

MAJOR SYMBOLS IN SELECTED

AMHARIC NOVELS

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GIRMA MENGISTIE

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APPROVED BY EXAMINING BOARD:

Advisor

Signature

Examiner

Signature

Examiner

Signature

Declaration

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

Name: ***Girma Mengistie***

Signature: _____

Place: Institute of Language Studies, Addis Ababa University

Date of Submission: June 5, 2002

Advisor's Name: ***Zerihun Asfaw***

Signature: _____

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
Abstract.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 OBJECTIVES.....	2
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	2
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	3
1.4 METHODOLOGY	3
1.5 THE SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH.....	4
1.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	5
CHAPTER TWO	6
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	6
2.1 SYMBOL	6
2.2 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS WORKS.....	11
CHAPTER THREE.....	20
3. ANALYSIS OF MAJOR SYMBOLS IN THE NOVELS UNDER STUDY	20
3.1 ANIMAL SYMBOLS.....	21
3.1.1 THE FOX	22
3.1.2 THE HORSE.....	23
3.1.3 THE DOVES	24
3.1.4 A QUEEN BEE.....	26
3.1.5 A CAT	27
3.1.6 AN OWL'S HOOTING	27
3.1.7 A LION,AN EAGLE AND A WALIYA IBEX	29
3.1.8 SINGING BIRDS.....	30
3.1.9 THE DOG AND BABOONS	30
3.2 NATURE SYMBOLS	31
3.2.1 WATER SYMBOL.....	31
3.2.2 THE DARKNESS	34
3.2.3 A FIRE.....	35
3.2.4 A LIGHT	35
3.2.5 THE SUNRISE AND THE SUNSET.....	36
3.2.6 THE MOON AND THE STARS.....	40
3.2.7 THE VOLCANO	41
3.2.8 THE SYCAMORE TREE (WARKA).....	42

3.2.9 THE WIND.....	44
3.3 THE BELL AND THE DRUM.....	45
3.4 THE HOUSE AND THE BUILDINGS.....	47
3.5 THE NUDITY.....	48
CHAPTER FOUR.....	50
4. COMPARISON OF LITERARY SYMBOLS IN THE NOVELS UNDER STUDY	50
4.1 THE SPHERES FROM WHERE THE SYMBOLS ARE DRAWN	50
4.2 TYPES OF SYMBOLS.....	56
4.3 PURPOSES OF SYMBOLS	59
CONCLUSION.....	68
REFERENCES.....	72
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	74

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze symbols frequently employed in ten Amharic novels of six pre and post revolution of 1974 writers. The study attempts to investigate the similarities and differences that exist between the writers in their use of symbols.

A detailed discussion of the term symbol is presented in order to have a theoretical framework that would provide insight into the meaning of symbol. Symbols identified in the novels are collected, categorized and analyzed in the context of the novels. The main finding of the research is that the writers mostly use universal and public symbols. These symbols are employed to develop the theme of the novels, to portray the mental state of the characters, in a way that they strengthen the theme of the novels. The writers usually use to foreshadow events that will happen in the lives of the main characters. The writers of the pre-revolution period expose the suppressions and evils of the feudal system as well as its corruption. They criticize and satirize some aspects of the traditions of the feudal lords, while in the novels set in post revolution period the writers glorify the revolution and belittle the feudal system.

Finally it is recommended that further in-depth research, on the subject should be conducted. Besides, the works of writers that are not included in this study and other new writers should be studied deeply to know the archetypal symbols of Ethiopian writers and the trends that are seen in the use of symbols.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

Writers could directly employ the symbols they encounter in various narratives of the society or add their creativity to the already existing symbols. They can also create their own symbols and use them to convey their ideas and thoughts artistically. The symbolic devices used in the creative works serve various purposes. This basically depends on the skill the writers have and their knowledge of society.

According to Shipley (1970:375) literary symbols that writers employ contribute to the development of the story. His observation runs: "*The symbol may serve to interpret a theme, to make it acceptable, as escape, to awaken dormant or suppressed experience; as adornment or exhibition.*" Besides, *The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* (1993:1252) elaborates what Olson says about the function of symbols in literary works. It says: ". . . he regards... *Symbolism as a device which is sometimes used in the service of [literary] work's artistic effect, - to aid in the expression of remote ideas, to vivify what otherwise would be faint, to aid in framing the reader's emotional relations and the like.*"

The elaboration indicates that the writers make effort to transmit their ideas and thoughts to the reader in a convincing way by exploiting the symbols that add beauty to the stories in their creative works. This is to say that writers use the symbols to transmit their views, and what they feel about particular experiences they come across in the society in an interesting way, so that the works would produce the desired effect on the readers. The role of symbols mentioned above could be taken as an indication of the immensity of the functions of literary symbols. It appears,

however, that symbols may have also other functions that could be determined based on the context of stories in creative works.

The interest of this study, therefore, lies in trying to find out the type and significance of literary symbols in Amharic novels in helping readers to fully grasp the meanings of the novels.

The study comprises four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction of the study. It includes the objective of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the methodology, the scope and significance of the research. The second chapter presents the theoretical background and the review of previous works.

In the third chapter, the major literary symbols are examined. The fourth chapter is devoted to the comparison of the symbols that recur in the novels. The last chapter is the conclusion of the study.

1.1 Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to identify and analyse symbols in selected Amharic novels. It attempts to bring out the literary significance of the symbols, the similarities and differences among the symbols.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A number of studies on symbols in Amharic novels have been conducted. However, they have been found to be more or less cursory. Therefore, the present study endeavours to deal with the subject in-depth. Besides, some of the studies have given emphasis to some aspects of symbols such as dream symbolism and symbolic

characters that appear in novels. Others have attempted to analyse the symbols of a few novels. This research is wider in scope than the previous studies because it deals with similarities and differences that could be observed among various types of symbols.

1.3 Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions. What types of symbols do the novelists use? What are the literary significance of the symbols? Are there similarities and differences among the writers in the ways in which they manipulate the symbols in order to suggest meaning?

1.4 Methodology

The research is designed in such a way that it passes through three stages. The first stage is a detailed discussion of the term symbol based on the definition of writers such as X. J. Kennedy, Wellek and Warren, Schneider, Shipley, Altenbernd and Lewis, Pickerin and Hoeper, and Tindal and Brumm. A discussion of the term is necessary in order to have a frame of reference for identifying and analysing the possible symbols that are used in the works of the novelists.

In the second stage, the symbols that are found in the selected novels are identified and collected. Then, the collected symbols are categorised based on their types.

Thirdly, since treating all the symbols is difficult to manage in this study, only some symbols that can best represent each category are selected and analysed.

1.5 The Scope of the Research

It is practically impossible to deal with all Amharic novels in such a single study. Therefore, the study limits itself to the widely known works of writers who have published at least two novels. It concentrates on the major symbols and gives more emphasis to the novels that have not been examined before and the symbols that are not dealt with by other critics. The following novels have been selected for the purpose of the study.

<u>Authors</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
1. Had:is Alämay:ähu	õkZ š`œMirZ Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr	1958 (E.C)
2. " "	!□ËE'!" Ç' Wänjälän:aw Dañ:a	1974 "
3. " "	¾GO } Yälmžat	1980 "
4. Bä'alu Gðrma	¾<E#□ Å!G Yähl:ina Däwäl	1966
5. " "	¾fÅ Ýœr ØW Yä k`äykokäb T`iri	1972 "
6. Bðrhanu Zärihun	¾{ □Ñ"} O`Ö#Z Yätangut Mðst`ir	1979 "
7. Andarge Mäsfðn	ÇZ š`œÇZ Dar ðskä Dar	1979 "
8. " "	ØgZ ÅO T`ðk`ur Däm	1980 "
9. Yäšðt`ðla Kokäb	!ÑÓ{ Wägägta	1982 "
10. Haylämäläkot Mäwa'ðl	Ñ" □Ñ"□ Gungun	1982 "

The following reasons have been considered for the selection of the novels.

- The study mainly deals with Amharic novels published in the years between 1958 to 1982 E.C. As many critics, (Kane1975: 14-5) and "rE&□" (Blen 1982 E.C: 19) have stated the development of the Amharic novel has achieved a remarkable leap with the publication of Had:is Alämay:ähu's Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr_in 1958, Dañ:ačew Wäрку's ~ÄöZ` (Adäfrðs) in 1962, Bä'alu Gðrma's œ`ÉN` qcÑZ (Kä

Admas Baš:agär) in 1962. These novels, unlike the former ones, are rich in techniques and depiction of the real life of the society.

- The novels are selected among the works of the modern writers who published their works before the 1974 revolution and continued to write in the post revolution period, and novelists who came to the scene of Ethiopian literature in the post revolution period. It is assumed that there could be some kind of likeness among the writers of the same period; because they share the same social, political and economic schema. Therefore, this study attempts to find out the similarities in the technique they use to present the subject- matter in the novels and extent of their differences.
- The comparison helps the critic to have information about the past and present novelists and their use of symbolic devices.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

It is believed that the study will reveal the complex symbols and will enable the readers to understand the novels and the society depicted in them. It is hoped that it will contribute to the overall understanding of the art of the novelist.

Chapter Two

2. Review of Related Literature

In this chapter an attempt will be made to review the related literature. First, the chapter will give a theoretical framework to provide insight into the meaning of symbols. Some reservations and concern of critics on how to understand, recognise and interpret symbolic elements that are embodied in literary works will be highlighted. Secondly, a review of previous studies done on the literary works of various writers will be presented.

2.1 Symbol

The term symbol contains broad and complex concepts. It is broad as The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics (1993:1250) states, "Since almost anything can be seen as standing for something else, and has engendered, a broad range of applications and interpretations." It is complex because symbols are associated with meanings or they bind various things together. In some symbols it is their property that gives meaning; while in others it is the activity, function, formal resemblance that hint at the meaning of the symbols. On top of this, writers could add another message on the already existing symbolic meanings of objects.

Therefore, to examine the literary qualities in the novels selected for this study, it is important to acquaint oneself with the concept of symbol. "What is a symbol?" According to Harry Shaw (1972:367) a symbol is "something used for, or regarded as representing something else." Mauric Beebe (1960:v) explains: "In a broad sense,

symbolism refers to the meaning of things.” Thus, creative writers can use various animate and inanimate objects that might signify other things besides their literal meaning. The writers attach additional meanings to the symbolic elements they use in their works and the meaning the symbols bear in a creative work is determined by the context of the particular work. The writer can enrich the symbolic elements with meanings in relation to the ideas the work is expected to convey to readers.

In this connection, the following words of X. J. Kennedy (1983:145) can strengthen the idea.

Symbol: in literature [is] a thing that suggests more than its literal meaning. Symbols generally do not "stand for" any one meaning nor for anything absolutely definite, they point, they hint or, as Henry James put it, they cast long shadows.... This indefinite multiplicity of meaning is characteristic of symbolic stray...

The above quotation indicates that the symbolic elements do not have distinct meanings. They can have multiple suggestive meanings besides the meaning stated by the critics based on the context of the works. This is not to say, however, that various critics or readers might understand the meaning of the symbols differently. According to the extract, the versatility of the meaning of the symbol is the distinction of the symbol unlike other devices of the literary work. The interpretation of a cross by Haward (1996:47) could clearly show the versatility of the symbolic element. According to him the cross "signifies hope in a life hereafter, relief from suffering in this life, or the desirability of moral behaviour." Besides, it seems to convey the defeat of the satanic forces and freedom of human from the bondage of sins and Satan. A symbol can receive the meaning it contains from the experience the critics have from the literary tradition and the symbolic employment of the society in its culture. In

other words, a literary work does not stand in isolation from other factors and the society it depicts in the story.

Literary theorists have given some ideas, which help the readers to identify symbols in literary works. Most of the theorists agree that there are three kinds of symbols. Accordingly, some of the symbols have universal meanings. Even though the readers live in various cultures, some symbols could be understood by everybody and the meanings they bear also seem common to the readers. The second types are conventional symbols, which are created by one particular society depending on the culture of that society. Since the conventional symbols have existed for a long time within the society, they could be familiar to the members of that society when they appear in literary works. The third type is known as private a symbol. Since private symbols are the inventions of the writers they might not be familiar to the reader. Besides, they could be more complex and bear “hidden” meanings than the universal and the conventional symbols. According to Meyer (1997: 168) the word hidden refers to the way the writers put the symbols in the story. He says: "Symbolic meanings are usually embedded in the texture of a story...they are carefully placed...what is needed is a careful consideration of the elements of story..." Therefore, there must be some clues that help the reader to identify private and other types of symbols.

Some theorists indicate that the repeated references to something in the creative work could make the reader feel that there is something important in the functions of the things we come across in the works. According to Kennedy (1983: 147) "... The storyteller often gives the symbol a particular emphasis. It may be mentioned

repeatedly throughout the story, it may even supply story with a title . . . At times a crucial symbol will open a story or end it." Therefore, the relevance of the recurring object in a text has to be taken into consideration. In other words, it could be taken as an indication of the idea the writers want to magnify through the object they incorporate in their works of art.

Wellek and Warren (1956:189) forwarded more or less a similar idea. They explain that if images appear persistently in the work they might have a symbolic significance. However, one thing that should be taken into account is that all things that are repeatedly referred to might not have symbolic meaning. They may show the setting of the story or the contemporary situation of the works.

It seems, therefore, that critics have to pay due attention to everything that the writers use in their works. The writers have a purpose to achieve when they use a literary device. It is the critic's concern to find out that purpose, and give evidences from the work to support his interpretation.

