

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES



**A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF FUNERAL DIRGES IN WEST
GOJJAM**

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A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF FUNERAL DIRGES

IN WEST GOJJAM

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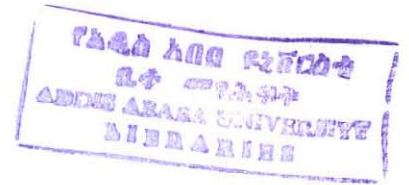
**By
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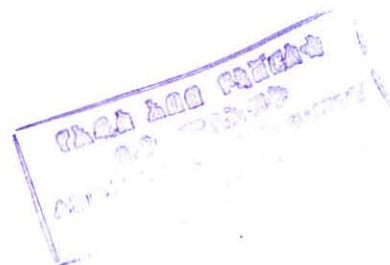
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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to analyze the themes of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam Administrative Zone. To achieve this objective, the researcher has tried to collect as many funeral dirges as possible. All of these dirges are in Amharic language. The collection was carried out by using different methods. Then, the funeral dirges collected through audiotape were transcribed on paper. This is followed by the classification of dirges based on subject matter. After this, some sixty one dirges were selected and translated into English for the sake of the analysis.

This study has five chapters. The first chapter includes introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and, methods and procedures. The second chapter describes the social setting of West Gojjam. The third chapter explains concepts like folklore, oral literature, oral poetry, funeral dirge, and provides a review of related studies and the theoretical framework. The fourth chapter deals with the analysis of funeral dirges. The last chapter is the conclusion of the study.

In this study, the funeral dirges are categorized under five major subject matters. These are thoughts about the deceased, death, God, socio-political issues, and other reactions to bereavement. Under each category, different themes are identified and discussed. To begin with thoughts about the deceased, it is possible to find praise, which is the most common theme in dirges. The sorrowful manner of death and the decisive role of the deceased in the life of the bereaved are also the themes conveyed through dirges. In the second category, the inevitability of death, the unpredictability of death and the existence of life after death are identified as themes. Thirdly, funeral dirges that express the mercilessness God and those that challenge his righteousness are discussed. In the fourth category, funeral dirges which reveal criticism of the manners of the society, the value of homeland, protest against a government and the horror of war are explained. Finally, funeral dirges that show the feelings of loss, helplessness, regret, compassion, and the painfulness of grief are dealt.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Oral literature is a means through which society passes down its rich experience of life from one generation to the other by word of mouth. In this regard, Getie (2000) notes that “through oral literature, the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of any social group is conserved and handed down from one generation to the next” (2). He further claims that oral literature includes a wealth of information which enables one to understand a certain society. This seems to imply that the study of oral literature is also the study of one’s society.

In a similar way, Fekade (1991) says that oral literature helps us to understand “who we are”, “what we have” and “what we lack”. He also asserts that oral literature records the beliefs, philosophy, depression, hopes, aspirations, sorrows, happiness and other values of life.

Accordingly, the study of oral literature needs to be given a prominent emphasis in the academia. In particular, the study of oral poetry, which is one of the genres of oral literature, is important as it is prevalent in every society. Finnegan (1977) says that oral poetry is found in all kinds of human society. In the same way, Getie (2000), quoting Finnegan (1992), and Miller and Greenberg (1988), also says: “Oral poetry is the most common form of oral literature through which people’s internal feelings as well as serious issues are expressed or brought to the fore in response to the social and physical world” (3). This seems to explain to us that oral poetry is a means through which people express their inner most feelings and reactions to social and physical events. Thus, studying oral poetry will be helpful to understand a society’s attitudes towards the social, economic and political issues.

There are different varieties of oral poetry. One of these particular genres of oral poetry in which people’s sorrow and grief are predominantly expressed is funeral dirge.

Taking the aforementioned points into consideration, this study will, therefore, make its focus on the funeral dirges in West Gojjam.

1. 1. Statement of the Problem

Oral literature records the history, culture, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and values of a society. In spite of its great importance, the performance of oral literature in our society is constantly decreasing. The rapid growth of globalization and technological innovation seem to be the reasons that impact on the low prevalence of oral literature in our society. The interest of the young generation in oral literature is also diminishing. The young seem to prefer watching movies and football games of the Western World than attending to the performance of oral literature by elders. The young generation, as a result, is on the verge of forgetting its own culture and is beginning to appreciate a foreign culture. This could lead to the gradual disappearance of oral literature among our society. Thus, there needs to be a systematic collection and documentation of oral literature before it vanishes.

In West Gojjam, where this study is conducted, the performance of funeral dirges is being prohibited in some parts of the Zone. The society, in view of avoiding harmful traditional practices, is being urged to stop performing dirges at funeral ceremonies. Consequently, it seems necessary to collect and document the funeral dirges in West Gojjam before they gradually disappear.

Though the study of funeral dirges is important in different aspects, it has so far been given little attention. Adequate research has not yet been done on funeral dirges, which are one of the genres of oral poetry. In support of this, Berhanu (2002) says that funeral dirge "has not been given the attention it deserves and adequately addressed by scholars in the social sciences." Thus, a study on the funeral dirges is unquestionably important. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, so far, there is no any comprehensive study, at local level, which made its overall focus on funeral dirges.

Taking all these points into account, the researcher will try to answer the following question in the course of the research;

1. What are the themes reflected through the funeral dirges in West Gojjam?

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study is to analyze the funeral dirges of West Gojjam people thematically. To this end, the study has also the following specific objectives:

1. To collect and preserve as many funeral dirges as possible.
2. To classify the funeral dirges based on their subject matter
3. To identify the themes reflected through the funeral dirges of West Gojjam people.

1.3. Methods and Procedures

This study is qualitative. It presents a thematic analysis of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam. To this end, more than 400 funeral dirges were collected from informants, teachers and a team leader in Culture and Tourism Bureau between 19th January and 20th February, 2009. The collection and analysis of the funeral dirges were done by employing different methods and following some procedures.

In order to carry out the field work, a letter of cooperation was first obtained from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature. Next, some necessary preparations for the field work were made. Having a letter that states the purpose of the study, the researcher got a permission to carry out the field work in each wärädas. The first step was to look for former friends who could help throughout the field work. With the help of these friends, informants who are considered to be knowledgeable in composing, performing and reciting were

identified. Twelve informants were chosen from the three wärädäs, four from each. Then, a good rapport was established with the informants. In this regard, Goldstein (1964) says that a collector needs “to establish rapport as quickly as possible and to maintain such rapport throughout the duration of his stay” (47). During the field work in this study, a good relationship with informants was created by means of some incentives. Some of the informants were invited the local *aräqi* and *täla*, and others were given some gifts and money. This has made the informants to be cooperative throughout their stay with the collector. The informants were then informally interviewed and recorded on audiotape. Some informants who did not want to be recorded on tape dictated the texts of the dirges for the collector.

Informal interview is the major data collection instrument used in this study. Providing some contexts for the performance and re-playing their own voice stimulated the informants to recite more dirges. In addition to the chosen informants, some funeral dirges were collected from people whom the researcher met on different occasions by chance.

As most of the informants could not come up with many funeral dirges in the absence of a stimulating funeral ceremony, the researcher employed other methods of data collection. In order to collect some more funeral dirges, Amharic Language teachers at local schools were consulted. The teachers provided a collection of funeral dirges for the researcher. They collected these dirges from their students in the school. In order to check the presence of these dirges in the area, the researcher read the dirges to different elders of the wärädäs and they claimed the ownership of the dirges. A collection of the funeral dirges obtained from West Gojjam Culture and Tourism Office was also used for the purpose of this study.

To have a better understanding of the funeral dirges, some three funeral ceremonies were attended. At this moment, a participant observation was conducted to gain insight about the occasion for the performance of dirges. This

helped to understand how and when funeral dirges are performed. A very limited number of funeral dirges were collected through observation. Due to some cultural reasons, this method was not mainly used to collect dirges. Instead, it helped to understand the circumstance that surrounds the performance of funeral dirges. It also enabled the researcher to know the cultural context in which the dirges are performed.

After the collection of the dirges is completed, the funeral dirges that were recorded on tape were transcribed on paper. This was conducted with the help of the researcher's father as there were obviously some archaic and dialectal expressions unfamiliar to the researcher. Then, some repetitions of dirges were avoided.

Based on the different sources consulted and a close examination of the collections, the funeral dirges were classified into five categories. The number of dirges in each category was determined by the dirge that was already available under each topic. Thus, a total of 261 funeral dirges were appended at the end of this paper. From these, it is only sixty one dirges which were chosen for the discussion of the different themes. Then, with the help of Amharic-English dictionaries, the sixty one dirges were translated into their equivalent English meaning. During translation, emphasis was given to the content than the form of funeral dirges. Some cultural elements were translated directly and, then, explanation was provided in the discussion of each dirge. Each funeral dirge was numbered for ease of reference.

In order to shade light on the themes of some dirges, a contextual description is given. During the collection, informants and some elders in the study area were asked to comment on the themes and describe the context of the funeral dirges. In addition to this, a close examination of the texts of the dirges was carried out to find out the themes. Dorson (1972) explains different theories to the study of folklore. According to him, these theories are not exclusive of each other. However, this study is predominantly dependent upon the contextual theory.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study collected and preserved the funeral dirges in West Gojjam. It may help people in the coming generation to know how their ancestors express their grief and sorrows through funeral dirges. Besides, the study can be helpful for psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians and other researchers who are interested to study the people of West Gojjam. It can also assist folklorists who may conduct their study in the different genres of oral literature. This study can also serve as a document for further research in the area.

1.5. Scope of the Study

In West Gojjam Administrative Zone, there are different genres of oral poetry. However, this study has made its focus on funeral dirges, which is one of the particular forms of oral poetry. The funeral dirges are chosen since they are one of the untapped genres of oral poetry in the area. Besides, it is difficult to deal with all the genres of oral poetry as it could be unmanageable. Thus, the specific genre of oral Poetry i.e. funeral dirges have been the focus of this study. In particular, the themes that were raised in the dirges were examined. As there is no limit to the invention of themes in dirges, the researcher does not want to claim that the themes identified are exclusive.

In west Gojjam Administration Zone, there are about nine Wärädas (districts). However, the study was conducted in the three Wärädas (districts) of the Zone. These are *jabi Tähnan*, *Dämbäčča* and *Däga Damot*. *jabi Tähnan* Wäräda is chosen because the researcher is well acquainted with it as it is his birth place. The researcher believes that conducting the study there has made things easy as it has been possible to identify and contact informants with no difficulty. *Däga Damot* is chosen since it is one of the remote areas in the region. This, the researcher believes, has helped to collect funeral dirges with their original flavor and taste. The third Wäräda (i.e. *Dämbäčča*) is selected as it is simply found

between *jabi Tähnan* and *Däga Damot Wärädas*. This makes it easy to collect data as the Wäräda can be accessed easily.

In general, there are three main reasons for the selection of these Wärädas (districts);

1. The researcher has adequate knowledge of these Wärädas.
2. The chosen areas are neighboring Wärädas. Their proximity to each other makes it easy for transport during data collection.
3. As to the knowledge of the researcher, there has been no research conducted particularly on the funeral dirges of these areas. Thus, the researcher wants to fill this gap.

1.6. Limitation of the study

The collection of funeral dirges was a difficult task. A very limited number of dirges were collected during the actual occasion i.e. at funeral ceremonies. Due to the cultural barrier and the pathos of the situation, it was extremely difficult to record the funeral dirges at the occasion of their performance.

In addition to this, most of the informants could not recite many funeral dirges in the absence of a stimulating funeral ceremony. Some previously identified informants said that they could not come up with any dirge in the absence of a stimulating funeral ceremony. Others said that they do not want recite dirges in the “good times” when nobody is dead. Thus, the researcher had to rely on other methods for collecting the dirges. In this regard, the collection of dirges from local teachers and a team leader in Culture and Tourism Bureau has been found important.

Due to cultural differences, the translation of dirges into English was also a difficult and tiresome task. Since dirges carry some cultural elements, it was troublesome to find their equivalent expression in English. Thus, emphasis was given to the content than the form of the dirges.

Classifying the dirges and identifying their themes have also been a mind boggling task. This is because they are interrelated. Thus, the researcher would like to admit that the categories are not completely exclusive of each other.

CHAPTER TWO

Social setting of West Gojjam

In order to investigate the themes of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam Zone, it is important to understand the overall context in which they are performed. To this end, this chapter tries to give a brief description of the study area and its funeral ceremony.

2.1. Description of the study Area

West Gojjam is one of the eleven zones in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia. It is named after the former province of Gojjam. It is bordered on the south by the Abay River which separates it from the Oromia Region, on the West by Agew Awi Zone, on the North West by Benishangul Gumz region, on the north by Lake Tana, on the northeast by Bahir Dar and the Abay River which separates it from Debub Gonder, and on the east by East Gojjam. Its highest point is mount Amedamit.

The Wārādas in the zone are semen Achefer, Bure Zuria, Bahr Dar Zuria, Yilma na Densa, mecha, Sekela, Quarit, Dega Damot, Dembecha, Jabi Tehnan, Bure, wonberma, Goncha, Debub Achefer, and Finoteselam town.

According to the report of the 2007 population and Housing census of the central statistics agency, this zone has a total population of 2,107,723, of whom, 1,058,775 are males and 1,048, 948 are females. Among the total population, 183, 499 and 1,924,224 live in urban and rural areas respectively. With an estimated area of 13,972.36 square kilometers, West Gojjam has an estimated population density of 174.47 people per square kilometer.

The largest ethnic group reported in West Gojjam is the Amhara (99.43%); all other ethnic groups make up 0.57% of the population, Amharic was spoken as a first language by 99.46% and the remaining 0.54% speak other languages. 98.28% practice Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, and 1.59% of the population

are Muslims. Farming is the occupation of the majority of the people in the zone. The infrastructures of the zone (transport, education, health, telephone, electricity and water supply, and other modern establishments like industries) are still at low levels though they have shown some improvements in recent years.

As far as the history of the beginning of settlements in the zone is concerned, there seems to be no adequate research so far. Yihenew (1996:25) notes that “historical materials about the region are limited to the history of kings and emperors who ruled the region one after the other”. Historians note that the composition of the people of West Gojjam is from different ethnic groups. In this regard, Tadesse (1994), in his article entitled “*Ethiopia in Miniature: the peopling of Gojjam*” puts the following:

The central position assumed by Gojjam following the crucial changes of the 16thc was pregnant with significant events... when the state took refuge behind the great Abay loop, many of its dependants and local subjects followed it there representing...the diverse elements of the pre-16thc. What took effect in Gojjam can therefore be seen as “Ethiopia in Miniature.” ... all the major language families in Ethiopia-Nilo-Saharan, Cushitic, Omotic and Semetic are almost completely represented in Gojjam today (961).

From the above quote, it is possible to understand that the present people of West Gojjam have different ethnic backgrounds.

In order to understand the different interactions and historical events that people went through, it may be better to refer to the different cultures of the people. In West Gojjam, one of such situations that help to understand the

people is a funeral ceremony. In particular, the performance of dirges at funeral ceremonies may be found to be important as it reveals the pathos of the situation at that particular time. With regard to this, the funeral dirge composed by a dirge singer in Gojjam in the 19th century can be taken as a good example. This dirge was composed by a dirge singer who lost her clothes and sheep during the war between King Takla Haymanot of Gojjam and Emperor Yohannes IV of Ethiopia. According to Takla Tsadiq Mekuria (1982), the soldiers of Yohannes IV have confiscated the clothes and slaughtered the sheep of this particular dirge singer who captured her feeling through the following dirge.

በላይኛው ጌታ በባልንጀራዎ፤

በቅዱስ ሚካኤል በጋሻ ጃግራዎ፤

በፅላተ ሙሴ በነጭ አበዛዎ፤

ጎጃምን ይማሩት ፈሪም አንልዎ።

In the name of the lord, your companion

In the name of St. Michael, your defender

In the name of the Tablets of law

Let you have mercy on Gojjam

And we do not take you as a coward.

The above dirge expresses the severity of Yohannes IV attack on Gojjam. The speaker of this dirge is appealing for mercy. Takla Tsadiq Mekuria has used this dirge as evidence for such historical events.

As this study makes it focus on funeral dirges, the following section tries to describe the funeral ceremony in West Gojjam, which is the occasion for the performance of dirges.

