibility of the characters.

However, as has been recurrently noted, such a narrative stance has its own disadvantage. The problem is evidently felt in

the first six lines of the above passage where the omniscient narrator abolishes the intimacy between the reader and the scene of the narrative. The narrator does not show us Abäbayähu's beautiful body objectively and dramatically. But, it is through his eyes and mind that we visualize the physical structure of the charming woman. He does not make us see and feel her beauty through her own actions and expressions. Accordingly, since it is the omniscient narrator who reports everything to the reader, he creates considerable distance between the reader and the character. He sets the reader far away both from the scene and the emotions or feelings that the scene (the physical appearance of the beautiful woman, Aäbayähu) creates.

On the other hand, S'ähaye, sometimes, employs the objective-omniscient narrative view point which enables her to achieve two different goals. First, it gives her a chance to record and present the actions, speeches and gestures of the two married people, Webešät and Abäbayähu, without probing into their innermost minds. Secondly, it offers the authoress an access to employ a narrator who has both the opportunity to observe and unfold the actions and reactions from the outside and comment on them at the same time. In the subsequent paragraphs S'ähaye tries to dismiss the gulf that

separates the reader from the incidents of the story by using the objective point of view.

"መቀለሽ አይደለሁም ልቀቀኝ" ብላ በኃይል
ልትመነጭቀው ጥከረች። አያያዙ ስለጠበቀ ገን
አልቻለችም። . . .
"ምናለበት ደግመሽ ስትናገሪው ብሰግ?"
"አልናገርም"
በቁጣ ጨምድዶ አርገፈገፋት። ፊቷን ወደትከሻዋ
መልሳ ዝም አለችው።
"ንገሪኝ።"
"ምኑን?"
"የመጀመሪያውን ቃል።"
"ብትወድም ባትወድም አርገሃለሁ" አለችው
ቀይ ፊቷ ሳምባ እንደመሰለ።

"Don't touch me! I am not your puppet" she said, and tried to run away from him" But she couldn't, for his grip was strong. . .
"Why don't you tell me again, let me hear it."
"I wouldn't tell you."
He shook her body angrily. But she dropped her face back and kept silent.
"Tell me."
"What shall I tell you?"
"Your first word."
"Whether you like it or not, I am pregnant"
she said to him, her red face turning pale. (pp. 15-16)

Such a dramatic presentation won't only give the reader an access to see and feel the actions, reactions and emotions of the two married people, but it also enables him/her to evaluate the

actions and reactions of the characters and come to his/her own conclusion. The use of such a narrative stance is recurrently observed in the novels of S'ähaye.

"ውብሽት"
"ወደ የኔ እመቤት"
"አንድ ነገር ለንገርህ"
"ንገሪኛ፣ ድምፅሽን መስማት
...ያረካኛለሁ" ...
"እሺ"
"አቦ ንገሪኝ የግራፍት ሁሉ ላገኛለሁ ለገደረገ
ዝግጁ ነኝ"
"አርገሃለሁ!"
"ዎን"
"አርገሃለሁ አልኩሁ"
"አትጫግለኔ..." ...
"እነዲያውም ... ካንኛል ጋር ያለኝን ገንኙነት
አልፈደገውም። አረገዝኩ ... የግራፍት
ጭንጭን መስማት አልፈደገውም..."

"Webešät"
"Yes, my darling!"
"Shall I tell you something"
"Tell me, please; I love to hear
your voice"
"Ok."
"But, I am afraid of disclosing
the matter."
"Hey, come on! Tell me! I am ready
to do everything what I can do for
you!"
"I am pregnant"
"What?!"
"I said, I am pregnant"
"Don't be silly! ..." ...
"Let me tell you ... I don't want
to have any relation with you. Nor
do I like to hear the word, I am
pregnant." (pp.22.23)

In this passage, the objective observer tries to remain completely outside the narrative and allow the two characters to express their feelings and move the narrative along. The authoress also remains outside the minds and feelings of her characters. She never enters into the story. Therefore, the reader sees the people and hears them talk.

2.2.2. The Employment of Flashback
and Telephone Techniques

Like other women authoresses, S'ähaye employs telephone conversation as a narrative device not only to introduce some of the major characters, but also explain the relationship they have. The telephone conversation that goes between Webešät Endayelalu and his mistress, Tayä e Aba 'äfeq, for instance, suggests the sexual life of the protagonist, Webesät.

የሰለኩን መነጋገሪያ ከጎኑ አቅርቦ ጥሪውን
ተቀበለ።
"ሃሎ " . . . አቤት"
"አለሁልሽ።"
"እንኳን አደረሰሽ ታዩ!" . . .
"ይገርምሻል ባላሰበው ዘመዶቼ ከገጠር መጥተው
እንግዳ በእንግዳ ሆኜያለሁ።"
"እናቴና አጎቴ ናቸው።"
"እንዴት ትቺያቸው እመጣለሁ. . . ." . . .
"ለኔግ ብትመጧ ደስታውን አልቸለውም ገን
መድከምሽን አልፈለግሁትም።"
"ከመጣችም ወደግታ ነዪ"
"ሴቶች ስትባሉ መጠራጠር ታበዛላችሁ. . . ."

"...ጸሐፊ ጸጸፊ"

He brings the telephone close to him and responds to the telephone call

"Hello"... Hello!"

"I am still alive, my darling"

"I wish you a happy new year! My dear, Tayä e.

"It is in fact surprising...My relatives came accidentally from their home place and I became rather busy in serving my guests.

"My mother and uncle."

"How can I come leaving them alone..."

"..." I would be very much happy if you come, but I do not want you feel weary of paying visit."

"Well, if you want to come, please, do it in the evening."

"You women are suspicious characters..."

"... Goodnight" (pp.20-21)

Thus, from the above telephone conversation we may sense that Webešät has strong sexual desire which he cannot subdue only by establishing marriage. It seems therefore for this reason that he has three additional mistresses apart from his legal wife, Abäbayähu.

On the other hand, flashback is also a common narrative device which S'ähaye recurrently uses in her two novels. Of course, some of the flashbacks are very long and also appear to be irrelevant in

the construction of the plots of the stories. However, the authoress, at times, employs interesting reminiscences which are very essential for the expositions of the main conflict as well as the various themes of the stories. Not only this, but they also help to demonstrate the relationships of important characters, and, above all, link the various chapters of the novels.

For example, the long flashback that comes at the outset of Anguz, though some of the retrospective episodes are too long and appear to be irrelevant, has technical significance in demonstrating the childhood experiences and relationships of the four major characters, Sänayet (the orphan protagonist), Arägaše, Qedest, and Abära. Below is an extract taken from the text, Anguz. It shows how the authoress goes back and starts to narrate the reminiscences of the orphan protagonist, Sänayet Beru.

በባለዎ ሸፈርነት እየተሸከረከረኝ መኪናዎ ከጋንዲ ሆስፒታል አካባቢ ብትርቅም የሠናይት ልቦና ግን ከዚያ ሥፍራ አልተገባብም። . . . መንፈስዎ የተነካባት የአረጋሽ ነገር ቀስ በቀስ እየነጻ ወደ ትዝታ መገገድ ከተታት በርካታ ዓመታትን አልፋ የጥንቁን የመሠረቁን አስታወሳት። በጎሠቀለ አካልና ሁኔታ ያየኛትን የጥዋትዋን አረጋሽን ሳይሆን . . . ለግላጋ ሰውነት የነበራትን አረጋሽን ለይታ አየኛት። ልጅነትዋን ጓደኝነትን . . . ገላልጣ አስተዋለችው። ሌላዋን ጓደኛዋንም ቅድስት በርናባስን አስታወሰኛት። . . . አረጋሽና ሰናይት እንዲሁም ቅድስት ከቅድስት ግርያም ቤተክርስቲያን ፈትለፈት . . . ከግንፍሌ ወንዝ አካባቢ ከነበረው መገደር ተወልደው ከልጅነት እስከ ኮረዳነት በጥብቅ ጓደኝነት የኖሩ አብሮ አደጎች ነበሩ።

Though her husband is driving her away from Gandhi Hospital, spiritually Sänayet is still in Gandhi Hospital. Moved by the current situation of Arägaše, she began to think of the good old days. Going back in time, she started to see the young slim and slender Arägase, not the currently weak and sick one. She unfolded past friendship and childhood and then recalled her other friend, Qededst. Born at a place, around G'enfelé River, in front of Saint Mary's Church, Arägaše, Sänayet and Qedest were brought up together in close friendship from childhood to girlhood. (S'ähaye Mälaku. 1984 Eth. C.: 9)

In the above quoted paragraphs the authoress makes use of the omniscient narrator who probes deep into Sänayet's mind to recall her past experiences. Thus, in association with the revelation of the protagonist's social and psychological backgrounds, the authoress tries to depict the setting of the story. As the long flashback moves forward, we come to know that the story of Anguz starts around 'G'enfele, here in Addis Abäba in 1961 Eth. C. at the time when Sänayet leaves for Däbrä Berhan to join the Däbrä Berhan Teachers' Training Institute. Moreover, we are told about the sweet experiences of the four intimate friends and major characters of

the narrative (Sänayet, Arägase, Qedest, and Abära Estifanos) through this flashback scene. The long flashback that appears at the middle of the story (Anguz, Chapter eight) also tries to reflect the political theme of the narrative, the political struggle of the youth and the massacre which prevailed during the Derg regime.

S'ähaye uses similar technique in Quwasa to effect a parallel purpose. She, accordingly, discloses the relationship between Mentäsnot (the mother of Wedé, Webšät's illegitimate daughter) and her mother, Wäyezäro Mulunäše. It is, therefore, the retrospective voice of the latter character which helps the reader to be familiar with the hidden cause for Mentäsnot's illness. Thus, Mentäsnot becomes a cripple, lunatic and dumb woman because of an illegal abortion. In the same novel we also come across another retrospection which attempts to unfold the kind of relationship between Ato Abeyé Qet'aw, and old guardian, and, his mistress, Wäyezro Mulunäše, a widow character. The omniscient speaker who sits inside Abeyé Qet'aw's mind presents the flashback scene, the scene that devotes to reveal how Abeyé Qet'aw meets Wäyezäro Mulunäše and introduces himself to her.

In addition, the all knowing narrator moves the reader from house to house and hospital to hospital retrospectively to

introduce him/her with new characters and unveil the mystery of Wede's identity. Of course, the whole mystery that focuses on the life of Wedé, Webšät's illegitimate daughter, is solved in chapter seven (two chapters before the last).

Generally, when we examine the flashbacks that are used in the two novels, however, we find that most of them are too long and have negative impact on the stories's progress, though a few of them are useful in attaining certain technical effects. Thus, for example, the flashback narrative that appears in the first chapter of the novel, Quwase, devotes to Webšät's past political life and other remote experiences which have nothing to do with the character's current dispositions. And, neither does it reflect nor magnify the various themes of the story (betrayal, love, jealousy and revenge). Besides, some of them are too vague. The reader will, apparently, be puzzled to identify or separate the actual discourse from the flashback. The very long flashback that comes at the start of Anguz is also a good instance here. This flashback covers a full chapter which comprise twenty pages. It tries to present too many events which are absolutely unnecessary to the forward movement of the story. For example, the long retrospection which deals with the accounts of the 1953's Eth. C military coup is not well connected

with the main focus of the story which tries to unfold the past experiences of the orphan protagonist. The political song that intends to insult General Mäng'estu Näwaye (the coup leader) and the long speech which he delivers in a court of law are also irrelevant incidents which attempts to expose neither the political themes, nor the political conflict of the discourse.

On the other hand, S'ähaye, at times uses the technique of detective story to hide things from the knowledge of the reader and heighten the suspense of her narrative. The true identities and personalities of many characters are usually concealed for a long time from the knowledge of the reader. In Quwasa, for instance, S'ähaye attempts to reveal the true identities of the three important characters, Wede, Asäläfä e, the young janitor, and Fanayé, the nurse, near the end of the story. We also come across such a narrative method in Anguz. In the story, the authoress tries to hide the political and social backgrounds of the two minor characters, Mänän Hayelu, Arägaše's maid servant, and Wärqu Zärihun, her boy friend until chapter eight.

However, most episodes and incidents appear to be irrelevant. Even if Sähaye frequently manipulates the technique, it fails to play positive role in the construction of tight plots. In this case,

Quwasa is a good example. Thus, the long narrative which devotes to conceal the past lives of the two women characters (Fanayé, the nurse, and Asäläfä e, the young janitor) fails to build the suspense of the story in that both of them entertain detailed materials that are not necessary to the story's target. For example, a detailed account of the life of prostitution which Fanayé, the nurse character, used to practice for a long time, and the long description of the incident that dwelt on the quarrel between Asäläfä e and her husband do not have any technical importance except making the plot loose and hindering the story's progress. The conglomeration of such unnecessary narratives will therefore make the plot loose, for they weaken the central conflict (the conflict that rises from the kinds of the relationships of the four important characters, Webšat, Mentäsnot, Wede and Abäbayähu) which is in fact the heart and backbone of the whole story.

2.3. The Applications of Narrative Techniques in the Novel of Elfenäse Bākurā.

2.3.1. The Employment of the Central and the Omniscient Points of view.

Elfenäše is the second woman novelist who appears on the Ethiopian literary scene, next to Sähaye, in 1985 Eth. C. with her

first novel S'elmät. The novel, deals with the life of a widow protagonist called Bezu'ayähu Ewnätu. Bezu'eyähu has four children three of whom are boys and the rest a girl. These are Bäqalu, Dagnawi, Sät'earga äw, and Mäzegäb.

In the past thirty years, Bezu'ayähu had led a sweet and happy life. However, after the death of her second husband, Mäkuwanent Gašaw, her home has collapsed. Loneliness hurts her mind and heart. The story of S'elmät revolves around such a tragic situation which Bezu'ayähu and her family encounter because of the death of the father of her children. Bezu'ayähu, a character-narrator, presents her own life history retrospectively within a half-night time. Of all the prose works that are under consideration, S'elmat appears to be unique for the fact that the whole story is presented in the form of flashback.

Elfenaše employs both the central and the omniscient points of view although much of the story is delivered in the former method. At the outset of the novel, the authoress uses the voice of the omniscient narrator to present a prelude that triggers or initiates the main story which unfolds the sad-happy-sad life experiences of the widow protagonist, Bezuayahu. However, Elfenaše does not entirely detach herself from the character to present her

objectively, but at times she also delves into the character's mind to record her innermost feelings and thoughts. Here is an example of how Elfenaše blends disengagement and interiorization. "... እስቲ የኔንም ያለፈ ህይወት ላጫውትሽ" አለችው። ከየት እንደምትጀምር ቦታው ጠፍቷት ጠቋሚ የምትረዳግ ይመስል ጣሪያ ገድገዳውን በዓይኖች እያግተረች።" "... Let me tell you about my own life history, too," she said. However she was unable to identify the point which she may start with and gazed both at the ceiling and the wall as though she is searching for someone to remind her. (Elfenaše Bakura. 1985 Eth. C.: 8) "አይገረምሽ እጅግ? እገዢአብሄር እኮ የሰውን ህይወት በደቂቃ ይለውጣል። እኔን ከትቢያ አንስቶ እዚህ ሲያደርሰኝ ለእገዢአብሄር ምን ይከፈለዋል? ምሥጋና ብቻ! "Aren't you surprised, Ejeguwa? God can change the life of an individual within a minute. What do I owe to the Almighty when he takes me out of the rubbish and puts me here? Nothing but thanks. (p.33)

The first quotation is an observation made by a detached narrator. In the first and half lines of the passage of the first quotation the outside narrator presents the speech of the character objectively. He tries to report only what he hears. However, in the second and third sentences we sense that the omniscient narrator goes deep into Bezu'ayahu's mind and senses her confused intellect that strives to summon up the past experiences of the protagonist.

But, the point of view of the second quotation is entirely the central one. The voice is also a first person. The character narrator, Bezu'ayahu, tells her neighbour, Egegayähu, about her own life history. According to the the content of this quotation the reader understands that Bezu'ayähu was a poor woman. But after a few years, she becomes a rich dame because of, as she enunciates, the help of God. Unlike the first one, in the second quotation, the relation between the reader and the character is so close. The reader feels the words of the character as though he/she utters them to himself/herself. The flow of the words and ideas are not interrupted by foreign elements. Thus, the effect of the powerful emotions inherent in them are realized soon.

On the other hand, Elefenäse employs 'a story within story' technique in two different places of the story for two different purposes. Of course, both sub-stories are reminiscences of two other characters. The first sub-story which appears in the middle of chapter two, deals with the unsuccessful love story which Mäkuwanent, Bezu'ayähu's husband, practices with his former girl friend. Elefenäse seems to insert this sub-story into the main narrative intentionally so as to demonstrate some of the weaknesses

of women. Especially, those who lack moral and, above all, intellectual faculties.

The second sub-story that appears at the end of chapter two unfolds Nägaše's (an old man who serves as a guardian in Mäkuwanent's house) youthful experiences, particularly his sexual personality. At his young age, Nägaše used to commit unlawful sexual intercourses with several married and unmarried women. It is this illegal sexual activity that wounds and damages his body and forces him to run away from his home village. Here, too, Elefenäše, the novelist, seems to have a definite objective which she wants to demonstrate through the bad experiences and dispositions of the old guardian, Nägaše. She tries to pronounce the bad aftermath of an abnormal and immoral eroticism. Hence, in her view, such infamous behaviour may destroy the physical, social and psychological lives of both the young and the old people as well.

Generally, as far as the modern and traditional fictional literatures of women are concerned, none of the Ethiopian women authoresses has attempted to use a story within story method except Elefenäše and Yäzena. The ideas of the three sub-stories (the negative impact of immature love, the concern of money than love and unlawful sexual intercourse) are well connected with the subject

matters of the two narratives, S'elmät and Yägerb Ruq. The employment of such a narrative method helps the authoress to reflect and illuminate the major themes of their two stories.

Telephone conversation is also another method which, like other post-revolution women authoresses, Elfenäše employs to narrate her story. The telephone conversation that goes between Bezu'ayähu and Wändemu (a married man who insists Bezu'eyähu to make love with him), for example, exposes Bezu'ayähu's strong and good personalities. Bezu'ayähu's character has its impact on her speech, too. Thus, her faint behaviour is revealed in the way she replies to Wändemu's emotionally charged questions. Moreover, through the conversation of this two people, not only does Elefenäše condemn Wändemu's insincerity and immoral conduct, but also criticize those men who are lustful and disloyal to their partners.

