

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
AND LITERATURE
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)**



**ANALYSIS OF HEROIC RECITALS (*FUKKERA*)
OF NORTH GONDAR ZONE
WITH SPECIAL FOCUS
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**BY
ASSEFA ALEMU NEGA**

June 2009

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**BY
ASSFA ALEMU NEGA**

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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By
Assefa Alemu



Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Approval of board of examiners

Birhanu Dferra Birhanu Dferra _____
Advisor Signature Date

Birhanu Malleku [Signature] 29/06/09
Examiner Signature Date

Examiner Signature Date

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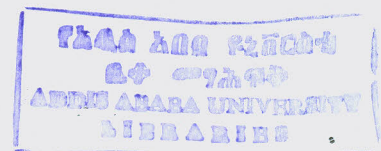


Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
Lists of appendices	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter one	
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	2
1.3 Objectives	2
1.3.1 General Objectives.....	2
1.3.2 Specific objectives	3
1.4 Significance of the study	3
1.5 Methods	4
1.5.1 Library Research.....	4
1.5.2 Field Research	4
Chapter Two	
Review of Related Literature.....	7
2.1. Concepts and Definition of Folklore	7
2.1.1. Oral Poetry	9
2.1.1.1. Heroic Recitals (<i>Fukkera</i>)	12
2.2. Review of Previous Studies Related to the Topic	14
Chapter Three	
Analysis of Heroic recitals.....	19
3.1. Occasions and functions of Heroic Recitals	19
3.1.1. Occasions of Heroic Recitals of <i>Tege</i> de and <i>Armačiho</i>	19

3.1.2. Functions of Heroic Recitals in Ṭegede and Armačiho	24
3.1.2.1. Preserve History	24
3.1.2.2. Inspiring the Society	29
3.1.2.3. Unifying the Society	33
3.1.2.4. Entertain the Society	38
3.2. Themes of Heroic Recitals (<i>Fukkera</i>) of Ṭegede and Armačiho Woredas	41
3.2.1. Theme of Patriotism	41
3.2.2. Themes of Heroism.....	44
3.2.2.1. Heroism in War and Hunting.....	45
3.2.2.2 Heroism in Work	50
3.2.3. Theme of Generosity	53
3.2.4. Theme of Danger.	56

Chapter Four

Conclusion	60
Bibliography	61
Appendix-1	
Appendix-2	
Appendix-3	
Appendix-4	



Lists of appendices

Appendix -1 Lists of Informants

Appendix -2 Recordings and Observations

Appendix -3 Interview Questions

Appendix -4 Lists of Heroic Recitals (*Fukkera*) according to their Themes

Abstract

The principal aim of this study was to analyze the major themes of heroic recitals (*fukker*) of Tegede and Armačiho woredas of North Gondar zone. In due course, however, identification of the occasions and functions of heroic recitals have also been made. The study utilizes primary and secondary sources for data collection. The instruments that are mainly used to collect the data are interview, observation, and previously recorded audio and video records.

The study found out that the major occasions where poets compose heroic recitals are successful kill of big games, warfare, public festivals (gatherings), and funerals of hero. The study have also identified that heroic recitals function as preserver of the local history, as inspirational instrument for the community to maintain the conventional manners in the society, as entertainment, and as a means to agitate the feeling of the warriors to war. Finally, in the thematic analysis, the study revealed that the themes of hard work, bravery, patriotism, generosity, and danger as the most recurring ones.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Oral literature is preserved from generations to generations orally through memory. In Ethiopia, where written poetry is common and has a long tradition, the oral culture is predominant and the bulk of its poetry is still in the oral form. In the past few decades, attempts have been made to record and interpret this oral tradition. However, there is disparity between what has been studied so far and what is left untouched. Finnegan (1992) describes oral poetry as "...great sources and products of man's imaginative and reflecting and dramatic faculties of those things which mark him out as a human and social animal."(<http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~mmagouln/oralpoetry.htm>.)

Heroic recitals, or *fukkera* their equivalents in Amharic, are special kind of oral poetry. It is one form of oral poetry that is performed on different occasions, such as funeral ceremony, during war time and hunting and other occasions in the Amharic speaking areas. In my study area, North Gondar the society's history, culture, and values are depicted in heroic recitals (*fukkera*) poetry. It, hence, serves as agency that preserves relics of the community. Not much research has been done on this significant sub-genre of folklore. The researcher could only trace one research work related to the topic, a senior essay by Yaiqob G/Kidan' (1979 E.C). Yaiqob's work has its own merits for it provides detailed difference between war song (*kererto*) and heroic recitals (*fukkera*) oral poetry. However his work lacks specificity to the study area and depth in his analysis. The study area covers the whole of Gondar not specific localities. It also does not deal with the functions and occasions of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) adequately. There are also some senior essays: Mateb Ayalew (1972E.C), Workinesh Demellew (1992E.C) Worku Mandefiro (1987 E.C) and others who treat heroic recitals (*fukkera*) cursorily as a part of their other main topics. Besides, most of these other studies/essays are dealing with other areas, and are not about North Gondar.

In general, this research will be focusing on thematic analysis of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) of North Gondar. It also will treat the functions and occasions use of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) in the area.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

There are almost no researches conducted on heroic recitals (*fukker*) of North Gondar as pointed out. If there are few, they are only mere collections that lack deep analysis. To fully understand the perspective, or mentality of a given society, the data collected should be analyzed and interpreted appropriately in its socio-cultural milieu.

In addition, according to **Encyclopedia Britannica** (1976) since the continued existence of an item of oral literature depends upon memory as it is passed from one person to another it suffers changes from forgetting or from conscious additions or substitutions. "They may improve a tale or a song or damage it through the bungling of unskillful singers or tellers." (Vol.7:97)

This idea explicitly declares that oral poetry as a part and parcel of oral literature is susceptible to any kind of distortion and also extinction in this dynamic and ever changing social environment. People in the rural area are becoming modernized and youngsters are getting access to modern education. Because of this, the new generations in their quest of knowledge and entertainment would be more inclined to reading books than listening to oral tradition. This trend has its own setback in limiting the number of people who possess oral poetry. Therefore, to understand this national wealth and contribute towards its preservation, these kinds of studies are very important. By conducting a research every time, one could contribute in retaining the wits, beliefs, and artistic works of a given community.

1.3. Objectives

This research will have the following general and specific objectives.

1.3.1. General Objective

- To analyze heroic recitals (*fukker*) of Tēgede and Armačiho woredas.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To thematically analyze the heroic recitals (*fukker*) of Tēgede and Armačiho woredas.
- To assess the functions of heroic recitals (*fukker*) in those communities.

- To investigate the occasions of heroic recitals (*fukker*).

1.4. Significance of the Study

Scholars from various disciplines of social science, most of the time, base their researches on oral literature depending on the thing they want to investigate. According to Finnegan (1976:518) literary scholars, for instance use oral literature to enlarge both their “literary experience and concept of literature altogether.” She also says in her book that oral poetry has often been ignored both in literary study, and still more perhaps in sociology of literature, and generally speaking assumed to be of merely marginal interest. She also contends that the study of oral poetry “falls squarely within the field of literature for there is no clear cut line between oral and written literature.” (Finnegan1976:2). With regard to studying oral poetry (*fukker*) of North Gondar, it is important for it helps us to appreciate the creativity of that particular community, and to know for what purposes that community uses it.

Kabira and Mutahi (1988:3) assert that both the written and oral literature of a given community carry elements that help us to fully understand them. Finnegan (1976:519) also supports this idea by saying “.....a society can not be fully understood without its song.” The other very important point worth considered is the fear that this oral antique would one day in the future probably cease to exist. Expressing his worry Yeshaw Tesema (2001:3) says that the youth are getting out of touch with indigenous treasures of orality due to modern education and tendency of interest towards modern/other cultures. He adds, “Unless this oral treasures are preserved (recorded along with their present collective feelings, they may be unnoticed,” or may totally be lost “in the near future.” But if effort is made to collect and preserve them, by disclosing their themes and literary techniques, we may be able to save some of the materials. Accordingly, by carrying out a research on heroic recitals (*fukker*) of the North Gondar’s people, the researcher hopes that this research on oral poetry would:

- help others to appreciate the creativity and wisdom of North Gondar community where the poetry springs from.
- Contribute its part to the development of Ethiopian oral literature, in general, and Amharic oral literature, in particular.

- Serve for other researchers, and students of folklore and literature as a reference material and point of departure for further study.

1.5. Methods

The data has been collected by using primary as well as secondary sources. In order to compile out data for this research, different methods and procedures have been used as briefly discussed below. The heroic recitals employed in the study are collected using interview, participant observation, recordings, and documents.

1.5.1. Library Research

This method is very useful to gather information from documents, or secondary resources. The researcher through intensive reading of related literatures in the field of oral literature and oral poetry in general and heroic recitals (*fukker*) in particular has tried to enrich the background of the study. Here B.A. senior essays, M.A theses, Ph.D. dissertations, journals, books of literary criticism and theories and other useful library materials related to the research topic have been examined.

1.5.2. Field Research

To gather data in the field research in Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas, interviews, observations, and recorded documents have been used.

For the interview, purposive selection is made to select elderly people who have rich knowledge of the local history and the study area. Purposive selection is done because heroic recitation is not every man's practice. It demands a gift to compose, memorize, and perform it on certain occasion with the right manner of acting. For these reason we do not find many people.

The interview is done to learn the prominent occasions and functions of heroic recitals in the area. Questions like who recites it, for whom, and questions related to the interpretation of some

of the expressions like the local metaphors, historical allusions of which the message cannot be easily perceived by the outsiders were also asked.

Observation is made to see how the people react during heroic recitals and to have the whole picture of the environment. These in a way help to the understanding of the meaning of the recitals easily. Though the researcher did not get the chance to attend any heroic recitals recited in a real context in his three weeks stay in the field, he uses his past experiences, and audio and video records taken in the real contexts for observation. That is to say the researcher is from that area. He had the opportunity to see heroic recitals performed at funeral of his relatives. In fact, two years ago he had made his own records of heroic recitals in the real context. He has also been able to get video tape and audio tape records recorded by others in the real context in Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas.

These records help him refresh his memory of the performance of heroic recitals. Secondly it helps him to collect data that are genuine and original and that may not come out from the interview. The live context by itself creates for the performer a conducive environment to recite his heroic recital in more relaxed and free way. Interview has its own setback in that it could cause unease, restraint, and nervousness for the interviewee.

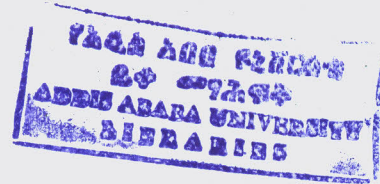
The other material used in this research as a source for data collection is a biographic book that narrates the local history of North Gondar in general, and Ṭegede and Armačiho in particular. This book also includes some heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) recited by prominent figures in the area. Besides its use as a source, this book is also used to substantiate some of the evidences discussed in chapter three.

Representative lines were taken from the collected lines of oral poetry to exemplify the analysis part. To elucidate each theme in the analysis, literary aspects of the poems are treated side by side when found necessary.

Here the selected poems are translated from its original language, Amharic, into the receptor language, English. In order to make the meaning of the translations more close to its original meaning, different techniques of translation have been employed. First, literal translation has

been used to translate the poems, and then to avoid awkwardness of some of the expressions, free translation has been used. In the mean time, whenever there are culturally meaning loaded words and words which do not have equivalent meaning in the receptor language, explanatory notes are provided either in the discussion part or in the form of foot-notes.

All in all to get fuller picture of the occasion, functions and themes of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) and to collect varieties of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) recited by different people, the researcher has used interview, observation, as well as recorded tape and video cassettes, and documents.



Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Concepts and Definitions of Folklore

Every individual is a part of a community of people and that is also a part of another bigger group /community. Depending on differences in geographical locations and ethnic cultures, there will be several bigger groups /communities. These bigger groups are themselves parts of a larger national community. In John Donne's words as quoted by Richmond in Dorson (1983: xviii), "no man is an island, entire of it self; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." A certain community develops a shared heritage of folklore which connects every individual in the community and with individuals in other communities. According to Richmond,

Each person is enveloped by it (heritage of folklore). It conditions everyone's actions and attitudes as a person, as a family member, as a member of a group.... as a resident in a village, city, and as one of the human race. (Dorson 1983: xviii)

In addition to strengthen the idea that a person is a part and parcel of sets of different sized rings of heritage of folklore one inside the other, the above extract also explains the way one behaves or reacts upon certain things is somehow shaped by it. In other words, folklore plays a great deal in determining societies' attitudes and actions. If folklore has this power, what is it really?

The definition of the term folklore, according to Dundes (1965:1), ever since its coinage in 1846 by William Thoms has been the center of debate. The reason was that different folklorists view it from their own perspectives. Though it is not as strong as it were, still today there seems to remain unsettled issues. However, this does not mean that the definition forwarded by different scholars in the field lacks commonality or completely complementary to each other.

Abrams (2005:105) defines folklore as "a collective name applied to sayings, verbal compositions, and social rituals that have been handed down solely, or at least primarily, by word of mouth and example rather than in written."

William R. Basow in Leach (1949: 398) sees folklore from its anthropological usage view point: folklore has come to mean myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, riddles, verse, and a variety of other forms of artistic expression whose medium is spoken word. He contends that although folklore is related to written literature in all its forms, it may never be written even in literate society, and may exist in societies which have no form of writing.

Similarly **The New Encyclopedia Britannica** (2005) defines it in its modern usage as an academic discipline that comprises the sum total of traditionally derived and orally or imitatively transmitted literature, material culture, and custom of subcultures within predominately literate and technologically advanced societies. (Vol. 4:863)

The above three definitions share the same idea in that folklore is an orally transmitted heritage. The fact that it embraces a host of genres as riddle, folktales, material cultural, and the likes is also the other common concepts the above definitions shares.

The latter two definitions however include additional information which we do not find in the first one. That is folklore is the heritage of every society - literate, illiterate, less civilized, highly technologically advanced. This view strengthens the idea that every individual is a part and parcel of a given community's heritage of folklore.

As discussed above folklore is a general term. It comprises different genres inside it. Using these different genres societies preserve their history and culture, express their mishaps, joy, sorrow and protest against in justices, instruct their young ones etc. When he expresses how useful folklore is in the life of the society, Dundes (1965:298) says the following.

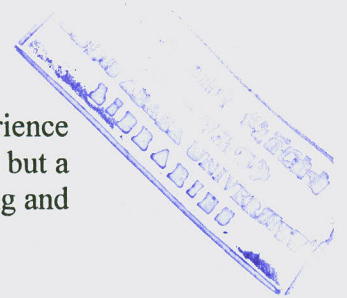
Folklore is an important mechanism for maintaining the stability of culture. It is used to inculcate the customs and ethical standards in the young, and as an adult to reward him with praise when he conforms, to provide him with rationalizations when the institutions and conventions are challenged or questioned, to suggest that he be content with things as they are, and need to provide him with compensatory escape from hardships, the inequalities, the injustices of every day life.

So studying the folklores of a given society helps us to gain access to the history, world outlook, and the psychology of that society. To do that a researcher can pick one of the genres of folklore and conduct his/her research on it. One of such genres that is highly resourceful and the genius and aspiration of human races greatly manifested is oral poetry.

2.1.1. Oral Poetry

Poetry generally is believed to be one of the greatest arts produced by human beings. Together both have traveled a long way. In olden times as well as today people have always found ways to involve poetry in their lives at different occasions. Almost in every individual or community despite the difference in language and geographical location, there is this impulse to compose poetry. In this regard Brooks (1960:4) has the following to say:

The impulse and methods of poetry are deep in human experience and that formal poetry itself represents, not a distinctive form, but a specialization of thoroughly universal habits of human thinking and feeling.



Finnegan (1977:3) on her part also states that oral poetry is still an object of attention of modern society as it was in primitive society. She also asserts that it has a firm and deep-rooted stand in every community - be it literate or non literate, traditional or modern - that it would “never wither away with increasing modernization.”

If one asks the reason why oral poetry stands the test of time and social changes, it is because poetry or oral poetry is highly related to feelings. William Wordsworth confirms this idea in his article “Poetry and Feeling” like this: “Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” (Diyanni, 1998:1965) Finnegan propagates similar concept for oral poetry as well. She says oral poetry is a spontaneous outburst of the primitive man or the traditional society. (Finnegan, 1977:39) So from this we conclude that one of the reasons that make poetry the oldest genres of oral literature is its closeness to feeling. When this feeling is affected, for instance, it could be by the loss of loved ones or at triumph or, a mood of festivity that surrounds the composer, the desire to sing, recite lines of poem urge him or her inside. In group or individually, they

compose and perform for such occasion. We should also bear in mind that these feelings of joy and lamentations are inherent nature of humans. As long as these feelings are there, societies compose and perform oral poetry.

As one of the part of oral literature, oral poetry is composed and transmitted by singers or performers orally. According to Abrams, “from an early period, the recitations were sometimes accompanied by a harp or a drum, or by other musical instruments (2005:208).”

Oral poetry can be presented in narrative form as in epics and ballads or in lyric forms as folksongs. There is no fixed version of an oral composition, since each performer tends to render it differently. (Abrams 2005: 208) Besides, with the diversification of languages and social purposes, oral poetry may exhibit its own peculiarity in form or nature that is different from the above two groups. Finnegan (1976:207) refers these forms of oral poetry as special purpose poetry. These are war, hunting and work poetry. One can easily infer what these poems are all about for their very names reveal their purposes.

Finnegan asserts that although some subjects are of particular significance in African poetry (such as poetry associated with secret societies, initiation, begging etc), war and hunting are topics that have always been given great attention and invoked particular interest in African societies. For this reason, she says, it gives rise to specialized poetry. (1976: 208) Finnegan also expounds that it is wrong to view oral poetry as one form: “Oral poetry can take many different forms, and occurs in many cultural situations; it does not manifest itself only in one unitary model envisaged by some scholar (Finnegan, 1976:9).”

