

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**ALIENATION IN THREE AMHARIC NOVELS:
Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir, Adäfris and *Kadmas Bašagür***

**BY
MISRAK TAREKEGN**

JUNE, 2002.

**ALIENATION IN THREE AMHARIC NOVELS:
*Fṯk'ṯr ṯskä Mäk'ab ṯr, Adṯfr ṯs and Kadmas Baṯagür***

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THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
LITERATURE**

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APPROVED BY EXAMINING BOARD:

ADVISOR

SIGNATURE

EXAMINER

SIGNATURE

EXAMINER

SIGNATURE

Declaration

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

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Place: _____

Date of submission: _____

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Pronunciation Key

Vowels

ä	ኧ	መቃብር	Mäk'ab _i r
a	አ	አያ	Aya
u	ኡ	ጉዱ	Gudu
i	ኢ	ዳዊት	Dawit
e	ኤ	ገበሬ	Gäbre
ï	ኦ	ፍቅር	Fïk'ïr
o	ኦ	ሞገሴ	Mogäse

Consonants

ć	ቸ	መጣጥፎች	Mät'at'foć
č	ጨ	አጭር	Ač _i r
j	ጀ	አበጀ	Abäjä
k'	ቀ	ቅኔ	K' _i ne
ñ	ኘ	ዳኛቸው	Dañaćäw
p'	ጸ	ጴጥሮስ	P'et'ros
š	ሽ	መሸሻ	Mäšäša
s'	ጸ	ገለጸ	Gäläs'a
t'	ጠ	ጥሶ	T' _i so
ž	ዠ	ረሻሮም	räž _i m

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis, "Alienation in three Amharic novels: *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir, Adäfrıs and Kadmas Bašagär*," is to explore the way human nature and social relationship are treated in the selected three novels from the perspective of Marx's theory of alienation.

By way of investigating the notion of alienation this research exposes how the consciousness of an individual formulates his/her world view that is the overall perception of one's social position. In this regard an attempt has been made to show how the past controls the present and the extent of human freedom. In order to reveal these points the different aspects of alienation are displayed with subtitles such as, alienation of man from man, alienation from self, dereified consciousness, education and alienation and intellectual alienation.

This study has five chapters. The introduction explains why the topic is chosen. It also shows the aim, method, scope and significance of the research.

The second chapter reviews available studies that have relations with the research topic. This includes both published and unpublished works. In this chapter the framework of analysis is also presented, beginning from the etymology of the term alienation, its intellectual development, Marx's concept of alienation and the application of the notion after him.

The third chapter examines the different aspects of alienation in *Fık'ır ĩskä Mäk'abır* . The discussion shows alienation from the self in terms of prohibition to express one's social and biological natures. When examining the alienation of man from man it investigates the world view of people through the notion of reified consciousness. It further reveals how this concept leads to the 'biologising' of human relationship. These two notions reveal how the society perceives of the man-made principles as natural. People who are non-conformists to the rules and regulations of the community are studied under the notion of 'dereified' consciousness.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the features of alienation in *Adäfrıs*. Again the alienation of man from man is examined in terms of reified consciousness. People who are aware of the artificiality of the social systems are presented under the notion of 'dereified' consciousness. This chapter also examines modern education and alienation that are exhibited in *Adäfrıs*.

The fifth chapter explores how alienation is manifested in *Kadmas Bařagär*. The alienation of man from man is examined through the 'biologising' of human relationship. It also investigates different aspects of reified consciousness. There is also a discussion regarding intellectuals and their conflicting positions in the society. In the conclusion, what the research reveals about the concept of alienation in relation to the three novels is summarized. Finally, the lists of references used in the thesis are put forward.

CHAPTER I

1. Introduction

1.1 The Rationale of the Study

It is assumed that the social, political and economic situations of a given society have profound effects on the literary expressions of writers who want to come to terms with themselves and the reality of their communities. Of all the genres of literature, it is believed that the novel tries to give a broader perspective of and deeper insight into the social, political and economic forces that operate actively in a given society. This is because "... the fact that the novel is in prose helps to establish that sense of 'real life'-of recognizable everyday existence that is the preserve of the genre". (Hawthorn, 1985:3). Even though this belief does not always hold true, what the position of Hawthorn asserts is the capacity of the novel in transcending its readers beyond what is literally expressed in the text through language. In other words, a novel is not considered as an experiment with language but with 'real life' situations. The voluminous nature of the novel enables it to treat different social issues from various directions. Because of its close resemblance with the vicissitudes of human existence the genre is sometimes interchangeably used with the issue of realism.

This seems to be one of the reasons that compel Wallace Martin (1980:19) to say: "The novel is thus relevant to the diagnosis of social and cultural issues." This assertion encourages the writer of this paper to look for social events that could be diagnosed from a different direction that might help to understand selected Amharic novels in a new light. Among the available Amharic literary productions the researcher selects three novels that she believes give in-depth emphasis on human nature and human relationship. These are Haddis Alämayähu's *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*, DañaĈaw Wärk'u's *Adäfris* and Bäalu Girma's *Kadmas*

Bašaḡär. Although the selected novels are among those which attract the attention of many researchers at different levels, there are only a handful of works that try to study human nature and social relations that are revealed in these novels. Now, the question that needs to be answered is, how do these selected texts treat the phenomena of human nature and social relations? What is found suitable to explore the above mentioned issues is the concept of alienation that considers a human being's essential nature, the controlling power of the past and the extent of human freedom. The multi-faceted features of these points, the writer of this paper believes, are thoroughly dealt with in the selected Amharic novels. Since the concept of alienation in Amharic novels is less discussed this present research focuses on exploring the different manifestations of this notion in the three literary works.

The concept of alienation has different interpretations in different academic disciplines. Consequently, the researcher has to identify from these explanations the one that is appropriate for the explication of human nature and relation. In this search for a framework of analysis Marx's theory of alienation is found to be relevant to serve the purpose of this study. Examining the novels from this perspective might help us to appreciate the way literary pieces submit themselves to various modes of analyses.

1.2 Aims of the Study

The main objective of this research is to expose the way human beings and their various institutions are treated in the selected literary texts. It also aims at showing the usefulness of Marx's theory of alienation in exploring the image of man in the contexts of the given novels. Since there is a tendency of blending Karl Marx with Marxist political movements, his contribution to the knowledge of man, particularly his concept of human relationship is among the most disregarded ones. Therefore, the research aims to throw some light on the views of Marx that play important roles in the advancement of man's knowledge in general

and social interaction in particular. This is a modest attempt by way of revealing the issues of human nature, self- fulfillment, consciousness and other related issues through Marx's concept of alienation.

1.3 Methods of the Study

The researcher relies on library work in undertaking this research. This study being qualitative, tries to describe and interpret the given literary texts based on Marx's theory of alienation. The explanations of the term are presented in the literature review of this paper. The researcher finds this restriction of the concept essential, since alienation has different meanings in different branches of knowledge. Because of this reason the notion of being eclectic in using the concept becomes unworkable. One might say, applying such kind of a 'foreign' theory on Amharic literary pieces does not bring justice to these literary productions. This might be true if the theory in question can only be explained within a restricted social setting. However, a universal concept like Marx's theory of alienation helps to expose human condition in any sphere of social relationships.

An attempt will be made to appropriate the explanations of the concept taking into account the social and cultural milieu of the selected Amharic literary works. In trying to explicate the human interactions presented in the selected novels, the researcher depends on what is expressed in the texts themselves. In other words, the study is solely text-based, focusing on scrutinisation of text extracts. The contents of each book are going to be examined separately and at the end an attempt will be made to compare and contrast differences as well as similarities. Since the selected literary pieces are written in Amharic, English translations of pertinent text extracts are put side by side with the original. For Amharic words that are utilized as they are, pronunciation key is provided at the outset. Since there is no clear-cut guideline as to how to transliterate Amharic characters, the researcher adapts the currently

used consonant and vowel symbols by the department of Linguistics at Addis Ababa University. Unless and otherwise indicated, all the dates are given according to Gregorian calendar.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The researcher restricts herself to three selected novels that she believes are competent to elaborate the concept under consideration. Such kind of limitation makes an exhaustive discussion of the texts in the light of the alienation concept possible. It is also found necessary to confine the study within the framework of Marx's theory of alienation, since the explanations of Marx are taken as corner stones that serve the concern of this research best.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this research could be used by teachers and students of literature, in their teaching-learning process of the interdisciplinary nature of literature and the openness of literary pieces for all kinds of analyses. Studying the way human nature and human relation are revealed in a work of literature directs the attention of students to a critical contemplation of humanity in general and their society in particular. It might force them to think whether society and culture are obstacles to one's freedom. What is more, this kind of discussion will give a deeper insight into the artistry and meaning of a work of literature. This, the researcher believes, might benefit students of literature when trying to give a sound interpretation and evaluation of any literary piece. Having presented the rationale, determined the objectives, the method, the scope and the significance of the study, the researcher would now like to present the review of the related literature.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

As explained in the rationale of this research, the selected novels are among Amharic literary works that attract the attention of many researchers at different levels. Starting from reviews on newspapers and magazines, we find B.A Senior essays, M.A theses, Ph. D dissertations and papers presented for different literary periodicals. The studies that consider the selected three novels reach about sixty-six without including those works that appear in magazines and newspapers. Therefore, one may ask:- if these works are examined by researchers whose number surpasses sixty five why focus on them again? Are there no other Amharic literary productions worthy of consideration? Or is it because it is easy to follow the route of others? However, no matter how many studies are done on a certain literary piece, it is always open to new exploration from various perspectives. Consequently, the present researcher wants to examine the chosen novels in a new light apart from the issues other researchers have raised. These novels are chosen not because they are Amharic literary canons or due to lack of other works. The reason behind the selection, as pointed out in the introduction, is to reveal their capability of exposing how the system man himself makes influences the human interaction expressed in the novels.

Since the concern of this study is the concept of alienation, the researcher would like to investigate how this is reflected in the selected literary texts. Although the available literatures on the selected novels are abundant, what the researcher reviews is the works that have significant relation to this present study in one way or another.

Through the examination of the works that are done on these novels, the researcher has learned that their focuses mainly revolve around characterization, the study of theme, the analysis of different social customs, examination of literary techniques, style of the author and the use of different types of oral literature. There are also a handful of biographical works regarding the authors of the novels. Since the bulk of these research outputs fall into B.A theses, the researcher begins her assessment of the related literature by carefully examining them as presented here under.

Täšomä Yimär (1980) studies the social outlook of the character Gudu Kasa in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*. He explains that Gudu Kasa plays a significant role in the class struggle of his society. However, he represents not the oppressed but the bourgeoisie; besides he does not have a clear idea as to how to struggle. Täšomä sees the attempt of Gudu Kasa in changing the world view of his community as an abortive class struggle. For him, it is because Gudu Kasa fails to communicate his philosophy of life that he becomes alienated from his society. Täšomä's study, one can infer, more or less depends on the Marxism-Leninism ideology that demands such characters to be revolutionary, although the researcher does not say this explicitly. However he fails to explain the many aspects of social tensions that bring forth the issue of alienation. He does not try to analyze the position of 'Gudu Kasa' in relation to the overall outlook of the community. This present study differs from his because it is not a character analysis. What it tries to show is not a status of a single character but human nature and human relationship based on the framework of Marx's concept of alienation.

Yilma Dämisaw (1994) is another researcher who investigates the point of view of three characters towards their society. He takes one character from *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* and one from *Adäfris*. These are Gudu Kasa and Adäfris. According to Yilma these two characters are revolutionaries and want to modulate the system of the society. Yilma does not delve into

the consciousness of these characters by way of explaining their worldview. Instead, he links them to the authors who create them and states:

... ጉዳዩ ካሣ ማኅበረሰቡን በተመለከተ እሚናገራቸው፣ እሚያደርጋቸውና ሌሎች ስለሱ እሚናገሩት ባብዛኛው ከደራሲው ስብዕና የመነጨ መሆናቸው ሊታወቅ ተችሏል። አደፍርስ ደግሞ ከኢ-ጥበብንና ተፈጥሮን በተመለከተ በሚራቀቀው ንግግር በከፊል ከደራሲው ስብዕና ተጋርቶ ተገኝቷል።(ገጽ፣ 65)

It has been discovered that the speeches of Gudu Kasa concerning the community, his deeds and what others say about him stem from the personality of the author himself. The way Adäfr̥is philosophizes about nature and art shares resemblance with the temper of the author. (This and subsequent translations are mine).

As the above quotation shows, the researcher relates the revolutionary characters to their authors, even though his comparison is not substantiated with pieces of evidence. He does not explain the reasons as to why the characters he mentions, perceive their community differently, when explaining the characters standpoint towards their society. It is the present researcher's belief that examining the social outlook of characters in relation to the personalities of their authors does not give the characters' point of view without considering the overall social situation and relationship of other people.

Among the M.A theses that are going to be reviewed, S'ägaye Wädajo's (1983) work is one. S'ägaye discusses themes and literary techniques in Bäalu G̣irma's novels. S'ägaye states that in *Kadmas Bašagär* Bäalu, through Abär̥ra reveals the importance of self-evaluation and criticism. He describes of these phenomena as unique in Amharic literature. He concludes by stating that Bäalu significantly points out the theme of life. However, S'ägaye does not touch the issue of alienation among the many themes that he explains as the themes of life. In fact, he does not explain how self-evaluation and self-criticism relate to the world view of characters, in relation to their consciousness. In this paper, an attempt will be made to reveal how the overall social situation and the way they are presented lead to the concept of alienation and understanding of the perspectives that are manifested in *Kadmas Bašagär*.

Täklü Minas (1983) examines DañaĆaw Wärk'u's two novels and three plays. He explains that *Adäfrıs* shows the conflict of traditional and modern values. He says: "Danachew Worku gives his audience a panoramic view of a tradition bound and change resistant Ethiopian society which should be necessarily affected by modern influences and consequently should change for the better" (1983: 21). As to the concept of alienation that comes to the foreground due to the contrast between the traditional and the modern social systems, Täklü Minas does not discuss. The current study, however, tries to expose how the tension between tradition bound society and modern outlook lead to the very idea of alienation.

S'ägaye Haylu's (1987) "Haddis Alemayehu as a social critic" investigates the life philosophy of the author in conjunction with the ideas reflected in his works. He talks of the author as 'man of two worlds' namely modern and tradition-bound. He elaborates how Haddis criticizes the political, religious and overall morality of the system in a rather mild way. S'ägaye does not mention whether the author wants to manifest the phenomenon of alienation or his own alienation from the society he criticizes through his works. In fact, what he states about the author refutes the above point. It reads: "... coupled with the exalted positions Haddis enjoyed, his western education and diplomatic service put their unmistakable mark on his outlook in general and his critical works in particular" (1987: 9). Therefore, according to S'ägaye, Haddis finds himself in a comfortable position to comment on whatever he feels is wrong. However, the purpose of this present study is not to examine the life philosophy of the author in relation to the concept of alienation. What will be attempted in this present work is explicating the texts themselves through Marx's concept of alienation.

There are four Ph. D theses that consider the selected literary works in their studies. The first is Thomas Leiper Kane's (1975) published work. In his *Ethiopian Literature in Amharic*, he talks of the problem of acculturation due to western education. However, he states that the Ethiopian author is unwilling to face and treat the problems 'westernization' brings to the country frankly. Regarding alienation what he writes is a passing remark. He states: "In any case, some writers indicated that there is some sense of alienation as a result of study abroad" (1975: 143). As to what this sense of alienation is and in what ways it is manifested, Kane does not explain.

In his published Ph. D dissertation, Reidulf Molvaer (1980) examines twelve Amharic works and shows their sociological value. His focus is not the concept of alienation, rather he talks about changing Ethiopia from its traditional way of life. In this respect he explains how Ethiopian authors exhibit the influences of change, (both foreign and indigenous), the attitudes to change, (conservatives, radicals, escapist) areas of change (education, urbanization, economic development) and how the novels that he examines envisage change and the building of a new society. What the selected three novels say about alienation due to the different social changes explained above is not explored in Molvaer's work.

Fik're Tolosa (1983) after examining it from a realistic point of view, praises *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* as the first Amharic realistic novel. (p. 183). He sees Dañäčäw Wärk'u's *Adäfrīs* as a contribution to the further development of the Amharic novel. (p. 228). As to Bäalu Girma's *Kadmas Bašagär*, he states that Bäalu Girma enhances Amharic realism in his own way. (p. 244). However, he does not mention anything about the notion of alienation in these works.

Taye Assäfa (1986) in his “Form in the Amharic Novel” slightly touches upon the concept under consideration, when he discusses the form of *Adäfr̥is*. The major preoccupation of this study is the formal elements of ten novels. He mentions all the selected novels and investigates their form. When he examines the first chapter of *Adäfr̥is*, he addresses the idea of dehumanization, which is an important aspect of alienation. He uses the word alienation on p. 195 when he explains the conversation of Adäfr̥is and the peasants. He states: “In the above depiction [*Adäfr̥is* pp 43-44] Adafres's alienation is shown through the communication break down between him and the peasants”. Taye’s study is a good example of showing how one can arrive at a sound interpretation of a certain literary piece through explicating its form. We find the mention of alienation only in his discussion of two occasions in *Adäfr̥is* . However, in this current study an attempt will be made to reveal how the notion of alienation helps to explicate the human relations explained in the novel.

The other studies examined are Zärihun Asfaw’s survey of researches on Bäalu G̥irma and Fäkadä Azäzä’s paper on the significance of description and dialogue in the first chapter of *Adäfr̥is* . Zärihun Asfaw (1992) reviews most of the works that are done on Bäalu G̥irma’s works including *Kadmas Basagär*. His review comprises of thirty studies, twenty six of them B.A senior essays, two of them Master’s theses and the other two Ph. D dissertations. He concludes by saying that the focuses of these studies are narrative techniques, characterization, style, social customs and theme. He also states that there is a room for further exploration on the works of Bäalu G̥irma.

Fäkadä Azäzä (1998) in his "Yägäläs'ana Yäm̥l̥l̥l̥s Fayda bä Adäfr̥is Yämäjämrya M̥l̥l̥raf" (The Significance of Description and Dialogue in the first chapter of *Adäfr̥is*) reviews all

the works that have raised different issues on *Adäfrä*s. Fundamentally, his aim is to show the unique literary technique of DañaĆäw Wärku, through dialogue and description, by taking the first chapter. As can be seen the major preoccupation of the researcher is with technique. What the present researcher wants to examine however, is the human interaction that is exposed in the novel through the concept of alienation. As Fäkadä uses the technique of the author to come up with his interpretation, an attempt will be made to further expose human relations based on the framework of Marx's theory of alienation.

The study that has touched upon the alienation concept to a large extent belongs to Yonas Admasu (2000). In a special issue of the *Ethiopian Journal of Languages and Literature* that is dedicated in honour of Dr. Haddis Alämayähu on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday, Yonas presents a critique on the way Haddis Alämayähu portrays his criticism of the society. Yonas points out that the overall idea of *Fäkä'ä r äskä Mäk'abä r* could be stated as the question of humanity. He shows this through examining the abuse of some 'inalienable rights' of human beings, mainly freedom of choice. As Yonas elaborates, the characters in the book are representatives of people with similar conditions within the overall framework of the society. What they (the characters) reveal is how their community is structured in an evil way and how it exhibits its dehumanized state. Yonas examines the issue of alienation in connection with dehumanization. In fact, his main concern seems to be exposing the total dehumanization of the community. Regarding the two terms he states:

**የሰብአዊነት መንጠፍ ከባይተዋርነት(alienation) እና ከፍርቅነት (anomie) ጋር
ከመመሳሰልም አልፎ የሚቆራኝባቸው ሁኔታዎች አሉ :: (ገጽ :108).**

The notion of dehumanization has resemblance and connection with the concepts of alienation and anomie.

However, Yonas examines a limited aspect of alienation that is the notion of dehumanization. As he himself points out on pages 108-109 (note) alienation has so many aspects. It is the

extension of the concept that differentiates the present study from his. Moreover, this paper tries to examine the different manifestations of alienation based on the alienation theory that is proposed by Karl Marx. Effort will be made to throw light on the aspects of alienation from this perspective. What is more, Yonas examines the dehumanization concept only in *Fık'ır ıskä Mäk'abır*. But in this present study *Adäfrıs* and *Kadmas Başagär* are included.

