

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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AND LITERATURE**

**Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Plays:
A Sociological Approach**

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**Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Plays:
A Sociological Approach**

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Abstract

This study is a thematic analysis of three selected Amharic plays, that is, *Mistru*, *Alkash ena Zefagn* and *Babylon be salon*. It endeavors to examine the role of plays in reflecting society and identify how the society is portrayed in the plays. To this end, the three sociological perspectives, functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism theories are used as framework. Analyzing the plays using these sociological perspectives, the researcher believes that it will result in understanding the value of plays in mirroring the society. Accordingly, extracts from the play will be thematically analyzed from sociological point of view, to demonstrate as to how the plays portrayed the society. The study has shown that the plays portray the society by their functional and dysfunctional aspects. For instance, the major theme in the play *Mistru* is justice. The play uses search of justice as a cause of unity for a society. Besides, societies respect for social values is reflected through the play. But still, betrayals are also seen as part of the society. *Alkash ena Zefagn's* major theme is found to be interdependence. The play portrays the society as interdependent. With interdependence having a constructive value, it is also seen being a reason for conflict that is conflict of interest. After all, the reason for conflict is not only interdependence; rather it is poverty adding to it. The other play *Babylon beSalon's* major theme is obstinacy, the playwright used marriage to reflect such a theme. It symbolically indicates any and every relationship within a society. As a whole, the playwrights used the valuable and major aspects of society, which are justice, happiness and sorrow, and marriage. This all seems to be parts of individual's lives, but they are issues of a society as well. And the plays showed the facts that people may not easily accept when told directly using humor and aesthetic beauty of art.

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Chapter One : Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Literature is a reflection of a society. According to Roshni (2015 P.192), literature, as an imitation of human action, often presents a picture of what people think, say and do in the society. In addition, through this, writers transport the real life events in their society into fiction and present it to the society as a mirror by which people can look at themselves.

And drama is one part of literature, which is written to be performed on stage, radio or even television. Play, is form of written literature, which is either prose or verse, but in dialogue form, that is intended for performance. (Pediaa.com, 2015)

Plays always are about something that matters. And their theme is developed based on the playwright's personal experience and values. Besides, Roshni (2015, P.192), states that; it is impossible to find a work of literature that excludes the attitudes, morale and values of the society, Since no writer has been brought up completely unexposed to the world around him.

The playwright being part of a society, and the play as part of literature being imitations of human action, plays/drama always presents picture of what people think, say and do in the society. In such products of literature, stories are designed to portray human life and action through some characters who by their words, action and reaction, convey certain message. (Roshni, 2015 P.193)

In other way, sociology is the scientific study of society, including patterns of social relationships, social interaction, and culture. And sociologists study all things about human, from the interactions between two people to the complex relationships between nations or multinational corporations. Accordingly, different scholars claim that there is a relationship between literature as a whole and a society.

For instance, Soeiro (2012, P.2) believes that the craft of sociology and of theater (including the play/drama) are both, in a sense, a symbolic production of reality and the manufacturing of categories of representation and understanding. According to him, in both cases, they do it at odds with other disciplines that offer competing ways of representing the social world.

Erving Goffman (1956, P. 149) used theater as equivalence for social interaction. And Goffman even recognized that people played their roles and engaged in interaction theatrically, often following common social scripts.

With this, Soeiro (2012, P. 2) states that Sociology might challenge theater to take into account how roles, identities, forms of action, are structured by social relations of power. And also sociology is used to look at individual stories and narratives not in their irreducible singularity but in the relations they express.

According to Roshni (2015, P.192) it is necessary to take a close look at some works of literature, in order to understand how literature actually reflects the society. What is Society? According to sociologists, society is a group of people with common territory, interaction and culture. And this huge entity has its own way of scientific study called Sociology.

Based on the scholars mentioned above, it is clear that there is deep rooted relationship between Sociology and play/drama. And in between, there are playwrights, who build their plays depending on reality of the society, their surrounding and the things they experience for themselves.

Therefore, based on the above stated situations, this study has tried to make a critical analysis on selected Amharic plays to find out major themes that they pass on. The analysis is made based on the theoretical framework of the three main sociological perspectives: functionalism, conflict and symbolic interactionism. The selected plays show the social interaction and the society's way of functioning.

1.1.1. History of Play in Ethiopia

History of play and play writing in Ethiopia is written together with the beginning of theatre in Ethiopia. It was the founding of the *Hager Fikiir* Theatre in 1927 that laid the foundation for modern theatre in Ethiopia, (Aregahegne, 1981, P.50). And it is after that; many and different playwrights started to emerge. According to Aregahegne, the *Hager Fikiir* Theatre was at the beginning meant to be a place where patriotic feeling was fostered and loyalty to the king was emphasized. (Aregahegne, 1981, P.50)

Later, in *Hager Fikir* Theatre, traditional music and dances were introduced as parts of its activities. These activities were, however, immediately disrupted by the Italian invasion.

Aregahegne states it as follows;

After the second Italian invasion, the Hagar Fikiir Theatre was set up again as an institution for the preservation of culture and as a house of music and played. This theatre alone was not sufficient to run the theatrical activities of the country and the more modern National Theatre was set up in 1948. (Argegahegn, 1981, P.51)

According to Aregahegn (1981, P.52), the earliest Amharic plays dealt mainly with the Italian invasion and the exploits of the Ethiopian patriots during the war. After that, theatre in Ethiopia started to show development with the founding of the creative Arts Centre in 1963 by Dr. Philip Caplan. And he (Caplan) was said to bring modern drama to Ethiopia for the first time (Plastow, 1994, P.223). Beside, the foundation of the centre was an inspiration for many young playwrights and actors.

The new stage was at first monopolized by writers from the upper class like Mekonnin Endalkachew and Kebede Micael who presented expensive production of their moralistic and historical works. It was much later that young and forward looking dramatists like Mengistu Lemma, Tsegaye GebreMedhin and Tesaye Gessesse took over the stage and presented their modern plays of social Value. (Argegahegn, 1981, P.51)

On the other hand, an article published on Addis journal titled “Ethiopian Theatre at a Glimpse”, by Yeshitila (2010, P.2) states that introduction of modern theatre in Ethiopia was in the 20th century by French-educated Ethiopian Bajrond Teklehawariat Teklemariam. This man was the first person to produce the Amharic play “*Fabula*” (*Ye Ensesoch Komedi*).

Beyond this, Mesele Mengesteab (2006, P.9) citing (Aboneh, 1996:33) states that the experience of theatre in Ethiopia is said to be; however, a bit different from other African countries. And since the genesis of its (Theatres’) introduction to Ethiopia, theatre has been serving the class of the elites.

Still Encyclopedia Britannica presents that Ethiopia had a very strong theatre tradition in the 1960s. Moreover, from the 1960s onward a new generation of young Ethiopians, often trained overseas, began to direct and write plays, engaging with more-modern social themes though exploring traditional performance forms. (Banham, 2016, P.10)

In addition, the plays theme was changing with the change of the political system and societal psychology. Yeshitila (2010) compares and contrasts the different themes in the different systems of government as follows;

Most of the plays presented during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, whether they deal with the issue of family, society or history tend to be moralistic and preach good manner. This has largely to do with the early teachers of modern school and practitioners of theatre like Yoftahe Nigussie, Melaku Begosew and Eyoel Yohannes being people with traditional church education background.

During the last decade of Haile Selassie regime, from the mid 1960's to the overthrow in 1974, writers like Tsegaye Gebremedhin and Mengistu Lemma were able to present plays with strong social and political criticisms.

Following the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974, the newly established Ministry of Culture made sure that socialist dramas got the most of professional or amateur stages. Derg used the theatre to introduce the ideology of socialism and to raise money.

The narrative continues and after the fall of socialist Derg in July 1991, the theater scene has increasingly grown to be commercially driven. Theatre has long become part of urban culture that enjoys a great number of audiences. (P. 1-2)

Yeshitila (2010, P.3), claims that Tsegaye Gebremedhin and Ayalneh Mulat are experienced professionals that could be mentioned in presenting plays with strong social and political significance in terms of content. And he says that all factors put together, theatre in Ethiopia remains under the strong influence of commerce and politics making it the least destination people would visit to learn the latest ideas.

Besides, it is said that Tsegaye Gebre-Medhin was a leading figure, with plays combining sophisticated language with subtle social commentary. And other playwrights of note included Fisseha Belay, who wrote social comedies with a strong traditional base and also one of the plays here under study, *Alkash ena Zefagn*. And Mengistu Lemma is also another writer of pointed comedies but also work of historical comment.

Adding to this, Encyclopedia Britannica has expressed Ethiopian theatre remaining as one of the most firmly established on the continent. (Banham, 2016, P.10) After all, whether the history of Ethiopian Theatre is traced back in millennium or near in a century, it exists still now. And we can witness playwrights are writing plays and the plays are being performed.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Besides their aesthetic value, plays are reflections of the society. Bauer (2013, P.1) believes that the premise saying drama or the performance theatre was developed only for entertainment purpose is incorrect. And he insists that play has so much purpose than being just a form of entertainment. And that it (play/drama) portrays a spectacular representation of culture, and it is a mirror for entire societies.

Selvam (2017, P.2), also on his side claims generally that every literature is concerned to reflect the society, its nature and contemporary situations. And that its (Literature's) chief feature is to bring out the nature and value of the people to the society.

Negus (2018, P.13), citing Eyayu (1994, P.22) states that to reflect life in every detail even if it were possible would be merely to imitate the art of a photographer. The task of the writer is to make us see a segment of life through his own eyes, to select what is significant, and to impress on that his own interpretation.

Teklu (1983, P.8) citing Molvaer states the following;

“Amharic literature gives a broad and many-faceted view of social and cultural phenomena in modern Ethiopia. Not only does literature mirror the life of the society by which it is created, but is itself a social and cultural phenomenon through the author's observations and critical analysis, which tries to influence and shape other social and cultural phenomenon.”

According to this, it is clear that playwrights build their plays depending on their surroundings. In addition, Beth Henley (2012, P.2) in a play writing seminar, concedes that playwrights do not often think consciously about their themes as they write. Their (playwrights) personal values tend to be so integrated into how they see the world that their themes flow into each play as the dialogue goes on the page. (playwriting.vcu.edu/theme, 2012)

“Plays are direct reflection of human emotions...” says Bauer (2013, P.1) and John Bruhn add more to this. Bruhn claims that in any society, people look to one another for social and emotional indication. They (Humans) do this, in part, to connect, and develop unity with another individual or group. This is not simply because people want more friends on social networks. He (Bruhn) says; “This connectedness with other individuals is essential to understanding oneself in society, and therefore, in life.” (John Bruhn, 2009, P.1)

A drama is considered to embrace all types of topics and represents all kinds of natures, as it is intended for all classes of people. Bhattacharyya (2013, P.2) declare that drama is a mirror of human existence intended to be presented on the stage. But there is a saying, 'If the mirror is an ordinary one, it produces a poor, faithful but colorless image; it must; therefore, be a focusing mirror.'

In case of Ethiopian plays, one can not exactly say if performed plays are focusing mirrors of the society without study. Even though they are few in numbers, new plays are being written and performed every year. Leaving aside the translated plays, plays written by Ethiopian playwrights are ought to be reflection of the Ethiopian society.

Of course, playwrights build their plays from their surrounding and this idea works for Ethiopian playwrights as well. Nevertheless, when we ask how the society is portrayed and what themes are forwarded by the plays, we could not find studies or researches around the field.

Hirut Admassu seems to capture this problem as well; she stated that there are no enough researches done around plays. (2014, P.121) She declared that though playwrights like Bajrond TekleHawariat TekleMariam, Yoftahe Nigusse, Laureate Tsegaye Gebremedhin, Ayalneh Mulat, Getnet Enyew and as such has contributed their own share to the theater, researches done are lacking.

With this in mind, this study aims to analyze how the society is reflected in the selected Ethiopian plays. Holding to the point that plays are more than their esthetic value and entertainment, this study analyzes selected plays written by Ethiopian playwrights to find out how the society itself and it's (the societies) problems are reflected.

The playwrights (Ethiopians) of the selected plays being part of the society are believed to depict the truth around them and their idea came from the society they live with. Therefore, the researcher of this study believes that the analysis of plays can give a better point of view to see how the society is portrayed.

Based on this, the study intends to answer the following questions.

- ✓ Do the plays reflect the society?
- ✓ How is the society portrayed in the plays?

- ✓ What are the major themes the playwright chose to present?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to make thematic analysis of the selected plays using sociological approach.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

Specific objectives of this study are;

- To examine the role of the plays in reflecting society
- To identify how the society is portrayed in the selected plays
- To find out the societal problems reflected in the selected plays

1.4. Methodology of the Study

This study is a qualitative type. According to the researcher's reading, relevant extracts are taken from the selected plays and the analysis is done with translation of languages of the plays, that is, from Amharic to English.

In addition, the selected plays are thoroughly analyzed based on sociological approaches of functionalist, conflict and symbolic theories.