2.2. The Funeral Ceremony in West Gojjam

In West Gojjam, the elaborateness of a funeral ceremony varies based on the social status, age, accomplishments, personal qualities and the manner of the death of the individual. Premature and accidental deaths usually involve elaborate ceremonies. This is particularly because the number of people who attend the funeral ceremony in such circumstances is very big.

The moment a person is proved dead; members of his family announce the death by shouting and wailing. Thus, neighbours and relatives in the nearby village come and join the mourning. At this time, elders in the society prepare the body of the deceased for burial. They thoroughly wash the corpse first and arrange the parts of his body for burial. This involves putting hands crosswise, closing the eyes and tying the toes together. Then, the corpse will be covered with a white cotton clothe (usually with *nätäla*). After this, the corpse stays in the house until relatives and friends in the nearby areas have arrived. In the meantime, a messenger is sent to relatives who are far away. For the nearby friends and relatives, there is usually a person who is paid to announce the death of a person. This person announces the death of the person by playing a trumpet loud and then calling the name of the deceased aloud and identifying him with his immediate kinship. The trumpeter says, "Ato__ is dead, come and give a company to his burial ceremony". In some cases, the trumpeter stands on a highland area and announces the death loudly. The residents and relatives, who have heard the death of the man late join the crowd by wailing and then hugging the bereaved family members on the neck. This is usually done to express their sorrow and sympathy to the bereaved. At this time, the male members of the '*idir*', the local association which is responsible for carrying out funeral ceremonies, erect a tent in front of the deceased's house. In the meantime, the priests perform the '*fithat*' (prayers of forgiveness) for the deceased. Some grave-diggers will also be sent to the church. The women members of the '*idir*' are busy preparing a banquet for mourners who come back from the funeral ceremony in the church.

While the coffin leaves the house, members of the deceased family, friends and compatriots are gripped by grief and sob intensely. In the church, it is usually common to see an organized kind of mourning. When some men prepare the grave and the '*fithat*' (prayers of forgiveness) is conducted, the corpse is placed in the middle of the mourners. It is at this moment that funeral dirge singers perform a lot of dirges. The dirge singers are professionals who may be invited and paid. In some cases, the dirge singers show up at funerals and perform dirges without being invited. This happens if they have a close relationship with the deceased. In most cases, the singers perform the dirges with a melancholy rhythm. It is also accompanied by mourners in the crowd. When a dirge is performed, the crowd mourns together by saying 'eh, eh, eh...' or by beating their chest with their hand. When the mourners beat their chest with hands they produce the 'woy... woy... woy...' sound turn by turn.

In the funeral ceremony, dirges make the sorrow or grief intense as they refer to the deceased and touch the feeling of the mourners. It is obvious that dirges invoke sorrow and sympathy in the pathetic situation. In west Gojjam, No wailing is allowed during the performance of the dirges. However, the bereaved may weep. Dirge singers usually perform dirges on behalf of the bereaved. In particular, the dirge singers stress the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased. Through dirges, the personal qualities and achievements of the deceased are celebrated. The sorrowfulness of the manner of the death also finds expression in dirges. Dirge singers, in general, try to break the hearts of the mourners by raising different issues about the deceased, death, God etc. The performance of dirges usually stops when the priests finish their prayers.

After the '*fithat*' (prayers of forgiveness), the mourners will move around the church three times holding the body of the deceased. Then, the corpse is taken to the grave for burial. At this moment, the bereaved and the mourners in general become highly emotional, and wail intensely. As soon as the coffin is

put into the pit, it is the priest who first fills it with a handful of soil. Then after, all the men who are around the pit fill in the pit with shovelfuls of soil. This part of the ceremony does not involve women.

When the burial rite is over, all mourners and the bereaved sit on the field near the grave yard. Then, the elders in society give a blessing which involves wishing the deceased to join the heaven and expressing condolence for the bereaved. After this, the crowd goes to the home of the deceased. At the time the people arrive at the house of the deceased, they get their hands washed and are served with "*Shibra Kolo*" (roasted Chick peas). Then, a banquet will be served to the bereaved and the mourners by the members of the '*idir*'. At this moment, there is always the narration of the circumstance of the death of the person. For three consecutive days, the bereaved receive those who come to condole inside a temporary tent, which was erected by members of the '*idir*'. After three days, the tent will be removed.

For some unlimited time, the bereaved express their sorrow by different ways. They shave their head and leave their beard. The bereaved are also dressed in black and avoid the use of ornaments. At home, the photos of the living will be turned over while the deceased's picture remains as it is. A feast is also served to priests in commemoration of the deceased. This is usually held on the 7th, 12th and 40th day, and every year for the coming seven years. Funeral dirge may, in some cases, be performed at these memorial rites.

After describing the occasion of the performance of funeral dirges, the next chapter will try to discuss the terms, concepts, studies and theories which are related to funeral dirges

CHAPTER-THREE

Review of Literature

In this chapter, a discussion of some basic terms and concepts, and a review of related studies and a theoretical framework will be presented. To this end, the umbrella term i.e. folklore will be explained first. Then, oral literature in general and oral poetry in particular will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion on funeral dirges. Then after, a review of some works related to funeral dirges will be given. Finally, the theoretical framework is briefly discussed.

3.1. Folklore

The term 'Folklore' was first coined in 1846 by an Englishman, William Thoms (Wikipedia). Thoms used this term for what was then called "Popular antiquities." Folklore, thus, embarked on as a study of 'antiquities'. The definition of the term "folklore" has been an issue of academic debate ever since it was coined (Dundes, 1965:1). Different scholars have tried to define folklore in different ways. To begin with, Abrams (1981) defines it as follows; "Folklore ... has been the collective name applied to verbal materials and social rituals that have been handed down... primarily, by word of mouth and by example, .." (66). According to him, Folklore includes 'verbal materials' and 'social rituals.' Georges and Jones (1995) have also defined it as follows:

The word folklore denotes expressive forms, processes, and behaviors (1) that we customarily learn, teach, and utilize or display during face-to-face interactions, and (2) that we judge to be traditional (a) because they are based on known precedents or models, and (b) because they serve as evidence of continuities and consistencies through time and space in human knowledge, thought, belief, and feeling (1).

The above quotation seems to explain to us that folklore represents 'expressive forms,' 'processes' and 'behaviors' that pass down through 'face-to-face interaction' and conserve traditionally obtained human knowledge, thought, belief and feeling. On the other hand, Dundes (1965) tries to define folklore by listing a number of its forms. He believes that 'a definition consisting of an itemized list might be the best type for the beginner.'

Similarly, Dorson (1972) explains the term 'folklore' in terms of its four groupings. These are social customs, performing arts, oral literature and material culture. Okpewho (1992) also says that "... the folklore of a people consists essentially of two kinds of activity: what these people traditionally say (e.g. songs, proverbs, tales) and what they traditionally do (weaving, dance, rituals)" (5). However, for the sake of this paper, it is better to see 'folklore' as it comprises; social customs, performing arts, oral literature and material culture. In the following section, one aspect of folklore i.e. oral literature will be dealt.

3.2. Oral Literature

Oral literature has been given different names by different scholars. Some of these names are 'oral folklore', 'verbal arts', 'expressive literature', 'orature', 'primitive literature', 'traditional literature', 'unwritten literature', 'popular literature', 'folk literature' and 'folklore' (as noted in Greenway (1964), Dorson (1972), Okpewho (1992), Finnegan (1970), Fekade (1991) and others). These scholars who name this genre in different ways have their own reasons for saying so.

In most cases, scholars have not tried to provide the definition of oral literature in exact terms. They, rather, prefer to explain it in terms of its characteristics, functions and forms. Thus, it seems necessary to deal with these aspects of oral literature.



As far as the characteristics of oral literature are concerned, Finnegan (1970) has tried to explain them in detail. One of the major characteristics is 'the significance of actual performance'. Finnegan claims that "oral literature is by definition dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion-there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product" (1979:2). The actual performance is, therefore, the only means through which oral literature unveils itself. The continued existence of oral literature relies on its actual performance. The performance of oral literature can be more realized by devices such as 'expressiveness of tone', 'gesture' 'facial expression', 'dramatic use of pause and rhythm', 'the interplay of passion, dignity or humour', 'receptivity to the reactions of the audience,' etc,(Finnegan, 1970:3).

The second related characteristic of oral literature is 'the question of improvisation and original composition.' In this regard, Finnegan (1970:7) says that the oral artist or "the performer introduces variations on older pieces or even totally new forms in terms of the detailed wording, the structure, or the content". This, according to her, happens during the actual performance through a technique of delivery 'that heightens its artistic effectiveness' (Ibid). She further claims that such type of innovation varies with both genre and individual performer. Changes that occur, in other words, are dependent on the form of oral literature and the skill of the individual performer.

Another important factor which is directly related to actualization and creation of a piece of oral literature is the audience (Finnegan, 1970:10). Since the Oral artist cannot get away from a face-to-face interaction with his audience, he is likely to exploit the situation and be influenced by it (ibid). The audience can be exploited, for instance, in the performance of sung lyrics where the poet acts as leader while the audience performs as a chorus. On the other hand, the presence and reactions of the audience may greatly influence the actual performance. In particular, the type of audience can impact on the mood, content and form of the literary expression (Finnegan, 1970:10-11).

According to Finnegan (1970), the other major characteristic of oral literature is the significance of the actual occasion. She states that the detailed content and form of the oral piece to be performed may be determined by the actual occasion. The particular situations that we consider as occasions are 'funerals', 'weddings,' 'celebrations of victory', 'soothing a baby', 'accompanying work' and so on (Finnegan, 1970:12).

Having all these basic characteristics, oral literature is important in that it has different functions among the society. "One of the major usefulness of any form of literature is that it offers delight and so relieves us of various pressures and tensions both physically and mentally" (Okpewho, 1992:106). During the physical conditions of work, oral literature enables us to keep up the spirits and relieve us of the boredom (Ibid). For people who are exhausted by a day's hard work, they find oral literature as a means of relief and a welcome recreation before going to sleep (Degh, 1965, and Okpewho, 1992). On the other way, oral literature helps as an instrument or a means for the psychological release of the tensions and grieves harbored by the artist (Okpewho, 1992). In this regard, the funeral dirge singer can be cited as a good example.

The other function of oral literature, according to Fekade (1991:17), is its explanatory role. The origin of life or humans and the universe is usually explained in terms of oral literature and in particular, myths. This is to mean that through oral literature human beings get answers to puzzling questions they ask about their origin and the universe. Reinforcing this idea, Okpewho (1992:110) says that "every society or community of people makes an effort to explain certain aspects of nature or the universe in which they live... in the form of a story that sounds reasonably original to the society and its natural environment". He further says that, through oral literature, a society wants "to safeguard its outlooks and interests and thus to establish securely an identity which they can cherish for as long as possible..." (Ibid). Thus, oral literature

can also serve as a means through which society preserves its outlooks and interests towards its environment. Society also builds its identity and natural pride through oral literature (Okpewho, 1992).

Oral literature is also important in that it serves educational purposes. In this regard, Fekade (1991) says that society employs oral literature to teach the wisdom and values that are gained through its life experience. He further says that oral literature shapes the personality of children and the young. In a similar way, Okpewho (1992: 115) states that citizens of a society learn from oral literature "about 'who they are, their origins' and connections, and the peculiar ways of living' and 'behaving that identify them as a people". Thus, it seems that the inclusion of oral literature in the curricula serves an important purpose. Fekade (1991), in this regard, emphasizes the uses of oral literature in the curricula.

Another most significant use of oral literature is that it records the historical events and facts of the past (Okpewho, 1992: 118-19). The five basic stages in life-birth, initiation, marriage, title taking and death-are found recorded in oral literature (Ibid). Oral literature may record events in the life of a society as well as a private citizen (Fekade (1991), and Okpewho (1992). There are also other functions of oral literature which are not discussed in this paper. However, it is important to note here that the functions of oral literature differ from genre to genre. Thus, it may be helpful to be aware of the different genres of oral literature

According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2005), folk literature consists of prose and verse narratives, poems and songs, myths, dramas, rituals, proverbs, riddle and the like. In a way which seems to define the term, Okpewho (1992) says that oral literature includes riddles, puns, tongue-twisters, proverbs, recitations, chants, songs and stories, and it represents only the verbal aspect

of folklore. Getie (2000), quoting Finnegan (1970), says that oral literature can be grouped into two categories. These are poetic and narrative forms which again comprise of different genres. Accordingly, oral poetry is grouped under the poetic genres of oral literature. Thus, the following section will try to explain about Oral poetry.

3.3. Oral Poetry

Many scholars agree that it is difficult to come up with a precise definition of oral poetry. However, some of them have tried to give the definition of oral poetry in simple terms. Taking different points into consideration, Fekade (1991), in his book entitled “Yäsnäqal mämärya” (Introduction to Oral Literature), defines oral poetry as follows:

... a folk poetry that is composed, performed, transmitted and preserved orally and rhythmically through songs, dirges, lamentations and others which have a similar musical element. (86)

According to Fekade, oral poetry is composed and transmitted verbally in a musical tone. He has also pointed out that dirges are a genre of oral poetry.

Nevertheless, Finnegan (1977: 9) asserts that “...many of the generalizations made about oral poetry are over-simplified and misleading”. She says that oral poetry occurs in many different forms. Therefore, “it does not manifest itself only in the one unitary model envisaged by some scholars” (Ibid). She believes that each of the different forms of oral poetry has its own peculiar characteristics, which makes it unique.

The occurrence of oral poetry appears to be culture universal. It is a common phenomenon found in every society. Finnegan (1977), in this case, says that oral poetry is of common occurrence in literate and non-literate human society. She believes that oral poetry is found all over the world. According to her, it is

not something we attribute to the past or the present. It was there in the past and it is all around us at the present time. "It is a normal part of our modern life as well as that of more distant peoples" (Ibid: 6).

Explaining about oral poetry, Fekade (1991) also admits that it may be difficult to have a thorough understanding and appreciation of the beauty and flavor of oral poetry without the knowledge of literature and music. He believes that oral poetry is usually associated with songs. Supporting this, Finnegan (1970) claims that "much of what is normally classed as poetry in African oral literature is designed to be performed in a musical setting, and the musical and verbal elements are thus interdependent" (4). Thus, it seems difficult to explain oral poetry without considering its musical aspect. Finnegan (1977) also believes that we need to include 'ballads and folksongs' in the definition of oral poetry. Similarly, Oring (1986) has a section that deals with "Ballads and folksongs", and Okpweho (1992) tries to explain "songs and chants" in a separate chapter. Both of them do not have a section that treats "Oral poetry" separately. From this, one can understand that Oring (1986) and Okpweho (1992) believe that oral poetry can be explained in terms of songs, ballads and chants. This may imply that it is difficult, in most cases, to elaborate oral poetry without taking its musical aspect into account.

There are different forms of oral poetry. Finnegan (1977) identifies four broad categories of oral poetry. These are epics, ballads, panegyric odes and lyric poetry. Among these, lyric poetry may be considered as universal in human culture (Ibid). She further claims that "Lyric is ...an extremely important and wide category of oral poetry" (1977:13). For her, lyric poetry is associated with 'song'.

According to Finnegan (1997), lyric poetry, which is usually in sung form, consists of love lyrics, psalms and hymns, songs to accompany dancing and drinking, political and topical verse, war songs, initiation songs, 'spirituals',

laments, work songs, lullabies and others. Funeral poetry or Dirge, which is the main focus of this study, can therefore be considered as one kind of lyric poetry.

3.4. Funeral Dirges

In order to understand funeral dirges, it is better to begin with a brief description of the moment that inspires its composition. Then, the concept of funeral dirge will be explained based on the definitions given by different scholars.

Death is among the major events in the life cycle of human beings. It is the “unavoidable lot of mankind.” According to Okpwho (1992), “the idea or experience of death of a relative or friend inspires a variety of reactions ranging from despair to resignation and even courage” (156). Most African people express these sentiments through ‘funeral dirges’ during the ceremonies on the occasion of the death (Ibid). In this regard, Greenway (1964) says that “Dirges-funeral songs- are found among all people, though the forms they take and the emotions they inspire are infinitely varied” (62). He believes that “the finest literary effort of which any people are capable is most likely to be inspired by death” (61). Death may be taken as one of the decisive stages in life which inspires the composition of funeral poems.

