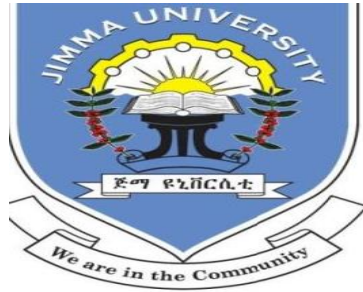


**A Thematic Analysis of *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk*:  
A Comparative Approach**



**Amelework Mesfin**

**A Research Presented to the Department of English Language and  
Literature in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts in English Literature.**

**June, 2017**

**Jimma, Ethiopia**

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A Comparative Approach**

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for the Degree of Master of Arts in English Literature.**

**Jimma University**

**Jimma, Ethiopia**

**June, 2017**

## **Declaration**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, and that it has not been presented for any degree or diploma in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

**Name:**                   Amelework Mesfin

**Signature**    .....

**Date**                   .....

## Confirmation and Approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as thesis advisors.

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## **Abstract**

*The aim of this paper is to study major themes in two different novels written in English which are selected from two different countries Ethiopian and Tanzanian and the two novels are Firebrands and The Wicked Walk. The literary works were written in the 1970 which is the first reason for choosing these two different novels and the other reason is that both novels were written in the English language. A qualitative research method has been used to study the major themes of the two novels of the period. After the two novels were chosen, the next staple was reading and classifying them under the major subject areas. Then the most recurrent themes were identified. After that through the analysis the most recurrent themes were identified and discussed. The study has revealed that both writers have presented several themes in there literary works (novels). During the period in focus there were several themes in the two that enhanced the thematic purpose of the novels. From the themes presented in the novel the theme corruption, ideology of class formation, portrayal of women and innocence were the major ones.*

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# CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

This chapter comprises sub outlines of the introduction, the background of the problem, the statement of research problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Several African writers wrote their literary works based on different issues such as culture, history, myth and day to day life experience of the African people. Those writers used different languages to write their works. Africa is believed to be a multicultural continent compared to other continents of the world, this situation led writers to portray different cultures and languages in their literary works. African authors who wrote their literary work in the Western languages presented. According to Gikandi,,S. F. Abiola Irele, (2004), Africa to the international arena by showing the true nature of social, political, cultural and historical backgrounds of the African people. The authors of this literature were Africans educated both in the traditional educational system of Africa and the European educational system. Chinua Achebe, Wale Soyinka, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Dangachew Worku, are some renowned authors and writers who wrote their work(s) in English language.

Furthermore, most African literatures were written based on the history of the African continent. African literary artists wrote about the traumatic experience of Africans in European and in the American plantation farms. During the colonial periods, African writers had to address the shocking experience of African people under the exploitative rule of the colonizers. Even after independence writers portray different themes about absence of a democratic culture and freedom of speech. Gikandi,,S. F. Abiola Irele. (2004 ). Many African writers have used literature as a peaceful weapon to struggle against any injustice directed to their respective countries in particular and the people of Africa in general. Writers evoked several themes in their literary works. In the period from 1967 to 1977 major literary works were written concerning the theme of political disillusionment.

According to Ogude, (ed, Gikandi,,S. Abiola F 20042004) East African literature is generally known as a literature coming from Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. These three

countries experienced British colonial, writers and writers from those countries reflected on the life experience of colonization. The conferences that took place in Uganda in 1962 were remarkable events in the history of East African literature. During the conference three university students were assembled from East Africa namely Ngugi, Rebecca Njau, and Grace Ogot. Including language, historical and cultural conditions in which African literature was produced different questions were raised during the conference. According to the Gikandi,,S. Abiola F. (2004 ) After the Kampala conference Ngugi's and Okot p'Bitek's major novels were published. On the other hand the establishment of Makerere University of Uganda played a bigger role for the emergence of East African literature in English. The university produced a number of leading East African writers. Until the 1960s, the East African writers had not attained international reputations. From other regions of Africa, East Africa demonstrated a wide range of multiplicity of cultural patterns, languages, ethnic identities and religious practices.

According to Justus, (ed, Gikandi,,S. Abiola F 2004) the eastern region of Africa displays a wide diversity of cultural patterns, languages, ethnic identities and religious practices. Geopolitically, the region encompasses – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, Southern Sudan and Burundi. The region, especially with reference to the first three countries, is normally approached in African literary studies as one heterogeneous unit with a high degree of similarities based on multiracialism and interculturalism emanating from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial contexts

According to Gikandi, (2004) between 1970 and 1980, the betrayal of the idea of independence and official corruption were major themes. East African writing in this area can be seen in three different trends a series of works in which disillusionment with the politics of independence continued to generate important works, discernable trend during this period was one in which writers responded directly to social and political crisis in individual East African countries, and the other one is a set of imaginative works that sought to intervene in the debate revolving around the culture and politics of underdevelopment.

According to Ogude, ( ed, Gikandi,,S. Abiola F,2004) Concerning Tanzanian literature, most literary works in Tanzania were written both in Swahili and English languages. Tanzania's literary scene was significantly influenced by Nyerere's Arusha Declaration of 1967, the official government policy that guided both the political and the cultural life of Tanzania and privileged the use of the Kiswahili language, leading to a burgeoning of Swahili literature. Tanzanian modern literature can be divided into two categories, namely the one which has been written in Swahili which is the major literature and the other one which is written in English but limited in number.

Gikandi,,S. F. Abiola Irele. (2004 ). The Tanzanian literature in English was born after the establishment of Makerere University in Uganda. Some examples of authors in English language from Tanzania are Peter Palangyo, Gabriel Ruhumbika , Abdulrazak Gurnah, and W.E Mkufya. In Tanzania, the first novel in English was published by Peter Palango in the year 1969 titled *Dying In The Sun*. The novel was written on the point view of psychology thematically regarding the obsession of life and death. Following the novel by Peter, other novels were published in 1970s.

The focus of this study was on assessing and comparing of two novels *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk*. The novel, *The Wicked Walk* was written by W.E Mkufya who was one of the renowned writers in Tanzania. According to Elena, B. (2005) William Eliezer Mkufya is a Tanzanian writer who was born in 18<sup>th</sup> June 1953 in Tange, a place in Tanzania. Mkufya is a self trained writer who developed his literary background by reading different literary works. Mkufya produced a number of literary works in different genres like novel, poetry and children's fictions in both Kiswahili and English. His first two novels were published in English. *The Wicked Walk* (1977) was his first one and was translated in Swahili as *kizazihiki* in 1980. Then, his second English novel was published in the title *The Dilemma* (1982).

*The Wicked Walk* was a remarkable novel which is published in 1977 with the publication of Hamza Sokkos *The Gathering Storm*. The novel was translated into Swahili melodrama. The choice of the novel *The Wicked Walk* is due to many factors, for instance, the novel employed several themes that vividly portrayed the masses of the Tanzanian area during

the time. As a result, the novel was suitable for studying the masses at large with *Firebrands* novel from Ethiopia.

Ethiopia is in the Eastern part of Africa, and the country had never been under colonization even though the Italians tried to colonize it, the people fought and gained their freedom from the Italian attempted rule. The earliest literary works of Ethiopia were written in Ge'ez then literatures were translated into Amharic, Guragegna, Tigrigna and Oromigna. The fact is that, countries that were under colonization began using the European language earlier. According to Taddesse, A (1998), Ethiopian literature has remained on the back stage of African literature partly because of its failure to adopt the colonial English language for its creative writing.

According to Taddesse (1998), English language became the official language of instruction at the University of Addis Ababa in the year 1941 after the emperor, Haile Selassie returned from England. The emperor was under refuge of England when Italy invaded Ethiopia. Some Ethiopian writers from abroad start using the English language as their second language to produce some writings in the early 1960s and were known as diasporic writers. Even though the writers adopted the life style of the Europeans on their literary works they thematically showed the truth about Ethiopia. Even though Ethiopia has a long history on literature, the literature published in the English language is a very recent phenomenon. Sahle Sellassie Berhane Mariam, Dagnachew Worku, Abe Gubegna, and Tsegaye G. Medhin are some examples of Ethiopian authors who wrote in English language.