In this connection, Altenbernd and Lewis (1975:36) write the following:

[First] The work under examination will ordinarily tell us what we need to know.... Second, if any object is given great prominence, as by repetition at a crucial point, we should suspect that it carries symbolic meaning.... Good writers write less casually than they may seem to do; everything in a work is directed to some end... [Third] The final test of an interpretation of a piece of symbolism is that it legitimately illuminates the work. By legitimately we mean that the interpretation is founded solidly on evidence in the work and is not a ramshackle remodelling of original structure, hanging over the void without a foundation.

It appears that the validation of the interpretation of symbols is based on the textual meaning of the work. This means that the source of the meaning of the symbol is the creative work itself. The critic should not 'impose' his feeling and knowledge when he

forwards the interpretation. Pickerin and Hoepfer (1997:83) strengthen this idea saying:

We are always limited in our interpretation of symbol by the total context of the work in which the author has established and arranged it with other elements; and we are not free to impose from the outside our own personal and idiosyncratic meanings simply because they appeal to us.

The quotation reveals that the authority has to be given to the context of the text.

The critics should not go unwisely beyond the context of the text and over stretch the interpretation of the symbols.

As The New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics (1993:1252) points out, "It is helpful to begin by identifying its imagery and analysing the source of that imagery in experience, whether from natural world, the human body, human made artefacts and so on." This refers to the area from which writers draw the symbols they use and in what way the identification of the source helps to interpret the literary symbol. But it may help to think about the symbols and try to associate them with other aspects of the literary element to understand the underlying meaning and the functions they perform in the work.

As it has already been mentioned, writers choose various elements that serve them as literary symbols. These writers take the symbolic elements from their surroundings, to which they want to attach the meaning they want to transmit. Therefore, it may be difficult to mention all the symbolic elements used by writers. However, there are some elements that are repeatedly observed in fictional works. Kennedy (1983:145) says: "*Often the symbol we meet in fiction are inanimate*

objects, but other things also may function symbolically... Even a locale or a feature of physical topography can provide rich suggestions." Other critics add to the lists. For instance, J.H. Pickerin and J.D. Hooper (1997:84) present others in their writing. *"In literature, however, symbols, - in the form of words, images, objects, settings, events and characters are often used deliberately to suggest and enlarge or clarify the meaning of the work."*

From the previous discussion, we can say that the various symbols cited above have something in common. They are there to perform some kind of functions. They bring the writers and the readers together. The writer expresses his idea and thought through them, and they suggest to readers the depth of the work.

When analysing the literary works, the critics have to consider at least two points that J.E. Cirlot (1962:xxxv) had raised. According to him, *"(a) nothing is meaningless or neutral: everything is significant; (b) nothing is independent, everything is in some way related to something else."* It is this interwoven atmosphere of the whole body of the literary work that gives significance to symbolic elements and serves as a hint to the meaning they have in that particular work of art.

2.2 Review of Previous Works

Alämay:ähu Abäbä (1979 E.C), in his unpublished paper entitled "xO^E&} p~NZ' GsEÊ† !''Ø" (Symbols in Amharic Novels), observes that symbols are presented in two ways in the novels he has selected for analysis. He points out that some writers narrate the whole story symbolically, while others employ some kind of phenomenon that has symbolic significance.

illiteracy represents the poverty stricken people of Ethiopia. The mother stands for Ethiopia. Alāmāy:āhu comments that this symbolic use adds artistic 'value' to the novel, but he fails to show the mechanism through which this is done.

In *Ma'ǧbāl Yā Abǧyot Magǧst* a part of the body of the main character is used as a symbol. As Alāmāy:āhu puts it, Kasahun's sexual organ was injured, and he became impotent when he was under investigation in prison. Hence, Kasahun loses hope of getting a child. The study tells us that the damaged sexual organ begins to function by the time Kasahun decided to accept the military campaign's call of his country. This regaining of the hope of getting a child symbolically shows the beginning of the new life of the Ethiopian people, and the responsibility entrusted to the younger generation to protect their country.

In *Bā'alu Gǧrma's Had:is* sycamore (warka) serves as a symbol. The sycamore that stands on the place where Had:is intends to build a school symbolizes the belief of the people of 'Sup:e'. Alāmāy:āhu says that the tree shows how the people were gripped by backward beliefs in the feudal system. Later in the story, the main character cuts down this tree. This act of removing the tree and laying the foundation of the school symbolizes the abolishing of the backward traditional beliefs of the society .

In *Sǧd:ātāñ:aw Dāmāl:aš* meets the Abay River and compares it with his life and the hard time he passed through in the Sudan as an immigrant. Thereafter, Dāmāl:aš

begins to contemplate on the Abay River. He is keen to know when the river shall return its face to its mother country and contribute its part to the economic development of Ethiopia. Alämay:ähu says that Gäbäy:ähu by using the river as a symbol shows the miserable life immigrants lead in the Sudan. Alämay:ähu further says that the return of the main character to his country signifies that Abay River may one day do the same and be used for the overall development of the country.

However, this interpretation seems to lack explanation. Alämay:ähu does not show how the coming back of Dämäl:aš to his homeland stands for the concept of future use of the river for the growth of Ethiopia. Though Alämay:ähu discusses the employment of Abay River as a symbol which contributes to the development of the narrative technique, he does not explain in what way this is achieved.

Alämay:ähu, says that the four novelists mentioned above did not properly apply the symbolic device in their fictional works. But he does not substantiate his argument with evidence, and does not show the weaknesses of the writers in applying the symbolic elements.

From the above review, one can see that the present study is similar to Alämay:ähu Abäbä's study in that it also analyses symbolic elements that occur in Amharic novels. But it differs from Alämay:ähu's research in that none of the novels selected by Alämay:äh are included in the present study.

The other study made on the use of symbols is Gete Gälaye's (1980 E.C) B.A thesis entitled ፕሮግራም ላይ ላሉ ስምዎች ላይ ስርዓት (Allegory and Symbols in Amharic Prose Fiction). Gete analyses the allegorical representations and the use of symbols in selected novels. It is the second part of the study conducted on five Amharic novels that has relevance to the present research. The novels Gete has selected are: Gǝrmač:äw Täklä Hawaryat's ረገድ (Araaya); Ab:e Gubäñ:a's ለገደልገደል; Had:is ለሌይገደልገደልገደል ለገደልገደል ለገደልገደልገደል; Dañ:ačäw Wärk`u's ለገደልገደልገደልገደል; and Bä'alu Gǝrma's ለገደልገደልገደልገደል (Därasiw).

Gete has identified a symbolic child in Araaya. He indicates that at the end of the story Araaya, the main character, raises many questions that continually obsess him. Araaya worries about the economic, social and political situation of Ethiopia, and contemplates about his fate and the future of the Ethiopian people. When he sees his son that sits on his side, the anxiety leaves him and he smiles as if he came back from a sort of a trance. He places his hope on the shoulders of the new generation for the civilization of Ethiopia. Gete shows that the author uses the child to indicate that the bright future of his country will be in the hands of the younger generation.

Gete claims that Ab:e Gubäñ:a also uses a child and a mother symbol in ለገደልገደልገደልገደል. The child character raises various questions about the Ethiopian people, and discusses his future life. The mother character stands for Ethiopia. In this connection Gete holds a view similar to that of ለገደልገደልገደልገደል ለገደልገደልገደልገደል. Gete says

that the writer notes that the symbols indicate the miserable life of the people of Ethiopia.

The other symbol Gete identifies is flower in Had:is Alämay:ähu's *Fə̀k`ər əskä Mäk`abər*. Had:is symbolically compares Säblä Wängel's teenage with the flowers and men with butterflies and bees that come to the flowers to collect nectar. The act of the insects represents the men who want to win her love and possess her. Säblä Wängel feels that the butterflies and the bees leave the flower as the petals begin to fade. In a similar way, the men also one day leave her as her marriageable age passes. Therefore, the fading flowers stand for Säblä Wängel and the insects stand for the men who wanted to marry her. Gete explains that Had:is uses these symbols to heighten his theme.

According to Gete, in Dañ:ač:äw Worku's novel entitled *Adäfrəs*, a donkey is used as a symbol for the weakness of the main character, *Adäfrəs*. *Adäfrəs* has no firm stand about his goals. He endeavours to change the attitudes of the peasants towards good governance without understanding their psychological makeup and deeply rooted culture. Gete points out that *Adäfrəs* wants to win Roman's love. On the other hand, it was decided that her wedding day will take place in the near future. At this time *Adäfrəs* sees Roman when she goes to the river to fetch water; he hides in a small bush, and calls Roman. But Roman instead looks at the donkey. Therefore, Gete says, the donkey hints at the shallow thinking of *Adäfrəs*.

Gete concludes that some writers use proper symbols to magnify their themes. But he does not support this idea with evidence.

As it has already been mentioned, the novels selected by Gete are not included in the present study except *Fəḵḵər əskä Mäk`abər*. The present study is different from Gete's work in its scope. Gete's study focuses only on a limited number of symbolic elements of the post revolution writers. This study includes the novels of both the pre- and post revolution of 1974 writers in attempt to compare and contrast their application of symbols. Besides, the types of symbolic elements are identified in this study. It also attempts to show the symbols that repeatedly appear in the Amharic novels. In addition, this study tries to analyse the symbols using the model developed by Short and Peer (1989) where the model appears to apply.

Mäkon:əḥ Tola (1980 E.C) in his B.A thesis "ግጥም ለግጥም ለግጥም ለግጥም ለግጥም" (The Technical Application of Dreams in Amharic Novels) has examined dream symbolism in selected Amharic Novels. He has selected the following novels: *Araaya*, *Fəḵḵər əskä Mäk`abər*, *Wänjäläñ:aw Dañ:a* and *Yälmžat*; *Bərhanu Zärihun's* ገላጠጥም ለግጥም (*Yä Tewodros əḥba*), *Ma'əbäl Yä Abəyot Magəst*, and *Yätangut Məst`ir*; *Bä`alu Gərma's Kä Admas Bašagär*, and *Yähl:ina Däwäl* ; *Sisay Nəgusu's* ገላጠጥም (*Sämämän*); and *Yäšəṭ'əla Kokäkəb's* ገላጠጥም (*Dosäñ:aw*); and *Andarge Mäsfəḥn's* *Dar əskä Dar*.

His analysis shows that the writers use dream symbolism to foreshadow the fate of the characters and to show the past life of the characters through the technique of

flashback. According to Mäkon:ðn, the other literary significance of the dream symbols is to serve for the development of a plot as in Yä Tewodros ðnba.

Mäkon:ðn's analysis limits itself to the objects that have symbolic meanings in the dream, and does not include other symbolic elements that recur in the novels. It fails to show the types of symbols the writers use. The comparison and contrast of the symbols has not come out clearly in the study. Mäkon:ðn's study is related to the present research in that it analyses the symbols that are seen in the dreams.

Tay:e Asäf:a (1988) in his study "Dreams in Amharic Prose Fiction" surveys dreams that appear in selected texts of prose fiction. He begins his analysis from Gð'ðz literature so as to see the influences it has on Amharic prose fiction. His focus is on the function of dreams in both literatures, and the types of symbols the writers use. He also deals with the similarities and differences among dream symbols.

From Gð'ðz literature, Tay:e selected ገጽ ገጽ (Kðbrä Nägäst), ገጽ ገጽ (Gädlä Täklä Haymanot), and ገጽ ገጽ (Tä'amrä Marðyam).

In the analysis of the dreams he found in Gð'ðz literature, some of the dreams have prescriptive functions where the dreamer receives instruction 'from the divine agents. The other types of dreams are prophetic which predict future events; and in such kind of dreams there are also expository ones that contain explanatory information.

Tay:e has examined the following works in Amharic prose fiction; ገጽ ገጽ (T`aytu Bät'ul); ገጽ ገጽ (Agðazi) ገጽ ገጽ (Gält`än Bðn:ayäw); ገጽ ገጽ (Polisn:a Dañ:a Bäbalagär; ገጽ ገጽ (Anðd Län:atu); ገጽ ገጽ (Hulät Yä ðnba

Däbdab:ewoč); Ma`ðbäl Yä Abðyot Magðst, Yä Tewodros ðnba; Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr; Kadmas Bašagär, Yähl:ina Däwäl; Wänjälän:w Dañ:a, Yälmžat, T`ðk`ur Däm, Sämämän, Dosäñ:aw; Dar ðskä Dar, Sbðhat Gäbrä ðgziabher's ~ÖóW š□Áci" (Agafari ðndäšaw).

Tay:e's analysis shows that prophetic dreams are used as predictive device, which indicates the future events in the story. Tay:e reveals that there are also prescriptive types of dreams. On the other hand, there are non-prophetic dreams that are used to portray the mental state of the characters. He points out that none of the prophetic dreams occurs at the moment of emotional crisis in the characters. He also tried to look at the function of dreams in terms of the role they have in plot scheme and their contribution to the development of theme.

As has been mentioned in the review of Mäkon:ðn's paper, Tay:e's study also analyses the dreams the writers employ in the literary works. Therefore, his study differs from the present research in that it is based on the analysis of dreams.

The last research, so far, found related to the study of symbols is Täklä Arägay Täsäma's (1992) BA thesis. His study deals with symbolic characters found in Bäalu Gðrma's ᵹINÄ (Oromay). According to this paper, character such as Fiyamet:a Gilay possess a noble quality that stands for genuine love. Fiyamet:a sacrifices herself to save S`äg:aye Haylä Marðyam when she is made to choose between life and death. Besides, Fiyamet:a stands for Eritreans who have love for Ethiopia. In a similar way, Colonel Tariku Wälday symbolizes loyalty. He firmly

believes in the unity of Eritrea and Ethiopia and fights to remove the obstacles that stand against unity . He also represents Eritreans who are loyal to the unity of Ethiopia. The other character used as a symbol of vice is Sə'əlay Baraki. The paper states that Sə'əlay who has a long history of killing and torturing people is represented as the agent of darkness and death.

