

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**A SEMOITIC CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
OF SELECTED AMHARIC FILMS OF ETHIOPIA:
WITH REFERENCE TO 'ZUMRA' AND
'SEMAYAWI FERES'**

**BY
MINASIE GESSESSE**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
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INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
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A List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

EFC: Ethiopian Film Corporation

EFPA: Ethiopian Film Production Association

ENSAP: The Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program

EPRDF: Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GFE: Global Film Expression

GDP: Growth Domestic Product

IMF: International Monetary Fund

NBI: Nile Basin Initiative

ODA: Official Development Assistance

SAP: Strategic Action Program

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

3EIFF: The Third Ethiopian International Film Festival

4EIFF: The Fourth Ethiopian International Film Festival

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ABSTRACT

Film production started in Ethiopia 90 years ago. However, its development was stagnated for long and began flourishing in the 1980s. With the development of film production, nonetheless, critical and professional recognitions of films have not yet been developed along with popular recognition of films. This study was intended to find out discursive practices of a society by using film semiotics as an approach under the umbrella of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to give critical recognition to the selected films_ ‘Zumra’ and Semayawi Feres’. The study used qualitative method of analysis using the selected films as primary and related documents as the secondary sources of data. The researcher has used, as his method of analysis, Chandler’s (2000) categories of codes and adapted Fiske’s semiotic model in order to match with CDA and the consequent discursive practices in the selected films. In ‘Zumra’ film, racial discrimination and its subsequent results are vocalized via social, interpretative, syntagmatic and paradigmatic codes. These codes are moved by two regulatory codes_ racism and love. Setting, background music, pictures, customs, events, natural phenomena (darkness) and psychological state of affairs are some of the signs which reflect implicit meanings. Similarly, in Semayawi Feres’, the political discourse is the main salient feature of the film. In this film, the controversies of the Blue Nile are the top agenda. In the film, colors (white, black, green, red, and yellow) are manipulated as broadcast codes. Besides, flags, cars, pictures, statues, flowers, highways, games and conversations reinforce hidden meanings of the Blue Nile controversies. In addition to these, as in the film ‘Zumra’, darkness and brightness have been manipulated for echoing implicit meanings. Thus, this study contributes, in a modest way, to suggesting a systematic approach to the study of Ethiopian films in order to appreciate and evaluate their communicative and aesthetic impact as a powerful mass medium using semiotic discourse practices.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background of Ethiopian film production, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significances, methods, scope, analytical framework and limitations of the study will be presented.

1.1 A Brief Background of Ethiopian Film production

In this section, an attempt is made to present the brief background information of Ethiopian films with its opportunities and challenges. As Masresha (2009) notes, the first film of Ethiopia was produced in 1916 (1923/24 GC) by Musie Terass. However, as Ek (2009) briefly explains, a first step in formulating the Ethiopian film industry was taken over thirty years ago, when the country provided the set for the filming of *Shaft in Africa* (1973) and the local production *Gouma* (1975) by Michel Papatakis. Consequently, the Ethiopian Film Corporation was established with two sections, one for news and propaganda; and the other for art productions, the latter only produced one feature film called *Aster*. Following the change of government in 1991, the Ethiopian Film Corporation lost its role. However, a beautiful roomy compound, which is located in Addis Ababa, is the legacy of the Film Corporation. Thus, its artistic works on the film industry of Ethiopia needs to be preserved, and restored as part of Ethiopian national film and audiovisual archives (Ek, 2009).

After the fall of the Military Government, some of the members of the Ethiopian Film Corporation subsequently formed the Ethiopian Film Association, which is presently named Ethiopian Film Production Association (EFPA). Afterwards, there come finger count well educated cinematographers who have attended their study in America and other developed nations. However, in Ethiopian film production sector, there is still lack of educated manpower and unavailability of governmental institutions which trains professionals who promote academic research. One of the crucial challenges faced EFPA is how to bridge the gap between the cinematographers trained in traditional film

production coming from ‘the old school’ and the new professional talents embracing digital video as a means of storytelling (Ek, 2009).

Though the numbers of produced films are too small from the view point of the huge socio-cultural and historical heritage of the country, there is actually a dramatic development in the film production sector of Ethiopia in the last three decades (Masresha, 2009). From the positive amenities that promote its development: the preexisting rich background of Ethiopian drama, the opening of private cinema houses, the establishment of private film production institutions, the popular recognition of national films and the formulation of film producers associations can be cited (Masresha, 2009). These amenities need to be further strengthened to address the diverse social, political, cultural, historical and economic heritages of the country.

According to Masresha the film sector in Ethiopia has gained momentum in 1985 when films began to be produced in the Amharic language and simultaneously accessed to the audiences via CDs. To mention some of the films produced since 1985, ‘*Fikir Mecheresha*’ (The Destination of Love), ‘*Sewur Chilot*’ (The Secret Judgment), *Senayit* which is an eponymous title, ‘*Yefikir Shimiya*’ (Competition of Love), ‘*Yezemariwa Wafe Hilm*’ (The Dream of the Singing Bird), ‘*Tsemaco*’ (named with one of the Military Government regime marching agenda) and *Seole* (The Hell) can be cited as an example. The popular recognition of Ethiopian films underwent a change with the provision of governmental theatrical houses where newly produced films that can be screened. This was begun by Tewodros Teshome’s Film of ‘*Kezkazaw Wolafen*’ (The Frozen Flare) at the end 1995 EC (2002 GC).

According to Pfaff (2004) a number of films by Ethiopian film makers tend toward reconstructing the nostalgia of the past feudal regimes of ‘Solomonic’ dynasty and showing the more recent bold experiment of the ‘Military Government by the name of socialist retransformation. To Pfaff, the thread that runs through Haile Gerima’s *Harvest* (1976) and *Imperfect Journey* (1994), Selam Mekuria’s *Yewonz Maibel* (Deluge, 1995), and Yemane Demissie’s *Girgir* (Tumult, 1996) as a scheme to revisit the foundational

narrative of a 3000-year Solomonic Ethiopia dynasty in light of the experience with feudalism and an unsuccessful revolution and their legacies. *Harvest*, made at the moment of transition between the end of feudal regime and dawn of the revolutionary regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, challenges and subverts the reigning feudal narratives and also anticipates, somewhat prophetically, the still unfinished struggle against similar forces of subjugation in the post feudal era (Pfaff, 2004).

As Pfaff further illustrates, *Tumult*, for its part, revisits the abortive in 1960s by students, in alliance with segments of the military to topple down Haile-Selassie's regime. Deploying a class analysis in this film, Yemane Demissie chronicles the psychological fallout of this moment for individuals. The competing narratives of history that the film eloquently presents is a solid foundation for better understanding of the continuing struggles in contemporary Ethiopia. Selem Mekuria also accomplishes this in *Deluge*, which revisits, from a more personal point of view, the 1970s and 1980s situations of Ethiopia under the military regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam (Pfaff, 2004).

Selam Mekuria's second major production, *Yewonz Maibel*, is also a moving personal journey back to the post Haile_Selassie Ethiopia and the 1978-79 bloody period of the Red Terror campaign of Colonel Mengistu Haile_Mariam against his oppositions. The human toll of the conflict that ruffled relatives, families and close friends against each other, as well as the difficult but the necessary process of healing and reconciliation in the 1990's when the film was shot in Ethiopia, are highlighted. Using the first person voice as the narrative device, Selam Mekuria constructs events with the aid of personal correspondence, with memories of her brother and her best friend, using photographs, archival footage, paintings and music. Through the personal and self-reflexive narratives, the recent history of the whole nation and region is laid bare and reinterpreted and its implications for the future of the country are made explicit (Pfaff, 2004).

Masresha points out that the Ethiopian film is going along by some private owners and by some professionals without enough professional manpower of cinematography and without the due support of the government. He further says that the number of films

produced in Ethiopia does not exceed 300 and its development compared to other African countries (Nigeria and South Africa), is far behind. Thus, he recommends that the film sector need to be regarded as one sector in developing and sharing culture, earning profit, and manifesting artistic, social, economic, and political development. The two initiatives that have a positive impact on the progress that the sector urges to achieve are the publication of a quarterly journal dealing with many global and national issues in film production sector by EFPA and the beginning of yearly celebration of Ethiopian films since 2006.

At present, there are many producers, private cinema institutions and associations of film producers, for example. Such new initiatives and efforts of practitioners, nonetheless, are not apparently strengthened as they should by concerned government bodies and reputed professionals. One of the contributions of scholars in the field of Literature, Theatrical Art and Cinematography in developing the film production in Ethiopia is conducting research from different perspectives. This research work attempted to analyze two Ethiopian films from the view that language, as a social practice, is a central element in social life and, hence, analyses semiotic discourse of the films in relation to the wide social context in which it occurs by using semiotic signs and codes. Analyzing different texts from a wide variety of context is the main agenda of CDA. CDA uses either of or a combination of ranges of approaches, i.e. politeness principle, conversation analysis, feminism, semiotics, ethnicity, inequality, ideology and others. The researcher has selected semiotics to analyze discursive practices and themes of the selected films. To select the appropriate films to this approach, the researcher has attended films with five other graduate school students of literature and theatrical arts.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Films have effective role within the society as one of mass medium communication. Films reconstruct the realities of the remote past; testify the present day practical situations and visualize what possibly happens in the future. In contrast to linguistic descriptions of texts, films have multiple sense appeal. The verisimilitude effect of films is most lifelike than other artistic works such as books, theatre, music, painting and others. Analyzing films from different perspectives by using various parameters, thus, helps to visualize the life of human beings in a certain imaginary or real setting. One of the possible parameter is discourse. Shrum (1996), cited in Allen and Lincoln (2004), says that quality standards and quality judgments are ultimately created within the context of discourse. Thus film, like a language is a culture-bound communication activity that could be comprehensible and viewed as discourse.

Knowing the values of the produced films in their country, Americans began nominating and consecrating films through various institutions many years before. As Allen and Lincoln (2004) note, directors of films and other agents are nominated and awarded by American Film Institute, National Film Registry and by The National Board of Council of the New York Times media, based on different profound parameters of these institutions. According to Allen and Lincoln the values adopted to select films would receive professional (bestowed by other artists), critical (by critics and scholars), and popular (based on the money gained from audiences) recognitions. Critical recognition helps to see historical significance, economic and political maneuvers, and cultural values, etc. of films. Recently, a number of films have been produced in Ethiopia, but they have not given serious critical and professional recognitions. To interpret the film semiotics employed in the films, critical recognition is imperative. Since the film sector vigorously uses language (Amharic or any national and international language), and since [a film] language is a social construct signifying societal values which appears neutral (Fairclough, 1997; Wodak, 2002; van Dijk, 2000 and Sheyholislami, 2001), this research has disclosed social relation and its consequent results caused by dominance of certain groups in each of the selected films using semiotics as a tool.

We may see people queuing at each of the cinema halls to watch their favorite Amharic films in Ethiopia (especially in Addis Ababa). This popular recognition of films, however, needs to be strengthened by professional and critical recognitions for film is a powerful mass medium that contributes fundamentals of social transformation, material development and encourages of positive human values in the general public. The study focused on diagnosing contextual meanings of the selected films with racial and political orientations from an assumption that there are hidden meanings and social semiotics which signify different schemata. Thus, this research work aimed at narrowing the research gap in the study of Ethiopian films for there was not a single study which saw the discursive practices and other social issues from the perspective of CDA and semiotics.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this research has been to analyze audiovisual representations, in terms of characteristics specific to the audiovisual events and actions. This research work has general and specific objectives that are stated below.

General Objective:

This study was fundamentally intended to examine the socio-political relations and power constructs of the two selected Amharic films using Fiske's (1989) semiotic analysis model and Chandler's (2000) types of codes.

Specific Objectives:

Based on the above general objective, this study is geared towards:

0. Finding out the body of language utterances, symbols, visual images and other forms of semiotics in *Zumara* and *Semayawi Feres*.
1. Exploring the power relations of dominant and dominated groups in different sociopolitical contexts.
2. Examining the contribution of the discursive practices used in the films to social transformation in different social contexts.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the above objectives, the present work managed to answer the following questions.