To develop the Ethiopian literature in English language, there is the need for an extensive research into the subject area to advance knowledge and literatures. Considering this the student researcher selected one Ethiopian novel *Firebrands* written by Sahle Sellassie. According to Gikandi,,S. F. Abiola Irele. (2004 ). Sahle Sellassie Berhane Mariam is one of the famous Ethiopian writers who had contributed a lot to the beginning of Ethiopian literature in English language. He was born in Warden village which is found in the Southern part of Ethiopia in the year 1936. Sahle Sellassie was educated in Ethiopia and three different abroad universities. He produced several novels in three different languages including English language, Amharic and Guragegna in which Amharic and

Guragegna are indigenous languages of Ethiopia. Some of his novels are *Shinega's Village* (1940), *The Afersata* (1969), *Warrior King* (1974), and *Firebrands* (1979). These are well known works of the author. Sahle Sellassie was not only a writer but he was also able to translate several literary works. From his major works the novel *Firebrands* was selected to be examined and a comparative analysis conducted with the Tanzanian novel, *The Wicked Walk*.

The works of Sahle Sellassie has dominated the Ethiopian literatures in English. The writer produced several novels in English. Sahle Sellassie has contributed a lot to the Ethiopian English literature. The fact is that, the works of the author haven't been studied sufficiently and extensively. His novel *Afersata* has been reviewed severally more than his other novels. The focus of this study will be on the novel *Firebrands*. Even though the novel is believed to be one of the best novels of the author, the novel hasn't been examined adequately. *Firebrands* employed several facts of Ethiopia during the time just as the novel *The Wicked Walk*, about Tanzania.

It is further said that this is done depicting the life lessons of a man that never heard what he was being told. African literature is divided into two: those writing in native languages such as Kiswahili and Kikuyu and those writing in foreign languages, e.g.; English and French (Wa Thiong'o, 1986).

The African literature is an enormous topic to be dealt within a single research. Instead it is better to deal with the concept in different sub topics. The focus of this study is assessing and analyzing the themes of the selected two novels comparatively, in the way that can answer what is common between these novels and the way the authors portray the then society. Authors dealt with the problem of the society as vividly as possible. So there are novels that enable us to see the majority of the people of each country with ups and downs. Therefore the researcher chose to examine these two novels.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Literature in English is an increasingly international, phenomenon as writers all over the world, from the Pacific, Asia, Africa, and the West Indies as well as from the traditional

centers in Britain and the United States of America use English as a medium for fiction and poetry' (Dasenbrock, 1987).

A number of thematic analyses have been done on African literature by several researchers and critics. These researchers and critics have explored different themes portrayed in different literary works. In fact conducting a thematic study on literary works is very important and will contribute a lot to the development of literature.

Apart from some studies conducted by graduate students of Addis Ababa University, and other universities in Ethiopia, Ethiopian literary works in English have not been examined sufficiently due to different factors. Some of these factors may be lack of interest in the study area, lack of adequate source about the literature itself due to this and other factors studies conducted in this area is still insufficient and limited.

Furthermore, the primary focuses of African writers are the social issues, so a part from the artistic value of literature it is taken as a means of showing the daily life's of the masse. Hence researching the thematic area of African novels is critical for understanding of the overall life aspects of the people.

The focus of this study is to conduct a thematic analysis of two different novels from two different writers from two countries of East Africa, namely: *Firebrands* by Sahle Sellassie from Ethiopia and *The Wicked Walk* by W.E Mkufya from Tanzania. The first problem that motivated the researcher to do this research is that both literary works are written in the same period and both novels are written in English language. Given the above problems the researcher attempted to fill the gaps by carrying out this research.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This research attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the thematic concerns in each of the selected two novels *The Wicked Walk* and *Firebrands*?
- 2) How do the themes in the novel enhance the thematic purpose of the novel?
- 3) What are the similarity and the difference between the themes in two novels?

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1 General objective**

The general objective of the study is to assess and examine the themes in two novels comparatively *The Wicked Walk* and *Firebrands*.

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To assess the thematic concerns of the two novels.
2. To assess how the presented themes in the two novels enhance the thematic purpose of the novel.
3. To assess and identify the similarity's and the difference between the two novels.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The researcher believes that conducting this research will be important in several ways.

- The findings of this research help readers and relevant stakeholders to understand the major themes that have been employed in the novels under examination
- Conducting this research helps readers and stakeholders to understand what common literary themes are shared by the two countries represented in this research work.
- The study seeks to motivate and inspire other researchers to conduct other thematic comparative literature analysis on other novels.
- Other researchers may use this research work as reference material for future for related research works.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the comparative analysis of the two novels *Firebrands* by Sahle Sellassie and *The Wicked Walk* by W.E. Mkufya focusing on their themes. The researcher critically read the two novels and identified the major themes portrayed in the novels and finally a comparative analysis was made based on their themes as presented in the novels under examination.



## **CHAPTR TWO: Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework**

### **2. Introduction**

The focus of this chapter will be reviewing related literatures to the selected research title a thematic analysis of two novels *Firebrands* by Sahle Sellassie from Ethiopia and *The Wicked Walk* by W.E. Mkufya from Tanzania. Under this chapter any possible literatures and thematic researches conducted on East African literature in English will be reviewed.

### **2.1 Related Works**

A number of local and global studies have been conducted on thematic analysis of African literature written in English language. An attempt has been made below to provide a brief review of these researches.

Bayleyegn Ayalew (2011) conducted a research on two novels of Sahle Sellassie which are written in English language. *Realism in Sahle Sellassie Berhane Mariam's Warrior*

*King and The Afersata*. In his research Bayleyegn found that the two novels of Sahle Sellassie, *The Afersata* and *Warrior King* portrayed the real events of Ethiopian history. According to the researcher the novel *Warrior King* was written without any exaggeration and fantasy since the novel is a historical novel. It is about Emperor Tewodros. In the novel the author portrayed different themes. Some of them are family, brevity and military hero. On the other novel *The Afersata* the researcher found that the novel was written based on a real experience of the Gurage people in the past, in the novel different themes are revealed political corruption, social insecurity and economic woes are some of them.

The research conducted by Bayleyegn (2011) is related in some ways to the research done. The first is that the study was done on two novels which are written in English. But what makes this research from Bayleyegn is that he focused on the literary works written by the same person in which the two novels are written by an author whose novel is selected for the coming study on hand. The focus of Bayleyegn's research is on realism of two novels which are written based on a single country. But the coming research will see other issues basing on the themes of the two novels from the point view of two authors from different countries.

Endalkachew Hailu (2008) in the title *The Predicament Of The Diaspora As Reflected In The Texture Of Dreams And The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* is another research conducted on thematic issues according to his research of Themes of emptiness, frustration, disillusionment, homesickness, and racism and discrimination are the major parallel themes in both novels. In Fasil's novel disillusionment is closely connected with unemployment and fear of unemployment while reversal of roles in home and abroad and differed dreams are the main causes of disillusionment in Dinaw's novel, Lack of interest, purpose or meaning in the daily occupations in the host land results in frustration and loneliness in Fasil's novel. Frustration as a result of loss engendered disinterest in life and disillusionment is a constant companion of the characters in Dinaw's novel. Emptiness or lack of meaning and purpose in one's life is the central focalizing theme in both novels.