The researcher preferred to approach the plays sociologically considering literature as having a social purpose. And the three theories of sociology found to be the prominent; therefore they are selected purposely.

Besides, the plays under study are selected by purposive sampling method. And they all are found to be original works of the playwrights.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study has the following significances:

1. It points out the role of plays in being a mirror to the society.
2. It indicates the ways that playwrights use in their plays showing the realities that cannot be told directly.
3. It shows how playwrights can contribute to a country by reflecting the societal functional and dysfunctional aspects, giving the judgment for the society itself.
4. It would serve to encourage and inspire other researchers for in depth study on original Amharic plays

1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study analyses only the three purposely selected plays. The plays are all original works and not translated plays.

In addition, the sociological perspectives used to approach the plays are not described in detail; rather points that can be related to literature as a whole are tipped. Besides this study is only delimited to plays written in Amharic.

One limitation that the researcher faced was translation. Especially, as the setting of one of the theatre under study was in the rural part of Ethiopia, some figures of language are found difficult to translate into English. As a result, some words, expressions and phrases became difficult to directly translate.

Therefore, some extracts from the play are translated into English based on semantic type of translations. The other major limitation of this study is the fact that the researcher could not be able to find any study conducted showing Amharic plays from sociological point of view.

1.7. Organization of the Study

The study has five chapters as a whole. In the first chapter, the issue under study is introduced by giving background and the history of plays and playwrights in Ethiopia. The second chapter comprises of review of related studies, while the third chapter is dedicated to the theoretical framework of the study. And the analysis of the selected plays is presented in the fourth chapter. The last and the fifth chapter give conclusion for the study.

Chapter Two : Review of Literature

In the Addis Abeba University catalog of research papers, number of studies are found at all levels (BA, MA and PHD), carried out about Amharic plays. But, studies relating plays with sociology are missing. Therefore, here the researcher has tried to look at articles and studies concerning other issues but based on the selected plays.

Wossen Bayu had done a study on folklore related analysis on plays in Ethiopia. And on his study titled “በኢትዮጵያ ቴአትር የተነሱ ፎክሎራዊ ጉዳዮች ፈይዳ በተመረጡ ተውኔቶች ማሳያነት”, one of the plays he viewed was “*Alkash ena Zefagn*”. Plays like *Yalacha Gabcha*, *Shotelay*, *Ye Tewodros Raey*, *Ye Kake Wurdwot*, *Ye Asha Lij* and *Fabula* are also parts of his study.

Wossen’s study shows that, the folklore found in the plays has cultural, social, economic, psychological, political, ethical, spiritual, literal relevance. In general, Wossen in his study related the plays with folklore.

For instance, in the analysis by which he viewed the play *Alkash ena Zefagn*, he used selected and extracted poems that are found in the play and the lyrics of the songs which are part of the play. And those extracted lyrics and poems are elaborated in view of folklore.

But as mentioned above, it was raised only from a point of view of folklore. Though this is also somehow related to the value of the society, it does not directly relate to the sociological approach of this study.

Mistru is the other play selected for this study. A play that sets upon a cultural gathering and crime investigation event called *Awtachign*. The play shows the value of truth in a society. However, previous studies on this play are none, because the play came on stage in recent times.

Here we can see few points about the traditional crime investigation system that the play used. The history of Ethiopian criminal procedure, as Aderajew Teklu and Kedir Mohamed (2012), stated, there were three types of devices of crime investigation or detection. These were known as *Lebashay*, *Afersata (Awtachign)* and *Arada Zebega* (which is the investigations undertaken by the market guards).

Awtachign/Afersata, is a gathering to screen criminals, by which all members of a community would assemble to identify an offender. This type of indigenous system is found in many parts of Ethiopia with different names and few changes. Teklu and Mohamed (2012) stated it as follows;

In the assembly, the elders would call upon each person to tell whom he suspected or what has been told to him by the “singing bird” The person who would testify as to the identity of the criminal under oath was kept secret and referred to as a bird...A person who failed to attend such gathering would be liable to a payment of fine.

In the system, a prosecution would take place against the person who is identified as the offender by a testimony. It was an established practice not to allow anybody to go home until the identity of the criminal was established. As a result, a great deal of harm was done to an innocent people, but still the society accepts it. Besides, if the people failed to identify any person responsible for the alleged crime, the entire community would be liable to the damage.

In the play *Mistru* this system of criminal investigation is the main part and setting of the play. The story took place mainly at the gathering and the theme is constructed on it. As *Awtachign* has different rules and regulations with in it, it magnifies values of the society.

The other play selected for the study is *Babylon be Salon*. “Babylon” in reality was a state in an ancient Mesopotamia. But in the case of the play, it is used as a symbolic representation of disagreement, conflict and difference. Tower of Babel, in Christian scriptures portrays *Babylon* as a wicked city. (History.com, 2018) stated the story as follows,

According to the Old Testament story, human tried to build a tower to reach the heavens. When God saw this, he destroyed the tower and scattered humankind across the earth, making them speak many languages so they could no longer understand each other.

In the play *Babylon be Salon*, the word Babylon is used as its symbolic implication in the Old Testament. It meant difference, conflict, troubled...etc. And the play continues showing the quarrel between couples in marriage and a Babylon they built between them.

In general, even though there are no studies done directly dealing with the selected plays, it is able to find studies on different Amharic plays. For instance, Haweni Gonfa (2009) did a study titled “*Approaching Characters through Conversation: An Application of Co-operative and Politeness Principles to Two Amharic Plays*”

Haweni, in her study approached two plays of Getnet Enyew's, *Etege Taytu* and *Wubetn Flega* based on selected frameworks of analysis to demonstrate as to how characters can be approached through their conversational behavior.

And Haweni's analysis showed that the change in characters' personality trait is implicated by the change in their conversational strategy. And she states, "Moreover, it has been shown that characters' attitude towards one another, how they exploit one another in conversation and the sort of power relationship between them is inferable from their conversational behavior." (Haweni, 2009, P.1)

Solomon Tessema G. (2007) is another person that has done a study related to plays. His study titled "*Interdisciplinarity in Tsegaye GebreMedhin's 'HaHu weyem PePu'*" shows the spontaneously presented disciplines in the play *HaHu Weyem PePu*. And he insists that the play *HaHu Weyem PePu* occupies a unique position because of the manner in which it presents legal, religious, social, economic, historical, political and anthropological decadences.

Teklu Minas (1983) did a study on three plays and two Novels of Dagnachew Worku. In his study titled "*Dagnachew Worku's Writings: Three Plays and Two Novels*" he showed that; in the society which Dagnachew Worku depicts through his plays and novels, there is a conflict of the old and the new Ethiopia.

Teklu stated that, in the writings of Dagnachew, force of modernity call for a lot of sacrifice and struggle. And the study concluded by saying that to discern what is ostensible and what is real in both, the old and the new sets of social values, presents a lot of difficulty. (Teklu, 1983, P.2)

Besides different researchers uses sociological approach for their study. One is Neguss Yilma in his study titled "Thematic analysis of selected Amharic Song Lyrics: A sociological approach" By this study, Neguss examines the themes of Amharic song lyrics composed during the three consecutive regimes: Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Derge and the EPRDF.

At the end of the study, Neguss identified that the themes of Amharic songs are dominantly topical, and they have significant contemporary relevance. (2018, P.219) Therefore, further investigations need to be conducted on the songs from different perspectives to uncover the major messages that they (the songs') convey. Particularly, conducting comparative analysis on the themes of Amharic

song lyrics and the song lyrics of other indigenous languages is recommended to understand the comprehensive sociopolitical landscape of the nation.

Above all, as stated earlier, the theme of plays change through time and with the psychology of the society, from which playwrights emerge. Selvam (2017, P.1) states this change based on African American plays. Stating the performance of plays, he says that African American Theatre was used as a tool to protest against whites. And that their theme focuses on slavery and struggle for freedom.

When we come to Ethiopian plays, they do have thematic changes through time. The reason for these changes from time to time of course needs a deep research. But it is assumed that the changes arise from political and economic change, natural causes, globalization and other different reasons might cause the change. But our point here is that, the concerns of themes of plays does change through time.

As stated in the previous chapter, when we see through the history of play in Ethiopia, themes of the few plays written at the beginning were about patriotism. Especially, after the Italian invasion, it was used to foster patriotic feeling within the society and to arouse the fighting spirit of the people

Aregahegn (1981, P.52), in his study, states that the earliest Amharic plays dealt mainly with the Italian invasion and the exploits of the Ethiopian patriots during the war. Neguss on his side, has putted this point in the following paragraph (2018, P.23)

Ethiopian novelists, playwrights and poets have been inspired by the theme of the Italian occupation. They have intensively addressed the onset of the war, the nature of the war, the overall (political, social, economic and cultural) effects of the war and the patriotic resistances. Some of these works focus on the prevalent social problems that Ethiopians face after independence.

After that, the political situation continued shaping the themes of plays. Even though studies on the issue are rare, one can observe that plays were used reflecting societies objection and opposition of political systems each time. Not directly, but usually they imply and use symbolic presentation of facts and feelings of the society.

Besides this, plays traditional themes are usually about ethics and moral values. They show how bad people and their wrong doings end up badly at last, while the good ones get the glory. In case of Ethiopia, as stated above, the major themes at the beginning of play writing were patriotism. Plays were written to make people love their country more, to show how patriots are fighting for their country, and to make an example out of them. Besides that, plays were used to portray events in a country, be it political, economic or social.

These moralistic and ethical themes of plays do exist until now. But concerning plays from a sociological approach, the themes help to understand how the society works. It helps to know people and situations in detail, to look at the big picture that is the society, to identify one to one relationships and examines patterns of social ties.

But, this is a result of observation and not a detailed study. Even now, we see plays written that criticize the society and also the political system of the government. As it is said above, playwrights build their plays from their surrounding; therefore, with the change of society, accordingly themes of plays are also expected to change.

Chapter Three : Theoretical Framework

The term sociology is said to be first used by the French-man Auguste Comte in the 1830s. (Study.com). and he defined it as a positive science. In addition, sociologists study all things about human, from the interactions between two people to the complex relationship between nations. Besides, they (Sociologists) believe that our social surroundings influence thought and action of each part of the individual within the society.

Different scholars viewed sociology from different perspectives or theories. What makes them all similar is that they agree that sociology is about the society, but still in different ways. And this different ways are confined in sociological theories. These theories in turn provide us with different perspectives in sociology, with which to view our social world. (Study.com)

Sociological theory as a whole or simply its perspectives mainly provides us with a vantage point from which to observe around us. They help us understand human behavior at the same time seeing the broader social context. Besides, as Julius (2014), states that sociological theory helps us to meaningfully organize and explain the linkages between specific observations that we make.

Here under this study, the three main or prominent theories named; the functionalist (also called structural functionalist), the Social conflict, and the symbolic interactionist perspective (also called the interactionist), are taken as framework. And Mooney, Knox, and Schacht, (2007), state that, each of them (the perspectives) offers a variety of explanations about the social world and human behavior.

Neguss, (2018, P.31) states as follows;

In fact, it is probably more useful and informative to view the stated three sociological perspectives as complementary. One perspective may explain one element of the society better than another. Or, both may be useful for explaining social life. In short, all of the perspectives are correct in the sense that they offer compelling explanations for social phenomena.

3.1 Structural Functionalist

The Structural - functionalist perspective is based largely on the works of Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton. Structural functionalist often referred as functionalist, is considered an objective means to understanding macro aspects of human behavior in the context of society. According to this theory; society is considered to be a whole unit, which includes many parts interrelated and works together to function. (en.wikiversity.org)

As mentioned above Emile Durkheim is considered as one of the creators of this (functionalist) theory. Different writers states that he was interested in the glue that holds society together and his focus was mainly on the shared experiences, perspectives, values, beliefs and behaviors. These indirectly are together called culture.

According to Durkheim, the existence of collective conscience is brought by combination of rules and norms and it result in a bond between individuals in a society. By this solidarity or togetherness theory, many problems of the society can be viewed. Be it political or economic, Durkheim's theory explains it all. Besides the functionalist theory, helps look through change of society. (WikiBooks.org)

Based on the theory, society can be studied in the same way the human body can be studied. Neguss (2018, P.31), citing Tuner and Maryanski (1979), stated that functional theorists claim that society is formed from different structures which play their own roles to the harmonious continuity of the society.

In relation to this, Ron J. Hammond (2010, P.23) indicated that, functionalism is more positive and optimistic. Functionalists realize that just like the body, societies get "sick" or dysfunction. By studying society's parts and processes, Functionalists can better understand how society remains stable or adjust to destabilizing forces.

Mooney, Knox, and Schacht, (2007) on an article "Understanding social problems" illustrated that for structural-Functionalist, society is a system of interconnected parts that work together in harmony to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the whole.