- What are those discursual constructs that dominated the film?
- Which discourses are purported in visual speech and nonverbal symbols of the films?
- How do more powerful groups control public discourse (mind and action) of less powerful groups in the films? And how are social inequalities reflected here?
- What kind of images do the films construct about the dominant and dominated groups and how can these images be analyzed?
- What are the contextual macro discursive practices of the films?
- How do the discursive practices employed in the films contribute to the social change?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study has fundamental uses to uncover inequalities that emerge from the power relationships of different groups in the selected films. The present research would help viewers to see the hidden meanings of films which are revealed by CDA using film semiotics as a research tool. Moreover, other critics and other stakeholders in film industry could possibly take this research work as an input to see micro and macro societal values from different perspectives. Besides, to nominate films to awards and to consecrate films of the past, this research work will provide some guidelines. This research may also enlighten stakeholders' vision on the necessity of professional critics on media texts in general and the produced films in particular.

At a macro level, this study helps to consider producers and directors of films to see self images, identities, social relationships and system of knowledge and beliefs of a society. The research attempted to help the film production sector in showing the implicit societal practices which dominate the film discourse. To this claim, there are scholars who say

that CDA has done a substantial contribution to the society (Chuliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). These scholars attribute the recent economic and social changes to a significant degree with the transformations in the language and discourse of films. Thus, CDA can help by theorizing transformations and creating awareness "of what it is, how it has come to be, and what it might become, on the basis of which people may be able to make and remake their lives" (Chuliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p.4). Likewise, this research throws light on the communicative interactions of characters in terms of semiotic and linguistic features to uncover what is going on in the societies as represented in the films.

1.6 Methods of the Study

This research work has used qualitative method of study.

1.6.1 Selection of Sample Films

There had been personal and the selected films in this study. Let us see these subjects as follows.

1.6.1.1 Persons Who Participate in the Study

The researcher had five colleagues to choose two films among the Ethiopian films that are produced from 1990 onwards. The researcher selected five colleagues from Literature and Theatrical Art Department of Addis Ababa University to choose two Amharic films that are produced since 1990s. Coordinating these persons was needed to develop rational criteria and to choose those films based on the set criteria and to minimize subjectivity in the study.

1.6.1.2 Selection Criteria of Films

Two films have been selected based on some parameters set by both the analyst and his colleagues. The criteria that were used to choose the films were:

1. popularity during the time of production,
2. the essentialities of their themes to the national values,
3. the contemporaneous of the film, and
4. their literary merits.

1.6.2 Sources of Data

The researcher has used primary and secondary data to his research work.

1.6.2.1 Primary Data

The selected films – *Zumra* and *Semayawi Feres* were used as primary data. This data sources were chosen among other films based on the above criteria.

1.6.2.2 Secondary Data

The researcher has used document analysis to find data. The documents (secondary sources) were: books, newspapers, articles, magazines and other related writings about the selected films, semiotic and CDA.

1.6.3 Methods of Analysis

The researcher has used qualitative method of analysis which is more of analytic and descriptive nature.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research work is limited to a discursal and semiotic study of the two selected films and therefore its scope is limited to Semiotic Critical Discourse Analysis and the analytic procedures there of.

1.8 Analytical Framework

This research work principally used the analytical framework of CDA with film semiotics to diagnose the discursive practices and semiotic codes in the selected films. Many scholars have agreed upon that CDA is an interdisciplinary ranges of approaches having no one specific method (Van Dijk, 1998, 2000; Wodak, 2002; McGregor, 2003; Sheyholislami, 2001, Fairclough 1992). CDA fundamentally sees what is meant when language is used to describe and explain things, actions, ideas or any. Though there is no one specific method of study, scholars have forwarded their own approaches of study from different perspectives. In Luke's words,

CDA involves a principled and transparent shunting back and forth between the microanalysis of texts using varied tools of linguistics, semiotic, and literary analysis and the macroanalysis of social formations, institutions, and power relations that these texts index and construct (Luke 2002, p. 100).

The researcher has used Fiske's 'semiotic methods and applications' (Fiske 1982, pp. 103-117, cited in Chandler, 2000) to analyze the film discourse. As the subjects of study are films, the researcher has employed three analytical elements of study: signs, signifieds and significations of film discourse. Since the fundamental semiotic signs and codes of the two selected films are different, the semiotic parameters that are used to each of the films also slightly differ. Hence, the researcher has used dominant semiotic signs and codes to each of the films. The general semiotic analysis framework is further explained in the following three paragraphs.

As Chandler (2000) explains, Semiotics can be applied to anything which can be seen as signifying something. Even within the context of the mass media one can apply semiotic analysis to any media texts, including television and radio programs, films, cartoons, newspaper and magazine articles, posters and other ads. In the present study Fiske's semiotic methods and applications have been used based on the role they play in uncovering invisible social, cultural, political, and historical practices of the society. Fiske offers a valuable account of 'semiotic methods and applications' (Fiske 1982, pp. 103-117, cited in Chandler, 2000, pp.26-27). The researcher has adapted Fiske's semiotic model in order match with CDA and the consequent discursive practices and put as follows.

Firstly, defining the genre to which the text belongs and the context in which it is found is fundamental. Under this analytical proposition, exploring the important implicit [signifiers](#) and what do they signify is essential. Knowing the system within which these signs make sense is also demanding. Secondly, the [paradigmatic analysis](#) will follow. In this section, finding out the genre of films, paired opposites, nature/culture and social signs which signify the discursive practices and central oppositions which add meaning to the implicit meanings can be discussed. Exploring the connotative meanings of the above paradigmatic parameters is also fundamental. The third important level of analysis is

looking through the [syntagmatic structure](#) of the text. In this section the focus of attention is on looking at: how does one unit (e.g. a film shot) relate to the others used; how does the sequential or spatial arrangement of the elements influence meaning and how far does [identifying the paradigms and syntagms](#) help you to understand the text. Exploring the prescribed features that have shaped the text is also a point of discussion.

At the fourth level of analysis, the analyst will find out the [semiotic codes](#) that are used in the text. The semiotic codes can be classified in different ways depending on the universality of the codes (by saying *broadcast* and *narrowcast*) or by the material they are signified by (by saying *analogous* or *digital*) or by using other methods of classification depending on the dominant codes of the films that are selected for the study. At the fifth level, the analyst will look at the social semiotics of the selected films. The researcher has sought this level together with Chandler's classification of codes which are discussed under the topic 'Codes'. In the present study, however, social codes (verbal, commodity, bodily, behavioral and regulatory) are emphasized than textual and interpretative codes for they are dominant features of the selected films. The sixth and the last level of analysis explores macro discursive practices of the selected films to see the insights that the semiotic analysis of the texts offered to the social transformation

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Though the researcher intended to do his research on other films which are still on the stage, however, the producers were not found willing to give the copy of the film for the research purposes. Because of this basic reason, the researcher changed his mind and focused on the films which are already on sale via Compact Disks (CDs).

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Film and Its Brief Background

Films are [cultural heritages](#), a source of popular entertainment and a powerful method for [educating](#) or [indoctrinating](#) citizens; created by specific [cultures](#) to reflect those cultures and in turn, affected by societal cultural values. In addition to the visual elements of cinema that give motion pictures a universal power of communication, films have become worldwide popular attractions by using subtitles that [translate](#) the dialogue (Wikipedia, 2009). The same website illustrates, right before the introduction of film thousands of years, [plays](#) and dances had elements common to film such as scripts, [sets](#), costumes, [production](#), [direction](#), actors, audiences, storyboards, and [scores](#). Later, however, much terminology used in film theory and criticism such as *mise-en-scène* (roughly, the entire visual picture at a time) and *mise-en-shot* (The process of translating *mise-en-scène* into moving pictures, into shots, and the relationship between the two).

The origin of the name film comes from the fact that [photographic film](#) (also called [film stock](#)) has historically been the primary medium for recording and displaying motion pictures. Many other terms exist for an individual motion picture, including *picture*, *picture show*, *moving picture*, *photo-play* and *flick*. A common name for film in the United States is *movie*, while in Europe the term *cinema* is preferred. Additional terms for the field in general include *the big screen*, *the silver screen*, *the cinema* and *the movies*. When we talk about film as a medium we can describe it in terms of the various stages of the entire cycle from production to distribution and consumption, with the product itself in the center of this process (Wikipedia, 2009). As Dirks (2009, p.1) explains,

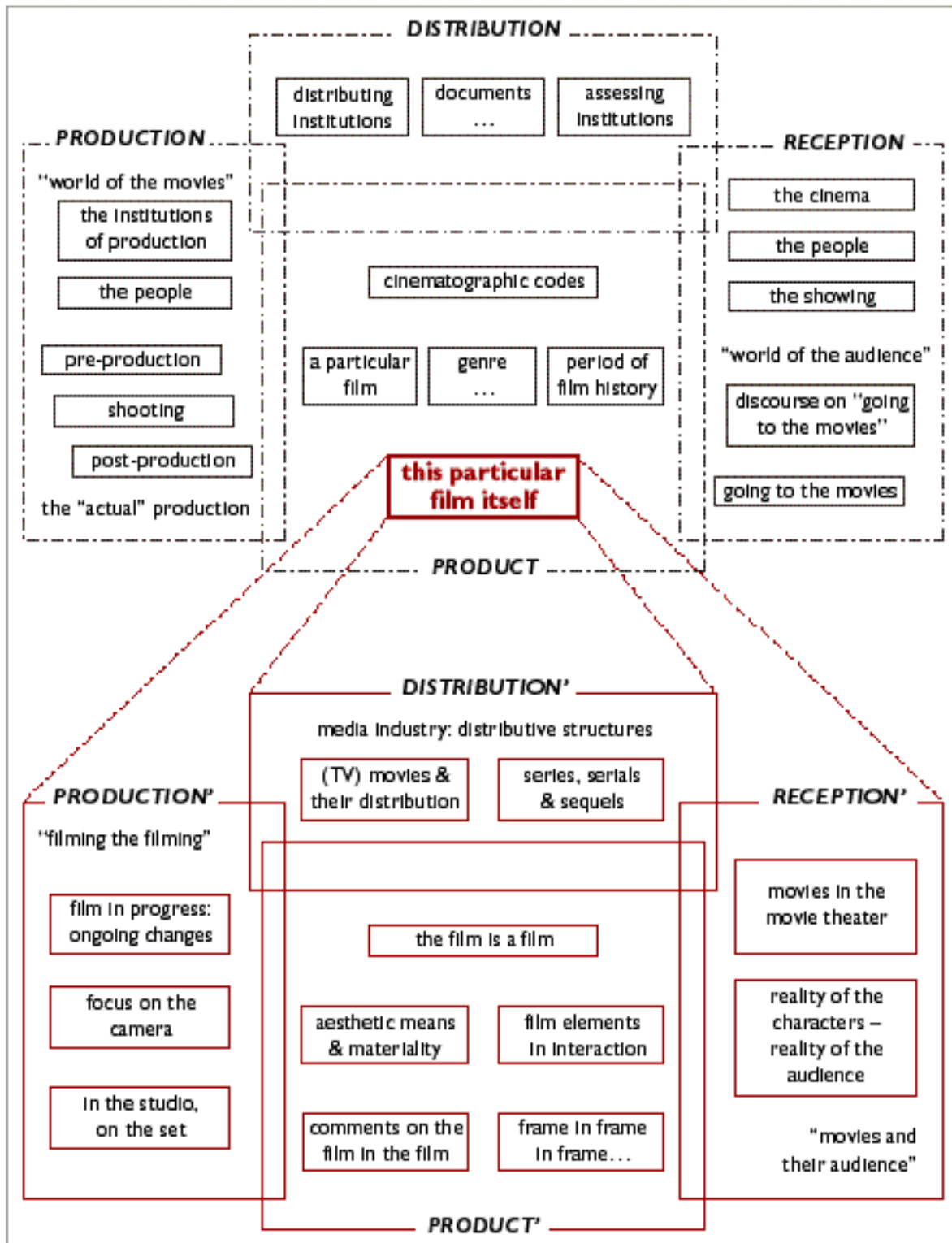
“dramatic themes often include current issues, societal ills, and problems, concerns or injustices, such as racial prejudice, religious intolerance (such as anti-Semitism), drug addiction, poverty, political unrest, the corruption of power, alcoholism, class divisions, sexual inequality, mental illness, corrupt societal institutions, violence toward women or other explosive issues of the times.”

As Dirks (2009) further explains, dramas are serious, plot-driven presentations, portraying realistic characters, settings, life situations, and stories involving intense character development and interaction. Usually, they are not focused on special-effects, comedy, or action. Dramatic Films are probably the largest film genre, with many subsets (*melodramas*, *epics (historical dramas)*, or *romantic* genres, *biographical film*). Though there are many genres of film (action, adventure, historical, romance, horror etc.), the researcher has found many of the Ethiopian films falls under Drama Films. Dramatic films are probably the largest film genre because they include a broad spectrum of films which conform to the societal values of Ethiopia. Many of Ethiopian films are serious presentations or stories with settings or life situations that portray realistic characters in conflict with either themselves, others, or forces of nature. A dramatic film shows us human beings at their best, their worst, and everything in-between.