Many scholars note the role of oral poetry in most communities of the world is valuable during funeral ceremony, warfare, marriage ceremonies, agricultural work parties, public gatherings, cattle herding and annual holiday celebration. Finnegan (1976:55) says, “Oral poetry is used to appreciate the people’s feeling, hopes, fears, aspiration, philosophy and aesthetic.”

Oral poetry is also significant in shaping a society’s behavior by discouraging socially harmful manners and upholding the good ones. In this regard Okpewho writes the following.

It [Oral poetry] was also a useful instrument for discouraging social evils such as theft, adultery, truancy and general irresponsibility among young and old alike. This indeed is the real usefulness of these songs.... They encourage the citizens of a society to observe proper conduct, cultivate a sense of purpose and responsibility and issue a warning whenever anyone or any group indulges in habits that are detrimental to the moral health and general survival of the society as shown by poetry. (Okpewho, 1992:149)

In general, oral poetry is highly related or second nature to human beings with which they express their daily experiences. This genre of oral literature is greatly practiced by non-literate communities. The heroic recital, *fukkerá*, is one of its sub-genres and it is discussed as follows.

2.1.2.1. Heroic Recitals (*Fukker*)

As discussed above oral poetry manifests itself in different forms. It can be classified according to its functions and social purposes. Hence we find heroic recital (*Fukker*) as one of its sub-genre.

In this study, the term heroic recital is used to replace its Amharic equivalent *fukker*. *Fukker* is, however, a broader term that includes war poetry and hunting poetry. It is a very special kind of oral poetry in its form and performance. Its length extends from a couplet to half or full hour recitation. To understand the term more clearly in the context of its origin, let us see some of its definitions taken from different Amharic dictionaries. A dictionary by Desta Teklewold (1962E.C:117) defines it as “ፈ.ከረ፣ ፎከረ፣ ሞያን፣ ዠብዱን ዠጠ፣ ቆጠረ፣ አሥረዳ፣ አካኪዘራፍ፣ ገዳይ እዘሀ ገዳይ እዛ አለ።” literally mean boasting, enumerating, describing one’s bravery or one’s courageous deeds. Another prominent Ethiopian scholar, Kidanewolde Kifle (1948E.C) also says heroic recital (*fukker*) is “መፈ.ከር መደንፋት፣ መ.ያን መናገር፣ ማውራት፣ በመ.ያ መታብይ፣ መመካት፣ ግዳይ መጣል፣ ሰለባ መቁጠር” to recount one’s deeds, to take pride in one’s action, to hunt and show one’s trophy, to kill and count one’s victim. (p.720) This is to mean that when one goes to war or for hunting, and on his return he would boast saying ‘I killed this much and that.’

Kesate Birhan (1951E.C: 299) another scholar on his part states heroic recital (*fukker*) as “የጀግኖችን ስራ እያነሱ፣ እያሰቡ መፎከር ነው።” thinking of and remembering of the gallant deeds of heroes. This definition is a bit different from the above two definitions only in its shift of point of view. The former two definitions maintain that the speakers (performers) of the heroic recital (*fukker*) recount their own bravery and great actions while in the latter one, the speaker speaks in praise of others, listing their courage and exemplary qualities.

Mahitemeselassie’s (1961 E.C) definition of heroic recital (*fukker*) is “ጀግኖች ለገዥዎቻቸው ወይም ለአለቆቻቸው ከፍ ያለ ድምጽ በማሰማት ወኔያቸውን የሚገልፁበት ግጥም ነው።” a war poem that heroes perform to express their courage and readiness for the war to their rulers and chieftains in a high-pitched voice. He adds that heroic recital (*fukker*) has its own unique

performance and the recitation of its words comes out with an angry-like speech tone. He also says that it is usually followed by war chant (*kererto*) a couplet which is usually performed in a form of song. It serves as an initiator and creator of mood before one bursts out with consecutive lines of heroic recital or *fukkera*.

From the above definitions one can conclude that heroic recital (*fukkera*) is to recount, enumerate, speak of, remembering (mentioning) the great achievements, deeds, and heroic actions of oneself or others.

However the name attributed to it and the forms and way of deliverance are different, Heroic recitals are very common genre of oral poetry in different parts of the world. For instance Miller and Greenberg (1981) in their book **Poetry: An introduction**, mention that hunting was a sacred event in the Navaho Indian culture, and that they use poetry interwoven with music and dance for the rituals before they set out. Miller and Greenberg also said Cherokee Indians before they left for battle engaged themselves in some sort of ritual chanting and dancing. (Miller and Greenberg, 1981:5-6)

Similarly, in different part of Africa, Finnegan points out that war and hunting topics are contexts for composing poetry. As she puts it her own words “. . . war and hunting are topics of particular interest for many African societies, and have frequently given rise to specialized poetry.” (Finnegan, 1976:206)

According Finnegan hunting and war poetry seem to have a lot to share. The first one is that both involve the same ideas of romance, danger, pride and glory. Secondly, that sometimes the same genre of poetry is even used to deal with both, like the *gheraerasa* or boasts of the Oromo in Ethiopia is universal among warriors and hunters, or the Adangme *tegle* poetry is used both for war and to honor a man who had killed a leopard with a spear. The third one is that both involve, in Finnegan’s own words, “action which is out of the run of ordinary every day pursuits.” Accordingly in both poetries, we come across elements like danger, triumph, or heroism, and boasting challenge, specialized ability. (1976: 207-8)

Some of the most frequent occasions for performing hunting songs (poetry), according to Finnegan are some time after a successful kill, at the funeral of skilled hunters, at public gatherings and festivals. Here one can hear of a solitary hunter or group of hunters bursting into more or less immediate song over some outstanding kill. In their songs, the hunter sings boastfully of his exploits and retells his heroism. (1976: 222-3)

On the other hand, according to Finnegan the occasion for war songs are not thoroughly documented. She writes the ending of wide-spread warring as one of the major reasons. However she never fails to mention some of the occasions. She says war songs were performed in the battle fields and before hand to stir up excitement and emotion on the warriors and prepare them for battle (1976: 208)

From the above discussion, one can notice that war and hunting poetry share some common characteristics for both involves risks. The heroic recitals (*fukker*) of North Gondar, as it will be discussed in the next chapter, shares some of these features.

2.2. Review of Previous Studies Related to the Topic

Getie (2005) in his article entitled “Ethiopian Contributions to the Study of Amharic Oral Poetry” states that the collection and publication of Amharic oral poems was started in 1890’s. To quote him:

The collection and publication of oral poetry material by Ethiopians begins with Afework Gebreyesus who presented poems, songs, proverbs and folktales in his book on Amharic grammar in 1905. Then follows *Blattlengata* Hiruy Woldesilassie’s funeral chant poetry 1910 and book of *qene* in 1918 dealing entirely with poems and songs. In 1915 Gebru Desta published the first grammar in Amharic and he presented few historical, praise and funeral poems at the last section of his book. (Getie, 2005:96).

Fekade Azeze (2001: 43) in his article published on *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* points out studies on Ethiopian language and literature began the late 16th century. These studies were predominantly made by the collaborative efforts of Ethiopian and foreign scholars.

In this article where he reviewed the contributions of the expatriate and Ethiopian in collecting and studying Ethiopian oral literature, he says it was Johannes Potken who published the first Geez text and others. Then the publication of travel accounts of Francisco Alvares at Coimbra in 1540. According to Fekade, this work of Alvares helped others greatly to develop interest upon Ethiopia.

Next to Alvares, the other person who contributed to the development of Ethiopian studies was Hiob Ludolf. With these peoples in the front line, many other European travelers, discoverers and missionaries played their share in developing this endeavor. (Fekade, 2001: 44-46)

Fekade, in this very article gives us a fuller picture of individuals, both Ethiopians and foreigners who played significant role in collecting, documenting, analyzing, and interpreting the oral literatures of Ethiopia by listing down the bibliography of work done so far.

He says studies conducted until recent times are not more than mere collections. They are not systematically analyzed. However, in the past few decades encouraging steps are being made. (p.43)

With these as the start, in the last half century study of oral poetry got much attention and studies have been conducted more systematically and in depth in the country. Studies of oral literature in general and oral poetry in particular are being conducted at undergraduate and graduate levels. The studies comprise of the various ethnic language and cultures found in Ethiopia.

In this section, because of the immensity of the number of studies on oral poetry, the researcher is obliged to treat only the studies of some prominent figures and MA thesis in with regard to Amharic oral poetry, and BA senior essays related Amharic heroic recitals.

To being with, Shibeshi Lema (1986) in his MA thesis thematically analyzes Famine-inspired Amharic oral poetry. By doing so he comes up with the results that show the psychological

tournament of famine victim in South Wollo. He says “People express their deep feelings of hardship and miseries through verse of sorrow.” (P-51)

Daniel (1998) has also considered the themes of red-terror inspired oral poems taken from Gondar and Gojjam areas. In his analysis, he revealed the agony, danger, and grief that particular societies have gone through. He says “oral poems express the grief of the time.” (P-5)

Apart from the above MA thesis, there are others who conducted studies on oral poetry in different issues like Berhanu Gebeyehu (1998) on Islamic oral Poetry, Mesfin Messele (2000) on “Abbawadde” begging poems, Getie Gelaye (2000) on oral poetry that reflects the social life of Yetnora of East Gojjam agricultural produce cooperatives, Meseret Kebede (2004) on oral poetry of *Tāmari*, and Tesfaye Mesele (2007).

All the aforementioned MA theses are different from the present research in their topics and focus of areas. However, in their own unique feature, they have contributed a great deal in collecting, analyzing and documenting the oral poetry of the country. None of them treated heroic recital (*fukkerā*) in their theses.

When one comes to BA senior essay, he/she finds some related studies with the current researches. One of such stance is Yiaqob Kidane’s senior essay. Yiaqob (1979 E.C) in his essay entitled “The Content and Regional Foot-print of heroic recital (*fukkerā*) and war chant’s (*kererto*’s) of Gondar” presents the difference between heroic recital (*fukkerā*) and war chant (*kererto*) and the prominent contents of the poems he collected. He also tries to show the regional foot-prints of heroic recital (*fukkerā*) and war chant (*kererto*) of Gondar.

In addition, he points out that heroic recital is common in other ethnic groups of Ethiopia. For instance he mentioned some of the equivalent name given to *fukkerā* an Amharic word. He said heroic recital (*fukkerā*) is named *Dadana* in Oromifa, *Gida* in Kambatigna, *Fehera* in Tigrigna, *Čequa* in Wollayitigna.

Yiaqob’s paper is different from the current paper in that it lacks depth in its treatment of the contents. It is more of general and does not explicate the themes of heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) by using literary devices like figures of speech used to magnify them. In addition the current

research includes hunting poetry. However, Yiaqob's work has a great merit for its immense collection of poems of heroic recitals (*fukkera*) and for its detailed explanation of the difference between *fukkera* and *kererto*

Matebe Ayalew (1972 E.C), in his BA thesis concentrates upon the ceremony of wedding starting from its conception to the end of the program. In due course, he tries to present wedding songs poems that reflect the joy, hopes, and good wishes of the society to the bride and the groom. The poems are collected from Gondar area. Similarly Geṭu Taddese (1989 E.C) conducts a research in the same area in the city of Gondar as Matebe. His area of focus is on the performance and rituals of funeral in the city of Gondar.

Workinesh Demellew (1992 EC) on her part presents the oral poems composed in honoring of male and female heroes at the time of their death. The poems composed comprise dirges, heroic recitals (*fukkera*) and war chant (*kererto*). She also tries to show how these different genres of oral poetry express the philosophy the poet has towards life and death, the heroic deeds of warriors, the oppressions, and the tragic impact of the loss of a hero etc.

Matebe's (1972 E.C) and Geṭu's (1989 E.C) essays related to the current research only in the place they selected to conduct their studies and that is Gondar. But Workinesh's (1992 EC) essays somehow related in some aspect of its topic. Her topic includes dirges. Her treatment of heroic recital is very little. Beside the major things that differentiate it from the current research is the place the study was conducted. It is in one of the *Woreda* in Gojjam. Of course, this tells us that heroic recitals are common in other regions of Amharic speaking areas.

The other person who made his focus of study on oral poems composed on the funeral ceremony of heroes in *Minjar* and *Shenkora* area of Shoa is Nigussie Aklilu (1974 E.C). Nigussie tries to classify the oral poems according to their contents. He also gives a brief discussion on the form of these poems. According to him the oral poems entertain varieties of issues.

Worku Mandefiro (1987 E.C) like the above ones discuss almost similar topics. The main focuses of his essays are funeral ceremony and dirge poetry of Libo Kemekem area of South Gondar. The study slightly touches upon, though not in depth the heroic recital (*fukkera*) performed in the funeral ceremony for funeral ceremony is one of the major occasions of heroic recitals (*fukkera*).

Worku Says the ceremony of heroic recital (*fukker*) is one of the cultural funeral ceremonies. According to him, in the ceremony the heroic recital reflects, the bravery, richness, loyalty, and other amiable qualities of the dead person possessed before he ceased to be. The poems have these qualities of reaching out to the feeling of each individual who listen to them. For it mostly dwells up on the treatment funeral ceremony and dirge poetry, and because of place the study conducted, Worku's thesis is different from the present study.

In addition to the above BA senior essays, Balkew Chernet's (An Analysis of Funeral Poetry in Menz, 1974 E.C), Taddese Mekonnen's (An Analysis of Wedding Ceremony and Oral Poems in Dembia, 1986 E.C) are some of the studies to be mentioned.

The other work worth mentioning here is the work done by Pankhurst and Girma (1985). They have written an article in English which is published in the *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*. The article is about Amharic war-songs of Emperor Tewodros's soldiers. The article states that the British Capitan Tristram Speedy during his stay in Ethiopia from 1868-69 collected about 35 war-songs. And the poems are about the king's courage and the soldier's loyalty to their king. Pankhurst and Girma give the following description of the moment of performance of heroic recital (*fukker*).

Horsemen who had distinguished themselves in battle would "dash up at full gallop before the king's tent, suddenly reining in their horses," while foot-soldiers, "brandishing their swords and quivering their lances," would " go through a war dance, and as each in turn recounts his deeds of prowess, his comrades confirm his boasts by crying out *Wunat, Wanat!* It is true etc. while the women raise the *elelta* of cry of victory. (Pankhurst and Girma, 1985: Vol 18)

This article by Pankhurst and Girma, however, does not give us the full account of Speedy's work. All in all the above theses and articles are in one way or another, as it has been discussed, related to the current research topics. It is undeniable fact that each of them contributes their own share in the development of oral literature in general and oral poetry of Amharic in particular. It is also noticed that the above studies have differences with the current one.

Chapter- Three

Analysis of Heroic Recitals of Ṭegede and Armačiho Woredas

Before just embarking on analyzing the themes of the heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) of Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas, the researcher believes that readers of this paper should be introduced with the occasions and social functions of heroic recitals in these areas.

Accordingly, this chapter is designed to have two sub-sections of which the first one is the discussion on the occasions and the social functions of heroic recitals (*fukkerā*), and the second one is the thematic analysis part.

3.1. Occasions and Functions of Heroic Recitals (*Fukkerā*)

3.1.1. Occasions of Heroic Recital (*fukkerā*) of Ṭegede and Armačiho Woredas

Unlike written literature which does not necessarily demand a definite occasion to be read, oral literature seems to entwine itself to its occasion. For any genres of oral literature, there are occasions that are socially developed. For instance to sing a wedding song, there should be a wedding occasion; likewise for performance of dirge, there should be a funeral service. Mixing up of one's performances with the others, for example performing funeral dirge in an occasion of wedding is sometimes a fatal and unforgiving mistake. Of course, this does not mean that some genres of oral literature do not share similar occasions. Recitations of heroic deeds are recited both in funeral and wedding occasions in North Gondar.

Therefore, knowing the appropriate time and place of when to deliver the different genres of oral literature is very important for the performer. It would, at a time, save him from great humiliation of his life. As one of the genres of oral literature, a heroic recital has its own occasions. In woredas of Ṭegede and Armačiho, Heroic recital (*fukkerā*) is mostly recited at the funeral service of a male hero, after a successful hunt, at the time of war and at different public gatherings.

In the past as well as today funeral has been and is one of the most common occasions in Tēgede and Armačiho areas for delivery of heroic recital. The poets usually referred as the *fokkaris*, take advantage of this day to publicize their skill of recitation. In the mean time they pay their homage to the dead by describing so boastfully of his bravery, heroism, and other amicable qualities he displayed while he was alive.

It is a harsh reality that death is inevitable. It leaves a painful experience upon the families and acquaintances of the dead person. In this time of helplessness and sorrow, societies in different community express their grievance and loss in different ways.

As in the case of Tēgede and Armačiho woredas, when a hero dies, a heroic recital (*fukkera*) will be recited at the day of his funeral. The word “hero” in this context refers to a person who achieved high standard of moral and social values, successful person, a patriot, the son of a patriot, a great hunter etc. According to my informants, a heroic recital is only composed to male heroes in these areas- neither to women nor to an indolent or morally corrupted man. This does not mean, however, they are totally excluded from it. Although it is not at their funeral services, mothers, sisters, and other female relatives of a hero are indirectly praised at his funeral. As for an indolent man and morally decayed man, they are condemned in general terms.

What usually happen when a man of great profile died in Tēgede and Armačiho woredas, his funeral service is not simple and fast. Rather the burial will be delayed until many people hear about it- from far to near. Once the relatives and friends, and acquaintances of the dead are gathered, the service begins. In the mourning procession dirges, war chant (*kererto*) and heroic recitals (*fukkera*) are composed to praise and to mourn the loss of such a great person.

The performers are the peasants from the community. They are artists of a great talent who have a profound knowledge of genealogical line of the most prominent individuals in the societies. In the delivery of the recitation, they, then, use this knowledge to praise the dead. In the mean time the mentioning of the dead ancestors and family members of the dead person serve to create the mood of mourning. Here is an extract.