They even more elaborate the theory of structural functionalist using the following example; *"Each of the social institutions contributes important functions for society: Family provides a context for reproducing, nurturing, and socializing children; education offers a way to transmit a*

society's skills, knowledge, and culture to its youth; politics provides a means of governing members of society; economics provides for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services; and religion provides moral guidance and an outlet for worship of a higher power.” (Mooney, Knox, and Schacht, 2007, P.1-2)

Other sociologists like Talcott Parsons also add ideas upon the Functionalist theory. Parsons says that different parts of each society have contribution to the operation of the system as a whole. Besides, there is interdependence and equilibrium without great conflict, that is, conflict is not considered as an integral part of the social world. Still it (the theory) says that there shall be a little bit of inequality. (Study.com)

In addition, this theory gives answers to questions like how society is integrated, what the major parts of society are and how society influence behavior. Moreover, Negus (2018) in his study cited Parsons saying that Parsons claims a society should be perceived as a system, which consists of different parts. As a result, society has to fulfill four functional prerequisites in order to persist, which includes;

- Every system has to adapt to its environment,
- Every system has to have mechanisms to set goals and ways to achieve the intended target,
- Every system has to formulate ways to integrate various parts (or social structures)
- Every system has to develop mechanisms to manage tension (Neguss, 2018; Savage, 1981; Parsons, 1953)

As a whole, the functionalist perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of society by focusing on how each part influences and is influenced by other parts. J. Hammond (2010, P.21) generalizes this points about the functionalist theory as follows;

Socialization, religious involvement, friendship, health care, economic recovery, peace, justice and injustice, population growth or decline, community, romantic relationships, marriage and divorce, and normal and abnormal family experiences are just a few of the evidences of functional processes in any society.

Based on all this, this study will explore how much and to what extent this perspective of sociology is shown in the selected plays. Beside by this theory, the plays will be approached in a way that shows the integration of the society and societies influence on individual behavior.

3.2 Social Conflict Theory

Unlike the functionalist perspective, that view society as composed of different parts working together, the conflict perspective views society as composed of different groups and interests competing for power and resources. Mooney, Knox, and Schacht, (2007), explains it further as; various aspects of our social world; by looking at which groups have power and benefit from a particular social arrangement.

The theory adopts the notion that there is a continual struggle and conflict that exists between those who own the "means of production" and the workers. Sociologists' argument is that conflict arises when individuals oppose each other because of differences of interest, ideas, etc. (J. Hammond, 2010, P.123), citing Collins, (1975).

Mooney (2007, P.2) on their part, states that, the origins of the conflict perspective can be traced to the classic works of Karl Marx. As they pointed out, Marx suggested that all societies go through stages of economic development. As societies evolve from agricultural to industrial, concern over meeting survival needs is replaced by concern over making a profit. And conflict is a social fact that goes on between dominant group which control over the means of production and the working class that sells the labor force.

According to Hammond (2010, P.19- 23), this theory has been repeatedly tested against scientifically derived data, and it repeatedly proves to have a wide application among many different levels of sociological study. Hammond states that the theory claims that society is in a state of perpetual conflict and competition of limited resource. He states is as follows;

Conflict theory is especially useful in understanding: war, wealth and poverty, the haves and the have nots, revolutions, political strife, exploitation, divorce, discrimination and prejudice, domestic violence, rape, child abuse, slavery, and more conflict - related social phenomena."

According to Hammond (2010, P.21) one perspective under this is the feminist theory. He states that Feminist theory is a theoretical perspective is coached primarily in conflict theory assumption.

This theory as a whole gives answer to the questions like how the society is divided, what the major patterns of social inequality are and how some categories of people protect their privilege. And the study tries to analyze the different conflicts and their consequence. Besides, under this study, the

matter of feminism as a whole or images of Women specifically is treated according to Hammond suggestion. That is, though Feminism is by itself a theory, it is coached in conflict theory assumption.

3.3 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a micro theoretical perspective, distinct from the above two theories (functionalist and conflict) of sociology which deals with the whole or the macro. It is concerned on subjective experiences because it enables us to understand individual behaviors in the context of society.

This theory examines society in terms of bottom up approach and it tries to define society at large on the basis of an individual's interaction to each other. It basically functions depending on three fundamental premises. Negus, (2018, P.39) citing Herber (1969) as follows;

Symbolic interactionism rests on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.... The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

According to Hammond (2010, P.24), this is a very useful theory for understanding other people; improving communications; learning and teaching skills in cross-cultural relations. For example, personal questions like “who am I?” can be understood better using this theory.

In our daily life, we use symbols to interact with people. For instance, Negus (2018, P.39) states one symbol, which is greeting. One asks “How's it going?” and when we reply we do not give the right answer to the question, or sometimes can say we do not give any answer for it. It is because it has become a greeting and not a question.

The theory according to Mooney (2007, P.2), was largely influenced by the work of early sociologists and philosophers, such as George Simmel, Charles Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Erving Goffman. And Symbolic interactionism emphasizes that human behavior is influenced by definitions and meanings that are created and maintained through symbolic interaction with others.

Mooney (2007, P.3), citing Sociologist W.I. Thomas (1966) suggested that humans respond to their definition of a situation rather than to the objective situation itself. Therefore he noted that situations we define as real become real in their consequences. Accordingly, as Thomas states, symbolic interactionism also suggests that our identity or sense of self is shaped by social interaction. We develop our self-concept by observing how others interact with us.

Still with all these descriptions above, Waskul (2008, P.118) claims that there is no universally agreed definition for symbolic interactionism Theory. And he states that symbolic interactionism is an approach, among other things, emphasizes the active processes by which people craft social worlds, create meaning, accomplish self, define situations and engage in cooperative, situated and structured joint action.

In general this type of theory is very powerful in helping people to understand each other. And again Neguss (2018, P.10) states that, one of the major realizations that come with Symbolic Interactionism is that you begin to understand the other people in your life and come to know that they are neither right nor wrong, but are just with a different point of view. And using this theoretical perspective, the research analyzes how the playwrights used symbols and what symbols they used to reflect the society.

As a whole, in this study, the methods that Negus Yilma (2018) used for his thesis titled “Thematic Analysis of Selected Amharic Plays: A Sociological Approach” which is submitted for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Literature, are applied. That is, the above stated sociological perspectives are not mutually exclusive; therefore, they have been used at a time to deal with the theme of the selected plays.

Chapter Four : Thematic Analysis of the selected Amharic Plays

Under this section of the study, the analysis of the three plays is presented. And for the ease of organizing, each of the plays is thematically categorized based on sociological theoretical framework discussed in the above chapter.

4.1 Thematic analysis of the play *Mistru*

The play *Mistru* (ግሥከጢሩ) was written by a playwright named Alehegn Birhane. The Play is about a young stubborn and arrogant man named *Mistru* and about his sudden death. The play starts with *Mistru* and few men in a place where local beverage is served that is traditional bar (*Areke bet*), with *Mistru* drinking, arguing and tussling with men at the place and even with his brother.

With a continued argument, all men left the *Areke bet*. And at that same day, during the night *Mistru* was found dead with his house burned down and money stolen. And the story goes on as the elderly fathers of that specific society held a gathering of crime investigation called “*Awtachign*” in finding who killed *Mistru*. As *Mistru* was arguing with almost everyone including his brother at the *Areke bet*, it was not easy to know the person who killed him.

The process of *Awtachign* is a way by which a crime is investigated. And through the process the society’s values and the way of life is clearly stated. Following this, the themes of the play *Mistru* are analyzed categorically as justice, respect for societal values, loyalty, betrayal and Images of Women.

4.1.1 Justice

Ethiopians give high value for justice. And sayings like ‘በፍትህ ከሄደ በቅሎዬ ያለፍትህ የሄደ ጭብጦዬ’, clearly justifies the value of justice in social system and order of Ethiopians. In modern Ethiopia, though different factors like politics have put justice in question, justice has been given high value by the society and it has been a custom to keep law and order.

According to Aberra (2015, P.4), before the advent of modern state and its criminal justice system, the administration of justice was mainly mediating and negotiating process within and by the community. And Aberra in his study mentioned that, during those times that is before the advent

of modern state and criminal justice, in a society, the main actors in settling disputes between victims and offenders were those affected by the wrongful act and the community within which such wrongs have been committed. (Aberra, 2015, P.4)

In the play of *Mistru*, the major theme that can be seen is the question of justice. And the play as a whole is about searching for justice. The search for justice in the play is not only for those who become victims out of injustice but also for those who were part of the wrongful act.

The main character named *Mistru* was an arrogant man. Before his death, he had fought with many men around him. And that made the crime investigation or the customary way of search for the criminal difficult. But in the process, the play shows the gathered people's incisive need to search for the criminal by reasoning and pleading.

On the play, *Mistru* was killed and his house was put on fire. The crime committed was the cruelest that the society around has ever experienced in their entire life. It is in the second scene of the play that the *Awtachign* started.

In the beginning of the investigation, there was difference and conflict of opinion between groups of people. For example, there was such difference between those who live in the lowland (*kolegna*), and those who live in the highlands (*degegna*).

There are dialogues and actions that show this search of justice and few are extracted as follows, One of the judges called '*Merigeta*' (which is a name given for a man serving in the Orthodox Church) says the following at the beginning;

መሪጌታ፤ እንደውነቱ ከሆነ በቀያችን እንዲህ ያለ ዘግናኝ ወንጀል ተፈጥሞ አያውቅም። በመሆኑም በነገሩ እጅግ ማዘናችንን ልገልጥላችሁ እወዳለሁ፤ እናም ተናገረን የምንፈልገው ነገር ቢኖር «ድር ቢያብር አንበሳ ያስር» ነውና ሁላችሁም «ነግ በእኔ» ብላችሁ ይህን አጠያፊና ድርብ ወንጀል ሲፈጸም ያያችሁ አልያም እገሌ ሊሆን ይችላል የምትሉትን ሰው እንድትጠቁሙን ይሁን...

Merigeta - To be honest such horrific crime has never been committed in our area. We would like to say our heartfelt condolences to you. And as it is said <Many hands make light work>, all we want from you is cooperation. We want you to point out anything you see or tell us about anyone who you suspect of committing such a crime.

As stated in the extract, after *Merigeta* asked the crowd to tell what they know, the people in sake of justice are seen doing everything that could help them find the criminal who killed *Mistru*. According to the play, one thing they did was to unite. Leaving their differences aside, they agree to work together. And they stated the need for cooperation as follows;

መሪያታ፤ እንኳንና ቆላ ደጋ፤ ወይና ደጋ ተባብለን ወገን ለይተን ይቅርና አንድም ሆነን ይሄ ወንጀል ከፋ

/ወይናደጋው በአንድነት/ እውን!

መሪያታ፤ ይኸ ሰው ላንድ ወገን ጠላት ሆኖ የመጣ አይደለም ለሀገር እንጅ፤ ስለዚህ ይህን በሀገር የመጣ ወንጀላኛ ወገን ሳይለዩ አንድ ሆኖ ማጋለጥ ነው የሚበጀን...በሉ እንግዲህ መሃል ክፍተታችንን እንምላ፤ ተሰባጥረን አንድ እንሁን (ሕዝቡ በራሱ ጊዜ ይሰባጠራል)

Merigeta - Not that we argue on every difference that we can call upon, the crime has got worse even being as one.

People living in the low land all together - That is Right!

Merigeta – This criminal is not just the enemy of the one deceased person, but for our community. So, being unified and not grouping by relations, we shall expose the criminal. Let not make a space among us...let us sit all together!

«መሰባጠር» means sitting here and there, not from the same group. This shows how much the society is willing to search for justice. This also shows the keenness of the society for justice. Justice here served as a bond between individuals in a society. Adding to this, the society search for justice is shown with their willingness to forget their differences at least until justice is served.

Under indigenous justice systems, the dispute resolution process is participatory and the decision is consensus based. In such a society that is characterized by strong tie, disputes and conflicts are viewed as issues concerning the entire community (Degefa, 2015, P.29). And in the play we can see that every individual in the society put themselves in the shoes of others saying “ነግ በእኔ” meaning “what if it happens on me tomorrow!”

But it is also seen as they are giving their time for the process. In the process of the traditional investigation, no one is allowed to go anywhere until the criminal is found. And the gathered people in the play did that. They were willing to wait until the end. The judges also point out these to the gathered people again and again.

መሪያታ፤ ...ሌላው ለስገነዝበው የምሸው ነገር ቢኖር...ይኸ ሀገር አጥፊ ወንበድ እስታልተጋለጠ ድረስ እንደተይህ ቀደሙ ሁሉ ቀኑ መሸቶ ቢነጋ እንኳ አውጣጭኝ እንደማይበተን ተገንዝባችሁ የሚች አስክሬን በሥርዓቱና በጊዜው ተሎ እንዲፈጠም ተሟች ጠብና ግንኙነት ነበረው አልያም እሱ ሊሆን ይችላል የምትሉትን ሰው ታለ ምንም ፍራቻና ይሉኝታ ታሁኗ ቅጥቦት አንስቶ እንድትጠቁሙን ነው...

Merigeta - The other thing that I want you all to know is that unless the criminal is exposed, the gathering will not be scattered. Therefore for the funeral and burial service to happen in time, you shall all tell what you know without fear and bashfulness.