2.2 Elements of Films

[Film] discourse is not simply a secluded textual or dialogic structure, rather it is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social context, featuring participants (and their properties) as well as production and reception processes (van Dijk, 1988, p. 2). At the production, distribution and reception levels of film production, there are many elements of films that need to be known by stakeholders of films (especially critics, directors and producers). Critics can evaluate and analyze any film by choosing the elements of films that are illustrated in the following table. This study saw the reception section of the film, as an individual educated audience, to give critical recognition using semiotic signs. Thus, it is essential to know the elements of films at production, distribution and reception levels. The table shown at the next page heralds these three basic elements of films into two categories: the produced films, in general and a particular film production, in particular. The top section of the figure discusses constituent elements of film production; while the bottom section shows the components of a particular film, from production, distribution and reception perspectives.

Figure 1: Film Elements (taken from Withalm, 2000, p.2)



2.3 Semiotics

As this research aims to see the semiotic CDA analysis in selected Amharic films of Ethiopia, looking at the nature and a range of related issues of semiotics is presumably fundamental. Thus, the background of semiotics and its definition, signs, codes, models and basic assumptions in semiotics will be discussed in the following series of sections under this title.

Chandler (2000) notes, the Swiss linguist [Ferdinand de Saussure](#) (1857-1913) is a pioneer who is regularly referred to semiotics. To Chandler, the other key figures in the early development of semiotics are the American philosopher Peirce (1839-1914) and later [Morris](#) (1901-1979). Chandler also refers to [Barthes](#), [Eco](#), [Metz](#), [Kristeva](#) and [Greimas](#) as the leading modern semiotic theorists together with [Jakobson](#) and [Halliday](#). As semiotics cannot be separated from [structuralism](#), [Levi-Strauss](#) in anthropology and [Lacan](#) in psychoanalysis are also considered as exponents in the field (Chandler 2000). As Chandler further clarifies, semiotics began to become a major approach to media theory in the late 1960s. According to Noth (1990), cited in Chandler (2000), Saussure's term, 'semiology' is sometimes used to refer to the Saussurean tradition, parallel to this, 'semiotics' sometimes refers to the Peircean tradition, but nowadays the term 'semiotics' is more likely to be used as an umbrella term to embrace the whole field.

The most common definition of semiotics is 'the science of signs'. It involves the study of any medium (or genre) as a semiotic 'sign system'. Semiotics aims to analyze media texts as structured wholes. It focuses on the system of rules governing the 'discourse' involved in media texts, emphasizing the role of semiotic context in determining meaning (Bell, 2001; Woollacott 1982, cited in Chandler, 2000).

As Chandler points out, semiotics represents a range of studies in art, literature, anthropology and the mass media rather than being an independent academic discipline. Those involved in semiotics include linguists, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, literary, aesthetic and media theorists and educationalists. Semioticians commonly refer to films, television and radio programs, advertising posters and so on as

'texts', and Fiske and Hartley (1978, cited in Chandler, 2000), referred to 'reading television'. Chandler further says media such as television and film are regarded by some semioticians as being like 'languages'.

2.3.1 Basic Assumptions on Semiotics, Communication, and Cultural Theory

Semiotics, communication and cultural theories are interrelated to one another. Irvin (2007) illustrates the presuppositions in semiotics, communication and cultural theory as follows. He firstly says that cultures are formed through language and hence language is public, social, and communal, not private or personal. He again explains that the users of a common language form what is called a speech community (subcultures, dialects, ethnic groups, social-class specific communities, etc.). He additionally discusses language as a system with rules (of own internal structure) from speech sounds, words, and sentences to longer units called discourse. According to Irvin, discourse circulates through cultures, providing meanings, values, and social identities to individuals and it is the level studied by most cultural theories and semiotics.

He also states that communication and meaning are formed by representation through signs that represent things, meanings, and values, such as, words in a language, images, sounds, or other perceptible signifiers. Signs and sign-systems present a socially interpreted and valued representation. Irvin notes that, as other scholars do (e.g. Chandler, 2000), the study of how a society produces meanings and values in a communication system is called semiotics, from the Greek term *semion*, "sign". He further enlightens that languages, and other symbolic systems like music and images, are called sign systems because they are governed by learnable and transmittable rules and conventions shared by a community.

Irvin also explains that signs in Semiotics are used for social functions through codes, the rule for combining a sensory impression with a mental content, and the basic signifiers in a language into a system of meanings. The relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary as part of the internal rules of a language (see also Chandler, 2000). Having an arbitrary relation to things signified, the signs of a culture can be analyzed to know how societies construct, produce, and circulate meanings and values. As Irvin further

clarifies, sign systems are often organized as sets of differences (differential values) and hierarchies that structure social values and are governed by ideology (see also van Dijk, 2004).

According to Irvin, signification is a process, a product, and a social event, not something closed, static, or completed once and for all occurring in the encoding and decoding process. All members of a society are interpreters or decoders and the ability to decode and understand signification is based on competence in the sign system and with a larger cultural encyclopedia of codes and correspondences. Semiotics, however, moves beyond language to study all the meaning systems in a society including: fashion, advertising, popular cultures like TV and movies, music, political discourses, all forms of writings and speeches. He further tells that semiotics contributes to communication studies by providing a method for uncovering and analyzing how a whole system of signification like a movie genre, fashion images, or television works in a culture. Semiotics, then, looks at culture broadly as a language considered as a sign system, or the ways signs and language map onto culture as a whole.

2.3.2 Signs

Everything in the world signifies a certain meaning of its own in the minds of the receivers (listeners, audiences, readers) via different types of signs. Chandler (2000) explains that in semiotics, 'signs' may be anything from which meanings may be generated (such as words, images, sounds, gestures and objects). For the analytical purposes of semiotics (in the tradition of Saussure), every sign is composed of: a 'signifier' - the form which the sign takes; and the 'signified' - the concept it represents. Nowadays, however, the 'signifier' is commonly interpreted as the material form of the sign.

In contrast to Saussure's 'self-contained dyad' definition of signs, i.e. signified and signifier, Pierce offers a triad description. To Pierce the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material) is the *Representamen*; the sense made of the sign is an *interpretant* and the material to which the sign refers is an *object*. Thus, signs may be symbolic, iconic

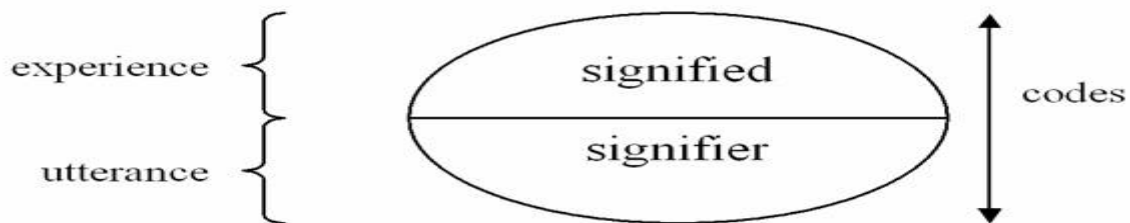
or indexical by their very nature. Hawkes (1977, p.129), cited in Chandler (2000, p.5), defines symbolic, iconic and indexical signs as follows:

- Symbolic: a sign which does not resemble the signified but which is 'arbitrary' or purely conventional (e.g. the word 'stop', a red traffic light, a national flag, a number);
- Iconic: a sign which resembles the signified (e.g. a portrait, a cinematic image, an x-ray, a diagram, a scale-model, onomatopoeia, 'realistic' sounds in music, sound effects in radio drama, a dubbed film soundtrack, imitative gestures);
- Indexical: a sign which is directly connected in some way (existentially or causally) to the signified (e.g. smoke, weathercock, thermometer, clock, spirit-level, footprint, fingerprint, knock on door, pulse rate, rashes, pain).

2.3.3 Semiotic Models: Dyadic and Triadic

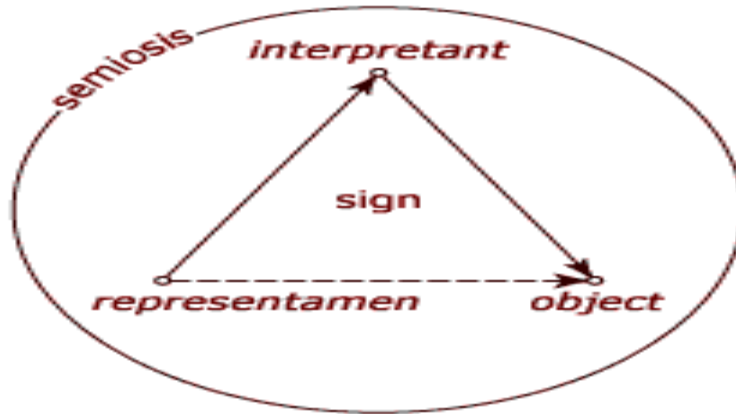
Irvin (2007) illustrates the two major semiotic models of de Saussure and Peirce as follows:

Saussure: Descriptive model



In the above two-part model of the sign: a signifier (sign vehicle; material perceptible content like sound or visual information) and the signified (a conceptual and abstract content) are illustrated.

Charles Sanders Peirce: Triadic Model



Peirce used a different set of terms to describe sign functions, which for him were a conceptual process, continually unfolding and unending (what he termed "unlimited semiosis," the chain of meaning-making by new signs interpreting a prior sign or set of signs).

2.3.4 Codes

Signs may invoke different social meanings depending on socio-cultural background of the society. To this end, Chandler also explains the social and cultural norms (conventions) that give meaning to different signs by citing several scholars. In each text signs are organized into meaningful systems according to certain conventions which semioticians refer to as codes (or signifying codes). Such conventions represent a social dimension in semiotics: a code is a set of practices familiar to users of the medium operating within a broad cultural framework. A range of typologies of codes can be found in the literature of semiotics (e.g. Fiske 1989a, cited in Chandler, 2000). Chandler mentions the three kinds of codes which are most widely mentioned in the context of media and communication studies. In the present analysis social codes are given primacy because they are relevant to the purpose of this study.

- Social codes

[In a broader sense all semiotic codes are 'social codes']

- *verbal language* (i.e. phonological, syntactical, lexical, prosodic and paralinguistic subcodes);

- *bodily codes* (i.e. bodily contact, proximity, physical orientation, appearance, head nods, facial expression, gestures, posture, eye movement and contact);
- *commodity codes* (e.g. fashions, clothing, cars);
- *behavioral codes* (i.e. protocols, rituals, role-playing, games);
- *regulatory codes* (e.g. the Highway Code, professional codes of practice).
- Textual codes
 - *scientific codes*, including mathematics;
 - *aesthetic codes* within the various expressive arts (poetry, drama, painting, sculpture, music, etc.);
 - *genre, rhetorical and stylistic codes*: narrative (plot, conflict, character, action, dialogue, setting, etc.), exposition, argument and so on;
 - *mass media codes* including photographic, televisual, filmic, radio, newspaper and magazine codes, both technical and conventional.
- Interpretative codes
 - *perceptual codes*: e.g. of visual perception (Nichols 1981 and Eco 1982, cited in Chandler, 2000, p.18) (note that this code does not assume intentional communication);
 - *codes of production and interpretation*: codes involved in both 'encoding' and 'decoding' texts - dominant (or 'hegemonic'), negotiated or oppositional ([Morley 1980, cited in Chandler, 2000, p.18](#));
 - *ideological codes*: individualism, freedom, patriarchy, race, class, materialism, capitalism, progressivism and 'scientism' (Fiske 1987, Fiske 1989a, cited in Chandler, 2000, p.18).

Codes are changing systems over time, and are thus historically as well as socio-culturally situated. Metz shows how in Hollywood cinema the white hat became codified as the signifier of a 'good' cowboy; eventually this convention became over-used and was abandoned (Fiske and Hartley 1978, cited in Chandler, 2000). Fiske (1982, cited in Chandler, 2000) distinguishes broadcast codes from narrowcast (or restricted) codes. A *broadcast* code is shared by a member of a mass audience; a *narrowcast* code is aimed at

a more limited audience. Broadcast codes stress the similarities amongst "us" (the majority)' and tend to be simpler. Broadcast codes are learned through experience; narrowcast codes often involve more deliberate learning (Fiske 1989a, cited in Chandler, 2000). Narrowcast codes have the potential to be more subtle; broadcast codes can lead to cliché.