The last character that symbolizes licentiousness and indulgence is Mäs`əhafä Danəel who represents the elite. The elites are theorists and not men of action. Takla Arägay's study, therefore, focuses only on one aspect of symbols, and does not relate the symbols that occur in other novels of the same author and other writers.

Chapter Three

3. Analysis of Major Symbols in the Novels Under Study

The concern of this chapter is to identify and analyse the symbols in the works of the selected writers. The symbols that are employed in the novels selected for this study include: animals, nature, bell, drum, house and buildings and nudity.

3.1 Animal Symbols

Writers use animals as symbols to make their artistic works more vivid and to give depth and strength to the ideas they want to convey. However, the meaning they attach to the animals varies from writer to writer. The same animal might have different or similar meanings when used by different writers. This could be attributed to the acquaintance and attachments that exist between the animals, writers and the society. In addition, the attitude the society has for that particular animal contributes to the variation in meaning. Regarding the use of symbolic animals, Cirlot (1962:10) says:

Of the utmost importance in symbolism, both in connexion with their distinguishing features, their movement, shapes and colours and because of their relationship with man.... The symbolism of any given animal varies according to its position in the symbolic pattern, and to the attitude and context in which it is depicted.

This observation could help the critic to some extent, but the meaning might not be limited only to the ideas mentioned. Writers use those animals that they think are effective in producing the desired results. In the works of some writers the symbols might be used to display emotional reactions of the characters in particular circumstances. The fear and sadness, the ambition and joy, the courage and determination of the characters could be expressed in a concrete way through the symbols. Various types of symbols and the roles they play in the novels are identified in the works of the selected writers. Had:is Alāmay:āhu, Bā'alu Gārma, Bārhanu Zārihun and Andarge Mäsfān employ the horse, the fox, doves, owl's hooting, a lion, an eagle, the walya ibex, the picture of a queen bee and singing birds in their novels. These symbols are employed to serve various purposes and, they contribute to the over all effectiveness of the novels.

3.1.1 The Fox

In *Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr Had:is Alämay:ähu* uses the public meaning of the fox. Fitawrari Mäšäša one of the main characters encounters a fox on his way to meet Fitawrari As:äge for a duel. Mäšäša and his followers believe that if a fox crosses the road from the right to the left side something bad might happen to them. As soon as they see a fox running in the field, Balambaras Mðtðk:u tries to keep the fox back to the right side of the road. But the fox disappears in the bush in front of them. All of them feel sad, but none of them was sure whether the fox has crossed the road or not. As Mðtðk:u indicates, the fox has not crossed the road because he saw a foxhole in the bush.

"~¬ IZ×□E† ~"j`EA" r., ÓÈEO" ~E" ð{!`XW q±□ ÉOí!/:~" ~GMJE«Oφ M□O ÆV□ š□ÇGi×† šZÓÖ' □«φ ÆV□ !~"Ø E!~"Ø š¼ZA" `ðGÓ ~□É ¼fp[Ñ"ZÑ"~É š±#Á p`xf« pæ"G r., Ñ`G< ":- `E±#C š±#Á ¼Ñq† ÆM`E`G::"~E" qFOqX` ¼fp[Ñ"ÉÑ<ªÉ ÁEp}□ pšÍ□!~" šÁMEæy:: (159)

Yes, I know it has crossed us. Anyway, it doesn't matter," said Fitawrari in a manner that expresses his sorrow. "I doubt. I am sure it has not gone out of the bush. When I searched for it in the bush, I discovered only a foxhole on the right side over there. Therefore, I think it went down the hole, "said Balambaras, pointing to the direction where he saw the hole.

As it is conventionally believed in our society, if a fox crosses a road to the left side while a person is walking misfortune might come to the person. Fitawrari Mäšäša feels that something bad will happen to him in the duel and he begins to worry. His worry is aggravated because of two things. Prior to this event he goes to a near by church believing that Saint George will support him and give him victory over his contender, but unexpectedly he finds the church closed, which implies to him that Saint George has deserted him on the day he wants his assistance. When the fox vanishes in the bush, he assumes that the fox has crossed him, which also signifies bad luck. When Fitawrari Mäšäša reaches the contest arena at 'Färäs Meda', the reverse happens, and the meaning that the fox was not in a position to cross the road holds true in this situation.

The writer uses the fox symbol to foreshadow the atmosphere of the duel between Fitawrari Mäšäša and his contender Fitawrari Asäge. The confrontation is peacefully settled through the mediation of the priests. The priests brought with them the arks of St. George in 'Bičäna' and 'Dima', which represent the presence of God, and could be considered as the symbol of peace.

The fox also serves as a symbol of misfortune when Fitawrari Mäšäša begins to fight with the peasants. Fitawrari's followers burn the huts and loot the cattle and sheep

of the peasants found on their way. On the third day, Mäšäša and his followers reach one of the village 'Gorgor' and settle to pass the night there. The landlord has planned to return to his home with a glorious victory the next morning. Almost at midnight the 'cry' of a fox is heard and one of his aides interpreted the cry as follows: "*fp[`{Ek` }}NF†A"? MÖö OGæ# □!"" ~E" qFOqX` O}æ" Gr^□!□ ~FGfi" š□ÅxÒÅS<::* (296) "Do you hear the howling of a fox? It is a sign of bad luck!" said Balambaras Mät̄k:u as he takes off his clothes to sleep."

Immediately, after the cry of the fox the house where Fitawrari Mäšäša is in catches fire. Then, he is put under arrest by the peasants. The temporary joy of victory that overwhelmed Fitawrari Mäšäša and his followers disappears.

The cry of the fox, however, is an imitation, but it foreshadows the misfortune that is going to happen to Fitawrari Mäšäša and his officials. The cry is used by the peasants as a signal to awaken them to get ready for the attack on Mäšäša's camp. It is also used symbolically to foreshadow the unexpected attack of the peasants and the humiliating defeat of the landlord. Besides, this symbol makes the reader ready for the coming event, which contribute to the plausibility of the novel.

3.1.2 The Horse

The horse is associated with courage and bravery. It also symbolizes high status and pride among the feudal lords. Had:is Alämay:ähu uses this cultural connotation in his novel *Fək`ər əskä Mäk`abər*.

Fitawrari Mäšäša, who has great regard for himself and who is proud of his lordship becomes furious when Fitawrari Asäge proposes to marry his only daughter Säblä Wängel as a divorcee on the ground that her marriageable age has passed. Fitawrari Mäšäša could not bear this degradation. He writes a letter to Fitawrari As:äge to challenge him in a duel to maintain his honour and respect of his family. Fitawrari

Mäšäša believes that the humiliation that happens to him could be washed by blood only.

Hence, Fitawrari Mäšäša chooses his horse T`ðrñ for the duel with As:äge. The Saddle of T`ðrñ was adorned with silver, while the saddle of the other horse (Hamär) and a mule (Wardit) are decorated with bronze and cloth ornamented with needlework. The adornment of T`ðrñ with silver is an expression of heroic quality while that of the mule is a sign of wealthiness. Fitawrari Mäšäša boasts for his art of riding horse, playing traditional game 'gugs'(a kind of polo) and hunting. The movement of T`ðrñ indicated below suggests a symbolic meaning.

*pxEÄ ØZ« ÅUy□ rk ~Ñy□]pZ Ð[-, □ š□ÅxÅÑ□" ×OX f~† "Àòf kc` ›É`Ó
 ~□Ç□É Ñ%±& Ó^ k~ ¼ò} šÓ[, □ šÁðXUf MY} š¼öÑU ~□Ç□É Ñ%±&O
 pÑ'Ö' ~æ"}æ""~ EÖN%!" □ ðÄ^ □ š¼'U æUÏO AOX§ fN%]" òZ]#ÁUpZr
]#{Ä šÏÓ Ä` Á]« □pZ:: (162)*

T`ðrñ, thrusting its chest, bending its neck, and raising its ears like a double lance, alternatively striking into the earth with its hoofs. It was interesting to see T`ðrñ's artful movement around Fäysa as it danced wearing its long violet K`ämis (a garment put on the back horses).

The movement, act and the emotional mood of T`ðrñ in turn seems to inspire Fitawrari Mäšäša to try it for the up coming contest. The writer symbolizes the movement of the horse to show the internal desire and determination of Fitawrari Mäšäša to fight the duel with Fitawrari Asäge. The symbol is used to create suspense in the reader and to make the situation tense. Although Fitawrari Mäšäša is seventy years old, the courage he shows to fight with his opponent makes the reader follow the story eagerly and attentively.

3.1.3 The Dove

The main character Had:is, in Bā`alu Gārma's Yāhl:ina Dāwāl, enters into conflict with government officials when he plans to build a new school and wants to renovate the old classrooms. After many difficulties, Had:is, with the co-operation and sacrifice of other characters such as Fitawrari Tāk:a, and Aynalām, is able to realise his vision. This success of Had:is is symbolized by doves that fly in the air. The flying of the doves heralds the completion of the school and depicts the satisfaction of those involved in the construction of the school.

The situation was narrated as follows:

*αÁ!G p&y FÁ ~Zð!" ¾pV} ~X} ZÓs† x`x!" Á{!" ENr]Z ¾xFæ" ÁM`G
 ~É ÁU{!" šÁÑ ÁÓP ĚZq!" EM`æUO ìHÁ š¾]Ö" f³i²!" ¾Z
 p"ó!" š¾f±ñ pUV:: (246)*

The four doves that were sitting on the bell tower began to fly, exposing their chest towards the September sun, and flapping their wings and sailing through the cold air as if they were sent to herald the good news.

Bā`alu uses the universal symbol of a dove. The dove is commonly used not only as a symbol of peace and innocence but also of love as *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (1997:506) interprets Song 2: 14. Hence, the sacrifice Had:is pays to solve the problems of the people is an indication of the love he has for his people. Had:is is an earnest character who exerts maximum effort to solve the educational problem of the people of 'Sup`e', a village in a remote area, which could be taken as symbol of backwardness. Had:is does not leave the problem to be solved by the government, he rather depends on his ability to work with his hands and with the hands of individuals who earnestly support his move.

The completion of the school is good news for the people of "Sup`e", a victory over illiteracy, and the laying of a foundation for civilisation and development. Hence, the doves fly to show the people the coming of bright future through education.

Bā`alu also uses the dove symbol in his third novel Yā K`äy Kokäb T`äri. In this novel, Bā`alu uses the doves to show Hirut's feelings. Hirut tries to know about her mental disturbance, but could not make out the reason for she goes to the window and begins to look thorough. She suddenly sees doves playing with each other. Immediately after this, she feels that her body's desires for something.

*O" «? ~E† p`Ú} rF ¾D†!" G{!"k ~G,,E†O f³i²!" ¾Z !Á ^q" š¾^p†
 ¾O rF pM`Ý} !Á !"β }MEæ} pZ!½½ A"E} ZÓs†]#ÇV ¾†:: (52)*

Tāsām:a, Hirut's brother, who was formerly a member of the EPRP becomes a dissident of the party and joins Dārðbe.

Tāsām:a exposes the hiding place of the members of the EPRP just to save Hirut, but she is wounded in this incident and falls in the hands of the revolutionary guards. When Darðbe sees her, the picture of the queen bee in Hirut's room come to his mind.

*¾ r □ ÓS} S⁻G J³ ~E! "1/2 1/2 B%V} ¾O} □ Åõ M`F {¾†!" æ r □ ÓS} ÒZ
¾N%Ñ □ « QXx' □ r !Ç#Á!" □ " š □ ÅN%P} É □ Ñ} `Exæ]xE} Ö" □ „,!" J#i xÖZ
x]N!":: (251)*

He recalls the picture of the queen bee. Hirut appears to him as a stinging bee. He began to feel the strain in his muscles as he remembered those worker bees that mate with the queen bee died quickly.

Hirut's character is described in terms of the stinging bee she uses love as a trap to kill her lovers. The way she treats him and the attempts she makes to kill him are symbolised through the picture of the queen bee.

3.1.5. A Cat

Bā`alu in a similar way uses a cat to depict the feelings of Hirut's father, Ato Gulðlat. Ato Gulðlat is a landlord whose land is confiscated by the proclamation of land for the tiller during the Revolution of 1974. The proclamation has deeply irritated him and he waits for a convenient time to fight and regain his land. His wife Wāyzāro Amsalā now and then criticises him and the other landlords for not showing courage to fight for their lands. A cat that sneaks to catch a bird expresses a wish fulfilment act as follows:

*ÓVO □!"1/2 1/2 pGp" J#^r J#^r J#ÁÅõØ lÃ~ šMZ ββ O □ ββ ÓVO □!" šÁÅõÖ"
J#ÁM† ¾Gr □ NÉU` . . . : (109) It is wonderful. It creeps, creeps, creeps
and lurks for a time being and jumped over the prey and hushes it; it is
good to lurk for a time being and do what you like at the appropriate
time*

The activity of the cat signifies the character's wish. Bā`alu satirizes the landlords who formerly bragged that they would die for their land, but later they say that they would do so only when the time comes. Ato Gulðlat hid his gun for this day. But, as his former butler Dārðbe is now a member of a 'k`ābāle' revolutionary guard, Ato Gulðlat's fear and tension increases. This shows the contradiction between what he thinks and what he does. Besides, Ato Gulðlat wants to bribe Dārðbe for fear that he might be exposed for hiding a gun. The activity of the cat with hunting skills indicates the fear of the landlords.