On the other hand, like Yäzena Wärqu, Elfenäše makes use of the epistolary technique to attain certain technical effects. In the story, Tadiyos, Bezu'ayähu's ex-lover, goes abroad without the knowledge of the latter. However, after six months he writes three letters, to Bezu'ayähu in which he confesses his unjust action and promises to marry her as soon as he prepares the invitation paper

which will enable her to go to the place where he lives. Bezu'ayähu does not accept his call, however. She refuses to respond to his two letters, though Tadiyos tries to convince her incessantly. Here, too, the authoress seems to reiterate and reflect Bezu'eyähu's good conduct. Therefore, through the different incidents and events of her story, Elfenaše wants to assert that Bezu'ayähu is a loyal and sincere woman whose 'good personalities' will not be spoiled by luxuries and/or wealth. Thus, even if she receives three letters from Tadiyos (in which he confesses his wrongdoings and asks her apology and invites her to come to the place where he lives) Bezu'ayähu refuses his invitation and sends his third letter back with her short note, 'thank you, but I did not accept your invitation.'

Besides, the authoress uses such a technique to reflect the major themes (e.g. betrayal and disloyalty) that recur in all of the three chapters of the novel. In her story, S'elmät, Elfenaše reveals that betrayal and disloyalty or insincerity are the common characteristics of man kind. She tries to reflect such attitude through the personalities and actions of the three male characters: Dawit, the father of Bezu'ayähu's elder son, Bäqalu; Tadiyos,

Bezu'ayähu's second lover; and Wändemu, a married man who wants Bezu'ayäahu to be his mistress.

Lastly, I must say that unlike other women authoresses, Yäzena and Elfenäše appear to be good at employing the various aspects of narrative techniques. Their stories do not entertain mechanical approach at least for two-fold reasons. First, they have a good knowledge about the ideas and central themes of their stories. They seem to know how, when, and where to start and close their respective narratives. Secondly, compared with the works of other two post - revolution women authoresses, Emewädše Bäqälä and S'ähaye Mälaku, the fictional writings of Yäzena Wärqu and Elefenäše Bäkürä employ appropriate narrative techniques which enhance the literary and aesthetic qualities of their works.

Generally, unlike the other Ethiopian women authoresses (both the pre-and-post-revaluation ones), the above two writers, Yäzena and Elfenäše, appear to be quite conscious, cautious, and good at choosing different narrative methods which are useful in constructing tight plots, heightening the suspense, revealing the various personalities of the characters and themes of their stories.

CHAPTER-THREE

THE ANALYSES OF CHARACTERIZATION, PLOT CONSTRUCTION AND LANGUAGE IN SOME OF THE PROSE WORKS OF ETHIOPIAN WOMEN AUTHORESSSES.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the methods and the credibility of the portrayals of characters, plot construction, and the nature of language that are used in some of the prose works whose methods of narration have already been discussed in the preceding chapters. It is divided into three headings which focus on the Charactrization, Plot construction and Language of the works under consideration.

3.2. Credibility, Consistency, and Motivations of Characters As Reflected in Some of the Prose Works of Ethiopian Women Authoresses.

Characterization is an important technique on which a novel's or a short story's success depends. In a well-constructed story, the characterization will in large part determine the nature, development, outcome and effect of the conflict. In other words, character determines and control the conflict of the story. We may therefore assert that characterization is as essential to fiction as conflict. Character portrayed in a fictional work can be analysed from different aspects. Regarding the diverse

possibilities or ways of examining characters in a creative literature the two renowned literary scholars, Roby and Ulanov, record:

Characters must not only be analysed for the qualities which they embody. They must be judged within necessary limitations imposed upon them by the demands of art, in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness in the particular plot ... (Robert C. Roby and Barry Ulanov. 1962: Xii)

This part of the study will therefore attempt to discuss the portrayals of the actions and personalities of some of the major characters (whom we find in some of the stories which this thesis considers) from the points of view of the constituents of characterization: credibility, consistency and motivation.

Characters in a fiction must be credible. Another way of putting this is to say that characters in a story must seem real. Unless we believed in people in a narrative, we cannot believe in what happens to them or in what they do. In addition, characters in fiction must be consistent. If a character is delineated as a vindictive, we expected him behave or act vindictively throughout the story. On the surface, this may seem contradictory, because in real life we observe people behave inconsistently or act out of

character. But, we also know that such inconsistencies are rare. Thus, the manner or behavior or disposition in fictional characters is based on what people in life usually do, not on what they occasionally do. Of course, characters in a fiction may assume some kinds of changes. These can be physical or mental or both. Here, we come across the third characteristic, that characters in fiction must be motivated.

When we consider character and characterization it is in fact essential that we criticize the characters in the fictional works if they are lacking credibility or consistency or motivation or some other indispensable qualities which we expect to see in the human species. By a brief but close study, we shall, therefore, see whether the portrayals of some of the major characters in the stories of Asrat, Zäwditu, Mät'änäwäraq, Gänät, S'ähaye, Emewädeše, Yäzena and Elfenäše, are convincing and whether their actions are in harmony with the traits they have. Moreover, the methods in drawing the physical, social, educational, and economic backgrounds of some of their major characters will be considered.

It seems true to say that in order to create more interesting and believable characters, the novelist or the short story writer must take the necessary precaution in his/her characterization.

Not only this, but he/she ought to have sufficient artistic talent, too. Emphasizing this need for adequate artistic talent a celebrated Soviet literary critic says "Inadequate artistic talent inevitably leads to sketchiness in the delineation of characters." (Anver Zis. 1977: 87)

It seems that because of the lack of sufficient artistic talent and the knowledge of literary techniques that most pre-revolution women authoresses portray abstract characters who are merely representatives of ideas and not really living individuals. In Mistené Bekāda Dārāsābeñe Fedā, for instance, Mälaku Gäbre is only an incarnation of savagery, while his wife, Manaläše Yaläne, is a representative of humbleness and chastity. Similarly, in the novels of Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq, Zäwditu Ašäber, and Mät'änāwārq Samuel, too, many of the characters are delineated to pronounce the views, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings of the authoresses. They only act as the mouthpieces of their creators, because nowhere are their personalities revealed in their own words and actions.

In Asrat's Yämäkinaw Mister, for instance, Yäwebät is depicted as a brilliant boy. We are told time and again that Yäwebät, the character narrator, is the brain of his school. But, nowhere in the story does the authoress try to show us his brainy

mind. Nor does Yäwebät attest his bright and quick-witted mind by his academic performances, excellence, promotions and rewards. He is there (in the story) only to reflect the importance, values, and fruits of education which seems to be one of the major themes of the story and the authoress' view, too. Even if he is presented as a foreign educated young man, Yäwebät fails to act accordingly. Because he lacks motivations, and as a result of this the characterization of the protagonist, Yäwebät, denies credibility. Furthermore, such characters like Terfé, the sergeant and disguised father of the protagonist; the man who abducts Yäwebät's mother; the maid-servant who reveals that she is Sälämon's mother; and Ato Mendahun, an old man who is Yäwebät's neighbor; speak in verse. The style of their language is not in harmony with their character however. In the story, none of the characters is shown to have particular ability or talent to use such type of language. In reality, however, it appears to be impossible for ordinary people to use verse in a normal state of condition and conversation. The ability of these people to speak in verse is seen nowhere else in the narrative but at the end of the story where Yäwebät's parents reunite accidentally. Hence, the actions and ability of the characters appear to be incredible. Tegst Mäkäräñawa (the novel of

Zäwditu Ašäber), is not exceptional either. Here, too, the two - young lovers, Berhanu Mäng'estu and Tegst Käbädä are not sufficiently motivated in their actions, especially in their ambition to arrange marriage between them. At the outset of the story, the two young characters are made to fall in love at first glance. To convince us that Tegst and Berhanu are dedicated lovers, we need more details that may assert and prove the true feelings, emotions and atmosphere of "love" with its taste of honey and lemon, its smell of rose and garlic, its sound of laughs and screams. But the authoress fails to do that in her story. Zäwditu does not describe or present the internal and external personalities of the two characters sufficiently and objectively so as to make them credible and living individuals.

It seems true to say that in order to create credible and well motivated characters the novelist's or the short story writer's artistic, imaginative and inventive mind whose power of observation is deep and critical may play significant role in this regard. Of course, while creating his/her character a novelists or a short story writer may follow certain kinds of approaches. According to the views (which are based on critical studies) of some literary scholars, there are at least three levels of

characterization and character delineation in any work of literature. Regarding this Gerald Weales records "The range is from extremely complicated personalities, realistically presented, to complete abstractions." (Gerald Weales. 1964: 28). However, here our main concern is not only with the methods of portraying some of the major characters that are realistically presented in the prose works of the post-revolution women authoresses, but also their defects at depicting credible, consistent and motivated characters.

In this regard, apart from the above works, the portrayals of some of the major characters of the two novels of S'ähaye (Quwasa and Anguz), the two short stories of Emewädeše (Endäzih Näw and Quč't), the six short stories of Yäzena (Samat, Yätäraqotä Edme, Sänayet, Zemetäyé, Yäqerb Ruq, and Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs), and the novel of Elfenäše (S'elmät) are also worth examining.

Hence, for instance, when we consider the characterization of the two novels of S'ähaye Mälaku, we see that her characters are extremely diverse. She portrays students, teachers, nurses, lawyers, artists, hair-dressers, soldiers, prostitutes, and tyrannical politician characters. In her two novels, however, we observe that some of the characters are not well depicted and

motivated. Websät Endayelalu, the protagonist in Quwasa, and Asäläfä e Bädané, the young janitor in the same novel, are the case in point. In the story none of these characters seems to be credible. Although they are the causes for the main conflict as well as the last tragic incident of the story, S'ähaye fails to describe the various facets of their personalities sufficiently, and, make them play their respective roles efficiently and convincingly throughout the story.

The authoress dismisses Websät from the very start of chapter two until the last page of chapter five in which three-fourth of the narrative is presented. Then, she makes him appear on chapter six without any convincing reason or obvious purpose; and then, he moves along the story until chapter nine where the novel assumes an illogical and unconvincing ending. Even if he is a tragic character, Websät does not show any development or alteration in his personalities throughout the story. The narrative digresses from its main concern and focuses on the lives of other characters such as Mäkurya W/Rufé (a great friend of the protagonist), Fanayé (the nurse), Wäyezäro Mulunäše (the mother of Websät's ex-lover), Abeyé Qet'aw (Wäyezäro Mulunäše's false husband) ... etc. S'ähaye does not take the necessary precautions in portraying both the

physical and mental characteristics of her central character, Webšät. She is unable to reveal both the external and internal realities of the character even in the last four chapters where the whole mystery of the novel is disclosed, the hidden relationships of the three prominent characters: Webšät, Mentäsnot (his ex-lover), and Wedé (an illegitimate daughter of the two people).

The portrayals of Asäläfä e Bädané, the young janitor who gives the story a tragic end, also lacks credibility. At the start of the story, we are told that Asäläfä e had fallen in love with her old neighbor, Mäkurya Wäldä Rufé, some twenty years ago. But in the end the former kills the latter, because he marries another woman called Fanayé. However, Asäläfä e does not have sufficient motivations which indeed forces her to fall in love with such an old man who is not aware of her deep love for him. Her appearance at the end of the narrative also accidental. She lacks concrete reasons to make herself appear on the last incident (Mäkurya's wedding) and kill a man whose age is not less than twice of her own. It seems that the authoress who invites and urges the young woman to make an atrocious crime, for she wants to close her story with a tragic and surprising scene. Therefore, since Asäläfä e's outrageous action is neither the outcome of the internal conflict (which may develop

in Asälafä e evil mind) nor the effect of the central conflict of the story (which the three prominent characters, Webšät, Mentäsnot, and Wedé, constitute), she lacks credibility and consistency.

Similarly, of the three women (Sänayet, Arägaše, and Qedest) whom S'ähaye delineates as major characters in her second novel, Anguz, only two of them are logically and objectively depicted. Objectively presented characters are, of course, convincing, because not only are they well motivated and have their own existence, but also possess typical behavior and personalities which reflect individualized backgrounds. Such kinds of characters do not act as the mouthpieces of a living artist, the novelist or the short story writer. In other words, they do not pronounce the author's views, thoughts, attitudes and feelings.

When we consider the portrayals of Sänayet, the orphan protagonist in Anguz, from the point of view of the above ever live truth, we find that she is presented as a living individual. S'ähaye credibly demonstrates that Sänayet is a wise, courageous, prudent, revengeful and still persevering woman. Her distinguishing traits are not only objectively drawn but fully developed, too. Her actions are always in harmony with her character. Therefore, the

reader acknowledges her decision of marrying the man who is not only the killer of her father and two young brothers, but also the cause for the illness of her mind which makes her suffer for eight years.

As soon as she is cured, Sānayet convinces herself that marriage is the only suitable means which may enable her to revenge the murderer, Kābādā Wami. Unlike, Asālāfāčē Bādané, the young janitor in Quwasa, Sanayet has concrete reasons to be a vindictive woman. She is, therefore, a living character whom we always accept the credibility of the various aspects of her personalities from the moment she is introduced to us, because her behavior, motivation and mannerism are emerged from her own life and real experiences.

Not only is Sānayet a living and credible character, but Arāgaše is, too. Arāgaše is portrayed as being honest, frank, generous and still short-tempered and wrathful. Even if she is not depicted as perfectly as Sānayet, from the moment she appears in the story we see her develop and then alter her mental positions logically and convincingly. Thus, no matter when and

where we meet this woman, she usually appears live and credible character.

But, in the case of Qedest Bärnabas, the third important character in Anguz, the authoress fails to portray the unique traits and personalities of the character as skillfully and efficiently as she presents the above two characters. S'ähaye tries to portray Qedest not only as a devoted novelist, poet, and foreign educated woman, but also literary scholar who has a good command of the English language and great love for literature. However, Qedest does not show these qualities in the story either through her dialogues or creative writings or any other possible means. In the story, Qedest usually uses a non-poetic or a non-literary language both in her speeches as well as creative works. Although the omniscient narrator has asserted that she lived both in America and in Germany for many years and her pronunciation is also highly influenced by the foreign languages nowhere is her ability in these observed. On the contrary she articulates Amharic as correctly and perfectly as any Ethiopian who speaks Amharic language very well.

However, in her second novel, Anguz, S'ähaye seems to improve her technical defects in portraying incredible and motiveless characters. Such improvements in portraying credible and well

motivated characters seem to be partly the result of the literary comments and articles which she received from the public through a number of letters; and, partly the effects of the literary-critical writings which appeared on the state owned newspapers concerning the weaknesses and strengths of the technical and thematic aspects of her first novel, Quwasa. Above all, however, S'ähaye's improvement in the employment of literary techniques, particularly at delineating motivated and credible characters, is the result of the cumulative effects of (as she declared in the interview which she held with the writer of this paper) the literary advice and lessons which she received from literary scholars. S'ähaye owes her literary success to the latter group, particularly, Dr. Fäqadä Azäzä.

In so far as my literary career was concerned, the most important and historical moment was the day in which I had been introduced to Dr. Fäqadä Azäzä, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature at the A.A.U. ... It was really a historical day which had marked a turning point in my literary life. ... After I was introduced to Dr. Fäqadä, I showed him the first draft of Quwasa, my first novel. Then, after some days he gave me back the text with valuable and constructive

comments. ... Had it not been for his incessant literary advice and practical guidance, I could not have succeeded. ... (S'ähaye Mälaku. Nov. 1986 Eth.C.

Generally, unlike Qedest Bärnabas, the other two women characters (Sänayet Beru and Arägaše Šäwanqo 'äw) are more realistic and credible ones. Their actions, feelings, thoughts, emotions and behavior are the true reflections of the roles that they are given to play. The various aspects of their personalities are emerged from their own life. We fail to sense this in Qedest, however. She lacks credibility, consistency and some other indispensable qualities which we expect to observe in any skillfully portrayed character.

Similarly, Emewädeše's two short stories, Endäzih Näw and Quč'et do not overcome the defect of characterization. In both short stories, Emewädese hardly tries to portray the two central characters (Täwabäč and Yäwbdar) as being representatives of the young generation. A generation that becomes the victim of the various social problems of the society. A generation that suffers from unemployment, poverty, robbery, and prostitution.

These two central characters, Täwabäč and Yäwbdar, are not shown to have any other personal traits or reasons which motivates

them to join and lead the world of prostitution. Apart from the ideas of unemployment and prostitution, in the short story, Endäzih Näw, Emewädeše attempts to show that there are women who accept the friendship of men, or marry them just for their money. But the authoress hardly reflect such ideas and issues through the portrayals of Tāwabäč, a street-girl who is to represent both the life of prostitution and those women who care more for luxury than for love. Generally, though the authoress tries to reflect some of the major social problems of the society through the roles of these two women characters, she fails to portray them as living prostitutes as are the real ones. They both lack motivation as well as credibility.

Of all the four post-revolution women authoresses, none of them seems to create as credible and well motivated characters as Yäzena. Yäzena tries to depict plausible characters who reflect a high degree of reality. Most of the major characters in her six short stories are drawn faultlessly. Mäsfen, the protagonist in Samat and Bäfeqadu, a low-student in Yäqerb Ruq, are delineated as educated people but with different traits of characters. The former is, therefore, presented as an evil man whereas the latter is depicted as a man of moral, ethics, logic, and truth. The two old

men, Abbahoy Gäbrä Tänsaye and Ayewa Gošu (the two major characters whom we find in Yäzena's two short stories, Yätäragotä Edmé and Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs are also well portrayed as men of humble birth but with distinctive physical and social characteristics.

Nevertheless, a few of her characters still fall short of giving us concrete and convincing reasons both for their actions, feelings and other particular characteristics. In this regard, the two major characters of the short story, Yägerb Ruq, are a good instance here. In the story, Feqertä, the third important character, appears to be the mouthpiece of the authoress. She is not sufficiently stimulated or motivated in her actions, especially, in compelling Alämešät, the heroine, to commit an unlawful sexual intercourse outside her legal husband, Ašänafi. Even if she plays a significant role in synthesizing the sub-plots together, her actions and feelings are entirely devoid of motivation. She does not have any apparent motivation and objectives when she blatantly intervenes in the affairs of the married couple, Ašänafi and Alämešät, and becomes the cause for their separation and the destruction of their sweet and lovely home.