Depending on the medium, film and television involve both aural and visual codes. As Chandler illustrates, [cinematic and television codes](#) include: genre, camerawork (shot size, focus, lens movement, camera movement, angle, lens choice, framing), editing (cuts and fades, cutting rate and rhythm), manipulation of time (compression, flashbacks, flash-forward, slow motion), lighting, color, sound (soundtrack, music), graphics and narrative style. Christian Metz added authorial style and distinguished codes from sub-codes, where a sub-code was a particular choice from within a code (e.g. western within genre). The syntagmatic dimension was a relation of combination between different codes and sub-codes; the paradigmatic dimension was that of the film-maker's choice of particular sub-codes within a code (Lapsley and Westlake 1988, cited in Chandler, 2000). Fiske and Hartley argue that:

The way we watch television and the way we perceive [everyday] reality are fundamentally similar, in that both are determined by conventions or codes. Reality is itself a complex system of signs interpreted by members of the culture in exactly the same way as are films and television programmes. Perception of this reality is always mediated through the codes with which our culture organizes it, categorizes its significant elements or semes into paradigms, and relates them significantly into syntagms. (Fiske and Hartley 1978, pp.65-66, cited in Chandler, 2000, p.20)

2.3.5 Paradigms and Syntagms

Knowing signs and the available codes are prerequisites to organize signs by choice (paradigmatically) or by chain (syntagmatically). As Chandler explains, the distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures is a key one in structuralist semiotic analysis. These two dimensions are often presented as 'axes', where the vertical axis is the paradigmatic and the horizontal axis is the syntagmatic. The plane of the paradigm is that

of *selection* whilst the plane of the syntagm is that of *combination* (these terms were introduced by Roman Jakobson, Chandler, 2000). A paradigm is a set of associated signs which are all members of some defining category, but in which each sign is significantly different. The use of one paradigm (e.g. a particular word or image) rather than another shapes the preferred meaning of a text.

In film and television, paradigms include ways of changing shot (such as cut, fade, dissolve and wipe). Fiske and Hartley (1978), cited in Chandler (2000), show how the medium or genre used by a particular media text is also a paradigm which gains meaning from the ways in which it differs from alternative media or genres. According to them, 'although the signifier remains the same, the sign itself is altered' by a change of genre or medium (Fiske and Hartley, 1978). A *syntagm* is an orderly combination of interacting signs which forms a meaningful whole (sometimes called a chain or combination). Such combinations are made within a framework of rules and conventions (both explicit and implicit). In a photograph or painting syntagmatic relationships are spatial (Silverman 1983, cited in Chandler, 2000). Syntagms are created by the choice of paradigms from those which are conventionally regarded as appropriate or which may be required by some rule system (e.g. grammar).

In film our interpretation of an individual shot depends on both paradigmatic analysis (comparing it, not necessarily consciously, with the use of alternative kinds of shot) and syntagmatic analysis (comparing it with preceding and following shots). The same shot used within another sequence of shots could have quite a different preferred reading. Similarly, a syntagmatic analysis would involve in an analysis of a film of how each shot, scene or sequence is related to the others. Metz elaborates syntagmatic categories for narrative film as follows (Monaco 1981, pp. 186-9; Lapsley and Westlake 1988, pp.40-42, cited in Chandler, 2000, pp.8-9).

- The *autonomous shot* (e.g. establishing shot, insert)
- The *parallel syntagm* (montage of motifs)
- The *bracketing syntagm* (montage of brief shots)
- The *descriptive syntagm* (sequence describing one moment)

- The *alternating syntagm* (two sequences alternating)
- The *scene* (shots implying temporal continuity)
- The *episodic sequence* (organized discontinuity of shots)
- The *ordinary sequence* (temporal with some compression)

However, Metz's '*grande syntagmatique*' has not proved an easy system to apply to some films. In their study of children's understanding of television, Hodge and Tripp (1986) divide syntagms into four kinds, based on syntagms existing in the same time (*synchronic*), different times (*diachronic*), same space (*syntopic*), and different space (*diatopic*).

- *Synchronic/synoptic* (one place, one time: one shot)
- *Diachronic/synoptic* (same place sequence over time)
- *Synchronic/diatopic* (different places at same time)
- *Diachronic/diatopic* (shots related only by theme)

To the present researcher, the division given by Hodge and Tripp (1986) seems to be a more simple and systematic way of seeing paradigms and syntagms in films than Metz's classification.

2.3.6 Film as a Semiotic Medium

The fundamental power of the media has inspired many critical studies in many disciplines to study film from different perspectives. Early studies of critical discourse studies, as of van Dijk (1988), mainly focuses on the observable aspects of media discourse. For example, Fowler (1991), cited in van Dijk 2004, has analyzed media discourse by seeing syntax, lexical structure, modality and speech acts. But nowadays, the emphasis of critical discourse analysis has been extended further to the discursive social practices. As a film is a language, let us see first film as a semiotics. Reputed scholars in CDA (such as van Dijk, 1988, 2004; Wodak, 2002 and Fairclough, 1995) have said little about film discourse. Their focus on the media discourse was on news discourse rather than film discourse. However, aspects of news discourse can be used in film analysis by supplementing the analysis with semiotics models.

The attempt of linking general linguistic concepts to other communicative modes beside language started in 1930' and 1940' Prague School and the 1960' Paris School (Nöth, 1995). Though, some social semioticians have moved systemic functional theory in using other semiotic modes, for example: architecture/three-dimensional space (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996); action (Martinec, 1998, 2000); speech, music and sound (van Leeuwen 1999) and visual images (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). Nevertheless, none of these modes can fully describe alone the textual and contextual meanings of a film. Thus, using a multiple of these modes together with a language of the discourse is very essential. Such a multimodal analysis attempts to see discursive practices of the society by using language, image, action and music and sounds of the selected films as represented signs of the selected films.

As Prince (1993) notes, a language is a semiotic process through which thinking may be communicated but a language system (or linguistic system) enables a response to that thought, through the degree of uses and kinds of signs and signifiers produced by the language. He also argues that film uses not only words, but also different kinds of shots, angles and speeds; therefore, while the audience can respond to a film's semantic intention, that audience cannot address its concerns regarding the film in the same language that the film used to convey its argument. For this reason, Stam, Burgoyne, and Lewis (1992), cited in Prince (1993), advance Metz's argument that while the means by which film expresses itself to its audience constitutes a language, it cannot comprise a linguistic system. Metz (1974, p.37) points out that:

one might call 'language'...any unity defined in terms of its matter of expression...Literary language, in this sense, is the set of messages whose matter of expression is writing; cinematic language is the set of messages whose matter of expression consists of five tracks or channels: moving photographic image, recorded phonetic sound, recorded noises, recorded musical sound, and writing...Thus cinema is a language in the sense that it is a 'technico_sensorial unity' graspable in perceptual experience.

Because of filmic freedom, Metz (1974) defines basic narrative units in the cinema as autonomous segments and argued that the major mode of analysis for cinema lies in syntagmatic relations. Based on this, Metz develops a series of possible syntagmatic

relations which can be considered to be the major combinations possible. In spite of our inability to respond to a film in its language through natural means of discourse, understanding the nature of film semiotics makes us critically aware of the language being used. Stam (2000, pp.48-9) explains that:

...like any artistic language, the cinema manifests a plurality of codes. In cinema, numerous codes remain constant across all or most films; unlike language, however, film has no 'master code' shared by all films. Filmic texts, for Metz, form a structured network produced by the interweaving of specific cinematic codes, i.e. codes that appear only in the cinema, and non-specific codes, i.e. codes shared with languages other than the cinema.

Like books, films are regarded as texts for reading by viewers or critics, with the concomitant implication that such reading activates similar processes of semiotic decoding. Film theory since the 1970s has tended to place great emphasis upon what is regarded as the arbitrary nature of the signifier-signified relationship, that is, upon the purely conventional and symbolic aspect of signs (Prince, 1993). What this focus has tended to displace is an appreciation of the iconic and mimetic aspect of certain categories of signs, namely pictorial signs, those most relevant to an understanding of the cinema.

The arbitrary nature of semiotic coding has enormous consequences for the way film studies as a discipline has tended to frame questions about visual meaning and communication (Prince, 1993). In short, a renewed attention to the iconic, mimetic nature of pictorial signs is warranted, so that our theories might become more sensitive to the unique, constitutive features of pictorial signs as opposed to linguistic-modes of communication. Prince also notes that culture-bound attitudes do indeed inflect the content of film narratives, along with their stylistic visualization, at the point of production and, again, through the inferences viewers draw from those narratives. Thus, it is up to the analyst to diagnose the implicit meanings of pluralistic codes in any kinds of films.

2.4 Film as a Medium of Mass Communication in Contemporary Film Studies

Rosen (1986, p.7), cited in Prince (1993), has pointed out, "One effect of the argument for the basic conventionality of cinematic images was to open the way for a utilization of the ideal of difference in cinematic signification." Stressing the signifier as a differential construction enabled film theory to emphasize communication as discourse, as a culture-bound activity, relative to and differently patterned by the distinctive social worlds of various groups of interactants. Signs, whether linguistic or cinematic, are viewed culturally instantiated: they do not produce meaning outside of the social and cultural context from which they have developed.

Thus, Prince (1993) explains, film like language could be comprehensible as discourse, as the creation of noticeable meaning where only true relations of difference prevail. Prince further views that cinema assumes a symbiotic relationship with ideology, becoming an effective vehicle for its transmission. The work of film theory became increasingly focused on deciphering the ideology at work inside the cinema's deceptive and transparent appearance of reality (van Dijk, 2006). This appearance of reality is, furthermore, suspect for having ideological effects (e.g., naturalizing that which is historical or cultural, etc.) and for creating ideal and false subject unities. Viewed in these terms, film history is the history of discourse, and the relation between film and the world is a matter of representational convention. As Heath (1981:26), cited in Prince, 1993, has written, "That reality, the match of film and world, is a matter of representation, and representation is in turn a matter of discourse.... [I]n this sense at least, film is a series of languages, a history of codes."

Language imposes a system of relational distinctions upon the world, creating culture from the real. Film is like language by virtue of employing relational, differential signifiers. Comprehension of the cinema, then, should likewise be predicated upon cultural conditioning, upon the apprehension of "cultural grids of intelligibility" (Prince, 1993). But, the spectator's understanding of cinematic images seems more immediately explicable in terms of mimetic, referential coding rather than via the chains of displaced, arbitrary, and relational meaning in prevailing theories. In other words, this understanding is more a matter of recognition than translation. That is why the researcher

stated that the critical analysis given by scholars and critics is made valuable than professional and popular recognition (Chapter One: Introduction). Heath (1981), cited in Prince, 1993, observes that the referents of cinematic images exist only in discourse, as representations already constituted by history and culture.

2.5 Discourse of Film Images

Pictorial signs do allow clear structural similarities to their referents, with the attendant consequences for perception and comprehension. The linguistic model has proven to be a very powerful paradigm for the analysis of images and larger film structures (e.g., dramatic scenes) in part because that analysis is typically conducted via words. When film scholars analyze images, visual information is translated into verbal description; one modality is substituted for another. But, Branigan, cited in Prince, 1993, p.46, has noted, "The analyst must recognize that the very fact of talking about narration requires a representation of it by verbal or other means which may capture only some of its features." The concept of the relational, arbitrary signifier would seem most applicable to pictures here; in the language of analysis which is employed to intellectually manipulate pictorial representations. Furthermore, while empirical evidence indicates that viewers easily and readily make the required inferences necessary to sequence a series of pictures into a coherent narrative, even to the extent of inferring information about situations not directly pictured.

According to Prince (1993), we may have a concept corresponding to the equivalence class of certain sounds or visual patterns without an explicit verbal label for it. Such a view implies that we can have mental concepts or ways of abstracting from our sense data which are beyond the reach of our current stock of words, but for which we could develop a vocabulary if communicating such concepts became important. Linguistic models, in other words, are not requisite for explaining how we respond to and make sense out of pictorial information, nor even for describing how we encode visual information for long-term memory storage such that it can be subsequently retrieved.