The above studies are taken as related and relevant to the current study. As the writer of this paper tries to show, even if the raw materials are the same, the approach different researches take to analyze the selected novels differ. Since the present perspective also varies from the above-mentioned studies, it is necessary to provide the framework of analysis. This point will be dealt thoroughly in the coming section.

2.1 The Etymology of Alienation

The term alienation before it comes to possess its several meanings, has been in the English language for several centuries. According to Raymond Williams (1983:33) “It has been used in English from C14 to describe an action or estranging or state of estrangement....” It is Richard Schact that thoroughly examines the traditional uses of both the English and the German original. Concerning the etymology of the English term he states:

The Latin origin of “alienation” is *alienatio*. This noun derives its meaning from the verb *alienare* (to make something another’s, to take away, remove). *Alienare*, in turn, derives from *alienus* (belonging or pertaining to another). And *alienus* derives ultimately from *alius* (meaning “other” as an adjective or “another” as a noun). (1970:9).

The sense of separation that we notice in the Latin original is utilized to refer to different situations. Schact explains its use in terms of transfer of ownership, mental disorder and interpersonal estrangement. The first use of alienation is understood in legal contexts. Williams elaborates that this transfer includes rights, estates and money. He states: “This was

then extended to the result of such a transfer, a state of something *having been alienated*” (1983: 33 emphasis added). The second meaning, that is, alienation as a mental disorder is used to explain a derangement of mental faculties that is insanity. The person is said to be alienated from his/her mental powers or senses. Schact investigates the third use as interpersonal estrangement, which initially refers to being cut off from the knowledge of God. However, as Schact further elaborates this use is transferred to denote personal relationships. Williams mentions a “... sense of deliberate and contrived interference in a customary family relationship, usually that of husband and wife” (Ibid., 34).

Schact further points out the meaning of interpersonal estrangement in terms of loss of intimacy among people. Since it is German philosophers that are identified with the term alienation predominantly, Schact seems to find it necessary to analyze the original term in German that is *Entfremdung*. Both terms used to be applied in similar cultures, as a result the use of *Entfremdung* becomes identical to that of the English alienation.

The etymology of the term alienation is presented here to provide a background for the different meanings of alienation, and to compare and contrast the meaning Marx attributes to the term. However, it is not the traditional or the standard uses of the concept that throw light on the understanding of Marx’s theory of alienation, but its intellectual development. Therefore, in the coming section the development of the notion that links us to Marx’s reinterpretation of the alienation concept will be elaborated briefly.

2.2 The Intellectual Development of the Concept, Alienation

Alienation as *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968:264) states, it is "... a concept of considerable antiquity, whose metaphysical origins have been veiled in the course of time by the progressive secularization of Western thought". As the above quotation shows, alienation used to be the point of discussion as far back as the times of ancient civilization. As western thought begins to be systematic, the concept continues to enjoy a prominent place and considerable development. According to Erich Fromm (1955:112) "... the concept is a much older one; it is the same to which the prophets of the Old Testament referred to as idolatry." In the act of idolatry, man begins to obey and even worship his/her own creations that alienate him/her from himself/herself. We find the concept in theological discussion as alienation from the life of God based on Christian scriptures or the New Testament. The discussion of the concept is still alive in theological circles. Raymond Williams writes: "There is the surviving theological sense, normally a state rather than an action, of being cut off, estranged from the knowledge of God, or from his mercy or his worship" (1983:34).

The discussion of alienation in theological circles resembles the ideas of the Greek philosopher Plato. In book ten of his *The Republic*, Plato talks about the immortality of the soul. The pure and perfect soul, by being forced to live in this mundane world becomes polluted. This pollution comes forth due to "... the associations of the body and other evils" (1954:315). From Plato's explanation we can infer that the soul is displaced from its true residence. Therefore, it is alien to this physical, and imperfect world. When explaining to Glaucon what the belief in the immortality of the soul brings, he talks about holding the upper road, following justice and wisdom. He further states: "... we shall be friends to ourselves and to the gods" (Ibid., 325) Looking forward to eternal life in the form of immortal soul implies alienation from the tangible world. When Plato states about being a

friend to the self, he in a way is talking about religious alienation. This is so, because essentially the place of the immortal soul is with the gods. Similarly, a life, which is separated from a life of God, is an alienated existence in theological circles. Even if Plato never uses the terms estrangement or alienation, what he elaborates about the soul's displacement and being friends to ourselves takes us to the notion of being estranged from ourselves and from this world. Consequently, we can say that his position is one of the early discussions on the concept.

Although the concept of alienation exists in different forms, it is Hegel who is said to systematically utilize it. However, he does not come up with a totally new idea but develops the ideas of his predecessors and contemporaries. According to Schact "The main philosophical context in which the term "alienation" was employed prior to Hegel was that of political theory-in particular that of social contract theory". (1970:16) Among the theoreticians of the natural rights philosophy, whose ideas are considered important, Schact presents the ideas of Hugo Grotius, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Regarding the theories these people uphold, Ernest Mandel states: "The social contract theory maintained that in organized society, the individual must forfeit a certain number of individual rights to the state as the representative of the collective interest of the community." (1973:13). The issue of alienation in the social contract theory comes to the fore when an individual forsakes his/her own right and free will for the benefit of his/her society. Hence the alienation is a voluntary act. Since the individual transfers his/her sovereign authority for others, in order for the society to exist, he/she is said to be alienated from his/her natural power. However, one of the proponents of social contract, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is "... one of the first to decry significantly a loss of man's humanity through 'alienation'" (Rippere, in *Mosaic, Literature and Alienation* Vol. 2, No. 1, 1968:101). Rousseau argues that the

individual's transfer of his/her liberty for the sake of other people does not serve the community as long as the action alienates the person from his/her power.

Quite differently from the social contract theory Hegel's contemporary Fichte uses the term in relation to religious alienation similar to Plato. His view is presented in Victoria Rippere, as follows:

The idea of God as legislator through the moral law in us is thus based on an alienation of something of ours (*eine Entäusserung des unserigen*), on transfer of subjectivity (*uebertragung eines subjectiven*) to a being outside (*ausser*) us, and this alienation is the actual principle of religion, to the extent that it should be used for determining the will. (Ibid., p. 103).

As Fichte elaborates, one has to denounce his/her free will in order to serve God. This means when a person acts according to the moral law in him/her, he/she is considered as an object, because he/she transfers his/her subjectivity to an external power that is the moral giver. Therefore, the principle of religion is founded on rejecting the tangible world to the spiritual one.

The other contemporary of Hegel whose contribution to both Hegel's and Marx's concepts of alienation considered important is Friedrich Schiller. Concerning his contribution, Rippere states: "His double contribution to it, in his portrayal of modern man's lamentable condition, is nevertheless extremely important for the development of Hegel's Feuerbach's and above all, Marx's conceptions of alienation" (Ibid., 99). Schiller mentions the concept of alienation in terms of being stranger to one's state and world. As Schact elaborates "... Schiller maintains that there presently exists a disparity between man's actual condition ("in time") and his true, essential nature ("in idea")." (1970:23). When discussing the actual conditions of man and his/her essential nature, Schiller considers modern society and culture as constraints of a person's self-realization. This aspect of his idea is taken and developed both

by Hegel and Marx differently. Schiller is also known for his notion of an 'alienation of the artist'. He suggests distancing self from artistic expression to give the literary piece dignity and quality. He states

... Even in poems of which it's often said that love or friendship, etc, itself guided the poet's brush, he must have begun by becoming a stranger to himself (sich selbst fremd werden), by separating the object of his inspiration from his individuality, by regarding his passion from a tempering distance. Ideal beauty only becomes possible through a freedom of the spirit (Freiheit des Geistes), through autonomous activity (Selbsttätigkeit) that suspends the dominion of passion. (in Rippere, *Mosaic Literature and Alienation*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1968:106).

As Rippere explains, the notion of becoming a stranger to oneself for the purpose of realizing one's individuality is not Schiller's invention. However, what is noticed here is his conception of the separation between a person and his/herself. The idea throws light on the conception of man as alien to him/herself. Such thinkers influence the concept of alienation that is utilized by both Hegel and Marx.

Hegel gives a new meaning and interpretation for the alienation concept. His ideas focus on absolute knowledge, self-consciousness and most importantly spirit. Axelos states these ideas by saying, "In absolute knowledge, science, consciousness, and self consciousness are reconciled, and absolute knowledge is the absolute knowing of absolute spirit, of absolute subject". (1976:34). The absolute knowledge and absolute ideas of Hegel's are difficult concepts to grasp. This concept is related to alienation because he discusses about self-alienated spirit. For Hegel, an individual gets position and existence in the presence of culture. In this process, the individual is passing through the act of self-alienation from the spirit. Consequently, the individual, in order to be part of the concrete world should be alienated from his/her essential self (the spirit). However, the spirit retains its existence through the power of faith. The person's being in the becoming process therefore is

dialectical. These two phenomena are as Hegel elaborates opposites by nature. He states: "... the present actual world has its antithesis directly in its beyond..." (1977:195) The following quotation from Axelos manifests what are involved in this being-becoming process. We read: "Nothingness, negativity, and contradiction remain inherent in the being-in-becoming which characterizes both the totality of the world and every particular ontic reality." (1976:30). The self-alienation from spirit as the above statement shows therefore is an inevitable dialectical process in the lives of human beings. For Hegel, anything we produce out of ourselves, be it an idea or labour is in some way separated from us in the process. " He therefore arrived at the conclusion that every and any kind of labor is alienated labor because in any society and under any conditions men will always be condemned to become separated from the products of their labor" (Mandel and Novack, 1973:16).

Hegel further sees alienation as a mediating agent between self-consciousness and the universal. Walter Kaufmann in his introduction to Richard Schacht's book *Alienation* states:

" In fact, Hegel went on to develop a different conception of man and his place in the world of spirit, and of the nature of reality. This is the context in which Hegel's discussion of alienation has its place." (1970:xxxiii). As Kaufmann explains, for Hegel, the alienation is essentially a mental process. It deals with man, his/her place in the world of spirit and the nature of reality. The combination of these three concepts brings forth the actuality of the individual. To become actual man must be alienated from his essential spirit nature. However, this individuality itself exists in the mind of the person. Hegel explains: "... individuality really only exists in someone's mind, an imaginary existence which has no abiding place in this world, where only that which externalizes itself, and, therefore, only the universal obtains an actual existence" (1977:298). Therefore, in reality, the individual is alienated both from the spirit and the social world. Explaining Hegel's use of alienation,

Schacht writes: "Hegel's use of alienation was two fold. At times he uses it to refer to a separation or discordant relation, such as might obtain between the individual and the social substance, or (as "self-alienation")" between one's actual condition and essential nature" (1970:43). Hence, Hegel links the self-alienated spirit with both the essential nature of man and the social substance. The individual when trying to reconcile with his/her society has to conform to the culture contrary to his/her self-consciousness. This conformation brings forth the issue of self-alienation, which is inevitable in Hegelian term.

The other thinker whose name is often mentioned in connection with Marx's concept of alienation is Ludwig Feurbach. Feurbach talks about alienation in religious terms. For Feurbach the discussion revolves around 'God as the agent of alienation'. He elaborates of religion as the notion that comprises the alienation of man from his/her true nature. Dennis Wrong (1985) says of Feurbach's position as follows:

Ludwig Feurbach regarded religion as a prototype of alienation: the projection of human qualities into imaginary beings who were then regarded as independent, external powers to whom man must abase himself. The overcoming of alienation required the rejection of religious beliefs and authorities in the name of a secular materialistic humanism (Partisan Review, Vol. 52, No. 3, 227).

Feurbach treats religion as an instrument of estrangement because it forces others to live in an imaginary religious world, while the reality is different. For him, human beings transfer their abilities and powers to God and begin to be dominated by these same attributes they give to God. Then they obey and worship their own powers and live in fear and awe of the supernatural. As a result, "Secular authorities then utilize this fear, awe and servility to dominate the masses. Men are dominated by other men through the very powers they transferred to God". (Nielsen in *Mosaic Literature and Alienation*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1968: 125). This notion of Feurbach, Nielsen suggests, lays the ground for the concept of worker's alienation from his/her product in Marx's theory. However, the concept of man for Feurbach

is abstract, isolated and individualized. (Marx; 1976:102-103). Hence alienation for Feurbach is alienation from the highest human power in a philosophical and abstract sense. Even if Feurbach lays the ground for 'materialistic humanism' thought "... he resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man". (Ibid., 100). Feurbach does not consider "... the historical conditions for the realization of the natural powers of man." (Walton and Gamble, 1976:8). These intellectual developments about the nature of man and his place in the world influence the Marxian theory of alienation. The rationale behind examining these developments is expressed in the following statement of James White: "Marx's use of borrowings from the German philosophical tradition implied a belief that these ideas had an important function in explaining how the real world functioned" (1996:157). Having the background of the concept of alienation, the researcher next presents a brief explanation of Marx's theory of alienation.

2.3 Marx's Theory of Alienation

According to White, Marx uses the above discussed intellectual outputs on the concept of alienation in a different way. The alienation theory of Karl Marx is found in "... the first important document of Marx's thought, the Paris Manuscripts of 1844..." (Ibid.,1) These manuscripts are also known as, *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. (Walton and Gamble, 1976:1) These manuscripts lay the foundation of Marx's theory of alienation as it is received today. When the manuscripts are published for the first time in 1932 there arises a controversy regarding the uniformity of Marx's thought.

Some label Marx's idea of alienation as the thought of the young and therefore immature Marx. As a result distinction is made between the young and mature Marx. There emerge two camps:- the first advocates the uniformity of Marx's thought and the other says the ideas of the young Marx should not receive serious consideration. However, scholars who specialize

in the writings of Marx do not accept these disputes. Axelos for instance states: “Marx’s thought is a unitary thing. There are not two Marxes, the early and the late, the youthful and the mature. Thought is the sort of thing that undergoes development as a unitary process”. (1976:45). In fact, the controversies rise due to politically opposite camps. One group accepts the early works and rejects writings that advocate socialism and communism. The other group in its turn idealizes his later works and rejects the early manuscripts as the thought of the immature Marx.

Meszaros in response to those who said Marx drops the concept after 1844 states: “ The simple answer is that he did *not* drop the word at all, let alone the concept. As a matter of fact there is *ample* evidence to show that Marx went on using the word “alienation” up to the very end of his life. (1975:221-222). Paul Thomas in agreement with the above scholars elaborates that Marx is concerned with immediate and practical phenomena when he produces his writings. Hence, his works are provoked by social and political disputes that need immediate theoretical explanations. (1991: 42). Therefore, one should not expect to find one and same idea throughout his writings. For James White, the controversies come to the fore due to misconceptions of Marx’s thought, he asserts: "...whether any great change occurred between the ‘young’ and the ‘mature’ Marx is symptomatic of how little is known." (1996:1). In this part of the paper an attempt will be made to reveal what Marx’s theory of alienation signifies.

What Marx basically does is demystify those abstract notions into practical applications. Marx starts his theory from the definition of man. For him man is essentially a social being. (Walton and Gamble, 1976:2) This social being has biological or natural as well as social natures. The biological nature is manifested in the need to eat and procreate oneself. The

social natures are difficult to distinctly put because in most cases they are socially produced. Among the social needs that human beings share we find the need to cooperate, to love, to participate in creative activities, to be free, to be identified with a community and to possess a self identity. We can also call these qualities spiritual nature. Therefore, apart from the socially produced attributes that are limited in given societies, all people need to eat, to procreate to be free and to have a self identity.

According to Ollman's interpretation, man is differentiated into natural and species man. The qualities that defined man as natural are similar to those that are labeled as biological nature above. For Ollman, "The powers most frequently associated with natural man, with human beings as living parts of nature are labor, eating and sex" (1971:79). Labour is taken in Ollman's definition as an attribute of a natural man because natural beings express their essence through labour. Therefore, labour is an important process in the historical development of the social being, man. These attributes of a natural man are also termed as animal functions because basically they are means and actions of survival that animals also share. However, "... man as a species is distinct from animals by virtue of his ability to engage in purposive production". (Walton and Gamble, 1976:5). Through the process of labour man unlike animals, gets victory over nature and dominates it. By doing this, man becomes alienated from nature. However, man overcomes this kind of alienation through social division of labour. This division is based on physiological foundation hence it is natural. The purposive production that is discussed above distinguishes man from other creatures. Therefore, one can talk about man in terms of a species being. It is Ollman who again gives us the explanation of this notion. He states: "As a species being, man can be distinguished from other living things, for he now possesses qualities which are uniquely his

own” (1971: 84). Hence, man is distinguished from other species by its capacity for knowing itself along with the social nature described earlier.

In the production process the species should produce to the whole not to particular members of the species. However, man’s relation to his productive activity becomes alienated due to division of labour. This kind of division by itself is necessary for the further historical development of man. What brings forth the issue of alienation is the division that takes place as a result of private property that further helps to form society into classes. In light of this explanation the division of labour which forces production to be beneficial only to parts of the species is “... the estranged, alienated positioning of human activity of the species” (Walton and Gamble, 1976:13-14). The division of labour that treats a producer as a commodity, creates a condition, where the producer becomes a stranger to his/her own labour and product, because he/she no longer attaches him/herself to the production activity. “Activity cannot be unalienated activity if its product is alienation; for the product is nothing but the sum of activity, of production” (Meszaros, 1975: 147) This detachment of man from his/her own labour is what Marx calls labour's self-alienation or alienated labour. In this process, man becomes unable to control his/her own labour, hence, the situation leaves him/her powerless. According to Richard Schacht's interpretation of Marx's concept of alienation what it refers to is "... related in some way to a certain surrender: namely the surrender of one's control over one's product and labour." (1970: 91-92). Therefore, when man loses control over his/her own product and labour by submitting to the powers of his/her production, he/she becomes alienated. This way, a person, not only alienates him/herself from labour but also from him/herself since a person's labour and product are expressions of his/her human essence.

In such a system of alienation man is "... reduced to the level of an animal, a slave, and a machine. Common to all of these descriptions is the idea of sinking to a subhuman level, or dehumanization."(Ibid., 110). Hence, denying the sociality of an individual and forcing him/her to act contrary to his/her essential nature is making a person depersonalized; it is killing the human self-expression and development of one's natural powers. From what we have gathered so far, we can discuss about alienation of labour from its product, which refers to estrangement of the production activity, due to private property ownership. There is also its subsequent human self-alienation, since a person no longer expresses him/herself through his/her labour as long as he/she is reduced to the level of a machine. This results in the alienation of man from man, since the division of labour creates a class society, in which the powerful considers the powerless as mere means to the end of private wealth accumulation. All the above features indicate for Marx, man's alienation from his/her species nature. In other words, man remains apart from the qualities that distinguishes him from other living creatures. The situation makes it difficult to label such a person a human being or an animal, as a result Ollman states "... the reversal of his [man's] species relations to activity, production and other men have gone the full distance, and man has succeeded in becoming all that he is not." (1971:153).

Nielsen, by generalizing Marx's theory of alienation states the following: " For Marx the problem of alienation revolves around three factors: the actual needs of men, the ingredients of a morally desirable life, and whether the institutions of society conduce to or militate against the satisfaction of men's needs" (in *Mosaic Literature and Alienation*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1968: 124). As the above quotation explains the issue of alienation comes to the fore since Marx notices disparity among the essential needs of human beings, the life they lead and

most of all the way society operates. It is the defects Marx sees in human existence that forces him to focus on alienation and its possible transcendence.

The system of alienation brings forth the issue of reification. This concept is sometimes interchangeably used with the notion of 'fetishism of commodities' which refers to people's misconception of the products of labour. This concept is utilized to elaborate how the relationship between people turns out to be a relationship between things. This notion especially applies for the system of capitalism where men relate to each other not as human beings but in economic terms. In other words, "... people engaged in one trade tend to see their fellows only as customers or through the lenses of whatever economic relations they have with them." (Mandel and Novack, 1973:26) However, the meaning of reification is not limited only to the system of capitalism. Walton and Gamble simply state of reification as "... the process of comprehension of the world under alienation." (1976:18). In this process people start to accept the alienated system as natural. Reified consciousness helps the different aspects of alienation to take root in the society. Axelos further defined the concept as: "In the world of reification, the past rules the present, the present is sordid, and the future is blocked" (1976:292). Therefore, reification that is founded on man-made social relationship is conceived as normal. Since it does not comply with a human being's essential nature for Marx this kind of consciousness is "false consciousness" (Walton and Gamble, 1976:19).