የአቶ አካሉ ልጅ ማለት ይኼ ነው
 የአባ ዘርዘር ልጅ ማለት ይኼ ነው
 የአባ ሙላት ልጅ ማለት ይኼ ነው
 የአባ ይርጋ ልጅ ማለት ይኼ ነው
 የአባ ጎፋው ልጅ ማለት ይኼ ነው
 እንደ አውራ በሬ የተጀነነው
 የአንበሳ ጃጃ የተሠቀለው
 ሁሉን የሚያሳድር ዕድል ነበረው።

Here lies the son of Ato Akalu
 Here lies the Son of *Abba* Zerzir
 Here lies the son of *Abba* Mulat
 Here lies the son of *Abba* Yirga
 Here lies the son of *Abba* Gofaw
 One who has the grace of a Bullock
 One who assume the spirit of a lion
 He had a great providence that was
 Enough for everyone

The above heroic recital is composed at the funeral of a man who lives in the wordas of ጅጅደ. It tells us that this man has become one of his ancestors, dead as they are. These lines have impacts on the listeners. It feels them with remorse and sorrow.

The second major occasion for heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) is the time of war. This is to say that it is recited before warriors set out to warfront and when they return from the war. The heroic recitals before departure to the war serves to agitate and inspire the warriors so that they go to the war filled with courage and unbeaten spirit. The recitation on their return, on the other hand, is to celebrate the victory won. On such occasion, the poets (*fokkaris*) recount his brave deeds or he may meticulously describes the heroism of his fellow friends display in the battlefield and the sacrifices they made to shame death.

It is not only the great fighters who survived from the war that are praised but also the ancestors and those warriors who heroically fall fighting.

War is not a strange phenomenon to the people of Ethiopia in general, that of ጅጅደ and Armačiho in particular. Many wars have been, in fact, recorded in Ethiopian history. Among these wars, the war waged against Ethiopia by the Italian invaders on two occasions is one of the

unforgettable and widely ranged ones. These wars severely affected every nation in Ethiopia. In the two wars against the Fascist aggression, Ethiopians have relentlessly fought for their country, freedom and kings and able to prove themselves as heroic nations.

Orality has it that the Italian invaders had faced severe resistance in its five years stay from 1936 to 1941 in the woredas of Ṭegede and Armačiho (North Gondar). One of the mechanisms used to mobilize and arouse the society to stand against the invaders and to help them fight courageously was heroic recitals. We will discuss this under the functions of heroic recitals more thoroughly.

A heroic recital (*fukkerā*) is not a kind of oral poetry that soothes or calms you, but it is one that agitates, and excites you to leave you with reverie and anguish. In fact, when ever one bursts out with his recitation of heroic recitals, the whole environment take different form. If it was calm and tranquil, it would change into a tense one. Uneasiness and atmosphere of tension prevail around. The audiences (listeners) would soon feel nervous and fervently restless. And you witness these in the clutch of their teeth, in the writhing of their faces and in the gestures they make.

All in all, by mentioning the exploit of war, the courage and the unconquerable nature of warriors of the present and the past and so on, the performers (*fokkaris*) manage to instigate warriors to unite for the common causes and to fight bravely in the time of war.

Hunting is another occasion for the composition and delivery of heroic recitals in Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas. According to my informants in the old time before the government officially banned the hunting sport, men (usually youngsters) in Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas used to go for hunting. In due course they usually used to hunt beasts like lions, tigers, buffalo, and elephants for glory and respect that would bring them from the community of the areas they live. They used to kill antelopes, greater kudu bushbucks, wild hogs, oribi etc for their flesh. It is when one killed a lion, or elephant, or an elephant that he bursts out in heroic recitals. Because hunting in those days was not an easy sport. It rather was a highly risky and dangerous practice (activity). It required a skill and courage to face the worst. It was a risky business because the weapons used for hunting in those days were not as simple to handle and as sophisticated as today's.

Out of the joy of a successful hunt and being safe from the lurking danger awaiting him, the hunter gets elated and goes on reciting his spontaneous heroic recitals. He describes his bravery and the incident while confronting the beast he killed. He delivers his recitals (*fukkera*) immediately after the kill by stepping upon the body of the lion or other kill, and after he returns to the village wearing the skin or mane of the lion (the hunt). While he performs, friends who had witnessed the scene ascertain his boast by saying “*Wunat new!*” “Yes, indeed, it was true!”

These hunters keep on reciting their heroic recitals in public gatherings as in public holidays, in churches, and wedding ceremony so that people would know what they have done and so that people would be entertained and inspired. In Tēgede and Armačiho, one of the criteria to be qualified as a man and to earn respect in the society, one should have to kill one or two games. Otherwise the community would develop a low opinion of him.

The other occasions for heroic recitals as I tried to reveal it above are public holidays like victory day, wedding ceremony, and while working together.

In general, the occasions mentioned above are not the only ones but the most common ones. Using these occasions as an excuse the poets (*fokkaris*) arouse themselves, praise the courage of others, and show their skill of recitations. Having said this about the occasions of heroic recitals now let us move on to its social purpose in the two woredas.

3.1.2. Functions of Heroic Recitals (*fukker*) in ጥጅጅጅ and Armačiho Woredas

Heroic recitals (*fukker*) serve different purposes in the mentioned areas. It, for example, is used as entertainment, to agitate the society to stand for the common cause, to praise people who display exemplary actions or manners and others. Under this section, the most dominant functions are discussed. Let us begin how heroic recitals are used as a living record of the history of the people of ጥጅጅጅ and Armačiho woredas.

3.1.2.1. Preserve of History

The majority of the people in ጥጅጅጅ and Armačiho woredas are non-literate. Until very recent time (around 12 years back), these areas have been denied access to modern education due to different reasons such as lack of basic infrastructures and its instability. Therefore, these societies have been left with no other means but oral literature to preserve their history; they solely rely on oral tradition to pass their history from generation to generation.

Among the different genres of oral literature in these areas, heroic recital (*fukker*) is used to record the prominent history of the local people. When one goes through most of the lines of recitals, since heroic recitals mostly deal with wars and how an individual and certain groups of people react to it, it recounts those incidents. After a while these descriptions of real incidents become history. In heroic recitals of ጥጅጅጅ and Armačiho, one finds lots of historical allusions. Names of great warrior-kings of Ethiopia and patriots of the local people are repeatedly mentioned in this oral poetry.

In the absence of sufficient written documents, to reconstruct the history of a nation, historians rely on the folklore of the nations as their primary sources. In support of this idea Georges and Jones (1995:84) says that “Folklore frequently serves as sources of historical information. Epic poems and songs, for instance, often have noteworthy wars as their sources and subject matters, as The Iliad of Homer illustrates.”

The same authors have also noted that examples taken from folklore sources do not only enable researchers to fully reconstruct past events but also help them “to supplement, corroborate, and challenge or correct existing historical records and interpretations.” (1995:84).

One thing that a research of this kind should bear in mind is that the information obtained from oral source can sometimes be confused or distorted. Therefore, he/she needs to devise techniques to verify the grain from the chaff.

Accordingly, if one wants to write the biography of an individual or to reconstruct the history of the people of Tēgede and Armačiho, he/she can use the heroic recitals of those areas as a valuable source. Heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) carry allusions from the past and historical facts of the time they were composed. These historical allusions and incomplete facts in the poems lead the researchers to ask a series of question to bridge the gaps. That is why it is said that heroic recitals are used to preserve history.

Here are two heroic recitals, for instance, with such allusions. These two heroic recitals (*fukkerā*) were recited on the same day by two different persons but who fought side by side for the same cause.

የድፋው ጌታ አበራ ነጋ
የዘመናት ገዳይ ድር ማጋ
ከጎፊር ጋራ ዋለ ሲዋጋ
ባንዳ ገዳይ አፍጋጋ
በጌታው ግንባር ፎክሮ ወርዶ
አሥር እራሱን በሌት ተጠምዶ
የበርበሬን ሠፊር አረገው ባዶ
ድል መታሁ ያለ ጦር አሸናፊ
እጭ የመሰለ ጥልያን ገፋፊ
ወገ በአፈ.መ.ዝ በግንባር ደፊ
አርባ ሰላቶ ጥይት አልካፊ።

The master of *Difaw*, Abera Nega
Killer at *Zemenat*, at *Der magu*
With lions, he fought all day long
Killer of Collaborator at *Afeggaga*.
So boastfully he did speak (swear)
In front of his chieftain
And down he went to face his enemies

Sat the Whole night
 Ten as they were
 And made the camp of Berbere, a deserted camp
 Breaker of the enemy
 Enemy who thought victory was on their side
 Captor of larvae like Italians
 Stabber with bayonet
 And bringing down the enemy face down
 Killer of forty *Soldato*¹

ጊዜ የመሠረደ ጌታ
 ጥሊያን ገዳይ በተርታ
 ስላቶ ገዳይ እርብ ማለዳ
 ሻሂ ሲያፈላ በና ሲያሰናዳ
 በፀሀይ ገዳይ በነዳዳ

Gizze, the master of *Mewgia*
 Killer of Italians in a row
 Killer of *soldato* on Wednesday morning
 When he was making tea
 When he was preparing for coffee
 Killer in a day light
 When the sun is hot

In the above heroic recitals (*fukkeras*), one major historical allusion is made. That is the war between Ethiopian patriots and the Italian aggressors sometime between 1936-1941. On the surface, these heroic recitals informs the next generations that Italians once had attempted to invade Ethiopia including their locality and their ancestors fought so courageously and bravely and chased him back. It also records the names of individuals who showed remarkable stamina and strength in those five years. The descriptions of individual relentless efforts mentioned in the recitals can be used as supplementary material in writing of one's biography.

However, if one reads the above two heroic recitals so closely, he/she can draw a more detailed and fully developed historical facts. This of course can be done by asking different questions which the heroic recitals (*fukkeras*) itself lent you. In your pursuit of understanding of these heroic recitals, you probably would ask for instance the following questions: who are the two individuals who recited the heroic recitals (*fukkeras*) and what was their positions? Who organized

¹ Is an Italian loan word, which means soldier and it has been used by Ethiopian negatively to refer the white Italian soldier who were defeated at the battle of Adwa in 1896 and later in 1935- 1941.

or helped them? Who are the other eight individuals? When did exactly this happen? Where did they recite these poems? and, others.

The above questions demand further sources. They are not explicitly present in the poems. So as it is noted above heroic recitals can serve as historical source themselves and as initiator for further explanation.

As for the above two poems, Liqu (1997E.C) in his biographical work gives us a good explanation. He wrote that the former heroic recitals are recited in honor of the victory achieved over the Italian (Invader). Ten patriots led by *Fitawrari*² Nega Abera carried on a sudden attack on the soldiers of Major Berbarae (an Italian captain) at the camp of Masfinto at 9 0'clock in the night, on July 17, 1938. This sudden attack left more than 15 collaborators dead, and several others severely wounded. In addition to this many beasts of burden which the enemy soldiers used for transport have been killed. On the patriot side in fact, everyone was safe. Such heroic deeds as discussed above inspire warriors to compose their heroic recitals. The above heroic recitals were recited in front *Dejazmach*³ Adane Mekonnon the leader of the patriots in Tēgede and Armačihō Woredas. (Liqu 1997 E.C.: 110-113)

The Other historical facts preserved in heroic recitals and inculcated their history in the generation is the brave deeds, scarifies, and unconquerable spirit of warrior kings of Ethiopia in the past. Here is an extract:

ጅግናው ቱዎድረስ እጁን ለጠላት አልሰጥም ብሎ
ጠጣው እርሣሱን ጠጅ አስመሥሎ
አጤ ዮሐንስ ከወደቁበት
መተማ ማህል ፀበል ነው የፈለቀበት
ሌላ ዘማች እንዳያልፍበት

Preferring death over captivity, brave Tewodros
As if it is *tej* (Wine), he drank his bullet
Where Emperor Yohannes fallen dead,
At the heart of Metemma, Holy water did spring
So that no other warriors died thereafter.

² Commander of the vanguard.

³ Commander of the Gate. He out ranks *Fitawrari* and *Qegnazmach*.

Though it is in a crude way, the above extract carries some historically significant allusions. The two individuals mentioned (Emperor Tewodros II and Emperor Yohannes IV) were kings of Ethiopia who died fighting against foreign invaders. Emperor Tewodros II who ruled Ethiopia from 1855 to 1868 killed himself with a bullet choosing honorable death than being captive to British soldiers. And Emperor Yohannes IV who reigned from 1871 to 1889 was beheaded at the battle of Metemma fighting with Mahdists. These are the historical facts (information) one draw from the poem above. Because of this the local people come to gain knowledge of past history of the country. We will see the above poem in a more detailed in the next section.

The war made between Italian Fascist and Ethiopian patriots, how Ethiopians fought so bravely, and other historical evidences are presented in heroic recitals. The following heroic recital is recited upon the death of a patriot to acknowledge the heroic contributions he made.

የግራ ማጆር በግራ መላሽ
 የቀኝን ማጆር በቀኝ መላሽ
 ገና ሳይመጣ ንንዴ ደመላሽ
 ሎንዶን የሄደ ባንዴራ አስመላሽ
 ኢትዮጵያ ሄዳ ተገፋች
 መልሦ አመጣት በአንዱ ጎራሽ
 የኢትዮጵያ አርበኛ ምንም አይሸሽ
 ሠላቱ ገዳይ ባለ ሽንቧሽ

Breaker of enemy soldiers who came from the left side
 Breaker of enemy soldiers who came from the right side
 Before *Guandae*, and *Demelashi* introduced
 Restorer of the Flag that migrated to London
 Ethiopia has been mistreated
 Never Her appeal been heard.
 He restores Her flag with Unsophisticated gun.
 Never has he retreated, the patriot of Ethiopia
 Killer of *soldato* with a rank.

The information that tells that the flag of Ethiopia has been to London and that fact that Ethiopia has been ill-treated explain a lot. The flag bearer Emperor is gone; the patriots have to get it back. Italian control over the capital Addis for five years and that plea the Emperor made at the meeting of League of Nations has been rejected.

3.1.2.2. Inspiring the Society

Every society has values and sets of manners that each of its members are expected to adhere to. They want these values to perpetuate from generation to generation because they are like codes of conducts or written laws which one person should respect to be a part of that community.

People of Tēgede and Armačiho woredas passed down moral values and social ethics from generation to another through their different genres of oral literature. A heroic recital is one of them. Through time they come to develop certain values they can use as criteria to judge whether the actions displayed by a member of the society are exemplary or not. Accordingly he will be praised and held in contempt. They, for example, take bravery, love of the country, hard work, kindness, generosity abiding to the cultural norms and religion dogmas, and etc as exemplary and desired manners in the society.

An individual who reflects the above manners in his day-to-day activity, his name will be glorified while he is alive and even after his death by using heroic recitals because such person is a social hero. The new generations sense the reward given to the person who shows exemplary manners. Then, they will begin to develop a formidable desire to be like that person tomorrow. They want for their names and the names of their family to be praised and glorified.

Among the different occasions where heroes are praised, funeral service is one of them. In Tēgede and Armačiho woredas people give great attention to what happen at burial service. It is one of those days they truly see what kind of person the dead was. For the dead, it is the day he collects the harvest of his life time struggle. His endurance, courage, humanity, pride, nationalistic feeling etc that he displayed through out his life will be judged and measured on this day. If he has a great personality, and if he was a man of the people, the turn out of the people will be immense. There will be also a great number of poets (*fokkaris*) to recite his exemplary manners.

For the dead and his family, this day is like a crowning day. As for the crowd who came to mourn him, it is the day they envy of and look forward at their funeral. On the other hand, for a man with less adventure and villainous nature, this day is an ordinary day. There will be no heroic

recitals to honor him or praise him. No one in the crowd would dream of it. Therefore as discussed above the societies in the two areas inspired by the heroic recitals, they will try so hard to be a better person.

Here is an extract taken to acknowledge and glorify dead man who manifested exemplary manners in his life time.

ዝቅ ዝቅ አርገህ ምንጥር መንጣሪ
ከፍ ከፍ አርገህ ክምር ከማሪ
ተራራ ማያህል ጎተራ ሠሪ
ያሙንም ያሚ
በተሥኪያን (ቤተክርሥቲያን) ሣሚ
ዳዊት ደጋሚ
በሃይማኖቱ ተከራካሪ
አርሠህ፤
አምርተህ፤
አፍሠህ፤
እንግዳ ይዘህ ከቤትህ ገቢ
ሚሸትህ ጥሩ የማታሣፍር
ብሉ ጠጡ ነው አሁን አሁን

When you clear for the farm land,
You cut the bushes at their root
When you heap your harvest,
You heap them high.
You, maker of a granary as big as a mountain
One who fasts all the fasting.
One who attends church service daily
One who reads book of prayer (*Dawit*).
You who has confident in your religion
You plough,
You harvest,
You collect,
You take guests to your home
And your wife never fails you
Ever ready to treat your guests, urging them to eat, and drink.

The poet in the above lines mentioned different exemplary manners of the person and praised him for that. In these lines we learn that being generous, hard working and being a man of religion are favored in the community. These qualities are revealed in the way he does things. His

hard working nature is expressed in the way he prepared land for farming, in the amount of harvest he gathered, and the size of his granary which is “as big as a mountain”. His generosity and sharing nature is also expressed in the last three lines- he invites guests and his wife entertains them so generously. Lines that describes that the man fasts all the fasts, that he goes to church every day and reads *dawit* (psalm) emphasizes that this man has fulfilled his religious duties as well. In Tēgede and Armačiho almost all the communities are Christians - follower of Ethiopian Orthodox church.

The other heroic recital that inspires the people and the coming generation to work hard, to be pioneer in introducing new technology to the area and to be generous goes as follows.

ጠለስ ገበሬው ልበልለት
 አብልቶ አጥጋቢ የድሃ እናት
 የበጋው ገለል፤ የመኸር እሽት
 ሞተር ይተክላል ለሀገር ሀውልት
 ወደቀ ጠለስ አይቀርም ሞት።

Let me call him Telese, the farmer
 He, who feed the needy well,
 The mother (provider) to the poor,
 The summer drink
 And the autumn harvest.
 He brought to the village a flour mill.
 A monument to his country
 Dead is *Telese* for Death is inevitable.