2.6 Language and Discourse in CDA

Discourse refers to what we would call the language of filmmaking in action, the mode the film provides to viewers. It is the decisions at the rear of the scenes that empower viewers to think of it in another way and affected by it and interpret the story. Discourse is a wide horizon including many societal values emanating from the assumption that we all share commonalities using language. In regard to this, Schiffrin (1987) notes that discourse analysis is vast and diffuse in terms of the following key assumptions about language: always occurs in a context, is context sensitive, is always communicative and is designed for communication (Also Weiss and Wodak, 2003).

Schiffrin also notes that structure, meaning and action are central properties of discourse. Here, structure signifies the informational content and its pattern. The second feature of discourse is the kind of meaning signified (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Schiffrin, 1987) in the text together with the interpretation of both parties (speaker and hearer). The third property of discourse is action, in which speaker's intentions and goals are taken up by the hearer and acted upon. Based on the above three features of discourse, CDA sees discourse (language use) in speech and writing as a form of social practice (van Dijk, 1998; 2000; Fairclough, 1995b and Wodak, 2002). However, Wodak and Weiss (2003) note that there are no comprehensive guidelines that shapes the theoretical viewpoint in CDA.

CDA is a contemporary approach to the study of language and discourses in social institutions. It is concerned with studying and analyzing [visual], written and oral texts to disclose the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias and how these sources are commenced, sustained, replicated, and changed within specific social, economic, political, and historical contexts (Van Dijk, 1998; 2000). It tries to shed light on ways in which the dominant forces in a society assemble versions of reality that favour their interests. By uncovering such practices, CDA scholars aim to support the victims of such subjugation and hearten them to resist and transform their lives (Foucault, 2000). This is the central tenet of critical theory and the critical science approach (McGregor, 2003). In addition to language structure, ideology also has a role to play in

CDA. Kress (1990) stresses that any linguistic form considered in isolation has no specific meaning as such, nor does it possess any ideological significance or function. Consequently, he notes that discourse is expressive of and organized by a specific ideology.

In a similar vein, Fairclough (1995a) defines CDA as discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often dense relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of supremacy and struggles over power; and to investigate how the cloudiness of these relationships between discourse and society in itself is a factor in securing power and hegemony. Kaplan (1990) notes that the comprehension of meaning lies not in the text itself, but in the complex interaction between the author's intent and the ability to encode that intent, and the receptor's intent and the ability mesh his/her own intent with the author's.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS

3.1 Analysis of 'Zumra'

Zumra is a dramatic film which reflects intense ethnicity problems of African countries across the continent. The signifiers are different kinds of semiotic codes, social codes (universal setting, mixed identity of actors and actresses, equality of gender roles), paradigmatic and syntagmatic codes. Let us see these semiotic applications in detail in the following subsections by looking the background information and synopsis of the film at first.

3.1.1 Background Information about the Film

Zumra was produced by Nahom Records and presented by Lominat Film Production Institution in association with Office-Tech Company. The script writer, the chief producer and the director of the film is Mesfin Getachew. The executive producers are Elias Fikru and Redeat Yimer. The main actor and actresses are Shimeles Abera and Haregewoin Abera respectively. Other actors and actresses are: Daniel Muluneh, Tesfaye Haile, Dawit Amare, Aster Alemayehu, Abebe Haile-Michael, Yetnayet Tamiru, Abebaw Melaku, Yetnayet Endayilalu, Tesfaye Metaferia, Rahel Gurmessa, Moges Wolde-Yohannes and Worknat Alemu. The racial problem of Africa is the thematic concern of the film. The film has no specific regional setting to reflect of Africa, so as the background music, dressing (custom of actors and actresses), names of actors and actresses are all given a general African nature rather than shimmering one single event or action of a single African country. One fundamental limitation of the film is, it is only transmitted through Amharic. Since the theme of the film clearly manifests the racial problems in Africa, it needs to have English subtitles to other audiences and to the researchers who want to study the film. As of many films of Ethiopia, there is role monopoly by one person. Mesffin Getachew is the script writer, the chief producer and director of the film. This decreased the chance of alternative editing, changing and developing acts, setting, custom and other related elements of the film in any different perspective.

3.1.2 Synopsis of the story

The story is about the love of two people, Doctor Natan and Ms. Nahomi, who are from two different imaginary countries named Simba and Robin. The people of these two countries have been living in peace and have been tied together by marriage and other social relations for many years. Because of these positive relationships, the Simba patriots have helped the Robin Revolutionaries who opt to overthrow the government which they call 'dictatorial'. In contrast to these allied powers, however, the governments of Simba and Robin fight against the revolutionaries together.

After many years of fighting, the activists in Robin take power and develop hatred and begin to avenge Simba people because Simba government has supported the 'dictatorial' government of Robin ignoring their historical positive relations and those Simba people who have lost their lives and have given their blood to the success of the revolution of Robin. This revengeful attitude endangers the life of Simba people who are living in Robin, in general, and the new love affair of the Simba doctor with a Robin lady named Ms. Nahomi. Unfortunately, Ms. Nahomi has been once the girl friend of one of those revolutionaries who rises to power after the collapse of the 'dictatorial government'. Her father, Mr. Joseph, is also one of those activists who comes back home handicapped after the war and who wants to give his daughter as a compensation for his grave military error that he has committed in the jungle to her former boy friend (Mr. Mamadu) by departing her from her new lover_ Dr. Natan. When Nahomi's father eventually praises his daughter new love affair, Mr. Mamadu intimidates Ms. Nahomi's mother that he manages to put the life of her husband endanger unless she places a military radio under Dr. Natan's bed to implicate him as a secret agent of Simba people sending them information from Robin. Her mother does what she has told and Dr. Natan puts into prison. Afterwards, one of the sympathetic and rational officials of Robin government plans to escape at night with the two lovers in favor of freedom. However, Mr. Mamadu and the Vice Security Minister of Robin run after them and fire a bullet which shots dead the Security Minister (Mr. Nahom). Finally, Ms. Nahomi and Dr. Natan are able to flee abroad with the awful wound of Doctor Natan.

3.1.3 Broadcast and Narrowcast Semiotic codes

There are many broadcast and narrowcast codes which are mainly of analogous. The picture of Mandela and the blue globe which shows the continent of Africa in the office of Security Minister of Robin, the background African music of the film, the African dance, darkness, the Muslims dressing style of some actors and actresses and names of actors and actresses are among the broadcast codes which set up implicit meanings. The lighting of the candle, the puppies, drinks, the pictures of: Walia Ibex (UNESCO registered endemic animal of Ethiopia), Castle of Fasil (UNESCO registered historical Gonderian kings palace of Ethiopia), 'Moseb' (traditional and cultural plate of Ethiopia made of straw or thread having different colors for adornment) and the old man who is playing 'Kirar' (traditional string musical instrument of Ethiopia made from leather and wood or wood alone) are all narrowcast codes which reinforce the central theme, racism.

To begin with the broadcast codes, the picture of Nelson Mandela is fixed against the wall at the office of Security Minister of Robin and he meditate with it at times, shows the value of peace by seeing the forthcoming civilization rather than vengeance by granting excuse to those racists who exercise of stigma, hatred and suppression upon the Simba people in particular, and those victims of racism in Africa, in general. Mr. Nahom has qualities of forgiveness and treats equally all humans in Robin regardless of their root. This is shown in the film when he repeatedly gives order (many times at a time) to the Vice Security Minister of Robin not to include innocent people's names which the Robin Government enlisted comprising the names of those Simba people as dangerous to the sovereignty of Robin. In spite of his order, the Vice Security Minister includes the name of Dr. Natan in this list of Simba people. Mr. Nahom, who knows the innocence of Dr. Natan, asked the Vice Security Minister why he has included the name of the doctor in the list. The Vice Minister replied that he is told by Mr. Mamadu (the ex-boy friend of Ms. Nahomi) that the doctor is treacherous in his deeds. However, the Security Minister sets Dr. Natan free for he is found innocent. When Mr. Mamadu reprimands Mr. Joseph's wife that he may put the life of her husband in danger, she secretly hides the military radio under the bed of Dr. Natan and the committee of the Security Minister catches him red-handed and puts him again to prison.

When the Security Minister is stigmatized by higher officials of Robin for he is against racism and corruption, he manages to go abroad together with the two lovers (Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi). When he is finally shot by the Vice Security Minister, he has a chance of executing the Vice Minister and Mr. Mamadu. He points his pistol at them and stops shouting them saying “The killing of brothers by each other needs to be stopped” (). This shows the need of the redemption of bloodshed among African brothers because of racism. His universal, ethical and social characteristics manifest Nelson Mandela is his role model. These personal qualities are implicitly conveyed by the film to the rest of African people who are killing each other in the name of ethnic loyalty across the continent of Africa. This agenda is again reinforced in the film by the last background music which orchestrates the stopping of African war among Africans. For the film seeks to project the existing meaningless wars in Africa in the name of racism, there is also a blue globe of the world showing African map. The blue color of the globe represents the aspiration of most Africans that the continent is in need of real peace.

In addition to the map of Africa, there are also background African music and African dances which reinforce the universality of racism and war across Africa. The background music conjures African sentiment in the hearers along with its social diversity and heritages of cultural dances. The diversity of African people is also highlighted through the different casts which represent different races (Caucasoid and Negro). The faces of actresses and actors vary to amplify the mixed races in Africa. Similarly, there are formal dressing styles (with jackets and pairs of trousers, with suits, with shorts) and Muslim customs of dressing and Christian pop style of dress to show the prevalent religions in the continent. The film predominantly represents Muslim way of dressing more than the Christian way (which is shown only once throughout the film) to show the spread of Muslim religion throughout Africa. The diversity of races is also reflected through the names of actresses and actors. Natan, Ms. Nahomi, Ebony, Joseph, Nahom, Mr. Mamadu, Karanja and Camara are the names which all reflect different kinds of people around Africa. The other broadcast code which is used in the film is darkness which represents ignorance of African government officials who aggravate the differences rather than

respecting the long year's peaceful coexistence of their people in social and cultural relations of harmonious life.

The above broadcast codes are also supported by narrowcast codes in the film. The lightening of the candle by Ms. Nahomi, beyond beautifying the love affair with Natan represents the few conscious, innocent and farsighted people who are surrounded by darkness (of racism, ignorance and corruption). Likewise, the puppies in the candle lights of the celebration of conception of Ms. Nahomi signify the coming of informed generation who able to differentiate the good and the bad, on racism and its resultant effect showing the contrast between the light and the surrounding darkness. Similarly, the alcoholic drinks consumed by the characters (men and women) have two fundamental functions. Firstly alcohol is used as a means of escape from the bad old days (while drinking Mr. Joseph forgets his secret plea with Mr. Mamadu and Dr. Natan in a at the dance club drinks to forget Ms. Nahomi's betrayal). Secondly, alcohol is taken for pleasure, to entertain or ornament the love affairs of the two lovers. The drinking wine, which is repeatedly shown by Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi, is to signify the need of eternal love to African. Likewise, the cigarettes smoked by Mr. Mamadu and Mr. Joseph are related to the intense emotionality of the former and the recollection of the bad old days by the latter.

Correspondingly, the endemic Ethiopian Walia Ibex (wild goat family), the traditional plaited cotton cloth, 'Moseb' and the old man who is playing 'Kirar' (a string musical instrument), and the Castle of Fasil which all decorate the dance club exemplify hidden meanings of their own. The picture of the endemic animal signifies that Africa is a home of many wild animals in different corners of the continent. The 'Moseb' (traditional serving dish) shows the need of unity among African people by collaborating together with their own rich traditions. Likewise, the picture of the old man who is playing 'Kirar' shows the old prolific wisdom of Africa undermined deliberately by the other world. Above all, in spite of its rich and acknowledged recognition, the Castle of Fasil is blurrily represented to highlight that African history has not been revealed to the world outside as it should have been. The elements of analyzed narrowcast codes are all from Ethiopia to signify the country is the African capital and the motif of African freedom for

it is the first African country which taught a lesson to the colonizers to think of emancipation of Africa from slavery and serfdom.

3.1.4 Social Semiotic Codes

The social codes of Robin governors and their vanguards have more of a verbal nature. Most of the speeches implicitly dictate the end result and testify the existing situation at its best. From the outset, when Mr. Joseph and his wife Mrs. Ebony are playing chess, their only daughter comes and says, “I am certain that the final win goes to papa, is that not papa?” () This superficially expresses the winner of the game could be of Mr. Joseph. However, when we see the story through, Mr. Joseph has been the first person who tried to break up the relationship of his daughter with Dr. Natan. In the end, he is found to be the one who praises the relationship of the two lovers and supports them to go abroad and is willing to ensure the necessary conditions. This is why their daughter ironically says that her father will be found innocent from fabricated accusation of Dr. Natan (as Mr. Mamadu pleases her father to be a testimony against Dr. Natan’s case).