Although the bulk of Marx's theory of alienation is derived from a capitalist society, Marx also applies it to a feudal system. In fact, he starts to explain his theory from how labour is alienated from land and how reified consciousness is formed in this process. Marx elaborates that when landed property has reached a relatively high degree of accumulation of wealth, the

dominant form of labour is serfdom. (Meszaros, 1970:141). Here, we can see how the making of land a private property, could alienate the peasant from the land and his/her own labour. Walton and Gamble (1976: 20) discuss about feudal alienation. In this kind of society the peasant is alienated from him/her self, since it is the feudal lord who presents the conditions of production. The peasant is also alienated from his/her product, because he/she has no control over the agricultural produce, even for subsistence. Regarding reification in feudal society, Marx explains the state as 'biologising' of social relations. What this means is, "Men are seen not as men but as manifestation of 'blood' (genealogy) or other biological properties, the role of 'birth' in terms of the location within society is seen as determining the character and destiny of human beings." (ibid.,20). This kind of 'false consciousness' about others governs the way people treat each other in a feudal system.

It is the process Marx terms dereification that helps people realize the snare of reification. This simply implies making known the falseness of reification and starting to abolish such a state. When people start to be conscious of their alienation they begin to react against it. The reaction itself could be manifested by further alienation as in the case of intellectual idealists. This is because the intellectual starts to disintegrate from the society that considers the view of intellectuals skeptically.

Lewis Feuer speaks against such intellectuals by stating: "The intellectual's alienation was in part a self-alienation which arose as he discovered the character of his own underlying aims." (1969:69). This statement holds true where the intellectual begins to face inner dissatisfaction because of the awareness of the reification process. Whatever the case might be, for Marx the abolition of alienation begins from an awareness of the social systems that hinder free and conscious human activity.

Marx's use of the term alienation is appreciated by some whereas it is criticized by others. Richard Schacht for example criticizes it by stating: " He [Marx] considers the various kinds of alienation involved to be interrelated, sometimes conceptually and sometimes factually. They constitute what might be termed his 'alienation syndrome'" (1970:120). The reason Schacht regards Marx's use of alienation as 'syndrome' is as he explains, because it is connected with a wide variety of things. However, since the agent of all these different aspects is man, it should not be difficult to connect all the phenomena, that Marx explains as varying aspects of alienation. Regarding this point, Pappenheim (*Monthly review*, Vol. 52, No. 2, 2000) opposes Schacht and explains that the three facets of alienation that are from oneself, other men and our world as interrelated. For him they reveal three phases of a single process. What Marx emphasizes is the link among them and this is the center of his method to the notion of alienation. As the researcher has tried to explain earlier, it is the nature of human beings and relationship among them that directs Marx into the concept of alienation. Hence, the different aspects of alienation Marx is talking about are interlinked one way or another. Although some aspects are taken separately for the sake of comprehensible analysis, when scrutinized carefully, as Pappenheim elaborates, we find them as 'three phases of a single process'. Marx's central concern is the essence of man and the social nature of human beings. Comprehending his theory of alienation within this general framework helps one to see how one aspect of alienation leads to other aspects depending on the characteristics of given societies. Marx's use of the concept leads other thinkers after him to apply it in so many different ways. In the following section the concept is presented in short to show its status after Marx.

2.4 Alienation After Marx

After the systematic use of alienation by Karl Marx, philosophers who focus on the philosophy of existence began to discuss the concept in a new light. It is the ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre that are considered seriously among existentialists, even though he rejects his original concept in favour of the Marxian theory of alienation. For the existentialists, alienation is inherent to man. Human beings experience themselves in this world as alien creatures.

Therefore, for existential philosophers:

Alienation is then the condition of man who must choose to increase the total amount of freedom in a society which, by its very nature, denies him the right to act freely. In the Marxian terms which Sartre eventually bent to fit his personal convictions, alienation is man's being dispossessed of his right and duty to exist subjectively and create himself freely within the framework of human possibilities. (Marantz, in *Mosaic Literature and Alienation*, Vol. 2 No. 2. 1968: 32).

As the quotation shows it is existence itself that alienates man in general, instead of the artificial human relationship. When explaining the inherent nature of alienation Kaufmann states: "... the early Sartre insists that we are our own victims, that we are really free, and that we are at fault for not realizing it." (in Schact, 1970: xxv). Sartre's alienation from freedom resembles the self-alienation of Marx that refers to experiencing one's self as stranger.

In Gila J. Hayim's (1980:10) interpretation of Sartre's works we come across to another dimension of alienation. We read: "The possibility that human goals and ends are mere illusions is a permanent one, says Sartre, but the cancellation or 'stealing away' of human ends gives us the very notion of alienation..." Fundamentally, human beings experience themselves as objects in Sartre's existential philosophy. This is so because the roles others assign to a person do not comply with the things which that person subjectively seeks. Since there is no reality behind appearance, man in Sartrean terms is suffered from what he/she thinks of him/her self and what he/she appears to be to others. Hence, the situation of being

dissatisfied due to failures in life is inherent to human beings. However, 'the cancellation or the stealing away' of human ends and its subsequent alienation is an abstract notion. In fact, Schact states: "Sartre's alienation refers to a separation which emerges in the context of the individual's experience of himself. It involves a relation to others, but it is not a form of alienation from others" (1970:231). Unlike the practical alienation theory of Marx, what existentialists believe in is an alienation of humanity whose transcendence is impossible.

Among other thinkers, who talk about alienation, Sigmund Freud deserves mention. Freud explains about alienation in connection to civilization. His explanations resemble that of Marx's theory of essential nature. According to Freud (1964:123-124) civilization sets so many restrictions on the demands and instincts of man. The technological age obeys the laws of economic necessity and not the deeper needs of man. This situation forces man to adopt this system for survival. "Civilization therefore, obtains mastery over the individual's dangerous desire for aggression by weakening and disarming it and by setting up agency within him to watch over it, like a garrison in a conquered city." This shows that man is forced to act contrary to his/her essential nature. Man submits to the dictates of civilization and allows it to control the in and out of his/her life. Freud further elaborates this through the concepts of ego and self. He states "... there are cases in which parts of a person's own body, even portions of his own mental life, his perceptions, thoughts and feelings appear alien to him and as not belonging to his ego;..." (Ibid., 66). Freud's explanation of alienation put forward in relation to the workings of the mind. However, we should also note that the external factors play vital roles in the formulation of one's ego and self. As the researcher has tried to reveal earlier, civilization as something imposed from outside the mind brings forth the issue of alienation. However, for Marx it is not one's consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness.

Following Freud, Erich Fromm describes the concept as an individual's psychological experiences of the world. When elaborating alienation Fromm applies Marx's theory of alienation. Fromm's definition of alienation reads as follows:

By alienation is meant a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as alien. He has become one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the center of his world, as the creator of his own acts-but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. (1955:111).

Fromm's application of the notion includes alienation from nature, others, work, process of consumption, modern way of life, friendship, language, thought and the like. Criticizing Fromm's use of the concept Schact states: "Fromm seems to refer to almost everything of which he disapproves as an instance of 'alienation'" (1970:147). Schact further explains that many sociologists after Fromm, perceive of alienation as some form of estrangement of a person from some aspect of social life, although they do not state how an individual is estranged from it. We should also note that the concept is taken as an issue that comes to the scene as a result of scientific and technological advancement. (Pappenheim: 1959).

For many sociologists the concept implies powerlessness, normlessness, cultural estrangement, loss of meaning in life, loneliness and similar phenomena. However, as Schact discusses they take these states at their face value without showing how these things come to the foreground and why. In fact, it is the sociologist Seeman who gives five fold classification to the meaning of alienation. These are powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation and self-estrangement. (*American Sociological Review* Vol. 24: 1959).

The concept of alienation, today has so many aspects which scholars talk about; work alienation, social alienation, race alienation, religious alienation, political alienation, colonial

alienation, land alienation, youth alienation, student alienation, labour alienation, positive alienation and the like. (Affinih, Y. *The Social Sciences Journal*. Vol. 34, No. 3, 1997)

However, regarding the different applications of the concept, aforementioned Schacht has the following to say: “Many recent writers have found Marx’s use fascinating and have been moved to modify it in the light of their own needs and interests.” (1970:246). In order to avoid such kinds of criticisms one should make restrictions when using the notion. This way, one can see the usefulness of the concept to the explication of human nature and social relation. “Alienation must be alienation from something; something must seem ‘alien’ in some way if the term is to have any application”. (Ibid., 199) Therefore, if we seek to comprehend what alienation is meant, we must ask, alienation from what? This present discussion of alienation therefore, tries to show what is alienated from what, why it is alienated, and how.

The methods of social analyses that are proposed by Karl Marx are fundamentally concerned with his society and address the social and political contradictions that deteriorate human relationship in his own day. However, his outlook of society gains worldwide status because his regard of human nature and examination of social institutes as anti- theses of man's essence have turned to have international implications. This condition leads many to go beyond what he says and bring to the fore the different schools of thought that bear his name. The fusion of Marx with ideologies such as Marxism-Leninism and Stalinism results in disregarding Marx's contribution to human knowledge in general. Therefore, the need to separate Marx from the ideology called ' Marxism ' arises. This distinction is essential because the reception of Marx is blurred by so many misinterpretations of concepts. Marx's major preoccupation as we learn from his own works is the concept of human nature.

Nevertheless, he is considered as if he talks only of economic phenomena and historical materialism which is the most misconstrued of his ideas. The misconceptions of Marx's ideas emerge from the appropriation of his thoughts through his advocates who identify themselves as Marxists.

Hence, a Marxian perspective concentrates on what Marx states rather than what Marxists believe. The point is not to make Marx a humanist but to comprehend the core of his thought.

In the following section of this research, an attempt will be made to analyze the selected three novels within the restricted sphere of Marxian theory of alienation. This, the researcher believes will help to vividly reveal what the literary pieces tell about the different aspects of alienation. This way, we might be able to reach at a deeper understanding and appreciation of these literary pieces as manifestations of human nature and social relation within the framework of the represented societies. And now the researcher takes up *Fik'ir iškä Mäk'abir* to examine the aspects of alienation manifested, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

Aspects of Alienation in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*

3.1 Alienation from the Self

According to Marxian thought, man is fundamentally a social being. This implies that man defines him/herself through the relationship of other human beings. As Frantz Fanon explains "Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him" (1970:154). Therefore, in most cases, the individual expression of one's life, unless confirmed and realized by another individual becomes meaningless. Being human implies living for the other and being communal. It is in this regard that Walton and Gamble state: "Man is understood as man only in the context of social relationships". (1976:2). When this social being is separated from the sphere of other human activity, then comes the issue of being alienated from man's essential nature. Hence in this part of the study, an attempt will be made to analyse how one is said to be alienated from him/herself in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*. Let us concentrate on the following utterance of Bāzabih, that reads:

ጉዋደኞቼ የሚያደርጉትን ለማድረግ እንዳልችል ሰው ሆኜ ተፈጥሮ እንደሰው ለመኖር እንዳልችል እኔ ሳላውቅ የገዛ እናቴ ፈርዳ ያሳሰረችኝ እስረኛ መሆኔን ተረዳሁና ጠላሁዋት። (ፍቅር እስከ መቃብር፣ 241)

I was made unable to do what my friends do; I was created a human being and yet I was made unable to live like a human being; I was sentenced and made a prisoner on the decision of my own mother without my knowledge and hence I hated her.

In the context of the above explanation, the utterance of Bāzabih reveals his recognition of alienation from the human essence. There are at least two possible interpretations of the text: the first is alienation from labour and the production process that are taken as basic elements in the manifestation of man as a social being as will be discussed immediately after the

following statement. The second aspect is alienation from producing one's kind that is the natural activity of a human being.

As the story of Bāzabīh tells us, his life is destined to remain to the services of the saints based on his mother's so many vows to them. His mother, out of her fears that they are the saints and Angels that have the power of killing and curing, bestows her son to their services. However, she cannot prevent her son from socializing himself with his peers. His childhood relationship with other children reveals for him that he is different from them. His fellow children tell his unique status through name calling i.e (የስእላት ልጅ ገጽ:46) "A child whose life is dedicated to the services of angels and saints through a vow." Bāzabīh does not comprehend what they mean until he becomes a fully-grown young adult. However, he gradually, starts to realize that his mother imposes on him the duty to live for the services of the saints. Since he is not allowed to participate in the sphere of the social activity, he starts to raise questions that concern his nature as a human being. The people with whom he lives are serfs of land lords under a feudal system. This implies that labour is the important means of the serfs human essence, even if their products and labour to a large extent belong to the land-lord. Their relationship to the land enables them to express themselves through labour to a certain extent. This kind of self-expression is impossible for Bāzabīh since the vows his mother make do not allow him to participate in production. Therefore, he is a total stranger to the land in which his own father and his peers till for their subsistence and self-expression. One can say that he can express himself through his own profession, for the reason that he knows it better than tilling the land. However, his career is an imposed one and not his choice.

Bāzabīh's forced profession demands strict isolation from the practices of the community. Hence his career by its very nature has an alienating function. He tries to make the best out of his situation by pursuing the education he can get from the church. His affinity with the church generates a new desire within him that is being a teacher of 'k'īne'. Unlike most members of his community, his profession does not require manual labour. Although he considers himself a social being, it is other members of his society that provide for his sustenance. His wish to do what his peers can do could be argued includes taking part in the production process, though he does not say this explicitly. Bāzabīh's incapability to participate in the production process causes his alienation from his essential nature that is his being social. This is one aspect of his alienation from himself as a social being.

The other aspect of Bāzabīh's alienation as revealed in his utterance can be analyzed by examining the activity that he is denied of enjoying. He could not meet the need to propagate one's kind, which could be taken as the inherent nature of man. For Marx, this is also considered an important aspect of social activity. Kostas Axelos (1976:114) writes, "...procreation, that is the reproduction of the human species, is an essential condition of historical becoming, but it remains above all-though not exclusively a natural function." Seen in the light of the above explanation, Bāzabīh is not allowed to fulfill the natural need of his own body. He is expected to stifle the essential nature of a human being, that is, man's desire of relationship with a woman. On the basis of his mother's beliefs and tradition, he is forced to act contrary to this aspect of his social nature. As he himself explains, the situation he faces, urges him to raise the very question of his humanity. This again is in harmony with what Marx says; that is if a person does not relate him/herself to other human beings, he/she could not comprehend the human essence. This relationship gets concrete meaning in the relationship between the sexes. Marx explains, "From the character of this relationship

follows how much man as a species being, has come to be himself and to comprehend himself: the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being" (in Axelos, 1976:118). In this regard Bāzabīh is alienated from his essential sexual nature. He cannot create this kind of social relation the way his peers can because he is prohibited to act according to the norm of the social practice. Knowledge of this fact therefore, makes his alienation from himself intense. His situation is expressed as follows:

ጉዋደኝነታቸውን ለሱ ብቻ መስጠት የሚመርጡት ልጃገረዶች መብዛታቸውንና እሱ ለዚህ ክብር ያልታደለ የሱት ጉዋደኝነት የማይፈቀድለት ሳይበድል የተፈረደበት ሳይገድል ጉደሎ ነህ ተብሎ የተመሰከረበት መሆኑን ስላወቀ ካደገበት የጭዋታ የደስታ ማኅበር ይሸሽ ጀመር። (ፍ.እ.መ፣ ገጽ 45-46)

He came to know that girls who wished to give their friendship to him only, were numerous and that he did not have the fortune to enjoy such honour. He was not allowed to befriend with girls because he was condemned without any fault of his own. Despite his being a complete human being he was decidedly taken as some one who was deficient and thus he began to withdraw from games and any pleasant social interactions which he grew in and gave him happiness.

The alienation of Bāzabīh from his essential nature urges him to find a way out of it. He is a social being, therefore, he wants to act accordingly. In order to understand himself he has to see himself in relation to others, especially women. As explained earlier, it is his mother who decided what kind of life he will lead when he grows up. As a result, he is forced to say 'I was sentenced and made a prisoner on the decision of my own mother without my knowledge, and hence, I hated her.' Bāzabīh's inability to act according to his essential nature impels him to hate his mother. It can also be argued that it is not his mother he hates but the social system that moulded her belief to do whatever she wants to with her child. Bāzabīh has been given no choice in the matter. He explains his bitterness through the words,

እኔ እንዲህ ያለውን ሕይወት አልወደውም፤ አልመርጠውም፤ አልፈልገውም።
(ፍ.እ. መ፣ ገጽ 46)

I don't like this kind of life, I don't choose it, and I don't want it.

This shows that social beings inherently, need freedom of choice. However, Bāzabīh's mother without her child's knowledge and consent gives him to the Church. After that she believed, he is no more her child, but the child of the saints or the property of the church. Since it is the church that has full control over him, whatever he creates and all his contributions belong to the church. This total deprivation of Bāzabīh from his basic rights intensifies his alienation from himself because he is restricted from fulfilling the needs of his social nature. As his desire to be a social being increases, he starts to contemplate his place in the community as well as his future. Even if he knows that he has to act in accordance with his essential self, he cannot do so, because his society accepts his situation as natural for his mother acted in line with the social norm. This is what, Marx calls 'reified consciousness' that governs the life of Bāzabīh's society. In this kind of consciousness people conceive of social relations as convention bound. Therefore, if Bāzabīh wants freedom to break away from the norm that causes his alienation from himself, the community views him as a deviant, because in reified consciousness social structures are perceived static. As a result, Bāzabīh has to remain alienated from his essential nature, if he wants to be accepted by his community. Yet, we observe that he wants to liberate himself from his alienation and on the other hand, he fears the consequences of his action. Therefore,

እይወትን በመውደድና በፍራት መሀከል ለሁለት ተከፍሎ እንዲህ እየተሰቃየ ሃያ አመቱን ጨርሶ ሃያ አንደኛውን ሲይዝ የዜማ መምህርነት ተመርቆ ወጣ። (ፍ.አ.መ፡ ፲፮ 46)

Divided between the double feeling of love and fear of life, and after suffering for twenty years, he graduated as a 'zema' teacher at the beginning of his twenty-first.

After contemplating on overcoming his alienation from himself, Bāzabīh comes to a realization that what he does is not the expression of himself as a social being. He does not consider to change or to reform the social framework. He rather wants a place where he will be able to do what his fellow men do. He also wants a community that allows him to act

according to his human essence. In short, he wants to become a free social being. Since Bāzabḥ is not a revolutionary or a reformist; the option he prefers is leaving the society behind and flee. This way, he hopes to live a meaningful social life that confirms his human essence. In his effort to triumph over imposed self-alienation, he comes to tie with a person that faces same experience in a different way. This person is Säblwängel, and the next discussion deals with her experience of alienation.

Säblwängel like Bāzabḥ is denied freedom of choice. As the destiny of Bāzabḥ is predetermined by his mother, Säblwängel’s parents particularly her father wants to make her the vehicle of their wishes. Hence, whatever she wants to do is rejected by them. That is why she says,

እኔ የምወደውና እነሱ ለኔ የሚፈልጉት በጣም የተለያዩ ነው።
 (ፍ.አ.መ፣ ገጽ፣ 242)

What I like and what they actually want for me are quite different.

What is it that she likes and wants to do? Firstly, since she is a social being, she has her own needs similar to that of Bāzabḥ. That is a relationship with a man and the need to procreate herself, (*Fḥk'ḥr ḥskä Mäk'abḥr* p. 87 and 92.) Of course, her parents want to see her having a relationship with a man. However, since she is their property, it is they who have the right to choose a perfect match for her. She knows that she has her own will and does not like the choice of her parents. Her parents do not think of her as a person who has her own preferences and views on things. This inability of hers from fulfilling her own wishes alienates her from her essential nature. As is explained in the case of Bāzabḥ “Marx’s theory of self-alienation rests on his distinction between one’s human and biological needs”. (Nielson, *Mosaic, Literature and Alienation* Vol. 2, No1, 1968:125). Säblwängel could not form a relationship with the other sex of her choice which is the essential biological need.