As stated, the fathers and elderly taking the responsibility fell obliged to the lost life. Whoever committed the crime, they count themselves accountable for a criminal person moving freely. They also call the name of God knowing that the society respects, fears and obeys God. *Merigeta* says the following to the gathered people;

መሪያታ፤ በሉ እንጂ ሰዎች ሰው ጠፍቶብን አፋልጉን እያልናችሁ ነው...ያልሠራነው... ያልፈጠርነው የእግዚአብሔር አደራ የሰው ነፍስ አልፎብን ነው። ሸሽገን ብናቆየው እንደተባይ ሲበላን ይኖራል...ፈጣሪም ቢሆን ይኸን ወንጀላኛ ለይተን ካለወጣን በቁጣው ይመጣብናል...

Merigeta – Come on! We are calling for you to help us search a lost person. A human life that we were consigned to care from God is now gone, if we hide the criminal, we will be regretting it for the rest of our life. And God also will not let us be if we don't expose the criminal...

The people in that gathering all have lived together despite of their differences in many aspects. And it's difficult for someone to say "I think Mr. X is the one who did it! Because of such and such reasons..." Besides, it feels uncomfortable, because one may betray his or her own friend or family. But in search of justice, though there was silence for a while, the gathered people did not hesitate to say what they saw and know. We can see this in the dialogues they exchange.

For Instance, a moment before the investigation, *Awtachign* started, one of the judges that is the clerk or the writer breaks the silence and remind the gathered people to speak; and it's after his word that the people start to say what they think and feel.

ጸሐፊ ትዕዛዝ፤ በሉ ማጉተምተሙን ተውይ! ይኸኮ ይሉኝታ እና አብሮ መኖር የሚያግደው ጉዳይ አይደለም ታውቃላችሁ...በሉ ጎሽ!

Writer - Stop gnarling! Exposing a criminal is not something that living together prohibits.

Value of justice in the society can be clearly seen as it is also fair. For instance, *Mistru* was not a good and loyal man according to the play. Everyone had something bad to say about him, and he has done many mistakes in his life. But still as a human being, the elderly believed that justice is for all without any difference.

For example, *Mistru's* brother in law, *Aschalew*, used to be angry at him. At the gathering, *Aschalew* stated all the mistakes and wrong doings of the *Mistru* and he said ‘ታዲያ ይህ ሰው ሞት አልሞተ!’ meaning “Why would we care about the death of such a person!”, but the elderly did not accept this idea; rather one of them said,

መሪጌታ፤ ሞት አልሞተ የምትል እንደየት ነው አንተ ተሰውም አልተፈጠርክ?

Merigeta - Aren't you a human being? How would you say that!

The other huge mistake or wrongful act that *Mistru* did was taking part in selling of liturgical items. Those were that his father kept at home for years waiting for the right person in the church to hand it over. But his father died before delivering the items. And at the criminal investigative gathering *Tigabu* confessed that as follows;

ጥጋቡ፤ አባ ተገኝ በፋሽስትና በአርበኞች ጦርነት ግዜ ይኖሩበት ወደነበረ ገዳም አርበኞች ሸሽተው ሲገቡ ፋሽስት የጣልያን ጦር ባዶ ገዳማቸውን ሲቃጥለው የገዳሙን ሁነኛ ቅርሶች ይዘው ሸሽተው ተቤታው አስቀምጠው እንደነበር አውቃለሁ ኋላ እርሳቸው እንደሞቱ ሟች እንዴን ከቤታው ሲያባርረኝ እኒህን ቅርሶች ሊሸጥ አስቦ እንደሆነ እንደገባኝ

እንዲያውቅ ስፈለግሁና እንዳያደርገው ጭምር ለማስፈራራት ስል...

Tigabu - during the Ethio-Italian war, while the force of Italy burned down many churches, Abba Tegegn took and hide those expensive and necessary heritages at home. And after the end of the war, before Abba Tegegn gave those heritages back to the church, he died. And one reason for Mistru to kick me out of the house was, in order to sell those heritages. As I knew that I tried to scare him not to sell them...

But still, knowing that *Mistru* has done such a huge crime, the elderly strive to serve justice for the deceased. If it was in a normal case, the society would not negotiate about stolen liturgical items. They would have said “it is an outrage from God and anyone who sells those items would deserve

it.” But on “Awtachign” where justice is to be served, whatever a deceased man had done or did, all are equal in the eye of justice.

In other way, one of the suspects was a man called Aya Belay. He was suspected because he had argued with the deceased before few hours of his (Mistru’s) Death. And at the time of the investigation, he was at a funeral of his baby daughter. Then while the judges ordered the guards to bring Aya Belay to the gathering, many were objecting. They say;

አንድ የአካባቢው ነዋሪ፤ እንዴት ነው ልጁ የሞተችበት ሳያንስ እንዲህ ያለ ነገር እላዩ ላይ መለጠፍ! እረ ደግሞ አይደል!

People - It is not a right thing to do! How can we insinuate on a man whose daughter is dead?

They were saying this for two reasons. One is that Aya Belay is a respected man around the community and they believe that he will not be able to commit such a crime. The other reason is because of his sorrow after the death of his daughter. But still there were few saying, if justice is to be prevailed and Aya Belay is a suspect, he must attend at the Awtachign. Saying;

የአካባቢው ሰው፤ ...እዚህም የሞተው እኮ ሰው ነው። መነሻ የሆነውን ነገር ይናገርና ታስረላገ ይጠራይ?

A man - Here is also a man dead...if Aya Belay is suspected...he shall come and give an answer

And again the main judge also accepts this idea of Aya Belay participating in the awtachign and to give answers for he became one of the suspected. And so Aya Belay was called to the gathering.

All the above extracts from the play shows how justice is relevant to the society. And they are seen doing everything they can, obeying the elderly as a judge, fearing God and respecting justice. In turn, justice is seen functioning as means of unification of individuals in a society with differences.

4.1.2 Respect for Societal Values

Respect in a society that has adapted to living attached is essential. Not only respect between individuals in a society, but also respect for the rule and regulation they agree upon. This is in a way respecting societal values. Societal values are criteria shared by the majority of a society in an ideal sense, all of which lead them to the better society. They regulate and organize daily life.

(Türkkahraman, 2013, P.635)

According to Türkkahraman, in almost every society people take the shared values seriously, they sacrifice their interest, struggle for them and even they give their lives until death. Besides societal values show the ways of thinking and behaving ideally, they use as means in judging, they make people focus on useful and important cultural objects, they perform as social control and restraint tools and they provides solidarity.

When we come to the play *Mistru*, we find the “*Awtachign*” or gathering in search of justice. And the call for the “*Awtachign*” was made before a burial service has taken palce. The people came to the gathering before burying their beloved ones. And none of them hesitate to be part of the gathering. In one part of the time where Aya Belay, a man who lost his daughter was called by the elderly he got there and said as follows;

አያ በላይ፤ አብዮት ጌታዬ! አንድዬ ልጄ ሙታብኝ ነውይ የእርሶን ትዕዛዝ ሳልሰማ ቀርቼ
አይደለም የቀረሁት

Aya Belay - I am here Sir! My absence was not of disobedience but because of the death of my only daughter

Here Aya Belay puts on a balance, saying his absence was not from disobedience rather because of the death of his daughter. In a normal social case, one could not set sorrow from death of an only child and being present in a gathering, in the same plate. Not only him, but the wife of the deceased, that is *Mistru*, *Banchiyerga* was also present at the investigation as the elderly called for her.

The society respects the social values because they are unified by them. Not only has the society as a whole but also the elderly, serving as judges, had respect for the people. They just don't use the power as their own; rather they know it is given to them from the people and they respect the people around. They count themselves responsible for the society and do not get or ask any reward out of it. In some part of the play, *Merigeta* states this point while they were talking to *Ayalew*, a brother of *Mistru*.

Ayalew was acting as a judge in the middle of the investigation. He counted himself as an investigator and started to ask question. Noticing his action, the elderly ordered him to stop. They

did so not because Ayalew’s action robbed their authority, but because Ayalew did not show a respect to the gathered people. Here was what Merigeta said;

ጠረጌታ፤ ተቀልብህ ሁንይ አያሌው አልታይቶህም አንድዬ ተኋላህ ያለው ህዝብ ? ተኛ
ቢደበቁ ተህዝበ የት ይደበቃሉ ? በዚያ ላይ እግዚአብሔር አለ

Merigeta - Come down Ayalew! Don't you see the people behind you? If the criminal could hide from us, but will not be hidden from the people, and do not forget that there is God.

In the above extracted parts of the play shows how much societal values are respected. And how far people go to the common values that they agreed to live upon. This respect for shared societal values helped the society to live together and united. Not only that, but they also respect the elderly who serve them with humbleness.

4.1.3 Loyalty

Loyalty by translation is the quality of staying firm in a friendship or support for someone or something. “The Atlas Society” states that objects of loyalty are human and institutional. One is loyal to a friend, an organization, a spouse, a country. (The Atlas Society, 2013)

According to the writer and Philosopher Sir Roger Scruton (2018, P.1) loyalty is a fundamental virtue on which we all depend for survival because it ties families, communities and nations together. Sir Roger in his article, 'Loyalty as a Virtue', states that in order to uphold to the personal and national loyalties which we all depend on, we must embrace virtues such as courage, collaboration, wisdom, commitment and honesty.

As in the play *Mistru*, loyalty is depicted from different point of views. And those virtues stated by Sir Roger are found. Individuals in the play are seen loyal to eachother, to the judges and to their community as a whole.

For instance, loyalty is shown between the friendship of Moche and Aycheh. Aycheh was one of the suspects of the crime. And in the play, we see Moche arguing about his friend’s innocence. He argued for his friend with every fact that he witnessed.

Moche did not hide the truth, and he was honest about his friend to the gathered people and to his friend Aycheh himself, that he (Aycheh) had threatened to harm Mistru. But he tells loyally what he knows about his friend.

ሞቼ፤ ...ትናንትና እኮ እንደም በቦታው ነበርሁ ምንም እንኳን ባልንጀሬ ቢሆንም ስለእውነት ተሆነ አይቼህ ሞቅ ብሎት ስለነበርዎ የተናገረው ተልቡ አየለም።

Moche - Yesterday I was at the spot when Aychew was threatening. But it was only because he was a little bit of drunk and he said that half hearted.

The other point to raise here is about Aya Belay. As stated above, Aya Belay was one of the suspects. But almost every attendant of the gathering did not want to accept that. Women during the investigation even said not to waste any time on Aya Belay, believing that he was an innocent Man. The dialogue was as follows;

መሪጌታ፤ ይልቅ ነገሩን አንተ ተሆንህ የፈጠምክ ተናገር ሰውን አታጉላለ?

አያ በላይ፤ ነገሩን አልፈጠምኩም አልሁ እኮ! ግን አድርገኸዋል ብትሉኝም ምንም አይቆጩኝም ምህኛቱም ያኔ ባይሞት እኔ እገድለው ነበር። ያዙኝ ስትፈልጉ የልጅን ነብስ ለበላ ተጠያቂ ተሆንሁ ልሁን ያበባዬም ነብስ በዝህ ይቅር ይለኝ ይሆናል/ እንባ ይተናነቀዋል/

ሴት የአባ ነዋሪ :- እረ እኔስ አያ በላይ እንድህ ያደርጋሉ አልልም በደንብ ይውጣጣ ነገሩ

Merigeta - If you are the one who committed the crime tell us...don't labor the people

Aya Belay- I said I did not do it! And even if you say I did, I won't regret it. Ypu can put me in jail, for if he has not been killed, I would have killed him by now. Then the soul of my daughter might forgive me.

And when *Aya Belay* said that he would not have regretted it if he had committed the crime, he was speaking honestly. It was clear for everyone gathered at the investigation that *Aya Belay* had a grudge on *Mistru*.

This was what happened, on the day *Mistru* was found dead, killed; *Aya Belay* had met *Mistru* at the traditional bar or *Areke bet* to ask for the money he lent to *Mistru*. But *Mistru* was not loyal to his words at the time. And he said to *Aya Belay* as follows;

ሚስጥሩ:- ለማንኛውም ነገ ጧት አናግረኝ አያበላይ:- ሌቱን ገልግሼ ሀኪም ዘንዳ ላድርሳት እኮ ነው ያልኩህ ሚስጥሩ:- ህዋ! እና አሁን ባሁን ከየት አምጥቼ ነው የምሰጥህ አያበላይ:- እኮ ተነስና እንሂድ ካኖርክበት አውጥተህ ሰጠኝ...የራሴን ድርሻ ገንዘቤን ነው

የጠየቅሁ እንጂ የአንተን አይደለም ሚስጥሩ፤ እምቢኝ ያልኩ እንደሁ ደብድበህ ልትቀበለኝ ነው?

አዎ በላይ፤ ህዋ! በአንድ ልጄ ነብስ ከመጣህ ሊቀርልህ ነው?