From the same conversation among the three family members, when Ms. Nahomi asks her parents permission to have some time at night, her father willingly grants it with a wide smile and says, “My daughter, the day need not be getting late before you arrive where you want.” (!) This is again related to the final terrific plan of leaving Robin behind by the two lovers in favor of freedom. Before the attempt of the two lovers journey to abroad, Ms. Nahomi also told Dr. Natan that her mother is cooking his favorite food. This conversely implies the hidden hatred of Mrs. Ebony against Simba people. This is the reason why her mother hides the military radio under the bed of Dr. Natan to send him to prison and tells to her husband that she hates the Simba people by blood.

As we have seen in the preceding section (3.1.3), Mr. Nahom is doing right and thinking rational thoughts. However, his innocent value judgment is abused by the two corrupted officials of Robin, especially the Vice Security Minister. When Mr. Nahom releases Dr.

Natan, the Vice Security Minister accuses him in front of the president. After a while, Mr. Nahom enters the office of the Vice Minister and the later tries to ask excuses by saying, “Mr. Nahom, I didn’t report this to the president to hurt you!” (

) Mr. Nahom replies with a smile and by looking side ways from where the Vice Minister sits, “I do understand ‘shaleka’, you did that for you have a feeling of deep love of your country.” (

...)

In addition to the above verbal language employed to reinforce implicit themes, bodily, behavioral, commodity and regulatory codes have been used in the film. To begin with the bodily codes, intense anger of Mr. Mamadu is by far reflected in his facial expressions, gestures and eye contacts. His couple of conversations with Mr. Joseph about his daughter Ms. Nahomi and a conversation with the nurse about her letter of release, the telephone conversation with the Vice Security Minister, and his secret plea with Karanja to fire Dr. Natan from the hospital, all reflect Mr. Mamadu’s strong and internalized emotional urges to win Ms. Nahomi by intimidation. Mr. Mamadu is the logo of the corrupted officials of Africa who often run to meet their material and psychological benefits by abusing their power in opposition to their long years of struggle to end the previous ‘dictatorial’ governments. Thus, his emotionality and passionate urges, his alcoholism and smoking distinctively testify the general characteristics of African governors who assume power by force.

Similarly, the frequent resistance of the Vice Security Minister to the orders and suggestions of his boss is clearly reflected in his facial expressions. It appears as if this person speaks through his face and thinks in his emotions rather than through his brain. As his boss is cool, rational and considerate, he often irritates him and at times resists to accept orders from his boss. That is why he once says to his boss, “I am very surprised at your sympathy to the Simba people!” (!)

Beyond this, he even accuses his boss for releasing Dr. Natan afterwards Mr. Joseph refuses to be witness for the fabricated accusation. Right after he receives evidence from one of the Simaba citizen against Dr. Natan, he mockingly laughs at the testimony and spats on him and puts him in prison in contrast to the witness’s expectation to remain free

by victimizing Dr. Natan by inserting false credentials into the doctor's personal profile. This shows that corrupted officials do not care about people who assisted them but, they use people as instruments to get what they want.

The Vice Security Minister has used the long years of friendship as a regulatory code to exercise his power irrationally. He also uses racism as an instrument to harass other innocent people of other races by attaching to them fabricated tags to satisfy Mr. Mamadu's emotions. In contrast to exploiting the former guerrilla companionship for evil, racial and emotional purposes by Mr. Mamadu and the Vice Security Minister; Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi use love as a regulatory code of universal peace that transcends the blood bonds.

3.1.5 Paradigmatic Codes

The broadcast and narrow cast codes are the paradigmatic codes of the film for they are specific choices in the film which reinforce discursive practices of certain areas of intents. To begin with the title itself, it is *Zumra*. The choice of this name at the present time conjures up equality, justice and modern thinking of Auramba Community who have their own socio-economic system regardless of sex, race and wealth of the members of the community. *Zumra* is the founder of the Auramba Community with established working philosophy in South Gondar, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. In this community, female and male do every kind of work without any distinctions. For marriage and other social occasions, there is no costly, extravagant and showy preparation. They believe in monism but they would not spend days by saying 'holidays' (like St. Michael, St. John, St. Luke) as the orthodox religion followers do. When a person is sick, people will visit frequently by orders with the necessary medical treatment arranged by the community. However, when a person is dead, there would not be many followers except some persons who dig a hole and carry the corpse. Thus, paradigmatically, the choice of the title laments the lack of equality, peace and modern thinking in those African people who often fight against each other.

In contrast to Auramba Community's outright social, economic and political structures, the two ideal races (and countries) are fighting each other rather than strengthening their positive historical bondage. Thus, the central opposition is racism with two opposites: on the one hand, hatred and discrimination practiced by the Robin Government top officials and on the other hand, love and forgiveness by the two lovers and by Mr. Nahom who heralds the beginning of a new world which stops war and killing among African countries without rational causes. That is why Mr. Nahom after pointing at the murderers, who fire a bullet and wound him, he finally shows the need to stop bloodshed among brotherhoods by folding his pointed gun and by sacrificing his soul for redemption. Dr. Natan as well, is a representation of ethics, devotion and hard work. Likewise, Ms. Nahomi is the emblem of peace who is needed to transcend the boundaries of blood and religion.

Besides the casting (the choice of the characters), customs (dressing, decorating and other office and home instruments), the picture of Nelson Mandela, African background music and universal setting that reflect Africa, all have their own share in demonstrating the situation and by further pointing to other practices.

3.1.6 Syntagmatic Codes

The combination of film elements has its own influence upon the entire theme and other discursive meanings they imply. Beginning with a narrative of the two countries socio-historical ties, help the film to have compact factual information through diegetic (telling and showing) means and help the audiences have some background information. The narrative comes again after showing the operation of Mrs. Ebony by Dr. Natan at a certain hospital in Robin during the 'dictatorial' regime, in spite of the strong warning from the top officials of Robins' 'dictatorial' government not to operate her. There, the narrative tells the beginning of revolutionary war, the triumph of the revolutionaries and the hatred and discrimination against the Simba people.

Showing Dr. Natan washing his hands (when his country man Karaja tries to murder him), the story goes to the home of Mr. Joseph and show him while he is playing chess

with his wife and interrupted by their daughters' arrival. The cause of the attempted murder is looting of the hospital store by Karaja and the medical director (Mr. Mamadu). By chance, Dr. Natan happens to witness this. Thus, Mr. Mamadu wants to get rid of Dr. Natan and also to win back his former girlfriend Ms. Nahomi. Dr. Natan is determined to be a witness to help the innocent prisoner, head of the store of the hospital, released. From the outset, there are racism, corruption, love and determination, which are the fundamental thematic elements of the film. One basic element introduced later by Mr. Nahom is giving mercy and winning the enemy (racists) by self-sacrifice. As Jesus Christ was victorious by his death, Mr. Nahom paid his beloved soul for peace and forgiveness that he earnestly emulates the spirit of Mandela whose picture he posted in front of his seat at office.

The story is mainly shown in synchronic/diatopic (different places at the same time) and diachronic/diatopic (shots related only by theme) manner. However, when Mr. Joseph told his daughter about the dreadful military error and its consequent results, the conditions of the war in the sloppy jungle is shown by flashback in diachronic/ synoptic (same place sequence over time) manner. Thus, we are going to revisit the major syntagmatic scenes in the following sub sections.

3.1.6.1 Synchronic/ Diatopic Scenes

To start with the synchronic/ diatopic events, when Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi are entertaining themselves by having food and wine in a certain restaurant, Mr. Mamadu and Ms. Nahomi's father are discussing the issue of giving his daughter as a compensation for his military error that he committed in the jungle. While Mrs. Ebony and her daughter are waiting Mr. Joseph at the verandah of their house; Mr. Nahom and his vice are talking about why the latter included the name of Dr. Natan from the list of dangerous Simba people who are assumed a treat to the sovereignty of Robin government at the office. Similarly, when Mr. Mamadu and Karanja are listening to the news about the beginning of a war between Robin and Simba, the former says to the latter "Do you see my brother; war has tremendous benefits and a great deal of profit to a few people!" (...) Dr. Natan as if he

responds to Mr. Mamadu facing himself in the mirror and washing his face and hands by saying, “How about those innocent victims sacrificed to the benefits of a few?” (

?) Like wise, when Ms. Nahomi gets back to her home having known that her father is to be a witness against Dr. Natan, she shouts at her father on his secret plea with Mr. Mamadu. At the same time, Vice Security Minister is arguing to Mr. Nahom on the special privilege given to Dr. Natan in prison. However, his boss tells him that the third person refused to be a witness against Dr. Natan and he rather wants to prevail in the operation to find the secret military radio that Dr. Natan has been suspected of.

The above synchronic/diatopic scenes show paired opposite agenda of corruption and rationality. The corrupted official Mr. Mamadu makes the store of the hospital to be looted and puts the innocent store keeper in prison and tries to get back his former girlfriend Ms. Nahomi by force and irrationally to satisfy his emotional thirst. Mr. Mamadu has used the Vice Minister as an instrument to satisfy his material and emotional needs. Mr. Nahom, Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi also demonstrate the higher order thinking in their behaviors. We learn righteous responsibility and universal thinking from Mr. Nahom and ethicality, dedication, professionalism and commitment from Dr. Natan. Ms. Nahomi, who is a rational thinker, reveals the essentiality of believing more in thought than in blood or ethnic relations.

3.1.6.2 Diachronic/Diatopic Scenes

There are also diachronic/diatopic shots related to the themes in the film. The first thematic issue is war. The two narratives at the beginning of the story talk about the guerrilla war and the war with Simba government. There is also a scene that shows the beginning of the war between Robin and Simba announced through the radio while Mr. Mamadu and Karanja are discussing to prepare a false profile of Dr. Natan. When Mr. Joseph tells the military error, the flash back shows the civil war in Robin. The final murder of Mr. Nahom can also be considered under this category.

Similarly, the persuasion, order and plea of Mr. Mamadu to have his former girlfriend back have also many shots across the film. At first Mr. Mamadu and Karanja are talking about the attempted murder that the latter has tried on Dr. Natan to remain hidden the eyewitness of their theft. As we have seen earlier, Mr. Mamadu wants Dr. Natan to be killed to have Ms. Nahomi back as his girlfriend. After this, Mr. Mamadu phones to the Vice Security Minister to close the case of the hospital by any means and do something about Dr. Natan. There is a scene showing a discussion between Mr. Mamadu and Mr. Joseph in the way to hand Ms. Nahomi to Mr. Mamadu. In the same issue, Ms. Nahomi goes to Mr. Mamadu's house in order to ask him not to interfere in her new love affair. When Mr. Mamadu raises the top secret that Mr. Joseph has made in the war to collapse the former Robin government, the latter comes to his home late at night to soothe his emotionality alone. However, his wife and daughter are waiting him at the verandah. Similarly, Mr. Mamadu and Karanja meet again and prepare a false personal file of Dr. Natan in order to expel him from the hospital. When a letter is written to expel Dr. Natan from the hospital, the Robin nurse comes to Mr. Mamadu's office to consider the release of Dr. Natan again, nonetheless, he tells her to hand him the letter of release soon.

Likewise, Mr. Joseph told Dr. Natan that his daughter does not love him any longer because of the prevailing conditions. This is false information which he is given by Mamadu as an assignment. Subsequently, Mr. Mamadu tries to persuade Mr. Joseph to be a witness against Dr. Natan. Afterwards, Ms. Nahomi comes to know that her father's name is one of the three witnesses in the accusation against the doctor. When Mr. Joseph refuses to be a witness, the doctor is released from prison. Because of his release, the Vice Security Minister reports the case to the president of the Robin Government. Having known that her father refuses to be a witness, Ms. Nahomi comes to her house and patches up her difference with her father. However, Mr. Mamadu chastises Mr. Joseph's wife that he would put the life of her husband in danger unless she agreed to hide a military radio under the bed of Dr. Natan to catch him red-handed and put into prison. As we have seen above, most of the scenes revolve around Mr. Mamadu's consistent corrupted and emotional practices in the name of the war between Robin and Simba.