Alämešät, the protagonist, is not exceptional either. In the story, Alämešät is described as a shy, coward and traditional

woman. She is brought up in a conservative and religious family. However, some of her actions do not seem to concord with her social and personal backgrounds. Thus, although she is a shy, traditional, and, above all, married woman, we see that Alämešät makes an unlawful coitus with a university student named Tewodros. The former is not well motivated in going against her legal husband, Ašänafi, however. It is Feqertä, the protagonist's school mate, who encourages and stimulates Alämešät to commit a sin against marital obligations and her sincere, loyal, considerate and loving husband, Ašänafi. Thus, Alämešät is obliged to do crime in order to satisfy Feqertä's tedious request.

On the other hand, Yäzena's technique of portraying the physical, social, psychological, educational, and economic backgrounds of her major characters through the dialogues of other participant characters are a very common one that appears in almost all her short stories. The method has, of course, certain technical advantages. Not only does it present the characters in actions, and create strong affinity between the reader, characters and incident, but also avoid extensive and awkward descriptions which may hamper the story's progress. Witness, for instance, how Yäzena

describes both the internal and external personalities of Asānafi as the dialogue goes between Alāmšāt and her ex-neighbor, Tegst.

"አሸናፊ 'ኮ ለጥሩነቱ ተወዳዳሪ የግዴገኝ ሰው ነው።"

"እኔም እስከግደቀው ድረስ ጥሩ ሰው ይመስላል።"

"... መልክና ትመናውስ ቢሆን ወንዳወንድ አይደለም"...

"... ለመሆኑ ደመወዙ ስንት እንደሆነ ታውቂያለሽ?" አለች ትዕግስት።

"... ከሰባት መቶ ብር በላይ ነው ከዓለግያ በዲግሪ ከተመረቀ እንኳን ስድስት ዓመት አልፎታል።"

"Asānafi is a man whose goodness cannot be compared with any other person."

"He seems to be a nice man, as far as I know him."

"... Don't you think that his physical structure is also a manly one." ...

"... By the way, do you know his monthly salary?" said Tegst...

"It is more than seven hundred birr. Six years has already passed since he graduated from Alāmaya with the degree of Bachelor of Science." (Yāzena Wārqu. 1982 Eth. C.: 163-165)

Another favorite technique in describing physical appearance in the works of Yāzena is the use of photographs. So, important characters are described when the protagonists are made to look at the photographs of these characters. In this case, the photographs

of Hana, the beautiful and innocent woman, in Samat; and Ašānafi, the agriculturalist in Yäqerb Ruq, are good examples.

What is more in so far as Yäzena's unique style in characterization is concerned that she usually portrays young graduates and university students. For instance, Yäzena depicts five graduates and six university students in her three short stories, Samat, Yäqerb Ruq, and Yämäräqiyaw Lebbs. Of these eleven young intellectual characters eight of them are men, and the rest women.

On the other hand, when we examine the educational and social positions of Emewädeše's characters, we find that most of her male characters are well educated and professional workers whereas her female characters are not. In the short story, Anagaw, for instance, the central character, Anagaw, is delineated as a chief accountant. Likewise, in her three short narratives (Endäzih Näw, Enägräwalähu, and Mulatu) Emewädeše portrays well educated men. Accordingly, T'asäw and Abäjä, the two important characters in Endäzih Näw; and G'erma and Mulatu, the two prominent characters whom we find in the other two short stories, Enägräwalähu and Mulatu; are learned and professional men. On the other hand, almost all of Emewädeše's women characters with the exception of Sänayet

(the protagonist in the short story, Enägräwalähu) and Martha (the protagonist's spouse in the short story, Mulatu), have little education and are also unemployed. Not only are they elementary students and unemployed, but most of them are fatherless women, too. Tāwabäč, the young protagonist in Endāzih Nāw; Yāwbdar, the young heroine in Quč'et; and Däbritu, the central character in Yābakänä Giize, are good examples here.

Of course, such a method of characterization is also common in the works of Yāzena Wārqu and S'āhaye Mälaku. Thus, the two heroines (Sānayet and Yergädu) whom Yāzena delineates in her two short stories, Sānayet and Zemetayé, are orphans. Fanayé and Sānayet, the two major characters in S'āhaye's two novels (Quwasa and Anguz) are also depicted as orphan women. Furthermore the above three women authoresses have similar experience in portraying prostitutes, street girls, widows, and divorced women. But, relatively speaking, none of the authoresses seems to create credible and well motivated characters as Yāzena Wārqu.

According to her explanations in the interview which she held with the writer of this paper, Yāzena has studied literature for three years at the A.A.U. and graduated with BA degree from the department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature in 1977 Eth. C.

Thus, the exposure of the Addis Ababa University gives Yäzena better opportunity not only to experience the various facets of the lives of the main campus of the A.A.U., but also use some of the students and young graduates as type characters to write short stories.

In general, compared with the other fictional writings, Elfenäše's S'elmät and Yäzena's Samat, Sänayet, Yätäraḡutä Edmé, and Yämämäräḡiyaw Lebbs, more successfully create characters who are both types and live individuals. Not only this, they also make their characters act true to their distinguishing traits. Those major characters like Bezu'ayähu, Mäkuwanent, Mäsfen, Sänayet, Wäyezäro Qonjit, Emmahoy Särayet, Abbahoy Gäbrä Tänsaye and Ayewa Gošu are not only types but also live individuals with well-defined and distinct personalities. In other words, the portrayals of most of the characters in the works of these two authoresses appear to be credible and consistent.

Bezuäyähu, a widow protagonist in Elfenäše's S'elmät, for instance, is delineated as a sincere, honest, loving, hardworking, persevering and yet suspicious woman. Mäkuwanent, Bezu'ayähu's husband, on the other hand, is portrayed as a good-nature, whole-hearted, benevolent and bounteous man. He is skillfully delineated

and most identified by the above particular traits of characters. However, though these are portrayed as the most important distinguishing features, there are still other less emphasized ones characterizing his personalities in the novel, S'elmät. Hence, in the story, we find Mäkuwanent not only as a benevolent and whole-hearted man, but as scholarly, rich, hardworking, and personable, too.

Generally, unlike many of the characters in most of both the pre-and-post revolution prose works, none of these appears to be unbelievable and tedious vehicles of ideas, but real persons with particular traits of personalities. Thus, it seems true to say that Yäzena Wärqu and Elfenäše Bäkürä surpass other women authoresses at delineating credible, consistent, motivated and live characters.

3.2. Plot Construction

3.2.1. The Nature and Methods of Plot Construction in Some of the Prose Works of Woman authoress.

It is true to say that the plot of a fictional literature usually provides the essential structure in the story by arranging its episodes, incidents and actions in a unified order from the

beginning through the middle to the end. Thus, unlike in a modern fiction in which new forms of structure are brought to use, the plot in a traditional story will form the structure of a story in the order of the beginning, the middle, and the end.

In the beginning section of the plot a writer may expose the introductory materials of his/her story. He/she may, therefore, unfold where and when the story takes place, who the characters are, and what the initial situation in the story is. In the middle section of the plot a writer establishes the various conflicts which develop to a moment of crisis, the climax of the narrative, usually marks an end of the development of the major action of the story. In the final section of the plot (the denouement or resolution), we expect the writer to show us the consequence of the action that occurred in the climax.

In addition to these important elements of plot, writers may as well use such techniques as foreshadowing and flashback so as to heighten the suspense in the story. The first technique enables the writer to provide hints or clues early in the story which forecast or suggest the turn of events and/or the outcome of conflict. The second technique interrupt the forward movement of the story to introduce a scene or episode from the past that highlights or

explains or comments on the present event or situation. What is more in so far as the characteristics of the plot of a story is concerned is that it should be "coherent", "unified" and "meaningful".

As is clear from a scanty critical studies of Ethiopian literature, the plots of most of the pre-revolution prose works are simple and very loose when we compare to the post-revolution ones. In this case, the fictional writings of women authoresses are not exceptional, either. In most stories, each character's life and action are not logically interwoven with those of others. Not only this, the events and incidents are also organized only in terms of time. Besides, most of them are not coherently interconnected one with another. Regarding the technical facets of the pre-revolution prose works, Thomas Kane records:

... the largest portion of the literature consists of a mass of poorly written materials in which coherent plots are lacking, incidents abound, but led no where and has a profusion of characters but none treated in depth, characters which appear and disappear without warning.
(Thomas Leiper Kane. 1975: 17)

The present section of the study will therefore attempt to look at the nature of the plots of some of the prose works which we have already examined in the foregoing discussions. Thus, the plots

of the prose writings of Asrat, Zäditu, Mät'änäwärq, Wädäryäläše, Wedenäše, S'ähaye and Yazena are analysed from the points of view of the three features of plot: Coherence, unity, and Significance (meaningfulness). Besides, the employment of such technical elements as setting, flashback and dream in the construction of the plots of the prose works of S'ähaye and Yäzena are considered for critical examination.

When we consider the plots of the novels of the three pre-revolution women authoresses (Asrat's Yämäkinaw Mist'er, Mät'änäwärq's Yäbakänaw Giizé, and Zäwditu's Tegst Mäkärännäwa), none of them seems to fulfil the three features of plot which we mentioned above. Hence, for example, in Asrat's Yämäkinaw Mist'er, we observe not only illogical and meaningless divisions of chapters, but also most parts of the four chapters of the novel are filled with many different episodes that have nothing to do with the construction of the incoherent plot which tries to present the separation, immigration and reunion of the three prominent characters: Ato Ambayé, Wäyozäro Zenaše, Ambayé's wife, and Yäwebät, the young protagonist and son of the two people.

Although the writer establishes the conflict at the opening scene of the story, she fails to concentrate on relevant details

which may develop the conflict and enhance the forward movement of the plot. The heaps of unnecessary episodes and incidents which appear in such sub-topics as 'የሀገን ከርታታ' (The Wandering Baby), 'ጣውንት በእህትነት' (An Enemy Sister), 'የልጅ ስደተኛ' (The Immigrant Boy), and 'ተለደኛው ገበሬ' (The Playful Peasant) are not interrelated one with another. Some of them (e.g. The Wandering Baby and The Immigrant Boy) are mere repetitions. Even though there are occasional references about the troubles of separation and immigration which are caused by the abduction of Wäyezaro Zenaše, the novel deviates from its purpose, direction, movement, and gives too much emphasis to such ideas like unemployment, prostitution and racial segregation which have little significance in the construction of the coherent plot of the story, Yämäkinaw Mist'er. Furthermore, the authoress portrays a great number of characters (e.g. teachers, beggars, street boys, guardians, peasants, students) whose roles in the story produce negative effect on the forward movement of the loosely-knitted plot.

In the novel, Yäbakänaw Giizé, too, we find a very loose interconnection among most of the thirty-eight letters which occupy most of the pages of the book. Such a technical shortcoming creates a lack of the sense of unity in the plot structure. The

framework of the plot in this novel is that there are two young lovers (Tegst and Tariku) who are students and anxious to marry to each other. However, although they live together as lovers for ten years and announce their engagement to the public, they are unable to do so because the boy (Tariku) fails to decide to marry his lover, Tegst. This is the situation around which the plot of the story is loosely woven.

Though it is true to say that every story is a narrative, the uniqueness of most of the pre-revolution narratives, however, lies in the fact that the writers use great number of unnecessary events rather than revealing the plot through relevant episodes and actions which often produce significant conflict and unified structure in the story. Mätänäwärq, the authoress of Yäbakänäw Giizé, also does not overcome this defect of plot construction. The episodic novel, Yäbakänäw Giizé, is divided into twelve chapters in which both the titles and events of the chapters are arranged in their chronological order. The authoress, for instance, begins her story by telling us where and when the story takes place, who the characters are and what the initial situation is. The introductory materials of the story are presented chronologically.

ዓመተ ምህረቱ 1940 ቀኑ ግንቦት 2 ዕለቱ ሐሙስ ከሰዓት በኋላ ወደ አሥር ሰዓት ተኩል ገደግ ነበር። ከክፍል ወጥተን የዕረፍት ሰዓት ስለነበረ . . . ተግሪዎች በብዛት በሜዳው ላይ እየተራራጡ ይጫወታሉ ግግሾቻቸው በየክፍላቸው ተቀምጠው ያጠኑ ነበር እኔም ከአንዲት ጓደኛዬ ጋር እክፍሌ አጠገብ ከሚገኘው በረንዳ ላይ እንጫወት ነበር። በጥቅ ጨዋታችን ላይ አንድ በጣም የግልቀርበው ተግሪ በጋለ ንዴት መጥቶ . . . ባትፈልገው አሳስገድድሽ . . . ደብዳቤዬን አንብበሽ እመንገድ ላይ የወረወርሻው በጣም ታላላቅ ያለሽ አለኝ።

It was Thursday in the afternoon at about 4:30 P.M., 2 May 1940 Eth. C. It was a break at school. Many students were playing on the school's field whereas a few of them were studying in their respective classrooms. I, too, was chatting with one of my friends in the verandah, near my classroom. Meanwhile a certain student whom I am not very much familiar with came and shouted at me angrily . . . "Look! I won't make you accept my request by force, if you do not like it. But, it is a shame to discard my letter after you read it." he said to me.

This quoted passage is the opening paragraph of the first chapter of the story Yäbakänäw Giizé. In this opening paragraph, the authoress indirectly introduces the time and place of the action, the character-narrator (Tegst), and the initial situation of the story (the kind of relation between the anonymous

protagonist and a certain boy who writes a letter for her). The style of the presentation of the various episodes and incidents of the twelve chapters is not different from the style of the opening paragraph of chapter one. The bulk of events that appear in all twelve chapters are narrated one after the other or presented in their chronological order. They do not build and develop the essential conflict that helps the plot to move forward. As far as the plot of such a kind of story is concerned, Mark Schorer contends "... the events are organized only in terms of time, with a simple chronological coherence, one thing happening after another." (Mark Schorer, 1964: 13). As most of the thirty-eight letters (which the two lovers exchange in the narrative) and some of the twelve chapters are characterized by repetition, the conflict which the authoress establishes at the outset of the story becomes weak, and the negative effect of the latter makes the plot very loose and incoherent. In other words, the beginning, middle, and end of the story are not closely connected one with another.

When we also examine the novel, Tegst Mäkäräñawa, we find no essential difference in plot construction which could give it harmony and structural unity that the above two novels lack. Like the preceding ones, Zäwditu's novel is also filled with irrelevant

protagonist and a certain boy who writes a letter for her). The style of the presentation of the various episodes and incidents of the twelve chapters is not different from the style of the opening paragraph of chapter one. The bulk of events that appear in all twelve chapters are narrated one after the other or presented in their chronological order. They do not build and develop the essential conflict that helps the plot to move forward. As far as the plot of such a kind of story is concerned, Mark Schorer contends "... the events are organized only in terms of time, with a simple chronological coherence, one thing happening after another." (Mark Schorer, 1964: 13). As most of the thirty-eight letters (which the two lovers exchange in the narrative) and some of the twelve chapters are characterized by repetition, the conflict which the authoress establishes at the outset of the story becomes weak, and the negative effect of the latter makes the plot very loose and incoherent. In other words, the beginning, middle, and end of the story are not closely connected one with another.

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incidents events and unnatural coincidences. The episodic plot of the novel does not focus on the main conflict that arises from the physical, social and spiritual problems which the orphan protagonist, Tegst Ayalqebät, faces while she was in love with a young student called Berhanu Mäng'stu.

For example, those incidents which devote to describe the different problems which Tegst encounters when she leaves her home town, Addis Abäba, and settles in Messawa appear to be unnecessary, because they are loosely interconnected with other episodes that both directly and indirectly establish the original situation in the story-the introduction, separation and reunion of the young lovers, Tegst and Berhanu. Moreover, those incidents which try to show the lives of the two bachelors (Abära and Dubalä) who live in Messäwa and give shelter to Tegst) and the nature of the relationships between Rai Ali (a man who lives in Messäwa) and Tegst are quite irrelevant. The conglomerations of the descriptions of such unnecessary incidents in the story therefore hinder the forward flow of the narrative by making the conflict and the plot weak and loose.

Thus, Unlike in Wädäryäläše's Känfär MätaČ'e, Eyärusalém's Beruh Helina Bäqäna Godana, and Wedenäše's Mesekerenäté, however,

we find in most of the pre-revolution prose narratives the use of unnecessary episodes and incidents that hinder the stories's progress. The loose interconnection between events, the absence of logic in their development, and the portrayals of superflous characters make the plots of most of the writings lose harmony, unity, plausibility and vividness. As far as the technical weaknesses of the creative literatures of the past is concerned, Zärihun Asfaw (An Assistant Professor in the department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature at the A.A.U.) has made the following comment in his reply to my interview.

When we consider the fictional literatures of the pre-revolution women authoresses from the points of view of literary techniques, we find that a great number of them are as poor and weak as are the works of most of men writers. Most authors seem to be inexperienced technicians whose employment of literary devices suffer from incoherence, inconsistency and implausibility. Generally speaking, during the time most women authoresses produce poorly written narratives. (Zärihun Asfaw. 1986 Eth. C.)

As has been explained in the previous discussion, of all the pre-revolution women authoresses it is only the authoresses of Känfäf Mätač'e, Beruh Helina Bäqäna Godana, and Mesekerenäté who

are relatively able to overcome the defect of portraying the life-long histories of the protagonists and other characters who play negative roles in the construction of coherent and well-woven plot. Instead their stories center on single situation.

In Wädäryäläš0e's Känfär Mätač'e, for instance, the struggle of Angagaw to murder his lover, Elizabeth, has been selected as the focus of the story. The different parts of the story are made to center on Angagaw's incessant effort to expose and kill Elizabeth who betrays his true love. The short narrative, Beruh Helina Bäqāna Godana, is also based on one typical situation, the efforts of the two young sisters, Lämläm and Asamänä e, to marry those men with whom they are in love. The conflict between the two sisters and their father, Ato Gäbäyāhu, is the main cause for the establishment of the plot which develops through the five chapters that are coherently connected one with another. In the story, Ato Gäbäyāhu, a traditional and religious man, wants his two daughters (Lämläm and Asamänä e) to establish marriage with men of wealth and noble birth. The two young women refuse to accept his word and decide to marry those men whom they are in love with. Unlike the stories of Asrat, Zäwditu and Mät 'änäwārq, the events and incidents in Berhun Helina Bäqāna Godana are all useful not only in unifying the

different parts of the story, but also reflecting the central theme, the victory of modern thoughts/systems over the traditional/backward views and values. Likewise the story, Mesekerenäté, focuses entirely on the spiritual life of an anonymous character-narrator who contends with herself to become a true Christian, and believe that Jesus, the founder of the Christian religion, is the only saviour in this world.