Her self-alienation is not limited to the prohibition of her from sexual relationship. She also could not express herself in other social activities. In the sphere of production, she is not allowed to contribute to the production and preparation to the means of sustenance process. Expressing herself through labour is unthinkable to her, since she belongs to the social class that uses other's labour for its survival (*Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* p. 257.) In any way, there are so many ways one can express him/herself in the society freely depending on one's social inclination. One of these social activities is artistic production. Säbläwängel reveals her wish to manifest herself through this medium. She says:

አንዳንዶቹ እመሀል ገብተው ባንገታቸው ሌሎቹ እዳር ቆመው ግጥም እየገጠሙ በቃላቸው እየዘፈኑ የወጣትነት ስሜታቸውን ሲገልጹና የልብ እንፋሎታቸው ሲወጣላቸው ስመለከት እኔም እንደነሱ ተነስቼ ባንገቱ ወይም ግጥም እየገጠምሁ በቃሌ ዘፍኜ እንዲወጣልኝ ደስስስ እንዲለኝ በጣም አመኛለሁ። (ገጽ፣ 244)

When I see some of them dancing by moving their necks, or others composing their poems and singing to express their feelings of youth and releasing their heart's turbulent feelings, I too wish to dance and to compose and sing my own lyrics similar to them to be happy.

As the above quotation shows, Säbläwängel has the desire to be social. She wants to participate in the activities that other young women do to express themselves. She knows that her parents force her to act contrary to her social nature. This shows whatever she desires to do is buried within her. If she likes the situation and agrees with it there is no self-alienation. However, she does not only like but also does not accept her situation. She reveals her feeling thus by saying;

... የድሜ ጉዋደኞቹ የሚያደርጉትን ሁሉ ማድረግ አፈልጋለሁ። ነገር ግን አልችልም። (ገጽ፣ 243)

I want to do what my peers do, but I cannot.

This clearly shows that Säbläwängel is alienated from herself, since she is barred from acting freely, according to both her biological and social needs. In short, she is denied of the right to establish her own personality within the framework of the possibilities that her society offers.

She is conscious of her self-alienation, that is why she expresses her situation as a prisoner who is not allowed to have a human essence. She says,

የጌታ ልጅ መሆን እንዲህ እንደኔ ታስሮ መኖር የሚወዱትን ነገር ሁሉ መመኘት እንጂ ማድረግ አለመቻል ከሆነ ከቅጣት ሁሉ የከፋ ቅጣት ከባርነት ሁሉ የከፋ ባርነት ነው (ገጽ፣ 244)

If being the offspring of wealthy parents is being imprisoned like myself, only to wish to get or do what one loves to but not to actualize or not to get, it is worse than the roughest of all punishments and is the worst form of slavery.

Säblawängel's inability to set forth herself as a social being in the spheres of the above mentioned social activities makes her an onlooker of other's life. She can only wish for the things she wants but could not get them. She is denied the life that she wants to lead and attain self fulfillment. As Erich Fromm (1973:81) explains, "Eros [the specifically male-female attraction which is a fundamental attraction in all living substance] and love of life are *the two central strivings of the unalienated man*" (emphasis added). Since both Bāzabih and Säblawängel are prohibited from expressing themselves freely they are denied what Fromm explains as the two central strivings of the unalienated man.

As we have noted earlier, Bāzabih can no longer continue to live as a stranger to himself, as a result, he thinks seriously about overcoming his self-alienation. The solution he has found is to leave his home village.

Säblawängel, however accepts her self-alienation and articulates her bitterness through her tears. She does not consider overcoming her self-alienation by rebellion or running away, until she meets Bāzabih. Even though Bāzabih starts to overcome his self-alienation by beginning to fulfill at least his need for a company of the other sex, he falls victim to another kind of alienation. Although Säblawängel momentarily forgets the imprisonment of herself due to her emotional tie with Bāzabih, she knows her relationship with Bāzabih brings forth

the wrath of her family members. This point takes us to the other fundamental aspect of alienation; the alienation of man from man, which is the concern of the next section.

3.2 Alienation of Man from Man

The alienation of a human being from another human being results in the division of labour that helps to form a class society of exploiters and the exploited. It is mentioned earlier that men are primarily alienated from nature in their attempt of gaining subsistence. This struggle for survival brings forth the abuse of nature for the satisfaction of man's limitless desires. The creation of classes transfers this phenomenon to human beings because the division of labour makes the exploitation of man by man possible. Axelos (1976:58) explains this situation as follows: "Those who exploit nature to produce or make what men need are in turn exploited by non workers." The formation of classes creates a distinction of one man from another. This distinction through time begins to be considered as normal, through the process of reification. Reification helps the system of alienation to take root. One of the reification concepts one finds in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* is the 'biologising' of social relations which implies the consciousness produced due to particular practices of life in a given society. By examining the following utterance of Fitawrari Mäšäša, an attempt will be made to elaborate the above-mentioned notion.

አባቱ ሰው አይደለም ገበሬ ነው። (ገጽ፣ 85)

His father is not a human being, he is only a farmer.

Since, Fitawrari belongs to the class that controls the means of production, he believes that his power over the means gives him the right of labeling humans and non-humans. For him a certain person is human, only when he/she belongs to a 'noble' line of ancestors. This shows

that the upper social class members alienate themselves from the working people. The peasants who till the land are dehumanized only because they produce what their ‘superiors’ need. These people who toil on the land to make life continue are categorized as non-humans. Once a person is identified with the kind of work he/she does so are his/her descendants. The same is true with a merchant or a black smith and all people of the lower class. No matter how a child of a peasant or merchant or black smith accumulates wealth and becomes rich, he/she could not stand equally with those whose grand and great grand parents were landlords. This is so because the differentiating factor between humans and non-humans is not a success in life but 'blood' (ancestry). This assertion gains the support of Fitawrari. He elaborates,

ዋናው ነገር አጥንትና ደም ነው! የተከበረ አጥንትና ደም ያለው ሰው ሲወለድ ጆምሮ ሽረ ከዚያም በፊት ከጸንሱ ጆምሮ የተከበረ ነው። የተከበረ ደም በደምስሩ የሚፈስ ህጻን ከተራ ሽማግሌ መብለጡ የታወቀ ነው።(ገጽ፣193-194)

The main issue is not age. More important is bone and blood! Whoever possesses a respectful bone and blood is revered starting from birth, even from the day of conception. It is a known fact that a child in whose veins a respected blood flows is more important than an ordinary old man.

What brings the issue of biological relations is nothing but the 'false consciousness' of the society. The notions of ‘bone’ and ‘blood’ reveal the alienating social factors and a consciousness that accepts other human beings as mere objects for the satisfaction of others’ ends. When this kind of consciousness takes root, then people start to consider that the rich and the poor possess different sort of ‘bone’ and ‘blood’ which in the long run becomes a norm. This kind of division among people gives depth to the alienation of man from man. Therefore, Fitawrari considers all people who do not trace their genealogy from the upper class, as animals that lead their lives by instinct. In fact, Fitawrari thinks that the peasants are created for the services of gentlemen like himself. Accordingly, peasants do not have the necessities of men like himself. For him, the human qualities that he possess are not shared

by peasants. In short, Fitawrari and his class consider peasants as objects who are created to pay tributes. The following utterance of his testifies his belief.

ባላገር የሚበላው ቢያጣ ይከፍለው አጥቶ አያውቅም ይባላል እስከ ተረቱ! አሉ ፊታውራሪ። (ገጽ፣ 218)

As the folk saying goes, A peasant has never lacked what to pay though he lacks what to eat.

One of the basic necessities of a human being is food. Without eating survival is unthinkable. Eating is not only the essential part of human life but also that of animals. When Fitawrari says a peasant never lacks something to pay as a tribute, even if he/she has nothing to eat, he shows the extent of his desocializing, and denaturalizing view. He also reveals how people of his kind consider other human beings who happen to be peasants and are involved in physical labour. The view stated above portrays the extent of human alienation as a result of the reified ‘biologising’ concept.

It is this kind of consciousness that controls the people Fitawrari represents. Deviating from this social rule is intolerable for him. This is the reason why Bāzabīh faces the wrath of Fitawrari when he calls Säbläwängel as his par. When Fitawrari finally learns his daughter’s involvement with Bāzabīh, he flies into a rage, because the ‘blood’ of Bāzabīh is not human in his terms. If the social system had not been based on human alienation Bāzabīh could have married Säbläwängel. We further see the dehumanizing view of Fitawrari through his ill treatment of the wives and children of peasants. He cuffs and flogs these peasants as if they do not possess the human qualities of pain and humiliation. In short, his treatment is an illustration of the ‘biologising’ concept that considers others as animals and oneself as ‘human’.

The separation of man from man is accepted as natural form of existence almost by all the members of the community. People who have some kind of rank consider themselves different, as endowed with special qualities. They call other people as ‘common’ as if all the ‘common’ people are one and the same in every way. This alienating view abhors association with the ordinary people anywhere. This seems the reason the two gentlemen who come to attend the king’s banquet bitterly discuss about their being considered the same with the ordinary people. The following is how one of them expresses the situation.

የንጉስ ግብርና ኡርባን አንድ በመሆኑ ከረድኤቱ ለመሀፈልና ጌታችን ከተራ ሕዝብ እንድንለይበት የሰጡንን ደረጃ ለመጠበቅ ነበር እንጂ እንጀራማ በዩቤታችን ከኛ ተርፎ ብዙ ሰው እናበላ የለ? » አሉ አይናቸውን እንባ የሞላው ሰው። (ገጽ 446)

An Emperor’s feast is like receiving God’s Holy communion. It is joined in order to share God’s blessing on the one hand, and to revere the position conferred on us by our master to differentiate us from the rank and file on the other. Otherwise, don’t we have sufficient food at home even to feed many people? said a man with tear filled eyes.

The reason these two gentlemen come to the banquet is to show the crowd that they are superior to them. Similar to Fitawrari Mäšäša, for them the multitudes have no human quality. All the ‘common’ people are one in their eyes. Indeed, the king does not, forsake them. He affirms the views of these land lords which is reflected in the manner he treats the crowd, like animals, that serve only the will of their masters. The human alienation is evident by the very way the hall is divided. Those who sit near the king have the human essence of order and discipline. They are made to sit in a comfortable place and enjoy the food and drink that is presented to them in a leisurely manner. On the other hand, for them the crowd has no sense of order. In the eyes of the nobles who sit higher, the common people lack the qualities that make the nobles ‘human’. This is so because the common people seem to accept the inhuman treatment of the king and his courtiers.

It is important to note that this ‘biologising’ of human relations is connected with economic power. Those who consider themselves ‘human’ and others as animals are those who have the economic power to control the majority. It is explained earlier that the class of Fitawrari considers anyone who can trace his/her ancestors from the nobility as human. This seems to be true only when he/she has the economic power. Let us consider the case of W_idnäš Bät'amu here. W_idnäš belongs to the class of Fitawrari, and according to the ‘biologising’ view, she should have been considered ‘human’. However, the different mishaps in her society paves the way for others who belong to her class, to force her forget her identity. In order not to be a blaspheme for her class, she starts to live afar from them. As a result, she starts to lead an alienated life. The people around her remind her condition by name calling and the like. As a result, she marries a peasant to prove her humanity to those who belittle her. Because of the social misfortunes she experienced in her life, she is alienated not only from her class but also from those her class considers to be non-human. We can observe how the society totally alienates her, by examining her situation, when her neighbours left her with a dying man. At that time, she is no longer human but a disease. Hence, no body wants to be sick by going near her. Even the priest does not want to be near her however he sends his servant Gäbre. Gäbre is a healthy human being but lost his humanity because of his social position. In fact, he is considered one with W_idnäš Bät'amu, who is seen as a disease. Is not Gäbre a human being who wants to flee from affliction like the other members? No, Gäbre is the chattel of the priest. The priest does not care whether Gäbre dies or not because he can replace him by another Gäbre. When one loses an animal he/she replaces it by another animal. Therefore, Gäbre is a thing for the priest. The priest might feel sad when he loses an animal that gives unrestricted service to him. However, his feelings will evaporate when he finds another animal. This situation, i.e, the priest’s treatment of Gäbre, reveals how the whole social structure is based on alienation of man from another man.

As mentioned earlier, the determinant factor of human alienation is reified consciousness. The society in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*, believes that the system of alienation is God-given. When the class of Fitawrari defines the lower social class's existence as non-human, the majority of the ordinary people accept it as normal. When they are treated like animals, they do not protest, instead, they believe that it is just the way the world works. The following is how the common people consider themselves.

... ከሰው እኩል እንዳልሆኑ ለሰው እንጂ እንደሰው እንዳልተፈጠሩ አብዛኛው ሰው አምኖ ስላሳመናቸው ይህንኑ ተቀብለው በዚህ አምነው ይኖራሉ። (ገጽ፣ 371)

They (the peasants, all common people) have accepted and lived with the belief held by others which states that they are not created equal with other humans, but there to serve others.

These people who are treated inhumanly, do not try to create a human identity, since their consciousness is formed after the social existence. This is in perfect harmony with what Marx explains, that it is the social existence that determines one's consciousness and not consciousness that determines the social conditions. These people internalize their dehumanization as natural. As the quotation shows most people believe in their inferiority. And it is the system that is based on alienation which formulates their consciousness in such a way. They view themselves as objects. They believe that they are created to serve those who are created 'human'. Therefore, they take the dehumanizing treatment of other people as just or inevitable luck. These people have not only lost their identity as humans, but also alienated from other people since their self-esteem is depreciated. We can see how such a consciousness manifests itself by looking at the behaviour of the crowd when the king gives a banquet.

ሕዝብ ከሰውነት ወደ እንስሳነት ደረጃ ራሱን ዝቅ አድርጎ ተገፍቶ ተመትቶ የሰውነት መብቱንና ክብሩን ሁሉ ትቶ የሚይበላ ነገር በልቶ ተንቆ ተደቅድቆ ለንጉስ የሚገዛ መሆኑን የሚያሳይበትና ንጉሱም ያን እያዩ ደስ የሚሰኘበት ዘዴ ነው! (ገጽ፣ 454)

It is a means by which humans are degraded and lowered themselves to the level of animals, pushed and beaten, lose their human dignity and eat what is not eatable, neglected, looked down and trodden upon and ruled by the king in order to prove their servitude and for the king to watch this and get pleased.

Since the people internalize their dehumanization as natural they show their animal status, in order to express their acceptance of the king's dehumanizing view. Hence, the above kind of consciousness is a deformed one. We observe human beings lose their qualities and assume animal ranks. And since they are not animals they continue to be fragmented and crippled human beings. This willingness to be treated like animals comes forth due to a 'false consciousness'. However, for the system of human alienation to operate actively, such reified consciousness is essential.

In the shaping and reinforcing of such kind of perception of the world, the role of the institutionalized ideology is very important. By institutionalized ideology, the writer of this paper is referring to the dominant religion. According to Axelos, (1976:159-160), Marx considers the very formation of religion in relation to alienated life. He says religion expresses, "... the alienation of a man in relation to the products of his labor as the imaginary satisfaction of unsatisfied real drives". Religion tries to give the meaning of human relations in abstract terms. It serves as an impediment to human expression of life and essence. Religion does not guide men toward practical reality, it masks truth with mystery. Since religion is found in the super structure of the society, it controls the consciousness of the community. Because it blinds men not to realize their situation, Marx says: "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." (in Axelos, 1976:160). Religion teaches the people that the present is not real, and every social rule is static or God- given. It is through the interpretations of religious teachers that religion forms a 'false consciousness'. The

following is how Abba Mogäse, one of the interpreters of religious concepts approves of the system of alienation.

እግዚአብሔር ጌታን ከድሀ ገዢን ከተገዢ ለይቶ ሲሰራ ጌታው ገዢው ፍርድ ቢያገድል ድሀ ቢበድል ጠያቂው መንግስት ከዚያም በላይ እግዚአብሔር ነው እንጂ ድሀ አቤት ከማለት አልፎ የሚተዳደርበትን ህግ አግኝና ፈራጅ ሆኖ አያውቅም። (ገጽ፣ 273)

God created human beings by differentiating between the rich and the poor, the ruler and the ruled. In case the master, the ruler denied justice and mistreated the poor, then it is for the government or above it for God to see that justice is done. The poor except supplication have never promulgated laws and have never played the role of a judge.

What we can observe from the priest's speech is that poor people are destined to be servants from time immemorial. It is God who creates the rich and the poor, the ruler and the ruled. Anyone who is poor should accept his/her condition because God predetermined his/her existence. In fact, trying to stray from the system that God himself has formulated results in eternal destruction. This kind of teaching makes the people believe that the class society is formed because the highest authority in the universe approves of it. The community believes that the power of the rulers has God's blessing. In short, religious teachers indoctrinate the people to accept the system. Through their preaching they make the people's consciousness reified. Because of the issue of predestination, the community accepts the system of alienation as ordinary and eternal.

In order to substantiate this view, what the priests utilize is The Book, which means The Bible. For instance, Abba Tam፡iru, the father confessor of W፡idnäš Bät'amu, mentions The Book to substantiate the notion of predestination.(*Fik'ir ፡iskä Mäk'abir* p. 14). People believe The Book, because they are told it comes directly from God. Fundamentally, what determines the meaning of the words of The Book is not what is written in it but the interpretation of the priests. Interpreting The Book and preaching is the domain of the priests. Hence, other people accept their interpretation as correct. This situation paves the way for the

priests to use The Book to win the favour of the powerful and to make the powerless subservient. Let us examine the following sentence,

'ኢትቁም ራቅከ ቅድመ መሰረት እግዚአብሔር' ሲል መጽሐፍ እግዚአብሔር ቀብቶ በሸመው ፊት ባዶ እጅህን አትቅረብ ማለቱ ነው። ... ስለዚህ ያመትባል መዋያና መተያያ መጽሐፍ ያዘዘው መሆኑ የታወቀ ነው። (ገጽ፣ 274)

When the book says 'itk'um rak'kä k'idimä mäsih Egziabäher' it means don't present your self bare handed before some one anointed and raised to a position. ... Hence, holiday visits and gifts are known to have been ordered by The Book.

In order to reinforce the alienation of the poor, Abba Mogäse presents the words of The Book. He explains that God himself anoints earthly rulers. And anyone, who wants to see the ruler must bring with him/her a gift that reveals respect for the anointed one. The priest's interpretative strategy is systematic. He uses The Book according to the dictates of the situation. He is also helped by the use of Giiz language which the peasants do not know. Others were arguing that peasants are not obliged to bring holiday gifts. However, when Abba Mogäse comes up with an authority, no one dares to refute. They are forced to hold their tongues. Hence, as long as The Book orders peasants to bring gifts for the ruler, there is no way peasants say no to the commands of The Book. This helps rulers to continue alienating others from their human essence, by making them their chattels. As mentioned earlier, it is the interpretation of The Book that supports the system of alienation.

Since, the community believes that the system is God-given it sees no point in trying to change it. According to the consciousness of the majority, it is the almighty who assigns roles, and when the powerful abuse their authority and the poor refuse to serve the masters, he punishes them. Therefore, under the mask of such beliefs the authoritative personalities give rules and regulations to the powerless majority and use them as they want. Even if the poor feel that their rulers make their life hell on earth, they believe that God has not given them the right to question the anointed what they do. The right of punishing the powerful as the priest says earlier, belongs to the government, but above all to God. The priest mentions

the government as a cover. In reality, the government is the association of the powerful, since it is found in the same structure of the rulers. The poor have no way to go in search for the human essences of equity and freedom.

This seems the reason that compels Bāzabīh to say,

ክፉም ሆነ በጎ የሚሰሩ ሰዎች መሳሪያዎች ናቸው እንጂ ሰራተኛው እግዚአብሔር ስለሆነ እነሱን መጥላቱና ማማቱ ወይም መውደዱና ማመስገኑ ከንቱ ነው!... (ገጽ 430)

Men who do good or bad are only instruments, otherwise it is God who does everything. Hence, hating and backbiting or liking and appreciating such men is to no avail.