Emptiness is found to be the result and at the same time cause of frustration, disillusionment, homesickness, nostalgia and loss in some situations. And the protagonists of both novels seek deliverance from emptiness through love. The emptiness in Dinaw's novel is connected to a painful loss and is thus deeper isolating the protagonist to seclusion. But in Fasil's novel the protagonist treats his emptiness through maintenance of contact. Homesickness is depicted as the cause of emotional instability in Fasil's novel, while in Dinaw's novel the bitter memories of home make homesickness to be overshadowed by loss leading the immigrants to seek escape through games and alcoholism. In both novels, racism and discrimination is revealed as the common problem of American society. And the immigrant characters face direct and aversive racism both as immigrants and as blacks. In Dinaw's novel this theme is relatively better handled showing the humiliation, wounded self-esteem and alienation immigrants reap from it. Economic and political woes of the homeland are among the themes shared by the two novels. And poverty, human rights violations, horrors of war, injustice and corruption are revealed in both novels. But *The Texture of Dreams* more successfully brought out these themes compared to Dinaw's novel. Other themes shared by the two novels are lust for love and acculturation. Acculturation is described well in all its stages from initial bewilderment or culture shock to gradual blending-in in Fasil's novel. Dinaw's novel with its extreme precision treats this theme sparingly. Failure to acculturate leads to culture shock, mockery, unemployment and alienation in Fasil's novel. In both novels, immigrants often face the loss of their dear social and cultural values due to acculturation. Identity crisis and loss also result from acculturation in Dinaw's novel. Lust for love as a result of the continuous emptiness in their lives makes the protagonists of both novels fall in love. And race, class and ideological differences make winning a soul mate difficult. Lust for love with the difficulties of winning a soul mate in the host land is successfully revealed in both novels.

The study conducted by Endalkachew Hailu focuses on two Diaspora novels. is Mulualem Denbegna's thesis in Addis Ababa University at postgraduate level in 2006 on 'Aspects of Feminism in Amadi's *The Concubine* and *The Great Ponds* and Emecheta's *Second-Class Citizen*, applying a post structuralist approach. In the review of related literature part, he incorporates the discussion on feminism as a socio-political influence

of feminism of African women, feminism as a major literary movement, contributions of feminist narrative, post-structuralism, feminist narrative as post-structural narrative and some prior research works on the same field. He argues that the oppression of women by tradition is not to straightforwardly express their feelings and their overload of household activities as reflected in the novels. He also tried to show the act of deconstructing dominant masculine discourses by putting instances out of the novels. Then he puts that even though the texts seem to present male domination over female, the writers implicitly say against the oppression by saying it is indefensible sin. Finally, he asserts as the writers expose biased and backward traditions against female group and deconstructs the dominant discourse by depicting women characters as wise, strong and courageous. At the end, Muluaem recommends all responsible bodies to work hand-in-hand at least to minimize the violation of both human and democratic rights of women.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Introduction**

Under the discussion of the theoretical framework theories and concepts from which perspective from which the researcher approach her study would be discussed. Hence, in line other literature, concepts like corruption, ideology of class, and portrayal of women were the focus of this paper. These concepts may have various meanings and interpretations in different fields, but there meaning in literature are discussed here in these paper.

#### **2.2.1.1 Comparative**

According to Bijay, (2000) every literature has its own specific character of form, style, images, symbols, nuances and associations etc. Having this thing in view, we realize the fact that French literature is dissimilar from English literature, from German literature and Russian literature. Similarly, if closely seen Bengali literature differs from Marathi, Tamil or Hindi literatures. They are not different just because the fact that they are written in different languages but because the fact that all these literatures developed under the influence of different socio- historic environment. There are many similarities and dissimilarities among them.

The term 'Comparative Literature' is difficult to define for it evolves not one but two or even more than two literatures in comparison at the same time. It becomes still more difficult task when the comparatist has to take into consideration the multi-dimensional aspects of comparative literature such as-linguistic, cultural, religious, economic, social and historical factors of different societies.

Comparative literature analyses the similarities and dissimilarities and parallels between two literatures. It further studies themes, modes, conventions and the use of folk-tales, myths in two different literatures or even more. Bijay (2000)

Comparative literature is a study of relationships between two or more literatures. For example - English literature, American literature, Canadian literature, Australian literature, Indian English literature and Caribbean literature - all are written in English language. The study of comparative literature encompasses all these literatures in its scope.

The other definition is given by Posnett, (1886) Comparative literature means the general theory of literary evolution, the idea that literature passes through stages of inception, culmination and decline.

Another approach is given by

Comparative literature studies can include the application of the usual aesthetic values to a literature an understanding of the different literary movement and tendencies of an age, studies of themes and idea that appear in different literatures, and finally the study of genre, of structures and patterns. But perhaps the most important of all are the literary relations.( Manikar, )

From the definitions given by different scholars this research adopted the approach given by Bijay (2000). As it has been discussed above comparative literature, as a subject of study the comparatist must keep a balance between expansion and concentration; make use of

new tools and techniques for analyzing the features of a work. Based on this framework the researcher has assessed the similarities and the difference in the thematic aspect of the two novels.

### **2.2.1.2 Theme in Literature**

The term “Theme” simply implies the central message of a given story in which a writer wants to transfer to his readers. It comes from the word *Latin; thema* which means something lay down. Bijay (2000) the term themes literally interpreted would include various thematological categories such as motif, recurrent images etc. The study of themes may also take into account 'associations' of all types governed and directed by a variety of psychological and cultural factors which establish rules and patterns for them.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is based on these ideas point of views that the researcher would use the concept of the themes in this research. As a result the researcher discussed the main thematic concerns of the two authors of the two novels.

### **2.2.1.3 Corruption as a Theme of Literature**

According to Berihun, (2013) corruption is a problem which hinders development, peace, democracy and human rights.

As the causes and effects of corruption are different depending on the context of the country, it is perhaps not surprising that it is difficult to formulate a single comprehensive definition that covers all the manifestations of corruption. Berihun, (2013)

Corruption can be seen as one factor that hinders the development of Africa. Many African people were expecting change after independence. But things did not come the way they were expected. The issue of corruption is the biggest issue of many literature works these days. Several authors presented the issue of corruption in their writing. Some of them include: Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Ayi Kwei Armah.

Corruption is defined as a wrongdoing on the part of an authority or powerful party through means that are illegitimate, immoral, or incompatible with ethical standards. Corruption often results from patronage and is associated with bribery. (Baldick, 2008).

The research was conducted with these in mind and in one way or the other the two novels under examination enhanced the theme corruption. In the two selected novels, we can find either of these forms of corruption or all of them. Therefore, it is in the line with the above different forms of corruption that the novels are analyzed.

#### **2.2.1.4 Ideology of Social Class as Understood in Literature.**

As it has been understood, all societies are stratified along one or more lines which is comprised of race/ethnicity, sex/gender, age, religion, and disability. Social stratification implies a hierarchical arrangement when people are ranked along some dimension of inequality which influences the social rewards to those in the positions (Dunn, 2010). “Social stratification refers to a system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy”. Another definition about social class stratification is a process by which a society is divided in different layers or strata, based on factors like level of education, occupation, income and wealth. The people who live within the same strata are members of the same social class. The other definition was by Wikipedia (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/.../>) class stratification is a form of social stratification in which society tends to divide into separate class whose class struggle is the active expression of a theoretical *class conflict* looked at from any kind of socialist perspective.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, leading ideologists of communism, wrote *The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle*. Marx’s notion of class has nothing to do with *social class* in the sociological sense in terms of quantitative income or wealth. Instead, in an age of capitalism, Marx describes an economic class. Class struggle becomes more important in the historical process as it becomes more general, as industries are organized rather than crafts, as workers’ class consciousness rises, and as they are organized as political parties. Marx talks mainly about two classes in the vast the capitalists (or bourgeoisie), who owned the means of production, and the workers (or proletariat), who sold their labor for wages. He believed that the classes would remain divided and social inequality and this will continue to grow. Furthermore social class stratification has been one main concern of literary authors. Based on those definitions the theme social class stratification has been assessed and examined for a comparison in *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk*.

### **2.2.1.5 Portrayal of Women in literary works**

Several African literary works portray the women character in different shades. The image of women is presented in different ways in different literatures. Feminism is a significant issue today, since it is the matter of all women in all parts of the world. Hence, many researchers are usually interested to investigate different aspects of feminism in different times. Among these, scholars in literature try to approach literary texts by employing different feminist literary theories. According to Shukla (2006) (ed. Abiola, F & Simon, G) Feminism is basically a political movement that includes the acting, speaking, writing and advocating on behalf of women's issues. Everywhere and anywhere in the world, women have been considered second class to man. In most cultures men take pleasure in most or all positions of power that is why those cultures are called patriarchies. These initiate women to fight for their rights under the shade of feminism that is against the domination. The word patriarchy can be broadly defined as the superiority of men over women in a certain society. In this male oriented rule, women face diverse degrees of oppression depending on their race, customs, socio-economic class, religion and the country or region in which they live. Feminism, therefore, focuses on spotting prejudices against females and to at least lessening their problems with regard to repression. In the same vein, Shukla puts that "Feminism is a concept emerging as a complaint in opposition to male control and marginalization of women (2006:1). Issue of women was a major concern for the research work and this informed the choice of this topic as it deals with issues pertaining to women in society in the two novels under examination, and how women were addressed in the literatures from the two countries (Ethiopia and Tanzania) particularly in the 1970s.