On the other hand, the problem of logical interconnection and division of chapters in the construction of coherent plot is also felt in S'ähaye Mälaku's novel, Anguz. As is noted previously, Anguz is the only novel which focuses on political theme thus marking a new trend of development in the world of the fictional works of Ethiopian women authoresses. The story, Anguz, revolves around the political, social, economic, and artistic backgrounds of the three women characters: Sänayet Beru, Arägaše Šäwanqo 'äw, and Qedest Bärnabas. However, the plot focuses on Sänayet's intention of revenging the man who murders her father and two brothers.

In the story, Käbädä's love for Sänayet and the latter's non-acceptance of his love is the main impetus both for the major conflict as well as for the development of the loose plot. The

general framework of the plot is that, Kabädä, the leader of the revolutionary squads in G'enfele qäbäle, retaliates the heroine's negative response by murdering her father and two young brothers under the cover of the movement of political terrorism. Sänayet becomes a mental patient as soon as she hears the death of her family. Then, after eight years of illness the protagonist gets cure and decides to marry the murderer, Käbädä Wami, with the intentions of revenging the death of her father and two brothers. Other conflicts also arise later on as the story progresses. In the sub-plots we therefore see conflicts between Sänayet and Arägaše, a hair-dresser and great friend of the heroine; between Käbädä and Wäyezäro Bälätä e, a revolutionary squad; between Qedest, the artist, and the two young people (Dälälänne Täsäma and Ešäté ernät) who fall in love with the artist; between Wärqenäh, the street-boy, and his poor mother, Askalä. Thus, these are the situations around which the plot of the story loosely knitted. Most of these incidents however, do not seem to be significant and well connected with the major conflict that reveals the main theme of the novel, the political and social turmoils of the then Derg regime and the struggle of the people against tyranny and tyrannical politicians.

The bulk of the novel suffers from irrelevant episodes, settings and characters. The long flashback which attempts to present the childhood histories of the four important characters (Sänayet, Arägaše, Qedest and Abära) without any selecting of relevant incidents produces a negative effect on the construction of the thin plot of the story. In his literary book, A Handbook to Literature, not only does Holman discuss the meaning, essence and features of plot, but also stress the need for selection.

Episodes do not in themselves make a plot; the plot lies in relationships among Episodes. Hence, ... Plot is an intellectual formulation about the relationships existing among the incidents of a DRAMA or a NARRATIVE, ... To define plot as an intellectual formulation is not, however, to define it as abstract idea or philosophic concept. ..., but that formulation is of INCIDENTS-CHARACTERS and ACTIONS- and how they interrelate. ...

The demands of plot stipulate that the author select... those items which have a certain UNITY, which point to a certain end, which have a common interrelationship, which represent not more than two or three threads of interest and activity. Plot brings order out of life; it selects only one or two emotions out of a dozen, one or two conflicts out of hundreds, only two or three people out of thousands, and a

half-dozen EPISODES from possible millions. (C. Hugh Halman. 1980:336)

However, in S'ähaye's novels we often meet a number of unnecessary episodes, characters and settings. Thus, for instance, those incidents which present the detailed accounts of the lives of Warqenäh, the street-boy in Anguz; Ka a Gämoraw, the old man who works at the Šakiso Gold Mining Center; Mäsfen, the wounded soldier; and his old mother appear to be redundant, because none of them is useful to reflect the themes and construct the coherent plot of the story. Emphasizing the need for selection and economy Miriam Alot also records:

... the plot-maker expects us to remember, we expect him to leave no loose ends. Every action or word ought to count; it ought to be economical and spare; even when complicated it should be organic free from dead matter... (Miriam Alot, ed. 1959: 248)

As has been clear from the foregoing discussion, the novel, Anguz, lacked a sense of unity. Most of its chapters are filled with unnecessary incidents and events which break the flow of the story and distract the attention of the reader from the main theme. Much of chapter one, for example, is devoted to a detailed political account of the life of General Mäng'estu Näwaye which has little or

no relation to the theme of the novel. The descriptions of the "Tahasas-Military coup"; the long literary discussion (which centers on the themes and portrayals of some of the characters of Araya, a novel written by G'ermaccaw Täklä Hawaryat) which the heroine holds with her former lover, Abära; and a detailed account of the historical background of "Gnbot Ledätä, a popular ritual ceremony; also depart from the main focus of the story. The last part of chapter four which centers on Qedest's literary and academic backgrounds, though interesting in itself, does not also seem to make the story progress. Chapter seven which is a positive commentary on a woman artist is not well connected both with the major plot and the sub-plots of the story. Emphasizing the need for unity, a noted literary scholar and philosopher wrote:

A plot ... should have UNITY, it should imitate one action and that is a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them displaced or removed, the whole will be disjoined disturbed... (C. Hugh Holman. A Hand Book to Literature. 1980, p. 335)

It is true that the interplay of characterization, conflict, setting, language, suspense and surprise is of utmost importance to a novel's plot. In Anguz, however, most of the qualities are

absent. The use of extravagant settings disturb the flow of incidents which essentially build the conflict and suspense of the story. On page 36, for instance, the authoress conveys a detailed historical accounts of Aläqä Näwaye's (the father of general Mäng'estu) house without any particular purpose. Although it is situated near Arägaše's house in the old village, Säbara Babur, the geographical and historical accounts of the residence of Aläqa Näwaye is not closely connected with the issues at hand, the revelations of the past histories of the two prominent characters, Sänayet and Arägaše. Nor does it help to show the miserable life of the latter character. The inclusion of such an irrelevant setting in the story has a negative impact on the smooth flow of the story and the coherence of the plot.

On pages 170, 244 and 258 of chapter seven, the authoress uses superfluous settings which attempt to portray the physical features and climatic conditions of Germany and the sceneries of Sidamo, Šakiso and Šäwa Robit. Apart from increasing the pages of the voluminous novel and obstructing the forward movement of the plot, none of the settings appears to have technical or thematic intent.

The novel also suffer from the incoherence produced by the author's insufficient knowledge of the exact locations of some of

the historical places which she uses in the story. In the subsequent dialogue, for instance, the speaker misplaces the historical site of Jägol. "... ሐረር ለመኖራቸው ደግሞ ሐረር ግንቡ ጋ ድረ ላዋ ጀነላ ካለው ቡቃቸው ውስጥ የተነሱትን ፎቶግራፍ አግይተውኛል።" "... in order to prove it to me that he used to live in Harär, he showed me his photograph which he took in his own shop which situated in Deré Dawa Jägol, near the castle of Harär." (emphasis is mine) (*Anguze* p. 307)

As is evident in this quotation the misplacing of the historical site, Jägol, gives the dialogue a sense of incoherence. In the former underlined phrase the speaker tells us that the historical place, Jägol, is located in Deré Dawa town, and then in the latter underlined phrase she says that it is situated near the castle of Harär. Here, there is contradiction between the two underlined phrases. The authoress confuses the reader with ambiguous and incorrect statements. S'ähaye places the historical site, Jägol, both in Deré Dawa and Harär, towns. But what is true about Jägol is that it is situated in Harär town - fifty five kilometers away from Deré Dawa. Therefore, the use of such an incoherent dialogue may not only dismiss those links that may connect and unite the scattered chapters, but the plausibility of the story, the harmony and unity of the plot as well.

Generally speaking, since the bulk of the novel is filled with isolated and incoherent accounts, and since the proportion of the treatment of the incidents of the various chapters is not determined by the degree of their relevance to the story, the plot is lacked unity and coherence. Besides, the portrayals of unnecessary characters (e.g. Askalä and Zäbänaye, the two prostitutes who live near Arägaše's house; Wärgenäh, Askalä's son; Mäsfen, the wounded soldier; Colonel Jigsa and Kača Gämoraw) and the employment of extravagant settings do not help the novel to be compact and structurally unified.

Unlike the prose works of the other two post-revolution women authoresses, however, Yäzena's and Elfenäse's writings do not suffer from incoherence, superfluity and loose plots. In many of their works the incidents, episodes and settings are well connected with the characterization, the conflicts and the themes. The focus of each plot is on the piling up of relevant episodes leading to the climax and then the denouement.

In such stories like Yätäraqotä Edmé, Yägerb Ruq, Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs and S'elmät, for instance, the focus is fully on the pattern of the events centering on the lives of the major characters of the stories. In Yätäraqotä Edmé, for example, the

conflict and plot revolve around the humble backgrounds of the two old and sterile people, Abbahoy Gäbrä Tänsaye and his wife, Emmahoy Särayet. Although both characters are aged people and need Senge's (their foster daughter) help, the latter fails to take more care over their lives. Such lack of significant attention and care towards the lives of these aged people brings about their death. Thus the various events and incidents of the story establish the internal and external conflict which revolves around the lives and death of the two religious people, Abbahoy and Emmahoy. The plot of Yäqerb Ruq also centers on the married life of the two major characters, Ašänafi and his wife, Alämšät. In Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs, too, we find a coherent plot whose episodes deal only with the living conditions of the two poor characters, Ayewa Gošu and his learned daughter, Askalämaryam. The plot of S'elmät also dwells on the good and bad life experiences of a widow character called Bezu'ayähu.

The uniqueness of the plots of these four narratives is also marked by the employment of proper flashbacks and foreshadowings. Yäzena and Elfenäše use both techniques skillfully and effectively in the construction of the tight plots of their respective stories. In their narratives both devices appear in the proper places with relevant incidents which provide the reader with background

information that illuminate the present realities, and give hints that subtly suggest the final outcome of the narratives.

Yäzena's Yägerb Ruq, and Elfenäše's S'elmät by contrast, show a more remarkable and artistic employment of flashbacks. In Yägerb Ruq we are given two brief flashbacks which are coherently linked with the closely knitted plot of the story. The first flashback is presented from page 98 to 114. The opening incident of this flashback shows the circumstance in which Ašānafi makes the acquaintance of Alämešät Bäfeqadu, the daughter of a traditional and conservative man. It also provides us with brief accounts of the social, psychological, cultural and religious backgrounds of Alämešät as a young - unmarried woman. Apart from revealing both the internal and external personalities of the married couple, this flashback also exposes the central conflict of the story which arises from the disparities in feelings and interests for education that the two married people have.

The second flashback (pp. 120-5) dwells too much upon Feqertä's sexual, educational and literary backgrounds. The revelation of the character's various personalities is useful in building the conflict and heightening the suspense of the story. As we probe into the episodes of this flashback we can also realize

that Alämešät contrasts to Feqertä. Thus, in the flashback scene Alämešät is portrayed as an innocent, shy, introvert, inexperienced and traditional woman whereas the latter is depicted as a careless, extrovert and well-experienced woman. Such a sharp and remarkable contrast between these two important characters may have two - fold purposes in the story. First, it helps to build up the sense of conflict and makes the story flow smoothly without any hinderence. Secondly, such disparities becomes the cause for the tragic scene which we meet at the end of the narrative - the abortion of the illegitimate child and the separation of the two major characters, Ašänafi and Alämešät.

S'elmat, too, attains the same artistic qualities in its employment of flashback. In this novel, we are given the whole story in the form of flashback. During the course of the development of the plot, the character narrator (Bezu'ayähu) retrospectively unfolds the three major events that mark significant changes in her life histories.

The first flashback scene, for example, demonstrates the hardships of the protagonist which she used to face while she was living with Dawit, her first husband and for whom she gave birth to a baby-son. In the second part of the flashback we are told not only

that Bezu'ayahu is employed as an archivist, but also the death of Mäkuwanent with whom she lives together almost for twenty seven years. In the last part of the flashback the central character recounts the negative effects of the death of her second husband, Mäkuwanent, on the pieceful, sweet and cheerful lives of her family. Not only are the different parts of the flashback story made to be knit together and convey a sense of unity, coherence, and significance, but also enunciate the various themes (cruelty, betrayal, perseverance, love and death) and form a well-knit plot of the story. This harmony in the flashbacks and the authoress's skillful choice of the proper place for their appearances therefore give the story more compactness and a smooth flow.

Of course, the flashback must have not retarding the story's forward movement. The long flashback in S'ähaye's Anguz is a case in point. The defect in using flashback in Anguz, is vividly seen in chapter one where the authoress presents the childhood histories of the three prominent characters without selection and the social and political accounts of the life of General Mäng'estu Näwaye. None of these flashbacks appears to be useful either to the development of the plot or expose the conflict or the general mood of the story.

On the other hand, of all the authoresses that this study considers, it is only Yäzena Wärfu who attempts to use foreshadowing as a device for developing the plots of her three short stories, Sänayet, Yätäraqotä Edmé, and Yämämäraqiyaw Lebbs.

Apart from its nature of probabliness and subtlity, foreshadowing must be very disguisedful and consistent. The foreshadowing in Yäzena's Sänayet appears to be inconsistent and vague, however. But in her two short narratives, Yätäraqotä Edmé and Yämämäraqiyaw Lebbs, the foreshadowings are indirect, consistent and artistic. In the story, Sänayet, Yäzena hardly tries to suggests the story's tragic ending through the portrayal of a rainy setting which she uses at the very outset of the story. In the latter short stories, Yätäraqotä Edmé and Yämämäraqiyaw Lebbs, however, we observe a skillful employment of foreshadowing which subtly hint the sorrowful ending of the stories by heightening the suspense of the conflicts and the dramatic effects of the events.

In Yämämäraqiyaw Lebbs, for instance, the use of the technique of foreshadowing is vividly seen on pages 265 and 266 where the father of the heroine, Ayewa Gošu, narrates his dream experience to his wife, Wäyezäro Accamyäläse. According to the traditional beliefs and values of the Amhara people the traditional meanings

and interpretations of Ayewa Gošu's dream may hint the final outcome of the story, the loss of Ayewa Gošu's money. Furthermore, the gloomy setting of the story: the humble-hut, the dim light of the kerosene lamp and the dark-time may subtly suggest the last scene or the sad ending of the story. In Yätäragotä Edmé, too, we note that Yäzena uses similar device to give hints that subtly suggest the future turn of events and heighten the tension in the story.

Generally, the conclusion that can be drawn from the foregoing discussion, therefore, is that the problem of logical interconnection and division of parts in the construction of the plot is commonly felt in most of the prose works of Ethiopian women authoresses. We observe that most of the episodes and incidents of the stories lack significance, unity and suffer from incoherences. However, compared with other writers, Wädäryäläse, Eyärusalem, Wedenäse, Yäzena and Elfenäse appear to be good at constructing coherent, unified and meaningful plots whose incidents, events and parts are logically and artistically interwoven one with another.

3.3. LANGUAGE

3.3.1. Appropriateness, Conciseness, and Harmony of the Language in Some of the Prose Fictions of Women authoresses.

The Language of literary writing is said to be at the core of the work by which all the other elements are expressed. By way of definition, the language of a fictional narrative is nothing more than the evocative, appropriate, coherent and concise words, phrases and sentences uttered by the characters or narrators. It is the only medium by which the characters express their ideas, feelings, emotions, desires, and the relations they have with other characters. Since language is a chief apparatus by which both the novelist and the short story writer communicate their works to others it must be used appropriately, concisely, consistently, and effectively. No matter how imaginative and observant he/she is, the novelist or the short story writer will not be able to achieve his/her purposes if his/her language lacks appropriateness, vividness, conciseness, coherence and/or harmony. These are, of course, some of the elements which make the language of a work of literature different from the colloquial language used in ordinary life.

Basically, the kind of language that a novelist or a short story writer uses depends on three different things. First, it depends on the writer himself/herself. In other words, the writers' knowledge of words or language, and style of expression will determine the nature of the language of his/her fictional text. Secondly, on the kind of story he/she wants to write. And, thirdly it also depends on the characters that the writer creates. The novelist or the short story writer must therefore make his/her language appropriate to the subject of his/her story. He/she must harmonize the language of his/her imaginative writing with his/her characters and/or narrators. Otherwise the work may fail to convince the reader's mind and achieve its ultimate intent.

The effectiveness of the language of work of literature must also be seen in relation to the forward movement of the story; therefore, the language of fictional writings must be vivid, concise, coherent, appropriate and plausible. Its vividness, appropriateness, conciseness, and coherence will enhance not only the aesthetic value of the work but the development of the plot as well. No matter how a great and original idea he/she raises his/her work may assume failure, if his/her language lacks those qualities which we mentioned above. In other words, the writer's success or

failure, directly or indirectly, depends on the appropriateness, conciseness, coherence and vividness of his/her language. Thus, this section of the study will attempt to examine the nature of the language of some of the prose works of women authoresses from the points of view of its appropriateness, conciseness, coherence, harmony and some other indispensable features and qualities.

As is clear from a closer study of Amharic literature, the fictional works of most Ethiopian women authoresses are not as good in the artistic manipulations of techniques as are the writings of few men authors. This holds true to their language, too. The nature of the language of most of the prose works of women authoresses appears to be inartistic. In other words, it lacks conciseness, appropriateness, harmony or coherence. Some of them are poor in linguistics realism. Their protagonists speak the same language which the writers themselves speak. Zäwditu's Tegst Mäkäräñawa Mät'änäwärq's Yäbakänäw Giizé, and S'ähaye's Quwasa and Anguz are typical examples in this regard. In the story, Tegst Mäkäräñawa, for instance, the languages of the omniscient narrator and the two young lovers appear to be the ordinary language of the authoress which fails to reflect not only the emotion, feelings and essence of the subject matter of the narrative, but also the emotional and

inner selves of the two young lovers, Tegst Kābādā and Berhanu Māng'stu. The language of Asālāfā Bādané and Mentewab (the young Janitor and the woman prostitute in S'āhaye's two novels, Quwasa and Anguz), too, become the philosophical utterance of the authoress herself. Their thoughtful and striking speeches are not in harmony both with the internal and external realities of their character. Hence, it appears to be very difficult to consider Mentewab, an illiterate prostitute, as a woman who has profound knowledge about the causes and effects of the various social problems such as poverty, unemployment, robbery, violence ... etc. The two tyrannical politicians (Kābādā Gari and his friend, Bāla äw) whom S'āhaye portrays in her second novel, Anguz, are also unable to reveal their political personalities through appropriate words/language which are newly invented during the outbreak of the 1966 Eth. C. Ethiopian Revolution, particularly, the time of red terrorism. Nowhere in the story are these two characters attempted to use political language which may differentiate them from other characters. Even if S'āhaye depicts cruel politicians, she fails to make them express their internal and external realities in a coherent and appropriate language which practically reflects their political views and tyrannical traits of character.