ሚስጥሩ፤ በላ ሞክር! እንድያውም ካልደበደብከኝ አልሰጥህም

Mistru - you can come and talk to me tomorrow

Aya Belay - I am telling you, I must take my daughter to hospital right this midnight

Mistru - But I don't have any money right now

Aya Belay - lets go and give me my money back from your saving...I am asking you for my share and not your money

Mistru - are you going to beat me up and the money if I say no

Aya Belay - of course it is about the life of my only daughter

Mistru - Try me! And I won't give you unless you attack me ...

The other loyalty that we see on the play is between *Fantaye* and *Aschalew*. The two characters which are part of the play are lovers. At the *Awtacign*, *Aschalew* was pointed as a suspect of the crime. And on his defense, he said that if he had the chance to kill *Mistru*, he would not hesitate because *Mistru* deserves to die. And as *Fantaye* listened to what her fiancé told to the gathered people, here was what she said;

ፈንታይ፤ (ተቅለብልባ በመነሳት) እህ እሱ ልሁን ታለ እንድየት ነው እኔም ልሁንይ መሪጌታ፤ አብረሽል ተገዳይ?

ፈንታይ፤ ሽረግ! በተሰቀለው! እኔው?

ጸሐፊ ትዕዛዝ፤ እህሳ እዝሁ ፈታኝን ቃልሽን ታብይ ነው?

ፈንታይ፤ ሽረ የለም ጌታይ... ቀኑ ተቆርጦ የጋብቻኝን... ወንጀለኛ ልሁን ታለ እኔስ ቆሜ ቀረሁ አይደለ

Fentaye - If he said he is the one who committed the crime...then I am in with him

Merigeta - Did you cooperate with him in killing Mistru?

Fentaye - In the name of God! I did not Writer

– So, what are you saying?

Fentaye - Our wedding day is soon, and if he say he is the criminal while he did not commit any crime, am I not going to be left alone?

Loyalty in the play also serves as an integrating factor of individuals in the society. Individuals in a society tell what they feel loyally and act like it. And like Fentaye, if they give their word to someone they love, whatever happens they stay loyal to their words. Those who are capable of being loyal to their near friend can be able to stay loyal to their community. Therefore, loyalty in a society is one of the qualities that strength friendship or support between individuals. But it does not mean there are no Betrayals.

4.1.4 Betrayal

After hours of the gathering of crime investigation, the criminal was not found. Therefore the elderly decided to use other way of search for the criminal. This way was making an oath or swearing in the name of God. While it became difficult to know the criminal by discussion, and as the criminal either did not say who he/ she were, it was the last chance that the elderly had.

መሪጌታ፤ ደግ እንግዲህ! ሁሉም ተጠቋሚ ታላሙን በወግና በስርዓታችን መሰረት ነገሩን በመሃላ እንፈታዋለን።

Merigeta- Well! As there is no one telling the truth about committing the crime, we shall move on and all shall give their word ...

By saying this, the judges are warning the gathered people, as they know people fear making an oath. By this, they were giving the criminal, whoever she/he was, a last chance to reveal her/himself. But that did not happen.

Though the gathered people did not like the making of oath, they accepted it. The oath was not made putting hands on a bible. In the culture, all those suspected criminals were obliged to walk over two guns full of bullets and swear they did not do it. *Merigeta* even mentioned and reminded the gathering about events that happened before, and what the consequence of lying is.

Here were the words of *Merigeta*;

መሪጌታ፤ ያው እንግዲህ እንደምታውቁት በአጥፊነት የተጠረጠረ ድርጊቱን አልፈጠምኩም ታላ ይሁነኝ ይህንን ወንጀል አልፈጠምኩም ሲል ሁለት ጥይት የጎረሱ

ጠመንጃዎችን እየማለ እንደሚረመድ ሁላችሁም ታውቁት የነበረ ነው። ...ታስታውሱም እንደሆነ በጊዮርጊስ ንግሥ ማግስት አውጣጫኝ ተሰብስበን...አምስት ክምር ጤፍ ያቃጠለውን ወንበዴ ወፊቱ ነግራን...ጊዜአችንን አጣባክ ሰው ሁሉ ሁለት ቀን ሙሉ እዚህ ቁጭ ብ በአፉ እንኳ እህል አልቀመሰ። ጥፋትህን እመን ብንለው እንቢኝ ብሎ ጠመንጃ ሲዘል ጥይቱ ባርቆ እዛው ፍግም እንዳለ ትረሱት አይመስኝም...

Merigeta – As you all know, if a suspect of a crime said he did not do it, he is ordered to jump on two guns loaded with bullet. And when doing so he will be swearing and giving oath. If you all can remember, after the day of celebration of St. George, we were gathered in such investigation. We were told about a burgler who burnt five heap of cereal. We told him to avow his wrong doings but he did not agree to that. We begged him as all the gathered people did not eat anything for two days waiting until the criminal is known, he still refuses. And when he was asked to vow, he swears falsely. After that, while jumping, one of the gun go off and he was shot dead. I don't think you all forget this...

And when jumping the guns, the oath that the suspects make or say is as follows;

ጸሐፊ ትዕዛዝ፤ ...እና አሁን ተመጀመሪያ ጀምሮ የተጠቆሙት እየማሉ ይኼ ቢስተኝ ያኛው አይሳተኝ፤ እኔን ቢስተኝ ደግሞ ተዘሬ አንዱን ይብላብኝ እያሉ ይራመዱና ...ፈጣሚው አልለይ ታለ ተከተማ ዘመናዊ ዳኝነት ዘንድ ኸዶ በጥብቅ ይጣራል...

Writer - ...Starting from the first suspect...you will jump the guns saying... 'if one of the gun miss to kill me shall the other not, and if both miss, it shall be on one of my family' and if we cannot find the criminal in this way...we shall go to the modern court house...

Accepting this, the suspects started to jump on the gun according to the orders of the elderly. After they jump one by one, when it came to the turn of Aycheh, he insisted that Aya Belay shall jump before him. During this controversy, a man named *Tafete* stands and suddenly says that he has something to say to the gathering.

And then he asked for the evidence that is found from around the dead body of *Mistru*. After he saw it, he knew that the watch was *Ayalews'*, brother of the deceased. And after hours of investigation, at last the criminal was found to be *Ayalew*. Why would *Ayalew* kill his brother? Because *Mistru* was the one who killed their father. He confess all his deeds to the gathered,

አያሌው፤ ...እኔ ሆነ ብዬ አድብኜ አልገደልኩትም...እራሱ ነው ቤት ድረስ ሰይጣን አስከትሎ የመጣ...ገንዘብ ተከተማ ባንክ ሊያስገባ አንድ ጉርድ ፎቶ ግራፍ አንተ ጋር አለ ወይ አለኝ....ምስጢሩ ተባንክ የሚገባ ገንዘብ እንደሌለው ስለማውቅ የሰማሁት ነገር

እውነት እንደሆነ አረጋገጥኩ...አብዬ ከጠላት ሰውሮ ያኖረውን ቅርስ ሸጥታል፤ እንዴት ብዬ ብለው...አንተንም እንደ አባትህ...ብሎ በቃ! ገደልኩት...

Ayalew - ...I did not do it intentionally. He came to my home asking for photo of his, and that he wants to put some money in bank. But I knew that he had no such money left to be saved at Bank. So it is then I understand that he has sold the heritages that our father has saved his entire life....when I asked him how? He said that he will do to me what he had done to our father...then I killed him... Ayalew confessed that he had killed his brother after knowing that his father was betrayed by his own son that is Mistru. As loyalty strengthens individuals' relation in a society, betrayal cracks down any relation. And Mistru had betrayed his father and the church, by selling the liturgical items. And he was then betrayed by his own Brother.

In addition, though the man who killed *Mistru* was known, the person who put the house on fire and stole money from *Mistru's* house was not known. And Ayalew said he did not do that. But he asked the elderly that the person who put the house on fire shall be put to justice, and that he will not take the fall for it.

In saying so, was holding a gun in his hand and scaring of anyone who came across him. He pointed the Gun at *Mistru's* wife *BanchiYirga*, and asked if she has put the house on fire. *Ayalew* was sure that she is the one who put the house on fire and stolen the money. Then there was confusion across the gathering, but to calm it, Ayalew himself fired the gun twice.

While everyone begging him to put the gun down and *BanchiYirga* crying, *Aycheh* came up to take the fall. He told the gathering that he is the one who burnt the house and not *Banchi*. He did not commit the crime but he was trying to protect *Banchi*. And after the crowd become calm, he told the truth to the gathered people saying;

አይቼህ፤ ጅዮርጂስ ይፍረድብኝ እውነቴ ነው...በገዥ ይረጋገ እንዳይገድላት ብዬ ነው እኔ ነኝ ያልሁት...

Aycheh – I swear in the name of St. George. I lied...I said I did it for Ayalew not to kill BanchiYirga...

As he had confessed earlier, the gathering believed that he has done it and he was taken to jail. And the rest suspected people were allowed to go as they are not guilty in any way. It is then that another

betrayal came out in the face of the gathering. Aya Bleay was shot by the bullet fired earlier to calm the gathering.

And according to the belief of the society, and to the oath that all suspects were to make, Aya Belay's shot on the leg was a sign of God sending a message. But no one think of it as Aya Belay was a trust worthy man, until he also confessed and told them all about his betrayal.

አያ በላይ፤ ...እሱን ያገኘሁ መስሎኝ ያንተን ነገር ነክቻለሁ... ማረኝ ጅዮርጅስ...
ያሻሻጠውን ሰው አውቃለሁ... ገንዘባቸውን መልሼ ንብረትህን አስመልሳለሁ... ማረኝ
የዛሬን ብቻ!

Aya Belay – I thought I stole from him and I have touched what is yours. Oh St. George... I know who sold the heritages... I will bring back what is yours and I will pay them the money! Forgive me!

The play *Mistru* shows that those who are able to betray the person near to them are capable of betraying a whole community. Betrayal is seen influencing a society negatively cracking the bond that relates individuals in a society.

4.1.5 Misconceptions about Women

In the play “Mistru”, there are few points that concern the issue of women and it shows images of women in the society. Even though Feminism shall be treated as a theory and perspective itself, here the researcher preferred to use in the conflict theory assumption. And as stated in the previous chapters, the study tries to analyze the different conflicts and their consequence, therefore the issue of women is taken as part of theme of the play to be analyzed.

As it is known, playwrights are expected to use good dialogues to tell about their characters as they have no chance as much as a novel writer have. And it is said that dialogue is one of the few ways that a playwright has to communicate important things to the audience through his/her characters. (writingfortheatre.wordpress.com)

Based on this, every word in a dialogue and each dialogue are worth to be part of a play. That means dialogue is not simply conversation between characters. Rathes it is useful to convey information, it reveals character and contains “provocation” towards action etc.

According to this, dialogues that included issue of women in any way are viewed. For instance, at the moment of the gathering or the process of crime investigation started, the people could not

keep quite. In order to start the event, the man organizing the event named Muluken says the following;

ሙሉቀን፤ እስቲ ጠጥታ! ጠጥታ እባካችሁ እደማመጥ! ተያ ማዶ «ሴት በዛ ጎመን ጠነዛ»
እንዳይሆን ነገራችን ወዲያ ሴቶቻችን እስቲ በሉ! (ሕዝቡ ጋብ ይላል)

Muluken - Please keep quite! Over there ladies...don't make it a useless gathering of women; let us do what we came here for

The saying «ሴት በዛ ጎመን ጠነዛ» indirectly meaning “where there are many women, work is not done well” seems to be acceptable by the society and no one from the gathering complained about it. Even the women, who, during the “*Awtachign*” speak again and again arguing, did not say a word against what the organizer had said.

This shows that they all have accepted the saying and its meaning. The worst is that they do not even feel anything when it is said rather they obeyed and they all kept silent after that. Though the play does not show the counter part of the reflection of the society or a solution by which bad influence can be managed, but clearly shows the societies state of mind.

Beside the above point, Tigabu faced difficult situation. Who is *Tigabu*? *Tigabu* was one of the suspects and the first one because he used to live with *Mistru*. He (*Tigabu*) living with family of *Mistru* and working hard, was promised to get *Mistru's* father wealth. But that did not happen because after the death of the father of *Mistru*, he was kicked out of the house.

The gathered people thought that this is a good enough reason for *Tigabu* to kill *Mistru*. But while it was *Tigabu's* turn to defend himself, he told the gathered people that he did not have grudge on *Mistru* even though he was left out on the street with no home. And he told the elderly that when he got married, he had moved-in with his wife to her family's house.

By his last statement, that is, he moving in to his wife's home, the reaction of the gathered people was laughter;

ጥጋቡ፤ ተዚያ እሷም እግዚአብሔር ይስጣት...ለእናቷ አንድ በመሆኗ አባቷ ቀደም ሲሞት
እሷው ቤት ገብተን እናቷን እየጦርን ለመኖር ተስማማን የተሰበሰበ ሕዝብ፤
(ይስቃሉ...በጋራ) እርፍ!