3.1.6 An Owl's Hooting

Bārhanu Zārihun uses a cultural symbol in Yā Tangut Məst`ir. Tangut who is a half sister of King Tewodros is invited by her relative Wāyzāro Dābre to visit her. Accordingly, Tangut arrives in 'Gondār' town and wants to know why Wāyzāro Dābre invited her to 'Gondār'. Wāyzāro Dābre doesn't want to tell her the reason directly. While they discuss this matter, Tangut hears

the hooting of an owl that filled her with gloom. Wäyzäro Däbre, then, informs her that the Bishop wants to see her. Tangut asks Wäyzäro Däbre why he wants to see her. Wäyzäro Däbre answers:

š□' U"pL†*KG<.: x³/₄} ~q{□!' š□ÅJM"}ø š□Ç!" pÇZ ÇZ{ ~□ÒÑZ ~Oq
Ñ%ÄZÑ%` ³/₄GĪ!"ZĪO ³/₄N%E"} □ÑZ ~F□!" ... xÅrU{sZ MØ{ q□ÒÓX} ĀFE"
`FE"« MG~□y□ Fæ"Gd.: (183) I know not where they hear of it. In a
side way talk there is a sort of miscarriage and 'Ambagorgis' news
disseminated by them. When I was informed that he wants to see you I
send the message to you to come here from 'Däbrä Tabor'.

Traditionally, the hooting of an owl is an indication of the death of someone or the coming of a misfortune. This incident portends bad news to Tangut. 'Amba Gorgis' is the place where she secretly made love with an unknown person and conceived from him because she could not get a child from her husband Gäbräy:e. Wäyzäro Däbre and Tangut design the idea, and attempt to keep the secret as much as possible to the extent that even the man who made love to Tangut did not know her identity.

The Bishop who knew Tangut's secret through Aklilu told her that the secret was revealed to the hermits and that she must repent her sins. When Tangut confesses her sin, he tells her to meet Mr. Sturn and tell him all she knows about the life of King Tewodros.

The hooting of the owl, which is used as a symbol, foreshadows the bad incidents that are going to come to Tangut, and it paves the way for the development of the story. Mrs. Rozental, who falls in love with King Tewodros, tells him about the bad image Mr. Sturn has depicted about him in his book. As a result, the king imprisons the white persons. When Tangut hears Tewodros would investigate those who provide information about his life history to Mr. Sturn, she becomes terrorized.

Aklilu, who conspires against Tewodros, was caught and thrown into prison. Aklilu contacts Tangut so that she can help him to escape from the prison. He asks her to

co-operate with him. Besides, he tells Tangut openly that he will expose her secret if she stands on his way. Tangut helps Aklilu to escape. Tewodros discovers this, and the fact that she has told his secret to Mr. Sturn. As a result he sends her to prison. The hooting of the owl is used to foreshadow the fate of Tangut.

3.1.7 A Lion, An Eagle and A Waliya Ibex

From the junior writers Andarge Mäsfəñ in his novel *Dar əskä Dar*, uses a lion, an eagle, a waliya ibex and singing birds as symbols. He narrates about the movement that was started by the university students, against the feudal system. The main character, Tadälä and other students raise various questions of the people and intensify their revolt against the government. The men in uniform in different camps raise their voices of opposition. The novelist presents these movements using animals symbols: " ¼cT@' < ¢MÁ Ÿ>ÁđÖuf Á'u[" "x:: Áw[²Áf ÁK" < "e` >V^ "Á cTÄ [¼SÖk Äu^M:: Áe [¼T>Áue` ÄSeM [²Á Áu'@ Äu^M::*ÒÈ" ÁK" < >ud >Nd::" (74) "*The northern ibex bolted out from its place of hiding. The eagle of 'Däbräzäyt' flew high in the sky heralding happiness like doves. The lion of 'Ogaden' roared over.*

The animals symbolize the revolt of various military forces throughout the country. A Lion is a symbol of courage and strength, while the eagle stands for lofty spirit. The narrator says that a waliya ibex is driven by the fire from the south, which indicates that the revolt has also spread to the northern army forces of the country. The animals symbolize an army ready to defend its country from invaders by climbing and going down mountains like a waliya ibex. It is said that a male ibex watches the herd to defend them from the enemy. It seems that the manner and life of the animal symbolically stands for the military force that begins to struggle against the monarchy by safeguarding the country.

3.1.8 Singing Birds

Singing birds are employed to herald the coming of good days everywhere in Dar ḁskä Dar. At the beginning of the 1974 revolution, various political groups were created to fight for political power. In towns such as 'Gondär,' the fighting was furious. The shooting of government officials and cadres was frightening. Town dwellers were in tension and woes of the people increased every day. There were mournings for the dead and song of lamentation for them. This situation changes when the 'Därg' becomes triumphant over its opponents. This partial peace in 'Gondär' town was symbolically presented by the birds that sing at dawn. ¼"ö† ²?T Ôl SpÅÆ" w`H" Sö"Öl" Twc` ËUbM:: xDf xDf u}vu[ÉUét"< Ã"ÝÝK<:: (371) "*The singing of the birds has started to herald the coming of dawn and the beginning of daylight. Every morning they sing in unison.*"

The writer uses this symbol to note the happiness and relief of the people and their longing for peace. Using this universal symbol, he asserts that the people always yearn for peace and stability. Some members of the EPRP are released from prison, which was a source of happiness to their parents and relatives.

3.1.9 The Dog and Baboons

Andarge, in T'ḁ k'ur Däm, associates the enmity between the dog and baboons to develop the theme of his novel. He explains how individuals brutally kill each other for revenge. He uses the two animals to magnify the atrocities.

The main character of the novel, Ab:a Mähari becomes an outlaw to avenge his brother's blood. His brother, Wärotaw was killed when he was caught red handed with Abatä Fänte's wife while he was making love to her. Ab:a Mähari takes his black dog with him and hides in the forest to attack any person going to Fänte's family. Traditionally, the black dog, which has white spots on its belly, is believed to be a good hunter. Then Ab:a Mähari begins to train himself by shooting the wild animals. This way he also prepares himself for killing human beings. 'Kostḁr', the hunting dog catches bush duiker when Mähari shot and missed it.

The socially accepted age for marriage passes because of her parents' backward outlook. They hold that she has to marry a person who suits her lineage and social status. Säblä Wängel is greatly affected internally, because the society gives lower regard to a girl who remains for long without a husband. This creates conflict with the outlook of her parents. When she learns that her parents were going to give her hand in marriage to Fitawrari Taf:äsä Dənbäru , she flees to join Bāz:abəh whom she prefers to live with. To escape from her bondage, she boldly starts a tiresome journey and reaches the 'Abay' desert where she passes the night in the jungle.

The next morning, she encounters a clear stream running through stones, following, which Säblä begins to move close toward tiny waterfalls. She is attracted by the sight of the waterfalls and she decides to wash herself. After the bath she says:

*xMÑÑ Ñ{Â !"B !"Ø šÉæZ Á^]ræ«!f3i2 !"B ¾fEÖ rU} ÁÖ□□XG]#E"
 æ□y xU} ĀM`E« □pZ E□` š!"□} □!"!æfÉP!" ~A"□ xcE~:: (506)
 Praise be the Lord who made me think of the cold water. I thought it
 was a fairy tale when they say cold water strengthens a molten iron.
 Oh! how true it is! I feel better now than before.*

Her immersion into the water connotes the washing away of her degradation, insult, discontent and misery. It also suggests the beginning of a new life she aspires. The physical strength Säblä got after taking a bath suggests her courage and determination to meet her lover Bāz:abəh. It can be said that Bāz:abəh's concern for her kindles in her a feeling of happiness and a desire to move towards her goal. The writer shows the readers the internal regeneration and hope of the character through the water symbol, which is compatible with a universal meaning indicating a life giving force or power.

In a similar way, the water symbol is used to show the beginning of a new life in Had:is' third novel, Yālmžat. Dāmāk`áč, the main character in the novel, is a victim of a backward culture. She is given to a husband at the age of nine. This experience

makes her flee from her husband, remain alone for a long time and fear and hate males who attempt to win her love. Closing her heart against all love affairs, she devotes her life to her son Tākāstā to make him happy as much as possible. Her hatred is strengthened when the relatives of Dājazmač Asāf:a and his servants try to rape her. However, it was only Bāšah who makes her change the negative attitude she has developed towards men. From the first day she met him in a market place, he treats her positively and wins her love.

Bāšah on his part has bad experiences during his first marriage that ended in divorce. He also fails in his struggle to punish corrupt government officials. He is disappointed with these failures and does not enjoy his life.

It is while he is in this situation that he met Dāmāk`áč. The two characters listened to each other and finally they fall in love with each other. Dāmāk`áč changes her mind and enters in a strong love relation with Bāšah. One day Bāšaha, and Dāmāk`áč travel to 'Ambo' to relax and he requests her: "ÖpG ÖØx □ |Ç#Á|"O {Øp □ EMME` |Å öG |"B š □É □B'É □pZ ¼M×A"}::" (509) "I have come to ask you to accompany me to a hot spring so that we can drink holy water and take a bath."

The two characters drink the holy water and take a bath. The following day Bāšah takes to a swimming pool to train her how to swim.

As indicated, water symbolises the renewal of the internal life of the two characters. It heralds the beginning of a new life for them. The water also gives spiritual meaning to the marriage. The Holy water symbolises purification. Aymro Wändðmagāñ:āhu and J. Motovu (1970:72) write: "it is [Holy water] a symbol of interior cleaning and interior purification. Holy water is used in the blessing of everything which the church wishes to sanctify." Dāmāk`áč, as her past life shows, hates males. Bāšah on his part hates the corrupt officials. This attitude is purified before their marriage so that God could bless the marriage bond.

This universal symbol is associated with the life of one of the characters in Yāšðt`ðla Kokāb's Wāgāgta. Māzāmðr is a blind character who graduated from the university. In his childhood he had small pox and lost his sight due to the disease. In his tender

age he has heard his parents complaining that he is created for misfortunes. The person who promised to educate him makes him a beggar in the streets of Ad:is Abäba. Mäzämêr yearns to join for his parents, but he could not find them. Mäzämêr could not secure the help he needed from others; he had no friends who could understand, help and encourage him. He says about his life: "KÄ:|□ □ñ' qÊ□} Ä]N{Gø qÊ□} r., ~ÄÄEO □FA"p} ÚEN ¾q] ¾ÚEN C"¡"Ø ÁEA" . . .:" (204) " *I badly feel emptiness in my life not only emptiness, but also greater darkness than the darkness I am already in.*"

It is while Mäzämêr is in this condition that he is acquainted with Ink`ut`at`aş. After some hesitation Ink`ut`at`aş accepts him as her lover, and tells him that she is determined to marry him. Then they go to Lake 'Langano' for entertainment. In the hotel Mäzämêr takes a bath and the washing of his body symbolically shows the beginning of new life, the end of disappointment, and the resurgence of courage and strength.

3.2.2 The Darkness

Darkness is a universal symbol, which is associated with despair or evil deeds. Bêrhanu Zärihun applies this meaning at the end of the story of Yä Tangut Mêst`ir to show the despair of King Tewodros the main character of the novel. The narrator says:

*E&E#y Nô½½ . . . p¾SõX!" ÄÉ¾pU!" š^} NÑÉ!" šÁEf□ l`nd šÁ× Öó½½
 ~□qp#:"□ ÚEN□ çØ{ □Ñ]p]½½ ¾Öó KGN□!"□ø ÁMEÖ @EN□!"□
 ¾N%øðGÑ" ÄM`Gø ~q {Ök r., æÉ□□<□□!" pXõ xfOÖ!" @Ä□□!"□ pÚEN!"
 FÄ š□ÅxæE" fV... :: (294)*

The night is getting late. The fire that was burning everywhere died out, either because of lack of firewood or because no one there to look after it. So, darkness and silence reigned over the place. Only Tewodros sat in front of his tent and staring at the darkness as if he is searching for his lost dreams or purposes.

Prior to this event Tewodros speaks about his failures. He indicates that things are beyond his control and speaks about his aims desperately. The Priest, the hermits and the Bishop conspire against him and destroy his image in the country. The relation he attempts to forge with Great Britain also discourages him. He plans to get weapons from Britain to safeguard his country, he also wants to lead his country to modernisation by requesting military experts from the British government, but the

This universal symbol of sunrise suggests the strengthening of the 'revolution' and the prevailing belief in the triumph of the working class. With time the shocks subside and some relief is obtained. Happiness is magnified through the symbol and brightness and the uncovering of the veil mark the start of a new era.

Bä`alu, in Yähl:ina Däwäl, employs sunrise to show Had:is' effort to build a school in 'Sup`:e'. As Had:is begins the construction of the school, the people accept his plan and stand on his side. But he faces resistance from the school director who is unhappy with Had: is' idea. As the work of the building progresses Had:is is excited and visits it every day at dawn. After the visit he sits on a big rock and stares at it with admiration till his eyes become tired. In this scene, the writer employs symbols to show the significance of the school for the people of 'Sup`:e.'

!Á ~X A"E} J@} FÃ ¾iHÃ" àX !ZkN¬, b□F¬† FÃ ~Zó □ØX `}ME` p¾p&y
 FÃ ¾AN%{¿} ¾4i"B ÖðÖö† pàX" ~N□Ã□} æš□g ¾4x]X MZÑõ M`E!"]#{¿
 ¾4p&y kZê š¾4Áp±± š¾4M□M□ - ~¾4Öó B`Ê pO}æ" !"r ¾4D□†]&} rk }FE†::
 (81)

At about 6.00 a.m the formation of dew on the edge of the roof of the building resembles a chain of precious stones. The rays of the sun fall on the golden bricks and bounce back from it to change the shape of things. The image of the building begins to get blurred, and the picture of a beautiful woman appears instead of it.