## **CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The method that has been employed to conduct this study is a qualitative method. In this sub-section, the research design, the instruments used for the data collection, sampling procedure and data analysis procedure are discussed.

### **3.2 Design of the study**

The first important part of research methodology, which this research work underscores, was the issue of research design. For this particular research qualitative research design was adapted because it is appropriate for descriptive purposes this Research design involves identifying extracts for the research, from the two novels. The focus of the study was to assess and compare the themes which are presented in the two novels, from two East African writers *Firebrands*. by Sahle Sellassie and *The Wicked Walk* by W.E. Mkufya.

### **3.3 . Nature of the Data**

In this study the selected two novels are used as a primary data to collect the extracts which is more relevant to the thematic analysis of the study. In addition to the primary data, related studies and books used so as to develop the study.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The student researcher has used comparative analysis as it is appropriate for the study planed. The student researcher extracted major ideas from the two novels which are related directly to the study after reading the two novels critically. Then, the interpretation of the selected extracts was done to discuss themes such as, corruption, social class stratification and the image of women. After working on the theme of the two novels individually, the student researcher attempted a comparative analysis on the two novels. The results coming from the analysis was presented and the discussion was accompanied in the last chapter of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: Thematic Analysis of *Firebrands***

### **5.1 Introduction**

This section presents the analysis of the novel *Firebrands*. Under this chapter, the themes portrayed in the novel are explored and analyzed. The analysis of the novel consists of the following four sections: introduction, synopsis, analysis and conclusion.

#### **5.1.1 Synopsis of *Firebrands***

The Title of the novel is *Firebrands* written by Sahle Sellassie in the year 1979. The novel was published in Great Britain. The novel has 173 pages which contain five sub topics *The Appointment, The Corruption, The Gathering Clouds, The Upheaval* and *The Release*. According to Taddesse Adera (1998) *Firebrands* was published after the five years bloody Ethiopian revolution. The novel was written in the time of Emperor Haile Sellassie regime. The novel starts by the conversation between Bezuneh and his brother Worku in which they were arguing to go to a party at Ato Kebret's house who is the boss of Bezuneh. But Worku refused to go with Bezuneh. The party was taking place at a villa where Ato Kebret and his family lived. The party was prepared to congratulate the former government official, Ato Kebret that he was appointed as a managing director with the rank of a minister. And beginning from Ato Kebret's house the story goes all the way down by showing how the government official's act on their position and how loyal people suffer in their offices because of the corrupt bosses they have like the character named Bezuneh faced several problems in his work places fighting against corruption and finally he was the winner and he put the corrupt officials in jail.

#### **5.1.3 Major themes in *Firebrands***

The novel *Firebrands* employed several themes. From those themes in the novel, the major ones are selected for analysis. After a critical reading, three major themes were selected for analysis. As stated above, Sahle Sellassie's novel employed several themes which are expressive of the situation of the imperial time. On the analysis part, three major themes were analyzed in detail, first corruption then, social class stratification and the portray of women. This does not mean *Firebrands* employ only those three themes but the focus of the study are on the main themes.

#### 5.1.4.1 Corruption in *Firebrands*

In his novel Sahle Sellassie presented corruption in detailed manner through the characters he created. They all played their part clearly in a way that can show the theme. The novel highly enhanced the issue of corruption in the imperial time. The theme of corruption is mainly reflected on the second part of the novel. In which the theme of corruption having its own subtitle: *The Corruption*. Sahle Sellassie fictionalized the reality which took place during the imperial time. According to the novel most high post workers during this time uses their position as a means of getting what they want. At the beginning of the second part of his novel, the author started by pointing out thought of many high post workers.

‘This is his opportunity’ Azbete heard his wife say to Tarikua. ‘Sishom yalbella sishar yikotchewal’. She was reminding her friend of the old Ethiopian adage that ‘he who does not enrich himself while in office regrets it when removed from office’. Appointment to a high post meant many different things to many different people. (p.17)

The above statement states Kebret’s opportunity and Kassech was telling Tarikua about the opportunity he got and how he needs to use his position to his personal interest before he got removed from his post. Here, Tarikua seemed confused about her friend’s suggestion. Political past during the time was taken as an opportunity to enrich themselves. The Amharic proverb in the extract shows that corruption is open among politicians. Hence, if a man is appointed in politics, he and his nearer families and friends will be beneficial.

Below is another extract that shows the fact that Ato Kebret himself thinks about stealing the wealth of his country through corruption. This voice in a monologue from shows that he has already been convinced to talk his share from the wealth of the nation using his political post.

“Take full advantage of your post, but take care not to expose yourself; rambler that theft not discovered is not theft: If anything is achieved in your work pace take all credit to yourself and pose as a hero; if nothing is

achieved, or worse still if something goes wrong find a scapegoat –pass the blame on your subordinates; never do today what you can do tomorrow; don't be straight in words or action, be crooked or at least more crooked than your subordinates; be vague in writing or speaking never try to a too clear, never have faith in a man, be ever suspicious and doubtful; don't reveal your true personality, put up appearances instead, be impersonal and detached; don't betray softness or humanity in your conduct; then, and only then may you hope to succeed in life in the imperial regime..... (p.31).

In the above paragraph, the writer stated the way in which high post workers think about corruption. Even though they know conducting, corruption is a crime and it is wrong but they practice it in different ways and as long as they are not caught, it is like part of their job. And they all know how to conduct corruption, which is the best way, and what situations expose the act and how to take care from being caught. On the last part of the paragraph it was stated that the act of corruption is the way of success in the imperial regime. Here, we can understand that for many successful people at this regime the result was corruption. Bezuneh as a fresh graduate, his knowledge about corruption was very limited and he was always surprised whenever he finds out the way it is conducted. Bezuneh is characterized by his act of avoiding the practice of corruption.

On the other hand Ato Kebret is characterized by his criminal activity. He is the boss of Bezuneh. Before Bezuneh finds the true personality of Ato Kebret he trusted him very much. He even got into an argument with customers like Ato Bushra about Ato Kebret's honesty. But he was betrayed by his boss after Ato Bushra told the truth to him.

As indicated in the theoretical framework of this research, the classification of corruption has been stated clearly. On his novel, the writer almost illustrated all types of corruption. But from this classification minor corruption was very much employed in the novel. The character Ato Kebret has conducted this sort of corruption several times.

Several times in past he had been of service to Kebret, especially at one time when Kebret had had serious car accident in the street, injuring a

passer-by the police lieutenant had rung the situation concerned and saved Kebret from being dragged to court which would have been a nuisance and humiliation to any self respecting official of the imperial regime.... (p.28).

Due to the favor he got from the lieutenant Kebret wanted to pay back his debt and there he did by employing the lieutenant's wife as his personal secretary. These situations bring them more close friends in which when Kebret was appointed to a higher post her secretary post was also raised as a vice-minister.

“If corruption is to be checked, sir immediate action should be taken on the stuff concerned. Otherwise, it will continue as before.”