Tigabu - Thanks to her (his wife)...as she was the only daughter to her mother and her father was not alive, we start to live at their house helping out her mother

Gathered people - (together) there you go! (Laughing)

The gathered people laughed at Tigabu as he moved in the house of his wife. It was humiliating for a man to move in the house of his wife or her family's home. A man is ought to fulfill the basic necessities of life, in marriage. And when a woman does that, it is shame and indignity.

This is what the society believes in, according to the play.

4.2 Thematic analysis of the play *Alkash ena Zefagn*

Alkash ena Zefagn is a play written by Fisseha Belay in the year 1978. The Theater is now on stage at the National Theater of Ethiopia. It is an interesting story mainly about two people, *Alkash* and *Zefagn* and a third person living with them, an old beggar. *Alkash*, named *Asgarjiw* and *Zefagn* named *Maru*, earn their livelihood, one by crying at funerals and the other chanting at weddings.

The two, *Asgarjiw* and *Maru*, lives in a house together with the old man. The prayers and wishes of the two are totally opposite. *Asgarjiw* always asks in her prayer to St. George, to kill someone for her. And *Maru* prays for a wedding to happen or any celebration that he can be part of.

And the play continues as the two people interest met at a single house. The house was Dejazmach granddaughters wedding. But at the same time, the bride was sick. *Asgarjiw* making her usual prayer, *Maru* gets worried thinking that she was trying to ruin the wedding by wishing a death upon the bride to be.

As the two are living in the same house, they know one another's wishes, prayers, failure and success. As it is known, *Alkash* in Ethiopia is a person who is called at funerals and set the people to cry, while *Zefagn* or a singer is called at the happy times. Besides the two, the play includes a beggar, a wealthy creditor and an old man renting a house. All the people in the play are dependent on one another. And all depend on their fate and faith.

The play is thematically categorized as Interdependence, hope and faith, Conflict of Interest, Working together and Fate.

4.2.1 Interdependence

Interdependent societies are said to be more connected and integrated, but they are also more fragile, weaker, and more vulnerable to cascading failures. Such an issue is part of the play *Alkash ena Zefagn*.

Maru and *Asgarjiw*, both are dependent on incidents that happen to other people. Just like a salary they are waiting to be given or like a money that a lender is going to hand them, they expect incidents like death and wedding to happen to others. Not only them, but the people around them are interdependent. For instance, the man who rent a house for the three people and the other person who lend *Maru* the money or the pawnbroker are all dependent on each other.

Balambaras, the owner of the house, rented his house to these three people. And whenever the time of rent payment arrives, he knocks on their door. They all usually did not pay on time, awaiting on incidents in others life. And so when the wedding was taking place in two days; Balambaras knocks at their doors again and again, Maru says;

ማሩ፤ ቢታገሱማ የደጃዝማች የልጅ ልጃቸው ሰርግ ከነገ ወዲያ ነበር

Maru - If he had been patient, Dejazmaches granddaughter wedding is in just two days

Not only *Maru* but also *Asgarjiw* depend on the death of people. As anyone would wish to have a good work, her wishes are also the same, but a bit different as it is not normal to wish for the death of other people. If there is no death or funeral, she will not be able to pay the rent she owes the house owner. And the people who lives with her who are Maru and the old man understand that:

ማሩ፤ አቤት አቤት...እርሷም የሁለት ወር ኪራይ ነው የሚዘፍንበት ሽማግሌ፤

ይዝፈንበት እንጂ! ሰው ካልሞተላት የት አግኝታ ትከፍላለች?

Maru - Oh! And her! She is indebt of two month rent

Old man (Beggar) – Of course! Where would she get money unless someone dies?

To earn money and to pay all her debt, *Asgarjiw* always asks St. George to kill someone, in order for her to get a job. She has faith and she dearly hopes for it. She lights up candle and give promises to St. George. She even buys a candle by money she borrowed.

አስጋርጂው፤ (ከዘንቢሉ ውስጥ ሻማ አውጥታ ትለኩስና በቅዱስ ጊዮርጊስ ስዕል ስር ባለው ማስቀመጫ ላይ ታኖራለች) ጊዮርጊ ፈረሰኛው ፈጣኑ እረ እባክህን ተለመነኝ! ከሻማ አቅም እንኳ ተበድሬ ነው የገዛሁልህ። እንግዲህ የነገርኩህን አድርግልኝ። በእለተ ቀንህ የአምስት ብር መጋረጃ እሰጥሃለሁ...ለእኔ የሚሆነውን አንተ አንተ ታውቃለህ...ገንድስልኝ።

Asgarjiw – (she takes out a candle out of a shopping bag and lights the candle in front of the holy picture of St. George) St George! Please listen to my prayers! I even borrowed to buy you a candle, do for me what I asked you for and on your day I will bring you a Curtain...you know what is good for me...kill someone please!

Maru, the singer, in his part puts off the candle light and tell to St. George not to hear *Asgarjiw*'s prayers and not kill anyone. He vows to give St. George more than *Asgarjiw* had promised. Looking through, in a conversation held between the beggar and *Maru*, they mentioned how hard *Asgarjiw* asks and begs St. George to kill someone for the sake of her job. And *Maru* says;

ማሩ፤ ...የሷንም ይመልከቱ እንጂ አበዛችውኩ! ከመሬት ብድግ ብላ መርጣ አንድ ጥንቅሽ እገሌን ካልገደልክ ትላለች። እነዚህ ይሙቱ የምትላቸው ሰዎች የሰሙ እንደሆነ ዓይኗ እያየ ወህኑ መውረዷን እኮ አታውቁም። ለመሆኑ ጊዮርጊስ ሰው ይገድላል?

Maru - Look at what she is doing! She selects someone and tells St George to kill that person. If those people had heard her prayers, she will be in jail anytime soon. After all, does St. George kill human being?

Both *Asgarjiw* and *Maru* are dependent on others fate and life. They both hope for someone to marry or to die. They put their faith in their God for that to happen. For instance, *Maru* hopes were high about the wedding. Though he did not pay the rent of his house, believing he will earn money from the wedding, he borrowed to buy clothes and not to pay the rent he owed to the owner of the house.

ማሩ፤ ...ባሻ ለዛሬ ዋስ ይዘህ ጡብቀን አበድርሃለሁ ብለውኛል። ...ያው ታውቃለህ ከደጃዝማች ሰር የምቆመው እኔው ነኝ። መቼም በርከት ያለ ገንዘብ ማግኘቱ አይቀርም...ለነገሩማ የምበደረው ለሰርግ ነው።...ታዲያ ይኸውልህ እኔን በአባቴ ተክተው ለሰር አክረው ጡሩኝ። ይህን አሮጌ ልብስ ለብሼ ስንት መኳንንት ስንት ወይዘርት ከተጠራበት ሰርህ እንዴት እቆማለሁ

Maru - Basha told me to wait for him with someone as a guaranty. You know that I am to stand in a crowd and guest of Dejazmach. I am sure am going to get lots of money. And I could not go to such a respectable family and wedding ceremony wearing such an old cloth, which is why I needed to borrow money...

In different parts of the play this hope of Maru is stated. But still there was also fear from his side. He did not fear that something will happen to the sick bride to be, but to her grandfather, Dejazmach. The bride's father was sick for long time and had survived when no one thought so. *Asgarjiw* prayer and the lightened candles only made him worry. He says as follows;

ማሩ፤ እኔ ይህ ሰርግ ደርሶልኝ ነው ጸሎቴ፤ እርሷ ደግሞ ደጃዝማች እንዲሞቱ ነው ምኞቷ።...ጧት ማታ ጊዮርጊስን ሞጬቅጬቅ ይዘላች...

Maru - Here I am praying to see the wedding day, and there she is hoping for the death of Dejazmach she begs St. George night and day

And when his (Maru's) warrantor *Gash Arage* told him that the sick bride does not seem to get well, his gets over stressed. He said;

ማሩ፤ እንደው ተሰርጋ እንኳ ዓለሟን እስክታይ አደራህን በጸሎትህ እንዳትረሳኝ ጋሽ አራጌ

Maru - Please Gash Arage, remember me in your prayers for the bride to be well until the wedding

Here Maru's prayer seemed he cared for the Brides health and happiness, But No. He was worried about the debt he is in, including the interest and about the rent he shall pay. His hopes consider himself only and he does not want to see it in any other way.

Maru and *Asgarjiw*, are both dependent on incidents which they are powerless over. Neither *Maru* has power to make the sick bride healthy or well nor is *Asgarjiw* able to kill anyone.

Symbolically, the two people living together show the life of human being that is the existence of both happiness and sorrow in ones' life. And that even if the two are opposites in the acceptance of the society, they are found together, one following the other.

Accordingly, interdependence in a society is well portrayed in the play. But as it is mentioned above, though interdependent societies are more connected, they are also vulnerable to much more problem. In the case of the play, we see a conflict of interest.

4.2.2 Conflict of Interest

The play shows mainly how both *Maru* and *Asgarjiw* await on an incident in a house. *Maru* the singer waiting for a wedding ceremony while *Asgarjiw* for the sick bride to die. Here is where conflict of interest happens.

Both of them talk about their interests in different ways; that at some points led to fight between the two. For example, while *Asgarjiw* prayed in front of the holy Image of St. George, asking him to kill someone lighting up candle, *Maru* says as follows;

ማሩ፤ (ተንጠራርቶ ሻማውን እፍ ብሎ ያጠፋል) መቸ አጣሁት ሃሳብሽን አንቺ ምቀኛ...አሁን በአንቺ ቤት እኔ ዘፍኜ ገንዘብ እንዳላገኝ ሰርጉም በሀዘን እንዲለወጥ ነው ለጊዮርጊስ የምትሰይ? እንዲሁ ትለፊያለሽ እንጂ ደጃዝማቸ እንደሆነ ድነዋል። በሽተኛዋ የልጅ ልጃቸው ታክማ በጎ ሆና ይኸው ከነገ ወዲያ ልትዳር ነው...በከንቱ አትልፊ

Maru - (blows off the candle) I know what you are thinking, you are now telling St. George for me not to earn money singing at the wedding. You are just wasting your energy, Dejazmach is already fine. Even his granddaughter has got her health back and is going to marry...do not waste your energy

While these tell a single situation that the play as a whole depends on, conflict of interest and fights over it is seen in the whole play. The two people nag each other and always disagree. They do not have a good word to exchange rather insult and malediction. Living in a house together, this conflict gets escalated each day. Then this simple dialogue continues to become harsh and insulting.

Besides the conflicts of Interest that the play put clearly, there is also such a conflict in the mind of the characters. For instance, *Asgarjiw*, on one side does not want the bride to die. Though it is a fact that it is not her wish that kills or gives health to the sick, believing St. George makes her wish come true, she says so. Still she needs money and that is the nearest chance out of which she could get money. While talking with the old man, she says as follows;

አስጋርጂው፤ ...አባባ ልጅቷምኮ ጤና የላትም...ሙሽራይቱ

ሻማግሌ፤ በሽተኛ ናት ይላሉ

አስጋርጂው፤ በስሙአብ ወወልድ በስማብ በስማብ...በእርሷስ አልመኝም። ምነው? አንዷ ፍሬ ልጅ ዓለሟን ሳታይ? እረ አይበልባት እቱ...ቅዱስ ጊዮርጊስ ጤናዋን ይስጣት...የፈለገው ችግር ቢያቆራምደኝ በእርሷስ አልመኝም...

Asgarjiw - Father...The bride is not in health

Old man (Beggar) - They say she is sick

Asgarjiw - oh In the name of the father, I don't wish that to happen on her. Let St. George give her health back. Whatever the problem I shall face, I don't wish it to happen to her

Unlike the two, the old man, who is the beggar, is not usually part of the conflict. He sits between the two, to give fair judgment and make peace between them, because he lives in the house too. He does not get biased by any of them as he is beneficiary out of both the situations.

When they ask him which one of them he prefers, he says as follows;

ማሩ፤ በሉ እንጂ አባባ ይህን ሥራ እግዚአብሔር ይወደዋል? ሰው ይሙት ይባላል? ሰው ቢሞት ነው ቢያገባ ሊደሰት የሚወድድ? እስቲ ራስዎ ይፍረዱት...እስር ነው ወይስ ሞት የሚፈለግ?

ሸማግሌ፤ ታድያስ ሰርግ ሲሆን እድምተኛ በልቶ ጠጥቶ ሲበቃ በየአቆልቋዩ ያለው ፍርፋሪ ተመልሶ ከመሰብ አይገባ። በየጠርሙሱ ያለው ጭላጭ እንደገና በጋን አይሾምም። ያው ለን ቢጤ ይሰጣል... ሲሞትም አለ፤ መጽሐፉ ያዘዘው እህል ውሃ ለሚፈቱት ቄሶችን ለምናጸድቀው ድሆች መስጠቱ አይቀር!

Maru – Tell me father! Does God love such a work? Is it right to say 'let a man die'? is it a death or a wedding that makes people happy? Which one is preferable father...tell me

Old man (beggar) – If it is a wedding, the food that is left over is not going to be in use again. The drinks left in the bottle will not be back in the kitchen...it is given for us beggars. And also there is on funerals...food and drink is served for the priests and for us beggars...