The metaphors used above like the mother of the poor, the summer drink, and the autumn harvest to refer to the person tells that this man is generous and rich. This implies that he is a hard worker as well. Otherwise he cannot afford to feed the poor, or serve a drink (*‘Tej’* or *‘tella’*) in the season of summer (the time after harvest), or he would not be able to have harvest on autumn. This man has also been praised for introducing a new technology, the flour mill, in the area. By doing so, the poet is indirectly encouraging or inspiring others to follow this man’s example.

By using heroic recitals, the people of Tēgede and Armačiho discourage theft and warn the vagrants in the society to abstain from such practices by describing what the consequences would be like.

እኔ ለሌባ ልንገርለት
 በሠኔ ወራት ለሚቀልድ
 በግንቦት ለሚቧልት
 ምሣው አይጠግብ የለው እራት
 እንዲሁ እድሜው ሲደረስለት
 አድባር እስከ አድባር አይጠለትለት
 ፈካሪ ገብቶ አይፎክርለት
 አስለቃሽ ገብቶ አያስለቅስለት
 በምድር ዳኛ መያዝ አለበት
 በላይ በአምላክም ከኑኔ አለበት
 ሌባን እንጥላው በእያለንበት

Let me say few words about a thief
 For one who jokes around in the month of *Senie* (June)
 For one who makes merriment in the month of *Ginbot* (May)
 Neither had he enough for his lunch
 Nor has he a dinner
 When his time is up and
 His death toll rang.
 Neither his name mentioned in any of the churches
 Nor any poet recites for him heroic recitals
 Nor any one composed him a dirge
 He must be held responsible here by the law
 There in heaven, for he is also a damned,
 Must we hate a thief in every corner.

The months *Senie* (June) and *Ginbot* (May) are very important months in the life of the peasants. In these months, a farmer prepares every material needed for farming and starts his farming. No farmer remains idle in these months. If at all, he is not one but a thief or indolent person. In the extract the poet explains what the fate of a thief would be –alive or dead. It is really grim; there is no comfort and security in it. Both religiously and worldly, theft is considered as a despicable act. A thief’s funeral service will not be as memorable as one who exhibits socially desirable manners. Proper prayers will not be made for him, neither dirge nor heroic recitation composed to him at all.

A man with the right state of mind will not follow the example of this person. It brings shame to him and his family. The heroic recitals, here then, serve as a constant reminder of duties and codes of conduct. If one is to go astray or rebel from the norm, upon hearing these kinds of warning, he might reconsider his intentions. There are other such heroic recitals in these areas

that discourage theft, laziness, and other socially undesired manners. Therefore, by presenting its social set back and negative rewards through heroic recitals, people of Tēgede and Armačiho teach their children to exemplify good manners.

To be courageous is also among the most needed and highly exemplary qualities one should possess in these areas (woredas). Therefore, when a person with such quality dies, his name, bravery, and courageous deeds would be mentioned and paid tribute to or praised. Because of that the audience will get inspired to be brave like this person.

To sum it up, as we have seen above the people of Tēgede and Armačiho through their heroic recitals, praise and glorify people who manifest exemplary manners, and also warn and explain what the consequence of being morally uncultured person would be like. By doing so, they inspire their people and the generations to come to be ethical, hard working, generous, religious, nationalistic and courageous.

3.1.2.3. Unifying the Society

Heroic recitals are commonly related to war, risky, and dangerous situations. Since its subject matters involve the exploit of war, bravery, and the heroic struggles and achievements of people of the past and the present, and since it talks about them so boastfully, it has been used for years as one of the best mechanism to instigate the people and mobilize them to stand for the common cause as defending one's mother land from outsiders, fighting against tyrant leaders, and other injustices.

It has been discussed that one of the occasions for heroic recitals is the time of the departure of warriors to war. This moment is a difficult moment for many because this could be the last time they see their family. There will be nervousness and hesitation. To avoid the fear, the feeling of hesitation, and nervousness, and intensify them with courage and determination, heroic recitals will be presented.

Heroic recital (*fukker*) has a commending power to create sense of solidarity and patriotism. Whenever a poet (*fokkaris*) steps into the middle of the warriors or steps forward in front of them

and bursts out with his recitation naming the heroic fallen brothers, and ancestors and recounting the past achievement of the warriors, the crowd cannot help themselves but moved by it. Inspired by this poet, others jump into the arena and begin to pour out their improvised words of bragging and boasting of heroic recitals by taking turns. From the crowd, some usher the poet (*fokkaris*) with their gun on their shoulder or just like the poet (*fokkari*) simply by displaying different body movements, gestures and face makings. When he sits, they sit. When he stands and walks from one end to another, they also do the same. In addition, they confirm what the poet (*fokkari*) is saying is true by saying. “*Wunat new!*’ Indeed!’

When their feelings are aroused, or when it reaches climax, they fire a gun repeatedly into the air. All these create a mood of a battlefield. It, then, helps the hesitant warriors to decide (makeup their mind), and the not daring, or the not yet inspired to gain hope and strength.

Here is a situation where hesitant fellow warriors finally resolve to go to the war after the recitation of heroic recitals. This example is taken from a biographical book written by Ligu Ejjigu. The setting and the people are from ጥጅጅጅ woredas one of the study area of this research. This makes it highly relevant to this study.

Ligu (1997E.C) in this book presents the biography of *Bitwoded*⁴ Adane Mekonnon who was the leader of patriots of ጥጅጅጅ, Armačiho, and Wolkayit weredas during the five years (1936-1941) of resistance against Italians. The book describes and narrates how bravely and tirelessly the patriots of ጥጅጅጅ, Armačiho, Walkayit, and other woredas of North Gondar battled the Italian fascists and the role of *Bitwoded* Adane in those years.

The war was long and quite frustrating. Once as Ligu puts it, *Bitwoded* Adane received a letter for help from fellow patriots in Debarke one of the woredas in North Gondar. Though he knew that the patriots had not completely revived from the ceaseless war they made in ጥጅጅጅ and other areas, he knew that this is the call he could not turn down. So he announced that everyone should get ready. But most warriors started to complain and reason out saying, “We have just

⁴ Imperial counselor and the most favored courtier.

destroyed the enemy in our areas. Many have died for that. Should we all have to be wiped out?”
“Don’t we deserve a little break?”

There prevail a moment of hesitation, frustration, and resentment. But it was hard for *Bitwoded* Adane not to respond to the desperate call of his countrymen, and then he decided to leave for Debark with one of his best leaders *Fitawrrari* Haile Taffere and few men. One of the patriots who witness this division and hesitation among the patriots compose the follow war chant (*kererto*).

ደፋር ገሠገሠ ተጓዘ ብቻውን
ዞር ብሎ እያየ ቀሥቶ መንትያውን

There goes *Defar*, travelling all alone
Looking back once to see
If *Kesto*, his twine, follows him at all.

In the above war chant (*Kerorto*) *Defar* is the horse name of *Bitwoded* Adane. Here it refers to him. *Kesto* is also used to refer to *Fitawarri* Haile Taffere. When then Haile Taffere (*kesto*) heard this, he was moved and immediately got into boasting as follows:

ኃይሌ የቀስቶ ጌታ
ጠመንጃው ጓንዴ ጥይቱ ካርታ
ኃይሌ ክፉ ሰው
በጥቁር ሐሞት የተለወሰው
ገዳይ አዳ. ኮኮብ
አያል መትረየስ ሲርገበገብ
ትግሬ ላይ ገዳይ ስለኸለኸካ
አያሌ ጣልያን ሲጠማው ውሃ
ትግሬ ላይ ገዳይ እንዳባገና
የተለየለት ፈሪ እና ጀግና
ገዳይ የዛን ዕለት
ጣሰው መኮንን የወደቀ ዕለት
የጠንቆ ወንድም ደግሞም የተክሌ
ልበሙሉ ነው ታፈረ ኃይሌ

Haile, the master of *kesto*
His riddle is *Guandae*
His bullets are in magazine,
Haile, the ruthless man

Whose body soaked in black bile
 Killer at Adikokob
 When countless machineguns screamed out
 Killer at Tigray at Endabbaguna
 When the brave and the coward were set apart
 Killer on that day
 When Tassew Mekonen has fallen (died)
 The brother of Ṭenko and Tekle
 Brave-hearted is Taferre Haile

Upon hearing this, others come out with their own heroic recitals. Soon the atmosphere changed. The unbeaten nature and the heroic fever of the patriot flared up. The tired and hesitant patriots got strength and their will got back and finally decided to go to Debarq. (Liqu, 1997 E.C: 182-185) The above historical evidence clearly shows us how effective heroic recital is instigating and unifying the warriors to stand for a common cause.

The words, phrases, and clauses used in the above lines have commendable influence on the feeling of listeners. It speaks of killing, death, and weapons. For instance, the clause like ‘whose body soaked in black bile’ refers that the man is proved to be brave for bile has culturally associated with “fearlessness and bravery”. The citing of the dead local war heroes like Tassew Mekonnen, the description of the battle field and past victory and the enumerating of the names of warriors who are present in the crowd (Ṭenko and Tekle) are some of techniques the poet (*fokkari*) employed to trigger (provoke) the feeling of the warriors. These things ignite their fever, and fill them with excitement and anguish. It makes them think of their brothers, ancestors, and kin who lost their lives in a fight with the Italians. Going to war is probably the best chance to avenge these people’s blood. So as one can see from the above discussion, heroic recital is one of the best mechanisms to create solidarity.

Here is another example of heroic recitals which is best fit for such function.

አይ ዘራፍ
 የመንግስት አሽከር የጦር ገበሬ
 ከዱር የወጣ ይመስላል አውሬ
 ልቡ አይሸበር ሆዱ አይፈታ
 የመንግስት አሽከር የጀግና ጌታ
 የማንን አገር ማን ይደፍረዋል
 ነጻነቱን ማን ያገኛዋል

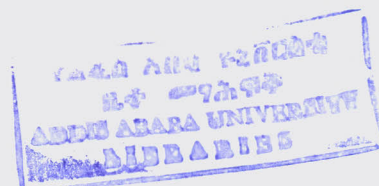
በ'ሣት ነበልባል ያቃጥለዋል
ማን ይነካዋል ያገሩን ልጅ
ማን ይረግጠዋል የቤቱን ደጅ
ደም እንደውሃ ይፈሳል እንጂ

The loyal servant of the government (king)
The war farmer he is indeed,
He is like the beast which just comes out
Of its den
He knows no fear,
Nor his courage did betray him.
Loyal to his king and the lord of heroes he is
Who would ever defy his country,
Who would ever dare to snatch his freedom away
But the flame of the fire would consume him.
Who would ever dare to pass the threshold
Of his house's door,
Who would ever dare to abuse
The son of his motherland
Only blood would shade like water

By employing words like freedom, loyalty, brotherhood, motherland, and words associated with bravery, the poet (*fokkari*) would be able to arouse the feeling of the warriors, or the target audiences to act together for the intended common cause with determination and renewed energy.

When one studies heroic recitals (*fukker*) so closely, he/she can learn how highly persuasive it is. It simply gives responsibility to fellow warriors and puts trust on them. The poets (*fokkari*) tell them that they are heroes of the nation, and that they would not remain passive when their freedom is threshed, when their country men are abused etc.

In all, heroic recitals (*fukker*) have been used by the people of Tēgede and Armačiho to arouse the warriors to act in unison to defend their country from foreign invaders and leaders. It helps them in order to act with determination and strength.



3.1.2.4. Entertain the Society

Heroic recital (*fukker*) is one of the genres of oral poetry. And poetry by its very nature is more close to the people's feeling. With its rhyming sound, images, symbols and manner of presentations, it easily lures the audiences. Diyanni (1998) confirms that poetry is a source of pleasure that is derived from its different aspects as follows.

We read poetry for many pleasures it offers - pleasures of sound and meaning, of image and symbol, of speech and feeling and thought. Some of the pleasures of poetry are intellectual, as we enjoy a poet's witty word-play or understand a poem's central idea. Others are emotional as when poem evokes sorrow or pity, fear or joy. (p.3)

Accordingly, apart from the different functions it performs, as discussed in the preceding topics, heroic recitals also functions as entertainment in society of ፓጅጅጅ and ልማት ወገኖች. As the literate societies read poetry or perform a short plays in public gatherings to entertain themselves or to liberate themselves from an unutterable boredom, the illiterate ones, on the other hand, use heroic recitals as one means for the same purpose.

The recitals can be performed on different occasions as in weddings, public festivals, in a time of farming when the farmers weed, harvest in groups etc. The poet either on the request of the audience or on his own terms might recite his heroic recitals. He does that because he perfectly knows how much love the societies have towards heroic recitals. He also understands its entertaining and inspiring effect.

When the people listen to heroic recital they derive the pleasure, as Diyanni put it above, from the image it draws upon them, the sound effect, the use of figures of speeches and hyperbole and other techniques used in the lines. For instance let us examine the following lines:

ገብሬ ኮርፋዳ ጅንጅሮ (ዝንጅሮ)መሳይ፤
ሣቅ ሣቅ ይለዋል አንባቅሮ ሲያይ።

Gebre the hideous looking, who resembles a baboon
Makes merriment whenever he runs into a fight

The words the poet uses to describe himself above are pictorial. They are blended with humor. When Gebrie (the poet) portrayed himself as hideous looking as a baboon, surely he does not mean to say he is so in his physical appearance. He is being metaphorical to tell us that he resembles the baboon only in manner. He tells us that he likes warring or fighting and is always happy to join if he sees one for that is a baboon's nature. So the image combined with the interpretation make the above lines entertaining. It enforces a smile on the listeners.

The manner of presentation, that is to say the posture, gesture, the facial expressions the poet displays, and his high pitched angry-like tone also have parts to play in inducing excitement and elation in the listeners.

The other thing that makes heroic recitals entertaining is its praises. In heroic recitals names of social heroes are mentioned and glorified. It is in man's nature that almost everyone loves to hear when he or one of his loved ones is praised in public for the great deeds he performed. Then, when one recites out heroic recitals, he recounts his own bravery and others' courageous and heroic deeds. These others might be people who have left their mark for their exceptionally good qualities in the community but are now dead. The praising of the living and the dead creates some kind of warmth in the hearts of the family and acquaintances. The following lines can serve as a good example for this.

አሮጌ ፈረስ ጭራው ጎታታ
በእናቱ እመቤት ባባቱ ጌታ
በራው ጠጠሮ ሰውየው ዳማ
ሰርዶ አራጋፊ እንደጨጓራ።

Long and clumsy is the tail of an old horse
Respected lady is his mother
And his father of a high birth (rich).
His bullock is spotted with black and white
He, himself, handsome (fair complexioned).
When weeding *serdo* (type of grass)
He cleans/shakes off the soil, like one cleans a duodenum.

The mother is called a respected lady and the father the rich. This explicitly signifies that this man is not an ordinary man. He came from dignified parents and he is also dignified and refined in manner. He is also praised for his hard working quality that is described in a way he weeds his farm. His work is clean. It will not demand him to come back again. ‘*Serdo*’ is a type of grass with many roots. When you pluck it, it usually comes out carrying much soil. If you, then, leave the soil there with it, the grass will survive and what you did is simply a waste of time. Therefore, to kill the weeds (*serdo*), you have to completely rid the soil of root fibers.

To recite a heroic recital is not trouble-free. The reciter should have the skill to compose and perform it excellently. Otherwise he would not get the attention he anticipated for from the audiences. He would be rather bluntly or severely teased if he fails to achieve that. Therefore, to command his power upon his listener so that they attend his recitals enthusiastically, he should practice well. The poets of heroic recital give testimonials themselves on how worrisome it is to recite in public as follows.

ከሰው ፊት ገብቶ ፈክራ
መክራ እንጂ ነው አግራ
የኮራ እንጂነው የተጠራራ
የተፈተነው በቀኝ በግራ

Tormenting and torturing is
To recite in public;
Proud and confident is he,
Proven to be a gallant
Every where he goes.

Why tormenting? Because the poet worries on the entertaining effect of his *fukker*a creates upon audiences.

In conclusion, one can draw more reason why heroic recital can be used as entertainment. The society’s eagerness to hear one reciting heroic recitals, their positive jealousy upon the person who recite it right, and their effort to learn lines of heroic recitals (*fukker*a) by heart can be additional justifications to draw a conclusion that heroic recitals have entertaining qualities as well.

3.2. Themes of Heroic Recitals (*Fukker*) of ጅጅጃጃ and Armačiho Woredas

In the previous section an attempt has been made to introduce the major occasions and functions of heroic recitals. Efforts have also been made to exemplify the different functions of heroic recitals by taking examples of heroic recitals that are thought to best fit them.

This section gives a discussion of the most recurring themes in the heroic recitals of the two mentioned woredas. Listening to the heroic recitals of ጅጅጃጃ and Armačiho woredas, one could easily identify the themes of heroism, hard work, patriotism, generosity, danger and bravery as the major ones. In these section each of these themes are thoroughly discussed by taking lines from the collected heroic recitals. This does not mean, however, these themes are completely mutually exclusive. In fact, there are times when we can see themes overlapping. For instance, in an example given to show the theme of patriotism, we can also find themes of bravery and danger.

3.2.1. Theme of Patriotism

Patriotism, according to **The Oxford English Dictionary** (1989) is a self sacrificing act that someone exerts to defend his country's freedom, or to promote the well-being of his country. Or in another way it is a "love of or zealous devotion to one's country." (Vol. VI: 349)

In the discussion on the function of heroic recitals as preserver of history, it has been cited that many foreign invaders have made attempts to conquer Ethiopia in the past, and that the people have fought so bravely and courageously to defend it. One such incident was the invasion of Italians. The people of ጅጅጃጃ and Armačiho were among those who had proven their over zealous love for their country, their freedom, and their king by giving their life and by enduring all sorts of pain. Their passion is depicted in their heroic recitals.