“Yes, yes, of course; you see, this corruption had no control in the past, especially before I was appointed to head it, and manly of our stuff took it for granted that they are given a free hand to management the business.....” (p.33)

The above dialogue between Bezuneh and Ato Kebret took place when Ato Kebret called Bezuneh to his office and told him about bid business they are about to make and Ato Kebret wants to know Bezuneh's attitude towards corruption. Here, Kebret was acting very honest and devoted for his job. And, Ato Kebret wanted to develop the trust that Bezuneh has for him. Sometimes, there are some people who are devoted in their work and avoid corruption. And for that matter they don't even know what is going on in their work area, Bezuneh is an example of such kind of employees. So Bezuneh as characterized by Ato Kebret as if he knows nothing about reality of doing businesses. Here goes the extract that portrays that fact:

.....you fresh graduates although well trained the theoretical aspect of business do lack practically. This is not of course your fault.” He allowed himself a faint smile. (p.35)

In this dialogue Ato Kebret was blaming the teachers for not teaching their students how to use their power to change their life in which Bezuneh was wondering what Ato Kebret

was talking about. This is how politicians degraded active workers without any corruption. Bezuneh is a solid country worker who knows nothing about corruption. That is why Ato Kebret degrades his working moral.

“.....you note who the winner is, and finally you give the business to the white man who charges you the highest price. I have not asked for any favor on account of my being an Ethiopian, Ato Bezuneh I wished to compete fairly with all other interested business man, Ethiopians and non Ethiopians.” (p.37).

This was the dialogue between Ato Bushra and Bezuneh. In which Ato Bushra found out Ato kebret used his power to choose the Whiteman to do the business. This is due to the fact that the white man saves certain percentage of money for Ato Kebret in the name of discount. That amount of money usually goes to Ato Kebret’s private pocket. What Aba Bushra wanted was a fair business achievement that was impossible due to Ato Kebret’s corrupt personality. That is why Aba Bushra was now discussing the matter with Bezuneh. But, Bezuneh still was blind and deaf about Kebret’s hidden personality. It was due to this fact that he asked Aba Bushra as:

“Who told you that we were giving the business to the highest quoter?”

“I have my own sources of information, Ato Bezuneh.”( p.37).

Bezuneh was very surprised when Ato Bushra told him what he didn’t know. In fact he was arguing about his boss’s honesty. He couldn’t suspect him. When he heard what Ato Kebret has done, he was shocked.

Below is the other conversation between Aba Bushra and Bezuneh. From their conversation, we can understand that Kebret was involved is an open corruption. Even though Bezuneh has no idea about what is going on. And the second statement Ato Bushra raised shows the same kind of corruption is being conducted in other corporations. This was retrieved in the following extract as:

It is not just that, Aba Bushra went on to say with the same sly smile as before. ‘The white man is giving one present discount to the corporation,

and two present more to your managing director. This is between you and me’

‘You are a new man in this corporation, Ato Bezuneh but I have a lot business contact with the corporation the last three years, and I know, why the white man’s business flourished in the country.(p.39)

The novel, *Firebrands* shows how the government officials use their position for their own interest and the people they know close to them. This kind of corruption is called nepotism. Nepotism is the practice among those with power or influence of favoring relatives or friends, especially by giving different jobs in the place they work or by other means. Below there are extracts that show this situation.

#### Extract no.1

It was true that Azbete had had a hand in kebret’s appointment. Although he was not directly involved in nomination he knows those who were making and unmaking officials in the imperial government. As he himself was one of the most influential and powerful man in the country. (p.14)

.... Are you interested in a piece of land in my province?’ he always referred to the province he was assigned to ‘ my province’ as though he in fact owned it, as though it were his private property.

Who is not interested in a piece of land, Dejzasmach sir?’

#### Extract no.2

There is plenty of land for sale in my province, ledje kebret, if you are really interested in buying some. Of course you can have forty hectares for noting like other servants of the state, provided you have the time.... (p.22)

On the first and second extracts we can see a conversation between Azbete and Kebret. On the conversation, Azbete is offering land to Kebret. When Dejzasmach offers the land

to Kebret he was ignoring the noise of the land owners. From this, we can understand that those officials after they came to power the only thing they give care is about building their wealth by taking or stealing from the poor.

The other extract that shows this situation is Dejazmach Azbete's wife, W/ro Kassech asked Kebret to hire her America learnt daughter Chucu at his corporation. This shows that Nepotism is the practice among those with power or influence of favoring relatives or friends, especially by giving those jobs.

Try to find her an opening. If there is non-create one for her, kebreye;

it should not be difficult for you to do that' ..... (p.59)

In the next extract, Bezuneh is complaining to his mother about the police that were behind him.

'They are killing us' he cried.'

'Who?'

'The policemen, the pigs.'

'Why should they?'

' Because we say no.'

'No to what?'

'To corruption, feudalism, oppression, misery...we say no to everything the rotten imperial government stands for.'(p.132)

The above dialogue was between woizero Debitu and Bezuneh. These dialogues took place when Bezuneh came home chased by the policeman. Bezuneh was very upset when he came home; he was even crying when his mother asked him what happened to him. For being honest, he was facing danger for being loyal to his work. In this conversation, the writer tries to enrich the issue of freedom to speak. In the imperial regime, when people do things, they have to be assured it is in the favor of their bosses.



#### **5.1.4.2 Ideology of Social class in *Firebrands***

In his novel, *Firebrands* Sahel Sellassie employed the ideology of social class as a theme in the time of the imperial regime. His novel shows the life difference between the high post government officials and the low paid employees. By employing the house they live in the cars they drive and the like. In Ethiopia during the centuries of imperial rule depended on ones land holdings which provided the basis for class formation and stratification. The emperor, the nobility, and the land lords occupied the social hierarchy's high positions.

Extract no.1

His house, like the house of the entire upper bourgeoisie, was well detached from the surrounding shacks of the poor by a low stone wall topped by a row of iron spikes, the sharp ends of which sparkled in the sun during the day. (p.13)

Extract no.2

The house itself was made of stone and placed on a high, above ground foundation so that the street outside the fence, and the houses beyond it were visible from both the wide verandah and the drawing room of the house. (p.13)

The above two extracts elucidate the house of Kebret. The house was structured to separate the upper class from the lower class. The upper class and the lower class in this case are used to indicate the life of the poor and rich or the life of a government official and an ordinary person. The government officials who are like Ato Kebret only focus on changing their life standard. Even they don't care how their work place looks like. The next extract shows how one of government offices looks like.

..... The court attendants sat in rows of wooden benches, shoulder to shoulder, behind the court clerk, the first row of benches was occupied by Dr. Mandefrot, Takori, other law students, and reporters from the dailies. Woizero Kassech, Tarikua, Kebret's secretary, and other staff from the

corporation occupied the second row of benches, while woizero Debitu, Ato Taddesse, Worku, their neighbors and acquaintance occupied the third row. The rest of the court attendants either huddled together on the remaining seats or stood on either side of the entrance to the court room. (p.90).

And the life Benzene's family can be an example of a low class society. Even though their life is not satisfactory, Bezuneh has no any interest in engaging in corruption. Furthermore Sahel Sellassie wanted to show that the life difference between politicians and the ordinary people. This is clearly shown by taking the life of politicians and the rest like Bezuneh family. Besides, the writer clearly portrayed the mentality of the new generation and the old. Bezuneh represented the new generation of Ethiopia represented as a *Firebrands* by the author. The old on the other hand is represented by Ato Kebret and his relatives.

Still, we have additional extracts as high depicted the social class among the politically the other citizens. This is given in the following two extracts.

Extract no.1

The madbet was a simple structure with a roof at the back of the main house. It was used for baking enjera, the traditional Ethiopian bread, for cooking, for brewing tella, and for strong firewood and utensils. It was a workshop, a sort of an appending the main house.

Extract no. 2

The main house itself was a very modest building with a small living-room, and two bedrooms, one for Ato Taddesse and woizero Debitu, and the other, close to the madbet, for Bezuneh and Worku. (p.66).

These two extracts show Bezuneh and his family life. It was in a modest house not far from the University Bezuneh and Worku were living with their parents. The brothers share a room. The next extract was taken from the argument Worku and Takori had. The

two friends were discussing and debating about the politics which suddenly turned into arguments. This has been indicated as follows:

Amhara peasants feel superior to the non-Amhara peasants because the ruling class is composed of Amhara's. The Amhara workers feel superior to the non Amhara workers for some reasons. And even the Amhara intelligentsia-teachers, journalists, writers, students and the like-believe in the superiority of the Amhara tribe. Even you, Worku believe deep in your heart that the Amhara tribe is a super tribe, a first- class subject of the crown. (p.47)

The above extract shows the superiority of the ruling class ethnically and how the other ethnic group was discriminated on the imperial regime. In the imperial regime the ruling class was from the Amhara region.