Funeral dirge can, therefore, be explained as a form of oral poetry which is composed and performed on the occasion of someone’s death. In his famous book entitled, *A Glossary of literary terms*, Abrams (1981) tries to explain a dirge in comparison with an elegy. He makes the following point about dirge:

The dirge expresses grief on the occasion of someone’s death, but differs from the elegy in that it is short, less formal and is usually represented as a text to be sung.
(46)

According to the above quote, the dirge is a short and less formal lyrical text that laments someone's death. Finnegan (1970) seems to treat dirge as a form of elegiac poetry. She also explains to us that dirges are mostly "sung round the corpse (or round the house in which the corpse lies) while it is being prepared for burial" (148). In this quote, one can understand that dirges are described in terms of their place and time of performance. Similarly, Getie (2000) explains the funeral dirges in Gojjam as follows;

Dirges or funeral songs are composed and performed on occasions of death and burial ceremonies both by men and women with strong voices accompanied with the ability to compose and improvise poems about a variety of issues. (67)

For the sake of this study, it is important to define funeral dirge as a short, lyrical poetic text that is composed and performed on the occasion of the death of someone at a burial ceremony. It is through this form of oral poetry that people capture their innermost feelings, attitudes and beliefs. A study on funeral dirges enables one to understand the different reactions of people in response to death. The following section will try to see some of the studies conducted on funeral dirges at local and international levels.

3.5. Review of Related Studies

In this section, the studies which are related to funeral dirges will be reviewed. First, some studies at international level are briefly discussed. Then, an overview of local studies on funeral dirges is presented.

Different scholars have conducted a research on oral poetry. However, it is, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, only a few of them who have made their focus on funeral dirges. In this regard, Nketia's (1955) study on 'Akan funeral Dirges' can be regarded as a seminal work. In his book entitled, "Funeral Dirges of the Akan people", Nketia (1955) has tried to examine the literary, linguistic

and musical features of dirge. In particular, Nketia has discussed the themes of dirge texts and grouped them under four major headings. These are:-

- i) References to the ancestor
- ii) References to the deceased
- iii) References to the domicile of the ancestor and of the deceased
- iv) Reflections and messages

Under each category, he has touched upon the major themes raised in the different Akan dirges.

Finnegan (1970), in her book, 'Oral Literature in Africa', discusses funeral dirges under elegiac poetry. However, her explanation of dirges seems to be solely dependent on the work of Nketia (1955), which is previously discussed. Finnegan identifies 'praise' as the major theme in dirges.

In his book entitled, 'The content and form of Yoruba Ijala', Babalola (1966) has also described funeral obsequies which are practiced in honour of a dead hunter. At various stages of the funeral ceremony, it is common among the Yoruba of Nigeria to perform 'Ijala chanting', which is one kind of poetry in the Yoruba (Ibid).

Okpewho (1992) has also discussed the theme of death as reflected in dirges. He has described the context in which funeral dirges are composed and performed. In addition to this, Okpewho identifies that sense of loss and inevitability of death can be cited as themes in dirges.

As far as the study of funeral dirges in Ethiopia is concerned, it seems that European scholars began the collection of dirges in the last decade of the 19th century. Stating this, Fekade (2001:50) says that Ignazio Guidi, in his published work in 1894, included more than 30 short poems which he obtained from *azmari* (Ministrel) and *alqash* (mourner).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, Ethiopian contributions to the study of funeral dirges began at the beginning of the 20th century. In this regard, Hiruy Wolde sillassie can be regarded as a pioneer in collecting and analyzing the funeral dirges. In his book, entitled *Yäläqso Zema güt'm* (Funeral Dirge) which is published in 1910, Hiruy has provided the analysis of 40 funeral dirges. In the analysis, he has made an attempt to provide a historical context for the composition of each dirge and explained the meaning of each dirge in relation to the bible and other religious books. Hiruy does not specifically mention where he collected the funeral dirges. From the historical account given for each dirge, however, one can understand that most of the dirges are collected from the Gojjam and Gondar.

The contribution of the 'popular historiographers' such as Takle-Tsadiq Makuria and pawlos Noño in the collection of dirges in their socio-historical contexts is worth noting (Berhanu, 2002:1907). These writers have used the funeral dirges to explain certain historical events. They seem to exploit oral literature as a preserver of history.

In 1981, Admasu Dästa published a book entitled *Yämar išät* (Young honey), which includes a collection of love poems, funeral poems, war poems and other poems expressing oppression. He has particularly included 197 funeral dirges. Admasu's book is simply a collection of poems. He has not tried to analyze the poems.

Another important work is Fekade's book entitled *Unheard Voices* which is published in 1998. In this book, Fekade has tried to analyze some funeral dirges that were composed in response to the famine of 1984/85. This work is similar with the present work in that it deals with poems of sorrow and grief. However, it is specific to famine-inspired oral poetry.

Getie (2000), *Peasants and the Ethiopian State*, has also collected some of the poems for his study from funeral ceremonies. In one of the chapters in his book, he has tried to describe funeral poetry as one of the genres of oral poetry in Gojjam. In this work, Getie has tried to show how the peasants reflect their responses to the government's agrarian policy through oral poetry.

A very recent work which is relevant to the present study is Berhanu's article entitled "Mušo as a socio-political discourse" which is published in 2002. In this paper, Berhanu Gebeyehu discussed how the society uses funeral dirges (Which he calls "Mušo") to express its feelings, attitudes and griefs to a socio-political event. The paper, nevertheless, is confined to dirges (Mušo) that criticizes the community and those in political power. In particular, he discusses the function of dirges or 'Musu' in depicting civil war, social criticism and exhortation.

Yäsäwdäg has also discussed some funeral dirges in her book, *yäbädäl wurs yäqr* (let there be no inheritance of abuse), which is published in 1997. In this book, she has tried to make a contextual explanation of some funeral dirges. However, her book seems to give more emphasis for the discussion of other genres of oral poetry. Hence, she has not touched up on the different issues reflected in funeral dirges.

As far as the MA thesis in the department of Foreign Languages and Literature are concerned, there seems to be no comprehensive study conducted on funeral dirges in focus. However, some of them, in one way or another, have touched upon this genre of oral poetry.

To begin with, Shibeshi (1986) has conducted a thematic Study of Famine-Inspired Amharic Oral poetry. This study is similar with the present study as it



deals with poems of sorrow and grief, which are typical features of funeral dirges. However, the poems collected in this study are very specific to famine.

Another similar work is Daniel's (1998) study on "Red-Terror inspired Oral poems in Gojjam and Gonder." In this paper, Daniel has tried to collect and contextually analyze the major themes of the red-terror inspired oral poems. Although Daniel has not mentioned the occasion in which the collected poems are performed, it seems that many of the poems are funereal. However, the oral poems are specific to red-terror.

Mesfin Messele (1999), in his MA thesis, has discussed the dirge as one of the genres of the Abawudde's oral poetry. In this work, Mesfin explains the occasion and performance of the dirge. In addition to this, he has tried to discuss the theme of 15 funeral dirges which he collected from South Wollo. In particular, he has expressed the only theme, which is praise of the deceased, as reflected in the dirges. Mesfin has not, therefore, seen other themes which can be reflected through funeral dirges.

A very recent work on "subject matter analysis of Amharic oral lyric poems in Raya" by Tesfaye (2007) can also be cited. Tesfaye says that Rayan lyric poems have long been performed in working, wedding and funeral occasions. Saying this, he has discussed the subject matter issues in love, marriage, elegiac, topical and work poetry. In particular, he has explained the subject matter issues expressed in 14 funeral dirges and identified the feelings of helplessness, loss, disconnection and anguish as subject matter issues in elegiac poetry. By elegiac poetry, he meant to say 'funeral dirges.' Tesfaye's work is very limited in its collection and analysis of the funeral dirges

Similarly, Alebachew (2007) has also made his study on the "socio-economic and political issues in Waghimra Oral poetry." In this study, Alebachew says that he has attended two funeral ceremonies so as to collect oral poems and



understand the context in which they are performed. Saying this, Alebachew discusses the socio-economic issues reflected in Waghimra oral poetry. Specifically, he has explained 10 funeral dirges that reflect the central role of the mother in the family. Thus, Alebachew's paper is very specific in its treatment of the dirges.

In general, the MA theses seem to treat funeral dirges as a part in the whole. Thus, it can be said that there is no study which made its focus solely on funeral dirges. Almost all these MA theses are very limited and specific in collecting, analyzing and preserving funeral dirges.

Relevant works to the present study are found among the BA senior essays of the Ethiopian Languages and Literature. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, so far, there are about twenty senior essays which have made their focus on 'funeral ceremonies' and 'funeral dirges'. Those studies which have been conducted on funeral ceremonies have, in one way or another, tried to touch upon funeral dirges as constituents of funeral ceremonies. On the other hand, the studies which have made their focus on funeral dirges have described the funeral ceremonies in which the dirges are performed. These studies are carried out in different languages. However, this paper will try to make a review of those studies which are particularly conducted on Amharic funeral dirges.

To begin with, Tadesse (1963) has conducted his study on "the funeral dirges of Gojjam". Tadesse seems to have collected the dirges from Debremarkos town and its surroundings. He has classified the dirges based on the relationship between the deceased and the bereaved. Thus, the categories include: dirges for the death of a father, a mother, a sister, a brother etc. Matebie (1972) has also classified the funeral dirges he collected from Gondar according to the relationship one has to the deceased.

Berhanu Mekonnen (1973) has also examined the features, content and usage of figurative speeches of Amharic funeral dirge. Berhanu argues that it is really difficult to associate a particular dirge with a particular section of Amharic speaking people. He has also tried to discuss the themes of Amharic dirges according to what they refer to: Reference to a father, mother, country, death, deceased and living. In a similar way, Balkew (1974) and Eyader (1984) has made their study on the funeral dirges in Menz and Addis Ababa respectively. Balkew has discussed the funeral dirges with reference to the deceased, the bereaved, death, God and place.

Nigussie(1974) and Worknesh (1992) have tried to study the funeral dirges composed for the patriots in North Shewa and Gojjam respectively. Both of them are very specific in their collection and analysis of the funeral dirges.

Another very recent work which is related to the present study is the one by Dasash Gofa (2000) of the West Gojjam Culture and Tourism Office. Her study is entitled “በምዕ/ገብ/ዞን በሠርግና በልሰሶ ዙሪያ ያለውን ክዋኔና የሚቀርቡ ቃላዊ ግጥሞችን /ስነ-ቃሎችን/ በተመለከተ በጥናት መልክ የተዘጋጀ ፅሁፍ” (A preliminary study of the performance and oral poetry of wedding and funeral ceremonies). In this study, she has described the wedding and funeral ceremonies in West Gojjam. Besides, she has included a collection of oral poems that are performed during funeral and wedding ceremonies. Dasash’s study is wider in its scope and is simply a collection of funeral poems with no analysis. The present researcher has found Dasash’s paper important in that it has included a number of funeral dirges collected from the different parts of West Gojjam.

In general, one can say that the studies conducted on Amharic funeral dirges;

- are very limited in their treatment of themes
- are very specific in their collection
- do not seem to consider it as a particular genre of oral poetry

- lack in depth analysis

Thus, it is important to have a study which makes its overall focus on funeral dirges. The collection and analysis of funeral dirges should be conducted regardless of the age, gender and status of the deceased, and the relationship between the deceased and the bereaved.

Having reviewed the related studies, the researcher has tried to fill the gaps that have been pointed out in the different papers discussed in this section. This is carried out based on the theoretical framework presented below.

3.6. Theoretical Framework

Dorson(1972) explains twelve theories to the study of folklore. These are; historical-geographical, historical-reconstructional, ideological, functional, psychoanalytical, structural, oral-formulaic, cross-cultural, folk-cultural, mass-cultural, hemispheric, and contextual. Dorson notes that these theories are not mutually exclusive. Having this in mind, the researcher has found the contextual and functional theories appropriate to the study of funeral dirges. Thus, this study has predominantly made the use of contextual description to the study of funeral dirges in West Gojjam. According to Dorson(1972),it is possible to come up with the meaning of a folkloric item by describing the cultural and social context of its texts. In addition to this, Dorson, quoting Ben-Amos (1971), says that “folkloric actions are distinguished from other modes of social interaction by ‘contextual conventions’ of time, place, and company” (ibid; 47).In order to study folklore, it is therefore important to understand the time, place and company of the performance of folkloric items. Thus, the next chapter, by and large, has employed the description of the cultural and social setting to analyze the themes of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam.

CHAPTER FOUR

Thematic Analysis of the Funeral Dirges

In this chapter, the major themes that are reflected through the funeral dirges in West Gojjam are discussed. For ease of discussion, the funeral dirges are categorized under five major topics. These are thoughts about the deceased, death, God, socio-political issues and other reactions to bereavement.

4.1. Thoughts about the Deceased

By using funeral dirges, the people of West Gojjam express their different attitudes towards the deceased and his manner of death. In this category, one can find the funeral dirges that;

- express praise of the deceased
- describe the sorrowfulness of the manner of his or her death
- identify the decisive role of the deceased in the life of the bereaved.

4.1.1. Praise of the Deceased

In West Gojjam, one can find a number of funeral dirges that glorify the deceased. In most cases, dirge singers accentuate only the good qualities of the deceased. Obviously, praise is the most common feature of funeral dirges in different societies (Finnegan, 1970:149). In West Gojjam, the personal and physical traits, and achievements of the deceased are usually celebrated. With regard to the physical appearance of the deceased, the following dirges can be good examples.

- (1) ያመቃው አንገትህ ያመቃው ያመቃው፤
አጣጥፈው ይክተቱት ጉድጓዱም አይበቃው።

That long neck! Oh, that long neck!

Let them fold it as the grave is not capable of holding it.

(2) ያፀጉር የማን ነው ከመከታው ላይ፤

እኔን ያቺ ቆንጆ ተቆርጣ ነው ወይ።

Whose hair is that over the wall?

Oh! My Gosh! Is that beautiful lady gone?

In the first poem, the dirge singer is celebrating the beauty of the deceased in terms of his long neck. She says that the deceased was tall and handsome. She admired his tallness to the extent of saying that “his neck needs to be folded as the grave is incapable of holding it.” In west Gojjam, tallness is a measure of beauty as it is in different societies. In the second poem, the dirge singer seems to be shocked at the death of the beautiful lady. The composer has tried to describe the beauty of the deceased by referring to her hair. From the poem, one can understand that the deceased seems to have been identified by her attractive hair. That is why the dirge singer tries to admire the beauty of the deceased lady by noting to her hair. From dirge (1) and (2), it can be noted that the attractiveness of the physical appearance of the deceased finds expression.

Benevolence is another important trait which is appreciated through the funeral dirges in West Gojjam. The society, by making use of dirges, pays tribute to benevolence as follows:

(3) በሬ እንኳ ዋ ሲሉት ይቆማል ከድንበር፤

እንተም ደግነቱን አብዝተኸው ነበር።

Even an ox stops at a border,

When it is threatened,

But your kindness had no boundary.

(4) አዘንተኛው ሁሉ ሆድ ሆዴ ይልሻል፤

አንቸስ መሸመቻ ገበያ ኖረሻል።

All the mourners call you as my dear! My dear!

Alas, you were a market where everybody has what he wants.

In the third poem, the kindness of the deceased is praised. According to this poem, the deceased was such a king-hearted person that he did not quarrel with anybody. Whatever bad thing people say to him, he used to treat them kindly. The kindness of the deceased is, thus, given emphasis in this dirge. In the fourth dirge, generosity of the deceased is admired. The use of the metaphoric expression, 'a market', seems to elevate the bounty of the deceased. This dirge singer is amazed at how the mourners showed their affection towards the deceased. This is, according to the composer, due to the fact that the deceased was so generous.

In West Gojjam, the strength, wisdom and achievements of the deceased are also praised through the performance of funeral dirges. It is possible to note these in the following dirges.

(5) ዘጠኝ ወር አርግዘሽ፤

ሶስት አመት አጥብተሽ፤

ባስር ዓመት ድረሽ፤

ኧረ እናት ዓለሜ ምን ይሆን ውለታሽ።

Being pregnant for nine months,

Breastfeeding for three years,

Giving one in marriage at ten!

Oh, my dearest mom!

What would be your favour?

(6) ደሞ ከላይኛው ደጅ አለ ወይ ሸማኔ፤
 ደሞ ከእግዚር ደጅ አለ ወይ ሸማኔ፤
 እንዴት ያለ ጥበብ አስወሰደ ዛሬ!

Alas! Is there a weaver in the kingdom of the Lord?

Alas! Is there a weaver in the kingdom of God?

wow !He had a wonderful 'tībāb' taken away.