አሞራው ውብነህ አዋጅ ሲያውጅ፤
ጅግናው አዳኑ አዋጅ ሲያውጅ፤
የኢትዮጵያ ጅግና አዋጅ ሲያውጅ፤

ባራቱ ማዕዘን አዋጅ ሲያውጅ፤
ተንቦጀቦጀ ያኔ ፈረንጁ።

When Wubineh, the eagle, makes a call,
When Adane, the brave, gives a signal,
When the warriors of Ethiopia pass a decree
In the four corners of the country, when a decree is passed,
Courage betrayed the white man
And then started to get trembled.

These lines are recited to acknowledge and glorify the brave deeds of patriots of North Gondar in particular, and Ethiopia in general. The individuals like Wubineh, the eagle, and Adane were officials as well as commanders of the patriots in North Gondar in the five years of resistance against Italian occupation in Ethiopia. They are known as *Ras Wubineh Tessema* and *Bitwoded Adane Meknnon*. What the poem is implying is that the people of Tsegede and Armačihö have not given up on their country in the time of foreign aggression. Rather enduring the discomfort of living in hideout, they fought and showed their devotion for their country and their freedom.

There are also heroic recitals that provide a live description of what a battlefield looks like. By giving us such description, the poet helps us to perceive the sacrifice made by the patriot to defend their country.

ጀቱ በሰማይ የጫደረለት፤
ታንኩ በመሬት የጓጎረለት፤
እግረኛ በታች ግፋ ያለለት፤
ጀግናና ጀግና የገጠመለት፤
ፈሪ እንደቅቤ የቀለጠለት ፤
ባሩድ እንደሚት የነደደለት፤
አወይ የዛን ቀን ያለ መከራ፤
ቀን ሲጨልም ፤ሌቱ ሲያበራ፤
ገዳይ ጠገዴ፤ ገዳይ ወገራ ፤
ገዳይ ማራኪ ጋራ ለጋራ ፤

The day when the war plane roared in the sky,
The day when the tank groaned on the land,
The day when the foot soldiers shouted, “March forward!”
And the day when a warrior confronted a warrior,
The day when the coward melted like butter,
The day when the gun powder flamed like fire
O! In that very day! What a plight there was!

When the day gets dark and the night turns bright (light)
Killer at Tegede; Killer at Wegera
Killer and captor of enemy from one corner to another.

The poet, going in flash back, tries to show us how dangerous, frightening, and tormenting the scene of the battlefield was. The noise of the war planes, the groaning of the tanks, the sound of the rifle and the sight of the burring surrounding, scene of the wounded and the dead surely were not pleasant experiences. But despite all these the warriors of North Gondar proved to be true patriots.

The sense of patriotism is revealed not only by commanders of local war and common warriors but also it has been the practice of Ethiopian Emperors of the past. One finds such facts in the heroic recitals of Tegede and Armačiho.

ጅግናው ቴዎድሮስ እጁን ለጠላት አልሠጥም ብሎ፤
ጠጣው እርሣሱን ጠጅ አስመስሎ፤
አጤ ዮሐንስ ከወደቁበት፤
መተማ ማህል ጸበል ነው የፈለቀበት፤
ሌላ ዘማች እንዳያልፍበት፤

Preferring death over captivity, brave Tewodros
As if it was *tej*, he drank his bullet.
Where *Atse*⁵ Yohannes fallen dead,
At the heart of Metemma, Holy water did spring,
So that no other warriors die thereafter.

These lines are cited earlier under the functions of heroic recitals to demonstrate heroic recitals as preserver of history. Here we have two patriotic kings of Ethiopia who died for the love of their country in the 19th century.

Emperor Tewodros II died fighting with the British soldiers. In fact Tewodros II killed himself with a pistol as he saw the British soldiers advancing towards him. Though he couldn't win at the battle, he proved himself unconquerable by denying them their wish of making him captive. By doing so he proved himself a true patriot and paid his life to defend his country.

⁵ *Atse*=title given to Emperor

Emperor Yoannes IV who became Emperor of Ethiopia three years after Tewodros II fell on the same fate. Only Yohannes IV was beheaded by the Mahdists at the place called Metemma, on the border with Sudan. The Mahdists (Sudanese invaders) who came to avenge Emperor Yohannes IV for helping the British (their enemy) were able to penetrate into Ethiopia as far as the city of Gondar. In due course, they burnt churches, plundered the city, and killed people who refused to accept Islamic religion. Emperor Yohannes IV who found this intolerable fought and drove the Mahdists away. It was at the last battle at the border that he was killed. Since he died fighting the Islamic invaders who did all sorts of atrocity upon the Christians of Ethiopia, Yohannes IV's death is considered as the death of a saint. That is why in the poem it says "upon the place where he fell dead, holy water sprung." That shows his sacrifice is even acknowledged by God. His death also brought the grudge the Mahdists had against Ethiopia to an end.

The imagery we have in the lines that express the manner of Emperor Tewodros II's death "as if he drinks *tej*" clearly shows his utmost love for his country. This clause reveals his extreme ecstasy to take his life for the good cause as he did. '*Tej*' is a favorite local drink that one is dying to drink it. We can say then, the death of these two warrior kings of Ethiopia fighting against foreign invaders is an act of patriotism.

In all, heroic recital of *Tege*de and *Armačiho* is typically marked by quite a number of poems that carry the idea of patriotism. By doing so, they instill the act of patriotism into the next generation.

3.2.2. Themes of Heroism

Heroism is the other most frequently recurring theme in heroic recitals of *Tege*de and *Armačiho*. Heroism according to, **The Oxford English Dictionary** (1989) is "the action and qualities of a hero; exalted courage, intrepidity, or boldness; heroic conduct." (Vol. VII. 171) To be clearer with the phrase "the qualities of a hero," it is good to see the definition of what a hero is. The same book defines a hero as:

A man who exhibits extraordinary bravery, firmness, fortitude, or greatness of soul, in any course of action, or in connexion with any pursuit, work, or enterprise; a man admired and venerated for his achievements and noble qualities. (Vol.VII.171)

This explains that heroism can be displayed in different forms. Showing bravery in a war or hunting is one kind and to be successful in one's pursuit (work] is the other. In the heroic recitals, these two qualities of a hero are usually mentioned and praised. Therefore, for convenience sake, they will be discussed in detail on their own terms as heroism in war and hunting, and as heroism in occupation.

3.2.2.1. Heroism in War and Hunting

Theme of heroism in war and hunting is manifested through bravery, perseverance, determination not to surrender at any cost, and number of enemy one killed, or the scale of damage one caused. We have already discussed in the occasions and functions section of this study that heroic recitals are primarily recited to boast or recount the courage, bravery, and heroic deeds of an individual. It is also cited that it is recited when returning from a successful hunt and in a time of war. Since war and hunting practice involve danger, death, hunger, discomfort, thirst, and other many different predicaments, and since it demands endurance, fortitude, and bravery from the participants, the poets include the descriptions of how one bravely and courageously overcame these problems in their recitals.

እግሩን አራጦ ጭር ካለው ሜዳ፤
ሲጥለው ዋለ እንደፍሪዳ፤
አባቱ ነብር ልጁ ግሥላ፤
አለበት ከዘር የቆረጦ በላ፡፡

Legs ajar, he stood on the vast deserted field,
He killed them all as if he was slaughtering a fattened ox.
His father, a tiger,
He, himself, a panther,
It is no wonder that he is a killer,
He took it after his ancestors.

The lines above express the heroic prowess of a man who confronts his enemies all alone. The way he fights shows his bravery. For instance the way he stood – legs ajar - shows his resolution not to retreat. The metaphors that his father is a tiger, and that he himself is a panther reveal that he possesses qualities of bravery, strength, speed, and fierceness as tiger and panther themselves possess.

Here are also other lines that state how a warrior proves adamant in highly risky and perilous time of war.

በቀኝ በግራ ጅግናው ሲያቅራራ፤
 በፊት በኋላ ጅግና ሲያቅራራ፤
 አንበጣ መሥሎ ጣሊያ ሲበራ፤
 በላይ በሰማይ ጀት ሲያጓራ፤
 ምድር ሲጨልም ሰማይ ሲጠራ፤
 ቀልሃው ሲበር እርሃሥ ሲበራ፤
 አወይ የዛን ቀን ያለ መከራ፤
 ነብሥ አሰናባች ከአባቱ ጋራ፤
 የማየቀደድ ሠራው ሸካራ፤
 ቆራጥ ለነብሡ ሞት የማይፈራ፤
 የሚተናነቅ ከጣሊያ ጋራ፡፡

When warriors in right, warriors in the left
 Cried out with their war songs,
 When warriors at the front, warriors at the back
 Cried out with their war songs,
 When the Italian soldiers covered the field
 Like swarm of locust
 When there in the sky, the war plane screamed,
 When the land darkened,
 And the sky brightened,
 When the cartridge flung away and the bullet burnt,
 Alas! Alas that day! What a miserable day it was!
 With his father, he did see off many souls,
 Bravery was he indeed,
 Neither did he fear for his life, nor did he afraid of death,
 But fought against the Italian to the end.

The grim and dangerous scenario of what an actual war scene looks like described graphically above. The war songs of the warriors to encourage others, the roaring of the war planes, and the

swarming Italian soldiers on the other side explain that the situation was highly risky and tormenting, and that death was everywhere. The metaphor, ‘like swarm of locusts’ carries a negative connotation. It connotes destruction and immensity of the enemy soldiers. Here the heroism of the patriots comes out clearly through the incompatibility in power between the invader soldiers and the patriot.

However, despite the hazardous conditions, the warrior together with his father fought heroically to the end. Here when the poet says ‘he and his father’ it is not only two persons but it also refers to other Ethiopians who participated in the war as well. Their fearlessness, their fortitude can be taken as heroism in the war.

Here is an additional example that reveals challenges that heroes face in the war. These lines are composed for a man from Tēgede who participated in a battle fought between soldiers of the military government of Ethiopia and fighters of the Ethiopia Democratic Union (EDU) at Metemma in 1969 E.C. It goes like this.

የዲና ልጅ ነው ደሞም የደሤ፤
 የተነጠረ እንደሰላሴ፤
 ውሃ በፍንጃል የተቀዳለት፤
 ሲነዳው ዋለ በከላሺን ብረት፤
 መተማ ገዳይ ከሁዳን ድንበር፤
 ለዝና ብሎ ለመነጋገር፡፡

The son of *Dina* and the son of *Dessie*
 Refined is he like the Holy Trinity
 On that day, when water was scarce
 When water went around in a coffee-cup.
 He was targeting and plucking out his enemies
 With Kalashnikov rifle.
 Killer at Metemma, at Sudan border,
 Simply for adventure and for a change.

The first line confirms that this man is the son of Dina and Dessie, heroes all and of reputable breed, flawless, held high. In every thing he does, he does it right like the creator, the Holy

Trinity. Dessie is the deceased father and Dina is his uncle who died at the battle of Metemma in 1969 E.C.

The poet stresses on the difficult situations that the warriors had to bear with. The area (Metemma) is a low land with high degree of temperature. To make it worse, it is war time, and water was scarce. One hardly gets a small cup full of water. It was the time man's perseverance put on trial and tribulation. The person, in the above lines, however, endured all the setbacks, and proved his bravery, fortitude, and heroism.

Theme of heroism is also found in the following heroic recitals performed by a hunter in celebration of a successful kill of a lion. In these lines bravery and skill of shooting (targeting) of the hunter are admired and glorified. Hunting needs those two qualities because the beasts, men of Tēgede and Armačiho used to hunt, were fiercer, faster, and much more powerful than the hunters themselves. In addition to that the weapons they were using for hunting in those days were not that sophisticated, rather were backward. They used rifles which took a single load of bullet at a time. You shoot and had to reload it again. That means if you missed, you gave your prey a chance to pounce on you. Therefore, things as they are, you need to be stout-hearted and a great shooter to take him out at once. Or you need to be fast and calm to reload and shoot him down again. That is why one is considered as a hero in the society when he killed a big game. Here is a recital (*fukkera*) that depicts the theme of heroism.

አበጃ ከባድ ቅንዴ የሚይዘው፤
ያንን ወንበዴ ዘልቆ አናዘዘው፤
የነውጥ ወንድም የዚያ ነፍጠኛ፤
የሲሴ ወንድም የትብተኛ፤
ቀሥቅሦ ገዳይ ገፈር ሲተኛ፡፡

Yes, indeed, *Kebbade*
He who carries *Guandi* rifle,
He made that outlaw
Confess his deeds,
The brother of Newit the man with a rifle,
The brother of Sisie the conceited one,
He who never kill a slumbering lion,
Rather wakes (alerts), him first.

In the above lines the theme of bravery is depicted in the last line. The hunter reveals himself as *Kebbde* by his horse's name says he is no coward to stab his rival at the back with out giving any warning. He says the lion (*gofer*) was slumbering when he had found him. For him it was easy to kill him right away. But that was not an act of a true hero. It was as if he is killing the lion that is already dead.

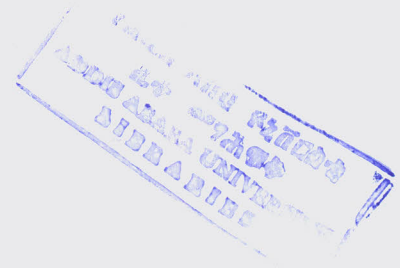
According to the local custom, it is shameful and unmanly to attack (kill) an enemy who is asleep, or who is answering the call of nature. If he is asleep, the culture forces you either to wait until he wakes up or you wake him up before you kill him; and if he is answering the call of nature, you should wait until he wears his trousers properly and tighten his belt. Here you should realize that people in the countryside don't have a latrine. They, rather, relieve themselves in an open. Then once he is ready you can kill him. And that will make you a man and win you fame and respect. This customary rule also works in a hunting of a beast. You will not be considered a hero or a great hunter if you kill a sleeping beast (lion).

The first line tells us that this hunter used an old fashioned and ordinary rifle (*Guandie*) to kill the lion which he referred to as an outlaw, an outlaw because the lion attacks the cattles of the peasants. The ordinariness of the rifle reinforces the theme of bravery (heroism).

Bravery of a man is also manifested through his resolution, determination, and the scale of damage he causes upon his enemies. To be at the warfront and do nothing remarkable, does not qualify you as brave rather you should personally perform some bravery, accomplish something against enemy soldiers. Then, according to what you perform in the battle, and the number of your victims and damages you have caused on your enemy, another person or you yourself compose the heroic recital and present it after the incident.

በጌታው ግንባር ፎክሮ ወርዶ፤
አሥር እራሱን በሌት ተጠምዶ፤
የበርበሬን ሰፈር አረገው ባዶ፤
ድል መታሁ ያለ ጦር አሸናፊ፤
እጭ የመሰለ ጥሊያን ገፋፊ፤
ወጊ ባፈመዝ በግንባር ደፊ፤
አርባ ሰላቶ ጥይት አልካፊ፡፡

In front of his chieftain
So boastfully did he swear
And down he went to face his enemies.
Sat the whole night
Ten as they were,
And made the camp of Berbere, a deserted camp.
Breaker of the enemy,
Enemy who thought victory was on their side,
Captor of larvae like Italians,
Stabber with bayonet,
And bringing down the enemy face down.
Killer of forty *soldato*.



Some explanation has already been given to these lines above under function of heroic recital as preserver of history. So here we see that this person together with other nine have done a great feat. They destroyed their enemies at one camp site. That is an act of heroism, a theme these words stress.

Having said this much about heroism in a war and hunting, lets move to the other form of heroism that is heroism in work.

3.2.2.2. Heroism in Work

Heroism is not only a prowess or bravery that one exhibits in a warfront or hunting. As we have seen in the definition of a hero, an individual can also be described as a hero if he proves successful in his pursuit (work).

In woredas of Tēgede and Armachio almost all people earn their living by farming. Though there are changes in the mode of production like using modern technology like tractors to till the land, still the society is practicing the traditional agricultural methods. Most of the work is still being done manually by hands. They till the farm by bullocks using ploughshares. The clearing of the farmland, the weeding, the collection of the harvest and the threshing are all done manually. The whole year a farmer spares only few days for a break. Farming in these areas requires much of one's energy and time. Besides, though the people live both in highland and lowland part of the country, because of the scarcity of farmland and the need to farm cash crops like sesame and

cotton, the highland farmers move to the lowland during the summer (the rainy season). That means these farmers have to bear with the heat and the malaria endemic prevailing in the lowland.

The combination of these and other difficulties definitely make the practice of farming a challenging occupation. It demands determination, hard work, and endurance on the farmers' side. Then, it is no wonder when the communities consider a farmer as a hero and compose him heroic recitals on his funeral. The poet might mention the hard working nature of the deceased and praise him as follows.

በጋ ከከረምት ሰርክ ገበሬ፤
 አገርህ ሽኒ እሥክ ግንግኔ፤
 ገበሬነትህን ልናገር እኔ፤
 ሞፈርህ ዘጠኝ ክንድ በሬህ ደጋጋ፤
 ግፉ ነው ምትል ሠኔ ሲነጋ፤
 ደጋ ተወልዶ ቆላ ያደገ፤
 እህል በቅርጫት የመደመደ፤
 አራሽ እንደፋራሽ በሰፊ ድግር፤
 ቅርጫት ከጎተራ የምታደላድል፤
 በዎመ ነሐሴ እህል ላጣ 'ምታበድር፡፡

Farmer all the time, summer and winter
 Your country, farm plots extend from *Sheni* to *Gingine*
 Let me tell what a great farmer you are!
 The beam of your ploughshare is four and half meter
 Your bullock is big and graceful.
 You are already on your farm tilling,
 When *senie* is dawn,
 Born in the highland, but whose livelihood is in the lowland
 Who owns granaries full of crop,
 Great farmer you are who till the land
 With a wide ploughshare,
 Who fills his granaries with different harvest.
 Who is able to lend crop to others in the month of *Nehasie*.