Takori was studying law to fight the injustice his parents were suffering under the hands of Dejazmach Azbete. He was a youngster who spoke his mind upfront and who believed non Amharas and citizens outside the domain of the orthodox religion to less preferential treatment during the emperor Haileselesie Regime. The author used Takori as an agent to the tribalism; ethnic discrimination and the expropriation of the land Takori's ethnic group were suffering.

The other character who was employed in *Firebrands* is a woman who works in Woizero Kassech's house the woman who is there house maid. In several novels or other literatures women are depicted as a maid and most of the time those women are like trash in *Firebrands*. The other character employed was Woizero Kassech's maid. This is a verbal abuse that the servant suffered from her mistress also throws light on the double fold discrimination women from the lower class were subjected to.

'You cow of a maid do I have to call out twice before you bring something from the kitchen? Now don't stand like a statue there. Bend down and pure the honey- wine in to the glass. Don't spill it are you possessed by the devil or something? Go Go Go away and bring a rag. Don't stare at me like that, you horse-faced caw Just fetch a rag and clean the table. You

must have left your heart in the kitchen sink to spill the drink like that. ...”

(p.122)

In the above extract, woizero Kassech was yelling at her maid because she was late to bring snacks and drinks to the guests on time. From this extract we can understand that people who are working as a servant or other works may face the discrimination by being insulted or forced to do jobs more than their capacity. Most of the time those maids who are employed in people's houses come from the lower class or society by different reasons. Employers like woizero Kassech distinguish their maids like trash.

#### **5.1.4.3 Marginalization women in *Firebrands***

In *Firebrands* Sahle Sellassie employed women in several ways. In the novel women are shown as marginalized characters, those characters are being insulted and undermined as a wife but these women are playing a large role in their family, who push their husbands to do something that is good for their family. Example extract we can see this situation clearly. The next extract shows a kind of wife who encourages her husband to do corruption:

‘You have to influence him, dear. That is why you are his wife,’ Kassech said, lifting the glass to taste the liquor. ‘I know that Kebret is a little reserved about such matters, but you have to urge him not to be bashful, you know what I mean, dear,’ she giggled more. (p.18)

The above statement was given by Kassech to Tarikua. Here, Kassech was convincing Tarikua to influence her husband Kebret to be more active and take his chance before he loses his power. From Kassech's suggestion we can understand that women have the power to influence others. Here Kassech was convincing Tarikua to force her husband to engage in corruption. In fact from her suggestion this is not the only thing we understand from the statement, on the other hand the part of women as a wife is to push their husbands to do something.

The other woman that Sahle Sellassie presented in his novel is the character of Woizero Debitu, the mother of Bezuneh who is very devoted to her family caring and taking all the burden of the family by herself. This can be seen on the next extract as:

‘How about father’

‘You know his habits, or have you forgotten about that.’

‘I thought he would improve.’

‘No, Bezuye, no.’

‘And you late him be like that?’

‘What can I do, Bezuye? I am a woman; I can’t fight him.....’(p.156)

The above conversation was between Bezuneh and his mother woizero Debitu. On their conversation Bezuneh was asking his mother about his father. According to their conversation we can conclude that Benzene’s father is irresponsible person who did not care about his family but himself. The extract continues defining the behavior of Bezuneh’s father.

‘What can I do, Bezuye? I said I am a women, I can’t fight him. Look what he has done to me. He come home very much drunk, one night, and angered by some trifle which I can’t remember now he flung water can in my face, and cut my skin. You can see the mark here, cant you?’

‘Yes of course?’

He did it when he was absolutely drunk, you understand, and begged me to forgive him the next day. You know how he is and I forgive him. I hope God forgave him too...’(p.157)

From the above conversation it can be said that woizero Debitu is not only suffering from the up’s and downs of life but also her life partner is not willing to share the burden with her. He even beat her when he gets home drunk. Woizero Debitu is covering for her husband, she don’t want the kids to have bad attitude towards their father. When Debitu said “what can I do?” it shows she got no other option and she is complaining for being women when she say “I am a women” because of her sex she is forced to live the life she hates. Even though Debitu has had a rather difficult life, she has always put her children’s needs first which truly shows her deep affection for her children as a mother.

Besides, in the novel, it is also depicted that women consider themselves as inferior to men.

In general writer Sahle Sellassie employed three major themes, on his novel *Firebrands*. These themes are Corruption social class stratification and the image of women in different writing styles. In his novel issues of corruption were mainly employed and most of his words enhanced the theme corruption clearly. On the issue of social class stratification the writer engaged characters and settings which showed the class difference. These differences are shown between individuals, a group of people which are referred as lower class and upper class and ethnic groups.

## **CHAPTER SIX: Thematic Analysis of *The Wicked Walk***

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents an assessment on the thematic concern of the novel *The Wicked Walk* by W.E Mkufya. The findings has shown how the writer enhanced the themes in the novel and in what way the themes enhance the thematic target of the novel.

#### **6.1.1 Synopsis of *The Wicked Walk***

*The Wicked Walk* was written by William Eliezer Mkufya and it was written in 1977 in Dares salaam, Tanzania and the novel contains 108 pages. *The Wicked Walk* is a story of a young girl named Nancy, and her prostitute mother who used to live in a poor village. Nancy was a beautiful school girl, who faced several difficulties to survive in life. The novel opens with the death of Maria hanging herself. Maria is the mother of Nancy and the story continues showing the cause that led Maria to hang herself. Nance was the only daughter for Maria in which she was born from the brother of Maria. Maria has no idea he was her brother. Maria and Nancy got into quarrels several times. Maria always tries to protect her daughter from following her footsteps. And Nancy did not like that. Suddenly, Nancy met an old man who is a manager in a company, his name is Magege and she was seduced by his money, at the same time she fell in love with a young handsome man who was employed in the company of Magege. His name is Deo. Deo was willing to marry Nancy ignoring the bad names given to her. Unfortunately she gets pregnant for the old manager and he forced her to abort it and after an illegal abortion she died of hemorrhage and this situation led Maria to kill herself.

#### **6.1.2 Major Themes in the Novel**

There are numerous themes in the novel *The Wicked Walk*, namely: prostitution as image of women, a social class stratification and corruption. But the focus of the study was on the three basic themes of the novel corruption, social class stratification and the image of women.

### 6.1.2.1 Corruption in *The Wicked Walk*

In *The Wicked Walk*, the character Magege corrupted the villagers of Livingstone which is the village Nancy and her mother lived. Magege does not pay the wages for the workers on time. The employees suffered from hunger due to his irresponsibility's. Magege only focused on his personal interests. Magege is known by corruption, he uses the company resources to get money and young girls from school and Nancy was one of such victims.

‘Sugar daddies, said Frank, are a few irresponsible government bureaucrats, who are with no good political justification, privileged to occupy high posts and obtain large sums of money. They make money through big salaries and underground business or through naked corruption. They make more money than they need, and use the extra to seduce women and destroy young girls, school girls. They forgot their high ranking position in the government and become more dirt, betraying the society which put them into leadership. These are sugar daddies.’(p.67).

This is a conversation between Deo and Frank. From their conversation we can understand that the government officials after they come to power forgot or ignore the society that put them into that position and serve their own interest. These officials get money from unknown source or sometimes conducting corruption without any fear. There is another conversation between Maria and her friend Ana. This typical extract can be used as a window to see the real life experience as a post independent life of the Tanzanian ordinary people. The author vividly portrayed the corruption among the politicians in the author. It was because of corruption that the life of Maria and other villagers goes from bad to worse. While the life of the appointed politicians become better and better day in day out. Therefore, it is due to this fact that scholars say that African authors serve their people by opposing the evils done on the people. African writers opposed conclusion and wrote lots of novels again it and they continued opposing the evil practices of post independence so, they wrote literary text against bad black politicians. The next is an example extract So, it is this that is gives in *The Wicked Walk*.