In the above quotation the rays of the sun represent the hope and happiness of the character. His hope is related to the expansion of education, which serves to change the backward life and beliefs of the people. The rays convey the bright future of the life of the people, and also the school is the source of modernization for the life young generation of 'Sup`:e.'

However, sunset follows sunrise just as night follows day, Bä`alu reflects this cyclical process also politically. The former landlords, bureaucrats, petty bourgeois, EPRP and other groups begin to fight the 'Därg' to 'reverse' the revolution. The landlord Gulðlat hides his rifle and waits for some convenient time to use it. The bureaucrat Getač:äw creates problems on the 'revolutionary' leaders of his own organisation. The members of the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement attempt to seize power by exposing the members of EPRP and members of other factions.

It can be said that the over all situation was becoming quite confusing at this time. But one thing was certain. The factions, therefore, bent to expose each other. The 'Därg', on its part, killed members of the factions in the name of the revolution of the people. Then, the members of the different factions become desperate and begin to disintegrate. This situation is projected by the sunset:

*ìHÃ" 7GgF æ!ÚÝ Ò^ p`xĚZq EMÅpk }□d fZ~{G½½ šÁlElE†□ □r ðO
š¾M]E† pB'Å† gØZ dkr ¾O}ð□Øf!" rZB□ ØgZ]Nç□ ¾f±f± ¾õO qCZ
¾x□×EEp} Á`M]E!" □pZ: (177)*

The sun is about to set and hide behind the 'Wäč`äč`a' Mountain. As it is on its way to set, its red- discs appearance grew bolder and bolder and the ray it emitted makes the cold black sky like a sea flooded with hot furnace.

The red disc stands for blood. It symbolically suggests the killing of the opposing factions in the red terror.

The former landlords and bureaucrats loss hope because of these measures. Some members of the factions expose others, left the group and joined the revolutionary guards. The bureaucrats such as Getač:äw Yäšäwalul became insane due to the consolidation of the 'Därg' administration. The members of EPRP are killed and some of them are disband by the 'K`äbäle' revolutionary guards. Some of the members such as Hirut, are wounded while Täfär:a is killed when Därðbe and others surround him, and ask him to surrender. The novel seems to reflect disintegration of the EPRP. The symbol of sunset shows that the time has expired for anti-revolutionary groups and individuals.

Bärhanu Zärihun also uses the sunset as a symbol to show death and loss of hope.

In Yä Tangut Mäst`ir, Garäd and Aklilu, the characters who conspire against King Tewodros, create a false story and tell Tewodros that Gäbrðy:e has rebelled. Then the King sends Garäd to fight with Gäbrðy:e and to capture him. But Gäbrðy:e escapes from the soldiers, and strives to meet King Tewodros, to tell him the truth. On his way to the King, Gäbrðy:e worried that some one may kill him. So, he passes a day in the woods and takes rest for some time. When he gets up, he is surprised to see the sunset. He interprets the sunset as follows:

. . . αMØö kμ} q □ J# □ i Ë □ pZ αO⁻ Xr ~ÉN` ÖGi □ pZ^{1/2}/₂ αFÃ ÚUZ □ Ñ □
^{3/4}N%_{of}pE!" JNÃ Ó □ ðO M`E, □ pZ^{1/2}/₂ ^{3/4}ÅO OG □ } □ !" ÃqFG^{1/2}/₂ ^{3/4}N □ ÅO ?
^{3/4} □ ' ÅO ? ^{3/4}ØUÉ □ ^{3/4} □ E#E" ÅO !Ã` E&F Øó} E#M× □ ' ?:: (136)

When he woke up from a bad nightmare, the sun has set in the western horizon. But the sky, that receives the sun's rays, has turned red. It is said that this signals blood. Whose blood? My own blood? Garäd and Aklilu's blood? Or another disaster is going to come?

Gäbräy:e gets Captain Säändäk`e who sleeps in Tewodros' tent. Gäbräy:e takes the captain with him to meet the King in his house. He fears that the guards who have heard about him may kill him before he meets the King. Then he designs to jump the fence at the backyard. He tells Säändäk`e to create conflict with the guards so that they could not hear anything. Säändäk`e conflicts with the guards and is killed at the gate of the King's camp. The sunset foreshadows the death of this character. As Gäbräy:e anticipated it suggests blood. When Garäd hears about the escape, he decides to fight with the King because the King knew that Gäbräy:e did not rebel against him.

The battle between King Tewodros and Garäd is the bloodiest of all. The number of casualties is greater than the previous battles. Garäd is killed in this battle. Lik`ä Mäkuwas Yohans, the advisor of the King and British citizens were also killed and this causes great disaster to the King.

After this battle the King's opponents rebel everywhere; some of his soldiers betray him; his wife Täwabäč dies; his request of armaments to the government of Britain ends in vain. The situation makes the King very bitter. The writer uses the symbol of sunset to show the circumstances that contribute to the failure of the King.

Yosef's uncle Mānda, in Wägägta has lived a pretentious life for quite a long time. He conceals his greed, and selfishness with his money. His internal emptiness is exposed when he advises Yosef about marriage. Yosef tells him that he could not agree with him because he is telling him what he himself could not practise. The conflict that develops between them enables Mānda to see his past empty life. He kills his lover with poison, thinking that she has offended him due to his impotence. Finally frustrated with his situation he commits suicide in his house.

Mānda's death is foreshadowed through the sunset.

pU □ Ç FÃ ! □ pZ ~"Ø~ xfO×<G:: Ä] & ð ^{3/4}Od □ iHÃ pMÖ □ " Ö □ αZ ÁE†
r}D □ O ^{3/4}O {iØGO `FGD □ † ~Gö ~Gö r., ðy □ pšÌ š^{3/4}αEE !ÃO šÁfUfU ĀViG::
(279)

He is sitting on a chair in the veranda. Even though the heat of the sundown is slightly strong, it is not so hot. Yosef warms himself in the sun covering his face with his hand, or bowing his head down to protect him self from the heat.

Since the readers already know that Mānda commit suicide the foreshadowing technique the writer uses seems lost the power of holding attention.

3.2.6 The Moon and the Stars

When Hirut is wounded, In Yā kāy Kokāb T`āri, Dārābe carries her home, so that her parents could take her to hospital. The narrator describes the moon sinking into a dark cloud, which reminds Dārābe, the quotation *ḥmaḍlaf* gave him. The quotation is about the wasted and successful life of a man.

*pæ`□r} ¼xæpp† ÓNd ÚUi ~Ã□óZ GÍÑUÉ M`F rk rFE† ÅZp& Ó□ ¼{¿} ØgZ
 JNĀ FĀ ¼xδ□×Ög fĀ æ`□r} □pV::... ÚUi` ØGk --- ØgZ Ñ"O !""Ø::(292)
 A half moon that resembles a shy girl comes out surrounded by stars. To
 Dārābe these stars that are twinkling over the black sky were visible red
 stars.... The moon disappears in the black cloud.*

The sinking moon suggested the life of Hirut that passed 'aimlessly.' It also stands for the hopelessness and defeat of EPRP. For Dārābe, the red stars stand for the sacrifice to be made for the sake of the future progress of the people. Red colour is universally associated with blood. Therefore, the red star shows the triumph of the 'revolution' over the 'anti revolutionary groups.' As one can see from the discussion, both symbols are intended to focus on the theme the writer conveys to his readers.

After Yosef introduced Ink`ut`at`aš to his friend Māzāmār, in Wāgāgta, the love relation develops between the two characters. However, Ink`ut`at`aš gets into trouble to accept him as her lover, and helper. The idea that comes to her mind again and again troubles her and she could not sleep, read and hear music. So, she goes out and stands on the veranda; and tries to forget about Māzāmār. But she sees the moon in the sky and the flowers in the garden.

*pU□ Ç FĀ ĀÑō rF š□ĀIM† ØZ} qE!" JNĀ FĀ ¼□ØZ pZ š□Ñ,, ¼O}M`E`□
 Ñ"GC ÚUi xMEæx,, }:: r□' ÚUi - r□' Gr:: ... MHG MHE"□ ¼xæE" ¼xÉÁ¿
 ~ps†O ÚUi`□ dkr š¼xMEæy š□□<□ ĀC□ M×d ¼N%E" ĀM`FE":: (213)
 As she leaned against the veranda she watches a clear shiny silvery
 like moon in the clearly sky. A lonely moon - a solitary heart. The
 different flowers at the centre of the garden look up the moon and
 seem to say a word of 'welcome to it'.*

The moon, which foreshadows the future of the love of the two characters, is used as symbol. Though Māzāmār's blindness throws a veil on Ink`ut`at`aš's decision to accept him as her lover, she thinks that Māzāmār is the kind of person she dreams to marry. But she is concerned about the opinion of her father and her sister. Finally, her inner feeling becomes victorious over her mind and she gets ready to marry him.

The happy life that the two characters are going to lead is indicated through these symbols. The shining moon connotes the happiness of Mäzämðr who has led a solitary life for a long time. His life that was darkened by despair is received by smiles of Ink`ut`at`aš's heart. His life revives and is filled with rays of hope.

Yäšðt`ðla Kokäb employs the universal meaning of stars to depict the internal regeneration of the character. As indicated earlier Ink`ut`at`aš decides to marry Mäzämðr. When Ink`ut`at`aš openly tells Mäzämðr that she wants to marry him, his life regains the lost hope. This is symbolically indicated as follows: æqÉ ÚEN ~¼V □ ¼xÝ □ ! " J#D □ JN; FÄ ¼x±V} æ` □ r} ¼ð □ |ZkN Ndf ¼x±Xp} ~M'E! "{G.: (301) "Though the atmosphere is laden with heavy darkness, the stars in the sky have made the sky to look like burst open golden sorghum ."

The stars stand for the removal of darkness from the heart of Mäzämðr and the coming of a happy and bright future. The writer heightens this idea by repeating the star symbol. Then, Mäzämðr shows his happiness by playing his guitar.

3.2.7 The Volcano

Haylämäläkot Mäwa`ðl in his Gungun seems to link the force of the volcano with the eruption of the 1974 revolution. The narrator tells the story as follows:

¼ □ z} æMÖ □ fg pð} ÓrÓp" ÁUÑ±!" š^x-ÑPX ð □ É~ UMÖ" J#Uß ~ÑZ OÉV
xf×ØE, x □ ! Ö.: (452)

Before the end of the month of 'Yäkatit' (February), the volcano that the struggle conceived erupts, and the hot ash and lava, which sprinkle everywhere begins to burn every thing; and the whole country is shaken to the ground.

The volcano again evokes the strength of the people of Ethiopia who overthrew the feudal system. The movements of university and high school students, the struggle of the workers in the factory, and the movement of the oppressed against the landlords, and the factory owners all point in the direction of a volcano as a big force that overthrows the King and his system.

3.2.8 The Sycamore Tree (Warka)

Usually trees represent influential individuals that are respected by the society.

These individuals could be leaders, or spiritual fathers or elders. The cutting of these trees is associated with the down fall or death of these individuals.

Andarge Mäsfân selects a tree as a symbol in his novel, *Dar äskä Dar*. The writer attaches importance to the cultural meaning of trees to society. Andarge takes up the act of cutting tree in his novel, which signifies the downfall of the king during the 1974 revolution. The falling of the tree denotes the removal of the king through the struggle of the people. The writer presents the symbolic narration as the following.

*Ól ue}UY^p kÇDM kÃ ðÑÓ u\p ÆÁM' K= 'Ò "'<:: ÚKT"< x" "<" Kw`H" KSMkp ÁxØ^M:...
¾xËMU;" šk`i}& "ó{" EN%E"} ó{ ^Á]Ø M`æUO A"E} f }Gg `Z xÑU]]
pØF!" ~ÚGP} ¾pU;" s{ rZB ð ÒÖfp}::(78)*

Dawn has appeared in the east. The glow of scarlet like morning light is seen from afar. The darkness is frantically leaving its place for daylight.... The movement continues to proceed in spite of those who requested a moment's respite, and the big tree falls down on 'Mäskäräm' two (September 9). The darkness cast by its shadow beamed with light.

In this way, the narrator holds the attention of the reader. Here, the author has used several symbols. The dawn and the light represent the 1974 revolution while the darkness symbolizes the feudal system that resisted the revolution.

The story shows the strength of the movement that over threw the monarchy and the various systems that tied up the people, which could be analogically symbolised by

the roots of the tree. The big tree usually hampers the growth of other plants, too. The king, in a similar manner, hampered the progress of the people, and their economic development. The light symbolically stands for victory over ignorance and the coming of a bright future.

In Gungun, the tree is also used to represent the landlord K`añ:azmaç Bälaynäh. The narrator tells us that Wäyzäro ðlfykändu becomes jealous of her husband K`añ:azmaç Bälaynäh when she discovers that he has started an affair with Wäyzäro Däjyt`ðnu. When she realizes that things go worse, she decides to consult a witch so that she can get solution to her long waiting problem. The witch says:

⊠²=Á u?fi ØÓ ¾qS c"< ã⊠¾—M:: fMp ³õ ⊠uL "< >K:: Ó"Æ" Ø`pU >É`Ô ã³DM:: >ß`U- [⊠UU
>ÃK<f' ⊠ÍÓU K`Á" >ÃVL! }"Ç=Á "Ç=I ã^"×M >ÃuñiU fM><" ³õ >f"ÿ="<' ÁÑ` >Év` "'<' ³ñ"
S<Ø` TK~ KU" wKA "'< "Ç=Á S"ß>?i ×Ã"<! (85)

Near your home I see a man standing there. There is a gigantic tree on top of him. He clings to the gigantic trunk. The man is neither short nor long and not as such elegant either. He is strolling to and fro! He would not be good enough to you! As it is guardian of the surrounding do not touch the gigantic tree! What is the reason behind that he firmly clings to it? Remove him off that trunk.