(7) አውራጃው ወረዳው የሚያውቀውን ሰራ፤
 እንዲሁም መስሪያ ቤት የሚያውቀውን ሰራ፤
 ሴቲቱ ባንገትሽ ላይ በይ ይዘሽው ዙራ።

The trousers known all over the province and the district,
 The trousers known by the offices as well,
 Let you, the lady, wander around holding it on your shoulder.

As it can be seen in number (5), the strength and patience of a mother in bringing up children is pointed out. In this dirge, the speaker admires the endurance that a mother has in taking care of her own child. The speaker seems to praise not only the endurance of a mother but also her stamina. Having praised these qualities of a mother, the speaker wonders what the favor of a mother would be. This dirge seems to stress the point that it is difficult to find a good turn for a mother.

Dirge (6) makes a very important point by making use of the word "tībāb". The word "tībāb" has two meanings in Amharic. The literal meaning, which is the wax, is a traditional dress which is entirely made of cotton. The underlying meaning of "tībāb", that is the Gold meaning, is wisdom, ability and skill of an individual. Thus, the speaker of this dirge is conveying the message that the dead person was a skillful and wise person. According to the dirge singer, the

deceased was well-known of his intellectual abilities. He was the one whom the members of the society consult in times of trouble. It is, therefore, possible to claim that society praises the wisdom of a dead individual by means of dirges.

In dirge (7), it is the achievements of the deceased which is celebrated. This dirge can be interpreted in two ways. The first one is that the speaker is recognizing the heroic deeds of the deceased. In West Gojjam, "Trousers" is a symbol of bravery or heroism. Thus, it can be said that the deceased was known in the area as a skillful warrior. The speaker of this dirge seems to pay tribute to the dead man's prowess as a warrior. The second one is that the dirge is praising the administrative skills of the deceased in the area. It is particularly, according to the dirge singer, admiring the determination and ability (bravery) of the deceased in making decisions. The speaker, in other words, is trying to point out how powerful the deceased was in the area. To put it in short, the deceased was a man of influence in the province. Whichever way the dirge is interpreted, it praises the achievements of the deceased.

Regarding praise of the deceased, Vernon (1970; 158) says: "In emphasizing what is considered to be the positive characteristics of the deceased, the group is indirectly emphasizing what is considered to be the positive qualities of itself". One can notice such acts of the society through funeral dirges.

4.1.2. The Sorrowfulness of the Circumstances of Death

In the funeral ceremony, the dirge singer may express the manner of the death of the person through funeral dirges. This is usually practiced as our reactions to the death of a loved one may be influenced by the circumstance of his/her death. It is particularly mournful when premature, and sudden or accidental death occurs.

In West Gojjam, the following are mostly the prevalent manners of death that are reflected through dirges:

- death due to childbirth
- death after a prolonged illness
- death by suicide, murder, car accident
- death during war and
- sudden death

The following dirges are typical examples that show the circumstance of the death an individual.

(8) ጠንካራውን ጎበዝ ጠንካራ ይዞት፤

ገዝግዞ ገዝግዞ አስገባው መሬት።

The strong man caught by a strong disease,
Weakening him slowly,
It put him into the earth.

(9) ሴቶችም አታግቡ ወንዶም ሴት አትተኛ፤

ደም መላሹ ልጅዋ ከሆናት ደመኛ።

Ladies! Do not get married,
Gentlemen! Do not sleep with a woman,
As her child, who should have defended for her,
Puts her to an end.

(10) አልበላም ስትሉኝ በልቷል ግጥም አርጎ፤

አልጠጣም ስትሉኝ ጠጣ ግጥም አርጎ፤

እባቡን እንጀራ ወጡን ጉርጡን አርጎ።

You said, “He did not eat it.”
But he ate it all,
You said, “He did not drink it.”

But he drank it all,
Assuming that the snake was “injera”
And the frog was ‘wot’

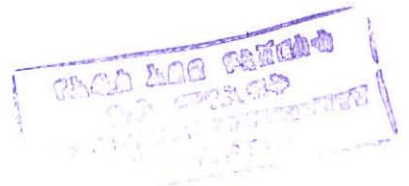
(11) የዚያን ወጣት መርዶ ውሻይቱ አመጣችው፤
ደመ ተለል ብለኝ ሂዳ የላሠችው።

It was the dog, which announced the death of that young man,
as it was licking his shedding blood.

As it can be seen in the above four dirges, the circumstance of the death of an individual is expressed in a way that could trigger intense sorrow among the mourners. To begin with, dirge (8) makes the point that the deceased has gone through a prolonged illness. The speaker of this dirge seems to feel sympathetic towards the suffering that the deceased went through. According to the dirge singer, such a dirge is particularly recited for those who died of “yāzāmānu Bāšta” (the disease of the time) i.e. HIV-AIDS. However strong an individual is, he cannot cope with HIV-AIDS is what the dirge singer would like to point out. The illness was so prolonged that the deceased suffered a lot. In this dirge, it is therefore, the prolonged illness of the deceased which is emphasized.

In dirge (9), one can note that it is death through childbirth which is accentuated. Death through child-bearing is one of the most sorrowful deaths in West Gojjam. Due to this, the speaker of the dirge seems to convey her message in a tone of anger. The speaker claims that there is no need to give birth for a child as it could cause the death of the mother. This seems to suggest that death through child birth is a regretful experience in the region.

Dirge (10) stresses the fact that the death of the deceased is caused by a poisoned food. Thus, the speaker of this dirge is claiming that the deceased was poisoned. For various reasons, people may try to kill each other. Thus, the dirge



singer is probably asserting that there must be somebody who is responsible for the death of the deceased.

The most horrible kind of death also finds expression in dirge (11). This dirge seems to accentuate how dreadful the circumstance of the death of the individual was. According to the dirge singer, this kind of dirge is recited when the deceased is found slaughtered by a dagger. Thus, the speaker in this dirge has tried to reveal the awful experience of the manner of the death of the deceased.

4.1.3. The Decisive role of the Deceased in the Life of the Bereaved

Recognition of the different roles that the deceased used to play in the life of the bereaved is an aspect of the funeral dirges in this section. In the following funeral dirges, it is possible to identify the specific roles of the deceased in the life of the bereaved.

- (12) አፋፋ ላይ ሆና ትጣራለች እናት፤
ኑ ብሉ ነው እንጅ ሌላ ምን ሞያ አላት።

A mother calls out loud,
Standing on the edge of the hill top,
“Come and eat!” is what she definitely says.

- (13) ቀዳዳውን ሁሉ ስትጠቁም ስትጠቁም፤
እናቴ ወደቀች እንግዲህ አለውቅም።

She was filling up the holes,
Filling up the holes!
Oh! My mom is gone by now,
I do not know what to do from this time on.

(14) ሁለቱ ልጆችሽ ሁለት ነው አመላቸው
ሶስቱ ልጆችሽ ሶስት ነው አመላቸው
እኔ ልሂድና አንች ነይላቸው።

Your two children have two traits,
Your three children have three traits,
Let me be gone and you come, instead.

Dirge (12) points out the role of the deceased as a mother in the life of the bereaved. The role of the deceased mother as a care giver is emphasized in this dirge. The speaker seems to hold the assumption that a mother is always there to provide care for her children. According to the speaker, giving care for her children is the only thing that concerns a mother. Thus, dirge (12) reveals the role of the deceased as a mother and care giver for the bereaved.

In dirge (13), the deceased mother is identified as a problem solver. According to the speaker of the dirge, it was his mother who used to be there when she encountered a problem. However, the speaker seems to lose hope as the one who solves her problems is gone. The deceased, in this dirge, is portrayed as a mother whose role was to get the bereaved out of his troubles.

Dirge (14) is a funeral poem that laments the death of one's wife. In this dirge, the husband is mourning that he is not capable of dealing with the different traits of his children. The speaker of the dirge, who is the husband, seems to be

wildered as to how he raises his children. The speaker, in this regard, appears to acknowledge the significant role of his dead wife in bringing up children.

In short, the above three dirges identify the decisive role of the deceased as a mother or wife who is a care giver and /or problem solver for the bereaved.

It is also possible to see some other roles of the deceased as revealed through the dirges that follow:

- (15) ትላንትና ማታ ክፉ ነፋስ ነፍሶ፤
ነቃቅሎት አደረ የቤቱን ምሠሶ።

A strong wind blew yesterday night,
And uprooted the central pillar of the house.

- (16) በርቀኝ እና ወንጌ ቀረ አሉ ተጣልቶ፤
የአገር ሽማግሌው አባት አለም ጠፍቶ።

“Bärqañ” and “wänge” remained quarreled,
As the mediator of the country is lost (gone).

- (17) ያ ቀንዳም ድኩላ ሄደ ማደውን፤
ጀግና ቅደምና ያዝበት በሩን።

That horny antelope is going down there,
You, the hero! Go ahead of him and calm him down.

Dirge (14) is mourned for the death of a father. It is the decisive role of the father which is accentuated in the dirge. It seems that the bereaved family was solely dependent on the deceased. According to the dirge singer, the father was the only source of income for the bereaved family. The death of the father

appears to be devastating for the bereaved. The dirge seems to depict the central role of the deceased in the family.

Dirge (15) identifies the role of the deceased as a mediator. “*Bārqañ*” and “*wänge*” are place names that represent the people of the area. Thus, the speaker of this dirge is saying that the two peoples of these two areas are not yet reconciled as the mediator is gone. The deceased, in this dirge, is portrayed as one who plays an important role in bringing about reconciliation between the two parties.

In dirge (16), the speaker reveals to us that the deceased used to play an important role in defending the peace and security of the community. The expression “horny antelope” represents one who disturbs the peace and security of the community. The speaker of this dirge seems to be confident in the deceased role of calming the “horny antelope” down. Thus, the speaker of this dirge depicted the role of the deceased as a defender of the community.

To sum up, dirge (14), (15), and (16) have identified the role of the deceased as mediator, defender and decisive to the bereaved family or to the community.

4.2. Thoughts about Death

In this category, the funeral dirges that express; the inevitability of death, the unpredictability of death and life after death are discussed. These dirges reveal to us what people think about death in the area

4.2.1. The Inevitability of Death

According to Callahan, in Spiro, et al (1996: xii), death “is a reality to be accepted as a fixed and necessary part of life.” The following funeral dirges show us what the society says about the inevitability of death.

(17) በሌ እናንተም ሂዱ እኛም ወደዚያው ነው፤
ወትሮም መንገደኛ ፊትና ጊላ ነው።

You go first and we follow you,
As passenger is always one following the other.

(18) ምን ቢሙሽረሽሩ ምን ቢበለጩለጩ፣ ቢመስሉ ጨረቃ፤
አወይ የሠው ነገር ተመልሶ ጭቃ።

However attractive we are,
However decorative we are,
However beautiful we are,
Alas! We, human beings, turn to mud.

(19) አወይ ጉድ ሠው መሆን በግድ መለየት፤
እኔም ተከታይ ነኝ የተጠራሁ ለት።

Alas! To be human is to be forced to depart,
When it is my turn,
I will also be gone.

The speakers of dirge (17) make the point that they will not live in this world forever. Though some of their loved ones are already dead, they claim that they will be the next. They take the death of their loved ones as unavoidable. In this dirge, it has been generally pointed out that nobody avoids facing death. It is inescapable. In a similar way, dirge (18) also asserts that death is “the unavoidable lot of human kind.” According to the speaker of this dirge, death is a defining moment which levels people of different kinds. However glamorous we may be, it is obvious that we all come to an end. This is what the dirge singer conveyed through this dirge.

On the other hand, dirge (19) expresses the inevitability of death in terms of our span of life. The speaker of this dirge appears to hold the position that everybody has a predetermined span of life. We are here till we finish our predetermined life span. Accordingly, death is the final destiny of all human beings. The speaker says that she will be gone when it is her turn. In this way, she points out that death is inevitable.

The above three dirges generally draw our attention to the inevitability of death. They stress out that we need to accept death as the ‘unavoidable lot of human kind.’

4.2.2. The Unpredictability of Death

As we can see in the dirges that follow, death is usually the most shocking and unexpected experience of the people in West Gojjam. In support of this, Vernon (1970:142) says; “Despite the inevitability of death, and the existence of societal patterns developed to adjust to death, it seems that bereavement is usually unexpected and is frequently accompanied by some degree of shock”. The following dirges reflect this view.

(20) እስኪ ላለቃቅሠው የዛሬን ጀምበር፤

ነገስ እኔም እንጃ ደህና ማደሬን።

Let me just weep for this morning,

As I do not know,

That I will be alive by tomorrow.

(21) ሠው መሆን አይቀርም ስጋ ከለበሠ፤

እውነት ሞቶ ነው ወይ የምትላቀሱ።

We are humans as our body is flesh,

Alas! Why are you crying?

Is he really dead?

4.2.3. The Existence of Life after Death

In West Gojjam, most of the people are the followers of Ethiopia Orthodox Church. As they are Christians, the people of West Gojjam believe that there is life after death. Perhaps, it is a means of gaining hope when we lose loved ones. This belief of the society can be witnessed in the following funeral dirges.

- (23) ጠጋ ብለሽ ተኝ ወደ ገነቲቱ፤
የዚህ አለም ኑሮ ቢቀር ምን አባቱ።

Sleep on the side of heaven,
As life on earth is worthless.

- (24) ስምንተኛው ሺህ መጣ በፈረስ፤
ስጋው ገበያ ስንልከሠከስ።

The eighth thousand is coming soon,
When we are sniffing around to satisfy our worldly desires.

In dirge (23), the speaker makes two points. In the first line of the dirge, the speaker appears to urge the deceased to join the heaven. In the second line, the speaker conveys the message that life in this world is of no value. At the expense of the worldly life, the speaker advises the deceased to join heaven. In this case, the speaker is making it clear that we do not need to fear death as there is eternal life on heaven. Thus, the existence of life after death is the message that this dirge conveyed.

Dirge (24) was composed for those who died of HIV-AIDS. According to the dirge singer, HIV-AIDS is a punishment brought against the people as they are always in hurry to fulfill only their worldly desires. Thus, this dirge warns the people that the end of this world is coming very soon. It indirectly states that

(27) ፈጣሪን ፈልጉት መጥረቢያ ይዛችሁ፤
 እግዚርን ፈልጉት መጥረቢያ ይዛችሁ፤
 የሠው ቤት ሰያፈርስ ታገኙታላችሁ፤

Look for the Creator! Holding an axe,
 Looking for God! Holding an axe,
 As you find him destroying people's house.

Dirge (25) was composed for the death of a pregnant woman. In this dirge, a comparison is made between the acts of God and a thief. The speaker indirectly states that a thief is more sympathetic than God as he does not steal a pregnant cow. In this case, it is the acts of the thief which is considered reasonable. However, the dirge portrays God as one who does not have mercy for the weak.

Dirge (26) is mourned, in particular, for the death of a young lady or gentleman who has not yet given birth for a child. In this dirge, the speaker expresses her anger against God. This anger is manifest through a comparison made between God and a farmer. The speaker clearly states that the farmer is far better than God as he is sympathetic towards his crops. Accordingly, a farmer does not harvest his crops before they yield fruits. Nevertheless, the dirge singer expresses her anger against God whom she thinks is the one that kills people before they even give birth for a child. Thus, the cruelty of God is also the message conveyed in this dirge.

Dirge (27) is imaginative of the acts of God. At first reading, it seems that the speaker of this dirge is urging us to join God in the destruction of people's house. It is ironic that the speaker makes such a comment. In the first two lines of the dirge, however, the speaker is probably suggesting that we need to say 'No!' to such acts of God. In the third line of the poem, it is stated that God is not sympathetic to any person. According to the speaker, God is always there

You did wonderful when you create the earth,
You spent the time for nothing when you create man.

(31) እናት ትገላለህ አባት ትገላለህ፤
የሴት ልጅ ነህና መኝ ፍርድ ታውቃለህ።

You kill a mother, you kill a father,
You do not know what judgment is,
As you are 'the son of a lady'.