The teachings of the dominant religious institution brainwashes the people to accept everything as a pre-determination. Therefore, the community accepts the system of alienation as the norm. As a result, those who exercise power continue to alienate and depersonalize the powerless while the powerless in turn accept their dehumanization and alienation as inescapable. According to Bāzabīh, people whether they are doers of evil or good are instruments of God because the arch worker behind them is the Almighty. Therefore, religion through its representatives, the interpreters of The Book, makes the community indifferent towards the alienation of man from man. However, there are very few individuals who perceive the system as man-made and strive to preach the reality in order to bring change. This is so because they become aware of the trap of ‘false consciousness’. They realize the consciousness of the people as reified, therefore, they resolve to abolish or ‘dereify’ such a perception. The next section deals with this notion of dereified consciousness.

3.3 Dereified Consciousness

Dereified consciousness is the negation of reification. It is “... the process whereby social relations between men are revealed as such and therefrom conceived as changeable,” (Walton and Gamble, 1976, 21). By rejecting the existing order of things and realizing that

men are not acting in accordance with their social nature, "...derefying consciousness aims at helping conditions where species being can be realized" (Ibid., 21).

In the previous section, we have examined the system that is based on the alienation of man from man. We observe how the system bisects man into humans and non-humans, as a result of 'false consciousness'. However, we also find individuals, though few, who reject the supremacy of social rules and the interpretation of religious teachers that support human alienation. We will consider few people in this regard. The first person who grasps the system of alienation reflectively is Gudu Kasa. He discards the reifying concepts of 'biologising' of human relations and the dehumanization of others. His realization of reification seems to come from his close examination of the religious books. Through his study, he comes to comprehend that the religious leaders mislead the community through their deceptive interpretation of religion. Religious leaders stupefy the consciousness of the community towards the acceptance of the social system. Gudu Kasa disagrees with what religious teachers preach and practice. Therefore, he makes himself free from the association of the church. The church, which is represented by its priests plays a vital role in the continuation of the system that cleaves man in two. Gudu Kasa transcends from the trap of reification and hence rejects human alienation. This awareness is reflected in his belief of human equality. For him

... ሰው ሁሉ ሰው ነው! (ገጽ: 413)

Human beings are all human beings.

He rejects the 'biologising' concept of Fitawrari and the community by telling them that their perception is outdated. In fact, he poses the question of economic power in relation to the 'biologising' concept. He confronts Fitawrari with the following assertion.

እስከ ዓለቱ ስላሉ አሳድረው እንዲህ ተዘባነው የሚኖሩ በሀብትም ነው እንጂ በዘርም አይደለም። (ገጽ፣ 412)

That you possess many servants and live in extreme luxury is because of your wealth and not because of your line of descent.

For Gudu Kasa the issues of ‘bone’ and ‘blood’ are trivial. He expresses his view publicly whenever he gets the opportunity. Gudu Kasa’s belief is not limited to theoretical convictions. He shows his denial of human alienation by marrying his female slave. He tries to liberate the consciousness of not only his wife but also his men servants by educating them while most of the community remain illiterate. He even changes their names to what the community believes to be a ‘human’ name. However, since the awareness of these people is very little, and they want to conform to the beliefs of the society, Gudu Kasa’s attempts to make them human are not successful.

Gudu Kasa overcomes self-alienation and dehumanization by rejecting the social system that is based on the alienation of man from man. However, the society he criticizes in its turn alienates him. Having a dereified consciousness in the community whose consciousness is obtuse forces him to be alienated from that community. His state is described in the text as follows:

በከበበው ዓለም ውስጥ የግሉን አለም ፈጥሮ በሰው መሀከል ብቻውን ሆኖ የሚኖር ሰው ነበር። (ገጽ፣ 123)

He was a man who created a world of his own within the surrounding world, and who lived alone in the middle of people.

His situation enables him to criticize every style of living that he finds fault with. Gudu Kasa shows his alliance with the dehumanized members of the society through his marital association. However, he does not belong to either of the separated classes. He creates his own realm that is ruled by his own perceptions. He strives to dereify the consciousness of at least the underprivileged to no avail. When both the powerful and powerless watch him

deviate from the norm, they respond similarly. The society views him as a person with some kind of mental problem.

However, not all the members deny his criticism of the system. He shares his view with Säbläwängel who is alienated from her self due to the ‘biologising’ and dehumanizing view of the system. She has to a certain extent, a dereified consciousness. Like Gudu Kasa, she denounces the concepts of dehumanization and ‘biologising’ of human relations. Säbläwängel expresses her belief in the equality of all human beings on different occasions. For her, the peasant whom her parents consider non-human does not lack a single human quality. She says:

ገበሬም ሰው ነው! የገበሬ ልጅም የሰው ልጅ ነው! የመከታዎንንት ዘር ጥሩ የገበሬ ዘር ጉድፍ መሆኑን አውቆ መከታዎንንት የሚመርጥ ይቸገርበት! (ገጽ 410)

A peasant is also a human being! His offspring is human too! Let any one who knew the son of a noble to be good and the son of a peasant faulty and yet choose the son of the noble bother himself with it.

Her view on the equality of all human beings impels her father to consider her sick. From her utterance we learn that she advocates the life philosophy of Gudu Kasa. She values all his beliefs and teachings. Therefore, she is conscious of her situation as a self-alienated person. She understands how her society is structured on the basis of separation. Even if she protests against the dehumanized system, Säbläwängel has no power to free herself and to publicly express her view. She even could not overcome her self-alienation, unlike Gudu Kasa who determines the course of his life by his own free will.

The teachings of Gudu Kasa not only affects the consciousness of Säbläwängel but also her servant Hab፲፲፯. Unlike the servants of Gudu Kasa, Ezra and Dawit Hab፲፲፯ does not internalize her dehumanization. She knows that she and her children are the property of Fitawrari Mäšäša. She understands the system she lives in better than Ezra and Dawit. People like Ezra and Dawit believe that they are created to serve the ‘lords’. But, Hab፲፲፯ seems to

recognize that she is a human being who is treated as a property. She knows that she has no power to change the situation. Therefore, like Säbläwängel, she reveals her objection of the social system through her tears. It is the teachings of Gudu Kasa that creates such kind of awareness, as Säbläwängel expresses it

... እድሜ ላይ ካላ የኑሮዎችን ስራት እጅግ ክፉና ግፍ የሞላበት መሆኑን እያዩን ለመበሳጨትና ለማልቀስ ያህል አይናችንን ከፍቶልናል! ብቻ ከሱ መውጣት ላንችል አይናችን ተከፍቶ ባላየነው ባላወቅነው ደስ ብሎን እንኖርበት ነበር። (ገጽ፣ 313)

Long live Aya. Kasa. He has opened our eyes so that we can see, get vexed and cry about our life style that is full of hardship and atrocity! Though our eyes have been opened we cannot get out of the situation. Earlier we lived happier because we don't see and we don't know.

As Säbläwängel states understanding what alienation does to the society and to each individual is important in the dereification process of one's consciousness. But knowing that something is wrong and unable to solve the problem makes the situation worse. Both Säbläwängel and her servant Hab፲፲፯ develop their consciousness according to the teachings of Gudu Kasa. Theory without practice is nothing but a myth. This seems the reason Säbläwängel prefers ignorance of the situation than knowing about it and being guided by it. Therefore, even if some members of the society are cognizant of the structure that is based on human alienation, the view of the majority crushed such deviant outlooks.

When one starts to dereify his/her consciousness he/she starts to raise questions which the other members regard as taboo. We have discussed time and again, that the church teaches that God designs the system in such a way which encourages separation. Gudu Kasa himself does not raise question on God and The Bible. His basic departure is with the way religious teachers interpret The Book and their improper practice. But, Bāzab፲፩ does pose a question on the nature of God by saying,

ይህ ሁሉ አይንና ጆሮ በሌለው አድልዎ ላይ የተመሰረተ ስራት እውነት አዋቂው፣ ትክክለኛው፣ ትልቁ እግዚአብሔር የሰራው ነው? እሱስ ባይሰራው የሰሩትንና ሲሰሩት የሚኖሩትን ለምን ዝም ይላቸዋል? (ገጽ፣ 463)

Is it true that this blind and deaf system filled with bias created by the true, kind and almightily God? If he is not the one who created this, how come that he keeps quiet looking at those who did and still are doing?

Bāzabīh has been taught about the omnipotence of God. He has learnt that it is God who makes the order of things as they are. Bāzabīh knows God as truthful, perfect, kind and the greatest power in the universe. When he watches the cruelty and inhumanity of people, he faces difficulty to match the qualities of God with the ferocious treatment of man by another man. Therefore, he starts to think that God does not set such a system. But why does God keep quiet when man dehumanizes another man who is created in the image of God. Still, the condition forces him to raise another question. It reads,

እንጂ! የሱ ስራት አይደለም እንዳልል ጌታና ባሪያ፡ ገዢ ንጉስና ተገዢ ሕዝብ አባትና እናት ልጃቸውን እንደያዕቆብ [sic] መስዋእት አድርገው ማቅረብ ሁሉ ከአሪት ጀምሮ በመጽሐፍ ይገኛል! እሱ የሰራው ስራት ነው እንዳልል ፍጥረቱን ያላንዳች ምክንያት በበዳይና በተበዳይ መካከል እንዲከፋፈል ማድረግ ያልበደለ ሁል ጊዜ እንደተቀጣ የበደለ ሁል ጊዜ እንደበደለ እንዲኖር ማድረግ እንኩዋንስ ያዋቆች ሁሉ አዋቂ የሆነው እግዚአብሔር የመንደር ዳኛም የሚፈርደው አይደለ! ታዲያ እንዴት ነው? እንጂ! (ገጽ፣ 463)

I don't know! To say that this system is not His doing, then how about the case of master and slave, the ruler, the king and the ruled people. The tradition whereby a father and mother present, their son as a sacrifice as was the case of Jacob [sic] is in The Book from the time of The Old Testament! To accept this system as God's work; say the irrational phenomenon of dividing his creatures between the culprit and the victim is difficult. The victim is always mistreated and the culprit always oppressing. This cannot be expected of God who is the Wisest of all the wise, not even from a village judge.

Bāzabīh seems to be confused about the nature of God. He comes to know God through The Bible. However, The Bible itself is full of stories that show a social system that is based on alienation. Beginning from the first book of The Bible, Genesis, we find individuals who have no free will of their own. We can mention Isaac who is about to be sacrificed as a symbol of his father's loyalty to God, without his consent. It is his father who decides his son's fate, just like Bāzabīh's mother. The situation is problematic for Bāzabīh. Even though there are evidence of God's approval of a separation of man from man, he does not convince himself that God makes the system as such. He contemplates about how unjust the

social system is. Man is made in God's image, so the quality of being fair to another is endowed to human beings from the beginning. Anyone, whose consciousness is not false can see how the system of alienation makes the life of the majority miserable. Therefore, if a human being comprehends the system as inhuman, the omniscient God must know everything beyond human understanding and should have solved the problem. However, God does not change the situation. He simply watches what people are doing with their lives. He lets the system operate. This situation perplexes Bāzabīh. Therefore, he leaves the question he raises unanswered. Bāzabīh's contemplation on the nature of God and the social system shows that his consciousness is dereified to a certain extent. This is so, because while the community accepts the system as natural, he argues with himself whether the belief of the community, which he also accepts is convincing or not. Although, realizing the nature of alienation is essential, it alone can do nothing. As Säbläwängel expressed earlier, knowing the weakness of something and being unable to correct it leads to both mental frustration and physical exhaustion.

An individual who at least realizes the trap of reification and is able to change certain situations is Abājä Bäläw. The peasants pay their tribute that is levied on them as mandatory. Since they accepted their masters as anointed, they do whatever they are obliged to do. However, when the suffering becomes unbearable some people begin to revolt against the authorities. Abājä Bäläw rebels against the system, because he feels that it is unjust. He discarded the notion of God-given authority. He realizes how power determines authority. He does not believe in the 'biologising' relationship of people. The following is how he reveals his view to Fitawrari Mäšäša.

የሚያስከብርዎና የሚያስፈራራዎ ሥልጣንዎ ነው እንጂ ስልጣንዎ ከሌለ ከመሀከላችን እንዳንጁ ደሀ ሽማግሌ መሆንዎን እናስታውስዎታለን። (ገጽ፣ 225)

That which makes you respected and feared is only your authority. Otherwise, if you do not have this position of power, we would like to remind you that you would only be taken as one of our poor old men.

Abäjä Bäläw comprehends that the social system reveals the power relation of people. Like Gudu Kasa he tells Fitawrari the basis of his authority. Abäjä not only grasps the dehumanization of the people, but also aims at making them conscious of their status. His attempt is a success to a certain extent, because the peasants come to understand their humanity. Abäjä, believes in human freedom and allies with the underprivileged. Even if the land-lords stupefy the consciousness of people, we observe how Abäjä's rebellion moulds their view towards their situation, as the following poem attests:

ስማኝ ያገራ ወንድ ልውቀስህ ወቀሳ፤
አይደለህ ቀማኛ አይደለህ ጃውሳ፤
ሳትሰርቅ ሳትቀማ ሳይኖርህ አበሳ፤
እያንዱ ሲያስሩህ እንዲሁ ባረሳ፤
የማትፈራገጥ የማትንቀሳሳ፤
ትንሽ የማትሸክር ከሆንህ ለስላሳ፤
በሁለት እግሩ ቆሞ ከሚሄድ እንስሳ፤
ወይም ነፍስ ከሌለው ከወደቀ ሬሳ
ከቶ ልዩነትህ በምን ላይ ነውሳ? (ገጽ: 234)

Listen, my country folks!
I've got for you reprimands
You'r neither thieves nor bandits
You haven't snatched or robbed
Why then should you get reproached
They get you rounded in mass
And speed you up to prison
But for no one good reason
And yet you don't stand up against
B'cause you'r never rough you'r rather soft
If you remain so smooth
And never act to stop it
Where lies from animals your difference
That only stood on two legs
Or from the dead and lifeless
A thrown away caracas?

Abäjä Bäläw, as the poem shows, dereifies the consciousness of the majority towards their inhuman treatment by their masters. He shows the possibility of fighting for one's freedom. He teaches that people are different from animals because they have their own free will. He

shows respect for humanity by his refusal to shed blood by fighting with Fitawrari Mäšäša. Unlike Abäjä Bäläw, Gudu Kasa is alienated from the society because the society does not comprehend the notion of overcoming its alienation. On the contrary, Abäjä Bäläw is gladly accepted by the community, because his way of revolt makes the people understand their human essence. His physical confrontation with dehumanizers seize the consciousness of the masses towards the abolition of dehumanization. In any case, there are individuals in the society, who comprehend the alienation of man from man. Abäjä Bäläw's effort is to make those human beings who are forced to believe in their inferiority aware of their humanity. As we have learned from the poem, he becomes successful to a certain extent.

The aforementioned discussion attempts to present dominant aspects of alienation in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* following the Marxian model of alienation. The next chapter concentrates on similar and different aspects of the notion that manifest themselves in *Adäfris*.

CHAPTER IV

Aspects of Alienation in *Adäfr̥is*

4.1 Alienation of Man from Man

“ In a class society man’s consciousness is necessarily false consciousness....” (Fromm, 1973: 73). As the quotation elaborates people who live in a society that is divided by classes perceive of the social rules as static, because their consciousness is moulded in such a way. We do not see the concept of ‘biologising’ of human relations being used word for word as ‘bone’ and ‘blood’ as such in *Adäfr̥is*. What we observe predominantly is a dehumanization of human beings based on class difference. What verifies this assertion is the following view of W/o Asägaš that reads:

... ከሰውምኮ ሰው አለው ' ከእንጨት መርጦ ለታቦት፣ ከሰው መርጦ ለሹመት' ሲባል አልሰማህም የኔ ልጅ .. አሁን ለምሳሌ አሽከሮቹን ገና ለገና በዝንጋ አምሳል ተፈጥረዋል ብዬ ከኔ ጋር እኩል ናቸው ልል ነው? የለም የኔ ልጅ ዙሪያንም አካባቢንም እያዩ ነው ጨዋታ....(አደፍርስ : ገጽ 101)

All men are not equal. There are men among men. My son, haven’t you heard about the saying. ‘As a special tree is selected for the ark of the covenant, there are also men selected for higher position.’ Now, for instance, simply because my servants are also created in the image of God, am I going to consider them my equals? No, my son. One has to consider situations and the environment when discussing such things.

W/o Asägaš distinguishes one human being from another on the basis of possessing more human attributes. For her, all people are not blessed with same human qualities. This perspective brings the issue of ‘biologising’ of human relations, though she does not talk out rightly the notions of ‘bone’ and ‘blood’. However, what determines one’s position in the society is the role birth right plays. If one is born of a dignified class then he/she is going to be considered ‘human’. This is why W/o Asägaš uses the social adage that encourages the separation of human beings to substantiate her point. According to the proverb, for the ark of the covenant one chooses the best of the woods available to cut. Similarly, for a government

post one should not choose the scum of humanity but the ‘real humans’. To further affirm her position what W/o Asägaš reveals is her relationship with her servants. She is by no means equal to the servants, even though they are said to be created in God’s image as she is. Since servants are the properties of their owners, they lack the human essence. Indeed, the powerless servants are not acting in accordance with their human nature because their activity is not free and conscious. W/o Asägaš explicitly states that one should consider the environment when expressing opinions. What this implies is that the society in which she lives is structured in such a way that fosters the separation of man from another man.

W/o Asägaš manifests her belief in human alienation on several occasions. Let us look at the following utterance:

...አሲጋሽ አሲጋሽ ነች፤ የማንም ደንጉሉጥ አኛ አይደለችም የራሷ የሆነ ክብር አላት....
(ገጽ: 41)

Asägaš is Asägaš she is not a one to be taken as ignorant and a fool. She has her own respect.

W/o Asägaš puts herself high in the stratum of her society. She is not identical with the rest of the citizens, because she has her own glory. This glory is the sole property of herself as a unique human being. This seems the reason, she does not want peasants and servants to walk on the same track that she has trodden. They have to let the road, stop and show their respect, for her splendor forces them to do so. W/o Asägaš has the right to say and do whatever she wants, because she has the economic power. That is why she depersonalizes the peasant who comes to her to borrow some sorghum. As Fäk'adä points out, (1998:13). The peasant accepts whatever she utters since his position does not allow him to act freely. He even does not have a freedom of speech to express his view on some of the things she says. The peasant seems to acknowledge his inferior position, as long as he has no economic power. In spite of this, he appears to have controlled his means of production, the land. Therefore he is not one of the

chattels of W/o Asägaš. His position resembles that of P'et'ros, W/o Asägaš s man servant.

For P'et'ros,

... ውርደት የፈለጉትን ማጣት እንጂ ፍላጎትን ለማግኘት ሲባል የሚደርሰው ርግጫና ግልምጫ አይደለም ባይ ነው። (አደፍርስ፡ 94)

He thinks that being degraded results from being denied what one looks for and not from being oppressed, kicked and looked down upon while attempting to fulfill ones desire.

Similar to P'et'ros, the peasant bears the depersonalization and degradation of the land lady in order to get his sorghum. The speech of W/o Asägaš carries a sense of vengeance because the peasant in the past belittled her authority. She reminds him that he is indeed not human compared to her, by calling herself 'your lady'.

In fact, W/o Asägaš considers poor peasants like animals. She states,

... ዘረ ድሃ ያው ዐመለ ድሃ ነው .. ቢሾሙት ቢሸልሙት .. አሁን አህያን ቢያስኬጧት የትኛውን ግርማ ሞገስ ልታገኝ...?.... (ገጽ፣ 172)

One born of the poor is also characterized by poor manners whether given gifts or high position. Now, take the donkey, whatever you do to adorn it, where does it get the grace and glory from?

Being poor seems to be identified with vulgarity, being uncultured, ill-mannered and similar attributes that are taken as properties of the scum of society. When a person is poor he/she is seen as a thing that has fixed characteristics. The notion of change is not the property of a poor person. Hence whether he/she is appointed or dressed well it does not alter the original thing like status of the person. W/o Asägaš likens the effort to change the poor with trying to decorate a donkey. This view of W/o Asägaš materializes itself with the way she treats her servants as her chattels.