The person in the above lines is a farmer who toiled in the dry as well as the rainy seasons with no leisure time to indulge in. The reciter also tells us the farmer is an expert in his profession. The length of the beam of the ploughshare reveals that. Four and half meter long beam of the

plough means he can till the ground with ease, and without being worried that his bullocks' feet would be poked by the ploughshare. By doing so, he protects his bullocks from any harm, and it enables him to till far and wide. A true farmer begins his farming as earlier as the month of *Senie*. This is the month the rainy season begins in the area. Starting early means he will have a chance to plough a wide area until end of the month. If, however, he starts late, since he uses bullocks to till the land, he could only manage to cover small area. That is not what a hard working farmer does but an indolent one. The amount of your harvest depends upon the effort you exert and the time you dedicate on your farm. In the above poem, the poet praises the person citing the size of his harvests filled in granaries. To have granaries full of harvest indicates how hard working the man is. If you also read the last line closely, you will understand why this man became a lender of grain seeds than a borrower in the month of *Nehasie*.

In North Gondar, *Nehasie* is a very difficult month to many households of the peasants. It is like the few last days of a month before the next monthly salary where your pockets are empty. The farmers, after the season of harvest, indulge themselves with the drinks and food. They also organize different feasts and weddings with what they got from the harvest.

When the farming season comes, they also use some of the grain left in the granaries as seeds for the farm. With all these things emptying the granaries, the households of many farmers find it difficult to survive the last month before the first harvest is gathered.

Unlike most farmers, the person in the above line is unshaken in this treacherous month. His household is full. He even helps people who are in short of supplies to pass the month by lending them grains. Such person is what the society considers as hero because he beats poverty. By the virtue of being complementary to hard work, there are considerable numbers of lines of heroic recitals recited to discourage indolence and theft. The society loathes these two acts, and advise people who are engaged in such businesses as follows.

ተውጋዴ ሲል ነበር እረ
ተው ጋዴ አርሰን እንብላ
ጥርስህ አይንግ
እጁህ አይለምልም

ጠጉርሀ አይደግ ሲል ነበር

Listen to me my friend,
He used to say.
Please, my friend,
Let us go farming,
Let not you teeth be whitened
Nor you hands get soft
Nor you hair grow, he used to say

These lines are recited at funeral occasion in praise of a hard working farmer. The poet tells us this farmer used to give advice and used to inspire indolent people and thieves to win their daily bread by following his example. Here the society by condemning indolence and theft assert that they favor hard work and good behavior. Having white teeth, soft hands, and fully growth hair metaphorically signify idleness and theft. And it also shows you are more fussy about your physical appearance than work.

As it is pointed out above in wordas of ገጃጃጃ and ለሙሉም much of the work is done manually. They do not even use gloves to protect them. For this reason a farmer hands become hard and bumpy. To have white teeth and a fully grown hair means you have plenty of time to care about them. A true farmer shows much concern to his work than to beautify himself. For him what is beauty is to be a hard worker.

Through his hard work, generosity of a man is also acknowledged. There are several lines of heroic recitals as it will be discussed more thoroughly below under the theme of generosity that implicitly reveals the theme of hard work as well.

3.2.3. Theme of Generosity

Generosity is among the different qualities that are considered as exemplary in the people of ገጃጃጃ and ለሙሉም. If a person has wealth, he is expected to share it with others or he should be generous to others. The society has its own ways for its members to exhibit their generosity. For instance since the communities in these areas are Christians, followers of Ethiopian Orthodox

Church, almost every person has a saint, or an angel he most favors or considers as his closest guardian. He believes this guardian will keep him safe from all sorts of evil begotten danger.

Therefore to show his respect and gratitude, he prepares food and drink on the day assigned to his favorite guardian, or deity by the church. For example every month, the twelfth day is assigned as Saint Michael's day. If Saint Michael is a favorite guardian angel for one, he chooses one month out of the twelve months of the year and organizes a feast upon his name. The size of the feast, of course, depends on how rich the man is. Or on other occasions like when he prepares a wedding feast to his son or daughter, in the way he treats guests, in the way he shares what he has in the time of scarcity, the generosity of a man is always under scrutiny.

If, then, the man is found generous, his name will be praised - dead or alive - using heroic recitals. There are a good number of oral poems that are recited to praise a generous person in heroic recitals of Tsegede and Armaçihó. Here is one instance where a generosity of man is glorified:

**ምሽቱ፣ ያውኔ የማታሳፍር፤
ጋኑ ትልቅ ነው የሚጠመቅበት፤
ሰመ እግዚአብሔር የሚጠራበት፤
ደሃና ሃብታም የማይለይበት፤**

His wife, Yawunie is not an embarrassment;
Big is the barrel with which she brews the drinks;
With which God is blessed when it is served,
His house is where rich and poor treated alike;

To start with the first line, it implicitly tells us that this man's generosity is reflected through his wife. That is to say whenever there is a ceremony that demands preparation of food and drink, the matter of the handling it mostly is left to the wife. The success and failure of the ceremony is determined on the quantity and the quality of the food and the drink. That is why the poet says his wife is not an embarrassment. The size of the brewing container and the number and the various people invited reveal that the man is not mean. When it says the poor and the rich are invited alike, that implies the size of the feast is big.

Here is also another heroic recital that upholds a man for his generous nature. He is metaphorically ascribed as the mother of the poor, as the summer drink, and autumn harvest.

ጠለሥ ገበሬው ልበልለት
አብልቶ አጥጋቢ የድሃ እናት
የባጋው ዝልል፤ የመከር እሽት

Let me call him *Telese*, the farmer
He who satisfied the needy with his bounty
The mother of the poor,
The summer drink
And the autumn harvest.

Since he helps the poor and shares with them what he has, he is called the mother of the poor. The word ‘mother’ accompanied with different connotative meanings that a real mother possesses. For instant she represents kindness, love and care. A mother is never being mean to her children. She has her children in mind every time. Then this line expresses that the man is as good-hearted as generous as caring as a mother.

The metaphor ‘the summer drink’ expresses his generous nature. Summer comes just after the harvest season. It is during this period that every thing is stored in granary and that the peasants in the area get some rest. It is at this time that the local communities attend and organize social occasions as weddings and parties (*zeker*). Since the period is the period of plenty where the granary is full, almost in every house at least *tella* (the local beer) is brewed. If the person is rather rich, you can also find *tej* (the local wine made of honey bee) in his house. So whenever you pay visit to a relative or a neighbor or a friend, you will be entreated with *tella*’ and *tej*. Unlike any of other seasons, this season is exceptionally in abundance of drink. That is why this man’s generosity is compared to the summer drink.

The comparison with autumn harvest also explains richness and generosity of the man. Autumn is a harvest season. One can see the richness of the season with the harvest. In autumn, farmers get their reward of eight to nine months of toil.

Another poem that reflects the wealth and generosity of a man is the following:

ሠው ከሆነ አይቀር ከተወለዱ፤
 እልፊት አዳራሽ ከመደመዱ፤
 ማጀቱ ገቢያ ወልወሎ ገቢያ፤
 በቢህ ሲሄዱ፤
 ያጣ ተሰጦ በልቶ ሲሄድ፤
 እንዳንተ ያለ ጀግና ላይወለድ፡፡

Indeed born to be a man
 His living room, so wide, his kitchen expansive like a market;
 If you pass that way,
 You would see the needy being fed,
 Never again would be born as a hero as you are.

To be born is not enough to qualify you as a man. Rather according to these societies to meet the criteria of being a man, one has to exhibit an act of generosity towards others. His living room should always be opened to the needy ones. Then, he will be called a hero. That is what is reflected in the above poem. These words are recited at the funeral ceremony of a man. The poet praises the generosity of the dead. This is done by comparing his living room to a market. A market is where every one (the haves and the have not) meet. It is also a place where one could see lots of crowd at a time. This implies that this man's house (living room) is always full of all sorts of guests and where everyone could have what he/she wishes. It is where every one feels like at home. In all, there are several lines of heroic recitals that refer to generosity kindness and wealth of a man.

3.2.4. Theme of Danger

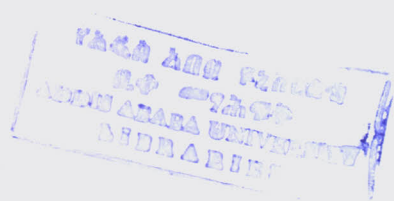
There always is a danger lurking in the time of war and hunting. When warriors and hunters set out, they are fully aware of it. Hunters could be attacked by the very beast they set out to hunt. They know the fierceness, the speed, and strength of their hunt. It is not always that they come out victorious and successful in their kill. Ironically enough, the hunters sometimes fall prey themselves.

Dangers and risks warriors face in warfront are even much worse, because this time they are dealing with more complex, calculative, and unpredictable creatures of their type-humans. Unlike

hunters, warriors confront enemies with more or less the same instinct as themselves, and probably that are readily waiting for them with a better strategy. This whole idea of antagonism makes war and hunting practices highly risky and dangerous affairs.

Perhaps that is why people of Tēgede and Armačiho take hunting practice and war as one means to elaborate their manhood and bravery. Upon their return from these adventurous and dangerous missions, they burst out with heroic recitals. In their recitations, they point out the danger they encounter, and the actions they take to overcome it. The hunter, for instance, remembers the dangerous moment of facing his hunt (a lion) as follows.

ጎፈር ተቆጦ ጥርሡን ሲያፈሽክ፤
ልቡ አይገመግም እግሩ አይሸሽ፤
ሀየቱ ጎፈር ሊበላኝ ቢል፤
ከሠከሥኩበት ያን ሁላ ማት፡፡
ጎፈር ሞኝ ነው እኔን ሊበላ፤
በእርሣሥ ዳር አየ መከራ፡፡



When *gofar* (the male lion) got angry
And gave me a grin,
No fear in his heart,
Nor his feet surrender;
When *gofar* came to devour me
Gave him I, a hail of bullets.
A fool is, in deed, *gofar*
For contemplating eating me
He is wasted by my bullets.

The hunter is a hostile creature in the territory of the lions. The lion reveals this hostility by showing him his grin. The hunter knows that this means his presence invites danger. He also knows that the lion may pounce at him at any time. It is repeatedly cited in the above lines. However, despite all these, the hunter manages to escape the attack.

Similarly, here is a heroic recital where the hunter escapes from being victim of a lion. He extols his M-1 rifle for saving him from possible danger.

ገዳይ ጎፈሩ
በሀምሌ ነሀሴ በወሽንፍሩ
ጎፈር ተቆጦ ሊበላኝ

የኦሞ ብረት ገላገልኝ

Killer of *Gofer* (a lion with a mane)
In the months of *Hamle* and *Nehasie* (rainy seasons)
In the time of heavy shower
When the *Gofer* got angry, was to pounce on me
This M-1 rifle did save me.

Heroic recitals (*Fukkera*) about the deadliness of battles, with vivid description of blood curdling sights and scenes of battlefields could be taken as instance to elucidate the theme of danger.

የጠቅል አሽከር የጠቅል ሎሊ
ጀግና ሲሰበር እንደ-በርሊ
ገዳይ ደባት ገዳይ ደባርቅ
አንዱ ሲነሳ አንዱ ሲወድቅ
ይደምቃል ተኩሱ እንደሙብረቅ

*Teqel's*⁶ servant, *Teqel's* soldier
Whence a hero breaks like goblet
Killer at Dabat, Killer at Debark
When one falls and another staggers up
Spectacular is the thunderous noise of gun fires,

The fragility of a hero is metaphorically compared with goblet. This implies the presence of danger in a war. The danger is death; and there is no worse danger than death itself. The poet tells us death is inevitable to anyone - hero or coward. The very choice of words like “killer,” which entails death of someone, also reveals the presence of danger though it is on the part of the enemy.

In the last two lines the rising and falling of warriors signify the death and casualties of the warriors. The noisiness of the battlefield also reveals how the war reaches at its peak. In every bullet fired, there danger rides.

In several of heroic recitals we treated in the previous sections, especially, those recitals related to war and hunting carry theme of danger.

⁶ Teqel= Horse name of Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, 1931-1974.

To sum up, heroic recitals of Ṭegede and Armačiho woredas encompasses different themes. These are themes of bravery, patriotism, generosity, hard work, danger, and others like regret, and loyalty which are not discussed in this study. The societies include these themes when they praise and glorify individuals who exhibit exceptional feat in a war, hunting, work, and in keeping the social values and codes of conduct which the society have developed and adopted.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

Heroic recital (*fukker*) is a special kind of oral poetry that is usually recited to boast the bravery, hard work, the generosity, and other many good qualities of an individual (usually male) in North Gondar zone. In this study attempts have been made to discuss the occasions, functions, and the most recurring themes of heroic recitals of People's of Tēgede and Armačiho woredas.

As far as occasions are concerned, heroic recitals are mainly recited after a successful hunt (kill), on departure and return from the war, on the funeral of a hero, and on public gatherings and feasts such as weddings, holidays, etc. Out of these occasions, the funeral ceremony is the most frequently used occasions in North Gondar these days. Since the practice of hunting is banned, we do not find hunting occasions anymore these days; however, we find elderly people with their hunting heroic recitals. These people some times recite it on public occasions to entertain the audiences and to boast of their prowess. War related heroic recitals are also in a declining state. This is because battles seem to be for the modern army. Also the fact that the military personnel are from different ethnic and social, and academic background, means there is almost no room for them. This in a way affects this tradition.

If we examine the olden time when patriots of North Gondar had to fight the Italian invaders, there was no organized military. The people had to mobilize themselves. Since the organization was homogenous, people with the same cultural background, going to battle together they used heroic recitals to agitate their kin, countrymen to join them, or to fill with courage those who are with them.

In the treatment of the major functions of heroic recitals, it is discussed that heroic recitals play significant roles in recording the local history. For this reason, it can serve as supplementary source in reconstructing the history of the local people in particular, the nation at large.

Heroic recitals can also be used as an instrument to instigate warriors to wars. People of North Gondar have used it during the Italian invasions, and it helped them so greatly to achieve victory.

Warriors gathered determination, strength, and a will to win from heroic recitals. Heroic recitals have the power to create solidarity, and sense of patriotism.

The other function of heroic recital is to inspire the society to exhibit exemplary manners. This one is the most practical one these days. As compared to the olden time, men do not have to go to war or hunting to attest themselves as hero these days. If one exemplifies the socially desired manners, he can be held as a hero. These manners are reflected through generosity, hard work, success in ones pursuit, bravery, and keeping the social values, etc. These are foundation to maintain the integrity of the community and to foster the economic development of the country.

Entertainment function of heroic recitals should not be overlooked. Because of its highly poetic nature and artistic manner of presentation, it has the power to command the attention of the audience. People usually appreciate and respect good reciters (*fokkaris*).

Heroic recitals encompass varieties of themes. But the most recurring ones are themes of heroism, generosity, danger, and patriotism. Under heroism themes of bravery, fortitude, and hard work are treated for they are criterion to qualify a man as a hero. A time of war and hunting demand a daring heart, skill, and perseverance to come out victorious. Cowards have no shares in this. So in the heroic recitals recited after a war and a successful hunt one finds glorification of an individual's bravery and prowess.

When a successful and skilled farmer dies, heroic recitals that recount, glorify his hard working nature, his generosity, and his other exemplary manners would be composed to him. Heroic recitals also usually are recited to acknowledge and remember the patriotic deeds done and the sacrifices made by the patriots of Ethiopia to defend their country from the foreign invaders at different times in the past.

In general heroic recitals are very significant genres of oral poetry in the lives of people of North Gondar. It helps the society to maintain their social values across time. It also preserves the local history wisdom, and artistic value of the society. Therefore, it should be given due attention in preserving this national treasure to the next generation.

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Appendix 1 – Lists of Informants

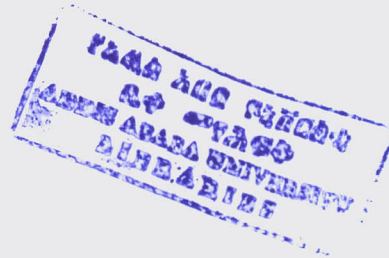
<u>Names of interviewee</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of interview</u>
Ato Alemu Nega	Gondar city	14/02/2009
Ato Getenet Yerga	Sanja (Armačiho)	16/02/2009
Ato Atinaw Shiebie	Jano (Tegede)	20/02/2009
Ato Melknew Shiebie	Serkua (Tegede)	19/02/2009
Ato Geberehiwot Kidanmariyam	Serkua (Tegede)	21/02/2009
Ato Tesfaye Tessema	Serkua (Tegede)	12/02/2009
Ato Birihan Bayehu	Sanja (Armačiho)	16/02/2009
Ato Eyaya Adugna	Gondar city	27/02/2009
Ato Alemayehu Bera	Gondar city	28/02/2009

Appendix 2 -Recordings and Observations

-Funeral Cermony of Ato Ayenā Nega - - video tape, 26-2 1995 E.C. at Debark town and Gondar city.

-Funeral Cermony of Ato Birhanu Dessie -- audio recording, 15-7-1999 E.C.at Shani, Tegele woreda

-Funeral Cermony of Ato Ertachew Kebede - - audio recording, 21-3-1998 E.C. at Gondar City.



Appendix 3 - Interview questions

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Place of residence
- ✓ Who performs heroic recitals?
- ✓ To who are heroic recitals composed?
- ✓ What are the major occasions where a heroic recital (fukkera) is performed?
- ✓ What function do heroic recitals serve in this area (Tegede or Armačiho)?
- ✓ When poets present heroic recitals, how do they perform it?
- ✓ What is the role of the audience?
- ✓ What's the society's attitude towards heroic recitals?
- ✓ What are the main subjects of heroic recitals or what heroic recitals are about?
- ✓ Would you perform any heroic recitals you know?