The two fictional works of Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq and Gänät Baheru, too, do not overcome this defect of incoherence and disharmony in the use of language. In both stories, the authoresses fail to use appropriate language which significantly evoke the necessary emotions and the sadest feelings of the two unfortunate characters (Wäyezaro Zenaše and Wäyezaro Manaläše Yaläné) and of the tragic incidents and episodes of the narratives.

On the other hand, the use of verse is a popular style and common feature of the language of the prose works of most pre-revolution women authoresses. The fictional writings of Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq, Eyärusalém Yesmaw, Mät'änäwärq Samuel, and Gänät Baheru are good instances in this regard, However, though it is a very popular style of language, in most works it does not express deep feelings, emotions and thoughts in a vivid, coherent and appropriate language. Instead a good number of verses are used just to communicate the authoresses's comments, views and feelings. None of the authoresses attempts to manipulate it with the intention of producing special effects or any other technical intents which may enrich the artistic values and meanings of their works.

In her story, Beruh Helina Bägäna Godana, Eyärusalém uses two different verses, "ገላላ ተግራጎጎ" (A Wise Student) and "ለጎጎ ጎጎ አይመጥ" (Not Suitable for Criticism), in which she comments on the qualities of a wise and clever student, and criticizes the "modern" dressing style of the Ethiopian women. Although we read in both verses the repetition of similar sounds in similar positions, none of them seems to be concise and the imaginative expression of strong feeling. Nor does the language of both verses seem to be designed to produce the necessary effects or pleasure or meanings of the love story (that revolves around the traditional and modern thoughts of marriage) through beautiful, elevated, imaginative and profound expressions.

Mät'anäwärq also employs the same styles of language in different chapters of her narrative, Yäbakänäw Giizé. Like Asrat and Gänät, the authoresses of Yämäkinaw Mist'er and Misten Bekada Däräsäbeñe Feda, Mätänäwärq makes her major characters (Tegst Ayalqebät and Tariku Täsäma) speak in a patterned language, verse. However, most of the verses (which the two young lovers exchange through their letters) as in the stories of Asrat, Eyärusalém and Gänät, are only collections of mass of words arranged in pattern. The language of the verses does not tell us, through important

emotional reaction, something that cannot be said. The language of the long verse (pp. 116-121) which Tegst, the protagonist, composes and reads to the reader does not tell us about the worst and saddest conditions of the speaker who is in fact disappointed at finding her lover, Tariku, with another woman at his home. Nor does it reveal the inexpressible feelings, emotions and sorrow of the protagonist, Tegst. Moreover, the language of verse which Tariku writes to his lover, Tegst (pp. 80-82), lacks not only imaginative words and powerful expressions which show his deep love for the latter, but also harmony and coherence. In his letter which he composes it both in prose and verse language, Tariku tries to appreciate Tegst's beautiful body and also express his deep and genuine love for her. But at the same time he highly condemns Tegst for the simple reason that the latter fails to pay a visit to the former. The authoress, however, tries to conclude her narrative with a ten lines verse which reflects one of the major themes of the story.

ፍቅራችን ፈረሰ መሠረቱ ጠፋ፣
ወዳጅ ዘመናችን ስለኛ ተከፋ።
እንግዲህ እበቃ ተፈፀመ ዛሬ
ሳለወድ ተለየሁ ከፍቅር መግሀሬ።
...

እኔም አላጠፋሁ እሱም ጥሩ ሰው ነው፣
አንባቢ ይፍረደን ታሪኩ ምስጢር ነው፣
በልጅነት ጊዜ ፍቅር የወጠናችሁ፣
በኛ ከደረሰው ዓምላክ ያርቃችሁ።

Our love is ceased its root is
destroyed,
And this makes our friends and
relatives feel sad,
Oh! It's all over with it, today it
comes to an end
To be separated from my darling
lover makes me sad,
...

I did nothing, neither did he,
Let the reader comment upon this
story, for it is mystery,
You, who fall in love at the under-
age,
Let God be with you and keep you
away from such disasterous fate.
(Mät'änwärg Samuel. 1965 Eth.
C.:209)

Compared with the other long verses, the language of this one is more concise, coherent and appropriate to the subject of the story. However, the words in the above quoted verse are not as beautiful and powerful as are the words of poetry which usually expresses deep feelings and noble thoughts more artistically.

S'ähaye and Elfenäše also employ verse in their two novels, Anguz and S'elmät. In Anguz, for instance, S'ähaye uses verse for double purposes. Thus the verse that appears on pages 177-178

enables the novelist not only to portray Qedest Bärnabas, the third important character in the story, as an artist, but also reveal her patriotic feelings and great affection for her mother land, Ethiopia. However, S'ähaye seems to be very much concerned not with the aesthetic significance of the language of the verse but with its technical and thematic purposes. Hence, though Qedest is described as a literary woman; though she is depicted as a woman whose artistic mind is so clever, imaginative and creative; though her verse which deals with the Abaye Wänze (Black Nile) is metrical and rhythmical, it does not contain the high and profound thought, the imagination and the deep emotion of true poetry. In addition to this verse (pp. 177-178) S'ähaye attempts to employ songs in her story but in vain. The authoress fails to give appropriate meanings or aesthetic qualities to the children's political song which appears on page 15, in the middle of chapter one. Even if the song seems to condemn those senior officers who take the initiative to overthrow the then Haile Selassie government, and also creates variety in terms of the novel's prose language, it does not have coherence and harmony either with the themes, or the conflict, or the plot of the story.

In her novel, Elfenäše also employs a lengthy verse for two-fold purposes. First and foremost she is able to portray the literary personality and creative mind of her second son, Dagmawi Mäkuwanent. Moreover, the authoress makes Bezu'ayähu, the protagonist, introduce her son to the narratee, Egegayähu, and express the importance of education which underlines one of the major themes of the story. Therefore, the verse which Dagmawi, an eleventh grade student, writes about the importance of education and literacy campaign, has harmony, not only with the story, but also the creative personality of the young-student character.

Not only this, most of the prose works of the writers under discussion also resemble each other in the nature of their language, especially, in the style of constructing phrases, sentences and paragraphs. Thus, many writers with the exceptions of Wädäryäläše, Yäzena, Emewädeše, and Elfenäše use long and tedious sentences and paragraphs. The authoresses of Yäbakänäw Giizé, Yämäkinaw Mist'er, Tegst Mäkäräñawa, and Anguz are the case in point. These authors fill the space of one or two pages of the books with single sentence or paragraph. The use of such a style of language - a language that reveals itself with long sentences and paragraphs has a negative impact on the emotions, interest and

understanding of the reader. Not only will the reader lose interest in reading the story, but also he/she face difficulty in grasping the idea/s of the incident or event under consideration. Some of the short sentences also become abrupt that they tend to convey negative meanings and appear to be contrary to what is said or described in the stories. The following are two examples which appear in the novel named Anguz "**... ካጃን አድናቆት ተሰፈው**" "... Kač'a is infected with surprise"... (emphasis is mine) (p. 251). "**ሐረር ለመናፈቅ ደገጥ ሐረር ገንቡ ጋ ድረ ደጥ ጀጎል ካለው ሱቃቸው ውስጥ የተነሱትን ፍተገራፍ አግይተውኛል**" "... in order to prove it to me that he used to live in Harär, he showed me his photograph which he took in his own shop which situated in Deré Dawa Jägol, near the castle of Harär." (emphasis is mine) (p. 307).

In the first quotation, the expression of the omniscient narrator fails to show the true meanings of the feelings and emotions of Kač'a in that the underlined phrase is misused. In the phrase "infected with surprise", the word "infected" refers to Kač'a's illness. It does not, however, tell us that Ka a is lost in admiration of the beautiful scenery of Addis Abäba. And, what is more is that since feelings of admiration or surprise is not a disease by itself it does not infect or wound one's body or mind or

feelings. In the second paragraph, too, the underlined phrase is also misused. There are two words in this phrase, Deré Dawa and Jägol. The former word refers to a town's name whereas the latter is the name of historical place. But, what appears contradictory in this phrase is that the latter is misplaced. The historical place, Jägol, is not situated in Deré Dawa, but, as is described in the last part of the underlined phrase, in Harär.

Unlike most women authoresses, however, Yäzena and EmewädeŶe do not seem to be ignorant about the advantages of punctuation marks. In their stories, they attempt to use them properly and effectively. They have tried to separate the dialogues of the characters from the narrator/s's speeches by using quotation mark, hyphen, question mark and new lines. Furthermore, Yäzena appears to be so unique in using figures of speech such as symbolism, metaphor, and simile by which she is able to enrich the aesthetic value and literary-technical quality of her stories.

Unlike other women authoresses, perhaps it is in Yäzena's Yätäraḡotä Edmé and Yämämäräḡiyaw Lebbs that we find an artistic and concise use of language which does not only affect the reader's emotions, and feelings, but also help the forward movement of the plot. Perhaps none is striking than the symbolisms of Ayewa GoŶu's

(the father of Askalāmaryam in Yāmāmārāqiyaw Lebbs) dream experience, old and dark hut, and the dim light of the kerosene lamp. In his dream, Ayewa Gošu, as has been explained in chapter one, sees that he sinks into a big sea with his clothes. But, when he comes out of the sea he finds himself naked. According to the traditional and cultural beliefs of the Amhara People, the big sea into which the poor peasant character, Ayewa Gosu, is sunk has its own symbolic meaning and interpretation. Hence, for them a big sea symbolizes a big city or town. His naked body, on the other hand, is considered as a sign of loss or failure. In the short story, Yāmāmārāqiyaw Lebbs, these two things are used both as symbols and foreshadowing, too. The big sea will therefore stand for the great city, Addis Abäba (the place where Ayewa Gošu loses his money) whereas Ayewa's naked body will suggest the loss of his money, the prediction which will be realized at the end of the story, page 292.

On the other hand, the old dark hut in which Ayewa Gosu lives with his family, and the dim light of the kerosene lamp may also symbolize poverty and the miserable lives of Gošu's family. The employment of such a technical device is also clearly felt in Yätäraqotä Edmé. In the story the symbolisms of the old dark hut, the dim light of kerosene lamp, old-age, sterility ... etc., get

their power of appropriateness, coherence and effectiveness from the contrast they draw. The contrast between old age and sterility; between the smoky fire and the life of the two aged people (Abbahoy Gäbrä Tänsaye and his wife, Emmahoy Särayet) may therefore have technical purpose, for it subtly hints the final outcome of the story. The settings of the story, Yätäraqotä Edmé, and those abstract ideas that are mentioned above are used not only to suggest the tragic incident which will come true in the end, but also reflect the central theme of the narrative.

One of the strongest points of Yäzena's language is its use of live and pertinent dialogues. Of all Ethiopian women authoresses, none is as skilful as Yäzena at employing good dialogues. The dialogues in most of Yäzena's short stories appears to be natural, terse and purposeful. They contribute a lot in constructing tight plots, exposing conflicts, heightening suspense, underlining the major themes, and introducing the physical, educational, social, psychological and economic backgrounds of the characters precisely and effectively.

In the short story Samat, for instance, the long and the short soliloquies of the protagonist, Mäsfen, disclose not only the speakers' typical traits of characters and the relationships of the

characters, but also the conflict and the central themes of the work. The short soliloqui of the protagonist that comes at the outset of the story (p.5) exposes the very conflict of the narrative which arises because of Mäsfen's love for Meseke, the girl friend of his great friend, T'elahun. Furthermore, in the long soliloqui that goes from page six to ten, Mäsfens' jealousy, cruelty, insincerity and evil-mind are shown as having no human bounds.

The dialogues in Yätäraqutä Edmé, particularly, the dialogues that go between the two aged people are also concise and in harmony with the characters. Not only do they strike-up the conflict, but also enlighten the reader on the physical, social and biological backgrounds of the poor and aged characters. Besides, Yäzena's language is precise and economical for the most part. In many of her stories, she tries to avoid superflous expressions, statements, and words which are, of course, very common in the works of many women authoresses. The frequent use of present tense, on the other hand, enable the authoress to give her stories action and the sense of immediacy.

In general, this short story writer, Yäzena, knows that the language in her short narratives belongs not only to the kinds of the stories but to her characters as well. It is easily discernable

that she has always considered the words in her stories in the context of the situation. Her language is, therefore, concise, appropriate and effective in that it carries the plot forward, working as a part of the conflict and characterization.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The intent of this study, as is explained at the outset, has been to introduce and analyse some of the prose works of twelve Ethiopian women authoresses from the point of view of the applications of literary devices.

In their stories, the authoresses try to use a number of narrative techniques which they feel best and apt to transmit the ideas and/or central themes of their works to the audience as clearly as possible. The majority of authoresses unfold their stories in the first person, the objective and the omniscient points of view. Such writers as Asrat, Mät'änäwärq, Wedenäše, Wädäryäläše and Elfenäše have employed the first person point of view, whereas Mästawat, Zäwditu, Emewädeše and S'ähaye have disclosed their narratives in the third person. However, S'ähaye at times tries to combine the omniscient position with the objective one. Of all the authoresses, however, it is only Gänät who has constructed her story, Mistén Bekäda Daräsäbeñe Feda in the objective narrative stance. Yäzena, on the other hand, has used all the three methods to recount her six short stories. The last two methods, among others, have enabled her not only to express her

characters' external realities and probe into their innermost feelings and thoughts, but also detach herself and present them objectively.

The epistolary method is also a common feature of the prose works of Eyärusalém, Mastäwat, Mät 'änäwärq, Gänät, Wädäryäläše and Yäzena. But, none of them is surely as excellent craftwomenships as the last two authoresses. They both use the technique effectively and artistically. The letters in their narratives are essential tools not only to knit the incidents together and move the plot forward, but also reflect the central themes of the stories. Furthermore, few authoresses have used the flashback, telephone conversation and dream techniques in order to reveal not only the relationships of the characters and the themes of their writings, but also produce conflicts which are the main cause for the stories to begin with.

The works of Wädäryäläše, Elfenäše and Yäzena are good instances here. Thus, for example, Wädäryäläše opens her story with the protagonist's retrospective monologue which triggers off the main conflict of the narrative. In their two stories (Yämämäräqiyaw Lebbs and Selmä't) Yäzena and Elfenäše have employed telephone conversations and dream experience to subtly suggest the outcome

of events and portray the emotional and mental behavior of the female protagonist who appears in S'elmät. Apart from emphasizing the central themes, such technical elements are very useful in building the psychological and social conflicts of the two stories.

Most women authoresses, with the exceptions of Asrat Gäbrä S'adeq and Gänät Baheru, delineate young female protagonists whose educational backgrounds range from the level of elementary school to university. Indeed, such a literary style is very common both in the pre-and-post revolution eras. However, few authoresses try to show the social and psychological problems of womankind through the portrayals of prostitutes, divorced women, widows, and woman-artist characters in their fictional works.

Unlike Eyärusalém, Wädäryäläše, Yäzena, S'ähaye and Eلفenäše, however, most authoresses depict abstract characters who are merely representatives of ideas and not really living individuals. Their actions, speeches and thoughts lack consistency, appropriate motivations and do not correspond with their personalities. When we probe into the stories of Asrat, Zäwditu, Mät'änäwärq and Gänät, we find a number of characters who are tedious vehicles of abstract ideas. As are mere mouthpieces of their creators nowhere are their true personalities revealed in

their own actions, speeches, feelings and thoughts. The fictional works' failure to portray the particular traits of their characters objectively and artistically is partly due to the authoresses' age and educational backgrounds, and partly due to the lack of sufficient knowledge about the characteristics of literary devices and the general milieus of the society in which they live. Not only are most writers (particularly those prerevolution ones) young and inexperienced, but their educational background is bound to Elementary and Junious schools.

Compared with the first two authoresses who are mentioned on the first line of the above paragraph, Yäzena and Elfenäše are more skilful at delineating well-motivated and credible characters. Their endeavors to go deep into the behavior of their characters and the causes that influence their feelings and actions are surely marks of good and highly skilled authoress. However, few of Yäzena's characters reveal duplication to the extent that they lack originality and individuality.

Unlike in the works of Wädäryäläše, Eyärusalém, Wedenäše, Yäzena, and Elfenäše, we see that the use of irrelevant incidents and unnecessary characters in the plot construction is a common practice in the stories of many women authoresses. The presentation

of events which are organized only in terms of time and the portrayal of each character's life from childhood to old age are also typical features of the plots of many narratives. For example, the lack of the sense of unity in the plot structure and the problem of logical interconnection and division of chapters in the construction of the plots are evidently seen in the novels of Asrat, Mät'änäwarq, Zäwditu and S'ähaye. The cramming up of unnecessary incidents, characters and settings that recurrently appear in the stories of their novels may not only distract the attention of the reader from the main themes, but also hamper the development of the plots. The interplay of characterization, conflicts, settings, language and suspense is absent in the majority of works of those novelists.

To the contrary, the fictions of Eyärusalém, Wädäryäläše, Wedenäše, Yäzena and Elfenäše are fully focused on a single situation which develops along the main line of the plots. The pattern of the events are also centered on the lives of important characters. Of the five authoresses, of course, the last two people are more skilful at constructing tight plots whose incidents, events, conflict, settings, chapters and characters are logically and artistically knitted one with another. Thus, Yäzena and Elfenäše, by contrast, show a remarkable and artistic employment

of flashbacks and foreshadowings as devices for developing the plots of their stories.

Generally speaking, with the exceptions of the fictional works of the above five women authoresses, the problem of logical interconnection and division of parts, and the cramming up of unnecessary characters, events, incidents and settings in the construction of the plots are commonly felt in the prose works of many Ethiopian women authoresses.

On the other hand, when we examine the nature of the language of the fictional works of women authoresses, we find that most of them use weak, inappropriate, incoherent and inartistic language. Their language lack preciseness and effectiveness for the fact that a great deal of them employ long winding sentences and tedious paragraphs that are customary in most early Amharic novels. However, such authoresses like Wädäryäläše, Yäzena and Elfenäše use concise, coherent, pleasant and appropriate language which seems to be in harmony both with the subjects of the stories and the characters.