As a matter of fact, there is slavery going on in her household. The reactions of the underprivileged servants has a stabilizing effect on this system, because they perceive of their sub-human status normal. The following sentence confirms this point, it reads:

... አሁንም እቤት ካሉት እረኞች ሁለቱ በግብር የተያዙ ናቸው፣ አባቶቻቸው ግብሩን እስኪከፍሉ ድረስ ሊያገለግሉ የመጡ። ሆኖም ልጆቹን የተቀበሉት ተለምነው ለነፍሱ ብለው ነበር እንጂ አስገድደው አልነበረም (ገጽ: 94)

In fact, from among the servants serving at home presently, two of them are held because of taxation. They came to serve until their fathers are able to pay their taxes. However, the kids were taken in not by force but because their fathers begged for it and it was also considered to benefit the soul on the part of the receivers i.e W/o Asägaš.

Both W/o Asägaš and the peasants who have to pay tribute, consider children objects. The children serve as bartering commodities. Since their fathers regard the authority of the land lady as conventional, giving their children for the services of her is mandatory. What could make these shepherds free is their fathers' ability to pay their tributes. As we can observe W/o Asägaš does not force them to give their children as collaterality. This way the children become slaves. By begging for their children's imprisonment the parents act against their children's freedom. The children have no choice of their own. They are denied their human essence, since they are treated like objects.

The relationship of these shepherds and their owner is based on 'thing-ification'. These people are viewed in terms of their utility. They are distinguished as the activity itself. These shepherds spend their lives watching the sheep and goats of their owner. They have no human identity. Their essence is that of shepherding. W/o Asägaš seems to value her animals more than human beings, because the animals bring more honour. In fact, having plenty of them is a sign of prestige. For instance, there are calves that dwell in the same room with the owner, and get the affection of people. The way these animals are treated excels the way

humans are treated. The shepherds sleep on the floor with the sheep and goats. The condition is explained in the next passage.

... ሰቀላዎቹ ክዳን ይኑራቸው እንጂ ግርግዳቸው ፍግርግር ብቻ ነው። አንደኛው ለወላድ በጎችና ፍየሎች ከነግልገሎቻቸው ማጎሪያ ነው። ተኩላውና ቀበሮው ኃይለኛ ስለሆነ እያነገታቸው እንዳይሄድ እረኞቹም ጭምር የሚተኙት እዚሁ ነው።(ገጽ፣ 32)

The barn though roofed is only sparsely walled. One of them is for keeping the mother goats and sheep including their offspring. Since the foxes and the wolves are malicious and could carry them away, the shepherds are made to pass the night in the same barn to protect the animals.

The above cited passage reveals how human beings are treated inhumanely. The shepherds are expected to lack the notion of rest. They have to be on guard in the night time while the animals take rest. This situation manifests their sub-human status. The shepherds, since they accept that their value is less than that of the animal they do not raise their voice against guarding day and night. This is so because their consciousness is formed after the belief of the community that conceives of human alienation as the order of the universe. As can be observed from the status of the shepherds, shelter which is one of the basic necessities of human beings becomes a myth to them. What brings this desocialising, dehumanizing and denaturalizing of human relationships, as mentioned earlier is the reified or ‘false consciousness’ of the society.

This kind of community, as Fritz Pappenheim (1959:82) elaborates is: “... a caricature of true human community, since man has become so isolated that his separateness from other men is accepted as his natural form of existence and the human bond which is the essence of mankind appears to be nonessential”.

For the formation of such type of society and ‘false consciousness’ religion plays a vital role. We are going to examine how. Religion shapes the community’s view of life and the approval

of the existing system. The society we find in *Adäfr̥is* is similar to that of *F̥ik'ir̥ isk̥ä M̥äk'ab̥ir̥* in its submissiveness to the institutionalized ideology. The dominant religion through, the priests its interpreters desensitizes the people with its teachings. The instrument of numbing the listeners is The Bible. The religious teachers interpret the words in whatever way they think suitable. The crowd, since it is God's word the priests are explicating, accepts it with awe. Then, this interpretation becomes common principle of life. For instance, to justify the inherent inequality of human beings, Abba Addise employs The Book as follows:

... ሰማያዊ ኢኮን ሠናዩ ኒሢኦ ንብስተ ውሉድ መውሂብ ለከለባት' ... የልጆቹን ንብስት ለውሾቹ ... ኢትዮጵያ ታዲያ ምን ተጠቀመች .. የማንንም እከሊን የማይባል ልጅ ሰብስበው አይደለም እንዴ ንጉሡ መከራቸውን የሚያውቅ ...? (ገጽ፣ 100)

Do you listen 'ikonä sänayä nisä h̥ib̥istä w̥ilud mäwhib̥ läkäläbat' the children's bread for the dogs. What does Ethiopia benefit then? Is the king not bothering himself and taking trouble by gathering the sons of the insignificant nameless people.

According to Abba Addise The Bible categorizes man into two. These are people, who inherently are endowed with the right to enjoy everything good. This, for the priest shows that not all people are created equal. He uses 'children' for those he considers 'human' and 'dogs' for those he regards non-human. Trying to treat all people equally, for him is giving the meal of children to dogs. Comparing poor people to dogs exposes the priest's refusal to accept human equality. It seems the educational policy in *Adäfr̥is* allows all people including the poor to obtain education. As a result, there are people who come from the poor, that get different posts in government offices. This condition for the priest exhibits the king's tribulation. This suffering of the king, comes to the front, since he deals with uncultured, ill-mannered and vulgar species of a human being. The priest also presents his belief in the 'biologising' concept, when he says that those people could not trace their ancestry from the line of nobles. Hence, they have no name and should not be treated in an equal manner with

human beings. By using The Bible that is highly respected by the society, the priest's interpretation of it gives the impression of innate human inequality. If the word of God itself says people are not created equal, there is no way the poor claims his/her equality.

This shaping of consciousness towards being indifferent for change, helps the overlords justify their dehumanization of others. Abba Addise further approves of exploitation by talking positively about domestic slavery. He says:

...አሁን የዚች የኔ ልጅ ጭሰኞችና ገባሮች.. ይኸውና፡ ራሳቸውን ማስተዳደር እያቃታቸው አይደለም፡ ከየሚስት ከየልጆቻቸው እየገቡ የሚያድሩላት..ይኸውና እንዳያችሁት፡ ወንዶቹን ለገበሬነት ሴቶቹን ለፈጫይ፡ ለፈታይነት፡ ላረም፡ ለጉልጓሎ ልጆቻቸውን ለረኝነት፡ ለተከታይነት፡ ለተላላኪነት እያዋለች ታስተዳድራቸዋለች.. (ገጽ፡ 157)

Now, look at the tenants of this daughter of mine. Is it not because they simply could not manage their livelihood that they came with all their wives and children to serve her and live under her? As you have seen, she administered them by assigning the men as farmers, the females as grinders, weavers and farming hands whereas their children are made to serve as shepherds, servants and errand boys.

Abba Addise utters the above, when substantiating his conviction that presupposes free will as the attribute of only a wealthy person. Basically, the distinction between human beings and animals lie in the former's free and conscious activity. The system that is based on human alienation makes the majority powerless, hence forces the poor present themselves as slaves. These people are forced to act contrary to their social nature. Because of the situation, the powerless prefers to survive under servitude than die of hunger. For the priest, the poor surrenders to the land lady because he/she does not know how to use his/her own free will. However, the fact is that the impositions levied on these people prove to be beyond their ability. By being an ally of the prestigious, the priest supports the system. For him, since it is God who creates both the poor and the rich, the social rules are just. His view seizes the consciousness of the community and especially the privileged ones. Following shows how

W/o Asägaš actualizes the teaching she receives from the priest, when she talks with the peasant who comes to borrow some sorghum. She states:

እግዚአብሔርን መፍራት የመጀመሪያው ጥበብ ነው። ከዚያም የበላዮችህን ማክበር-
ባላባቶችን፣ ባለርስቶችን፣ የንጉሣቸው ልግሥና የእግዚአብሔር ቸርነት ያልተለያቸውን
.... (ገጽ ፣ 8)

Fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom. Then respect for superiors, nobility, land lords and all those blessed with the grace of their king and God.

As W/o Asägaš expounds the beginning of all wisdom is fearing God. The next wisdom is respecting landlords/ladies to whom the grace of God never part. This implies that the authority of rulers comes from God. W/o Asägaš separates people by considering herself superior. As a rule, the lower class should be obedient to those who rule over. If they deviate from this rule, God himself interferes to punish them. For W/o Asägaš that is why the peasant who is begging for sorghum becomes needy unexpectedly. For the peasant his destitution is a reminder of the existence of God's grace with his rulers. This kind of parroting religious teaching shows the depth of religious reification.

It is Ato Wäldu who tries to elaborate why religion exercises such a grip on the world view of the community. He explains:

... አብዛኛው የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ የሚኖረው ለምናቡም ጭምር ነው። .. ደግ ሠርቼ
እግዚአብሔር የሚያዘውን ሁሉ ፈጽሜ መንግሥተ ሰማያት ገብቼ እኖራለሁ በማለት
አይደለም እንዴ አባቴ ..? (ገጽ: 157)

The majority of the Ethiopian people also live an imagined spiritual life. Father, is it not true, that the people aspire to do good, and accomplish God's orders in order to obtain and live in heaven?

As Ato Wäldu explains, the community is taught that this life is just temporary. Hence, all the suffering one receives in this world will be compensated in the coming life. This coming life is determined by one's obedient way of life with the rules and regulations given by God. Living in accordance with God's commandments brings forth eternal life. On the contrary, trying to go astray from the principles which God sets out results in eternal destruction. Both

the upper and lower classes of society hope to join the kingdom of heaven. Those who are higher in the social strata try not to lose the favour of the church. They show their reverence through supporting the priests financially. They do this because they believe, it is through the supplications of the priests that they obtain remission to be part of God's heavenly kingdom. The church on its part supports the earthly life of its benefactors, by approving the alienation of man from man, by its shrewd interpretation of The Book. People who belong to the lower class also want to join heaven. In order to attain eternal life, they have to prove themselves worthy of such an existence. What tells them God's way is The Bible and reading and interpreting it is not their domain. Therefore, they go to the priests to learn the way of God. What they are told is to respect their overlords and to comply with the teachings of the church. The priests console the poor by saying the kingdom of God belongs to those who suffer in this world. This way, the church makes the community unresponsive to change. This view discourages realization of humanity. As a result, the system that is based on the alienation of man from man continues. However, similar to those few persons, who have dereified consciousness in *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*, there are few people in *Adäfris* who realize the effect of reification. The next section deals with this concept.

4.2 'Dereified' Consciousness

Even though, some people become aware of the snare of reification, not all of them preach change. On the contrary, they prefer to conform to the rules of the society. One of these people is Ato Wäldu. Ato Wäldu got the opportunity to obtain a limited amount of Western education. As a result, his view of the world differs from that of his community. Ato Wäldu reflectively comprehends the rules and regulations of his society. He even understands the consciousness that is shaped by different social forces, mainly religion. However, he prefers to remain with his awareness by not criticizing the life of the people. He, for instance, shows

his conformation by accepting his sister's offer to be cleansed with the book of 'K'edär'. Ato Wäldu realizes that the community needs a thorough education to go along with his view. Since, educating the masses seems impossible, he prefers to live in harmony with the illiterate. Of course, when he feels something is wrong, he freely expresses his view, as in the case of Abba Addise's misleading interpretation of The Bible. Though he does not participate in the alienation of human beings, he sees no problem in its continuation as a system. As for his personal view he states:

... ለሌላ ሰው ባረያ ከመሆን ለራሴ ባረያ መሆንን መረጣሁ... ለራሱ ባረያ መሆን ያልቻለ ለሌላ ሰው ባረያ ይሆናል ነው የጉሮዬ ፍልስፍና... ስለዚህ ለራሴ እንዳሽከርም እንደጌታም ሆኜ እኖራለሁ .. ይክበር ይመስገን ሁብት አለኝ። - ግን ቢሆንም ከረዳተኛ ጋር ቁፋሮም እንደሁ አብራ ቆፍራ.. ሸክምም እንደሁ አብራ ተሸክሜ ነው የምኖረው (ገጽ: 214)

I chose to be my own slave instead of being the slave of others, my philosophy of life is that whoever cannot be his own slave becomes a slave to others. Thus, I live as a slave and a master for myself. Thanks to God I have wealth. But, I live with my assistants doing whatever they do be it digging or carrying with them.

Ato Wäldu has the human essence of free will. He wants to keep this freedom at all costs. As stated earlier the poor members of the community amenable make themselves slaves, because they are hampered from exercising their own free will. On the contrary, Ato Wäldu prefers to be his own master and his own slave. His dereified consciousness makes him comprehend that self- realization is an important essence of a person as a social being. His enlightenment enables him to keep his freedom and coexist with the social system. The mention of his wealth, though, should be considered critically. Economic well-being is an important factor in the realization of one's social nature. In contrast with the serfs and servants, Ato Wäldu has sufficient time to satisfy his other human needs like knowledge, beauty and creativity. His thirst for admiring beauty of nature seems the driving force that compels him to live in the countryside. Consequently, he treats his subordinates like human beings. He even calls his servants 'my assistants'. He does not put himself higher in social

strata. Ato Wäldu expresses himself through manual work with his assistants. The division of labour that dehumanizes the labourers has no place with him. Though his outlook of the world deviates from the dominant view of the community, he does not publicly teach change. This way he integrates with society, without alienating from it, unlike Gudu Kasa who strives to change the outlook of his community.

The other person who has similar world view is the judge Ato T'፲so . Unlike Ato Wäldu, Ato T'፲so is not the member of the country folks. However, he acts in compliance with the custom of the rural society. Ato T'፲so is free from the snare of reification because he perceives of the social system as man-made. Following is how he reveals his perspective:

... ዓለምን የያዛት አብዛኛው የምታምንበት ነገር ከሰው የመነጨ በመሆኑ ታምናለህ? ማለቴ የምናምንበት አብዛኛው ነገር ራሳችን የፈጠርነው አይመስልህም ...? (ገጽ: 253)

Do you believe that most of the things that influence the world as a belief has generated from man? I mean don't you think most of the things we believe in are our own creations?

The above assertion exhibits a credence in the dynamic nature of human beings. It is the ideas of individuals that become institutionalized and emerged as rules. Concepts like the meaning of human life, human nature and good and evil, before taking their existing meanings begin as thoughts in individuals' minds. Therefore, Ato T'፲so is cognizant of man's servitude to the rules and regulations that are created by man himself/herself. If this is the case, what helps systems of thoughts take root is the congregate agreement of a particular society.

However, the judge does not speak of change. Even though the social practices are man-made he seems to approve of them. His position resembles that of Ato Wäldu in terms of conforming to the social convention. Ato T'፲so praises those social practices he considers

good and condemns those he considers bad. As to the social convention of inequality, he does not discuss. In fact, he appears to support the alienation of man from man based on power.

He states:

... የሥልጣንና የባላይነት ልማድ አለን፡፡- ምን ማለት ነው እንግዲህ ሥልጣንን የማክበርና በላይነትን የመታዘዝ ልማድ አለን ማለት ነው (ገጽ : 73)

We have a culture of authority and superiority. What this means is that we have the culture of showing respect to authority and submitting and showing obedience to superiors.

As we have discussed thoroughly, the social relation that is based on classes bisect people in two. Ato T'፲so explains of the habit of surrendering to the power of the upper class as a good tradition. In fact, what assists the powerful to degrade poor people is this custom of accepting the authority of dehumanizers. Theoretically, the powerful has the duty to safeguard the rights of their subordinates. However, the majority of the upper class consider their power inherent and look down upon the poor justifiably. The practice of obeying authority takes root deeply, hence considered natural. Ato T'፲so, despite his awareness of the artificiality of the convention, consents to it. He wants to be guided by the customs the majority approves as normal. His conformation is not limited to social customs. He also approves the power of religion over the masses.

As explained earlier, religion stupefies the people not to concentrate on the present life. If the people accept dehumanization and degradation as the order of the world, there will be no violence. However, if people start to realize their alienation, the system becomes disrupted and people begin to express their discord. What Ato T'፲so presents as a solution against such action reads as follows:

... በሕዝቡ ዘንድ አለ ብለን የምንኮራበት ፈሪህ እግዚአብሔር እንዳይጠፋ ቤተ-እግዚአብሔር የምትጠነክርበትን መንገድ መሻቱ ነው (ገጽ : 264)

We have to look for means of keeping the fear of God prevailing among people that we are proud of from perishing and we have to look for ways of strengthening the house of God.

As long as the house of God represented by its priests continues to preach the status quo allying with the powerful, religion cannot be a solution to social evils. The facts show that religious interpreters are in favour of alienation of man from man. Therefore, Ato T'፲so supports reification of the people through religion, even if he grasps the system consciously.

Both Ato Wäldu and Ato T'፲so prefer to comply with the social system. They do not preach human equality, rather they encourage others to abide by the social rules. Both people transcend self-alienation, but do not move to take measures against human alienation. Their personal convictions alone meant almost nothing because abolishing human alienation requires a unified act of the community with people like the two above. However, we find another person who ardently preach social and cultural change. This person is Adäfr፲s who is a representative of the education and its structure. In the next section attempt is made to elaborate how he confronts the concept of alienation.

4.3 Education and Alienation in *Adäfr፲s*

Every society has its own system of education. The quest for knowledge is an inherent quality of human beings. However, the focus of this present discussion is not examining the system of education in general, rather it is aimed at revealing how the general system of education that we find in *Adäfr፲s* , moulds the consciousness of its members towards human relations. It is to be recalled that the society in *Adäfr፲s* exhibits a religiously reified consciousness. It is on this world view that Adäfr፲s tries to impose his erudite ideas. Basically, what he wants to preach is a change of the social system. The kind of change he advocates though is mainly theoretical. The following is how he explains his position:

... ዩኒቨርሲቲ የገባሁት የተጻፈን ለማስተጋባት አይምስልሁ.. የኘሮብሌጥችን መነሻ ከሥራቸው አያጠናሁ መልስ ለማግኘት ነው። (ገጽ: 56)

Don't think that I joined the university to absorb and reverberate what has been written... I joined it to study problems and their root causes in order to find solutions.

Adäfr̥is seems to acknowledge that identifying the roots of problems and finding solutions is the task of the educated elite. Nevertheless, his way of propagating change does not consider that he is dealing with people whose consciousness is deeply moulded by the customs and beliefs of the society. For instance, the people he talks to at the court house concentrate on their immediate problems. They listen to whatever he says, because they take him as an authority. What he preaches makes him alienate from them because both have different consciousness. For instance, let us discuss his theory of the unconscious, which he presents ambiguously. He talks of the unconscious as a social phenomenon, when he begins his speech. He seems to support the Marxian view that states of consciousness as a product of a particular practice of life in a given society. This means that he is telling them the role their formed consciousness plays in the way they view the world. But his listeners do not even know the word he uses to explain his theory. Contrary to the previous quoted statement, what he does is not identifying and solving their problems but imposing his ambiguous notion. Since what he preaches to them has no connection with their current cause, they respond to his views based on their retained knowledge. This appears unacceptable to Adäfr̥is , hence he states:

... ጭራሽ የምለውን ፈጽሞ አይሰሙኝም፤ ደንቆሮ ናቸው ወይም አይገባቸውም፤ እኔ ስለ ግብርና ሳወራ እነሱ የሚያወሩት ስለ ብሩታይት ነው። (ገጽ: 43)

They never listen to what I say. They are idiots or they don't understand. When I talk about agriculture, they talk about Brutayt. [A legendary girl saved by the saints from the mouth of a certain serpent]

This shows that his education does not enable Adäfr̥is to consider how reified consciousness views the world. Therefore, his education instead of bridging the gap between him and the society, serves as an alienating instrument. As explained previously, Adäfr̥is does not present comprehensible theory of the unconscious. This is seen with his discussion of the concept with Bälay for the second time. This time he presents the unconscious as an inherent

part of a human being. His lack of clarity represents the failure of his education. As a rule, education plays a vital role in dereifying the consciousness of the mass. Regarding this Meszaros (1975: 289-290) has the following to say "... Thus the positive transcendence of alienation is, in the last analysis, an educational task, requiring a radical "cultural revolution" for its realization." Contrary to Meszaros's assertion Adäfr̥is could not perform his 'educational task' because his education does not teach him how to surpass human alienation. Of course, he wages war on the culture and tries to revolutionize it. However, his approach lacks understanding of the social and thought systems of the community.