Appendix 4- Heroic Recitals (*fukkera*) according their Themes

1.Heroism in War and Hunting (bravery,fortitude)

በዝና ዉሎ ለማነጋገር
 ጎፈር ገዳይ ከሠዳን አገር
 በላብኝ ብሎ ድሃ ሲያሰቅሥ
 ጠየለታለሁ ወርደህ ውቀስ
 የገባር በሬ ሲበላው ጎፈር
 የንጉሥ አስራት በምን ይከፈል።
 ገዳይ በአም በአፈ ደምዳማ
 ቁጭ ብሎ ቆየው እንደደካማ
 የባቲ ወንድም የኮራ
 የተንጠራራ
 ሽቅብ ይፈላል እንደገብ ጠላ
 የደሤ ጥይት አይሄድም ብላሽ
 ደም እየጠጣ ብርንዶ ጎራሽ
 አባቱን መሥሎ የተወለደ
 ፊቱ እንደሀምሌ የተገመደ
 የመሥላል ሀምሌ አከባበዱ
 ጎፈር ተጋዳይ በልጅነቱ
 ስንቁን አድርገልኝ ከማለትማ
 ገሎ ይመጣል ያጎበዝማ
 የጀግኔ ወንድም የዚያ ወዘላ
 የመብሬ ወንድም የዚያ ወዘላ
 ጎፈር በፊቱ ጎፈር በኃላ
 በዋል ገዳይ ሲዞር ደመና
 የጎፈር እናት አረኪት መና
 ቀጭን ነው ብሎ ሠው አይናቅም
 በአም ብረት የሚገረደም
 የአባበር ልጅ የሠራው ሥራ
 ፍሪዳ በፊት ጎፈር በኃላ
 ጎፈር ሞኝ ነው ሲበላ በሬ
 እርግጥ መኖሩን አልሰማም ወሬ
 የ----- ልጅ ቆላ ወገሬ
 ሲጥለው ዋለ ተሬ ለተሬ
 አወይ እናቴ ብላ ስትል
 ጎፈር ተነስቶ ሲያዝረጠርጥ
 የልቡን ሰራ አባ እርገጥ
 ጠመንጀው አም ጥይቱ ካርታ
 እርገጥ መድሀኔት አመለኔታ
 ሲገል ይውላል ጧትና ማታ
 የመምህሩ ልጅ የቅኔ መሪ
 አንጋዳ ቦታ ጥይት ዘርዛሪ
 በአም ብረት አቀባጃሪ
 ጭር ካለ ቦታ ጉልበት ሠባሪ
 ጎበዝ መሥበሩን ማን አስተማረው
 እርግጥ አመሉ መደበኛ ነው

አትናገሩት እርግጥ ይናገር
 ሠብብቦ ገዳይ እንደቤት ማገር
 ሞኬ በቀኙ ልጅ በግራ
 ከሠክሥኩበት እሣተ ጎመራ
 ግዝት ያርግብኝ ሞት እንዳልፈራ
 በሰላሳ ቁስ በሃምሳ ደብተራ
 የጎፈር ግንባር ፊቱ ዛመራ
 አዙር ገዳይ በጥልያን ሥራ
 በዚያ ቁልቁል በዚያ ደፍታ
 ልቡ አይሸበር ሆድ አይፈታ
 የመብሬ ወንድም የሳልልሽ
 የጣይቱዬ ልጅ የዚያች የወይዘሮ
 ገሎት ይመጣል ተራራ ዞር
 ያለማው አባት የአበራሽ ባል
 ተገባያቸው በሙሉ ቀን

 መገን የከባድ ጌታ
 ገጨው ገዳይ ካንገዳ ቦታ
 በልጅነቱ ማርዳ ሣይፈታ
 ገዳይ እሁድ ጧት
 አስለፈለፉት የጎበዝ ምሽት
 የአባግጠም ልጅ አመል አለበት
 በአስራት ጉልቱ ከተሠቀለበት
 በሀዳር ገዳይ በዚህ ደገላ
 ብቻውም አይደል ከዳገት ጋራ
 የአቶ አብርሃ ልጅ የመኪንቱ
 የድንቃየሁ ልጅ የሴት ወንዲቱ
 አገሩ አወራ ከባላባቱ
 መሃል ጠለሎ ከሹመ ጉልቱ
 ወልቃይት ተወላጅ ከመሳፍንቱ
 ጎፈር ሠቀለ በልጅነቱ
 ያበደው ግልገል ያበደው ጥጃ
 በጊራዴ ብረት ያሥልጣል ደንጅ (ድንጋይ)
 የዘርጋው አሸከር የዚያ እምቢተኛ
 በነጭ ጥይት ዘልቆ የሚያሥተኛ
 የዲቃሎች ዘር የአምሮች ሲሳይ
 በኮሎ ጥይት መከራ ሚያሣይ
 ፊቱ እንደ ሀምሌ የተገመደው
 እንደደመላሽ ደም የለመደው
 ከመኪንቶች የተወለደው
 የአባ ጮሌ ልጅ የአባ ይላቅ
 አልቀረም ዳኘው ሣያውቅ
 ደን ሲመሥል ያነሸሣ (የአንበሣ) ጫንቃ
 የከባድ ጥይት አንድ ሚበቃ
 የዳዊት ወንድም የደባካይቱ

ገና ሲወርድ በልጅነቱ
ዳኘው አብረሃ አለች እናቱ

የጠላት ምሽግ ሚያረገው ባዶ
ጠምዞ ገዳይ በቀኝ በግራ
በልጅነቱ ልቡ የሞላ
ብሬ ወንዱ ብሬ ደንዳና
የተሰፈረው ሱሪ በቁና
ገሎ መፎከር የዘር አለበት
ከጠለቱ ፊት ሳንጃ ሳበበት
አራፊ ዘራፊ
ዘራፍ ሲቆጣ በእርሳስ ገራፊ
ቀልህ አብሮ ጥይት ደጋፊ

ትውልዱ ከዚህ ቆላወገሬ
ይሽነፍጣል እንደ በርበሬ
ከዱር የወጣ ይመስላል አውሬ
ተፈጨ ሲሉት የሆናል ጥሬ

የጠለስ እናት ምነው አትወዛ
ዘጠኝ ወር ሙሉ እሳት አርግዛ
እሳቱ እሳት ወለደው
እፍ እፍ አያለ እያነደደው
የጠለስ ጠመንገር አይሄድም ብላሽ
እራስና እግር ለይቶ ሚመታ
የወርቁ ልጅ የሣልለሽ
ወርዶ ገጠመው ምድር ሲመሽ፤
የደርግ ወታደር በM14 ብረት የሚበላሽ፤
አለ ተብሎ የሚታመነው፤
በጠባብ ጎራ የተፈተነው።።
የአባ ንዴ ልጅ ይሄ ነው ብያ፤
የአባ በርዝ ልጅ ይሄ ነው ብያ፤
ወርዶ ገጠመው ያንን አህያ።።

ገዳይ ከሻቦ፤
ያሞራ ሲሣይ የጅብ ቀለቦ።።
ገዳይ ሠሮቃ፤
እጥፍጥፍ ያለው እንደባህር ዕቃ።።
ገዳይ ማርዘነብ፤
እንቃሣሚ ንብ ጥይት ሲዋነብ።።
ገዳይ አደንድን
የይባሥ ጥይት አይሄድን ጎድን።።
ባያሌ ጊዜ ባያሌ ወራት
ተሻግሮ ገዳይ ያገሩን ጠላት

አንበሣ ገዳይ ትልቅ ጎፈሬ
ሠኞ ጠመደው እንደአውራ በሬ።።
ጎፈር ተቆጦ ጥርሡን ሲያፈሽክ

ልቡ አይገመግም እግሩም አይሸሽ
የጎፈር ልቡ ማልዶ ቢክደው፤
የጥይት ምሣ አስተናገደው
አበራ ነጋ ተኳሽ አረደው።።

ተው ጌታ
ጠመንጃው ንንዴ ሱሪው ቡታንታ፤
ራስና እግር ለይቶ ሚመታ፤
የሚያፍረሽረሽ አለው በሽታ፤
የሴትዮ ልጅ የዚያች ቀምጣላ
ካልደረሱበት የማይጣላ፤
ከተጣላማ ወርዶ ተኳሽ
ተኳሽ ዝቅ አርጎ ከመረገጫው
መታው ታፋውን ከመረገጫው
እጅንን መታው ከመጨበጫው
ባፉ አገባበት በማላመጫው
የኢትዮጵያ ልጅ የተጀነነው
ከአንጋታ ቦታ የሚለመነው።።

ሺህ ጦር ቢመጣ(2)
አይከብደው እዳ
እርሳስ ለጣሊያን ቀልህ ለሜዳ
ይሽ ያገር ጠላት የአለም ግድግዳ
ወዶ ሚጠቅም ጠልቶ ሚጎዳ፤
ጠላቱን ያርዳል እንደፍሪዳ
እሪ ሲል አገር ላሙ ሲነዳ፤
አየር ሲተኩሥ ሲሆን ነጎዳ፤
ጥይት ዘርዛሪ ንል ቀንጣ ሜዳ
እሁድ ወጥቶ ሠኞ ማለዳ
አሥጋጠው አፈር ያንን ይሁዳ።።
ከሮማ መጦ የገባው እዳ
አስደበደበው ሀሙስ ማለዳ
ገዳይ ንልቀንጣ
ፈሪ ሲጨነቅ ጀግና ሲቆጣ፤
ጅኔራል ገዳይ ባለባርኔጣ
ያውም በቁሙ ነብሱ ሣይወጣ፤
ቀኝ እጁን ይዞ ጎቶ ሚያመጣ
አሥራ ሁለት ቀን ተገዳይ ቀንጣ፤
የአባይ መትረጌሥ ቂጡ እያወጣ
የወጣለት የጦር ሠቀቀን
ቀንጣ ላይ ገዳይ በሠኞ ሮብ ቀን
የተሠማ ልጅ የዚያ ትልቅ ሰው፤
የመንገሻ ልጅ የዚያ ትልቅ ሰው፤
የመኮንን ልጅ የዚያ ትልቅ ሰው፤
የነጩን አውራ በደም ለወሠው፤
ሥሙ አይረሣ እንዲህ ያለው ሠው።።
ፈሪ ተቀመጥ የለህም ተራ
ወዴት ኑረሃል ሲሠበር ግባ
ግባ ሲሠበር ባሩዳ ሲነፍሥ
አርበኛው መጧል እያለው ደሥ
ወልወል አይለቅም እንዳውራ ዶሮ

የመጣ ወታደር ያዘው አባር
ቁመቱ ረጅም ልቡ ተራራ፤
ያለፈጣሪው ሠው የማይፈራ፤
የተፈተነው በጠባብ ጎራ፤
የተገረፈው በእርሣስ ጨንገራ፤
አየር በሠማይ ያገመገማል፤
ላውንቸው በታች ይወረወራል፤
መትረጌሱ በግሩ ይሸከረከራል፤
ገዳይ ሸንቦቆ ጦር ሠራዊት፤
ያለምነሽ ወንድም የድንቁ አጎት።
ከላሽ ሲተኮሥ ሙለና ተራ፤
አወይ በወንድ ልጅ ያለ መከራ፤
በካር ካልሄዱ ምላጭ ካልሳቡ፤
ሱሪ አይገኝም በዚያ ቤት ቢያሥቡ፤
የጦሩ ገበሬ የጦሩ ክርካር፤
የሚናገረው ከትልቅ ሠው ጋር።
አታሎ ገዳይ እንደጨዋታ
ሆዱ አይሸበር ልቡ አይፈታ።
የኮራ የተንጠራራ፤
በጋሻው ልክ የተሠራ፤
በአፉ ተናግሮ በጁ ሚሠራ።
እንሸሽ ብሎ ጀግና ሲጨነቅ፤
የጠራ ጌታ ጣለበት መብረቅ፤
ከታች ንጉሱ ከላይ እራሱ፤
ሲዋጋ ዋለ ቆርጦ ለነብሱ።
የጠራ ጥይት ብልት አዋቂ፤
እንደግራምጣ መሃል ሠንጣቂ፤
በኮሎ ጥይት አደባላቂ።
ነጭ በጥቁር ዘንቆ ገዳይ፤
በሃይማኖቱ አልጋ አደላለዳይ፤
ሲከተል ውሎ ደል አደረገው፤
አዴት ተወልዶ አዴት ያደገው፤
አይቀርም ጠራ ሳይበጠብጠው።
ኸረ አባ ጠራ አይነ ቅብቅቡ፤
አይስትም ጥይቱ ሲርገበገቡ።
ልቡ የሞላ እንደነብር፤
አተኳኮሱ
ከጠመንጃው ላይ ጋኔል አለበት፤
ከጫንቃው ወግቶ አፈለቀበት።
የጠቅል አሽከር በጥብቅ ያደገው፤
በእርሳስ ሚያተላ እንደገመደው
እንደአቡጁዴ አብጠለጠለው
ደም እያስተፋ ጥሎ ገፈፈው፤
ከአንጋዳ ቦታ ጥብብ ካለ ቦታ የተፈተነው፤
አንዱን መኪና ባደውን አስቀረው
ነብሥ አለው ብዬ ነብስ የሌለው
መኪና ደፊ ከሚሄደው
ጥይት ተከሶ ቀልህ አብራሪ፤
አፈር የመሠለ ማንዳ አባራሪ፤
ጀት ቢመጣ ቢሆን ነጎዳ፤

ኸረ አባ ጣራ ሰሞት አይፈራ፤
መኪና ደፊ ባንዳ እንደሞላ
ሻማ አስመሠለው ፋሽሽቱን
በልኩ ይሞታል እንደግስላ

2.Heroism in Work (hard work)

የቋዳ ልጅ ነው የነልጅ ደሴ
 የልቡን ሰሪ እንደሰላሴ
 የቆራጥ ልጅ ነው የነደመቀ
 በሬ ገራፊ እያስጨነቀ
 የአስረሳ ልጅ ነው የነአባዲማ
 የሌለም ይጠይቅ ያለህም ስማ
 ይነገርለት የጠለሥ ስራ የጠለስ ሙያ
 ጠለሥ መድሀኒት ደህናው ገባር
 ጎተራ ተካይ በግቱ አገር
 ጸረ ተው ሌባ አርሰህ ብላ
 ገሀነቡ ሣት እንዳትበላ
 ወንዱ አባቋዳ
 አንተን ሲወልዱ በሙሉ ሴት
 ከአጠናነስ ነው ስም ከማውጣት
 የህዝቡ ብርሃን ብሎ ማለት
 ስም ከፍ ያለ ከርስት ከጉልት
 በጎናት በወንድም ኑሮህ ከራት
 አንተ የደካማ የህዝቡ አባት
 ማን አሰቦት ነበር አንተን ለሞት
 ወንድ ነኝ ማለት
 እንደጠለስ በርሃ አርሶ ነው
 ሰው መግደልማ ከኑኔ እንጂ ነው
 በስመአብ ወልድ መንፈስ ቅዱስ
 ማረሻውን ስሎ ለሁሉ ማደርስ
 ማረሻ ስሎ ድግሩ ከሌላ
 ቆላና ደጋ አርሰህ ምትበላ
 የአገሩ አውራ ያገሩ መሪ
 ያባ ገዴ ልጅ የፊታውራሪ
 ይህ የቤቴ ልጅ የተጠናቀቀው
 ጦቢያ ሁሉ በሙሉ ያወቀው
 የይልማ ልጅ የተንጠራራ
 ባለሻኛም ነው ባለ ጋታማ
 አርሶ፤ አምርቶ፤ አፍሶ፤
 ስመ እግዝሄርን የሚያስጠራ
 ከበሬ በሬ መርጦ ማጠምድ
 ከጥገት ጥገት መርጦ ማጠግት
 በተስኪያን ስሞ የሚያጠልት
 ይህን ሁሉ ጊዜ ሲኖር ስልሳ ዓመት
 አይሰርቅ፤ አይቀጥፍ፤ አይወሳልት፤
 ደህና ገበሬ ባለአንደበት
 በሰኔ ግንቦት አስፍተህ ተላሚ
 በፈንዛ ጅራፍ በሬ ገራፊ
 ቅርጫት ከጎተራ አደጋጋፊ
 ሰው አይነካም ደርሰው ካልነኩት
 በኃላ እያማ ካለ በግንባር ካለ በፊት

አንተ የሴቶች ጠበቃ የወንዶች ጋሻ
 ከባድ ገበሬ ባለ ማረሻ
 እስኪ ዝም በሉ እኔ ልንገራችሁ
 ፈሪ አይጠምደው የሱ በሮች
 ያውቁልኝ የለ ባልንጆሮቹ
 አይ አተራረስ ከደህና ቦታ
 ሸርፋ አደላዳይ የሶሪ ጌታ
 ሰፋ ካለ ምድር ወርዶ ማደርስ
 አሞጭ የመሰለ ነጭ እህል ማደፍስ
 ያጣ ተጠርቶ የሚበላበት
 ስመ እግዝአብሄር ማጠራበት
 አስራት በኩራት ማከፈልበት
 የሞተ ሰው ማፈታበት
 ጎተራው ልዩ ነው የወንድ ቤት
 በሰኔ በግንቦት አስፍቶ አራሽ
 በሐምሌ ነሐሴ ሳር የሚያሽ
 እንዲህ በጥቅምት እሽት አድራሽ
 በጥር የካቲት ምርቱን አፋሽ
 አገር ያውቀዋል እኔም አልዋሽ።
 የተንጣላለ ትውልዱ የጠራ
 እንደ ሃምሌ ውሃ ልቡ የሞላ
 ባለቅርጫት ነው ባለጎተራ
 ሚስቱ ጥሩናት ግብሯ ወለላ
 የተራብክ ሰው ግባና ብላ
 ለተራብ አብልቶ፤ ለተራቆተ አልብሶ
 ስሞ ይሰሳል ራስ ዳሶ
 ነቅናቂ በእርፍ ገሬ በድግር
 የእህል አምራጫ የምታበቅል
 ጣቃ ባለ ሜዳ የምትመነጥር
 ከዚህ እናት አባትህ አገር
 ሰኞ ማክሰኞ አጋም መንጣሪ
 እሁድ ቅዳሜ ቤተስኪያን ሳሚ
 ሀምሌ ግምግም ሰኔን ሲያጓራ
 በሾር በሾሩ ውሃ ሲሞላ
 አርሶ ማደደላድለው ሸርፋ ከጎተራ
 የበቅሎዎች ጌታ የነሳሙኔ
 ከሰፊው ሽና ወርዶ እርፍ ነቅናቂ
 ለራብው ማደቦላ ለጠማው አሰጠማቂ
 ከሠፊው ሽና ወደ ተላሚ
 ወርዶ ተልሞ ውሎ ማደመሽ
 አንድ ውድማ ቅርጫት ማደፍሰው
 ገበያ ማደጠግብ በአዋጅ ቢነገር
 ዋሽቼ እንደሁ ይመስክር ሰሜን ቤጊምድር
 የሚያርሰው በቶርቶር / ትራክተር/ ነው
 የሚሄድ በላንድሮቨር ነው
 ዳጆፍ ሰፊነው የጋን መውረጃው
 ቁምና አብላ ቅዳና ስጠው
 የአርሶ ጠጋብ ጌታ ብሎ የሚለው
 ማደደቦና መጋቢት ሞፈር ቀንበር ነዳይ