Although some of the conversation in the narratives of women authoresses are short and well-suited to the characters speaking them, most of them are, however, too long and tend to digress from

the pertinent themes and subject matter under consideration. Moreover, the majority of works do not overcome the problem of punctuation marks. Perhaps none of the authoresses is as careful and pragmatic as Emewädeše and Yäzena at employing proper punctuation marks in their respective stories. Similarly, one of the strongest points of the latter's language is its use of live and pertinent dialogues. Unlike in the works of other authoresses, the dialogues in most of Yäzena's short stories appear to be natural, terse and purposeful. They contribute a lot in constructing tight plots, revealing the backgrounds of the characters and emphasizing the major themes of the stories.

Generally, compared with other women authoresses, Wädäryäläše, Yäzena and Elfenäše have tried to use an appropriate, coherent and concise language which carries the plots forward, working as a part of the conflict, suspense and characterization. In other words, these authoresses seem to know that the language in their fictional works belongs not only to the kinds of the stories but to their characters, too.

Lastly, the conclusion that can be drawn from the foregoing discussion, therefore, is that the lack of wide life experiences and sufficient knowledge of literary devices and readings are

appeared to be the common shortcomings of most of the Ethiopian women authoresses. Regarding the latter idea, Kane contends:

The lack of technical skill on the majority of writers in Amharic means that they are few who are aware of the different types of prose literature current in modern literature, or if aware, lack the requisite skill or understanding needed to write them. (Thomas Kane. 1975: 16-17)

On the other hand, such major obstacles as the lack of literary schools, training centers, seminars, symposiums, well established literary journals and the practice of literary criticisms which entirely dwell on the fictional products of women authoresses can also indicate some of the adverse circumstances under which they embark upon their literary creations. As a result, most of our women authoresses are unskilled technicians whose fictional texts suffer from heaps of irrelevant incidents, extravagant settings, unappropriate and incoherent language, unnecessary and abstract characters, and loose plots. Moreover, the absence of sufficient publishing houses, the increment of the price of publication, the fall of the demand for fictional literatures and other inimical conditions curtail the efforts of Ethiopian women authoresses.

To sum up, although most women authoresses lack the basic knowledge of the characteristics of different kinds of literary devices, the fact is that their works not only portray some of the oppressive elements in our social norms and cultural beliefs, but also serve as stepping stones in the development of Ethiopian literature. Whatever the shortcomings or weaknesses of their fictional writings may be, they can serve as lessons for other writers to acquaint them with the characteristics of literary techniques and develop their skill.

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APPENDIX A :

INTERVIEW WITH YÄZENA WÄRQU

- Question: Could you tell me your mother's name?
- Yäzena: She is called Wayezaro Mu 'et Warqu Dästa.
- Question: Where were your parents born?
- Yäzena: My father was born in Gondar Administrative region Semada Awaraja; whereas my mother was born in Gondar.
- Question: Could you tell me the date of their birth?
- Yäzena: I am afraid, I do not know
- Question: Are they alive?
- Yäzena: My father died in 1979 Eth.C. Mother is still alive.
- Question: what was your father's profession? And what about your mothers?
- Yäzena: At first, my father was a corporal and then he became a member of the parliament of the Emperor Haile Selassie regime. During the Derg era, however, he became governor of a certain Awraja. By the way, he wrote two novels. These are: Yäsälam Gondana and Mag'e ät be a Ayebäqam. My mother is just a house wife.
- Question: Are your parents educated?
- Yäzena: Of course Yes. My father had studied Elementary and Junior schools. My mother can also read and write.
- Question: Did your father and mother have traditional church education?

- Yäzena: No.
- Question: Did your father or mother use to tell or read you tales, poems riddles, or any other verbal or written historical or religious stories?
- Yäzena: In this case my mother has played significant roles.
After she had divorced her former husband she used to tell me a number of different tales always in the evening. Accordingly, the two short stories: Yätäraḡotä Edmé and Zemetayé were the products of the tales which my mother had told me during childhood.
- Question: Are you married? If so, What is your husband's name? Does he have a job? Where does he work?
- Yäzena: Yes, I am a married woman. My husband is called Jämal Suléyeman. Of course, he has a job and he works at the Addis Ababa Municipality.
- Question: Is he educated?
- Yäzena: Of course, he is an educated man. He graduated from the Addis Ababa University with a BA degree in Psychology.
- Question: How many children do you have? Boys--? Girls--?
- Yäzena: I have only one son. And he is six years old.
- Question: Where and when did you begin and complete your modern education?
a) Elementary and Junior Schools (1-8)?
b) Secondary high school (9-12)?
c) Higher education (college of University):
- Yäzena: I have studied my primary education in Gondar at the Sadequ Yohannes Elementary and Junior Schools: and from grade nine to twelve I have attended in

Nazerét at the Asé Gälawdéwos Comprehensive secondary high School.

Question: Do you have a job? If so, where do you work and what is your current qualification?

Yäzena: Yes, I've a job. Currently I am serving as a Junior expert in literature at the Ministry of finance.

Question: Do you have any particular experience/s which you had practiced in Your school time?

Yäzena: It is very difficult to answer such a general question. But, I think I may have something to say if your question aims at assessing the background of my literary life. Hence, I began the writing business in 1965 Eth. C. When I was a seventh grade student. That very year I wrote a thirty-six pages of an incomplete fictional narrative whose main theme was love and youth. But I had thoroughly given up the writing activity for the fact that my elder brother had accused me when he came to understand the theme of the story. On the other hand, no matter how weak and infrequent his assistance was, my father used to encourage me to describe the geographical settings and sceneries of the district where I used to in childhood. I have resumed the writing business in 1974 Eth. C., the year I joined at the Addis Ababa University and where I met my husband. As far as my literary life is concerned, indeed, Jämal, my husband, has played meaningful roles. Thus, when we were in the University Jämal and I used to walk outside the campus always in the evening. While doing this, Jämal used to insist that I should describe the sun set, the scattered clouds, the dusk, the colourful horizon, the bright moon, the dimly-lit sky and all the beautiful natural objects that which inspired his artistic and imaginative faculty. I had tried the assignment and Jämal had been very much pleased with my first fictional writing. He had expressed his great admiration and told me that I could have

been a good writer if I had been taught the technical properties of literature. In fact, it was Jämal who, despite my interest to study other subjects, had compelled me to join the Department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature in which I had acquired the basic knowledge of literature. Then, I wrote Samat, my first short story for the literature course called "The short story" while I was studying at the AAU. Thus it was the ceaseless efforts, incessant advice and genuine appreciations of my husband that led me the world of literature.

Question: Do you have any unique experience/s which you encountered thus far in your social life? And, could you tell me about the events, or incidents which you consider crucial to you?

Yäzena: Oh, I have practised so many horrible and regrettable experiences. But the most bitter and tragic one was the one I had experienced after I had legally married a man whose religion was different from that of mine. My parents were indeed very fanatic in so far as the matters of religion were concerned. Hence, they didn't accept my husband and had severely condemned me for marrying a man whose parents were absolutely Muslim. Ultimately such critical and incessant religious controversy had marked the death of my second son who was only one and half months old. It was a terrible incident which I had never experienced ever since I was a small girl.

Question: Do you have hobby? If so, what?

Yäzena: Practically speaking, I can't say that I've particular kind of hobby. However, when I was in Ambo I used to rear pigeons and cats. Well, at present I usually prefer to stay in my house whenever I am free. In fact, in most days of the week I chew " 'at" with my husband. And then we read fictional books and discuss the literary

contents and technical aspects of the texts. Thus, relatively speaking, I can say that in addition the writing business, the following three things: chewing 'at, reading and literary discussions are my favourite hobbies with which I usually engage myself whenever I am free.

Question: What do you think is literature?

Yäzena: I can't define the general and broad concept of the term literature as briefly and clearly as possible within such short space and time. However, as far as my understanding goes literature is a work of art that can display the whole matter of this visible world. Moreover, it is a discipline by which one may demonstrate his/her feelings, beliefs, attitudes and experiences by using written words.

Question: what do you think techniques are?

Yäzena: Literary techniques are the methods by which a writer may produce a fictional text.

Question: What do you think are literary elements?

Yäzena: Oh, it is very difficult to answer such a question without first referring to the theoretical texts of literature. However, from the very residue of my knowledge of literature, I think literary elements are what we call character, plot, setting, and narrative points of view...etc.

Question: What do you think literary criticism is?

Yäzena: In its positive sense, literary criticism is a work of art which dedicates to analyze, interpret, appreciate and evaluate the strength and weakness of any kind of fictional literature.

Question: When do you write? Or when do you get inspired? And where do you write?

Yäzena: I can write when I am in all sorts of conditions & emotions. I write, therefore, when I feel happy and so do I when I'm sad. Nothing will hinder me from the writing activity. In so far as the places for the writing are concerned, I usually write in my house, but at times I write both in the office and library too.

Question: what do you think are the attitudes of Ethiopian writers towards literary criticisms which particularly deal with their fictional writings?

Yäzena: I can answer this question only from the points of view of my own experiences. Of course, so far I have't read a strong, genuine, critical and detailed criticisms. Most of the comments are too general and very vague. they are inundated with subjective feelings, attitudes and experiences of the so called 'our critics'. They probe neither into the contents nor into the technical compositions of the work. Generally speaking, the criticisms that prevailing now do not follow the very theoretical rules and methodologies of literary criticism. For example, if you have come across the criticisms that dealt with Sähaye's and mine prose works were absolutely one sided comments. They have attempted to pronounce only the negative aspects of the texts in a very general and personal ways of approach. Hence, the criticisms which I have read thus far were-by and large, destructive utterance which could practically affect the emotions and literary activities of Ethiopian writers.

Question: Which foreign or Ethiopian writers have you read?

Yäzena: I have read most of the prose fictions thus far written by Ethiopian writers. I have begun to read when I was a six grade student. Among the works of

the former writers I can well remember both the stories and characters of such fiction like Sähaye Mäsfen, Gäl än Benayäw, Yagudeguwadu Mes ir, Yafeqer Sedät, Yafeqer Tornät even now. On the other hand, I've read Doestoveski and Chekhov from aborad writers. Indeed, I have imitated the style of chekhov to begin the first paragraph of Sänayet, a short story in Yätäšä äw Séye an.

Question: Which fiction do you like most? Why?

Yäzena: Among the works of Ethiopian writers I live Haddis's Feger Eskä Mäqaber very much. Of course, I have read it for the first time in 1962 Eth.C. However, I've read it more than twenty times since then. Yet I always found the novel as new and original as a fresh work. Moreover, I appreciate his Tärät Tärät Yämäsärät in that it employs a beautiful symbolism that highlight the literary meanings of the text. Ba'alu's Kadmas Bašagär is also my favourite novel. I like the narrative because of the successful employment of literary techniques and of the beautiful harmony among various chapters that are strongly interwoven together. According to my understanding of literature, Ba'alu is a novelist who can be considered a veteran writer in the world of modern Ethiopian novel. On the other hand, among the prose works of Ethiopian young authors I love Sänsälät, G'erdoš and Sämämän for the fact that they entertain loftier subject matters and employ pertinent narrative technicians that help the stories forward movement. The novels are more realistic and have great aesthetic values.

Question: What kinds of themes do you usually poetry in your fictional writings?

Yäzena: My works usually demonstrate the themes of the life of youth, love, eduction, friendship, poverty , marriage, jealousy, betrayaletc.

Question: After you get finish the writing business, do you make proof readings ?

Yäzena: Certainly, I always make errata first for myself. Then I read the full story time and again with my husband to cross out all typographical errors and other conceptual fallacy.

Question: What is your future plan?

Yäzena: Well, I devote myself to literature. I usually read and write fictional discourses. This is not exaggeration. It is my principle. It is the principle of my life. At present I have a new novel. So, my future plan will be to accomplish two things. First, to publish my new novel and then pursue the task of writing.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH EMWÄDEŠE BÄQĀLĀ

- Question: Are your parents alive?
- Emwädeše: No.
- Questions: Where did you parents use to live?
- Emwädeše: They used to live here in Addis Ababa
- Question: Could you tell me their birth places?
- Emwädeše: my father was born in Šäwa Administrative region, Mänze-Yefatena Temuga Awaraja; and, my mother was born in Harärgé Administrative region, Asaba Tafari Awaraja, Hirna Wārda.
- Question: What was your father's profession? And what about your mother's?
- Emwädeše: My father was a policeman; and my mother was house wife.
- Question: Were your parents educated?
- Emwädeše: No.
- Question: Did your father or mother use to tell or read you tales, proverbs, poems, riddles or any other verbal or written historical and religious stories?
- Emwädeše: No.
- Question: When did you marry? To whom, and how did you meet him? What is his profession?
- Emwädeše: Actually, I have married twice. First, I was married in 1969 Eth.C. and then in June, in 1982 Eth.C. this time, everything was entirely managed according to my own will and sheer interest. My first husband is a civil servant. My present

husband is a merchant. Indeed, I happened to meet my second husband in 1976 Eth.C. at a certain banquet hall. Actually, we have stayed together for seven years just only as lovers. But, we have been officially married in 1982 Eth.C.

- Question: How many children do you have Boys ___? Girls__?
- Emwādeše: At first they were four but my youngest child died last year. Now I have three children and none of them is boys.
- Question: Did you have gone through tradition education? If so, could you explain your grade and qualifications?
- Emwādeše: I have studied only the preliminary lesson of church education.
- Question: Where did you have your traditional education and for how long have you studied?
- Emwādeše: I have studied it at the "Gola Mika'él Church" only for one year.
- Question: Where and when did you begin and complete your modern education?
a) Elementary and Junior Schools (1-8)
b) Secondary High School (9-12)
c) Higher education (College, University)
- Emwādeše: I started modern education in 1954 Eth. C. at the Africa unity School here in Addis Ababa. Then, I've completed my Junior and High School at the Wāsān Sägād and Duck Mäkonen (now Addis Kätäma High School) Schools respectively. Finally, I have tried to promote farther education at the Cathedral School, but, unfortunately, I failed to succeed.
- Question: Do you have a job? If so, where do you work? And what is your qualification?

Emwädeše: Yes, I do have a job and I work at The Police Head Quarter, and, I am a reporter and producer of the Pliocena Ermejaw Gazé a, a fortnight newspaper produced by the office of the head quarter.

Question: Do you have any particular experience/s which you had come during your school time/life?

Emwädeše: Of course, when I was at school I used to perform many short plays.

Question: Do you have any unique experience/s in your social life?

Emwädeše: I've been in good terms with people. Of course, it appears to be all the same even now. Thus, I am always happy in my life. Indeed, in the past I was a member of the then Ethiopian Women Association. During the derg era I used to write many articles which dealt particularly with women affairs and appeared on the newspaper which I am serving as a reporter and producer of criminal issues and incidents.

Question: Could you tell me about events, occasions, or any sort of incident which you consider crucial to you?

Emwädeš: I have, of course, unforgettable memories and experiences. However, the most ugly and painful memory is my former marriage. You know, everything was dominie against my will. At that time I was very young. I was not matured enough both physically and mentally to shoulder the responsibility of a married life. It was my parents who had forced me to marry a man of whom I had no knowledge at all. I really always feel angry when I recall such a disgusting and horrible incident. Had I not been married to that man, indeed, I could have led a better and an enjoyable life.

Question: When do you write? Or when do you get inspired

Emwädeše: I write when something strikes me. In other words, I write when I happen to be impressed by extraordinary events and peoples.

Question: Do you have hobby? If so what?

Emwädeše: Yes, I do have a number of hobbies. Apart from my frequent activity, writing fictional literature, I like to collect different kinds of stamps. Besides I usually listen to different local and foreign music. And, at times I enjoy watching theatres.

Question: What do you think is literature?

Emwädeše: I like literature very much for the fact that it shows us the matters of the objective world. It is something through which one may express his/her feelings and experiences in a beautiful language.

Question: What do you think literary techniques are?

Emwädeše: Literary techniques are the backbone of any work of literature. Hence, without them it is absolutely impossible to write a well-constructed narrative.

Question: What do you think literary Criticism is?

Emwädeše: I believe that literary criticism is an important tool in the world of fictional literature. Because it is through criticism that a writer may come to know the strength and shortcomings of his/her prose work. Therefore, literary criticism is an indispensable apparatus which may help to improve the technical standard of the literary outputs of Ethiopian literature.

Question: Which foreign or Ethiopian writers have you read? which writers do you like most? why?

Emwädeše: I have read foreign writers such as Steila, Rob

bins and Christie. From the local writers I have read the prose works of Berhanu Zarihun, Balaul Girma, and Gabayhu Ayala. However, Christie Berhanu and Bä'alu are my favourite writers. But, above all, I love the works of Christie very much because I have strong emotional attachment with detective stories. Besides, the very nature of my job has close affinity with the concepts and activities of crimes and criminals.

Question: What is your future plan?

Emwädeše: I have written nine new short stories and one novel called Ebedu Bälä ä (Bälä ä the Mad). Thus, I have planned to publish these new fictional works.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH SĀHAYE MĀLAKU

- Question: Could you tell me your mother's name?
- Sāhaye: Wayezaro Azalace Yegabahal Za-Giyorgis.
- Quesiton: Are your parents alive?
- Sāhaye: My father died long ago. My mother is Still alive.
- Question: Where does she live?
- Sāhaye: She lives in Arusi Administrative Region.
- Question: Could you tell me her birth place?
- Sāhaye: She was born in Manzena Yefat Awraja.
- Quesiton: What was your father's profession? And, what about your mother's ?
- Sāhaye: At first he used to serve in the Church. But, later on he became a district governor. My mother is just a house-lady.
- Quesiton: Are your parents educated?
- Sāhaye: Yes, my father was a literate person. In fact, he had a good knowledge of traditional church education.
- Quesiton: Did your father or mother use to tell or read you tales, poems, riddles or any other verbal or written historical and religious stories?
- Sāyaha: Of course, my father used to teach me how to read the Bible as well as other stories. He also used to correct me when

I split the words of God written in the Holy Scripture. True, such experiences may seem to have nothing to do with the writing business and the concept of the question. But, in one way or another, it has positive contribution to my literary career. On the other hand, a good number of people used to visit us. These different group of people used to debate and argue about various issues. And, while doing so, they had been employing different kinds of proverbs, poems, and tales to enrich their ideas and used to elaborate the contents of the cases/issues under consideration. Obviously, such recurrent performance had enabled me to enhance my knowledge of Amharic words and the language of literature.

Quesiton: Are you married? If so, what is your husband's name? And what does he do?

Sāhaye: To be honest with you, I haven't legally married to any one.