Adäfr̥is is ambitious. He assumes that people change their ways because he shows them a better course. The previously discussed conformists Ato Wäldu and Ato T'̥iso repeatedly tell him that his mere preaching does not alter a thing. The society that Adäfr̥is strives to reform accepts the alienation of man from man. This creates difficulty to eliminate the belief in inequality of human beings. What might alter this outlook as Ato Wäldu expounds below to Adäfr̥is is:

... ሰው በእግዚአብሔር አምሳል ስለተፈጠረ በፈጣሪው ፊት እኩል ነውና የእኩልነቱን ሁኔታ ሃይማኖቱን አስታኮ ካስተማሩት እንደ አዲስ ግንጥል ጌጥ ስለማይቆጥረው ይቀበሉው ይሆናል::.... (ገጽ: 153)

Since man has been created in the image of God and he is equal in front of Him, if this equality is taught to man by relating it to his religion, then he will not see it as something superficial but may accept it.

Ato Wäldu shows his familiarity with the rules and regulations of the community, unlike Adäfr̥is who aspires to make cultural revolution on baseless ground. What the people need is altering their 'false consciousness'. This change calls for a strong ideological institution. Since the society perceives that no human power assumes authority above the supernatural, it seems impossible to reform the social relations. Ato Wäldu himself doubts the possibility of changing the communities deepened credence through a different religious teaching.

As discussed earlier, Adäfr̥is's views are mainly theoretical. He disapproves of any social custom that he regards backward. He wants to abolish the system that he believes the anti-thesis of development. Ato Wäldu talks of Adäfr̥is and his fellows negatively, by calling them obstinate. This is so because for Adäfr̥is he is the only one who possesses the truth. What he presents as a driving force of his conduct is the system of education as stated below:

... የትምህርታችን ይዞታ እንደሁ እንዲያ ያረገን? አይታወቅምኮ... (ገጽ: 212)

Could it be the content of our education that made us that way? It is not known.

One can observe from this statement the speaker's lack of confidence. Being stubborn is not a desired quality, from a student like Adäfr̥is . However, by way of avoiding responsibility for his own behavior, he attributes responsibility to the educational system. His lack of confidence and fear of responsibility by themselves reveal the deterioration of the academic network.

The education that Adäfr̥is is given could not bring “positive transcendence of alienation” because it does not aim at the betterment of human relationships. Instead of encouraging the sociality of man, the educational system upholds the division of humanity. The following is how the people consider others who obtain ‘western’ education :

... ለምሳሌ ወላጆችን የመድፈር፣ ሃይማኖትን የማፍረስ፣ ሥልጣንን የመናቅ ሁኔታዎች ይታይባችኋል ይሏችኋል ከቤተሰቦቻቸው ራቁ አጉል የገለልተኝነት መንፈስና ኑሮ ፈጠሩ ይሏችኋል፡፡... ብዙ ጊዜ በማይቆዩ ክልዩ ልዩ ምዕራብና ምስራቅ ሀገሮች በተጠራቀሙ መምህራን ስለሚመሩ፣ ውጤታቸው የማያንን ሆነ እንደ እስከት ይለዋወጣሉ፣ ቋሚ ሐሳብ የላቸውም፣ ጎደሎ ስብእና ነው መደምደሚያቸው ይሏችኋል.. (ገጽ: 231)

They say that you show disobedience to your parents, you try to destroy religion, and you look down upon authority... They also say that you keep aloof from your family and create a spirit and life of being alienated. Since you are led by temporarily staying teachers coming from the West and the East your end result is said to be unattractive. They also say that you keep changing like the chameleon and have no consistent outlook and hence you end up with an incomplete personality.

As the above quotation exposes, the system of education that Adäfr̥is reflects does not aim at solving problems of human relations by integrating with it. Since, the system is uni-

dimensional, it upholds the thinking that is given by different ‘foreign’ teachers. This situation brings forth a crisis of identity. This is so because when one is taught to denounce his way of living by imagining an ideal place the result is alienation from one’s self. In fact, Adäfr̥is does not examine the social relations of the society and he does not learn how to make what he preaches practical. What is more, instead of trying to improve the human relations of his own society, he strives to reach at ‘western’ civilization. In short, his view can be stated as educational utopia. Since the educated elite considers himself/herself superior to the illiterate masses, by way of showing this phenomenon he/she creates an ivory tower. Hence, instead of contributing in the dereification process of the consciousness of the people the education system aggravates the alienation of man from man. Consequently, the educated elite regards his/her community strange, the society in its turn views such people as outcasts.

Education could further serve as an alienating instrument by eliminating one’s identity. The system of education that we find in *Adäfr̥is* teaches the supremacy of foreign languages especially English over the indigenous ones. Adäfr̥is seems to recognize how one’s identity could be lost through language when he says:

... በእንግሊዝኛ ለመግለጽ የሚያስቸግር ኢትዮጵያዊ ሐሳብ- በእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ የማይገለጽና የሌለ ማንኛውም ኢትዮጵያዊ ባህል ሁሉ ዋጋ እንደሌለው ተቆጠረ እንጂ- እንጀራውን 'ብሬድ' ወጡን 'ሱፕ' ጠይሙን 'ብላክ' ጥቁሩን 'ኔግሮ' እንዲሉ ተገደዱይ ምን አለፋህ ብቻ ... የኢትዮጵያውያንን ስብእና አጥፍተው የፈረንጁን ስብእና ተኩብት ነው የምልህ ... (ገጽ: 295)

Ethiopian view difficult to be expressed in English, an Ethiopian culture not known in English and difficult to explain in English were all considered to be useless. They were forced to take 'Enjära' as bread 'Wät' as soup, the moderately colored as black and the black as Negro. All in all, they discarded the Ethiopian personality and exchanged it for the white man's personality.

What Adäfr̥is talks about in short is a reified consciousness through education. As we have already mentioned the dominant ideological structure exercises tremendous power in the shaping of the consciousness of its subjects. What the education system does to its recipient

is similar. Since the education system praises the use of the English language, what it does is forcing people to disregard theirs. Rejecting one's own medium of communication implies rejecting the community that uses it. This is so because "... language is an institution, a way in which men stand in relation to one another...." (Turner:1968:17). If one is taught to disregard his/her language and community, then he/she strives to be the person that is identified with the 'superior' language. Hence, an Ethiopian who is inculcated in such a way aspires to be a European or an American. Education is seen as the domain of the English language. Therefore, being educated requires a thorough knowledge of this language. As Turner explains language serves as an instrument of relationship in a given community. However, if the educated elite sticks to his/her English to impart his/her messages, his/her alienation from the masses becomes intense. The situation causes the identity crisis of the educated elite which again exposes the crisis of the educational system. This crisis becomes profound when the educated elite tries to be integrated in the community.

Adäfr̥is reflects the above kind of personality when he discusses with Abba Yohan̥is. While the priest tries to tell him about a local church that is believed to be leaning, he talks about 'the leaning tower of Pizza' found in Italy. This shows that the educated elite perceives of knowledge in the framework of the education system that is designed to eliminate local identity.

The previously mentioned conformists, Ato T'̥iso and Ato Wäldu reflectively grasp the alienating effect of the education system. They comprehend that the education aims at guiding the life of the society in Western customs. This custom does not help to increase the prosperity of the country. Instead, it aims at increasing government officials who are said to be skilled based on some kind of paper examinations. Since this system chooses the town as a seat of learning, it separates the rural community. For the above mentioned people, the

question of identity is essential. Though they conform to the convention of the society they are cognizant of the effect the system brings. Ato T'፲iso expresses his view as follows:

... ዘመናዊውን ሥልጣኔ ለመቀበል መጀመሪያ መቀበያ ሰብእናችንን እናጠንክር ነው የምለው .. ባህላችንን- ልማዳችንን፣ ወጋችንን፣ ቅርሳችንን እንመርምር .. መርምረን ያገኘነውን ይዘን ያላገኘነውን እንፈልግ- አለዚያ ነፍስ እንደተለየችው ሥጋ ሆነን ብንቀርብ በመዘውር የሚሄድ ሰብእና ነው የምናተርፈው ነው የምንለው.... (ገጽ: 230)

What we are saying is in order to accept modern civilization first we need to strengthen our own personality upon which to receive. We need to look into our culture, tradition, customs, norms and artifacts-then we hold what we have found through investigation and look for what we did not get. Otherwise, if we come close like a body without soul then what we get is a personality propelled by a machine.

Ato T'፲iso consciously elaborates the need to realize one's humanity. One has to build his/her own personality freely within the framework of human possibilities. This implies examining human relationships and abolishing dehumanization. According to Ato T'፲iso one has to examine his/her own way of existence before trying to receive another. Otherwise one will lose his/her identity and becomes like a machine that rotates whenever the wind comes.

A person who realizes the essence of humanity comprehensibly does not suffer from identity crisis. This assertion agrees with the following statement of F.T. Mikahailov (1980:200) which reads; “Surely, then, to be a human being merely means being able to distinguish one's knowledge from the object of knowledge, oneself from those around one and from the external world in general and of course oneself as a person from one's own abilities and actions.”

In a society whose consciousness is reified, the above kind of self-realization seems almost impossible. Moreover, the society that we find in *Adäfr፲is* is hampered from exercising its free will. Even teachers are not allowed to teach what they believe is true. Again it is Ato T'፲iso who explains this point:

... አስተማሪዎች መንግሥት የቀጠራቸው ናቸው:: ራሳቸው በግል የሚያምኑበትን ሳይሆን መንግሥቱ የሚያምንበትን ማስተማር ነው ግዴታቸው::.... (ገጽ : 233)

Teachers are employees of the government. They are obliged to teach what the government believes in, and not what they themselves believe in .

What the above quotation implies is that the education system serves the interests of the government. Since the government needs submissive subjects the education should fulfill the government's need. What Ato T'iso says about the education system agrees with Meszaros's (1976:303) two main functions of education in a capitalist society, they are: "(1) the production of the skills necessary to running the economy and (2) the formation of cadres, and the elaboration of the methods of political control". If instructors are forced to parrot the beliefs of the state they are prohibited from exercising their freedom of speech. As we can observe, the skills that one obtains from education do not enable him/her to treat human beings equally. Instead it moulds one's consciousness towards using one's skill for the existence of the status quo. In short, the system of education produces people who are commercial minded and who are not conscious of their consciousness.

As one can see from the discussion on *Adäfrıs* the alienation concept that is proposed by Marx serves to elaborate many aspects of human relationship. The explanation given here is hoped to throw light on the comprehension of human condition in a society whose members are divided. In the coming chapter attempt will be made to examine critically the human condition in *Kadmas Bašagär*.

CHAPTER V

Aspects of Alienation in *Kadmas Bašagär*

5.1 Alienation of Man from Man

The human relationship that we come across in *Kadmas Bašagär*, as observed in the previously discussed books, is based on the separation of man from man in various ways. The first notion we are going to examine is the 'biologising' of human interaction that upholds the supremacy of 'bone' and 'blood' in one's social status. The proponents of this outlook are W/o Bafäna and Ato Abatä. As explained in the cases of *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir* and *Adäfris* the driving force behind this 'biologising' of human relations is reified consciousness. Ato Abatä talks of this kind of consciousness when discussing his world view with Abärä. He states:

ባህላችንንና አስተሳሰባችንን አታውቀውማ። (ገጽ: 114)

You don't know our culture and our point of view.

The way Ato Abatä and W/o Bafäna perceive reality differs from that of Abärä. Abärä, to a certain extent has tried to denounce the culture and thought system of his folks. However, what is stressed in the above statement is how Ato Abatä exposes his view on human relationship in relation to his limited perspective.

For Ato Abatä the descent of human beings can be categorized into three. The first group traces its descent from the 'purest' of humanity, which Ato Abatä and his relative belong to.

By confirming this point, he says, of his brother the following:

... ማንነቱን እንዴት አያውቅም! የጀግናው የፊታውራሪ ወርቁ ባንተይርጉ ልጅ ነው። ዘራቸው እንደወርቅ የጠራ በሰጋስነታቸውና በሀይማኖታቸው ጽኑነት ሀገር ያወቃቸው ታላቅ ሰው ነበሩ። (ገጽ :23)

... How come he does not know himself? He is the son of Fitawrari Wäрку Bantyrግu, the hero. His father was a great man known to every body for his commitment to his religion and for his generosity and for descending from an ancestry as pure as gold.

As the quotation reveals the type of people who belong to the ‘purest’ group have well known names. These names affirm their unique and human status in the community. What is more, the purity of this line of descent is analogous with the purity of gold. The qualities of this descent are mightiness, generosity and religious devotion. Hence, for Ato Abatä a person who can trace his/her genealogy from this group knows his/her role in society. In other words, the person does not suffer from identity crisis because his/her social position is well defined.

The other group of people have no descent at all. This attitude is well expressed by W/o Bafäna as follows:

... የጨዋ ልጅ አልቆ ቀን ዘራሽ የበቀለባት ዘመን ... አዲስ አበባ እንዲህ የዘረብሽ ጉሮኖ ሆና ትቅር?» እያሉ እንባቸውን በተጨማሪዱት ጉንጮቻቸው ላይ ያወርዱት ጀመር-እንደወትሮአቸው። (ገጽ: 57)

A period whereby the sons of the gentlefolk disappeared only to be replaced by upstarts of the day. Shall Addis Abäba become such a dungeon filled with the insignificant base. Her tears beginto flow down her wrinkled cheeks as usual.

For both Ato Abatä and W/o Bafäna individuals are not created equal. As there are the purest pedigrees, so are the dregs of humanity who have no traceable family tree at all. W/o Bafäna manifests her bitterness on the seemingly changing human relationship. According to her, the city becomes a dwelling place for people who cannot trace their genealogy from the perfect family tree. For her they simply sprout out of nowhere. Consequently, this kind of people should not be treated in the same manner with those who belong to the ‘golden’ descent. An example of this group, according to Ato Abatä is Haylämaryam. He talks of Haylämaryam as a person who has no family origin, hence lacks the qualities of a human being.

The third group of people have lineage, but it is a crippled one. In fact, these group of people are almost identical with those who have no descent at all. However, the way Ato Abatä

speaks of Haylämaryam as a person without a family origin, exhibits a slight modification from the manner he talks of Lulit. He states:

**በዘርም ሆነ ባስተዳደግ እኩያህ አይደለችም። አጥንተ ሰባራ መሆኗን ሰምቻለሁ።
(ገጽ: 113)**

She is not on a par with you neither by birth nor in upbringing. I have heard that she is from a low social class.

Here, Ato Abatä appears to admit that Lulit can trace her ancestry, but hers is not considered human. This is so because the qualities that make Abärra human are not her attributes. For both Ato Abatä and W/o Bafäna human relationship should be based on this awareness. Those who belong to the pure progeny should stay in their circles. This includes shunning every relationship with other groups of people. This concern for equality of social position and descent forces W/o Bafäna to say:

ልጄ አጥንቷ ጥሩ የሆነ ሚስት አግብተህ የልጅ ልጄን ስሜ አያት ተብዬ እንድሞት ብታደርገኝ ምናለበት? (ገጽ: 59-60)

My son, why don't you marry a girl from a notable family and let me be able to kiss my grand child, and then be called a grandmother and die

The consciousness of W/o Bafäna and Ato Abatä is moulded by the ‘biologising’ of human relations. The issues of ‘bone’ and ‘blood’ are important in their social lives. W/o Bafäna does not want to see her offspring contaminated and spoiled by an association with the ‘crippled descent’, as a result she begs her son to marry a woman who traces her ancestry from a noble birth. The human alienation that is exhibited in *Kadmas Bašagär* is not limited to the ‘biologising’ of social relations. There is also another social system that considers a woman as prey and servant to man’s pleasure, hence reveals a different aspect of alienation.

The human alienation that regards a woman as an object is best manifested through prostitution. This interaction of people is based on ‘thing-ification’ which is a relationship among things. Concerning this kind of relationship, Axelos (1976:116) states: “...

Prostitution is based on a commercial relationship that makes the one who prostitutes even more alienated and alienating than the one who is prostituted". As this assertion explains it is money that determines the human interaction, thus a woman becomes a commodity that one buys and uses. Let us see how this is revealed in the text:

... አበራ ዳሌዋ ሰፋ ብሎ የታየችውንና ሲገባ እንደሌሎቹ ወክክ ያላለችለትን ሴት መርጦ « ተግደርዳሪ ጦም አዳራ...» እያለ አጅዋን ይዞ እየገጠተታት ወደ ውስጥ ገባ። ሌሎቹ በቅናት አይን ቆዳዋን ገፈፏት።... (ገጽ: 46)

Abärra saw and selected the one with broad hips the one who did not show any interest towards him. He held her hand and dragged her inside saying "one who pretends to have eaten, will pass the night without food..." The rest of the women peeled her skin with their envious eyes.

When Abärra enters the room the first thing he does is choose an object that he thinks is going to satisfy his lust. Since he has no human interest on his object of pleasure, the woman he wants to seduce is selected by the width of her hips, just like any other commodity. The quality of this commodity he chooses is also a sense of humanity in relation to others, since she does not present herself to be used out rightly. Nevertheless it is his money that gives him the right to treat his object in any way he likes. As a result, he drags her in, like an entity that has no free will other than that of its master. This situation reveals the dehumanization of a fellow person. When a relationship is based on a human basis, love is exchanged only for love. However, in Abärra's situation he does not even see the woman in his life. She is in fact not a human being, but a sexual object, since he comes to her only for the material act of semen secretion. The woman on her part seems to accept her dehumanized situation as normal. The jealousy of the other women throws light on the way she and her colleagues perceive their condition. Their outlook is the demonstration of their reified consciousness, regarding the relationship of man and woman. Similar to the view of Abärra, Haylämaryam says of them:

ለለውጥ ያህል ትናንት ከሸርሙጣ ጋር አላደርኩም። ጠረናቸው እየሰለቸኝ ሄዷል። (ገጽ: 15)

Just for a change I did not pass the previous night with a harlot. Their smell has begun boring me.

Haylāmaryam expresses of prostitutes as if they are all one. For him, these women have no individual essences because they are synonymous with what they do for living. In other words, they are the prostitution itself. It should be noted here that it is those persons who take part in the act that degrade and regard the women profane.

As Axelos pointed out earlier, the most alienated and alienating are those people who prostitute rather than those who are prostituted. This is so because these persons refuse the humanity of others. An individual who rejects the human essence of another does not comprehend what the meaning of human relationship is. Consequently, this kind of person is alienated from him/her self and alienating others by his/her practices. However, when this kind of person possesses wealth, it is easy for him/her to dehumanize others for his/her selfish interests. The power of money compels the prostitutes to remain in their condition, since no one can survive without its authority. Therefore, the prostitutes become alienated from their communal nature and continue to be sexual commodities. Accepting the institution of prostitution and participating in its continuation expose the deformity of one's consciousness. Hence, a person who is both an actor and initiator of prostitution exhibits his/her alienation from his/her social nature. The prostitutes are not the only members of the society who are the victims of the separation of man from man. We also come across prisoners who are deprived of their human essence as will be examined below.