Other diachronic/diatopic syntagmatic scenes refer to the captivity of Dr. Natan by the Robin racists while he is walking from the hospital to his home. At first, while the doctor is washing his hands in the toilet, the appointed murderer tries to kill him with a knife. After a while, when Mr. Nahom calls to Dr. Natan to be careful for there appear strong enemies against him he is surprised, depressed and frustrated. This is clearly seen from his face. Thirdly, the doctor is talking to himself seeing his face through the mirror washing his face and hands, about the innocent victims who lost their life in the war. This again testifies to how much he is worried about the consequence of war between the two countries. Besides, when Mr. Joseph tells Dr. Natan that Ms. Nahomi betrays him, the doctor becomes lonely and begins drinking liquor in the dance club. Ms. Nahomi comes to him and tries to talk to him; however, he contemptuously leaves the dance club leaving her behind. In spite of all these, the doctor is doing his work at the hospital as often as possible. At the hospital the doctor washes his hand and rap up with a light blue handkerchief wearing a light blue t-shirt. Amazingly, the nurse sympathetically tells him that he is fired from his work before four days. Symbolically, washing his hands with water shows that he is innocent from any guilt, like Pilates.

In the next scene, having been demotioned and victimized by Mamadu’s secret pleas, thinking that he is really betrayed by Ms. Nahomi, the doctor is walking alone in the street till Mrs. Ebony takes him to their home. There, he comes to know that he misunderstood Ms. Nahomi. However, three messengers come and take him to prison while he is talking to Ms. Nahomi. Consequently, when Mr. Nahom comes to know that Mr. Joseph is not willing to be a witness, he sends two bodyguards to bring Dr. Natan to his office. When he sees them, Dr. Natan says, “Where are you taking to me right now?” (?) One of them says to him, “We are taking you to the place that your sin takes.” (!) The Doctor replies,” Please understand me, I am not sinful!” (!) The other Robin bodyguard responds, “At this moment, there would no be sin other than being born as a Simba citizen!” (!) The second one adds, “Our country has jails for your kind of traitors that anybody can not get out alive!” (

!) However, doctor Natan is released by the command of Mr. Nahom. Nonetheless, even before he realizes the happiness with his lover, he is taken to prison again under the pretext of being a secret agent to Simba Government.

The third fundamental diachronic/diatopic syntagmatic scenes portray the love affair of Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi. The first scene introduces the two lovers at the hospital while the doctor operates her mother. In the second scene the two lovers are seen in a certain restaurant having food and wine. Ms. Nahomi shows unfailing humor and conveys her warm feelings to her lover about the antagonism of the Robin and Simba people while they are socially and culturally bound. In the third scene, the two lovers come out of the restaurant and have a fun at the doctor's rented house with a surprising discovery (i.e. the pregnancy of Ms. Nahomi). At first, Ms. Nahomi asks him to wait at the verandah and decorate the house with candle flames. There are also toys on the sofa. At the center of the house, there is a big green light having a plate with bananas and wine fruit nearby. The next scene overlaps with the first one. This is when Ms. Nahomi goes to Mr. Mamadu's house to convince him not to interfere in her love affair. The next scene depicts the loneliness of the doctor; the message of Ms. Nahomi (to explain why not she answers his calls) and the assertion of the false information given by Mr. Joseph that she prefers to separate from him because of the prevalent conditions.

The next scene compromises the differences between the two lovers when doctor comes to know that Mr. Joseph told him lies. There, the lovers have taken orange juice to show that they are reconciled and to further indicate the necessity of peace in Africa. Next, the two lovers celebrate the release of the doctor from prison by lighting candles and by having wine. Here, the flame of the candle represents the civilized power of love by creating pleasant atmosphere than hatred, discrimination and stigma which are symbolized by darkness (ignorance). Together with this, Ms. Nahomi ventures to arguing with her father about the inclusion of his name to be a witness, her disguising role as male to leave Robin together with the doctor and Mr. Nahom and the final journey by a boat to foreign country demonstrates the love affair and its related sacrifice of the soul of Mr. Nahom and their evacuation from Robin by force.

In addition to these three major diachronic/diatopic scenes that revolve around three themes (racisms and its effect; corruption and conspiracy and love and its sacrifice), the scenes about Mr. Nahom reflect forgiveness and equality, and self-sacrifice. Though we separately see these three major diachronic/diatopic syntagmatic scenes in three categories, each of the scenes is related to the other. For example, racial discrimination, demotion, loss of work, betrayal and other social problems have inflicted a psychological wound on Dr. Natan by the plans of Mr. Mamadu. When Mr. Mamadu plans to send a murderer to kill the doctor, when he asks the Vice Minister to close the hospital case and to do 'something', when he reprimands Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Ebony to be witness and to hide a military radio under the bed of Dr. Natan, when he plans to prepare a false file of the doctor and when he finally fires bullets and wounds Dr. Natan; all the scenes touch the doctor and his lover in one way or another.

3.1.7 Macro Discursive Practice of 'Zumra'

The main implied theme of *Zumra* is the issue of the absence of true democracy, freedom and good governance among the African governments who assume power by force. The Robin government officials came to power by replacing the former government after long years of struggle. They fought the previous government for it was 'dictatorial' to the people in Robin. When they assumed power like the Robin Revolutionaries, however, they began discriminating people by their blood and abused their power to their personal material and psychological satisfaction. Because of mal-governance: corruption, abuse of power, discrimination and humiliation became features of the Robin government. Okafor (2001) says aggressive ethnocentrism results in serious and large-scale violation of rights based on origin, gender, language and religion. Such kinds of problems have been characteristic features of some of the African countries. Africa has been a panorama to many of these ethnic uprisings and genocides. It is to such escalating negative face of most of the African countries that the imaginary governments of Robin exercise stigma and discrimination against the Simba citizens. Memories left behind by the horror of the conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda, Liberia, Angola, (Okafor, 2001) 'Zimbabwe', Darfur and elsewhere are similar to the real situations of the Simba and Robin governments. Because of these happenings, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, cited in Okafor, once said

that the conflict in Africa is a major challenge to UN efforts designed to ensure global peace, prosperity and human rights for all.

In 1992, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and suggested that States should try to accommodate their ethnically diverse populations through democratic governance (Okafor, 2001). However, we see the people of Simba when they are discriminated, insulted and prohibited from undertaking social discourses. These two imaginary countries represent the practical features of many African countries. Democracy may hold up, but it has not yet been able to stop war and disorder in Africa. Most African countries, which have signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and incorporated the principles of human rights into their constitutions but not fully implemented them in practice. Okafor also notes that at the heart of the ethnic conflicts there are issues that have given rise to discontentment, some of which were examined during the Regional Seminar of Experts on Prevention of Ethnic and Racial Conflicts in Africa, in Addis Ababa in October 2000. They include cultural identity, inclusiveness factors, arbitrary delimitation of boundaries, economic disparity, competition for material resources, over-centralization, exclusive appropriation of resources of a country by a dominant ethnic or racial group, weakness of political, juridical institutions to protect rights and fundamental freedom, insufficient democratic institution and bad governance. There has been also A UN Global Conference to discuss racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance that held from 31st August to 7 September 2001(Okafor, 2001).

The cause of conflicts is often attributed to historical experience imposed in Africa by European during the '[Scramble of Africa](#)' era. Natural fuel is also added to the conflict by stirring up ethnic differences and enticing hatred (Okafor, 2001, Shah, 2010). In Zimbabwe, there has been increasing racism against the white farmers, due to poverty and [lack of land ownership](#) by black natives of the country. Similarly, South Africa until recently suffered from Apartheid, which legally segregated the African population from the Europeans. The lawlessness of South Africa emanates from the economic monopoly of the whites which lets the black dwellers poor ever longer. It is to humorously touch the

political and democratic evils of African countries which assumed power by force; *Zumra* is produced in universal setting somewhere in Africa. The characters have given different names of Africa across the continent. Such governments of Africa, though they claim that they have struggled ‘dictatorial’ governments for many years, they would begin suppressing the rights of the people when they place the former governments.

However, with all these negative features of many African countries, there are people of Mr. Nahom kind who give their precious life for freedom, democracy and modernity. Practically, we can cite Atse Haile Selasie from Ethiopia; Jommo Kenyata of Kenya; Peter Abrahams of Ghana; Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabie who have struggled for freedom, emancipation and black identity of African people. In contrast, there are also many corrupted officials across the continent who exercise long years of absolute dominance on their people.

3.2 Analysis of ‘Semayawi Feres’ (The Blue Horse)

Semayawi Feres is a scientific dramatic film which discusses the political discourse of the Blue Nile controversy. Here follows the semiotic Critical Discourse Analysis of the film by giving the brief background information and synopsis of the film at first.

3.2.1 A Brief Background of the Film

Semayawi Feres is one of the grand films in terms of the issue that it raises and also as a scientific generic drama on the controversial river, the Blue Nile. The Producer of the film is Serawit Multimedia Production. *The* script writer, the director and the main actor is Serawit Fikre. Surafel Bekele is a production manger. The assistant director and customs designer is Serawit’s wife Roman Ayele. Other than Serawit Fikre, the main actors and actresses are: Zinash Getachew (Fireselam), Tamiru Birhanu (Petros/Peter), Shimeles Bekele (Nadew) and Tesfaye Gebrehana (Melaku). The unit cameraman, the unit editor and the visual effect manger is Kirubel Estifanos; sound effect is by Samson Tefera; lightning and unit director is by Girum Zenebe; the editor is Samson Tefera and the makes up is by Dawit Alemu. Though the total cost of the film has been estimated to be 200, 000_350, 000 Ethiopian Birr; finally, the cost reached 450, 000 Ethiopian Birr.

Despite the fact that this cost may be nominal compared to huge film production companies else where in America or India, in the Ethiopian context, this amount of budget is very huge.

3.2.2 A Synopsis of ‘Semayawi Feres’

The story of this film talks about the fourteen year scientific research of Engineer Iskinder, an Ethiopian scientist coming from abroad on attempting to rain the 80% leftover of the Blue Nile that empties to the Mediterranean Sea. His dream has been raining the Blue Nile and changing the image of the country by increasing productivity of the Ethiopian farmers. When he finally manages to come to Ethiopia, however, foreigners (most possibly of Egyptians) have conspired to the traitors in his homeland to buy his original research illegally for \$30, 000, 000. The traitors have enough information about the time of his arrival. To get his research study into their hands, they send a beautiful lady named Fireselam, to have her own class in the hotel he resides, to introduce her to him and to get his research study by any means. At one occasion, she waits for him pretending writing her creative work and able to invite him for a dinner. Gradually, their relation develops to love affair and he tells everything about his life and his research and gives his research paper and tells her to read it by closing the door of her class throughout that night, after she promises to him to write a book about it. Finally, she calls to the chairman of the traitors and refrains from telling him that the research work is already in her hand referring the words of Iskinder; “This is the fourteen years old son of mine!”

However, the traitors group is following her relationship with the engineer by hiding tape recorders under the mattresses of her and the engineer classes. Unfortunately, she finds the hidden tape recorders while she tries to hide the copy of engineer Eskinder’s research work entitled “Abay to Abayneh” (Blue Nile to Ethiopian sort of thing). She tells engineer Iskinder that everything has been messed while he is doing his work near ‘Tis-Isat Fall’. She persuades him to drive to Addis and she is captured by the three traitors at Tana Hotel when she tries to pick the research work of the engineer. However, Fireselam’s brother-in-law is following the traitors from Bahir Dar together with local officials to catch those traitors on time. Disguising himself with muslin dress, Engineer

Iskinder goes to Addis Ababa and gives the original CD to one of the top officials who secretly agree to give the research to the traitors for four million dollars. As soon as the engineer left his office, the official calls to the chairman of the traitors that the research work is already in his hand. While he is further bargaining for more money out of it, the one who receives his call is Fireselam's brother-in-law together with Brigadier General of the Ethiopian Government. The general takes the original CD and all the traitors are taken to jail.

3.2.3 Broadcast and Narrowcast Semiotic Codes of the Film

There are some broadcast and many narrowcast codes in *Semayawi Feres*. The traitors are five in number (who participate in the Blue Nile maneuver) named Teshome, Petros, Nadew, Melaku, and Fireselam. There are so many signs around the scenes which show the actions, deeds and conversations of these people and their contenders Engineer Iskinder, the family members of the two groups and other top officials of the Ethiopian government. The signs in the film may be divided into two different categories: broadcast and narrowcast codes.