Here the plays show how interdependence could lead to conflict of interest. And in the play, the main reason is poverty. As they are poor even with no money to pay for rent, they quarrel over things they have no power on and on situations they cannot change. Even the old beggar man, depending on both incidents of others life, is obliged to do so because he is poor. According to the play, in a society where individuals are integrated by interdependence, one reason for conflict is poverty.

4.2.3 Working Together

Even though *Maru* and *Asgarjiw* disagree on things they have interest on, they do not hate each other that much. And different times the ideas of working together of the two is raised. But no agreement was there to work together as their field is dissimilar. Their jobs are the two extremes

of life, happiness and sorrow. Making the two together or combining the two is impossible, as to feel pity over happiness or to be happy over sorrow is not right.

As for *Asgarjiw* and *Maru*, they could have worked together instead of having conflict. *Arage* who is a friend of *Maru* for instance has raised the idea of the two working together. They had even tried to work together, but *Asgarjiw* started singing and the “*Musho*” or funeral dirge suddenly took over and changed her rhythm, soon she changes the situation to funeral.

አራን፤ ማሩ መቼም የምነግርህ አልሰማኝ አልክ እንጂ ብሰማ ደኅና ነበር። አስጋርጂውኮ ጥሩ ድምጽ አለት

ማሩ፤ ድምጧስ ወደር የለውም። ...የአስጋርጂ ድምጥ የማንም ሰው ላይ አልተፈጠረም።...ታዲያ ምን መላ አለው፤ ዘፈኑን ለአንድ አፍታ ደኅና አድርጋ ትጀምረውና ምልስ ብላ እዚያው ከልቅሶዋ ትገባለች...

Arage - Maru! Why don't you listen to me and work with her (Asgarjiw) she has a good voice...

Maru - I know about her voice...no one has the talent that she has. But what can you do! She start crying in the middle of the singing

Even *Asgarjiw* has asked *Maru* to work together with him. Especially when the situation seemed favoring *Maru* and the wedding was expected. At the moment she asked him to be the singer while he plays the *Masenqo* – a traditional musical instrument. She said to *Maru*;

አስጋርጂው፤ በል እንጂ ማሩ። እስቲ አንድ ነገር ልጠይቅህ...በዚህ ሰሞን ማታ ማታ ደኅና ዘፈን እያስለመድከኝ ነበር። ምናል ዛሬና ነገ ቅዳሜ ቀኑን ሙሉ እስከማታ ድረስ አለማምደኸኝ ከሰርጉ አብሬህ ብዘፍን

Asgarjiw - let me ask you something Maru...why don't you let me practice the wedding songs with you before the wedding and why don't I sing with you at the wedding?

But *Maru* did not agree to work with her. Not because she has adapted to the rhyme of funeral dirge but he feared of what others might think. There is a societal perception for the two fields of works. Though both give service for the society, they are conceived in different views. And that was *Maru's* answer for *Asgarjiws'* request to working together.

ማሩ፤ ድፍን ሀገር ያወቀሽን አልቃሽ ከደጃዝማች ቤት ዘፋኝ አድርጌ ባቆምሽ ማን ሊባል ነው? እነሱ የሚያዘፍኑሽ ይመስልሻል? ታሚርችብናለሽ ነዋ የሚሉት...

Maru - Everyone knows you for your dirges at funerals. How could I take you as a singer at Dejazmach's granddaughter wedding? Do you think they will let you sing?

The two people are not able to work together, symbolically meaning that they cannot be the same in life. Each have their own taste and human beings react to the situations in different and extreme ways. Directly looking through the play, Maru and Asgarjiw are seen not able to work together for two reasons.

One is their own habit, which is *Maru* cannot do dirges and *Asgarjiw* will not be able to sing on weddings even though she has a good voice. The other is the feedback they get from the community or the society as a whole. For instance, when a person who is known at doing funeral dirges, is seen singing a song on a wedding, the society may think is not a good luck to the married couple.

4.2.4 Fate

Fate is also the main theme of the play. Two extremes of life, wedding and death are standing in front on a discourse. Through *Alkash ena Zefagn* the truth of life is conveyed. In the culture of Ethiopian society, it is said that in life, Death and wedding are similar, as they are known to happen once in a life time.

Even in music of wedding, the poem is as follows; “ከባ ልበሽ ምንድነው? ሰርግና ሞት አንድ ነው” meaning why don't you wear your wedding cloak? Don't you know that wedding and death are one? (By “one” meaning they happen only once in life and also they are similar as they have huge ceremonies)

For instance, in the play the two equally happening events are having a conflict. The end according to the playwright was putted upon fate. And there, death won. The death of the bride gave *Asgarjiw* the work she hoped for. Fate gives for one and takes away from the other what they hoped for.

After the decision of fate in the play, things were not going well for *Maru*. He had bought clothes by the money he borrowed from pawnbroker. But he did not complain, rather accepted the truth. The two, that depends on others life event, at last agreed to live together married and as a couple. Both having their own work, they agreed to live in a house. Just like there is both happiness and sorrow in one's single life.

4.3 Thematic analysis of the play *Babylon be Salon*

Babylon be salon is a play written by Wudneh Kifle in 1991E.C. The play is about husband and wife, named Wubshet and Tizita. The couple is seen having a huge argument for some unknown reason. Even though they are not divorced, they are living in a huge house, separating the guest room into two by a wall made of wood. Wubshet owning half of the house and the house keeper while Tizita also keeps the other half of the house with the women serving her.

Though the couple seems to hate each other; that was not the case. The problem between them was admitting their love for one another and leaving their obstinacy. Each of them want the other to admit their love and regret of separation, but none of them want to do so. Rather jealousy was taking place. They go extra mile to make each other jealous. They try to make each other believe that there is no more love between them, and act as if there is not.

In the play there is another character named Sintayehu with a major role of trying to make reconciliation between the two. Sintayehu, sister of Wubshet and an actress, tries every method to make them believe their love for one another. And the story goes on as the two used their own ways to make each other jealous.

The main theme of the play, according to the researcher, is Obstinacy. Throughout the play we see a couple, that is *Wubshet* and *Tizita* who love each other but do not admit so. Letting go, admitting fault and confessing ones feeling became a matter of life and death, in the play. The couple, instead of trying to understand each other, preferred separating and building a huge wall between them, *Babylon*.

The play *Babylon Be Salon* in this study is thematically categorized as jealousy, obstinacy, images of women, and relationship and trust.

4.3.1 Jealousy

In the play *Babylon Be Salon* jealousy takes place in every scene the couple are found. Both of them, Tizita and Wubshet, thought making each other jealous would be a solution. As it is said that people regret seeing what they left in the hands of others, they both thought that jealousy will help them solve their problem and that one of them might be the one to say 'Sorry' admitting their love.

The method that they used was artificial and nonexistent. In the play the reason that leads them to such a quarrel is not stated. But it is clear that, whatever the reason might be, the worst thing is not that reason which made them apart, but the thing they do after that. For instance, *Wubshet* without a phone, talks to an imaginary woman, he named *Messi*. He says;

ውብሽት፤ እኔም መሲ...ንፍቅ ብለሺኝ አልቅስ አልቅስ እያለኝ ነው። ባክሽ ያንቺ ከኔ አይብስም

Wubshet – I missed you too Messiye...I missed you that I want to cry right now...I miss you more than you do...

In the huge Salon they used to share but has now separated by a huge wall they put in between, *Tizita* listens to *Wubshet* talking on the ‘Phone’. She does not say it out loud, but as *Wubshet* wanted and expected, she feels jealous. Her every moves and actions explained it all.

Again *Tizita* also does the same thing as a reaction to his (*Wubshet*) deeds. She talks to her servant *Worke* about *Atnafu*. An imaginary person that, she created to make her husband jealous. She describes him out loud for *Wubshet* to hear.

ትዝታ፤ (ድምጽዋን ውብሽት እንዲሰማው ጮክ አድርጋ) ስሚ! ፍቅር እንዴት እንደሆነ የገባኝ በአጥንዬ ነው...የረገምኳትን ዓለም በእርሱ ወደድኳት...አጥንዬ በፍቅር ቅልጥ ሳያደርገኝ አልቀረም

Tizita - (talking out loud) listen to me Worke... I understand what love is because of Atnye...I liked the world that I used to cures...I think I am in deep love with Atnye...

This purposeful and intentional action of the two continued, they did not stop there, but both of them brought the imaginary characters to life. They hired people. *Wubshet* on his side hired a prostitute and *Tizita* hired a mechanic from a garage nearby. They added more people into their circle of jealousy.

ሴተኛ አዳሪ፤ የማስቀናልህ በምን መንገድ ነው? ውብሽት፤

በቃ አንቺ ለእኔ እጮኛ ነሽ። ማለቴ የውሸት

Prostitute - How do I make her Jealous?

Wubshet –You are my Fiancé...I mean...not actually

Tizita also does the same thing, calling *Atnafu* at home and talking out loud so that *Wubshet* could hear.

ትዝታ፤ ያው በተነጋገርነው መሰረት

ነው አጥናፍ፤ እንዴት!? ትዝታ፤

አፍቃሪዬ ነህ! አጥናፍ፤ የውሸት!?

ትዝታ፤ አዎን!

Tizita- we will do as we have talked Atnafu-

How?

Tizita- You are my lover Atnafu-

not actually, right?

Tizita- Of course!

Both of them are in a situation which they do not accept only to make each other jealous. Without knowing what the end may bring, they blindly continue on doing actions they don't believe in.

Family, which is the huge entity in a society, is result of marriage. And as individuals matter in society, marriage is also a concern. Problems in marriage affects society negatively as individuals are fruits of family. Marriage in other way is one value with in a society; it is respected and valued highly.

For instance, the play *Babylon beSalon*, indicates the effect within a specific circle of relations. They had affected their workers at home, their families and even the people they hired, that are the prostitute and the mechanic. This implies that, one way or another, people around tremulous marriage are affected socially and psychologically.

4.3.2 Obstnacy

In the play *Babylon be Salon* the main theme is about obstnacy and how far it pushes away people from the thing they love. The couple building a huge wall between them act like they want to stay far apart, but truly it was clear they do not want to. But to gain what they want, one of them shall admit the truth, while none of them were volunteer to do so.

When one of them say something that they do not mean, in reply the situation gets harder. For example, *Tizita* unintentionally says “let us divorce”. Her husband did not hesitate to accept as they are in anger and Obstinacy. He even acted like it was what he wanted, while it was not. And in their face they enclose from each other, they both were unhappy about it.

ትዝታ፤ ፈርማችንን እንቅደድ

ውብሸት፤ (ክው ብሎ ቢደነግጥም እንዲታወቅበት አይፈልግም) ጥሩ...በጣም ጥሩ...ፈጣሪዬ ምን ይሰንሃል? በዓመቱ ዣንጥላዬን ይገዢ ስለቴን አደርሳሁ...እኔስ እንቢ ትያለሽ ብዬ ስጨነቅ ነበር የከረምኩት ትዝታ፤ (የውሸቷን) እግዜር ከእሳት ሲያወጣን...ምን በጣኝስ!

ውብሸት፤ ጊዜ ማራዘም አያስፈልግም ትዝታ፤

ሽማግሌ ሰብስበን መቅደድ እንችላለን

Tizita – Let’s get divorce

Wubshet (shocked but acted normal to hide his feeling) that is good! Thank God! I promise to bring you an umbrella. I was afraid that you will not agree for a divorce

Tizita - (lying) God saved me from the worst

Wubshet- we do not need to take more time

Tizita - We can gather the elderly and then we can split-up

Sintayehu knew what was going on between the two. She always tries to talk to them both to let go their obstinacy. They did not agree to it though they know it is the right thing to do, which is to save their marriage.

Not only Sintayehu, but the people that the couple included to make each other jealous knew that. For instance, the prostitute told Wubshet the same thing, but clearly he states that he does not want to admit what he feels.

ሴተኛ አዳሪ፤ ግን አንተ ሳይህ ሚስትህን የምታፈቅራት ይመስለኛል። ካፈቀርካት ደግሞ ለምን...

ውብሸት፤ (አቋርጧት) ኖኖ እኔ ሳልሆን እሷ ነች የምታፈቅረኝ

Prostitute – You look like you still love your wife. So if you love her why... Wubshet- (Interrupting her) No! I don’t. She is the one who loves me.

While the employed prostitute was at Wubshets part of the house and acting to make Tizita Jealous, Tizita was very much in confusion. She used not to believe the phone call, but when she hears a woman laughing in the half part of the room where her husband's lives, she was shocked and could not believe that her husband could do such a thing.

ትዝታ፤ /ለብቻዋ/ ያሳዝናል! የመጨረሻችን ቀን ተቃረበ? /በሰግ/ ሊሆን አይችልም!
ውብሽት አያደርገውም!

Tizita- I am sorry. Does our marriage come to an end? It can't be! He (Wubshet) would not do it!