In a tone that appears similar, Dirge (28) and (29) challenge acts which are presumably committed by God. Dirge (28) is lamented for the death of a child. Why is the need to put him to death at an early age? Why does God do away with a child? Is there an authority other than God during the judgment day? These are questions that are indirectly addressed to God by the speaker of dirge (28). In a similar way, dirge (29) seems to pose the following question to a third party. Why does God create man if he puts him to an end later on? In both dirges, the speakers have challenged the righteousness of God. They appear to doubt the righteousness of God

What the dirge singer identified as the wrong acts of God are also reflected in dirge (30) and (31). In these dirges, one can note that the society may, due to the loss of loved ones, fiercely attack God beyond expected. In dirge (30), the speaker admires the power and ability of God in creating the moon, the sky, the sun, and the earth. This is pointed out purposefully as the universe is everlasting or permanent. It expresses God's ability of creating undying elements of the cosmos. Nevertheless, in the last line of the dirge, the speaker assures God that he spent his time extravagantly in creating human beings. It points out that God created a mortal creature as opposed to the immortality of the sun, the moon, the earth and the sky. Thus, dirge (30) identifies the wrongness of God in creating mankind. In a similar way, dirge (31) puts the feeling of the

speaker towards God in a tone of anger. The key expression in this dirge is “yäset lij näh” (you are the son of a lady), which means ‘a misbehaved’, ‘ill-mannered’, or ‘impudent’. Such an expression is a great insult among the people of West Gojjam. The speaker of dirge (31) deliberately describes God using this expression so as to convey the message that God does not have what it takes to judge the acts of the society. The speaker further claims that God does not have the know-how to judge the acts of the society. In short, the speaker of dirge (31) identifies the incapability of God to pass judgment.

The funeral dirges discussed in this section generally show us the extent to which society goes to defy God’s righteousness when it faces the loss of loved ones.

4.4. Thoughts about Socio-Political Issues

In West Gojjam, the reaction of the society towards socio-political moves finds expression through dirges. The funeral dirge singer, by making use of dirges, tries to;

- criticize the manners of the society
- point out the value of homeland
- express protest against a government and
- describe the horror of war

In this section, we will try to see funeral dirges that reveal the above four thoughts of the society.

4.4.1. Criticism of the manners of the Society

In west Gojjam, funeral dirges are used as an instrument for correcting some wrong acts of the society. This can be observed in the following dirges.

(32) ሳለ መጠቃቀም ይተውና ዘመድ፤
ሲሞት ወያ ወያ ይመስለኛል ማበድ።

Putting aside to help each other when we were alive,
And over crying as death comes is like madness.

(33) ባይድ እንጀራ በላ ጥርሡን እያሳየ፤
የመከራው ስታ ምነው የተለየ።

Looking so happy,
The unrelated ate *injera*,
Where were they in the time of adversity?

(34) የእኩል ዓደኞች ድርጅት ያላችሁ፤
የእኩል ዓደኞች ስርጭት ያላችሁ፤
አወዳድቅ እንዲህ ነው እዩት ያሳያችሁ።

Friends of the deceased who own a company
Friends of the deceased who own a distributor's agency
Look! This is how people fail.

(35) ደሙ ወርዶ ወርዶ ከገበዞች መንደር ድንጋዩ ገደበው
ሳይፈረድበት የተደበደበው።

The stone dammed up his shedding blood
Though he was beaten when nobody accused him

Dirge (32) was composed for the death of a poor man who was not helped enough by his relatives when he was alive. It is common that people express their intense grief at the death of someone though they did nothing to help the deceased during his life time. In this dirge, the speaker is suggesting that the society needs to help each other in times of trouble. It is better to take care of

someone when he alive. This dirge seems to go with the following English proverb;

“Don’t cry over spilt milk”

According to the dirge singer, it is advisable that an individual stands by his relations before they are gone.

Dirge (33) was composed for the death of a generous person. According to the dirge signer, a few people attended the funeral ceremony of the deceased in spite of his generosity. Thus, this dirge is composed in order to attack those who have not attended the burial ceremony. In other words, the dirge singer is making the point that the society should be there to share not only happiness but also grief. This dirge reminds one to refer to the Amharic Saying which goes as follows;

ለባዕድ ያበሉት እንደ ማር ነው

ለዘመድ ያበሉት እንደ ቅቤ ነው

What we feed for the unrelated is like honey, and

What we feed for a relative is like butter.

According to the above saying, a relative is always there no matter what, whereas the unrelated may easily forget us. In a similar way, there is also an English saying which is put as follows;

“In times of Prosperity, friends are plenty,

In times of adversity, friends are empty.”

Both the Amharic and the English sayings seem to reinforce the message conveyed through dirge (33)

Dirge (34) was composed for the death of a rich man who appears to have been unhappy in his life time. This was because the society used to outcast him as he was greedy. Thus, the dirge singer states that an individual needs to lead a happy life by being sociable and friendly. She indirectly states that an individual who is rich today does not have to show off as he may be bankrupt the next day. The dirge singer is also suggesting the rich people to share what they have with the society.

Dirge (35) was mourned for the one who was beaten to death. In this dirge, the speaker clearly states that the deceased was not accused of any wrong doings. The dirge singer is implicitly making the point that the society needs to solve its disputes by legal means before it goes to attack each other physically. She is advising the people to abide by the rule of law. According to this dirge, it is advisable for the society to solve its disputes by peaceful and legal means rather than force.

4.4.2. The Importance of Homeland

In the following dirges, one can note the place of homeland in the hearts of the people of West Gojjam.

- (36) ኑሮ በሠው ሀገር ሞት ባገር ይደምቃል፤
ትንሹም ትልቁ በአንገት ላይ ይወድቃል።

Living in a foreign land,
And death in a homeland is wonderful,
As everybody hugs you on the neck.

- (37) አንተ በሠው ሀገር አገርህ በሌላ
ከሠው የበለጠ እንጂራ ላትበላ።

You are in a foreign land,
When your homeland is somewhere else,
Though you did not eat better 'injera' than others.

(38) ሽረ ማረኝ ዳሞት ፊቴን ልመልሰው፤
ተው ማረኝ አገሪ ፊቴን ልመልሰው፤
አለ አገሪ በቀር መኝ አለኝ አንድ ሠው።።

Oh, forgive me 'Damot' and let me turn back,
Oh, forgive me my homeland and let me turn back,
As I have nobody other than my homeland.

In the above three dirges, it is palpable to understand that the society views homeland as an important and comfortable place to be successful in life. To begin with, dirge (36) was mourned for the one who died in a foreign land. It was composed in a burial ceremony where a few people attended as they do not know the deceased. In this dirge, however, the importance of living in a homeland is indirectly addressed. "Death" in this dirge suggests the problems or troubles that one faces in life. Thus, the speaker of this dirge indirectly states that it is in your homeland that people lend their hands to you when you face troubles. It is in a homeland that one copes up with the troubles in life as he will have the spirit and strength.

In a similar way, dirge (37) suggests that we can be successful in life if we are in our homeland. The speaker of dirge (37) seems to sympathize for the deceased who lost his life in a foreign land. In this dirge, the speaker witnesses that the deceased has never led a better life in foreign land. "*Injara*", in the last line of the dirge, symbolizes the life standard of the deceased. The dirge singer seems to suggest that we can achieve what we want if we are at our own homeland. Though many of us wish to live in a foreign land, the speaker

asserts that there is nothing better there. In this dirge, the speaker appears to claim that we can lead a better life at home.

In dirge (38), the dirge singer is speaking on behalf the deceased who was forced to leave his homeland due to blood feud. The deceased is asking for forgiveness as he wants to live in his homeland. According to the speaker, the only important thing he has in life is his homeland. The importance that the society ascribes to homeland is also manifest through the eagerness that the speaker has to turn back home.

To sum up, the significance of homeland in the life of the society is emphasized through the three funeral dirges in West Gojjam.

4.4.3. Protest against a Government

According to Berhanu (2000:1907), the Amhara have an organized form of funeral dirges which are used as an important 'medium of political discourse.' As they are members of the Amhara society, the people in West Gojjam use funeral dirges to express their hatred and protest against political power. This can be noticed in the following dirges.

- (39) ትላንትና ማታ ትንሽ ካፊያ ጣለ፤
እንዲህ ቢደጋግም ጎመን በበላነ።

There was a shower of rain yesterday night,
We would eat cabbage if it repeated.

- (40) ሸረ እናንተ ሆይ አልቅሁ እንላቀስ ገና ነው ነገሩ፤
ባልታወቀ ዳኛ ተይህል አገሩ።

Alas! You, people! Let us weep again and again,
There is still some other thing,
As the country is captured by an unknown judge.



ከሚያውቁት መላዕክ የሚያውቁት ሠይጣን ይሻላል።

The familiar Satan is better than the unknown angel.

Hence, it can be said that the dirge singer is expressing her protest to the political power which took control at that time.

In dirge (41), one can clearly note the hatred of the speaker towards the deceased. Literally, one may actually understand it as a sympathy expressed to the deceased as he will be put into the earth. However, the dirge singer told the researcher that such a dirge was composed for the death of a bureaucrat who got many youngsters killed at the pretext of anti-revolutionary. This happened during the *Dirgue* regime. Hence, the dirge signer is predicting that the deceased joins hell as he is sinful. In this way, the dirge singer is expressing her protest to the acts of the political power at that time.

4.4.4. The Horror of War

By making use of funeral dirges, the people of West Gojjam express their hatred towards war. They also describe the fatality and destruction that comes as a result of war. This can be noted in the following dirges.

(42) የሚነሻን መርዶ ወሬቱ አሞራ አመጣችው፤
አደረቱ ሆኖ አይነን የጠጣችው።

It was the vulture who announced the Death of the 'militia',
Since it ate his eyes standing on his chest.

(43) ጅግና ሲረጋረግ በሠሜን ተራራ፤
ስጋ ጠግቦ አደረ ስንቱ ጆፌ አሞራ።

When the patriots were heavily fighting on the mountains of the North,
A number of vultures were satiated with meat.

(44) የባድሜ አጥራ አንጀት የሌለው፤
ምን አናት ወለደው አያለ በላው።

The vulture in 'Badme' was heartless,
As it ate him, wondering who his mother is.

In dirge (42), the horrible nature of war is given due attention. The dirge singer has clearly stated her disapproval of war by portraying war as a horrifying event. In a similar way, dirge (43) has pointed out the calamity that the war caused. In this dirge, the speaker claims that the recent war with Eritrea cost us a number of lives. Dirge (44) has also pointed out how costly the war was at "Badme". This dirge emphasized the loss of important citizens of the country.

In the above three dirges, the key word is 'vulture' which is used to describe war. 'Vulture' in these dirges symbolizes how fatal, horrifying and costly war could be. To sum up, the people of West Gojjam, by means of funeral dirges, have expressed their disapproval of war by referring to the catastrophe which was caused by the recent Ethio-Eritrean conflict.

4.5. Other Reactions to Bereavement

In order to deal with the funeral dirges that reflect reactions to bereavement, it is better to explain the word bereavement first. According to Bupa's health information team (2007), bereavement is a term used to describe the sense of grief and loss that one experiences when a person close to him dies (online). Researchers have found out that there are different responses to loss (Wikipedia). In this section, therefore, those responses to loss which are reflected in the funeral dirges of west Gojjam are identified.

4.5.1. The Painfulness Grief

Zeller (1991) defines grief as “the common human response to the loss of a cared for person, often referred to as an attachment figure” (5). In the following dirges, it is possible to see how painful and difficult grief is.

- (45) አባት የሞተለት ድንበሩ ይገፋል፤
እናት የሞተች ለት ምድር ሠማይ ያልፋል፤
እህት የሞተች ለት ኮሶ ይደነፋል፤
ወንድም የሞተ ለት ባላንጣ ይፋፋል፤
ከዚያም ሁል ከዚያም ሁል የልጅ ሞት ይብሳል፤
አለ ካራ አርዶ ያለ እሳት ይጠብሳል።

When a father is dead, the border is trespassed,
When a mother is dead, one becomes bewildered,
When a sister is dead, one becomes infested with tapeworm,
When a brother is dead, one's enemy gets stronger,
Of all these, the death of a child is the worst,
As it slaughters without a knife and roasts without fire.

- (46) የእህልንስ እራብ ሸምታው ያልፋታል፤
የብርንም እራብ ለምነው ያልፋታል፤
የወገንን እራብ እንዴት ያረገታል።

We can cope up with a hunger for food by buying it,
We can cope up with a hunger for money by begging for it,
What do we do with a hunger for people?

Deserted is my mother's home
 Deserted is my sister's home
 Deserted is my father's home
 Deserted is my brother's home
 Oh! Deserted! Deserted
 Going and going, where would my feet take rest?

In dirge (47) the speaker describes her kinship in terms of “*aräg resa*”, which is a plant with many branches. In this dirge, “*aräg resa*” represents the fact that the speaker had many relatives. In the second line of the dirge, however, the speaker admits regretfully that she has lost them all. At this point, one can understand that the feeling of loss seems to have filled the mind of the bereaved. The speaker in the dirge has also stated implicitly that she is feeling lonely.

Dirge (48) was composed for the bereaved that lost all members of her family. The speaker of this dirge clearly expresses that she has nowhere to go as all loved ones are gone. What is accentuated in this dirge is therefore the feeling of loneliness that the speaker feels due the death of her family members. The word ‘deserted’ suggests the feeling of loss that the bereaved person has experienced.

3.5.3. Helplessness

Psychologists say that people may feel powerless and insecure when they lose a loved one (online). In the following dirges, such feelings can be noticed.

(49) ኸረ ማሩኝ ሠዎች ሠዎች እባካችሁ፤
 ወንድሞች ሳሉ የተናገርኳችሁ።

Those of you, whom I attacked verbally,
 When my brothers were alive,
 Oh, please, forgive me!

4.5.4. Hopelessness

According to Hinton (1967), “Misery and despair may fill the minds of the bereaved so that life seems empty and all ambition worthless” (169). In the dirges that follow, one can notice how such feelings are reflected.

- (51) ቢቆጨኝ ነው እንጅ አሁን መለፍለፌ፤
ከዳዋ ውስጥ ገብቶ ይገኛል ወይ መርፌ።

It is just because I am furious,
That I chatter (over cry),
How could one find a needle covered with shrubs?

- (52) አንተ አለህ ብዬ እንጅ አንተን ካጣሁማ፤
ምን ያስቀምጠኛል ከባዶው አውድማ ።

It was because you were present,
That I lived there,
If I lost you,
Why would I be there in the deserted farmland?

Dirge (51) was composed by a dirge singer who felt weary of crying. The speaker of this dirge states that she over cries though the deceased does not come back. Despite the intense grief, the speaker says, the deceased will no longer be there. Thus, the speaker is indirectly stating that she lost hope about the deceased. Accordingly, someone who was important to her life will no longer stand by her.

In dirge (52), the speaker expresses that life may no longer make sense in a native land. The speaker appears to have associated her native land to the deceased. That is why the speaker wants to leave for another place. Life in

homeland without the deceased seems to be meaningless for the speaker. It is therefore the feeling of hopelessness that finds expression in this dirge.

4.5.5. Regret

The bereaved may usually feel guilty for not having done enough for the deceased even if they have actually performed great care during the last illness (Hinton, 1967:170). The following dirges may prove the presence of such reactions to bereavement.

- (53) ሲይዟት ቀላል ናት እናትና ብር፤
ስትወድቅ ነው እንጅ የምትቀረቁር።

When we have it,
We neither care for mother nor for money,
When we lose it,
It feels is terrible.

- (54) አሳድጋኝ ነበር እንደ ጌሾ ፍል፤
አሳድጋኝ ነበር እንደ ባህር ዛፍ ፍል፤
ወሠደብኝ እንጅ ብድራን ሳልከፍል።

She raised me like the shoots of 'Gesho',
She raised me like the shoots of eucalyptus,
She, however, was gone before I did her a favour.

- (55) እረ ማረኝ ማረኝ ተጎንብሽ፤
እግዚአብሔር ይማርህ ሳልልህ ደርሼ።

Oh, forgive me! Forgive me!
As I did not say, 'bless you, bless you'.

(56) ከልጅ እና ተነፍሰ የተኛው ይበልጣል፤
 የመብለጡን እማ ነፍሰ ይበልጥ ነበር፤
 የነፍሰ መጣያ ነው ልጅ የተፈጠረ።

Which one is more valuable, our child or our soul?

No doubt, our soul was more valuable

A child, however, is created to be a reason to commit sin.

In dirge (53), the speaker expresses that she feels remorseful for not caring enough for her deceased mother. Similarly, dirge (54) states the regret of the speaker for not helping her deceased mother. Dirge (55) is, however, a bit different in that it expresses the remorse of the speaker for not paying a visit to the deceased during the last illness.