Theoretically, a prison is believed to be an institution that aims at correcting people who are regarded as causes of social evils. However, what one observes in this establishment is total depersonalization. It is a place where people alienate from themselves by acting contrary to

their human nature. The following is the condition of a certain jail that we come across in

Kadmas Bašagür

... በወህኒ ቤቱ መኝታ ቤት ውስጥ ያለው ከሩቅ የሚገለጫው የሰገራ ግማት፤ የመኝታ ቦታ ጥበትና ሰው ሆኖ መፈጠርን የሚያስጠላው አሰቃቂ ትፍግፍግ፤ ለረጅም ጊዜ ውሀ ነክቶት የማያውቀው የሰው ገላ ክርፋት፤ የሸራና የዝናብ ጫማዎች ጥምባት፤ ከደረቅ ጥቁር ዳቦና ከረጋ ጥቁር የሽሮ ዶኬ ሌላ እህል ረስቶ የከረመ የሰው ትንፋሽ ሽታ- አዎን፤....(ገጽ: 148-149)

The stench of faeces in the prison bed room, the narrow and over crowded sleeping place that make one hate life, the odor of human body denied of water for a long period, the pervasive stink of canvas shoes and boots, the bad odor of human breath that comes out of a mouth that has forgotten good food except for dry, dark bread and black baked cold sauce made of pea powder.

The above described prison reveals no human element. It seems a place where human beings are treated like dirt. The stench of a human waste, the overcrowded room, the suffocation, the stink of human body and shoes and the offensive smell of human breath manifest the total degradation of man. These people are treated even less than animals, hence they can be described as sub-humans. The structure of the prison is called a rehabilitation center while it operates as an instrument of dehumanization. The prisoners are alienated not only from themselves but also from ‘real’ human beings by a wire mesh which serves as an agent of separation. Their situation forces them to be detached from their human qualities. Abärä conceives of their state as follows:

ከህይወት መሰላል ስር መውደቅ የሰውን ይሉኝታ፤ ክብርና ከራት የቱን ያህል እንደሚገፍ ለመጀመሪያ ጊዜ የአይን ምስክር ሆኖ ስለተረዳው አዲስ አይነት ፍርሀት አደረበት፡፡.... (ገጽ: 151)

Being an eye witness and coming to an understanding of how far falling under the ladder of life reaps off human decency, honour and pride for the first time, he felt a new sort of fear.

The relationship that is seen among the prisoners exhibits a total lack of respect for another. Because of the inhuman treatment they witness everyday, the concepts of free will, privacy, dignity, esteem and the like are dispossessed of the inmates. In short, they behave as objects which are insensitive for everything that happens around them. As a result, whatever they do,

they do it without interest and commitment . This again manifests, the convicts alienation from their social nature. We can further examine the alienation of these prisoners by taking a close look at the nature of their work. We read:

እስረኞቹ የሚሰሩት ስራ ምንም ጠብ የሚል ነገር የለውም። ምክንያቱም፤ የሚቆፍሩት መሬት ማገጸኗን ነፍጋቸው እነሱም ሀይላቸውንና ልባቸውን ስላልሰጧት ነው። እሷ የነርሱ፤ እነርሱ የሷ አካል አይደሉም።..... (ገጽ: 185)

Whatever the prisoners did was of no avail. The reason for this is that the ground that they dug did not offer them her power and they themselves did not give her their energy and their heart. Neither was she theirs, nor were they part of her.

The activity of human beings should be conscious and free, because fundamentally, work is an essential expression of one’s life. The history of human societies is very much connected with production that is aimed at satisfying one’s material needs. Work allows people to survive. The work that the prisoners do, however, does not allow them to express themselves. Basically, their labour is not a free and conscious activity, rather it is something which is imposed on the workers without their own will. They have no need to satisfy from their activity because the relationship between them and the work is non existent. Since the prisoners have no connection with their activities, there is nothing that comes out as the fruit of their labour. The convicts are alienated from their labour because they do not consider toiling on the land as their means of livelihood. For production to be the essence of human beings, it should be purposive. However, as long as the prisoners are reduced to the level of a machine, their labour is alienated from both its product and labourer.

The state of the prisoners as we have examined manifests the dehumanization of the institution. The convict labour that is imposed on them aggravates their alienation instead of providing purposive activity. All in all, what the ‘biologising’ of human relations, the state of the prostitutes and the condition of the prisoners reveal is the way the social system is structured on the basis of the alienation of man from man. However, there are individuals

who believe themselves to be different on the ground of their reasoning ability. This point takes us to the discussion of intellectual alienation which is the next topic of discussion.

5.2 Intellectual Alienation

The people who are considered intellectuals in this section are people with first and second degrees. These people who are going to be examined, have studied abroad, hence developed a different view of the world compared to the laity whose consciousness is reified. Intellectuals critically question the social institutions and advocate change. Consequently, conflicting positions are established between western educated intellectuals and the ordinary people, who value their cultural heritages. The intellectuals refuse to integrate with their communities accepted way of life. As a result, their code of conduct makes them alienate from other people. They cannot identify themselves with the people, even though they seem to live in harmony with the rules and regulations of the community. We consider the case of Haylämaryam here, by scrutinizing the following statement.

... ስለ ራሱ የሚደብቀው ነገር የለም። ስለ ሰው ሲናገርም ፊት ለፊት ነው። ታዲያ የሚያውቁት ኢትዮጵያውያን ከሩቅ ይሸሹታል። ሌሎች ባጋጣሚ ምክንያት የተዋወቁት ደግሞ ይህ ሰው እብድ ነው እንዴ በማለት ይዘባቡቱበታል። ከቂል የሚቆጥሩትም አሉ። (ገጽ፡ 15)

He has nothing to hide about himself. He was straight forward while talking about other men. Hence, Ethiopians who knew him shied away from him. Others who happened to know him casually asked and wondered if he was a lunatic. There are also some who considered him a fool.

The behavior of Haylämaryam violates the moral code of the society. He frankly explains about himself and talks about others candidly. This kind of conduct is not a desirable quality from a ‘cultured’ member of the society. Some consider his deviation as a case of a psychopath, others consider him a fool. This is so because he refuses to comply with the moral code that the majority upholds. As a result his fellow countrymen alienate him. It should be noticed that it is the Ethiopians who recognize his personality that estrange him.

This situation presupposes that his outlook is regarded deviant in a limited context. Haylämaryam pursues higher education in a different social setting, hence his consciousness is not reified as those of his fellow country men. There seems to be another community that treats people like Haylämaryam with due respect by giving value to their world view. However, Haylämaryam lives in a community that abhors intellectuals who critically question its different social institutions. Consequently, he prefers to shun all relationship with people around him and confines to his own affairs. His relationship is with inanimate objects as the following statement exposes:

... የተቀጣጣለ ሲጃራ፤ የተዘረጋ መጽሐፍና አንድ ብርጭቆ ውስኪ የልብ ጓደኞቹ ናቸው፤ ከነርሱ ጋር ስሆን እዝናናለሁ፤ ይላል አዘውትሮ። (ገጽ: 17)

A lighted cigarette, an open book and a glass of whisky are my best friends; when I am with them I relax. He frequently said.

The above quotation reveals Haylämaryam's disappointment with human relations. He does not try to alter the perspective of his society by preaching change. The more his people alienate him, the more he distances himself from them. Hence, what gives meaning to his life appears to be a cigarette, a book and a glass of whisky. The phrase 'my best friends' elaborates how detached he is from the human race. As a result, he seems to spend almost all of his time with them than trying to socialize. His closeness to books shapes the way he sees himself in relation to the world. Hence, even if his perspective is multi-dimensional, he is inward looking. Since he boldly expresses his view he seems to accept his alienation. The following is what he states regarding this point.

... እኔም ከዚህ አይነቱ ባህል ውጭ ነኝ። የማስበውንና የሚሰማኝን ከመግለጥ ልቆጠብ አልችልም። ይህን ለማድረግ ደሞ ወኔ ያስፈልጋል።... (ገጽ: 36)

I am outside of such culture. I cannot refrain myself from expressing what I think and what I feel. To do this courage is required.

Haylämaryam knows that his view is rejected by the majority, however, he considers himself a hero, since raising questions which no one else dares to ask calls for courage and

determination. This quality, as Haylāmaryam describes, makes one a dignified person. This seems the reason he calls Abārra who conforms to the rules and regulations of his society, as an ordinary person as follows:

... ወኔ የለህም። ግን አልፈርድብህም። ለምን? ተራ ሰው ነህ። ተራ ሰው ደኞ ካካባቢው ጋር መመሳሰል አለበት። ... (ገጽ: 127)

You don't have a gut. But I don't blame you. Why? Because you are a common person and a common person needs to be similar with his surrounding.

The ordinary people Haylāmaryam talks about, have a reified consciousness as mentioned earlier. Consequently, the social relationship that is based on confirming to the status quo is considered legitimate. Nevertheless, people like Abārra and Haylāmaryam obtain education that helps them see the artificial rules that exercise power over their creators. This awareness differentiates them from the laity. In other words, they are not ordinary people. However, intellectuals like Abārra follow the course of the common people, because according to Haylāmaryam they are cowards. Their actions of conformation strengthen accepted social customs.

Intellectuals, for Hylāmaryam are superior to the crowd by virtue of their critical, creative and contemplative faculty of mind. Therefore, they have to show the society a different meaning of human existence. However, it is not the alienation of intellectuals from their society that takes prominence in *Kadmas Bašagär* but their alienation from themselves. Both Abārra and Haylāmaryam feel that they are acting contrary to their true selves. The following quotation shows how Haylāmaryam discloses their situation.

... እኛ ግን የምንፈልገውን አናውቅም ... ፍለጋ ላይ ነን። የኑሮውን ህሉውና ባወቀና ባላወቀ ሰው መሀል መግባባት ሊኖር አይችልም... እኛ ግን በምንም ነገር አናምንም። እምነት የለንም... ራሳችንን፣ ማንነታችንን ስለማናውቅ። በራሳችን ላይ እንኳን እምነት ቢኖረን ምናለበት? ስለራሳችን የውነቱን ብናውቅ! ለዝግብ ራሳችን እንኳን ታማኝ ብንሆን... (ገጽ: 129)

But we don't know what we want... we are on search. There can't be an agreement between one who knows the basis of his life and another one who doesn't. However, we do not believe in anything. We have no faith because we don't know about the what of ourselves. Why don't we at least have faith in ourselves? If we only knew the truth about ourselves, and be faithful to ourselves...."

According to the above cited text both Abärä and Haylämaryam do not know the purpose of their existence. They long for finding the essence of their lives through their intellect. However, since they do not get the meaning of their lives they become critical and skeptical. Both are not sure about their convictions, hence do not know the truth about themselves. In short, they are alienated from themselves by acting self-destructively. What takes precedence in the thoughts of Abärä and Haylämaryam is the need to express their true essence. The desire to realize the crux of self is the concern of Abärä from the beginning. Abärä feels that he is hampered from exercising his free will and that is why he compares the freedom of a certain fly with his inability from doing whatever he wants to do freely. (*Kadmas Bašagär*, p. 6 -7) His imprisonment in a situation that does not allow self-fulfillment compels him to critically contemplate about his state. Since he is well educated, his perception of the world is very much connected with the education he received. However, he has doubts over his intellectual achievements. He reflects:

... የትምህርት ዓላማው እያንዳንዱ ሰው ራሱን፣ ማንነቱን፣ የተፈጥሮ ችሎታውን እንዲያውቅ ማድረግ ነበር። እኔ ግን ማን ነኝ? (ገጽ: 8)

The objective of education is to enable each individual to be aware of himself and to recognize his own natural potential. But who am I?

Abärä has faced identity crisis in terms of self-realization. For him the educational institution does not enable a certain individual to express him/herself complying with his/her natural bent. when one knows his/her place in the world, it could be said that he/she fulfils his/herself. However, acting contrary to one's essence leads to frustration that brings the alienation of self from its true identity. Similarly, Abärä suffers from self alienation by not fulfilling himself since he is not able to express himself in agreement with his inner desire.

His frustration pressures him to conform to the customs of his society. Unlike Haylämaryam he does not prefer to be alienated both from himself and other people. But the need for freedom haunts him. His ‘ordinary’ way of life does not bring him the meaning of humanity that he ardently seeks. As a result he wonders about it.

... መቼ ይሆን ነጻነት አግኝቼ የራሴን ፍላጎት ለመከተል የምጀምረው?... (ገጽ: 112)

When would be the time when I could secure my own freedom and start following my own free will?....

The above utterance of Abärra presupposes that there are obstacles to one’s self fulfillment. He seems to sacrifice his own needs for pleasing others. Though he has his own free will, he is not able to find ways to employ it within the framework of the social circumstances. He seems to overcome his self alienation in prison because he has got the opportunity to freely realize his true self. Hylämaryam also appears to recognize the social circumstances that impel one to act self-destructively. He states:

ስለ ችግርና ስለብቸኝነት ለመዝፈን ፍላጎት የለኝም። መጻፍ የምፈልገው ስለ አለም ውበትና ስለሰው ተፈጥሮ መሰረታዊ ጥሩነት፤ እንዲሁም ሰው በራሱ የራሱን ደህንነት እንዳያገኝ ስለሚያደናቅፉት ሁኔታዎችና አካባቢዎች ነው።... (ገጽ: 49)

I don't have the desire to sing about problem and loneliness. What I want to write is about the beauty of the world and man's basic natural goodness and what conditions and environment hinders man from obtaining his own safety.

Haylämaryam recognizes that human relationship deteriorates because of man-made principles. He seems to acknowledge the beauty of the world and the essential constructive nature of humanity. However, the structure of society hinders one from his/her innate self acknowledgment. Haylämaryam wants to philosophize and write about the constraints that make self alienation prevalent. Although he does not state what these constraints are the social circumstances that act as agents of one’s destruction of self seem to pervade his thought. In short, what he wants to depict is how society works against individual freedom of

choice. Hylāmaryam's engrossment in literary activities seems to be his way of overcoming both his self alienation and the alienation of himself from his community.

What we can observe from the intellectuals is how dereified consciousness confronts culture and society. Even though the society wants to shape its members according to its image, the intellectuals as we have observed refuse to enhance accepted systems of thought. Consequently, they cannot exercise their own free will within the framework of human possibilities. All in all, the aspects of alienation that we have examined in *Kadmas Bašagär* expose how human beings are constrained against their will and interest by the social structure of the society they live in.

Conclusion

Any production of literature, as a manifestation of human interaction, can be effectively examined from the perspective of any theory that focuses on human nature and social relationship. True, every theory develops within a limited context aiming at definite goals within the framework of restricted social situations. Marx's theory of alienation is no exception.

Even though Marx devotedly works to propose methods to abolish, annihilate and transcend alienation, what is attempted to achieve in this present study is not showing a way of overcoming alienation. Alienation is used in this paper as a descriptive concept that sheds light on the human relation that is left undescribed by previous researchers. Alienation as we have observed helps to examine the conditions of man in a society whose members are separated on the basis of 'false consciousness'. As a rule the prevalence of alienation is assumed to lead to violence and its subsequent change. This is the rationale that Marx sets out to propose a kind of system that helps to restore man to himself as a human being.

However, what one observes predominantly, from the analysis of alienation in the selected three novels is conformations of the status quo rather than movements for change. The societies that we find in all the three novels exhibit similar world views. Among the things that link all the selected literary works there are found the 'biologising' of human relationships and few people who are non conformists to the social rules. We can mention Fitawrari Mäšäša, W/o Asägaš and Ato Abatä along with his mother who believe in the roles of 'bone' and 'blood' in determining one's social status. The perspectives of these people as we have examined gain solid support by the institutionalized ideology. In *Fik'ir ĩskä Mäk'ab'ir* priests like Abba Mogäse interpret The Bible to help perpetuate the

separation of man from man. In *Adäfr̥is* we find Abba Addise explicate the word of God in support of human alienation . In *Kadmas Bašagär* we do not see priests elucidating The Book as in the other novels . However, there is an indication of the grip of religion in the way W/o Bafäna propounds her attitude.

The concept of reified consciousness controls the lives of the society in the three novels. This is the reason we come across different features of the alienation of man from man in all of them. In fact, the distinct social settings disclosed in the literary pieces direct to the examination of particular aspects of alienation . For instance, we read of modern education and its impacts only in *Adäfr̥is* and *Kadmas Bašagär*. Again , the type of education we talk about in *Adäfr̥is* differs from that of *Kadmas Bašagär* . Because of this, we observe aspects of alienation that are typical of each novel. For example, we have examined alienation from self in *F̥ik'ir̥ is̥kä Mäk'ab̥ir* that takes place due to outside impositions and loss of freedom. This concept resembles the intellectual alienation of *Kadmas Bašagär* in its essential nature. However, Bāzab̥ih and Säbläwängel are prohibited from materializing their biological and social natures. What their basic need is expressing their social and biological nature both by participating in the production of materials and procreation processes. In contrast, the intellectuals, Abärra and Haylämaryam concentrate on the purpose of their existence.

For them finding their true selves is realizing their innate potential for the good of mankind. The demand to participate in production of material goods and procreation for them are trivial activities that are attributes of the common people. This is so because the psyche of Bāzab̥ih and Säbläwängel is shaped within the structure of their society. Whereas the view of the intellectuals surpasses the framework of their community.

The education that forces Abärra and Haylämaryam to raise the issue of self-realization does not make Adäfr̥is to contemplate about the purpose of his existence. The knowledge that Adäfr̥is accumulates about the society focuses on their backward status. His aim is to criticize every way of living without analyzing the world view of the society. The education of Adäfr̥is manifests crisis because of its inability of bridging the gap between the community and the educated elite. As a result, it serves as an instrument of alienation from the society instead of teaching students to realize their potentials for the benefit of their community. It seems that the educated elites that are found in *Adäfr̥is* feel the alienation of themselves from their society necessary. There is an element of self alienation in their attitude because the education these elites obtain brings forth identity crisis. In short, the alienation from self that is revealed in the three novels is manifested in different forms.

The notion of dereified consciousness is also exhibited in the selected literary works. The main proponent of this world view in *F̥ik'ir̥ iskä Mäk'ab̥ir̥* is Gudu Kasa, who strives to preach change. His awareness of the artificiality of the social rules, however, alienates him. Consequently, he is unable to fulfill his dreams. Unlike Gudu Kasa, Abäjä Bälāw who rebels against the system of dehumanization, on the basis of his limited knowledge becomes successful through physical confrontation. He becomes victorious in dereifying the consciousness of some of the underprivileged members of his society. In contrast to the people mentioned above the persons in *Adäfr̥is* and *Kadmas Bašagär* seem to limit their knowledge to themselves. Even though Adäfr̥is tries to propagate change, his ideas are not based on in-depth understanding of the community. As a matter of fact, he is not a member of the society that he aspires to change. However, Ato T'iso who has a thorough knowledge of the social life, and Ato Wäldu who reflectively grasps the ways of his society do not see the need to dereify the consciousness of their people by teaching a new way of

perceiving human relationship. Similarly the intellectuals in *Kadmas Bašagär* seem to confine in their own search for the purpose of their existence rather than informing the community about their reified consciousness.

We observe a certain order that unifies the society of the three novels. We should notice that the factor that moulds the outlook of all the three societies is reified consciousness, that believes in the past, receives change as sordid and does not look to the future. In *Fik'ir iskä Mäk'abir*, we see a 'traditional' community whose world view is shaped after the religious system. Therefore, religion helps as a unifying element of the system that is based on human alienation. The need to change the view of the community is revealed through Gudu Kasa who obtained church education. When we come to *Adäfris* we witness no change regarding the outlook of the society. However, we notice difference because of the commencement of modern education. The introduction of modern education however, does not help to alleviate the human condition. Instead, what comes to the fore is identity crisis and the further separation of people through the formation of various modern institutions. The need to change the status quo comes through the member of the education system who does not even recognize the ways of the society. The education that is introduced in *Adäfris* appears to reach at its peak in *Kadmas Bašagär*. The community again does not change its perspectives. However, the education produces intellectuals who are confused of their social position and role. What takes priority for these people is not changing the lives of their fellow human beings but realizing their true selves. What this structure reveals is the different stages that the society reaches through time. What is more, we see no fundamental change in the human relationship. The changes that come due to modern education further introduce different aspects of alienation that play no role in the betterment of human interaction. The

attempt to shake the foundations of this structure as we have examined becomes futile, since the system is built on a rigid social consciousness.

The appropriation of Marx's thought of alienation is hoped to vividly describe the social interaction that is manifested in the three literary pieces. The social analysis that is undertaken in this study, as indicated in the first chapter is based on the texts themselves. This approach to the explication of the selected literary texts as we have observed exposes the structure and nature of various systems of thought that provide firm ground for the different aspects of alienation to actively operate in the lives of the represented people.

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