The tree stands for the influence and the power that the landlord has in the system. It seems that the witch knows that it is very difficult to Wäyzäro Däjyt`ðnu to conflict with this tree which is deeply rooted in the land. The clinging of the man to the tree shows the strong relation created between Mðndaye and the landlord.

As she is advised by the witch ðlfykändu begins to plot to kill Mðndaye. Hence, the story changes its course. ðlfykändu contrives a secret plan to kill Mðndaye through

bandits. However, her plan fails and the relationship of K`ãñ:azmač Bälajnäh and Mõndaye is strengthened. Here, the tree is simply used to show the social status of the landlord, and the relations of the characters.

3.2.9 The Wind

Had:is Alämay:ähu applies the wind symbol in Yälmžat to underline the main character's fear after she begins to live in Ad:is Abäba. She decides to be hired as a housemaid, and leaves the hotel. She could not get anyone to hire her. When she tries to return to the hotel she forgets the area and its name. Therefore, she is compelled to tell her problem to an old woman she encounters on the road. The woman feels pity and takes Dämäk`áč to her home. ômät Fäk`aduwa asks Dämäkáč where she comes from and guesses that the area might be 'Guläle'. The next morning, the woman agreed to take her back to 'Guläle'. On their way, they encounter gusty wind that rip-off the loose corrugated iron sheets of houses and bends the trees to the ground.

ômät Fäk`aduwa talks about such types of winds. She says: “š□Á±#A @Ã□y □ó` %4N%M× %±#C @EO NEðÁ J#ÁZ` □!“ ÁqFG:”
(56) *“It is said that such types of winds come when dooms day approaches.”*

The writer foreshadows the next event through this public symbol, which signifies the coming to hardship. When they reach the Institute Pasteur, Dämäk`áč sees her former husband and is terrified beyond control. Her fear arises from what she experienced at his house because of early marriage. Though the main character rejects this backward culture and flees to free herself from the bondage, her fear lives with her, which makes her lead an unhappy and fearful life in Ad:is Abäba till she hears the death of her former husband.

Yāšōt` āla Kokāb, in Wāgāgta, associates wind with the bad future that is going to come in the life of the main character, Yosef. Yosef enters into conflict with Tārṣit. She believes that she can trap males through her beauty and force them to do whatever she wants to do. Then, Tārṣit endeavours to change the firm stand Yosef has against corruption. But she could not. When Tārṣit understands that Yosef cannot cooperate with her, she wants to take away violently the financial document he has kept with him.

She sends gangsters to the hotel where Yosef used to pass the night. The narrator describes the setting, which hints that the next episode might be disastrous to Yosef. The narrator says:

ḏUJ`" □ō` æĒZq!" ¼xdæM!" ÅM □ šÁ □Epø æ¼ØØÑ" ¼N%Á □^!" □ ~q<X □
 lcc šÁM^fEø Á □Ç □Æ □ p&} IZl[~□`~ š¼×E ¼Å □æM ÓÉÓÇ □ šÁ`[ÑÅ
 Åæ □óG:: (252)

The torrential wind, driving speedily the cloud it carried on its back, whirls the dust and filthy materials, takes away corrugated iron sheets from some roofs, and it sways the old walls.

The description of the setting is frightening. It denotes what Yosef will encounter in the hotel. When Yosef comes out of the bar, the gangsters attack him, and as he falls in the ditch his right leg breaks, and the gangsters snatch the documents. As a result of the loss of these documents, Yosef is thrown into prison. The bad luck that comes into his life is hinted prior to the events by the wind.

3.3 The Bell and the Drum

In his second novel, Yāhl:ina Dāwāl, Bā`alu Gārma uses bell and drum as symbols. Fitawrari Tāk:ā one of the characters in the novel is portrayed as a progressive person. He is against the practice of witchcraft and he establishes a church and brings a priest who can teach the people. But he does not succeed, because the priest could not resist the sorcerers and could not bring the intended change.

Therefore, Christianity and witchcraft practices seem equally influential in ‘Sup`e’ village. This is symbolically indicated in the novel as follows:

*³r Er±" Ñ%±& Öõ~ ÅM p]NÃ FÃ M{¾}]#ËÖZ ¾q Úô æp[
¾p&xZ`zÁ Å!G ¾xöæV pMO`G pxÅÒÒN% ãJM" ËMZ ::(88)*

When the clouds start to appear in the sky after many days of absence of the rains, the drum of Ab:a Č`äf:e and the church bell begin to be heard repeatedly as if they were competing.

This indicates the spiritual rivalries in ‘Sup`e’. The writer attempts to show that the church has failed in its mission because the priest could not change the people. Then, the writer transfers the role of educating the people to a modern school. The school built by the main character Had:is takes up the role of the church. This is also indicated through the sound of the two objects.

Had:is comes to ‘Sup`e’ leaving his university education to work only for a year to get money to support himself and his mother. However, when he sees the acute shortage of classrooms, he decides to stay in ‘Sup:e’ and embarks on a school building project. He sacrifices his university education.

He courageously faces all the problems he encounters and starts the project. Fitawrari Täk:a and his daughter Aynalãm are the only persons who understand his aim and give him full support. The school is completed with the participation of students and the contribution of the people. Fitawari, realises that it is modern education, which makes the people turn against the practice of witchcraft.

When the construction of the school is completed, the school bell rings and the sound reverberates throughout the village. The event is described as follows:

*EM"æX ÁCG ÑMÆ ã´ ¾Å!E" ÉOî EMËMWÁ Ñ%±& æõ ~ÉZÑ, ~]N½½
¾ã ãEO ò} æA"E" ãpGØ Ñ,G~ {¾!":. š ã ã ãÖxN% ¾q Úô Ép& ìØ ~E.:
(246)*

Just to test he holds the rope and rings the bell for the first time. He saw the face of Aynalãm more prominently than ever. By chance, the drum of Ab:a Č`äfe becomes silent.

Here, we notice that the sound of the school bell spreads over ‘Sup`e’ suppressing the sound of the drum. The triumph of modern education over witchcraft and ignorance is magnified by the silence of the drum.

3.4 The House and the Buildings

In Wänjäläñ:aw Dañ:a, the main characters T`ðlahun and Sofðya who stood for economic development and social change for the people of ‘Yäki’, attempt to build a modern house which they think would serve as a model. Their work is accepted and supported by the people. T`ðlahun and Sofðya try to change the traditional house by introducing a modern house, which they think would change the life style of the T`ama people who live in small huts made from dry sticks. The characters' good will is not in a harmony with the desire of the traditional people.

As Asay:ä, one of the characters, tells us the T`ama people believe that mankind does not live forever. So, they do not accept the idea of building permanent house. They prefer to build small huts instead. They also believe a man must not leave any wealth after he dies. Asay:ä says:

pš Ç#C ÁE!" SX} ¼N%ÁO"p} O Á} J#Ö¾g U°O Ñ%±& Ml¾}
EMI¾y N;k ¼NÁ+E!" J!" U°O Ñ%±& ¼N%D Ar} N qy E`{O y xÚNW
O`Z æMD pfZ E&F ¼N%Á`UÇ!" ÑZ ¼EO ÁFE" ::(262)

When they are asked why they believe in this tradition, the reason they give is that, "any man does not know how long he lives. The accumulation of wealth to serve him for a longer period is yet another evidence of his selfishness. What else can it be?"

T`ðlahun and Sofðya build the model house for Faridigo, the character who supports them in their activities. They believe it might serve as a model as it is durable than the traditional huts.

When Faridigo dies, the T`ama people demolish the model house and used it as firewood according to their tradition. The demolished house magnifies a theme of the novel, which shows the failure of the characters to change the beliefs of the people.

In Bārhanu Zārihun's Yā Tangut Mōst'ir, a symbol is suggested in the description of old buildings portrayed in the setting.

Ó□s, ^Ãfv ~Zīx:" □pZ½½ ~□Ç□Ê, ÓÉÓÇ□! " δXZa M³Ñ%Á□!" !FGf!"
 ¾E&E#} !ð NÁWÁ D□·G½½ . . . ¾!"Ö"O KÃ!} š□Á !"Ü!" MGæ" ÁUË
 ¾p]p] ®Ã□} □!": (6)

Even the buildings were old. The walls of some of them were destroyed; their doors were broken; and have become the abode of bats. Life in the surrounding was also old and rotten, both internally and externally.(6)

The old castle buildings and the walls stand for the corrupt administration of the aristocrats and their officials. The ill- mannered administration of the judges and their military officials, the looting of the products of the peasants, and the extravagant life they led are epitomized by the cultural symbol. King Tewodros' aim was to change a corrupt administration and to form united country, which was divided among aristocrats who fought to overthrow one another. The symbol has thematic significance and lays a good ground for Tewodros to change the situation.

Bā`alu describes Fitawrari Tāka Boro's house in his novel Yāhl:ina Dāwāl.The house symbolically seems to be a reminder of the outdated administration of the landlords.

The description read as follows:

pa` } □r ±"WÁ!" □ ¾{ÖU!" ¾ð{!"XW x□ qE~□É ök p&} æ]"â& s[~□} FÃ
 p]ð!" x□×F<G½½ ¾p&y ~U□ÖÈ fEO År³²<G½½ qEð!" ±M□ p^O□} a` }
 f□ š□Á àX rk rE!" ¾K³p"□ ~p&y{ ¾N%çpE"p}□ gβ rE!" ¾N%Ç"p} ¾p&y
]Ñ□} p~pq O□×ð š□ÇGx□lÖlÖ A"E" βZ rF<G½½ FEð!" ±M□ ¾x]X p&}
 ÃM`FG š□Í# ÓZN PÑ`□ ~F×O ::(26)

The one storey mansion of Fitawrari Tāk:a Boro which is encircled three times by stone walls is spread at the top of 'Sup':e Boro' village... The green paint of the house has become dimly faded. The balcony on which the Fitawrari appears and sits on to hear complaints of the people three times a week which was adorned with beautiful carpet in the past is now deserted. Though it seemed to be built for a past era, it has not lost its dignity.

Fitawrari Tāk:a, the governor of 'Sup':e' village for a long time was authoritative and bad-tempered. However, things begin to change under the new regime as the feudal system entrusted responsibility to its officials. Green is the symbol of new beginning while the fading of the painting connotes loss of power by the landlords.

3.5 The Nudity

Had:is Alāmay:āhu, in Fðk`r ðskā Māk`abðr and Yālmžat, applies the connotative meaning of nudity, which is considered as a symbol of shamefulness. For example, when the peasants burn the house in which Fitawrari Māšāša was resting, he dashed out of the house naked with his trousers on his shoulder. The stripping and removal of trousers signifies the humiliation, and the defeat Fitawrari encounters. The scene is described as follows:

ò{"XW ÁE"p} p&} J#iÖG š□α"~□` MRWÁ□!"□ □Ep} ðGÑ!" EMÁ³
 J"WÁ□!"□ ENØEk Ñ%±& `FÖ" αÒp#Á□!" pFÃ p}αc□!" ~□ÖGØE!" !Ã±/
 ¾QXd□ pf« šÍ□!" Ã±" š¾[Ö" J#iÖ" "Ñ'Â !Ç#C ÃÖÖ"" ~E□ ~É J!" ÓX
 šÍ□!"□ Á´ αN%iÖE!" p&} Xk ~ÉZÑ, ~IN□!" "": (296-7)

When the house where Fitawrari resides starts to burn, he did not even have time to wear his trousers leave alone to search for his gun. So, he puts his trousers over the heavy toga (gabi) he wore, and holds the arm of Wäyzäro Yäsäraš and runs out of the house. Immediately, a person grabs his left arm and said, "Come this way, sir!" A person makes him stand farther away from the burning house.

The event is satiric because the peasants catch the landlord naked. The tenants defeat Fitawrari in spite of the fact that he regards himself as invincible.

In Yälmžat, Dämäk`áč who is compelled to marry, at age of nine, to Tamðrat Tägäñ, a 50-year-old man, not only hates males also sees them as beasts. Her beauty tempts several men and they attempt on several occasions to rape her, but she escapes the trap.

One of those men is Kasahun Abð`e, he was at his home to take the cultural medicine (Anthelmintic Medicine) for tapeworm. According to the custom of his time, he takes off his trousers and wears his heavy toga. As the other men did to her, he tries to catch her hand and take her to his bed by force. Dämäk`áč fights with Kasahun violently. In the middle of the fight, the heavy toga falls down and he stands naked near his bed. When he realises that he is naked, his sexual urge suddenly disappears. So, he beats her, tramps on her over the ground and leaves her there helpless. The author describes Kassahun's state as follows: "... š□Ç#Á J#iÑE" Òu=Á□!" œFÁ□!" !É! šZi□□!"□ fV::" (289) "As he wrestles like that, his heavy toga falls down and he stands stark naked." The event exposes Kasahun, whom everybody regards as a sincere spiritual man. When the cloth, the symbol of his manhood, is removed from him his wild behaviour comes to the surface. Here, the writer satirises the nakedness of the character that lives under the cover of spirituality and shows us what he looks like internally.

Chapter Four

4. Comparison of Literary Symbols in the Novels Under Study

The spheres from where the symbols are drawn, the types of the symbol and the purposes of symbols vary from writer to writer. Therefore, in this chapter the similarities and differences of the literary symbols employed in the novels under study will be discussed.

4.1 The Spheres from Where the Symbols Are Drawn

In the preceding chapter, various kinds of symbols are identified. About 55 symbolic elements are observed in the novels under study. Of these, 30 symbols are analysed

in this section. These symbols are categorized in terms of the relations they have so that their similarities and differences could be identified.