‘You are right. Most of these sugar daddies are government officials; they use government cars and government allowances to win young girls. No “private businessman” would fool around with his hard earned money.

‘God forbid. It is hard to imagine a respectable, fat-bellied boss tumbling on a girl of fifteen’. (p.45).

From the discussion between Ana and Maria we can see that the government officials have no respect for themselves, they have no shame when they go after underage girls. And they use government cars and money to seduce those young school girls.

In fact Magege was not the only person who uses his position for his personal interest. There are other men who are after young school girls. Nancy encountered several men on her way home from school or from home to school. Below is an example extract.

Another passing car honked. This time it was a Benz, and the man inside looked like Magege. Yet the manner in which he waved his hand indicating that he did not know her. She waved back, however, and the car stopped. (p.4)

From the above extract we can say that there a lot of other man who are after school girls like Nancy.

#### **6.1.2.2 Ideology of Social class in *The Wicked Walk***

In *The Wicked Walk* Mkufya presented the issue of social class stratification in detail. The life difference between the high class society and the poor society is well presented.

Most of them were roofed with coconut palm leaves; and those made with iron sheets were full of rust making them look like triangular anthills. The windows were purposely made small to stop some unfaithful from escaping in the night, paying for the services. The walls of the houses were unflustered. (p.1)

As given in the novel, one of the main causes of poverty among the mass is the bad leadership in African politics. In Africa politicians use their power to enrich themselves

for getting their responsibility of uplifting the life of the masses. As a result, the masses are unmatched. Those in leadership lead a luxury life, but the masses are under total poverty.

Below is given an extract that openly showed this difference.

Soon she saw the block shaped building. It stood tall amongst a swarm of similar beautiful buildings, none of which were quite as tall. Colorful shrubs and flowers adorned the foreground like the edges of a tablecloth.  
(p.50)

This extract shows the living environment of Magege. Magege lives in extremely exaggerated house on the other hand his employs sometimes have nothing to eat. For Nancy that was the first time to see that kind of house since she was born into this life. The two villages are the extreme opposite to show the difference of social class. While living in the same city, Magege and Maria live in an extremely different life conditions. Hence, Magege's village can be taken as the upper class and Maria's compound is the perfect example of the lower class.

The man lived in a luxurious place. He lodged in the eastern wing of the three storey building. He divided the block into two parts, east and west.  
(p.42).

The above is another extract that shows the living environment of the high class society: the house of Magege. Nancy was seduced by the beauty of the house. She has never been in that kind of house before. The other thing that can be understood from this is that those high class societies live away from the lower class society.

Another statement that shows the exact opposite living environment is,

Deo moved his lags quickly, drawing them into a crouched position. She made attempts to speak but seemed to have nothing to say to him.(p.55)

This Scene took place when Deo went to Marie to tell her that he is engaged to her daughter. Deo was surprised when he saw how Marie and Nancy live. Deo was not a rich person but he lived in a better house compared to them and also he is educated.

Why take a daughter from such a woman? His eyes drifted to the disorderly bed, to the flies searching tirelessly on it. The flies never despaired, they were present on the bed, in the cupboard, on the plates.....everywhere. He looked towards the corner, at the pail of water with a piece of soap stuck on it, and cringed inwardly. (p.55)

This was a conversation Deo had with another employee in the company he works. The man was very angry he assumed Deo was one of the government officials. From the extract, we can see that workers in lower position are not paid on time. And those government officials are treated differently.

Extract 1

“Ah, brother, you know these problems of wages. He who has eaten enough does not realize that there are others who are still hungry....”  
(p.57).

Extract 2

.....they sensed that he was a man different from their class. (p.58)

*The Wicked Walk* shows the living difference of characters in respect to their village. The next extract shows the assumption of Frank. From his statement we can understand that vagabonds, low paid workers and jobless people are some facts that increase prostitution.

‘So we come to a compromise, said Frank, ‘because, as you said, as long as our society is full of vagabonds, low- paid workers and so many jobless roaming the streets, killing prostitution will remain a dream.’(The wicked walk p.70).

*The Wicked Walk*, presents the pure African realities, especially the living style of the society. The novel also teaches the class difference does not matter in love which was

shown by the decision of Deo deciding to marry Nancy ignoring the class difference they have between.

### **6.1.2.3 Prostitution**

*The wicked walk* mainly enhances the image of women prostitutes and the life they lived. In the novel women were drawn mainly in the character of prostitution. Prostitution is the business or practice of engaging in sexual relations in exchange for payment or some other benefits, prostitution sometimes called commercial sex work. In the novel *The wicked walk* mainly circulates on the life of a woman and her daughter. The main characters Nancy and her mother Maria suffered a lot in their life. Being a daughter of a prostitute is on challenge for a young girl like Nancy.

She remembered the times a man would come- hot, charging like a bull racing towards grass in the fields- and this man would hand Maria the money and rush her to bed. She had to handle such men to control their wild jerking's, their urges to make her feel pain, otherwise they would hurt her. When she was still new to the profession and a young girl, such men made her whimper or scream. (p.2-3)

For Maria being a woman was a bad luck because she was treated like animal. Whenever a man comes to her, he treats her like a toy by which he play as he wants. In the novel we can see that all the women around Maria's house live the same life as Maria. They all use sex as their source of income and livelihood. The women are discriminated against and treated meanly. These girls are abused and abandoned by men and even women who lived in other villages around them. Mkufya showed what kind of child can be produced from a prostitute's mother and the kind of environment they lived. Nancy is a daughter of Maria who was born dramatically from Maria's brother but Nancy has no idea who her father was. She grew up observing what her mother had to do to survive. Several times after she comes back from school she waited her mother outside their house until she finished doing business with her costumers.

...no she was convinced that she would only make money using her body. (P.48)

In the above extract we can see that Nancy is becoming just like her mother instead of attending her class she decide to sell her body for old men's like Magege. Even though Nancy falls in love with Deo she started dating Magege behind him. Nancy understood that she can make more money going school is not worth for her.

‘For example?’

‘Em....em....girls.’

‘How? In that case you will be the fighter, with your beauty.’

‘Ah, yes,’ Nancy rejoined. She chose to deliberately misinterpret Rosas remark.

You are right Deo will be the beauty and will be the fighter holding him from other girls

‘And you have that potential Nancy, I tell you.’

‘What flattery’ Nancy said, and they both laughed. (p.31)

In the above dialogue between Nancy and her friend Rosa we can see that women can use their physical appearance or beauty as one weapon. From the extract above, it could be understood that the women in the novel are characterized to think themselves as sexual object that are formed for the fantasies of men. The other issue that can be understood from the dialogue is that there is peer pressure from Nancy to also engage into prostitution.

In general this chapter has analyzed *The Wicked Walk*. And has examined the theme presented by the author. According to this research study, the novel *The Wicked Walk* enhanced several themes. From the themes enhanced in the novel the focus of the study were on the major three themes which are corruption, social class stratification and the image of women were examined critically. According to the research study, the novel presented the above themes in different characters. According to the study through the novel, women have been exploited sexually.

#### 6.1.2.4 Innocent

In the novel *The Wicked Walk* the theme innocent has been presented in depth. After Maria left her family she engaged in to prostitution and without her knowing she slept with her brother. She was very innocent she have no idea Josephat was her brother till they noticed it in the next morning.

He caressed the women and pulled her closer to him. He ran his bearded chin down the cleavage between her breasts and she cried out with pleasure. Josephat engulfed her with his strong arms, absorbing her into his presence and Maria felt good. She felt that at least there was a man who could take her as other woman were taken, who didn't take the sex play between them as masturbation. He was not like other man who come, handed the ten shillings, then pushed her to bed, the desire was not for a woman but somewhere to dumb their lust. He was a man that night and she was a woman. (P.8-9)

The above extract shows how Maria and her brother were into each other not knowing they are related in which this situation led Maria to have a baby. Josephat was not expecting that his sister will end up as prostitute. When they realized that they are related he was shocked he couldn't even speak a word to his sister he just stared into a space. Even though Maria has no idea that he is her brother he insulted her rite at that moment he hated there relation as a brother and sister he couldn't even let her touch him, she begged him to forgive her but he refused and he left her and leave the house. The next extract shows this situation.