But the thing here is that they both knew that they were acting and the things they were doing was not real. This was how it was stated in the play;

(...ውብሽት አልጋውን በእጁ እያነቃነቀ ሲጥ ሲጥ ያደርጋል። ትዝታ ትርበሻለች። ራሷን መቆጣጠር ያቅታታል። ሰውነቷ እየተንዘፈዘፈ በቅናት የሰማችውን ለማመን ወንበር ትደራርብና ተንጠልጥላ በችጥዳ በላይኛው ክፍተት አሻግራ ወደ ውብሽት ክፍል ትመለከታለች። ውብሽትና ሴተኛ አዳሪዋ አያይዋትም። ሴተኛ አዳሪዋ ወንበር ላይ ቁጭ ብላ፤ ውብሽት ደግሞ ባዶ አልጋ ሲነቀንቅ ታይና ትዝታ ቀስ ብላ ከወንበሯ በእጅይታ ስሜት ታማትብና ትወርዳለች) ትዝታ፤ (የእጅይታ ስሜት እየተሰማት) አሃ! አንድ ለባዶ ጫዋታ ነው! (ለራሷ) የኔ ይብሳል... እሠራለታለሁ!

(...Wubshet was wagging the bed and Tizita gets worried. She could not control herself therefore she stood on chair and look across Wubshets room. Either Wubshet or the prostitute did not see her. Tizita saw prostitute sitting on a chair and looking at Wubshet wagging the bed. After seeing this, Tizita steps down from the chair.)

Tizita – (feeling relieved) Ok! It's a game of one to Nil! (Talking for herself) I am worse than that!

Not only Tizita, but also Wubshet experienced the same thing. While Tizita talks out loud while Atnafu was at home, as they are having fun, he saw them across to her room standing on a table.

But this thing does not make them smile and regret the childish thing they are doing, rather the obstinacy pushed them to do more.

Sintayehu has made few experiments on the couple, to show them that they still want their marriage. This is what happens, each day she met with each of them, they curse each other and they tell her that they hate each other and do not want to live together. But one day Sintayehu proves both of them wrong. As she was an actress, she acted in front of them both, each at different times, like the other happens to be in an accident.

ስንታየሁ፤ እኔ አላምንም! ወይኔ ወንድሜን ወይኔ ውብሽት የኔ የሳት እራት እኔ ልገጭልህ
ትዝታ ክው ብላ ደንግጦ ትንቀጠቀጠለች

ትዝታ፤ ምድን ነው ውብዬ ምን ሆነ? በሳቅ ፍቅሬ ምን ሆነ? አንዲን እኮ ነው? /በለቅሶ/
የሱን ክፉ ከማይ እኔ አሁኑኑ ፍግም ልበል! አንቺን እኮ ነው ውብዬ ምን ሆነ?

/...ስንታየሁ ታይና ሳቋን መቆጣጠር ያቅታታል። በኃይልም ታስከካለች። ትዝታ
ለቅሶዋን አቁማ ታያታለች። ከምር እየሳቀች መሆኑን ስትረዳ በብስጭት ትዝታ፤ የምር
ነው የቀልድ?

SIntayehu – (Crying loud) I can't believe it! My brother! Oh! my Brother!

(Tizita got terrified...)

*Tizita- what happened to Wubye? What happened to my love? Am talking to you
Sintayehu! (Crying) I prefer to die than to see any harm on him...what happened to
Wubye?*

(Sintayuhu started to laugh at Tizita...) Tizita-

Was that a joke?

The same happens with Wubshet;

ስንታየሁ፤ እኔ አላምንም እኔ አላምንም እሀ እኔ ልገጭልሽ ውብሽት
/በድንጋጤ/ መኪና! ወይኔ ካለሷ ይሆንልኛልና ጉድ ጉድ ጉድ ሸር መከራ!
ውብሽት ራሱን መቆጣጠር አቅቶት ራሱን ይዞ መሬተ ላይ እየፈረጠ ኡኡታውን
ያስከካዋል። ስንታየሁ አለቃቀሱ እያስገረማት ሳቋን ትለቀሳለች። ግራ ተጋበቶ
ጭኸቱን ያቆምና ያያታል

Sintayehu- I can't believe it! Oh my sister! A car accident...

Wubshet (terrified) - car accident! Oh my! How can I live without her! (He could not control himself and started to cry falling on the ground) Sintayehu laughs at him after seeing his reaction.

The play shows how obstinacy leads to losing everything one owes. The couple in *Babylon Be Salon* loved each other and do not want to lose one another, but they do not want to admit it. Acting like they hate each other and not living their truth, they waste times in life.

4.3.3 Misconceptions about Women

One of the themes that we found here in the play is also images of women and the misconception about women. As the plays genre is Comedy, the play writer might use phrases, sayings and ideas to create laughter. But still those words mean something, and they have a message as they are a reflection of the real world or the truth of the society.

ውብሽት፤ /ተረጋግቶ/ ስማ ጎበዜ ከዚህ በፊት ምንድነው ያልኩህ? ትዝታን አንቱ አትበላት አላልኩም? አየህ ሴትን ልጅ ናቅ ማድረግ ያስፈልጋል

Wubshet- (Calmly) listen to me Gobezze! Haven't I told you before? Don't give respect to Tizita... You see! It is necessary to neglect women.

As Wubshet is angry at his wife, it can be said that his saying are based on the situation he is facing. But unlike him, Sintayehu repeats the same idea. That girls as a whole or women must be neglected, otherwise they will be overconfident. It might not be shocking to hear such an idea from a man, but to hear a woman herself giving such an advice is of course shocking.

ስንታየሁ፤ ...ሴት ልጅ ቆጣ ብለህ ናቅ ታደርጋት ነው በእጅህ የምትገባው አላልኩህም?

Sintayehu- It is when you get serious and neglect them that you will get her for your own.

Sintayehu have such pessimistic ideas about women, or else she generalizes. Being a person between a couple in a way to divorce, and trying to make peace between them, also giving many good advices for both, but the images of women inside her [Sintayehu] is inequitable. She said the following;

ስንታየሁ፤ ሴቶች የሚሰደቡት የሚያፈቅሩትን ሰው ነው ይባል የለ!

Sintayehu- it is said that women usually insult the one they love...

Imitating from this, the servant of Tizita also took some ideas and even practice what Sintayehu told her. Beside, looking at some actions of Tizita, Worke gave judgment about women saying;

ወርቄ፤ ...ሴት ልጅ ፍቅር ሲይዙት ጸባይዋ ውስጥ መመናቀር ይጨምራል ልበል?

Worke - I think Women act different as they fall in love

Image of women in a society is necessary. When we look at the above extracts from the play, the words are tapped easily and a reader may not give concern and care about it. Just like things and saying that are adapted by the society, and which seem normal, it is also normal in the play.

But looking at other facts, one can say that it must be given concern. For instance, in a society we see individual's quarrelling about their ethnicity. Plays or any literal works do not insult or say bad words about any ethnic group. And even if there is such a word or expression, a reader will stop and say "How could the playwright say this? How bold is she/he to say so?" But the issue of women is not given as half of the concern given to ethnic group.

4.3.4 Relationship and Trust

In the play, Sintayehu who tries to reconcile the couple is seen in her own relationship drama. As she is an actress and she is a sharp thinker about relationships, she is also Cynical in her own relations with men. Therefore she wanted to test a man, Delelegn. Delelegn is a man who is her admirer as she is an actress and he said that he loves her. Knowing her only for few days, she found his word unacceptable, therefore she tested him.

She did not push him away rather accepted him. The way she did the test was different from one that anyone could guess. She used her acting ability, and acted as she has a twin sister. That means she created her own 'twin'. She named 'her' Senait, then she told Delelegn that they had fight with her, and asked him to make them reconcile. But adding she tempted him;

ስንታየሁ፤ ሰኒ ያንተ ዓይነት ቅርጽ ያለው ወንድ ትወዳለኝ።... አልፈልግም ይቅርብኝ፤ እርሷ ጣጣ የላትም። አንድ ሰው ዓይኗ ከገባ ሺህ ጊዜ አይናፋር ብትሆን እወድሃለሁ ከማት አትመለስም...እኔን ያናደደች መስሏት ፍቅሬን ብትነጥቀኝስ? እንደውም እርቁ ገደል ይግባ!

ደለላኝ፤ እንዴ ፍቅሬ እንዴት ነው የምታስቢው...እሷ ፍላጎት ቢኖራት ማን እሺ ይላታል! እኔን ልታምኚኝ ይገባል...

Sintayehu – Seni likes a man with a shape just like yours. She don't care about anyone...nothing will stop her from saying that she likes you...trying to make me angry she might take you away from me...so do not do the reconciliation and let us leave that...

Delelegn – My Love! What are you thinking? Even if she wants me who am I to agree and accept her...you have to trust me!...

He (Delelegn) insisting to make the reconciliation between the 'Twin sisters' and left. Sintayehu then waited for him in the other room clothing different and with another name, which is Senait. She also tempted him acting like the other herself, he did not hesitate to fall, he betrayed Sintayehu.

ስንታየሁ፤ (እንደ ሰናይት) የስንታየሁ እጮኛ ነህ?

ደለለኝ፤ (እያመነታ) እ...እ...አይ...አይደለሁም ማለት...

ስንታየሁ፤ (በዝግታ)...መሆንም የለብህም። ባለውቅህም ለንተ ዓይነቱ ሰው የምትመጡን አይመስለኝም። እውነትህን ነው ግን እጮኛዋ አይደለህም!?

ደለለኝ፤ ገብርኤልን

Sintayehu (acting as Senait) - Are you Sintayehu's Fiancé?

Delelegn – No.... I mean...

Sintayehu (acting as Senait) – You are better off without her...Though I don't know you, I don't think she deserve you...Are you sure she is not your fiancée?

Delelegn – I swear in the name of St. Gabriel.

Lying to her and swearing, the man was not trustworthy. Knowing this, one day Sintayehu showed him her true face and that she has no twin rather she was the one acting both. Then they break up and their relationship did not continue, as trust was not there.

Chapter Five : Conclusion

At the beginning of the study, it is stated that the aim was to give an answer, whether or not the selected plays reflect the society, and if so how they portrayed the society, and what themes they embrace. Now, we can say that; plays can exactly reflect a societal problem and be a mirror for the society to look through oneself.

The plays are analyzed emphasizing mainly on the functional, conflict and symbolic interactionist perspectives of sociology. In addition, the analysis of the selected Amharic plays under this study shows both the functional and dysfunctional aspects of the society.

The first play *Mistru*, showing the cultural way of crime investigation, discloses scandalous acts and the common decency in the society. One side, there is loyalty and willingness to see justice prevailed and in addition there exists true respect for societal values. However, within that society which is thought to respect social values and fear God, there are people who kill their brothers, and who steal and sell things they are given to care for.

It also shows the society as an interconnected and integrated entity. The play indicates how the society can unite to solve a common problem saying “ጎግ በእኔ” that is by putting oneself in each other’s shoes. Besides, it captures the value and contributions of indigenous ways of life to the stability of the society.

In the play *Alkash ena Zefagn*, interdependence within a society is highly reflected. The play expresses how that interdependency within society creates conflict of interest. The play also stretches the two extremes of life, happiness and Sorrow, and how they live side by side. Moreover, the existence of category and class in a society is not left out of interdependency.

In addition, the deep-rooted theme with some humor included, it mirrors the society and the truth of life. As mentioned above, we see the society in a category divided because of standard of life. According to the play, the poor are dependent on the rich. And the society is divided as the haves and the have not’s. The poor pay rent to the wealthy and borrow money from them as well. Again, the poor are the one that adds flavor to the incidents in the life of the rich, be it wedding or funeral.

In the other play analyzed under this study, *Babylon Be Salon*, the play expresses the obstinacy in each heart and house of individuals in a society. Creating a humor, it shows the hidden face of the

society. It makes the audience laugh at one's own reality of obstinacy. To show this, the play used marriage, which is significant part in a society.

In a society of individuals, with a wall between them called obstinacy, simple issues became complicated. The play, using marriage as a symbol, show what childish things that individuals can do, that will make them more far apart. The result of knowing the right thing to do, but not doing it, it is shown in the play.

The findings of the study show that, in all the three plays, though there are structural differences, there is interdependence and there is conflict. Moreover, functional and dysfunctional aspects of the society are depicted in the plays. Adding to it, the plays can prove that, when performed, plays are not just a matter of entertainment but they can convey significant social message and reflect the images of the society, in order to help show the society its own problems.

But, except the play *Alkash ena Zefagn*, in the other two plays, the images of women are inequitable. As words have every power in the minds of people, negative images of women also lead to the questions of women right. It is usually seen that writers are very careful and precise on ethnic situation or other classifications of society, but they do not give concern about women.

In some parts of the plays, it seems that the playwright wanted to create a humor or the playwrights being part of the society, may not even recognize it. However it shows that the images of women in the plays are inequitable.

Accordingly, more concern shall be asked from the playwright's in cases where there are misconception, like misconception about Women. Beyond that, plays can show the images of society, that even an outsider, watching the plays in action, will be able to understand and know about the society.

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