The symbols are drawn from animals, nature, the house and buildings, and musical instruments and nudity. Of these categories, nature symbols are the most recurrent symbols.

The writers do not always employ the same symbols even to convey the same idea. Had:is, Bā'alu, Bārhanu and Andarge use animal symbols in their novels, while

Haylāmäläkot and Yāšət`əla seem to use other symbols such as nature, which dominantly appear in the novels of most writers.

The category of animal symbol contains bee, bird's song, cat, dog, baboons, doves, eagle, fox, horse, lion, ibex and owl. Of these animals nine of them are drawn from wild animals. This indicates that one common feature of these writers is the preference for higher order animals in their novels.

Among the writers who use animal symbols, the cry of fox that Had:is employs in his novel Fək`ər əskä Mäk`abər and the hooting of an owl in Bārhanu's novel Yä Tangut Məst'ir are used to foreshadow the coming of a bad event. The two writers use different animals for similar purposes. Andarge uses the roaring of the lion, as a

symbol to indicate the courage of one of the military forces that revolts to overthrow the feudal system. The bird's song, which has similarity to other sound symbols, is intended to suggest a happy mood in Andarge's novel *Dar əskā Dar*.

The other aspect of animal symbols is the use of the quality and manners of animals. Had:is employs the emotional mood and manners of the horse as a symbol in *Fək`ər əsā Mā k`abər*. Bā`alu in a similar way uses the hunting quality of a cat in *Yā kāy Kokāb T`əri*. Andarge on his part uses the hunting ability of the dog and the enmity between baboons and dog as symbol. He draws his symbols from domestic and wild animals.

The other Similarities and differences observed are seen in the novels based on symbols taken from nature. Almost all the writers use nature symbols in their creative works. Nature symbols include dawn, the darkness, a fire, a light, the moon, stars, the tide, the sun, the tree, the volcano the water and the wind.

Bā`alu *Gərma* exceeds the other writers in making use of solar and lunar symbols followed by *Yāšət`əla Kokāb*. Bā`alu *Gərma* uses the cyclical process of the sun and the moon, which is not widely observed in the works of other writers. For instance, he writes about sunrise and sunset, brightness of the sun, full moon and waning moon. On the other hand, *Yāšət`əla Kokāb* and *Bərhanu Zārihun* write about one aspect of the cycle of the sunset only.

The other feature of similarities and differences of the symbols is the use of the properties and the opposite meanings of the nature symbols. Had:is Alämay:ähu and Yäšät`äla Kokäb employ the life giving property of water, which connotes the beginning of a new life. What makes the two writers similar is that they employ symbols for a similar purpose. They also use the wind to foreshadow the story that is to come.

Through symbols, Bärhanu Zärihun and Bä`alu Gärma convey different meanings in their novels. Bä`alu transmits the loss of hope of one of his characters through the sunsets while Bärhanu resorts to darkness to show the despair of a character. Andarge does the same with light and darkness, but he associates these symbols to the theme of his novel.

For Haylämäläkot and Andarge a fire and the volcano are symbols for showing how popular uprising gathered momentum in the 1974 revolution. The two writers select different symbols to transmit a similar message to the reader. Andarge in his novel Dar äkä Dar uses forest fire, which spreads vastly from place to place. The volcano, on the other hand seems dormant or non-existent; but its force is seen when it erupts. Haylämäläkot tells us about the tide that over flooded the area to suggest the revolt of the people. Though the writers differ in drawing the symbols from various spheres, they are similar in their choice of characteristics of the symbols.

House and buildings emerge as symbols in Wänjäläñaw Dañ:a, Yähl:ina Däwäl and Yä Tangut Mät`ir. Bä`alu and Bärhanu employ such symbols as tools for explaining their points of view. Fitawrari Täk:ä Boro's house painted with green and built at the

top of Sup`e village symbolizes the status of the Fitawrari as an over all administrator of the locality. Later, however, the paint begins to fade suggesting the beginning of a downfall of the system. Meanwhile, for B`rhana an old building and its broken doors suggest the corrupt nature or practices of the aristocratic system. Here it can be seen that both writers deal with the aristocratic system. Moreover, the way the two writers present buildings, as symbols differ. B`alu puts the symbol subtly, while B`rhana describes it plainly.

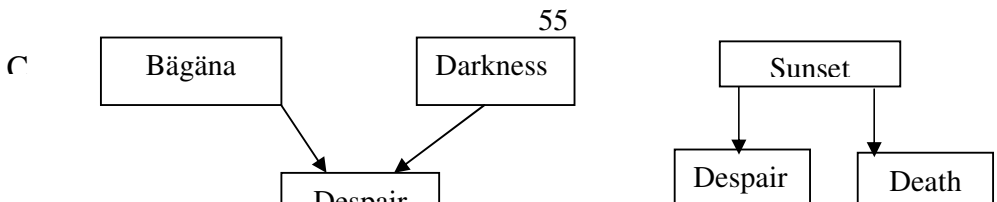
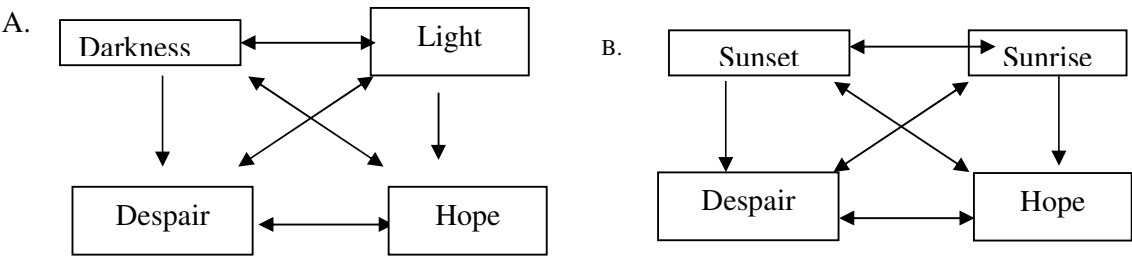
Had:is Al`may:ähu's symbol of house is related to the lives of the common people. His type of house differs from the other writers for it seems to conform to the theme of the novel. He applies the demolished house to heighten what the novelist wants to convey to his readers. For Had:is a demolished house signifies the failure of the main characters in W`njäl`a:aw Dañ:a in some of their moves. Had:is, like B`alu subtly uses the symbol so that it does not detract from the positive image of the main characters and simply indicates that, as human beings, the characters have their own flaws.

Some of the writers also employ religious symbols in their works. These include holy water, bell, and the Ark. The main similarity of the symbols is that they are mostly associated with religion. B`alu's sound of the bell that spreads good news over 'Sup`e' village to indicate the happiness of the characters that are enjoying the fruits of their work. Where as the bell is usually used in the service of churches, it is now employed to silence the drum of the witchcrafts who have been deceiving the people for a long time.

Another symbol that has religious meaning is the holy water. Had:is applies its meaning in connection with some of the main characters in *Fəḵ`ər əskä Mäk`abər* and *Yälmžat Säblä Wängel*, *Dämäk`áč* and *Bäšah* respectively.

Had:is Alämay:ähu singles out himself from the senior and junior writers by employing nudity as a symbol. However, the purpose of the symbol is similar to that of *Bä`alu* who uses a cat symbol for a similar purpose. Both writers satirically present the symbol of nudity and cat by associating it closely with the characters in novels *Fəḵ`ər əskä Mäk`abər* and *Yälmžat*, both by Had:is and *Yäk`äy Kokäb T`əri* by *Bä`alu*.

To sum up, though the writers draw their symbols from different spheres of life, some of the symbols are used in similar way and others differently. In certain ways this conforms to the illustration of symbols by Short and Peer (1989:52) analysed in poems showing the relations between symbols and what they suggest to readers.



D.

The above schematic presentation shows that diagrams A and B are highly related to Mick Short and Van Peer's presentation where the single headed arrows denote what the symbolic element suggests which Short and Peer say are rough equivalent relations. On the other hand double-headed arrows indicate the contrast that the symbols have. The other diagrams are presented from the observations of the symbolic elements. For instance, some symbols, which are illustrated by diagram C, could have been taken from various sources to denote the same thing. On the other hand some symbols could suggest more than one meaning as in D where as in the last diagram symbols can stand for only one meaning in the context of the novels.

4.2 Types of Symbols

As mentioned in chapter two, writers can use universal, public or private symbols. Of the symbols identified in this study about 32 symbols are universal symbols. Some examples are: the bell, birds' song, the darkness, an eagle, a fire, a light, a lion, the

moon, the stars, sunset, tide, water, volcano, etc. The analysis of the symbols shows that almost all the writers employ universal symbols.

However, nature symbols that have universal meanings occur repeatedly in the works of both senior and junior writers. Of all the universal symbols, lunar and solar phenomena are the most recurrent in the novels of Bǎ`alu and Yǎšǎt`ǎla. Of the two, Bǎ`alu widely employs cyclical movements of the lunar and solar symbols. By contrast, Bǎrhānu, Yǎšǎt`ǎla and Andarge use only some aspects of the cyclical movements such as sunset, light, and full moon. Had:is does not employ solar and lunar symbols at all.

Therefore, though symbols with universal meanings are often cited, the writers differ in repeatedly using one kind of symbol and excluding other symbols. The other source of the symbol is the public symbol, which appears to be familiar to most of the Ethiopian readers. It is familiar because such types of symbols might appear in the culture of the setting of the novels. Had:is, Bǎrhānu, Bǎ`alu, Andarge and Haylǎmǎlǎkot employ the symbols that have cultural meanings in their novels. Of all the writers, however, Had:is widely uses various cultural symbols most of the time in his novels, while Bǎ`alu focuses on the universal symbols. Had:is also seems to give more emphasis to public symbols. In a similar way, Bǎrhānu leans more towards the cultural symbols than the universal symbols.

Some of the public symbols the writers employ are: the 'Bägāna', the cat, a fox, a horse, the house, the hooting of an owl; old buildings, the wind, the trees, etc.

As it has already been mentioned, though the writers have similarities in using the public symbols they differ in the spheres from where they draw the cultural symbols.

Some of the writers also have similarities in the purposes they use the public symbols. The discussion above on the types of symbols shows that the writers seem to employ the symbols to give more emphasis to the idea they want to communicate.

Sometimes, the writers themselves attempt to give interpretation to the symbols. For instance, when Dāmāk`āč and ḍmāt Fāk`aduwa, in Yālmžat, encounter gusty wind on their way to 'Guläle', Had:is, seems to give the meaning of the symbol using the character who says: "*It is said that such types of winds come when doomsday approaches.*" These words indicate that the writer has selected a symbol, which when interpreted foreshadows a great event. Bārhanu, similarly makes Gābrḍy:e to comment about that the sun that looks like red disc as it sets down in the horizon.

When he woke up from a bad nightmare, the sun had started to set down in the western horizon. But the vast sky, which still received the sun's rays, had turned red. It is said the colour signals blood. But whose blood? My own blood? Garad and Aklilu's blood or is another disaster is going to come. (Yä Tangut Mḍst`ir:56).

Such kind of interpretation is given because of the concern of the writer that the symbols might not be understood. However, since they use the public symbols the reader could most likely get the meaning quite easily. The other writers such as Andarage and Haylämäläkot put the symbols in a way that they are easily

recognised. For instance, Andarge presents the symbols in description to give strength to it.

4.3 Purposes of Symbols

Another area worth examining is purposes for which the authors use the symbols.

The authors employ symbols to portray the characters' mental state and their wishes, to foreshadow the coming events and to strengthen the themes of the novels. In the novels under study, most of the symbols are used to reinforce the themes of the novels.

The symbols that are employed for the purpose of portraying characters situation include water, the waning moon, the sunset, star and Bägäna, while symbols such as cat, doves and a horse are applied to show internal wishes while the characters indulge in certain circumstances. There are also other symbols that satirize either the characters or the system in which the stories are set.

In the novels *Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr*, *Yälmžat*, and *Wägägta*, water is used to show the resurgence of some of the characters. Had:is in *Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr*, *Yälmžat* and *Yäšðt`ðla Kokäb*, in *Wägägta*, uses this symbol for a similar purpose.

As mentioned in chapter three, *Säblä Wängel's* life begins to revive as she flees to meet her lover. Similarly *Dämäk`áč* who hates males for a long time, changes her mind and decides to marry *Bäšah*. *Mäzämðr's* life is also filled with joy when *Ink`ut`at`ä* tells him that she will marry him. The lives of these characters begin to rejuvenate because of marriage. However, the causes for their despair vary. *Säblä's*

depression is associated with the suppression she experienced in her parents' home and the belief of the society that she is too old for marriage. The depression of Däm̀k`ãč has close connection with the backwardness of the culture, while the dejection of Mäzäm̀ðr is attributed to the attitude of the society towards the blind.

Both authors show the regeneration of their characters by taking them to bathing places. However, Had:is seems to give emphasis to the revival of the female characters while Yäš̀ðt`ðla presents the blind male character who was psychologically affected and thus isolated himself from society.

Yäš̀ðt`ðla also uses a star to depict the renewal of life Mäzäm̀ðr gets as Ink`ut`at`aš decides to marry him. Yäš̀ðt`ðla's use of water and star to show the internal life of the character while Had:is employs water only. Through the employment of water and star symbols the authors show the extent of the desperation of the characters in the past.

The other similarities that are noticed in the use of symbols are the way the writers show the loss of hope or death of the characters through symbols such as darkness, waning moon, sunset and 'Bägäna'. The authors employ a variety of symbols to suggest similar conditions of the characters. B̀rhanu refers to darkness and the 'Bägäna' to explain the loss of hope of King Tewodros. B̀rhanu also employs the sunset to suggest an event that is due to take place in the life of the characters. In Yä Tangut M̀st`ir the sunset suggests the death of captain Sändäk`e at the gate of King Tewodros. It could at the same time be associated with the bloodiest battle between Garäd and the other nobles of the then King, which accounts for the failures the King faced and the cause for his despair.