In dirge (56), we find a very different kind of regret. This dirge was composed for the death of a child whom his mother took to witchcraft to get him cured of his illness. Unfortunately, the child was not cured. Thus, the dirge singer, on behalf of the bereaved mother, is pointing out the regret of the mother for going to a witchcraft, which is considered to be sinful among the followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

4.5.6. Sympathy

In west Gojjam, it is possible to find funeral dirge that express sympathy for the bereaved as well as the deceased. In most cases, the dirge singers express their sympathy for the deceased by referring to the circumstance of his death and compassion for the bereaved is also communicated by noting to the disaster that the death brings about to his life. The following dirges express such feelings of the dirge singer.

(57) ጡቷ እያፈሰሰ ጉናው ሲበሰብስ፤
 ልጁ ሲያለቅስ ያድራል የሰው ደረት ሲልስ።

As her breast leaks and moistens the pit,
Her child cries, licking somebody's chest.

(58) መልካም ጌታ ሲሞት በሎሌ ይብሳል፤
ሚስትም ታገባለች ልጅም ከብት ይወርሳል።

When a good master is dead,
Worse it is for a servant,
As the wife will be married
And the child inherits the cattle

(59) እንዴት ያረጉታል የልብን ህመም፤
እኔን የናቴ ልጅ እኔን ወንድም አለም፤
ማጭድ አይገባበት በእጅ አይታረም።

Oh, my mother's son! Oh, my brother,
What can one do with a disease in the heart?
As a sickle cannot be used,
And it cannot be weeded with a hand.

(60) ጓደኞችህ ሁሉ ወንበር ሲዘረጉ ዲግሪ ሲካፈሉ፤
አፈሩ ደረሰህ እንደድልህ ሁሉ።

When your friends took higher positions,
And were awarded a degree,
You got the soil as it was your fortune.

(61) ሀዘን ቅባ ኑግ ነው በሁሉም ይደርሳል፤
አይዞሽ እቴ መሀል ጎረቤት ያለቅሳል።

Grief is '*qiba nug*' (oil-nigger),
That happens to everyone,
Feel ok, the infertile woman,
Since your neighbours mourn.

Dirge (57) was composed for the death of a mother through child-birth. Though the mother was dead, her newly born child did not. Thus, the speaker of this dirge expresses her compassion for this bereaved baby. The dirge is imaginative of the circumstance of the baby and the deceased mother. According to the speaker, the bereaved baby licks somebody's chest as there is nobody to breastfeed him. This is how the dirge singer expressed her innermost sympathy for the bereaved. In a similar way, dirge (58) was composed to express sympathy for the bereaved that lost his good master. In this dirge, the speaker takes us to the fate of the servant, which seems gloomy. The speaker is sympathizing that there will be nobody to stand by the servant.

On the other hand, in dirges (59), (60) and (61), the speaker expresses her compassion to the deceased. In dirge (59), the speaker appears to sympathize for the suffering that the deceased went through. The speaker feels sad that she could not do anything with the disease of the deceased. According to the dirge singer, the deceased was suffering from an incurable disease. Dirge (60) was composed for the death of a prospective graduate. The deceased died when he was left with two more months for graduation. Thus, the dirge singer is expressing her sympathy for the deceased by referring to the status of his friends. The speaker of this dirge is mourning that the deceased passed away before he witnessed the fruit of his hard work. Dirge (61) also expresses sympathy for the deceased. This dirge was composed for the death of an infertile woman. The fact that the deceased couldn't have a child is what the speaker of the dirge refers to. Though there is no child to mourn for the deceased, the speaker maintains that the infertile has neighbours who mourn her death.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Oral poetry is a means through which people express their socio-political, psychological, philosophical and religious assumptions about different-events in life. One of the forms of oral poetry through which people reveal their different thoughts are funeral dirges. Funeral dirges are lyrical poetic texts that lament usually the death of someone. They are usually composed, improvised and recited by funeral dirge singers on the occasion of the death of someone.

In this study, it has been found out that those funeral dirges in West Gojjam deal with five major subject matters. These are thoughts about the deceased, death, God, socio-political issues and other emotional reactions to bereavement. Under each category, different themes are identified.

In the funeral dirges that deal with the deceased, praise has been found out as the most common theme. Funeral dirges in West Gojjam usually celebrate the kindness, looks, generosity, wisdom, and achievements of the deceased. The other theme identified in this category of dirges is the sorrowfulness of the circumstance of the death of the individual. The decisive role of the deceased in the life of the bereaved is also the theme of the dirges in this category.

With regard to death, its inevitability, unpredictability and the life after are found out as themes of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam. There are also funeral dirges that make some surprising comments about God. In this regard, the cruelty of God and his incapability of judgment are identified as themes.

As it is discussed in the previous chapter, it is also possible to find funeral dirges that criticize the acts of the society and protest a political power. The

importance of homeland and the horror of war have also been identified as the themes of the funeral dirges.

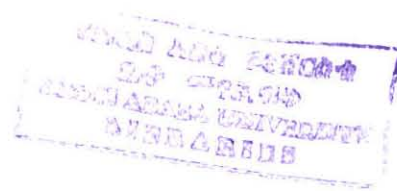
Some emotional reactions to bereavement are also features of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam. In this case, the feeling of loss, helplessness, hopelessness, regret, sympathy and the painfulness of grief are found out as the themes of the funeral dirges in West Gojjam.

The funeral dirges in West Gojjam have been, therefore, found to be helpful in gaining some insight about people's feelings, attitudes and beliefs which are reflected in response to the death of someone.

In order to get a better understanding of the people of West Gojjam and their oral arts , it may also be important to conduct a comprehensive study on oral poems that are inspired by other defining moments of life like 'birth', 'initiation', 'title-taking', and 'marriage'.

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ማተሚያ ቤት።

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APPENDIX

In this study, more than 400 funeral dirges were collected. However, those repeated and very common ones were avoided. And it is only 261 funeral dirges which are appended in this section.

1. Thoughts about the Deceased

This category of funeral dirges expresses;

- Praise of the deceased
- Sorrowfulness of the manner of death
- The decisive role of the deceased in the life of the bereaved

1.1. Praise of the Deceased

1. አትሠሩት እጅዋን እኔ እፈታዋለሁ፤
በሞቴ እየተባልኩ በልጅበታለሁ።
2. መኝ እበላ ነበር መኝ እጠጣ ነበር በሚታሠር እጅ፤
ትሠነብቻለሽ መስሎኝ ነበር እንጅ።
3. የእኩሌ መስታወት ወድቆ ተሠበረ፤
እስከዝንታለሚ መታየቷ ቀረ።
4. ፍትፍት ፍትፍት አርገሽ ጣይበት ባንጀቱ፤
እንዲያ እንደክረምቱ እያልሽ በሞቴ
5. ሲግም ቅቢው እና ሳይነቃ ክፈኙው፤
ጣትሽ ሳይታሠር እንድትፈተፍኙው።
6. ጉድጓዱ ሲቆፈር እኔስ ባየሁ ባባሁ፤
ከማጀትሽ ቢሆን ዘልየ በገባሁ።
7. እንዘርቱ ባገልግል ንድፉ በወራንታ እየተላቀሠ፤
እኔን እቴ ጓዴ የጓዴማ እጣቷ ታማ በሠበሠ።
8. በመረቅ ፈትፍታ ደረቅ ነው ትላለች፤
አንድ እንጀራ ሠጥታ ግማሽ ነው ትላለች፤
ጎዳና ሲጓዙ ልቧ አብሮ ይጓዛል፤

20. በቅሎህንም ይገዙት እንደተመኙት፤
በሬህንም ይገዙት እንደተመኙት፤
ሚስትህንም ያግቧት እንደተመኛት፤
ሠራህን ነው እንጅ የማያገኙት።
21. ሆይ ያልቅስ እንጅ ዐይኔ ምን በወጣው፤
ማርና ወተቱን ደባልቆ የጠጣው።
22. እኔስ ካራው ጠፋኝ ከነባለቤቱ፤
እኔ ጩቤው ጠፋኝ ከነባለቤቱ፤
ጥብስና ብርንዶ የበላሁበቱ።
23. ያፀጉር የማን ነው ከመከታው ላይ፤
እኔን ያቺ ቆንጆ ተቆርጣ ነው ወይ።
24. የአባትዓለምን ቤት ማነው ያፈረሰው፤
አሞራ ይሆናል በጁ ያልቀመሠው።
25. ወረዳው ፍርድ ቤት ቆሞ ሲነጋገር፤
አውራጀው ፍርድ ቤት ቆሞ ሲነጋገር፤
የቀኙን በግራው ያዛውረው ነበር።
26. በል እንባየ ውረድ በመላ በመላ፤
በጠጣሁበቱ በዋንጫው ላትሞላ።
27. አዲስ ኩታ ለባሽ አይለፍ በደጁ፤
(ጃኖ) ደህና ኩታ ለባሽ አይለፍ በደጁ፤
እናቴ ናት ብሎ ይሠቀቃል ልጁ።
28. ትልቅ ሠው ነበረ ትልቅ እንደዋርካ፤
እግሩ መሬት እንጅ አፉ ሠው አይነካ።
29. በሬ እንኳ ዋ ሲሉት ይቆማ ከድንበር፤
አንተም ደግነቱን አብዝተኸው ነበር።
30. የሠኔው ገበሬ የሐምሌው ጎልጓይ፤
ጅራፍህን ጠቅልለህ መሄድህ ነወይ።
31. ባርኔጣውን አርጎ፤ ጀበረናውን ታጥቆ ሲወጣ ከመንገድ፤
ለባዕድ ያኮራል እንኳንስ ለዘመድ።

- 32. ከመንገድ አጠገብ ሠፊ አዳራሽ ሠርቶ፤
ጣል አድርጎት ሄደ እንግዳውን ፈርቶ።
- 33. ግሙንም ድንቁንም ስትለቅም ስትለቅም፤
መሬት ያለዛሬ ሠው አግኝታ አታውቅም።
- 34. ዘጠኝ ወር አርግዛ ስጋዋን ለብሼ፤
እናትዓለም አልኳት ስሟን አሳንሼ፤
ይህቺ ዓለም በላይ ልበላት መልሼ።
- 35. ዘጠኝ ወር አርግዘሽ፤
ሶስት ዓመት አጥብተሽ፤
ባስር ዓመት ድረሽ፤
ኧረ እናት ዓለሜ ምን ይሆን ውለታሽ።
- 36. ጣትሽን ነው ወይ ይሆን ያጎረሽበትን፤
ክንድሽን ነው ይሆን ያንተራሽበትን፤
ደረትሽን ነው ይሆን የታቀፍሽበትን፤
ምንሽን አስቀርቶ ይቀብሯል እናትን።



1.2. The Sorrowfulness of the Manner of the Death

- 37. ታሞ ታሞ ሲሞት ይሉታል አረፈ፤
ገበያ እንደወጣ ነግዶ እንዳተረፈ።
- 38. ጠንካራውን ጉበዝ ጠንካራ ይዞት፤
ገዝግዞ ገዝግዞ አስገባው መሬት።
- 39. ከሳ መነመነ ቀጠነ እንደሠበዘ፤
ያልወጉበት ዛቢያ የመሠለው ጎበዝ።
- 40. መሬት አትቀበይ ስም ይሆንብሻል፤
ስጋውን ጨርሶ አጥንት መጠልሻል።
- 41. ከአራዊቱ ሁሉ አሞራ ነው ክፉ፤
አንጀቱን ጎትቶ ሠቀለው ከዛፉ።
- 42. ቆላ ደጋ ዳሞተ አርሶ ተወደደ፤
በአሁኑ ዘመን ልጅ በአጭር በቅሎ ሄደ።

43. ጉድጓዱ እስኪቆፈር ጉናው እስኪበጅ፤
አራሲቱ ልጅሽን አጥብተሻት ሂጅ።
44. ጓደኞቻችሁ ሁሉ ደብሩን አረሙት፤
አንቺ ሹልክ ብለሽ ቀርተሽ በድንገት።
45. እኪሙ ነው ይሆን ቡዳው ነው የበላሽ፤
እንደ ሠኔ ሙላት በደምሽ የዋኘሽ።
46. ሴቶችም አታግቡ ወንዳም ሴት አትተኛ፤
ደም መላሹ ልጅዋ ከሆናት ደመኛ።
47. የጎቻው ድንጋይ የአስፋልቱ ጎዳና ሳሩ ለምለም ነው፤
የውሀው የዝናቡ አይደለም የሠውየው ደም ነው።
48. የሚያጠፋ አጋንንት የሚያለማ መስሎት ታይቶት ለወንድሜ፤
አሳጥሮት ቀረ ረጅሙን እድሜ።
49. አልበላም ስትሉኝ በልቷል ግጥም አርጎ፤
አልጠጣም ስትሉኝ ጠጣ ግጥም አርጎ፤
እባቡን እንጀራ ወጡን ጉርጡን አርጎ።
50. የወጣቱ እናት ታች ታቹን እለፊ፤
የዚያ ጀግና እናት ታች ታቹን እለፊ፤
እዚያ ወድቆልሻል የአስፋልቱ ትራፊ (car accident)
የአሞራው ትራፊ (war)።
51. የዚያን ወጣት መርዶ ውሻይቱ አመጣችው፤
ደሙ ተለል ብሎ ሂዳ የላሠችው።
52. እናንተም አልቅሁ የኔም ስጡኝ ፋንታ፤
ወደቀ ይሉኛል ሳያሠጠው ፋታ።
53. አይ አያየው የለም እግር ከደረሠ፤
አራሷን ቀለሯት ጡቷ እያፈሠሠ።

1.3. The Decisive Role of the Deceased in the Life of the Bereaved

54. የአገሩ አረኛ የከብቶች አረኛ፤
ደከመው መሠለኝ ሽብልል ብሎ ተኛ።
55. እግዜር ሠርቶ ሠርቶ ትንሽ ሲቀረው፤
ለእናት ሁለተኛ ቢኖራት ምነው።

56. እራቡ በሆዴ በቅሎ ዘረዘረ፤
እናት ዓለም ብትኖር ትቆርጠው ነበረ።
57. አፋፋ ላይ ሆኖ ትጣራለች እናት፤
ኑ ብሉ ነው እንጅ ሌላ ምን ሞያ አላት።
58. ሲሆንም በጊዜ ሳይሆንም በመብራት፤
ጋግረሽላቸው ሂጂ ለልጆቻችን እራት።
59. ምንኛ ድንቅ ነው የእናት ጎረቤት፤
ተበድሮ በልቶ የለኝም ማለት።
60. ሁለቱ ልጆቻችን ሁለት ነው አመላቸው፤
ሶስቱ ልጆቻችን ሶስት ነው አመላቸው፤
እኔ ልሂድና አንቺ ነይላቸው።
61. እናቴ ቤት ብሄድ አለች በቃ በቃ፤
እህቴ ቤት ብሄድ አለች በቃ በቃ፤
ወንድሜ ቤት ብሄድ አለች በቃ በቃ፤
አባቴ ቤት ብሄድ አለች በቃ በቃ፤
የማይሠለቸው ባልና ውሀ እቃ።
62. እንግዲህስ ወዲያ መጣልሽ ውርደት፤
እንግዲህስ ጓዴ መጣልሽ ውርደት፤
ከጎረቤት ጋግር በሠፊድ መብላት።
63. ትዳሬ ተሞተች ቤቴ ከፈረሠ ምን ያደርግልኛል የእንግዲሁ ኑሮ፤
ከልጆቼ ሞሠብ አይኔ ተወርውሮ።

64. ልጅ አይጠቅምም አሉኝ እንዴት ለጅ አይጠቅም፤
 ከብት እየጠበቀ ጭራሮ ሲለቅም።
65. እኔ ልጅ አበባው ልጅ ማሩ ልጅ ማሩ፤
 ድንክ ድንክ አርጎ ሲልኩት ማማሩ። (መቶ ተቆጥቶ)
66. ወንድም የሌለው ሠው ጥላው ከውካዋ ነው፤
 ክንፉን ከተመታ ያሞራ ምን አለው።
67. ወንድም ያለውና ወንድም የሌለው፤
 ከሩቅ ያስታውቃል ዋግ እንደመታው።
68. በርቀኝ እና ወንጌ ቀረ አሉ ተጣልቶ፤
 የአገር ሽማግሌው አባትዓለም ጠፍቶ።
69. ያ ቀንዳም ድኩላ ሄደ ማዶውን፤
 ጀግና ቅደምና ያዘበት በሩን።
70. ሴቶች አታልቅሁ ወንዶች እናልቅስ፤
 አደባባይ ወጥተን የምናጣው ዋስ።
71. የልመና ቀጣር ሲሳብ እንደሠርዶ፤
 አባትዓለም ቢሆን በደረሠ ማልዶ።
72. ቀዳዳውን ሁሉ ስትጠቁመ ስትጠቁም፤
 እናቴ ወደቀች እንግዲህ አላውቅም።
73. አንዱ ቆሎ ይላል አንዱ ንፍሮ ይላል፤
 ይህን እናት አንጂ ሌላ ማን ይችላል።
74. የሠማዩ ኮከብ ብቆጥረው ሠላሳ፤
 እናት የሌለው ልጅ ታሞም አይነሳ።
75. እንደዓይን እንደጆሮ እንደጣት እንደጅ፤
 ሲመቱት ይቀርባል የወለዱት ልጅ።
76. ትናንትና ማታ ትናንትና በልሜ፤
 ድልድዩ ተሠብሮብኝ እባህር ላይ ቆሜ፤
 እኔ እናንተ ሆኖ ህልም እንደፈችው ነው፤
 ድልድዩ ወንድሜ ባህሩ እንባዩ ነው።