ሕዳርና ታህሳስ ቅርጫት አደላዳይ
ሀምሌና ነሀሴ ራብ ችግር ገዳይ
ተል ተሎ አባመስጠት በራዱ ዶልዳሌ
በበሬ ያርስ ነበር ዳጉሳና ቡሌ
ብርሀኑ ቀረ ያሽብር ሽማግሌ
በቀጭን ጋቢ 'ሚሸቀበነነው
የአባ ዘርዘር ልጅ የተቀደሰው
የደጃማች ዘር የተቀደሰው
ከቫቮ ወርዶ የሚያሳርሰው
ነጭና ጥቁር ባንድ ላይ 'ሚያፍሰው
በዚታ መኪና የሚያመላልሰው
የጠለስ ጌታ ያ ትልቅ አውራ
ያባ ጎዲ ልጅ ያ ጎዳዳ አውራ
የደጃች ጠለለ ልጅ ያጎዳዳ አውራ
አርሶ እንደፋርሶ ሰርቶ የኮራ
በሀይማኖቱ ተከራካሪ
አርብ ሮብ የሚ
እሁድ ቅዳሜ በተስኪያን ሳሚ
ሰኞ ተነስቶ ዳዩት ደጋሚ
በርሃ ወርዶ መነጠር መንጣሪ
ጉምባ 'ሚያህል ክምር ከማሪ
የመሸበትን አሳዳሪ
ለገደደው አበዳሪ
ልብ ላነሰው መካሪ
ያባ ጠለሥ ሙያ ይነገርለት
ሰአቱ ረጀም ነው ሚያዚያና ግንቦት
ያገሩ ልጆች መጣገንላችሁ
የወንዙ ልጆች መጣገንላችሁ
ሰሙ ምቹ ነው እንደኮርቻ
በዚህ እርሻ ነው በዚያ ዘመቻ
ሞተር 'ሚገዛ ብቻ ለብቻ
በሥመ አብ ብሎ ጀማሪ
በሃይማኖቱ ተከራካሪ
ራስ የሚሄድ ከላሽን ገሪ
ሠኞ ማክሰኞ በሬ ገርጋሪ
አረብና ሀሙስ አርብን ጨምሮ
ወይፈን አራቂ
እሁድ ቅዳሜ ሰው አስታራቂ
ያላረገውን አልሞሽም እኔ
የጥቅሥ መላሽ ደንደሃም በሬ
በጣም አራሽ ነው ቆራጥ ገበሬ
ልናገርለት እንሄድ ወሬ
አራሽ በግንቦት በአባ ገሪማ
አራሽ በሰኔ በተጋባት
አራሽ በሀምሌ በውሀ ሙላት
አራሽ በነሀሴ በቀን ጨለማ
አራሽ በመስከረም በሳር አበባ
አጫጅ በጥቅምት በአውላላው ሜዳ
ማበደር ነውጂ አይወድም እዳ
ሽና ሠንጣቂ እንደፍራዳ

የፈሪ ምክር ዙሪያው ገደል ነው
ግጠሙ እንግጠም ቀኑ የኛ ነው
የሰነፍ መንገድ ዙሪያው ገደል ነው
እረሱ እንረስ ቀን የኛ ነው
አራሽ በሰኔ በተጋባት
አራሽ በሀምሌ በውሀ ሙላት
አራሽ በነሀሴ በቀን ጨለማ
ምነው በሬው ቢፈከርበት
ቦሾሩ ሲሄድ ውበት ያለበት፤
አህዬ አምሥት የሚከመርበት፤
ምሬው ብዙ ነው የሚገባበት፤
ሚንሾኑ ሠባት ሚመሽንበት፤
ማንኪያው አራት ነው ሚጣልበት፤
ወንፊቱ ሀለት የሚነፋበት፤
አቁማዳው ሃያ ሚቋጠርበት
አህያው አሥር ሚጫንበት
የመጫኛው ቆራጣ የለው፤
የአቆማዳው ቀዳዳ የለው፤
የዳውላውም ዝሪንጦ የለው፤
የባልንጀራው ወደር የሌለው ፤ሲል ነው
ኸረ ተወ ሌባ(2) ሠርተህ ማትበላ ሲል ነበር
የሠውን ፍል ከመመልከት፤
የሠውን አህያ ከመመልከት፤
የሠውን በሬ ከመመልከት፤
ገጆም (ገጆራ) ይዞ ከዱር መግባት።
አከታከቱ አለው ዓይነት
ወደል ገመር ገብተህ እንደመቁረጥ
ካልቆረጡት የገመርን ወደል፤
ካልቆረጡት የግራርን ለጋ፤
ይጠገጥጋል የራብ አለንጋ።
ያልገደለውን ገደለ አልልም፤
የምትፀድቁውን ነብሥ አላስኮንንም፤
ያልገደለውን ገደለ ማለት
በላይ ከነኔ በታች ቃል ከለት ሲል ነበር
የሴቶች ወንድም የወይዛዝር፤
የሴቶች አባት የወይዛዝር፤
ትውልዱ ሰፊ ዳር እስከዳር፤
ሰሜን በሙሉ በንምድር።

3. Patriotism

ጉዳይ ፀሃይ ሃይወጣ፤
ጠላት ገፋሬ ባለባርኔጣ፤
ያውም በቁሙ ነብሱ ሃይወጣ፤
ጠላት ተጨንቆ መድረሻ ሲያጣ፤ ሲል ነበር
በመጀመሪያው ጣሊያን ሲመጣ፤
ነጭ ሠው ገዳይ ባለባርኔጣ
ገዳይ ተከዜ ገዳይ ተከዜ
የሠው ጭንቅላት ሲመሥል አዋዜ

አሁን ገባ፣ ገባ ወገራ፤
ቦታ ካለው ሀገር ስም ሚያሥጠራ፤
አያና ነበር ያገርኝ አውራ።።
ዘራፍ ብሎ ዘራፍ ሲለካ፤
የመንግስት አሽከር የዱር አንበሳ፤
ደንበር ጠባቂ ዘር ሚያኮራ
ማህላ አለበት ሞት እንዳይፈራ
ቆላ ተኩሶ ደጋ ሚመታ
ባሩዱ ጥቁር እርሳሱ መንታ
ትመለሃለህ ብዬም አልነበር
አባሮ ገዳይ ጠልቆ እንደ ጀንበር
አባሮ ገዳይ ጅረት ለጅረት
ተናንቆ ገዳይ አንገቱ ላንገት
እጥፍጥፍ ያለው እንደበለሴ፤
ነብስ አሠናባች እንደሥላሴ ።
አያና ነጋ ጀግናው ነብር
ማን ይደፍራታል ያንተን አገር
ከወለዱ አይቀር ካልቀረ ምጡ፤
እንደ አያና ነጋ እንደረመጡ።።
የኢትዮጵያ ልጅ የተጀነነው፤
ልቡን በቁና ሠፍሮ ያኖረው
የደልድል ጌታ
ገዳይ ከየሸንተረሩ፤
ገዳይ ከሸቅቡቱ፤
ገዳይ ከቁልቁለቱ፤
ገዳይ ደባርቅ፤
አንዱ ሲነሣ አንዱ ሲወድቅ
ተኩሱ ይደምቃል እንደመብረቅ
የዘልሥ አሽብር የውቃው ጌታ፤
ጠመንጃው ባሩድ ሱሪው ቡታንታ፤
ጅው ጅው ጅው ሲል የጣሊያን ኮዳ
ሲጥለው ዋለ እንደፍሪዳ
የዘልሥ አሽብር የውቃው ጌታ የተጀነነው
ውስኪ ጨብጦ ውሥኪ ሚናፍቀው
የሴትዬ ልጅ የዚያች ጥሩ ሠው
የቸገረለት በሮ ሚደርሰው
ጦር መጣ ሲሉት አጥባቂ አራቂ፤
ጭው ካለው ሜዳ ቃታ ፈልቃቂ
የተጨነቀ አገር ጠባቂ
የራቀ ጣሊያን በርሣሥ ጠያቂ
ብዙ ሠላቶ ካፈር(ከአፈር) ደብላቂ፤
የሚያፍነጀንጅ እንዳረቂ
እንኳንስ ወንዱ ሴቱ አዋቂ።።
እንኳንስ ወንዱ ሴቱም ያውቃል።።
ተኩሱ እንዳረቂ ይሠነፍጣል።።
የጣሊያን ጫማው ውቃቤ ያርቃል።።
ጓንዴ ጠመንጃ ያ ጎዳዳ፤
አምነው ከተውት ልቡ የማይከዳ፤
መሸገት ያውቃል የነጭ እንግዳ፤
ጓንዴ ጠመንጃ ያ ዲሞፍተር፤

አውርዶ ከአልጋ ጨማሪ ከፈር።።
ምንሽር ብረት አይወድም ዋዛ
ካልተኮሱበት አፉ እስኪወዛ።።
ጠላት ይሄዳል እጅ እያነሣ።።
ገዳይ መተማ ጉም በጋረደው
ባዲሱ ጓንዴ ባልተሞረደው
በጥይት ጥሎ በሣንጃ አረደው
የኢትዮጵያ አርበኛ ደም የለመደው
አቆላለፊ እንደገመደው
ጣሊያን ሲጠላው መንግስት ወደደው
የነጭን ካንቦ ማልዶ አነደደው
ዝናርክን ፍታ ብረትክን ድርድር
እያለ ጣሊያን አዋጅ ሲነግር
አሞራው ውብነህ ነበር በዱር
ደፋር አዳነ ነበር በዱር
የኢትዮጵያ አርበኛ የጠቅል አሽከር
የኢትዮጵያ አርበኛ የተጀነነው
ልቡን በቁና ሠፍሮ ያኖረው፤
የተቸገረ ዕለት የሚለመነው
መቶ ሃምሳ ጣሊያን አግብቶ እንደከብት
ለዚህ ባንዴራ ሠጠው በረከት
እንደወልቃይት እንደጠገዴ
እንደ አርማጭሆ እንደጋይንቱ
የዘልሥ አሽብር ይምጣ ጋይንት
ቀን ባይሣካ ይደርሣል ሴት
የዘልሥ አሽከር ደብረታቦር
ከተናገረ የማያብል
የውቃው ጌታ ይምጣ በለሣ
በአጭር ምንሽር እጅ የሚያሥነሣ
የዘልሥ አሽከር ይምጣ ወገራ
በነጭ ጥይት የሚያንጠራራ
ይምጣ ጠገዴ ይምጣ አርማጭሆ
ይልወሰውሳል ጠላት እንደ አዉሬ
ሺህ ጦር ቢመጣ(2)
አይከብደው እዳ
እርሳስ ለጣሊያን ቀልህ ለሜዳ
ይኸ ያገር ጠላት የአለም ግድግዳ
ወደ ሚጠቅም ጠልቶ ሚጎዳ፤
ጠላቱን ያርዳል እንደፍሪዳ
እሪ ሲል አገር ላሙ ሲነዳ፤
አየር ሲተኩሥ ሲሆን ነጎዳ፤
ጥይት ዘርዛሪ ጓል ቀንጣ ሜዳ
እሁድ ወጥቶ ሠኞ ማለዳ
አሥጋጠው አፈር ያንን ይሁዳ።።
ከሮማ መጦ የገባው እዳ
አስደበደበው ሀሙስ ማለዳ
ገዳይ ጓልቀንጣ
ፈሪ ሲጨነቅ ጀግና ሲቆጣ፤
ጅኔራል ገዳይ ባለባርኔጣ
ያውም በቁሙ ነብሱ ሣይወጣ፤

ቀኝ እጁን ይዞ ጎቶ ሚያመጣ
አሥራ ሁለት ቀን ተገዳይ ቀንጣ።
የአባይ መትረጌሥ ቂጡ እያወጣ

4 Generosity

ሚስቱ ጥሩናት ግብር ወለላ
የተራብክ ሰው ግባና ብላ
ለተራብ ክብልቶ፤ ለተራቆተ አልብሶ
ስም ይሰሳል ራስ ዳሶ
ተል ተሎ አባመስጠት በራዱ ዶልዳሌ
በበሬ ያርስ ነበር ዳጉሳና ቡሌ
አድሽን ክበሪ በልተን ጠጥተን ነበር
የዘገሊላ በልተን ጠጥተን ነበር
የደብረዘይት ዝልል ጠጥተን ነበር
ልጆቹን ሊድር ታላቅ ታናሽ
ሲወድቅ ካራው ሲታደል
የሁሉ መስራች ዋርካው ሲሰበር
ቃሉ ሀቀኛ እንደፈጣሪ
የማያዳላ እውነት ነጋሪ
ያባቱን ባዕላት አርሶ ዘካሪ
ማረሻው ለምለም ህዝብ አሳዳሪ
አራሽ ገበሬ ሞላለት፤
ሁልጊዜ ጥሩ ጮማና ዱለት
አያሳፍርም የእርታቸው ቤት
ብሉ ጠጡ ሲል አያልቅበት፤
ጥሩ ያማረው ሚጠጣበት፤
ህብስት ያማረው ሚበላበት፤
ሁሉ በልቶ ጠጥቶ የሚያድርበት፤
የተቸገረ ቀን የሚመጣበት፤
የተራቆተ የሚሉበስበት፤
የታመመ የሚድንበት፤
የተጣላ ሰው የሚታረቅበት፤
ቤቱ ሰፊ ነው የሚስተናገድበት፤
ነጭና ጥቁር የሚቀርብበት፤
ማርና ወተቱ የሚጠጣበት
ወረዳ አውራጃ የሚያድርበት፤
ብሉ ጠጡ ሲል የማያልቅበት፤
የማያልቅበት ሁላው ዝግጁ፤
ላሙ ከበረት ጠመንጃው ከጁ፤

5. Danger

ገዳይ የዛን ቀን የሽብር ዕለት፤
አያሌው ጀግና የወደቀ ዕለት፤
አያሌው ጎበዝ የቆሰለ ዕለት፤

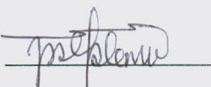
እንደወንድም ነው ከላሽን ብረት።

የውቃው ጌታ ይምጣ በለሣ
በአጭር ምንሽር እጅ የሚያሥነሣ
የዘልሥ አሽከር ይምጣ ወገራ
በነጭ ጥይት የሚያንጠራራ
ይምጣ ጠገዴ ይምጣ አርማጭሆ
ይልወሰውሳል ጠላት እንደ አወሬ
ሺህ ጦር ቢመጣ(2)
አይከብደው እዳ
እርሳስ ለጣሊያን ቀልህ ለሜዳ
ይኸ ያገር ጠላት የአለም ግድግዳ
ወዶ ሚጠቅም ጠልቶ ሚጎዳ፤
ጠላቱን ያርዳል እንደፍራዳ
እሪ ሲል አገር ላሙ ሲነዳ፤
አየር ሲተኩሥ ሲሆን ነጎዳ፤
ጥይት ዘርዛሪ ንል ቀንጣ ሜዳ
እሁድ ወጥቶ ሠኞ ማለዳ
አሥጋጠው አፈር ያንን ይሁዳ።
አየር በሠማይ ያገመግማል፤
ላውንቸው በታች ይወረወራል፤
መትረጌሱ በግሩ ይሸከረከራል፤
ገዳይ ሽንቆ ጦር ሠራዊት፤
ያለምነሽ ወንድም የድንቁ አጎት።
ከላሽ ሲተኩሥ ሙሉና ተራ፤
አወይ በወንድ ልጅ ያለ መከራ፤
በካር ካልሄዱ ምላጭ ካልሰቡ፤
ሱሪ አይገኝም በዚያ ቤት ቢያሥቡ፤
የጦሩ ገበሬ የጦሩ ክርካር፤
የሚናገረው ከትልቅ ሠው ጋር።
አታሎ ገዳይ እንደጨዋታ
ሆዱ አይሸበር ልቡ አይፈታ።
የኮራ የተንጠራራ፤
በጋሻው ልክ የተሠራ፤
በአፉ ተናግሮ በጁ ሚሠራ።
እንሸሽ ብሎ ጀግና ሲጨነቅ፤
የጠራ ጌታ ጣለበት መብረቅ፤
ከታች ንጉሱ ከላይ እራሱ፤
ሲዋጋ ዋለ ቆርጦ ለነብሱ።
የጠራ ጥይት ብልት አዋቂ፤
እንደግራምጣ መሃል ሠንጣቂ፤
በኮሎ ጥይት አደባላቂ።
ነጭ በጥቁር ዘንቆ ገዳይ፤
በሃይማኖቱ አልጋ አደላለዳይ

Declaration

I, the under signed, declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all source of materials used for the thesis duly acknowledged.

Name: Assefa Alemu

Signature: 

Date: June 24 2009