Similarly, Bă`alu indicates the death of his characters and their despair by the last phase of the moon. He described in Yă kăy Kokăb T`ari to the death of the main character, Hirut, and the effect of her death resulting in the desperation and disintegration of EPRP. The sunset also suggests the death and depression of some of the characters in the same novel. The two authors seem to have much in common in the employment of natural phenomena just as Had:is and Yăštəla do in the renewal of their characters through water symbols.

Among the animal symbols the horse in Fək`ər əskă Măk`ăbər, and a cat in Yă k`ăy kokăb T`ari, are employed to bring out the desires of the characters. Thus, Fitawrari Măšăša's determination to confront his enemy and the innate desires of Ato Guləlat to fight for his land that was confiscated by 'Dărg', are presented by the two authors. But the ways the writers present the symbols vary. Fitawrari Măšăša has taken a courageous decision to fight his contender, whereas Ato Guləlat lacks such courage. Bă'alu seems to satirize this wish of the character through the cat symbol.

Had:is also satirizes the condition of Fitawrari Măšăša on the eve of the battle he fought with peasants. Had:is also satirizes the character who is considered as a spiritual man in Yălmžat. These two characters are exposed to the readers so that one can see them as they are. Had:is criticizes the feudal lords and their spiritual situation in particular and the feudal system in general to give strength to his story.

The other similarities and differences the novels have are found in the way in which the symbols hint the incidents that are going to come. Accordingly, Had:is and Bārhanu apply fox and owl's hooting respectively to foreshadow the coming events. Had:is describes two events in *Fə̀k`ə̀r ə̀skä Mäk`bər* where the fox is mentioned. The first is when the fox does not cross the road implying peaceful resolution of the matter. The second event is the cry of the fox that foreshadows the bad luck that awaits Fitawrari Mäššäša. In these two events, the fox symbol is intended by the author to fulfil specific purposes.

Bārhanu in his novel *Yä Tangut Mə̀stir*, uses the hooting of the owl to give clues about the future events that awaits Tangut. The symbols hint that the events, which come after these incidents, were frightening. The sound of the animals has symbolic significance that holds in the culture of the society. First the symbols differ. Secondly Had:is chooses the cry to make the story plausible by giving the reader a hint for the oncoming event. Here, it can be said that the symbols have different purposes in the works of the same author.

The attachment of symbolic meaning to one of the main characters to foreshadow what is going to happen is what the two authors share in common. However, Had:is associates the symbol to the male character while Bārhanu associates it with the female character.

Had:is and Yäšət`ə̀la refer to rushing wind to give clue to the misfortunes that await the main characters in *Yälmžat* and *Wägägta*. The difference that can be seen in the symbols is a matter of degree; otherwise there is no significant difference. The wind

that Yăšə̀t`əla describes is mixed with rainstorms while that of Had:is is not. Moreover, Had:is gives the interpretation of the symbol through his characters, no such kind of interpretation exists in Yăšə̀t`əla.

A considerable number of symbols that the authors employ might be associated with the themes of the novels. Though the authors commonly share in using the symbols to clarify, strengthen and transmit their messages, the subjects they raise and the purposes for which they use the symbols vary. Some writers criticize the social system of their time and the cultural practices of the society. Others seem to use the symbols solely to convey the struggle of the peoples of Ethiopia.

Had:is, Bă`alu, Bə̀rhanu and Yăšə̀t`əla criticize the social system or its officials. Had:is in his novel Fə̀k`ə̀r ə̀skä Mằk`abə̀r clearly depicts the life of Säblä Wängel. The author highlights the suppression caused by the feudal lords on their subjects. Fitawrari Măšăšă's only daughter Säblä is greatly affected internally when she understands that it is because of her parent's belief that she could not marry at the appropriate age. The author brings out what Säblä loses in her life. Säblä herself considers her life slavery. Her parents do not give her a chance to choose the person whom she wants to marry. These situations hurt Säblä Wängel and make her to flee.

As Säblä flees from her parents the author revives her life through the water symbol. This asserts the theme that the character prefers her freedom instead of remaining

subservient to the honour her parents want to achieve at the expense of her miseries.

In a similar way, in considering cultural practices in the society, it can be observed that *Yäšðt`ðla* seems to show the negative attitude of the society towards the blind. *Mázámðr* feels this from childhood and it remains with him even though he graduates from the university. He develops a sense of rejection. But when he hears from *Inkut`at`aş* that she loves him and decides to be his life partner his life begins to change. That change is crystallized in the water and star symbol.

The similarity that is noticed between the two authors is that they show the beginning of the new life of the characters by presenting past situations. The difference between the past and the present magnifies the theme of the novel. There are differences in the novels themselves, for in the case of *Fðk`ðr ðskä Mäk`abðr* it is the evils of the feudal system and the attitude of the nobles that is brought out into the open. In *Wägägta* it is the attitude of the society that affects the blind to which the author gives emphasis.

Yet another kind of criticism that *Had:is* presents in *Yälmžat* is the bad manners of the lords depicted in the novel. The character who represents the landlords and who is regularly seen going to church is depicted while attempting to rape *Dämäkäch*. *Kasahun* is respected by the society as a spiritual man. When he is presented naked *Had:is* seems to expose the true nature of the individual in a way readers can

understand. What the writer is doing is to describe the traits of the lords and bring to light the hidden bad manners of the so-called religious individual.

The tradition of criticizing the social system also continuous in the novels of Bərhanu and Bā`alu. Bərhanu describes the old 'Gondär' palace to indicate the decaying of the aristocratic system. The author's use of the symbol appears pertinent to the main ideas of the novel. The narrator seem to be of the opinion that aristocracy has out-lived its days and should be changed through the struggles of progressive and politically prominent figure such as King Tewodros. Bərhanu seems bolder in his presentation because of the time he published the novel. On the other hand, Had:is and Bā`alu place their symbols more subtly. For instance, Fitawrari Tāk:a Boro is portrayed as a progressive character who strives to change the society. Besides, the author states that the house of the aristocrat still maintains its grace, which suggests the place the character has in the feudal system. On the other hand, Bā`alu attempts to show the ineffectiveness of the strategy followed by the aristocrats.

The authors also deal with the imperfections of the cultural practices that affect the life of the society in which the story of the novel is set; for instance, Bā`alu and Andarge present symbols to condemn the backward cultures of the society.

Bā`alu, in Yähl:ina Däwäl, mentions the bell and the drum to broaden the subject he raises in his novel. The drum represents the church and the practices of witchcraft, while the bell stands for modern schools. In this context, when the sound of bell was heard all over Sup`e village, the drum is automatically silenced. Here, the writer seems to convey the idea that the practices of witchcraft which are dominant in the

Sup`e village would be eliminated when the people get education. Similarly, Bā`alu condemns the priests who fail to teach the people not to follow the traditional belief.

In T`ə k`ur Dām, Andarge similarly condemns the culture that pushes individuals to take revenge over the blood of the dead and affects the lives of many families. Through the extermination of the dog and the baboons by killing each other, he, transmits the idea of atrocity committed by some people. Therefore, Ab:a Mähari repents for his past wrong doings and begins to preach the consequences of the bad blood. Bā`alu and Andarge, seem to share the view that to change the tradition, the people have to get the opportunity for education so that they can see the advantages and the disadvantages of the tradition they uphold. Though both writers have similarities in this regard, they have also differences in out looks. Bā`alu stresses that it is through modern education that traditional beliefs can be changed. This is expressed by the sound of the bell symbol in Yähl:ina Däwäl. Andarge, however, gives emphasis to the role the church plays in condemning family feud and hatred.

The last point on the similarities that the novels have is the application of the symbols to show the struggle of the people for their rights and to overthrow the feudal system. Had: is, Bā`alu, Andarge and Haylämäläkot indicate that the people of Ethiopia need to make an effort to free themselves from the exploitation and suppression of the feudal system.

Had:is, in Fək`ər əskä Mäk`abər portrays the contempt Fitawrari Mäšäša has for peasants and the exploitation and suppression he inflicts on them. Such acts make

the peasants to rebel against the landlord and express their determination to fight against him if he does not change the way he treats them.

As the narrator explains, the landlord falls to the hands of the peasants, and is captured while he is running to save his life half naked. It could, thus, be said that the author shows that the peasant who bear the exploitations of the landlord one day would stand up for their rights. Had:is differs in that he satirizes the feudal lords who brag about in their lordship.

The other novels that raise the question of struggle of the people were set in the post revolution 1974. In these novels it seems that the writers praise the revolution and belittle the feudal system through their symbols. For instance, Andarge and Bä`alu associate the revolution with light, which signifies the bright future that the revolution will eventually bring to the people. The writers contrast the revolutionary period with the feudal system. This can be observed from the symbol employed by Andarge with regards to the fall of a tree that stands for the abdication of the monarch. The tree he presented in Dar əskä Dar darkens the area under it. This is an indication that the writer uses the symbol to appreciate the revolution and degrade the feudal system. The writer states that the people were under total darkness and in great despair in the past system. The light of the revolution triumphs over the darkness and brings hope for them.

Andarge and Haylämääläkot associate the political movements started by various bodies and people with symbols such as forest fire, volcano, storm, roaring lion,

eagle, and the ibex. However, Andarge's symbols are related to the armed forces who come together to overthrow the King. Those of Haylāmälākot are linked to the revolution, which overthrows the feudal system; through the struggle of the people.

Conclusion

A good understanding of a literary work can be gained if one gives attention to every part of the whole work and closely looks at the various literary devices that the writer makes use of to achieve his/her goals. One of these devices is the employment of symbols in creative works that give strength and depth to the ideas that the writer wants to convey. Discovering the art of the writers, the roles the symbols play, and

the meaning they carry in that particular literary work could assist readers to fully understand and appreciate the creative work.

Therefore, in this study attempt has been made to identify and analyse the roles the major symbols play in the selected Amharic novels. The researcher has identified that the writers mostly employ animals, nature, the house and buildings, the bell, the drum and nudity. The study has attempted to bring out the similarities and differences observed in use of the symbols. As it is seen from the analysis, the novelists employ the symbols for various purposes. The most common functions of symbols in the studied novels are employment of symbols for enhancing the themes, depicting of characters and their feelings, and criticizing some aspects of the social system and the culture of the society. The other technical function is the foreshadowing of future events.

In the novels of pre-revolution period that are set in the feudal system, the writers in most cases seem to be concerned with exposing of the corruptions of the feudal system, and the suppression of the people. These are suggested through the various symbols used. The authors also criticize the traditions of the landlords. The writers bring to the attention of the reader the necessity of social and cultural changes. However, the novelists do not restrict themselves to exposing the evils of the feudal systems only. Writers like Bă`alu suggest that educating the people is the basis for any change. Had:is, on his part, emphasises the exploitation and suppressions of the feudal system through his symbols. B̂rhanu sees the aristocratic system as a corrupt system that cannot be changed.

The lives of the characters portrayed in the novels through the symbols also suggest the evils done to them by feudal officials. The present situations of the characters enable the readers to contrast the past and the present; and a symbol is employed to magnify the miseries they faced in the system. On the other hand, the writers depict the selfishness of the feudal lords, and their bad manners through their symbols. In this study, it is observed that in some of the novels that were set in the post revolution of 1974 the symbols are mostly used to glorify the revolution. The writers express their optimistic view about the revolution. Besides, they reflect, in most cases, the victory the people get over the feudal lords, and the bureaucracy. On the other hand, the gloomy life the people led under the feudal and aristocratic system is also presented through symbols.

Without exception, all the creative writers whose works are analyzed in this study frequently foreshadow what some of the main characters are going to face in the future. The symbols mostly suggest the bad happenings that await them at the climax of the story.

In this way, some symbols are used to hold the attention of the readers, to generate suspense and to make readers follow the story with eagerness. However, the employment of some of the symbols lack subtlety in foreshadowing the future event either the stories are already narrated or the symbols are interpreted to readers through some of the characters. *Yäšät`əla* foreshadows the bad happening that awaits the main character of *Wägägta*, Yosef, but readers already knew that there was some plans to attack him.

The employment of the universal or the public symbols is what both the pre and post revolution writers commonly use in their novels. In the literary works of some writers, it is

the public symbol that dominates, while in others it is the universal symbol that appears frequently. Among the symbols used in the novels under study the researcher did not encounter symbols that are used to develop the plot of the novels.

Finally, it is identified that the writers draw their symbols from various spheres. It is also observed that the same symbols can be used to convey different meanings, and varied symbols that contrast with each other may convey various meanings. There are also some symbols that stand for only one meaning in the novels.

To sum up, it appears that the same symbols that the pre- revolution writers employ in their works are more interwoven in the story of their novels than in the post revolution writers. This can be attributed to the difference in the writer's experience, and the knowledge of the society and its culture they have accumulated over the years. Besides, the pre- revolution writers present subtly some of their symbols. This kind of presentation is not observed in most of the symbols of the post revolution writers.

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GÇ=e >KT¾G<: 1958:: õp` leÿ Snw`:: >Ç=e >uv' w`H"" cLU T}T>Á u?f::
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2]G<" >eó"<:: 1992:: ¾c'êOö Sc[]"<Á": >Ç=e >uv' "ÓÉ T}T>Á u?f::

¾)=fÄáÁ s"s-« Ø"f" U`U^ T°ŸM:: 1993:: T— S'Ñu nLf: >Ç=e >uv' >`+e+j T}T>Á É`İf::