- 77. እረ እናንተ ሆኖ ባይበሉስ ምን አለ፤
ከደጃፍ ቆይቶ ልጅ አበባው ካለ።
- 78. ባልበላ ባይጠጣ ባይገባ ከቤት፤
ከደጃፍ ሲቀመጥ ደስ ይላል አባት።
- 79. ትናንትና ማታ ክፉ ንፋስ ነፍሶ፤
ነቃቅሎት አደረ የቤቱን ምሶሶ።

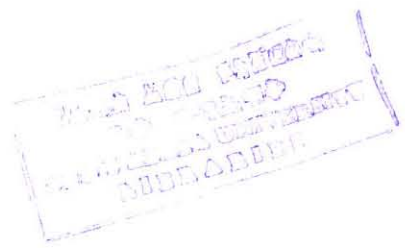
2. Thoughts about death

In this section, funeral dirges that express the following points are include;

- The inevitability of death
- The unpredictability of death
- The existence of life after death

2.1. The Inevitability of Death

- 80. እነሆ ሲሄዱ እኛ ሸኘናቸው፤
እንዴት ይታዘቡን የቀረን መስሏቸው።
- 81. በሉ እናንተም ሂዱ እኛም ወደዚያው ነው፤
ወትሮም መንገደኛ ፊትና ኋላ ነው።
- 82. ዋይ ለልስ ብላችሁ አፈር ስትመልሁ፤
የኔም ለት ብላችሁ እንባ እንድታፈሁ።
- 83. አልቅሁ እንላቀስ የልቅሶ ወበራ፤
ዛሬ የሁ ቢሆን ነገ የኛ ተራ።
- 84. እኛ ወደ አንቺ ምን ቢሆን አንቀርም፤
አንቺ ግን ወደኛ አንጠራጠርም።
- 85. ከአጣቢው ነው ይሆን ከእንደዱ ማነስ፤
አፈር መስሎ ታየኝ የዚህ ሁሉ ልብስ።
- 86. ምን ቢሙሽረሽሩ ምን ቢብሰጨሰጨ፤ ቢመስሉ ጨረቃ፤
አወይ የሠው ነገር ተመልሶ ጭቃ።



(መቼ ታመመና መቼ ሆነ ሞቱ)

98. ሺረ መቼ ታሞ መቼ ሆነ ሞቱ፤

ለኒህ ምን ነው ቃላት ሆኖ ለሆነ ማገገሚያ

97. አለቅ ስለሌላው ምን ማገገሚያ

ለኩ ያልታወቀ አይደለም ተሰኝሞ

96. አለቅ ስለሌላው አይ አገናኝ ሆኖ ለሆነ ማገገሚያ

2.2. The Unpredictability of Death

ሞት አይደለም ግብር ነው ለሰው ልጅ ስዘር።

95. መታመን ነው አንድ ያሰው ቀም ነገር፤

አመት ሁለት አመት ያህል ሆኖት።

94. አይ ሞት መላክ ቀም ከገላት።

አይምና ይገን ያተፈጠሩ ላት።

ድር ነበር አንድ ሰው አልሆንም ማለት፤

93. ቀድሞ ነበር አንድ ሰው አልሆንም ማለት፤

ሆኖ ጥላው ሃይ ሞትን ያህል አይ፤

92. አሁን አይ ቃይ ተጠላቀው ማለት፤

አይሞሽን ስቀና ሰቀና ማለት፤

አይሞሽን ተይን ላለበት ላለበት ስይ፤

91. ሺረ ተይን ተይን ነገ ስይ፤

ግደን ግደን አስከምከተላሁ።

90. ወንድሞ አትቆጣ ቀረ መሆኑ፤

ፊትና ገላ አንድ ያሞቅር ላው ያለም።

89. ስለ ተወው ወንድሞ ስለተወው ግደላም፤

አይም ተከታይ ነኝ ያተጠራሁ ላት።

88. አወይ ገድ ሰው መሆን ስግድ መሆኑ፤

ከአን ላይ ላትወርድ ምን አናግርኝ ክፉ።

ና ግብ ተቀመጥ ቀጭ ስለ ከምንገባ፤

አንድምን ሠነበትህ አንድትህ አይረሀል፤

87. አይ ሞት መላክ አንድምን ወላህ፤

110. ታምሜ ተኝቼ የዋልሽልኝ ውለታ፤
 አትከለከይም ትገቢያለሽ ገነት።
111. ጠጋ ብለሽ ተኝ ወደ ገነቱ፤
 የዚህ ዓለም ኑሮ ቢቀር ምንአባቱ።
112. የክርስቶስ መንገድ ይቀጥናል ከመድፈ፤
 በሠጠሁ ያሠኛል ልብሴን ተገፍፈ።
113. የእግዚርን ጌዳና መምጫውን ያወቀው፤
 እንደጉልተ ገዥ በጨው የታረቀው።
114. ለኔ ይብላኝ እንጅ መተኪያ ላጣሁት፤
 አንተማ ገብተህል ከዘላለሙ ቤት።
115. ያም ገድፌ በላሁ እንጅራ በአዋዜ፤
 እንዲህ ለሚቀረው ለሚደርሰው ጊዜ።

3. Thoughts about God

This group of funeral dirges;

- Express the mercilessness of God and
- Challenge his righteousness

3.1. God's Mercilessness

116. እንደ እግዚአብሔር ጨካኝ እንደ ምድር ሆዳም፤
 ሌባ እንኳን ከበረት እርጉዟን አይነዳም።
 (ሌባ እንኳ ከበረት አራስ ላም አይነዳም
 እንደ እግዚአብሔር ክፉ እንደ ምድር ሆዳም)
117. ከላይኛው ጌታ ይሻላል ገበሬ፤
 ዝርዝሩን አይቀጭም ሳያፈራ ፍሬ።
118. ተምሮ ተምሮ ህገ ወግ ሳይደርሰው፤
 አሠጣቹ እግዚያብሔር መልሶ አፈረሰው።
119. የዚያ ጎበዝ በሮች እማዞሪያው ናቸው፤
 እግዚአብሔር ነው እንጂ ሠውም አልፈታቸው።

120. እመቤቱ ማርያም ልጅሽን ተቆጭው፤
 አንች እንዴት ጨነቀሽ ለአንድ አርብ ብታጭው።
121. ፈጣሪን ፈልጉት መጥረቢያ ይዛችሁ፤
 እግዚርን ፈልጉት መጥረቢያ ይዛችሁ፤
 የሠው ቤት ሲያፈርስ ታገኙታላችሁ።
122. እግዚር ምድር ወርዶ ገና ይጫወታል፤
 አወ ይጫወታል እኛም አየነው፤
 እየቀላው ሄዶ እያጋደመው።
123. ምን ያለ እግዚር ነው ለፍርድ ያስጨነቀ፤
 የሚያድገኑ ሀሳን ከአንቀልባ ቆረጠ።

3.2 Challenging God's Righteousness

124. ጨረቃን ስትሠራ ድንቅ ሞያ ውለሀል፤
 ጆምበርን ስትሠራ ድንቅ ሞያ ውለሀል፤
 መሬት ስትዘረጋ ድንቅ ሞያ ውለሀል፤
 ሠማይ ስትታረጋ ድንቅ ሞያ ውለሀል፤
 ሠው የሠራሀለታ በከንቱ ውለሀል።
125. ድሀን የሠራ ለት አምላክ ተሠስቶ እግዚር ተሠስቶ፤
 ቁሞም አያምርበት እንኳን ዛሬ ሞቶ።
126. ደሙ ሄዶ ሄዶ ተጉዞ ተጉዞ፤
 እኛ ባይሆንልን እግዚር ምን ይዞ።
127. ቢተወው ምን አለ ለጋው እንዲበስል፤
 በኋላ ስልጣኑ የሌላ ይመስል።
 (ኋላ ዳኝነቱ)
128. እናትን የምጥ ለት፤
 እሀትን የራብ ለት፤
 ወንድምን የጠብ ለት፤
 አባትን የድንበር፤
 አፈረሠው እንጅ ጥሩ ሠርቶ ነበር።

129. ክምር ከማሪና እግዚር አንድ ናቸው፤
መልሰው ሊያፈርሡ ምን አደከማቸው።

130. እኔና ያዳም ልጅ አራሩ ትንሽ፤
አምላክ አይደለም ወይ ሠርቶ የሚያበላሽ።

131. እናት ትገላለህ አባት ትገላለህ፤
የሴት ልጅ ነህና መኝ ፍርድ ታውቃለህ።

132. የላይኛው ጌታ በስንት ያሳርሳል፤
በነጋ በነጋ ዘር ያመላልሳል።

4. Thoughts about socio-Political issues

In this category, there are funeral dirges that;

- Criticize the manners of the society
- Identify the importance of homeland
- Protest against a government
- Express the horror of war

4.1. Criticism of the manners of the society

133. ሳለ መጠቃቀም ይተውና ዘመድ፤
ሲሞት ወየ ወየ ይመስለኛል ማበድ።

134. ባይድ እንጀራ በላ ጥርሡን እያሳየ፤
የመከራ ለታ ምነው የተለየ።

135. የእክሌ ዓደኞች ድርጅት ያላችሁ፤
የእክሌ ዓደኞች ስርጭት ያላችሁ፤
አወዳደቅ እንዲህ ነው እዩት ያሳያችሁ።

136. ደሙ ወርዶ ወርዶ ከጎበዞች መንደር ድንጋዩን ገደበው፤
ሳይፈረድበት የተደበደበው።

137. ማልቀስ ለደሀ ነው ማልቀስ ለምስኪን ነው፤
ሀብታም እማ ሲሞት አብልቶ አጠጥቶ እንባውን ገዝቶ ነው።

138. ቋሚ ቀብሮ እስኪሄድ ምን አገሠገሠው፤
እሡ ቀሪ ሳለ የሚበሠብሠው።

139. አልቅሁ እንላቅስ ከመሀል ያለህ ሰው፤
የዳረኛው እማ ሳቁም አያደርገው።
140. ማብላት ለወንድም ነው ማብላት ለዘመድ ነው መልሶ መላልሶ፤
ጤዛው ካልረገፈ ባዕድ አይመጣም ለቅሶ።
141. የዛሬ ዘመን ሠው ድፍን ድንጋይ ሆዱ፤
ውሻውን ይወዳል ከደሀ ዘመዱ።
142. ሳንቲም እና ወንድም እመንገድ ወድቀው፤
ሳንቲምን አነሡ ወንድምን ትተው።
143. ከስራ ወጥቼ ልብሴ ሲቆሽሽ፤
አየሁት ወንድሜን የኋሊት ሲሸሽ።
144. ከስራ ገብቼ ልብሴ ቢነጣጣ፤
የጠላኝ ወንድሜ ሊጠይቀኝ መጣ።
145. አረ ሠው ሞኝ ነው ይጣላል ከስጋው፤
የመከራ ሌሊት አብሮ ከሚያነጋው።
146. ከድንጋይ መሀከል ትብቅላለች ሠርዶ፤
ለሀብታም ነው እንጅ ለደሀ ማን ፈርዶ።
147. ያሳድጓል እንጅ ልጅን ተጠንቅቆ፤
አሁን ምን ያደርጋል ማርዳ በሸንቆ።
148. ምን ወተት ቢያጠጡት ቢያስታቅፉት ጥሬ፤
ክፉ ነው የሠው ልጅ አያዞርም በሬ።
149. ዛሬ ክንዴ ክንዴ ቀኝ እጅ ቢሉኝ፤
የገዛ እናቴ ልጅ ታላቁ ቢለኝ፤
በቁሜ ያልሆነው ምን ሊሠራልኝ።
150. ልጄን አደራ አለ ወይ ሞኝ ወይ ሞኝ፤
ምን ወዳጅ ተገኝቶ ቁሞ ካልተገኘ።
151. እኛ ባገራችን ወንድም አለኝ ማለት እህት አለኝ ማለት፤
አጉሪና ደብተራ ካገር የጠፋ ለት።
152. አረ ጎበዝ ሲሞት ጎበዝ ካልመነነ፤
አረ ጀግና ሲሞት ጀግና ካልመነነ፤

ይህ አልቅሶ መቅበር ዘፈን ነው የሆነ።

4.2. The Importance of Homeland

153. ኑሮ በሰው ሀገር ሞት ባገር ይደምቃል፤

ትንሹም ትልቁም በአንገት ላይ ይወድቃል።

154. አንተ በሰው ሀገር አገርህ ከሌላ፤

ከሰው የበለጠ እንጀራ ላትበላ።

155. እኔ ማረኝ ዳሞት ፊቴን ልመልሰው፤

ተው ማረኝ አገሪ ፊቴን ልመልሰው፤

አለ አገሪ በቀር መኝ አለኝ አንድ ሰው።

156. አፈር አበድሩት በቁና ሠፍራችሁ፤

አገሩ ሲገባ ይመልስላችሁ።

157. ከሰው አገር መሞት ምኑና ምኑና፤

አፈሩ ተሠፍሮ ቁሡ በልመና።

158. እንጀራ ሆነና ደጉ ቁም ነገሩ፤

አልቀበር አለ ሰው ሁሉ ከአገሩ።

159. ያባት ሀገር ቀሚስ የናት አገር ሸማ፤

ነጠላ አይደለም ወይ የሰው አገር እማ።

160. እንዲህ ወደ አገሪ አልተላከም ወይ፤

አንገቴ ጠመመ ዞሪ ዞሪ ሳይ።

4.3. Protest against a Government

161. ትላንትና ማታ ትንሽ ካፊያ ጣለ፤

እንዲህ ቢደጋግም ጎበን በበላነ።

162. እኔ እናንተ ሆየ አልቅሡ እንላቅስ ገና ነው ነገሩ፤

ባልታወቀ ዳኛ ተይዟል አገሩ።

163. እስቲ ትንሽ እህል እስቲ ትንሽ ውሃ፤

የምትሔድበቱ እሳት ነው በርህ።

- 164. እስቲ ልሂድና ልጎለት ካፋ፡፡
ሠዎቸስ አልቀዋል እንዴት አደርህ ዛፋ፡፡
- 165. ወይ ዕድሌ ሀብቱ መጣ ጨለማው፤
ቀኑን ዘመዶቹ ይዘውት ሄደው፡፡
- 166. ቅቤ ተወደደ በየገበያው፤
ነግ ለራሴ ብሎ አያዝንም ወይ ሠው፡፡
- 167. አገሪ አማኝ አሉ ዳሞት አማኝ አሉ መቼ ተለየሁት፤
ሲሠራም ነበርኩኝ ሲፈርስም አየሁት፡፡
- 168. አገራችን ታሞ ይሄዳል ባልጋ ላይ፤
ወዴት እንሄዳለን ሞት ሽረቱን ሳናይ፡፡
- 169. አልቅሁ እንላቅስ ምንድን ነው ዝም ዝሙ፤
ያልሞተለት የለም ከእህት ከወንድሙ፡፡

4.4. The Horror of war

- 170. የሚኒሻን መርዶ ወሬቱ አሞራ አመጣችው፤
ከደረቱ ሆና አይኑን የጠጣችው፡፡
- 171. ጀግና ሲረጋረግ በሠሜን ተራራ፤
ስጋ ጠግቦ አደረ ስንቱ ጆፌ አሞራ፡፡
- 172. የባድሜ አሞራ አንጀት የሌለው፤
ምን እናት ወለደው እያለ በላው፡፡
- 173. አንቺ አታይም እንጅ እናት አለሚቱ እኔስ አይሻለሁ፤
በአሞራ ሆድ ሆኜ በደጅሽ አልፋለሁ፡፡
- 174. ከእንግዲህስ ወዲያ አልበላም ጎመን፤
በወንድሞቼ ደም የበቀለውን፡፡
- 175. የጎጃም መኪንንት የጎንደር መኪንንት፤
እዚያው ባለህ ባለህ፤
ድልድዩ ተሠብሯል መሻገሪያም የለህ፡፡
- 176. የወንድ ልጅ እናት ታጠቁ በገመድ፤
ልጅሽን አሞራ እንጅ አይቀብረውም ዘመድ፡፡