Question: Do you have children? If so, how many? Boys -? Girls - ?

Sāhaye: Yes, of course. I have two daughters. I have no son.

Quesiton: Where and when did you begin and complete your modern education?

- grades)
- a) Elementary and Junior School (1-8
 - b) Secondary High School (9-12 grades)
 - c) Higher Education (College, University)

Sähaye: Well, I have studied elementary classes at the Menelik II Elementary and Junior School. Then, I went to Dabra Tabor, and there I had completed Junior school; I attended Secondary classes at the Gondar ASe Fasil Comprehensive Secondary High School. Finally, I graduated from the Addis Ababa Commercial College in business education.

Question: Do you have a job? If so, where do you work?

Sähaye: Yes, I have. I job for the General Winget Construction School.

Question: What do you do there?

Sähaye: I am a teacher.

Question: Could you tell me a few things about your school life in relation to your literary career?

Sähaye: I used to be in good terms with my Amharic teacher when I was a Junior School student, Ato Bisaw Mang'estu. He used to encourage me to write fictional stories based on my childhood experiences. He found my first work very interesting and I won his admiration and affection. Obviously, his practical assistance and guidance had really played significant roles in moulding my literary ability which I had acquired early then. Generally speaking, it was his priceless advice and genuine appreciation that motivated me to pursue the practice of creative writings.

Question: Do you have any unique experience in your social life?

Sahaye:

Of course, Yes. You know, my profession is very suitable to assess the various facets of human life. Teaching itself is a center of learning. You learn many things from your students. A teacher may therefore has a good knowledge about the social, psychological, cultural, political, economic and religious backgrounds of his/her students. Oh, I, myself have learned a great deal of things from my own students. Thus, I can't forget them all. I can, really, say that I always have intimate contact with most of my students. Such experiences have therefore created fertile conditions for me to examine the sociological, psychological and economic backgrounds of my students. Thus, I could remember a good number of students who used to be prostitutes and who gave up this cursed profession after they had graduated from our school. During school time, these women used to tell me their life history, particularly, how they became prostitutes. Accordingly, I've got tremendous knowledge about the abject life of prostitution.

Of course, I've met these women so many times and heard them pronouncing the importance of education. Of all ladies I met so far, I could not forget the words of a certain woman.

They have been deeply implanted in my mind ever since I heard them "Education does not only change the spiritual life but it can also alter the material world of human beings". Thus, I used such vast but horrible experiences as a spring board to construct fictional stories and display the abject life of prostitution.

Question: Could you tell me about events, or occasion, or incidents which you consider crucial to your literary career?

Sahaye: At one moment, in the past, I had attempted to present my literary works to the public. Fortunately enough, I got the change to use the Educational Mass Media of Ethiopia. I wrote many articles and became a regular contributor for the Sunday - Morning - Programme. However, after sometimes I had been given a twenty minutes regular programme, called "The Pen from women's world". Therefore, I read most of my literary writings every Sunday for ten years.

In sofar as my literary career was concerned, the most important and historical moment was the day in which I had been introduced to Dr. Faqada Azaza, Assistant Professor in the Department of Ethiopian languages and Literature and the director of the Addis Ababa University Cultural Centre. It was really a historical day which had marked a turning point in my literary life. So, I will never forget that very incident till the last day of my life. After I was introduced to Dr. Faqada, I showed him the first draft of Quwasa, my first novel. Then, after some days he gave me back the text with valuable and constructive comments which, of course, enabled me to shape up the whole contents of my work. Had it not been for his incessant literary advice and practical guidance, I could not have succeeded and appeared on the Ethiopian literary arena with my fictional work.

Quesiton: When do write? Or, when do you get inspired? And where do you write?

Sāhaye: Honestly speaking, I do not have as such particular times and places to carry out the writing business, I write in day times, and so do I in the night.

Actually, when certain ideas strike my mind I immediately put my pen on paper wherever I may be. Why not even in the classroom or on the city buses, I just sit and start to write. But, most of the time I write in my house. Indeed, I am acquainted with different tasks which I must accomplish before starting the writing business. Thus, when I am about to write, I always turn off the electric light and light a candle. Then I put a bunch of flowers on my table, and finally I drink a cup of brandy in order to build up the atmosphere that overwhelm the worlds of imaginative faculty.

Quesiton: Do you have hobby? If so, what?

Sāhaye: Yes, I do have hobbies. Hence, apart from the writing business, I usually paint different pictures and make dresses.

Quesiton: What do you think is literature?

Sāhaye: According to my understanding, literature is a discipline which reflects the life of human beings and the objective world in a beautiful language.

Quesiton: What do you think literary techniques are?

Sahaye: I am afraid, I have not gone through any literary education. However, according to my little knowledge of literature, I think literary techniques are the tools by which a writer may construct and shape his/her fictional text so as to make his/her writing more readable and easily understandable.

Question: What do you think literary elements are?

Sahaye: I do not know the theoretical meaning of the term literary element. Anyway, as far as my understanding is concerned, I just consider as the characters and themes of a story.

Question: What do you think literary criticism is?

Sahaye: When we consider the literal meaning of criticism, it is simply a comment that focuses on any sort of work. However, literary criticism, on the other hand, is a written discourse which deals with the technical compositions of any given literary writing.

Such a work of criticism indeed discusses the strengths and weaknesses of any fictional literature.

Question: Which foreign or Ethiopian writers have you read? And, which writer do you like most? Why?

Sahaye: I have read a good number of writers both from within and abroad. With regards of works of foreign writers, I usually prefer the works of women writers. Aghata Christie and Robert Lundlum are, however, my favourite writers. On the other hand, among the prose works of

Ethiopian writers, I like above all Yaras Ras, for it presents the true and original culture of Ethiopian people in a beautiful language. Besides, I appreciate Hadis Alamayahu's Feger Eska Magaber since it is a social, cultural, historical, political, economic and religious document that reflects the spiritual and material lives of Ethiopian people. I also appreciate the novels of Ba'alu G'erma and Berhane Zarihun because of their modern narrative techniques. The prose works of these two novelists are embellished with beautiful literary language.

Of course, Ba'alu and Berhanu have proved both their talent and literary knowledge in their respective novels.

Question:

What do you think are the attitudes or feelings of Ethiopian writers toward the literary criticisms which particularly deal with Ethiopian literature?

Sahaye:

In my understanding, there have been very few comments which have made practical contribution to the improvement and development of the overall literary activities of the country. But, most of the so-called "Critical Writings" seem to be discouraging and destructive.

Question:

What is your future plan?

Sahaye:

I have written a new novel called Bis Gala (The Useless Body). Therefore, I have planned to publish this new novel when I can offer to do so. As you well know, the main problem of Ethiopian writers is nothing but lack of money.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH ELFNÄŠE BÄKURÄ

- Question: Could you tell me your mother's name?
- Elfnäše: My mother is called Mäng'est Gäbrä Amlak Tafäsa.
- Question: Are your parents alive?
- Elfnäše: My father is not alive. He died long ago. My mother is still alive.
- Question: Where did your mother use to live?
- Elfnäše: She used to live in Boqoji, a city found in Arusie Administrative region.
- Question: Could you tell me your parents' birthplaces?
- Elfnäše: My father was born in Yefatena Temuga awraja; and, my mother was born in Tagulatena Bulga Awraja.
- Question: What was your father's profession? And, what about your Mother's
- Elfnäše: My father was a land lord. He used to own vast estates and different business centers both in the country sides and in Bogaji town. My mother, however, is a house wife.
- Question: Are your parents educated?
- Elfnäše: Of course they are. My father had a good knowledge of traditional church education. My mother also reads and writes.
- Question: Did your father or mother use to tell or religious stories?

- Elfnäše: No. They did not. But, I used to read fictions and poetry since early then.
- Qetion: Are you married?
- Elfnäše: No. I am not yet married.
- Question: Where and when did you begin and complete your modern education?
A) Elementary and Junior Schools (1-8)
B) Secondary High School (9-12)
C) Higher Education (College and University)?
- Elfnäše: I have attended my Elementary, Junior and Secondary High Schools in Asala, the Capital City of Arusie Administrative Region. Then, I graduated from Awasa Agricultural college in 1978 Eth.C. in Animal Scienc.
- Question: Do you have a job? If so, where do you work?
- Elfnäše: Yes, I've a job. And I work at the Maritime and Transits service Corporation.
- Question: What do you do there?
- Elfnäše: You know, it is very surprising and really incredible. As I told you, I have studied Animal Science. But, for many years I've been serving as a typist.
- Question: Could you tell me about events, or occasions, or incidents which you consider crucial to you?
- Elfnäše: Of course, there are different occasions which I personally regard as very crucial and decisive moments. First and foremost, I will not forget the date (Aug, 28th, 1974 Eth.C. in which I came to hear the good news of the E.S.L.E.C. Indeed, it has significant place and profound effect on my social and

intellectual personalities. It enabled me to be enrolled in the Awasa College, a place that marked a turning point in my life. I will not also forget the date of my graduation which really marked the end of school life. And lastly, I will never forget the birth day of my first novel Selmät, Too.

Question: When do you write? Or, when do you get inspired?

Elfnäše: I usually write when I happen to meet somewhat strange and very exiting incidents, events, things, and people.

Question: Do you have hobby? If so, what?

Elfnäše: Yes, I have. Apart from the writing business, I like to read fictional texts and listen to the voices of different radios such as the voices of Ethiopia, Voice of America, B.B.C...etc.

Question: What do you think is literature?

Elfnäše: Well, in this case, I would like to tell you that I am ignorant to the theoretical aspects of literature. Because I did not acquire any formal literary education from any of literary school. Accordingly I cannot define the concept of literature from the theoretical point of view, but from my common sense of the discipline, the term literature seems to mean the art of writing.

Question: What do you think literary techniques are?

Elfnäše: I may comprehend the meaning of the term literary techniques. But it is very difficult for me to define and elaborate what literary techniques are.

Question: Have you ever come across any literary discussions, or seminars, or symposiums to enhance your understanding of literature?

Elfnäše: Thus far, I have written only one novel. Hence, I am not well acquainted with the public. And so far no one has invited me to attend any literary discussion, or seminar, or symposium. Indeed,, my own personality has great role and influence on this matter. Practically speaking, I do not have a well defined and considerable social interactions with people. I am rather a self-living women. I am always bound to my own individual matters.

Question: What do you think are literary elements?

Elfnäše: Sorry, I do not know.

Question: What do you think is literary criticism?

Elfnäše: I can answer this question only from the points of view of my own experiences. You know, I came to understand what the term literary criticism means after I've received a number of comments which directly dealt with Selmät, my first novel. Thus, in my understanding, literary criticism is a written material which may enlighten a writer on the strength and shortcomings of his or her literary work.

Question: Which foreign or Ethiopia and writers have you read? And, which of them do you like most? Why?

Elfnäše: Well, most of the time I prefer to read the prose works of Ethiopian writers. So, I have read a great number of Amharic novels and short stories. P'awlaws o o and Ba'alu G'erma are my favourite Ethiopian writers. I also like to read those narratives whose main characters are women. On the other hand, from the world of foreign literature I have been

acquainted with the works of Christie and Shelden.

Question: As far as Ethiopian literature is concerned, thus far you've mentioned only the fictional writings of men writers. How about the prose works of women authors? Haven't you come across the works of women writers?

Elfnäše: I do not think there are a good number of women writers in our country. It is really very surprising and a shocking experience. Since the 1966 Eth.C. Ethiopian revolution I have read only two women authors. Among these Sahaye is one. But, personally, I do not like her works, especially, the latter one, Anguz, for it deals with politics, In my very nature I hate politics. I am always ignorant of it. Therefore I did not read this novel, Anguz. However, I appreciate the works of Yāzenna Wārqu. Because they entertain lofty ideas and also employ beautiful language.

Question: If you did not read Anguz. how did you then come to know its subject matter?

Elfnäše: Well, I have read those comments which appeared on the state owned newspapers.

Question: What do you think are the attitudes and feelings of Ethiopian writers toward literary criticism which particularly deal with Ethiopian literature.

Elfnäše: Well, in the first place, I do not have as such any social and/or professional ties with any of other writers. I may therefore respond to this question only from the points of view of my own experiences. Thus, all my explanations are entirely based on those criticism which attempt to review my novel, Selmät, on the daily Addis Zaman, the state owned newspaper.

The criticisms were absolutely destructive ones. But, I do not worry about such invalid and baseless utterances. From the very start I was ready to read such sorts of comments. Indeed, I believe that there can always be praises and defamation or accusations. But mine were very discouraging. I could not even forget the words of the so called "Critic". Here was what he said: "It would be much more simple and easier to write the whole text once again than try to analyse the technical compositions of the novel, Selämt." It was really an insulting comment. However, I did not feel embarrassment by his abusive words. On the other hand, I have read a number of criticisms which devote to praise the works of men authors. For example, very recently I came across two critical writings which dealt with 'uhat, a new anthology written by Fekade Azaze. both criticisms were completely positive and constructive ones. Generally speaking, all of the criticisms which I read so far were thoroughly destructive utterances which failed to give important lesson about the technical shortcomings of the prose writings of women authors.

Question: When one reads your novel, Selmät, he/she will certainly face a problem to distinguish the discourse of the narrator from the dialogues of other characters. Could you comment on this?

Elfnäše: In my understanding, the speech of each character creates neither confusion nor problems in differentiating the narration from the dialogue. Of course, I did not employ punctuation marks properly. However, I did this intentionally, because the story is narrated in flashback, Moreover, I did not want to disfigure the novel with quotation marks, hyphens, commas, colons, and semi-

colons. If I were to use such things I could have undoubtedly spoiled the aesthetic quality of the story.

Question: What is your future plan?

Elfnáše: Although I have not stated the writing business, I have planned to compose another novel very soon. But the prevailing situation does not have the interest for and kinds of literary outputs. Of course, our people seem to have shifted their attention to the publications of political writings. Hence, such tendencies and stern hunger for political issues have affected the current market value of the works of literature. Thus, if you produce a novel or short stories or any other fictional writing, you may therefore encounter an inevitable tragedy and an imponderable loss.

APPENDIX B: Personal Interview With Ato Zärihun Asfaw

Question: What do you think are the roles of literary techniques in composing a fictional text?

Zärihun: Literary techniques are methods by which a writer can transmit his ideas to the reader. A novel or a short story is the total effect of the composition of literary techniques. In other words, a story can't be composed unless and otherwise these literary apparatuses are not harmoniously blend together. A work of fiction is therefore unthinkable without the employment of literary devices as they are tools which will enable a writer to grip the emotion of his readers and move them alongside the incidents and events of the narrative. The applications of literary devices in fictional writings appear to be so natural and inevitable task.

Question: In the world of fictional literature, which element do you think is more important?

- a) Theme /idea
- b) Techniques

Zärihun: Well, basically both of them are equally important because they are always inseparable things in the works of fictional literature. But when we attempt to examine these two elements, the theme or idea, indeed, appears to be the grand cause for a story to reveal itself. The techniques, on the other hand, are the apparatuses which enable a writer to compose his fictional ideas in the form of text. Hence, in my understanding, a writer should give much emphasis first to the methods or devices in that without them, as I have noted earlier, telling a story seems to be impossible or unlikely.

Question: According to your knowledge of literature, which literary element is the best tool in the making of a fictional work? Why? And in what order of importance do you put the tool?

- a) Character 1
- b) Plot 4
- c) Setting 2
- d) Conflict 3
- e) Narrative techniques 5

Zörihun: Well, in order to produce a fictional text all these literary elements appear to be equally important. The work of fiction cannot be realized without such technical apparatuses. We may weigh the quality of a certain novel or short story from the view points of the successful employment of the technical devices which you raised in your question. However, among these literary elements some of them may be used as spring-boards, and, whereas the rest may help the story to move forward. Hence, we may classify the literary elements according to the order of their importance. In view of this, we may consider character as the most important literary element because almost every story seems to be first and foremost, deal with the lives of different characters. The rest will, of course, come into view next to characters. It is obvious that all characters portrayed in a story need places where they could manage the

matters of their lives. In other words, the setting of a story becomes the second important element.

Obviously, all living characters may have different sorts of personal and social interactions either with themselves or with others.

Hence, because of such interactions there may arise disagreements and conflicts among people. The conflict of a story therefore appears to be the third crucial element which is, of course, the backbone of a narrative. Thus, each literary element that appears in a story has nothing to do with itself, but it is there to show and magnify both the physical and psychological lives of the characters that are portrayed in a narrative. We can therefore deduce that character is the most important literary element in the world of fictional art.

Quesiton: What do you think is the role of language in a fictional texts?

Zárihun: I think language is always employed intentionally. The meaning of a text is conveyed through the verbal words or language. Of course, a writer might have a right to choose any kind of language to compose his work.

However, the quality and readability of a novel or a short story seems to depend on the employment of good literary language. The language of a creative writing indeed needs to be very powerful and beautiful.

A writer must therefore, have a good knowledge of language in order to produce a beautiful and readable text. True, literature is an art, thus it has its own language. The language of literature is therefore a language of art. Art,

in fact, works in exaggeration. The same is true for fictional writings since it is a product of imagination and creative faculty. Hence, a novelist or a short story writer must be sensitive about the language of literature, which is, indeed, embellished with exaggeration. But, the degree of exaggeration must have a limit and should not be imbalance and unbelievable.

All the literary elements which we consider in the foregoing discussion can be well organized if they are expressed in a beautiful language. Indeed, the language of a fictional work becomes senseless and boring if it lacks artistic exaggeration and aesthetic quality. A writer of fictional literature must therefore has to have a good knowledge of words or language which may enable him to demonstrate the different aspects of the technical compositions of his work vividly and distinctively. He/she must be aware of the present value of his/her words and/or language. He/she can't employ ancient words that are meaningless to our modern society.

Not only this, a novelist or a short writer has to differentiate the languages of fictional characters from the main narrator of a story. The character, on the other hand, must speak according to their social, physical, educational and professional backgrounds.

Question:

What do you think of coincidence? As you might have observed coincidence is one tool which both the pre-and-post revolution writers usually use in their prose works. Thus, what do you think are the technical advantages and disadvantages of this technical device in a fictional writing?

Zerihun:

Coincidence is the appearance of two different things, events, or situations at a time in a fictional work; but without convincing backgrounds and intents between cause and effect. In the past (in 50s) some Ethiopian authors used to portray such kinds of coincidence in their stories. At times these writers invent a number of coincidence that have no relationship one with another and which practically lack the necessary motivation and harmony between cause and effect.