'Kimaryo.....'Maria said, and collapsed on his chest, crying.

'Brother Josephat! She whimpered. They were still for some minutes, Maria weeping onto his breast. Josephat staring blankly into space. What else, he wondered. They had committed it and it could never be withdrawn. What would everybody think of them if anything resulted from their coming together? He pondered their blood kinship and this awful intimacy between them. She was cursed woman, she had drawn

him into her realm and now they were, intimate yet brother and sister.

(P.9-10)

From the beginning of the novel the character Maria has been shown as a woman who suffered a lot in her life what makes Maria's life worse is sleeping with her brother and having a baby from her brother. Nancy was the only daughter of Maria who was born from Josephat. When Josephat leaves the house Maria felt he left something that will remind her to her.

When Josephat had dressed, he walked out of the room without a word. When he had gone Maria felt that he had forgotten something. She felt some of him in her. She wished he could come back so that they could cleanse themselves before the elder. He never came back, though he left something with her: a big wound. (P.11)

The other extract that shows the theme of innocence is the attitude Nancy has towards new things. She has no idea about what prostitution means, to her it is just a way of getting money.

Now Nancy had proven stubborn. She had failed to resist the touch of city life and accepted its false warmth before Maria blocked her away. Nancy was convinced that what she was doing was right, and it became more and more difficult to convince her otherwise. If Maria used force and became very strict the girl would move further away from her. And the boy would drop the engagement. The world would never give her a chance to win! It was always there to claim her joy. It made her a prostitute, and she served prostitution faithfully... (P.77-78)

Her mother couldn't keep her from engaging in prostitution she was indirectly involved in it. Nancy thinks that everything she does is good even she didn't have good communication with her mother. Considering the theme of innocence the wicked walk several indicate of innocence.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: **Findings and Conclusion**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter draws attention to the summary of the comparison of the themes between *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk* and finally gives a conclusion. Both novels enhanced corruption, social class stratification and women. In fact, this is not the only themes those novels contain but the focus of the study is on those three basic themes addressed above.

#### **7.1.2 Findings**

The following are the major findings of this paper. The findings are presented according to the major themes of the two novels comparatively. The thematic analysis of the two novels *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk* have been discussed in a separate chapter. In chapter five, themes in the novel *Firebrands* have been assessed and analyzed critically. In fact the theme of the novel was not limited only on the three themes listed on the analysis but the focus of the study was on assessing and analyzing the theme of the themes portrayed in the two novels and making a comparison between the two novels. Based on this, the basic theme of novel was analyzed and, it can be said the novel has employed these three themes in detail.



*The Wicked Walk* has been assessed and analyzed thematically in chapter six. According to the study conducted in the above section in the novel the theme corruption, ideology of class, prostitution and the theme innocence were the major thematic concerns of the novel. In fact *The Wicked Walk* employed those four themes in detail. After identifying the themes in the two novels, what followed was the comparison. When dealing with the thematic analysis of the two novels the issue of how and when the two authors employ the themes was first concern of the student researcher. In their novels both writers employed the three themes in their novels in their own writing style. The novels share several ideas which made them comparable. The first theme for comparison was the theme of corruption then social class stratification and finally the image of women.

### **1) The Theme of Corruption in *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk***

According to the analysis done in both novels the theme corruption was a big issue. In the novel *Firebrands* corruption was conducted by characters like Ato Kebret and some of his customers. This means Ato Kebret used his power (position) for his personal interest. To do this, he employed the workers without the due processes and procedures just because he knows them or they offered him some money. On the other hand in the novel *The Wicked Walk*, the manager Magege was a character that was portrayed as a corrupt man who was using his power for his personal interest just like the character Ato Kebret in *Firebrands*. The difference between Ato Kebret and Magege is that Magege uses his power to seduce young school girls like Nancy. One way another both novels have shown the misuse of power by the characters like Ato Kebret *Firebrands* and Magege in *the Wicked Walk*.

The other characters presented in the two novels are the character Bezuneh in *Firebrands* and the character Deo in *The Wicked Walk*. These two characters were portrayed to fight corruption. In *Firebrands* Bezuneh was always fighting against the act of his boss Ato Kebret and he even put himself in danger because he couldn't allow Ato Kebret to commit any act of corruption. In *The Wicked Walk* Deo always wanted to put Magege in jail for the bad things he do on employees and on school young girls.

Based on the analysis conducted above, all corrupt characters in both novels have paid for all the bad things they have done and characters like Bezuneh and Deo were able to

achieve success for their honesty. Additionally both novels can be categorized under forward looking novels.

## 2) **The Theme Ideology of Social class in *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk***

In the novels *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk* the theme of social class stratification was the other major theme next to the theme corruption. In the theme of social class stratification clear similarity can be observed between the two novels. In the novel *Firebrands* the social class in the imperial time as presented in the novel shows the life difference between the lower class and the higher class. And the author employed the social deferens between the ethnic group of the monarch which is the Amhara ethnic group and the other ethnic groups. At the same time the novel shows the life difference between the government officials and the ordinary people, example of such characters include Bezuneh and Ato Kebret. Bezuneh is a man who is employed in an office where Ato kebret is the manager. There is a big difference between the two people in terms of living style. Starting from the house they lived in.

Similarly *The Wicked Walk* social class stratification is highly shown as the novel *Firebrands*. *The Wicked Walk* shows the life of people who live in a poor village like Maria and her daughter Nancy live in and a town where Magege lived in. In the village where Maria and Nancy lived, many people live in very terrible conditions. Most of the girls in the village work as prostitutes and several people live from hand to mouth. In the village where Magege lived, other high people lived luxurious lives. For Maria and her daughter, they lived in one room where Nancy can see her mom doing business with her customers. On the hand Magege lived in a big house where he even has some unused rooms. And the other social class in the novel is the life of Deo. Deo is another character who lived a better life than Nancy and her villagers. Regarding the theme social class stratification both novel has presented the life of the people in the 1970<sup>th</sup> and according to the novels the social class have several similarities.

### 3) Marginalization Women in *Firebrands* and *The Wicked Walk*

Like the other two themes in the novel the theme of image of women is employed in the two novels as a major theme. In the novel *Firebrands* the image of women is presented differently than the novel *The Wicked Walk*. In *Firebrands* women are portrayed in different characters like the character woizero Kassech, Kassech's maid and woizero Debitu who is the mother of Bezuneh even though these characters are not protagonist characters but they can be studied. In this and other women characters Sahle Sellassie presented the women in different images. For example woizero Kassech is a woman who supports her husband and Kasich's maid which is presented to show how different maids are triton. The other character is woizero Debitu she is presented as a woman who is loving and caring. But she didn't get the respect and the help she deserves from her husband.

On the other hand *The Wicked Walk* portrayed he protagonist character Maria is prostitute in fact in the novel Marie was not the not only character that is presented as a commercial sex worker. William Mkufya presented women in a single image of character throughout the novel which is the character Maria, her friends and Nancy and her friend. From the beginning till the end the novel shows how the character Maria lived her life till the day she killed herself.

## 7.2 Conclusion

Under this sub-topic the conclusions of the research work has been presented. The study concludes that, both novels employed three major similar themes, and both writers employed the themes in their own style. The three themes are corruption, social class stratification and the image of women. According to the study, the authors did a thorough work that addressed major societal issues presented as themes in the two novels analyzed. In both novels the writer's use of themes has big effect of communicating the message to the readers of their literature works. Compared to *The Wicked Walk* *Firebrands* employed the theme corruption deeply from the begging to the end. This situation is well illustrated in the novel. According to the analysis done by the student researcher both novels presented the theme social class stratification in depth. When we come to the theme image of women *Firebrands* has presented the image of women in different characters, on the other hand *The Wicked Walk* presented women in a single character.

Therefore based on the analysis done both writers presented several themes in there novels from the themes assessed the theme corruption, ideology of class and marginalization of women have been broadly presented.

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