177. የጎበዙ እናት ላይ ላዩን አለፈ፤

አጥንቱ እንዳይወጋሽ የአሞራው ትራፊ።

178. ዳር ድንበር ማስከበር ሽራሮ ሄደና፤

ተሸክሞ መጣ የመከራ ቁና።

5. Other Reactions of Bereavement

In this section, there are funeral dirges that express:

- The painfulness of grief
- The feeling of loss
- The feeling of helplessness
- The feeling of hopelessness
- The feeling of regret
- The feeling of compassion

5.1. The Painfulness of Grief

179. አባት የሞተ ለት ድንበሩ ይገፋል፤

እናት የሞተች ለት ምድር ሠማይ ያልፋል፤

እህት የሞተች ለት ኮሶ ይደነፋል፤

ወንድም የሞተ ለት ባላንጣ ይፋፋል፤

ከዚያም ሁል ከዚያም ሁል የልጅ ሞት ይብሳል፤

አለ ካራ አርዶ ያለ ሳት ይጠብሳል።

180. የእህልንስ እራብ ሸምተው ያልፉታል፤

የብርንም እራብ ለምነው ያልፉታል፤

የወገንን እራብ እንዴት ያደርጉታል።

181. አንተ አብሽሎ ሆነህ ደረቆች ሆኛለሁ፤

አርሬ ተክኜ እከተልሁለሁ።

182. ወንድሜ ከሞተ የናት ልጅ ከሞተ እስከዛሬ ድረስ፤

ብበላው ብበላው እህል ካንጀቱ አይደርስ።

183. በስማም አሀዱ አምላክ አፌን አለው ደም ደም

ብዙ አሳቢው ወጣት ወርደህ ስትጋደም

184. ቢያለቅሁትም እንባ በፈጁትም ደምነው፤

እኔስ የተመኘሁ ሠው አለመሆን ነው።

185. እናቴ እናት ሆንኩሽ ቀርቶ ልጅነቴ፤

ተመልሠሽ ገባሽ በቧዶው አንጅቴ።

186. እናት ያለመሆን ቀድሞ ነበር እንጅ፤

ሲራብ ያሳዘናል እንኳን ሲሞት ልጅ።

187. ሠወቸ ካለቁ አልበላሁም ደረቅ፤

እያማግሁ በእንባየ እንደ ዶሮ መረቅ።

188. አርቀው ቢቀብሩት መች ይቀራል ልጅ፤

ተመልሶ መጥቶ ልብ ይበላል እንጅ።

5.2. The Feeling of Loss

189. ዘሬ ብዙ ነበር እንደ አረግ ሬሳ፤

አለቀብኝ እንጅ አንድ አንዱ ሲነሳ።

190. የናቴ ቤት ባዶ፤

የሁቴ ቤት ባዶ፤

የአባቴ ቤት ባዶ፤

ኸረ ባዶ ባዶ፤

ኸት ይገባ ይሆን እግሬ ሄዶ ሄዶ።

191. እናት ከገበያ የሚሸመተ ቢሆን፤

በትልቁ ቁና ዘርፌ ዘርፌ

አወይ እናት ዓለም ማለቱን አርፌ።

192. ከጫና አፈር ገብቶ ከተዘጋ በሩ፤

አባት አይገኝም እንደ ወፍ በበሩ።

193. እጣን እጣን ሲሞት ያልቅስ እጣን እጣን፤

መልካም ቆንጆ ስትሞት ታልቅስ መልካም ቆንጆ፤

ቡታ ቡቴው ሲሞት ያልቅስ ቡታ ቡታ፤

እንዲህ እያለ አይደል ባድማ ማፈታ።

194. ሠው ከሞተ ወዲያ አንጋዳ ከገባ፤

ወዳጅን አይጠቅም ጠላቱን አይጎዳ።

195. ጎረቤቱ ሲሞት ያልቅስ ጎረቤቱ፤

ከማን ይጫወታል ከተዘጋ ቤቱ።

196. ያንቺ ሚስጢር ከኔ እየተላወሠ፤

የኔው ሚስጢር ካንቺ ታማ በሠበሠ።

197. አልቅሠ እንላቅስ እንሸኘው ይሄን ሠው፤

አመት ሁለት አመት የማይመለሠው።

198. ዝቅዝቅ ቤት ሽቅብ ቤት በምትሄድበቱ፤

እኔስ አንተን አንተን ሸተተኝ መሬቱ።

199. ምሳና ውልክፋው አይዞህ አይዞህ በለኝ፤

ንሳማ ግራሩ አይዞህ አይዞህ በለኝ፤

አልቆብኝ ነው እንጅ ብዙ ሠው ነበረኝ፤

ረግፎ ነው እንጅ ብዙ ሠው ነበረኝ።

200. እኔ ላልቅስ እንጅ ምን ዝም ዝም አሠኝኝ፤

የማይሸመተው ሠው ማጣት ሲያገኘኝ።

201. ሠው ከሠው ያደርሳል መንገድ ከመንገድ፤

እናቴ ለየሽኝ ከብዙ ዘመድ።

202. እኔን የናቴ ልጅ እኔን ወንድምዓለም፣ እኔኔ እህትዓለም፣

እኔን እናትዓለም፣ እኔን አባተዓለም፤

ብጣራ ብጣራ ብጣራ ሠው አጣሁ፤

በጉበን አልፎ ከወንዝ ውሀ ጠጣሁ።

5.3. The feeling of helplessness

203. ሺረ ማሩኝ ሠዎች ሠዎች እባካችሁ፤

ወንድሞቼ ሳሉ የተናገርኳቸው።

204. እበላ ነበረ ሞሠብ ተደግፌ፤

እጠጣ ነበረ ወንበር ተደግፌ፤

አውጥቶ ወሠደው እንጀራውን ካፌ።

205. ባደባባይ ቆሜ እሚዋሠኝ ባጣ፤

አየሁ ምድር ምድር ቆፍሬ ላወጣ።

206. ብትሠድቦኝ ሠደብኳት ብትመታኝ መታኋት፤

አወይ የናቴ ልጅ ወንድሟን ብትጠራ ወንድሜን አጣሁት።

207. አንተ አለኸኝ ብዬ ተጣልቸክሠው፤

የአለፈውን አፌ በምን ልመልሠው።

208. አባት የለለው ልጅ ከጥጥ ፍሬ ያንሳል፤

ክፉ ሲናገሩት በጎ ይመልሳል።

209. የኔስ ወንድሞቼ አሉ ምድር ምድር፤

ሲርቦኝ በልቼ ሲመሽ እንዳላድር።

210. ድንጋይ ሲወረወር ወረወርኩኝ ኩብት፤

ወንድም የሌለው ሠው የለውም አንደበት።

211. ወንድም የሌለው ሠው የወንድም አባሪ፤

ከትከሻው ቀረ የዱላው ስባሪ።

212. እንጨቱ ኩብቱ ቢጠጋ ከቤት፤

ያላባት ገደፋ አይሠራም ቤት።

213. እባክህ ወንድሜ አንድ ጊዜ ተዋሠኝ፤

ከላይ የጎተተ ከታች አደረሠኝ።

214. አባት የሌለው ልጅ የገደል ላይ ሳር፤

ሳሩም አይታጨድ ልጁም አይዳብር።

215. እስምንተኛው ሽ. ልንገርሽ ዓይ ዓ የተመከረውን፤

ባል ገረድ ያደርጋል አባት የሌለውን።

5.4. The Feeling of Hopelessness

216. ቢቆጩኝ ነው እንጅ አሁን መለፍለፌ፤
ከዳዋ ውስጥ ገብቶ ይገኛል ወይ መርፌ።
217. አንተ አለህ ብዬ እንጅ አንተን ካጣሁማ፤
ምን ያስቀምጠኛል ከባደው ባድማ።
218. ሸረ እኔስ ዘንድሮ እንባዩ ቅጥ አጣ፤
ከዚህ መላክ እንጅ ከዚያ ሠው ላይመጣ።
219. ሙሽራው መጣ አሉ እጉብን ደረሠ፤
ሂድ ተመለስ በሉት በኛ እኩል ፈረሠ።
220. ጠልሠም የምትገዛ ና ከኛ ቤት ግዛ፤
ቀሚስ የምትገዛ ና ከኛ ቤት ግዛ፤
የጎደሎ ቤት ነው ዋጋም አናበዛ።
221. ፍንጃሌ ተሰብሮ ቡናው ተደፋብኝ፤
ብርሌው ተሰብሮ ጠጁ ተደፋብኝ፤
ከእናት ዓለም ጋራ ስንት አለም ቀረብኝ።
222. ከእንግዲህ ለምኔ ሠፊ መቀነት፤
እናትዓለም የለች አልቋጥርበት።
223. አባት ጥሩ ነበር ከድንበር ሲቀመጥ፤
እናት ጥሩ ነበር ዘለው ቢገቡባት፤
ወንድም ጥሩ ነበር ቢያንገራግሩበት፤
እህት ጥሩ ነበር ሲሩብ ቢበሉባት፤
ሸረ በኸት እኩል ይሔ ሞት ባለበት።
224. ሞት መጣ ይሉኛል እንዲህ ባግድም ቤቱ፤
ከዚህ ቤት አይወጣም ከለመደበቱ።
225. ባለቅሠው ባለቅሠው ዐይኔ ሆነ ወንፊት፤
ምነው ሞቼ ባረፍኩ ከሠዎቹ በፊት።

5.5. The Feeling of Regret

226. እናት ሳለች ቀሊል የጉብን ገለባ፤
ይቸግራል እንጅ ምድርቤት ስትገባ።

227. ሲይዟት ቀላል ናት እናት እና ብር፤
 ስትወድቅ ነው እንጅ የምትቆረቆር።
228. እናት እንደጌሾ ብትበቅይ በደጂ፤
 ውሀ አጠጣሽ ነበር ማልጄ ማልጄ።
229. እከሊት እከሊት እልሻለሁ እሳ፤
 እድል እንዳለው ሠው አስታሞ እንዳነሳ።
230. ከልጅ እና ተነፍስ የትኛው ይበልጣል፤
 የመብለጡንም ነፍስ ይበልጥ ነበረ፤
 የነፍስ መጣያ ነው ልጅ የተፈጠረ።
231. ና ብላ ስትለኝ ወየው መጓደዴ፤
 ና ጠጣ ስትለኝ ወየው መጓደዴ፤
 ያን የተመኘሽውን አገኘሽው ሆዴ።
232. እረ ማረኝ ማረኝ ማረኝ ተጎንብሽ፤
 እግዜአብሔር ይማርህ ሳልልህ ደርሼ።
233. አሳድጋኝ ነበር እንደ ጌሾ ፍል፤
 አሳድጋኝ ነበር እንደ ባህርዛፍ ፍል፤
 ወሠደብኝ እንጅ ብድራን ሳልከፍል።
234. በሉ ተጫወቱ እህት ያላችሁ፤
 በሉ ተጫወቱ ወንድም ያላችሁ፤
 ወደ ኋላ ፀፀት እንዳይሆንባችሁ።

5.6. The Feeling of Sympathy

235. በድሎሽ እንደሆን በሬውን ተካሽው፤
 በድሎሽ እንደሆን አልቢኑን ተካሽው፤
 በድሎሽ እንደሆን ሽጉጡን ተካሽው፤
 የልጅሽን አባት ጥቁር አታልብሽው።
236. ጡቷ እያፈሠሠ ጉናው ሲበሠብስ፤
 ልጁ ሲያለቅስ ያድራል የሠው ደረት ሲልስ።


237. ቀኑንስ እዋለው በወተት ደልሎ፤
 ገበያ ሄዳለች ትመጣለች ብሎ፤
 ሌቱንስ አደረው በአሳር በመከራ፤
 ልጁ እናቴን ሲለው እሁ እሷን ሲጠራ።
238. እኔ እናቴ እናቴ እያለሽ ልጅሽ፤
 አሁን ካፈር በቀር ምን ይዘሻል በጅሽ።
239. መልካም ጌታ ሲሞት በሎሌ ይብሳል፤
 ሚስትም ታገባለች ባልም ሀብት ይወርሳል።
240. እኔ አንተ ሠውየ ሆዴም አልወደደህ፤
 የልጅ ተስካር አውጭ ማነው ያደረገህ።
241. እኔ አባቴ አባቴ ነበር እንጅ ልቅሶ፤
 እንዴት ልጅ ልጅ ቁልቁል ተመልሶ።
242. ወተት ያለህ ወተት ያዝና ናውጣ፤
 ዱቄት ያለህ ዱቄት ያዝና ናውጣ፤
 ፍትፍት ያለህ ፍትፍት ያዝና ናውጣ፤
 እበተስኪያን ጓሮ አራሲቱ ወድቃ።
243. የዚያ ጎበዝ ቤቱ ዳር ዳሩ አፈሠሠ፤
 የዚያ ወጣት ቤቱ ዳር ዳሩ አፈሠሠ፤
 ከመቸው ተሠርቶ ከመቸው ፈረሠ።
244. ማሙሽ እሽሩሩ ሚሚም እሽሩሩ፤
 እንቀልባው ተቆርጦ እንዳይበላህ ዱሩ።
245. እንቧይ ከብለል ከብለል፤
 ልጅ እምቧይ ይወዳል፤
 አፈር እና ድንጋይ ለአዋቂም ይከብዳል።
246. ጓደኞችህ ሁሉ ወንበር ሲዘረጉ ዲግሪ ሲካፈሉ፤
 አፈሩ ደረሠህ እንደ እድልህ ሁሉ።
247. መፅሀፍህ ተሸጠ ገዛው መንገደኛ፤
 ትመለስ እንደሆን ላስይዘው በዳኛ።

248. ባልሽ ሚሽት አገባ ሽማግሌ ሊሆን፤
እሚያስነውር እቃ ምን ጥለሻል ይሆን።
249. አንድ ሠው ከፍኖ አንድ ሠው ቀበረው፤
የገበያ ግማሽ ዘመድ እንደሌለው።
250. ወተት ያለሽ ወተት ዶሮ ያለሽ ዶሮ፤
አራስ ተኝታለች በቤተስኪያን ጓሮ።
251. ሽረ እንደወጉ እንደወግ አወጉ፤
አንቺ ልጅሽን ያገዢው ይሳብልስ በጉ።
252. ቤትስ ሠርቶ ነበር በመሽጋገሪያ፤
አድርጎት ሄደ እንጅ የቡላል ማደሪያ።
253. ምን ይደብቅሀል በጥዱ በጫካው በኋላ፤
ምስጥ እንጨት ይበላል እንኳን የሠው ገላ።
254. ይብላኝ ለሚች እንጅ ቋሚ አለው መድሀኒት፤
እህልና ውሃ እንቅልፍና ሌሊት።
255. እንጀራ በሞሶብ ነጭ በጎታ ሞልቶ፤
ጦሙን አሳደረው ጉሮሮውን ዘግቶ።
256. እንዴት ያደርጉታል የልብን ሀመም፤
እኔን የናቴ ልጅ እኔን ወንድምዓለም፤
ማጭድ አይገባበት በጅ አይታረም።
257. ሐዘን ቅባጉን ነው በሁሉ ይደርሳል፤
አይዘኝ እቴ መሀን ጎረቤት ያለቅሳል።
258. መሀን የሞተችለት ሁለት ጊዜ ለቅሶ፤
እሷ እንኳን አትመጣም ፊቷ ተመልሶ።
259. መሀን የሞተችለት ዝግ ብዬ ዝግ ብዬ፤
የትኛይቱ ልጅዋ ትታዘበኝ ብዬ።
260. ደስ አይበልሽ ወላድ የእኔም ደሮ አለችኝ፤
ታምሜ ብተኛ ጭራ አለበሰችኝ።
261. የመካን ምን አላት ያለ መቀነቷ፤
ቀብረው ሲመለሡ ይወራል ቤቷ።

Declaration

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

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Signature 

Date of Submission 19th June, 2009

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Advisor.

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Date of approval 22/08/09