Of course, coincidence has a number of technical advantage. First, it may be useful to solve problems. For example, there is a coincidence in Sahaye's novel, Quwasa, whose main intent is to solve the problem of unemployment. In order to solve Mentasnot's (Websat's illegitimate wife) problem of unemployment, the omniscient narrator brings the character (Mentasnot) so as to introduce to a bachelor man and Fanaye's neighbour who, gets a job for Mentasnot in a certain organization.

The second technical advantage of coincidence is that it brings two antagonistic characters together to establish the conflict of the story. We may find such technical device at the outset of Sahaye's second novel, Anguz. At the very first page of the novel, we observe that Sanayet arrives at the Gandhi Hospital early in the morning where she meets Aragse, her former neighbour and friend. It is at this coincidence that the major conflict of the story starts and many events are presented retrospectively in accordance with the dispositions and lives of the characters who participate in the narrative. However, if the cause and effect of coincidence lacks harmony and purpose it will have technical disadvantages whose effects can be realized on the development of the plot of the narrative.

Question: What do you think is/are the roles of literary symbolism in prose fictions?

Zarihun: Symbol is to represent or express certain things or ideas or objects in terms of another thing or object. A writer may therefore take anything as a symbol.

Like coincidence symbol has also great literary and technical advantages in the world of creative literature. It is a device by which a writer can express his ideas, feelings, attitudes and outlook. A novelist or a short story writer may therefore employ symbols to hide the subtle/inner meanings and essences of the very subject matter of his literary work. Moreover, it appears to be very useful to demonstrate a number of ideas in a single word or phrase, or sentence. Symbol can be revealed in a story in different ways. Some writers may use words or phrases recurrently in their narratives so as to transmit or reflect certain ideas, images, and feelings. For example, in Dannachew's Adefris there are compound - words which are recurrently pronounced by the main character, Adfris. These are ignorance and knowledge, and life and death. The writer employs these two compound words as a symbol to display the prevailing social, political and educational conditions of the society.

On the other hand, a writer may use settings as a symbol. Through the portrayals of settings he/she could tell us about the lives and personalities of his/her character, and, moreover, the nature of incidents that will be realized at the end of a narrative. Symbolic setting has therefore technical advantages, for it shows us the overall atmosphere of the story and the lives of the characters in advance. In addition, it appears to be a useful

tool which helps a writer to escape from the hardships and troubles of censorships. In relation to this, it may be worth citing Armah's interesting novel, The Beautiful ones are not yet Born. It is written in the form of a symbolic novel. The narrator tells us that every road, buildings, offices and walls of the city has bad look and is full of litter. But through these heaps of bad looking figures and images, Armah seems to reflect the socio-economic and political corruptions of the prevailing system of the country.

Quesiton: What do you think are the general themes displayed in the prose works of Ethiopian women writers?

Zärihun: We must first know that any fictional text is a product of what the writer is and what he thinks.

No writer writes without reference of self and society in which he/she lives in. He/she writes what he/she knows and what he/she acquires from experience and life in general. The pre-revolution prose works of Ethiopian female authors have attempted to reflect the themes of love, marriage, and education. In addition to these themes they have given much emphasis to different social and cultural norms which regard woman as an inferior creature of the society. She is born to obey the words of her parents and husband. Moreover, she is considered as the only person who must shoulder the responsibilities of the whole matters of her children and the management of the household in general.

After the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution both the number of women writers and their literary outputs have declined dramatically.

In the last twenty years, only four women authors and six prose texts have appeared in the world of Ethiopian literary scene. Among these authors Sahaye has attempted to portray the whole political, social and economic messes and corruptions of the dictatorial derg regime in her second novel, Anguz.

Yazena, on the other hand, has tried to reflect the lives of younger generation, particularly of the elite. Of course, Yazena's short stories do not deal with the existing political and economic conditions of the country. Emewadese, on the other hand, has displayed the problems of women particularly of those who have plunged into the world of prostitution after an illegitimate pregnancy.

Question: What kinds of thematic differences and similarities have you noticed between the prose works of the pre-and-post revolution Ethiopian women authors?

Zärihun: Generally speaking, it is true that the themes of marriage and love have appeared in the prose writings of both the pre-and-post revolution female writers. These two main topics can therefore be considered as their common feature. Coming to their differences, the prose works of the pre-revolution writers have been devoted to portraying the prevailing social and gender related problems of the society. The prose writings of the post-revolution women authors, on the other hand, have gone beyond the routine affairs and issues of the society and have tried to entertain political ideas directly associated with the system that they live in.

Question: As far as the applications of literary techniques are concerned, what sorts of

differences and/or similarities have you observed between the fictional works of the pre-and-post revolution authors?

Zerihun:

Well, as far as the employment of literary devices is concerned, most of the prose works of the pre-revolution era are poorly written. Their characterization, for instance, are very weak and unimaginatively portrayed. Besides, most of the characters are passive and fail to demonstrate themselves in actions. The plots are not also well organized. Neither the episodes nor the events and incidents are harmoniously connected. Their stories are developed in meaningless coincidences that have nothing to do either with the characters or the plots or the themes of the stories.

Some writers of this period blend the styles and techniques of other literary genres with the styles and techniques of a prose narrative. Some of them therefore write their fictional works both in the form of dialogue and verse. The problem of lack of selection seems to be the outcome of the under development of the discipline, literature.

At the time literature was not as such a very widely known discipline. Accordingly, except a few group of elites, the majority of writers had not been acquainted with the idea of literature. But the prose works of modern Ethiopian women writers seem to be technically better than the then fictional texts. Indeed, such technical improvement is the result of the widespread of modern education and the establishment of literary schools, clubs and groups. Modern women writers are, therefore, exposed to the idea of literature. And that is

why Sahaye, Yazena and Elfenase have tried to employ an appropriate flashback technique in their respective fictional works.

However, on the other hand, the writers of the two eras have similar technical shortcomings. Thus, both writers entertain a number of stories under the umbrella of a single and short narrative. They employ unnecessary details which have no contribution to the development of the plots of their stories. The problem of lack of selection has also been clearly observed in the two novels of Sahaye Malaku.

The writer has made an attempt to narrate every episode, event, incident and character in detail, which in the final analysis, could affect the tightness of the plots of her stories.

Comparing with men authors we have only few women authors in Ethiopia. What do you think are the reasons for this?

Zerihun:

Yes, as you have said, our women authors are few in number in comparison with men writers. What is really surprising is that before the 1974 revolution there have been much more women writers in our country than we have at present, although the exposure of literature of this time appeared to be great and by far better than the then eras'. Nowadays there are a good number of literary - clubs and groups.

Generally speaking, the conditions now prevailing in our country seem to be more conducive to literary activities than the past. With all such exposures and facilities, however, we have only four women authors.

Of course, such a problem does not seem to be bound only to the world of the professions of literature and art, but the same is also true in other professions. We have only few women professionalists all over the world. There are cultural and physical dominations and other oppressive elements which may affect both the spiritual as well as material lives of women in general.

Unlike men, women are not free to go out from their confined houses. They are not allowed to experience the life of the outside world. Such heavy impositions naturally limit the scope of their knowledge and experiences of the social, political, cultural and economic lives of the society. On the other hand, most of Ethiopian women are mothers and house wives. They are therefore responsible to look after their children and manage the whole matters of the family and the household in general. Then, how does she become a writer since she has no free time even to write a single word or sentence? The task of creative writing obviously needs a free mind, sufficient time, and silence/a very quiet place. But, most of Ethiopian women lack these three important things which are very crucial to write.

Question: Comparing with the prose works of men authors how do you weigh the technical compositions of the fictional writings of women writers?

Zärihun: Well, as far as the employment of literary techniques is concerned, I don't see any significant difference between the works of men and women authors. True, both the pre-and-post revolution writers have encountered with the problem of the proper employment of literary techniques and the lack of literary knowledge.

Therefore, in the case of the techniques and styles of literary writings, the prose works of women authors can be considered as good or bad writings as the fictions of men writers are. Thus, Emewodese, for example, usually employs long sentences and an unimaginitive language.

Indeed, such technical shortcomings have also been observed in the short stories of Mulugeta Gudata and Neguse Ayala. The same is also true in the novels of Sahaye Malaku, Sisaye Negusu, Yasitela Kokab and Hayela Malakot Mawa'el. Ultimately, I would like to make one thing absolutely clear.

Hence, as far as the task of fictional writing goes keen observation, a quick perception, a fine sensibility, and an intuitive insight into life are the strong points of any novelists or short story writers. Women authors, infact, have made an attempt to use these natural gifts in their fictional stories.

Question: As to the task of writing what do you think are the main problems of Ethiopian women authors?

Z'arihun: Do you mean those problems which prevent them from the writing business?

Question: No. I'm sorry my question does not refer to that, but it just focuses on the technical defects of their prose works.

Z'arihun: I think we have already discussed this question in the foregoing discussion. With regard to the novels of Sahaye, I've already said both works lack precision and the necessary selection. In neither of her narratives, Sahaye has made an attempt to treat a single major story/idea/situation and construct a well-knitted plot.

Quesiton: As far as characterization is concerned, one may come across the same portrayals of characters in each and individual work of Sahaye, Yazena and Emewadese. How do you feel this duplication/problem?

Zérihun: It is a good question. You know, such kind of problem has not only been revealed through their methods of characterization. The settings of their prose works have also suffered from similar technical shortcomings. But, this is, infact, the outcome of lack of experience. As has been noted in the previous discussion, most women have limited knowledge about the outside world. Therefore, women writers cannot delineate characters whom they do not know. The same is also true for the settings that they happened to portray.

Question: What solution/s do you suggest to overcome these shortcomings?

Zérhun: Well, we may propose a number of solutions in order to acquaint women writers with the characteristics of different types of literary techniques. So, the practice of literary criticism can be considered as one solution to overcome the problems mentioned above. In this case, critics and literary scholars have great roles to play and are, of course, responsible to carry out such task. They must give much emphasis to the works of women authors and analyze the technical aspect of the work critically so as to give lessons for the present as well as future writers about the former's shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths. On the other hand, there need to be frequent seminars and workshops which will absolutely be devoted to discuss the literary products of women authors. Such activities may help to increase

Quesiton: As far as characterization is concerned, one may come across the same portrayals of characters in each and individual work of Sahaye, Yazena and Emewadese. How do you feel this duplication/problem?

Zárhun: It is a good question. You know, such kind of problem has not only been revealed through their methods of characterization. The settings of their prose works have also suffered from similar technical shortcomings. But, this is, infact, the outcome of lack of experience. As has been noted in the previous discussion, most women have limited knowledge about the outside world. Therefore, women writers cannot delineate characters whom they do not know. The same is also true for the settings that they happened to portray.

Question: What solution/s do you suggest to overcome these shortcomings?

Zárhun: Well, we may propose a number of solutions in order to acquaint women writers with the characteristics of different types of literary techniques. So, the practice of literary criticism can be considered as one solution to overcome the problems mentioned above. In this case, critics and literary scholars have great roles to play and are, of course, responsible to carry out such task. They must give much emphasis to the works of women authors and analyze the technical aspect of the work critically so as to give lessons for the present as well as future writers about the former's shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths. On the other hand, there need to be frequent seminars and workshops which will absolutely be devoted to discuss the literary products of women authors. Such activities may help to increase

the number of both amateur and professional writers. The establishment of literary training centers can also be another important/practical solution to motivate women writers and enhance their knowledge of literature, particularly, of literary techniques.

Moreover, there need to be incessant literary completions among women society in which the best works can be awarded and get the chance to be published. Indeed, such crucial activities may have significant roles to cultivate the morales, psychological and material interests of female authors.

The establishment of readers's association is also one solution. A writer must first read different kinds of works of literature in order to have broad experiences and to acquaint himself/herself with the technical facets of literature. Such kind of association may also help Ethiopian writers to improve their technical problems and enhance their knowledge of literary devices.

Question: In relation to this may I ask, whom do you think is responsible to carry out such task?

Zārihun:

I think, the transitional government of Ethiopia has given considerable attention to women issues. It has launched great campaign to assess and solve the social, educational and personal problems of women society.

Office of women's affairs responsible to the Prime Minister's office has also been opened. Accordingly, the office of Women Affairs has great responsibility to carry out those tasks

which I've just mentioned. Besides, the Ministry of Culture & Sports Affairs can play important roles in organizing women writers and encouraging their literary activities.

Quesiton: With regard to this, Don't you think that the Department of Ethiopian Languages and Literature can have a great role to play?

Zarihun: The Department of Ethiopian Languages & Literature is a teaching center. Its main objective is, therefore, nothing but to train pupil in literature and languages teaching. However, it may participate in literary seminars, workshops, and symposiums which deal with women affairs, and can present research papers on the literary works of women authors. Furthermore, whenever, there is a demand we, the teachers of the department may help those female students who have the talent and interest in this particular field of art or creative writing.

Let me tell you my own experience, I teach different literary courses.

While teaching these courses, I always encourage female students to prepare research papers which dedicate to analyse either the prose fictions of women writers or examine those women characters which are portrayed in the works of men writers.

To sum up, what our department can do is really that whenever there are calls for literary seminars, workshops and/or discussions, it will attempt to participate and present research works on the literary writings of Ethiopian women authors.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH ABÄRA LÄMA

Question: What do you think are the roles of literary techniques in composing fictional text?

Abära: Literary techniques are very essential in create works such as novel, short story, and drama. Without a technical know-how I doubt whether a writer could say 'I have produced a creative work'. Thus, in order to compose any type of fictional literatures the importance of literary techniques are unquestionable.

Question: According to your knowledge of literature which literary element is the best tool in the making of a fictional writing? Why?

- a) Character
- b) plot
- c) setting
- d) conflict
- e) Narrative techniques

Abära: At least three or four of them must be taken into account in my case. Without a character and a plot there is no conflict or theme or setting and finally a story that can be termed as a novel or a short story.

Question: What do think is/are the role/s of language in the world of fictional literature?

Abära: In my understanding, a good knowledge of language appears to be compulsory so as to produce a wonderful and very striking discourse. Language is therefore an important tool by which a novelist or a short story writer may transmit his/her ideas and philosophies as beautifully and successfully as possible. A writer without a good knowledge of a given language is therefore like a man who tries to teach a physician how to operate an appendix, while he is yet an illiterate.

- Question: What do you think is/are the role/s of literary symbolism in a prose fiction?
- Abära: If one can use them appropriately, literary symbolisms are the species of fictional writings.
- Question: What do you think are the general themes displayed in the pores works of Ethiopian women writers?
- Abära: Most of our women writers have reflected the themes of social problems, such as family problem, poverty, crimes, and prostitution. In addition to these recurrent themes, such topics like marriage, love jealousy and education have also been entertained. On the other hand, SABärahaye Malaku has tried to demonstrate the themes of politics and corruption in her second novel called Anguz.
- Question: As far as the applications of literary techniques are concerned, what sorts of differences and/or similarities have you observed between the fictional works of the pre-and-post revolution women writers?
- Abära: Most of the pre-revolution women writers did not seem to be very much concerned with the technical aspects of their fictional writings. Instead, almost all of them have been so curious about the thematic values of their works. The post revolutionary writers have in fact evidently shown great improvement in the applications of the technical devices of creative literatures.
- Question: Comparing with men authors we have only few women writers in Ethiopia. what do you think are the reasons for this?
- Abära: I think it is a matter of chance. But, there is one fact which we can't deny. The deep-rooted

cultural rules and values that govern both the social and spiritual life of our traditional society do not allow women to become artist or writer. Of course, such antique truth functions at present, too.

Question: Comparing with the prose fictions of men authors how do you weigh the literary knowledge of Ethiopian women writers? Could you comment on this matter by giving examples?

Abära: As I have investigated some of their narrative, our women writers seemed to have little knowledge of literature. For example, you may simply examine the short stories of Yäzena Wärqu vis-a-vis her husband's.

Question: As to the task of writing, what do you think are the main problems of Ethiopian women authors?

Abära: 1. I think they are not exposed to the life of the outside world. Accordingly, they do not have very broad experiences. For example, the lack of the knowledge of the lives of farmers, factory workers, and the images and feelings of different war fronts...ect.

2. Besides, there is no panel discussion which deals with the prose works of women writers. Indeed, such practices could have been very important, because they enable the writers to share experiences and improve their knowledge of literature.

3. Lack of academic knowledge on literature and creative arts can also be considered as one problem.

Question: What solution/s do you suggest to overcome these shortcomings?

Abära: In order to solve these problems there need to be

taken appropriate measures against all major problems which I have just mentioned above.

Question: What do you think is/are the importance of chapters in a fictional work?

Abära: At least it gives the writer a chance to use various narrative techniques, characters, plots, conflicts etc. So, if a fiction is not divided into several chapters it will be boring and too monotonous to read.

Question: As far as the two novels of Sahaye are concerned, do you think that the whole thirteen chapters of Anguz, and all nine chapters of Quwasa are so useful? Why?

Abära: I do not think that all the chapters are useful. Because some of them are simply repetitions. And still certain chapters are not necessary at all. They do not have any significant relations and interconnection with the main plot of the story.

Question: What do you think is/are the importance of the incidents that devote to demonstrate the lives of such character like; Wärgenah. (the street-boy in Anguz), Masfen (the soldier), Measfin's mother ka a Gamoraw, and the chauffeur who works at the Sakiso Gold mining center? (N.B. All Characters are found in Sahaye's Anguz)

Abära: I think they are portrayed so as to increase the number of the characters of the novel. Of course such a technique appears to be one of the characteristics of a work of novel. But, what we must not forget is that each character must have significant role to play in the development of the story. Otherwise, it may create superfluity although it appears to be very true, in a work of novel, to entertain several character and very broad experiences.

Question: Could you comment on the portrayals of Qedest, a woman artist in the same novel, Anguz?

Abära: Qedest is simply the other image of the writer herself.

Qedest is not a well portrayed character who may demonstrate the whole intricacies of the whole world of artists', particularly, that of a writer's life. Although she assumes herself as a would be writer the reader may not consider Qedest as a writer as she lacks the very qualities and talent which every writer obviously possesses in nature. A writer must, of course, have to be very creative and talented person. Accordingly, to become a writer Qedest has to have first a creative faculty. Without having an imaginative mind, one cannot become an artist or a writer.

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: ASSEFA WORKU

Signature:  _____

Place: Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa

Date of Submission: May, 24, 1995