3.2.3.1 Broadcast Codes

At the beginning, the title is shown in grey color having a background of heavy cloud. There is also a heavy cloud when the presentation of 60% research work of engineer is viewed by the messengers (traitors) through a projector. This broadcast code represents an expected challenge, problem or war that may pour like rain at any time. There is also darkness that is frequently used throughout the film. Initially, the traitors have seen the soft copy of engineer Iskinder's research work by making the light off. Here, the darkness that surrounds the light fragments of the projector shows the real ignorance of the traitors to conceptualize the benefit of the research to their nation than the foreign money which corrupts them. In addition to this, the darkness signals the sophistication of the conspiracy by using any opportunity which represented by darkness (ignorance, poverty, trying to be rich by any means). That is why the waiter, the receptionist, the killer and other collaborators of the traitors lend their hand to the traitors to gain money illegally.

Similarly, the name Peter has also a negative connotation to all Christians since he is the one who betrays Jesus Christ three times in one night. Like the Biblical Peter, this person is also the one who deals with foreigners to stop the fundamental agenda of increasing agricultural productivity by raining the Blue Nile. His name is an umbrella name to all the traitors who betray their country in favor of money. This is again strengthened by Fireselam's creative writing entitled 'The Traitors of the Mother Land' or 'The Biters of Their Mothers' Breast'. Similarly, the other names of actors and the actress are all symbolic to the underlying behavior they manifest. For example, Nadew is an Amharic name which meant 'the demolisher/the spoiler or the destroyer.' Likewise, Fireselam is an Amharic name which means 'the fruit of peace.' When we see these two persons, the former is running to ruin the fundamental mission of the researcher to increase the agricultural productivity and to change the image of the country at large. Conversely, Fireselam is the angel who primarily collaborates with the traitors and eventually seeks to stop bloodshed and runs to the achievements of engineer Iskinder research work. Since the 'fruit of peace' is development and civilization; since peace seeks peaceful solutions to contradictions and differences, Fireselam's soul and her consciousness have always been driven by peace and development.

The other broadcast codes are more of colors. For example, Fireselam's car is red. At the same time, the chairman of the traitors is accompanied by a lady wearing a red t-shirt. Red color with ladies connotes love, affinity and enthusiasm. That is why men often give a bunch of red flowers to their lovers to express their strong love to their girlfriends, lovers or wives. For this basic reason, Fireselam finally changes her mind and begins to help Engineer Iskinder. Red color is also associated with war. Soldiers of many countries are mainly male. One of the traitors wears a red shirt to show the active volcano of war that may erupt any time. This is demonstrated in different parts of the film. For example, the luxurious sofa, the bed, the blanket, and the blooming red flowers that adorned the huge villa of Teshome, the red shirt which recites the engineer former German girlfriend, the red cover of Fireselam's copy of the research work which makes her hurry to hide it and the red seat of Brigadier General Befrdu; all represent the possible war among the beneficiaries and losers of the countries contending to the Nile Basin.

The extra broadcast codes used in the film are the animals the hare and the tortoise. These animals are widely known in fairytales for their quick and slow movement respectively. The hare metaphorically represents the Egyptian and in some way the Sudanese exploitation of the resource (water) using different strategies of their own (agreement, diplomacy, using other international institutions as an umbrella to exercise their missions, to mention some). The tortoise represents mainly Ethiopia and the rest of the countries of the Nile Basin excluding Sudan. Ethiopia and other countries in the basin are represented by a tortoise for their lag behind in using the Blue Nile water for agricultural productivity and hydroelectric power generation.

Semiotically, red, white, green and yellow colors have been used in the film as a broadcast code to reflect the prevailing situations, the possible opportunities and challenges on the issue of the Blue Nile water. The red color is used for two purposes: to reflect how much love is the leveler than other material benefits (e.g. Fireselam) and to pinpoint the controversies, subtleties of Egyptians and Sudanese in exploiting the Blue Nile and the wake up of other countries in the basin to use the river for their development which may later end with confrontation (possibly war) among the countries in the basin. The white color dominantly describes the interference of Egyptians in the issue of the Blue Nile to keep on monopolizing the river to their national benefits and the influence of other allied countries in support of the needs of Egypt for political, religious or diplomatic gains. Green color represents the potential agricultural development from the Blue Nile and its consequent civilization. Similarly, the yellow color highlights the possibility of peaceful solution to the controversies that existed for long in the use of the Blue Nile for a reasonable share of the water of the Blue Nile.

3.2.3.2 Narrowcast Codes

Petros (Peter) comes to the meeting in a white Mercedes which shows that he is in possession of the foreigners command who often represented by Ethiopians with white color. This person wears black trousers and a yellowish white coat, shirt and ties which signal the mixed identity of the person. He is a messenger of enemy foreigner though he is an Ethiopian by blood. Melaku comes to the meeting in green blue car with dark

greenish suit to signify what really the Blue Nile is. The green indicates the possible civilization and hope of using the Blue Nile. The blue color mixed with green signifies the Blue Nile and the peaceful joint development initiative by the countries of the Blue Nile Basin. Nadew comes in a light black car wearing a black suit and a red shirt. The black suit in Ethiopia signals death and grief. It also psychologically connotes despair and ignorance to show the deal of those traitors with lowered consciousness in selling the possible development of Ethiopia for money. His red shirt represents controversies, challenges and the possibility of war on the issue of the Blue Nile.

The traitors try to capture the scientist research study by disguising themselves in a company named Mixer Investment Group. The noun *mixer* has a similar meaning with *blender* and *beater* showing their function as messengers. But, their ultimate function is to be an instrument for the foreign agenda. We do not see them discussing the impact of their operation, the vital goal of the research to Ethiopians; their main concern is finding the research study by any means for the millions of dollars they would gain. In the next scene, there appears Teshome and Nadew playing a dart which is not a usual type of game in Ethiopia. The game represents war and the adjoined arrow indicates a missile, representing armament. The novelty of the game to Ethiopians shows that there were/are not many traitors of such kind in the past/present that ruins the life of their fellow citizens. By contrast, we may remember those Ethiopian veterans who lost their life defending the sovereignty of their country from usurpers in different historical periods. After three different scenes next to the above, there is a big florescent light near the gate of the restaurant where the engineer resides. This light refracts red color having blue at its center. There are six main beams refracted from the light. The beams indicate the countries that play fundamental roles in the deal of Nile Initiative. These countries are Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. There is also a light yellow florescent gleaming at the entrance to illuminate a possible agreement between the two groups (the upper Nile and the lower Nile Basin countries).

In the restaurant, the two persons (the engineer and Fireselam) arrive and confront each other having food and drink of their own at different seats. The tables in the restaurant are adorned with white cloth having green diamond shape clothes above it to signal the

Fireselam's final choice of agricultural productivity (green color) of the Ethiopian farmers than the million dollars share she aspires to obtain (white). This again is supported by the next scene showing the engineer contemplating in his class, standing and getting down to his seat. While he is sitting, suddenly, there appears his shadow for a little while. The shadow represents that Fireselam is going to be his ally which by extension describes her betrayal of the mission given to her (handing the research by winning his heart) as if she is the icon of the engineer. The red flowers placed on the tables of the dinner show the forthcoming love affair of Engineer Iskinder and Fireselam in between the two groups' confrontation and plea to own the research work or to implement it. The restaurant is shown in dim light to connote the existing obscure negotiations with implicit national agenda of the countries of the Nile Basin.

There are Ethiopian flags: when the Ethiopian executive officials welcome the engineer; when Fireselam and engineer Eskinder looking Addis Ababa at night from the hotel they reside; when the engineer navigates the Abay River (Blue Nile) by boat (the flag is fixed to the boat); at Brigadier General Befrdu's office and when the General finally comes to endorse the engineer's effort by arresting the traitors, there is a small Ethiopian flag fixed at the back of his car.



Figure 1: Historical Ethiopian Flag Figure 2: The Present Day Ethiopian Flag

In the first meeting, the Ethiopian flag has a blue circle at the center and yellow star stripes on the green, yellow and red column of the flag as it is illustrated in Figure 2 above. This is the present Ethiopian flag representing the ruling government (EPRDF). Other four flags, however, have no blue circle and yellow star stripes at the middle as shown in Figure 1 above. Thus, in the film, the Ethiopian flag represents different historical periods in the last two millennia. Accordingly, the four flags include those of Ethiopian in the past that passed through different historical periods. One of the flag is seen through the dark night which appears from a distance, from the hotel where

Fireselam and engineer Eskinder accommodate. This flag shows how far Ethiopia has been less influential (the flag is surrounded by thick darkness of the night) in decision making concerning the Nile River. The flags in general connote the need to consider national benefits and sovereignty of the country rather than other political and diplomatic maneuvers needed by governments at a particular historical period, as the Ethiopian flag represents all Ethiopian in the past, the present and the future.

There is also a statue of a bare man having thick hair and moustache in the house of Teshome carrying a huge weight (a half circular iron) that bends him down. Above the half circle of the statue, there is a rectangular table like box which is fixed on it. On the table of the statue, there is a golden light refracting white light. The statue represents the Ethiopian peasantry living under difficult conditions (poverty, famine and war) for a long period of time. It has a golden color and a thickly grown hair and moustache of the man to represent the rich resources of the country (water, minerals and labor) that may change the image of the country. The role of the statue is adornment as the people of Ethiopia are being exploited by Egyptians as inanimate objects (standing table). Above the hardworking and innocent farmer, however, there is a golden light refracting white light. The white light represents foreigners' plots by enslaving some Ethiopian collaborators with money (golden color).

The lament of the poor farmers of Ethiopia is also underscored by the beggar at the straight with engineer Eskinder. There is also an abstract picture showing a child and an old man fixed on the wall of the reception with an 'assegai' (javelin) and a shield. The old man in front holds the shield, while the teenager facing the back holds the 'assegai' (both in their left hands). The boy and the man share the same head. The youngster faces a green area in the reverse side where the old man stands. The two persons represent the changing generations and the historical cultural heritages in shielding the sovereignty of Ethiopia. The green area is the hope of civilization (Blue Nile) which every citizen needs to safeguard (with a shield and an 'assegai').

Likewise, there are two cups at Yilma (Fireselam's sister fiancé) house. The colors of the two cups are bronze and golden. Above the cups, there is a statue wearing over cloth on

his right shoulder that drops to his right hand. The statue seems looking far away, resting on his right hand on his waist and holding a shield in his left hand. The meaning of the shield is related to the protection of the country's sovereignty from foreign usurpers, while the gaze of the person indicates amusement about the interference, the plot and something that did not happen before (selling the Blue Nile for 30, million dollars perhaps). The two cups symbolize the prizes to different kinds of citizens who run for money (the traitors) and who do something substantial to their country (Engineer Eskinder and Fireselam). The golden cup is the prize to the traitors (including Dr. Mulu). This is approved in the office of Dr. Mulu when he is found red-handed, dealing to sell the original CD of the research work entrusted by Engineer Eskinder, whilst the traitors are chasing the engineer. The bronze cup represents locality, nationality and historicity of Ethiopian heritages. Here, we need to remember that 'Maretereza' (silver coin) was once used by Ethiopian government as the country money. This exchanging money is now used by many Ethiopian people for adornment in different cultural fashions (for example, cross, bracelet, ring, etc.).

In spite of the frustration and unfair use of the Blue Nile water by the name of consciously constructed agreements of Egypt and Sudan in 1929 and in 1959, there is a hope amongst Ethiopians to use the Nile River water for their own development. This is reflected by the two persons (a nurse and a man) when they dine seated in a cultural chair and eating in a plate together (as most Ethiopians do) 'Injera' and roasted meat using 'Moseb' instead of an adorned table as seen in the restaurant of the hotel where the engineer and Fireselam reside. The Ethiopian way of dining in the restaurant exemplifies the approach of the time for Ethiopians to benefit from the Blue Nile by their own national strategic plans.

3.2.4 Social Semiotic Codes

The social codes include verbal and nonverbal codes, commodity codes, behavioral codes and regulatory codes. Let us see these codes in *Semayawi Feres* as follows.

3.2.4.1 Verbal and Nonverbal Codes

The first verbal code signified in the film is the conversation between Petros (Peter) and his daughter. When Petros is looking at the world map and the picture of 'Tis-Isat Fall' (the Blue Nile Fall), his daughter suddenly comes at his back and hit him with her sandals and asks him, "Daddy, when are you taking me to the Blue Nile?" However, her father purposely tries to divert her attention by asking her, "Did your mother sleep?" His daughter, after replying to him that her mother is taking a bath, she again tries to elicit the answer to her question by saying, "Tell me! When do I take a shower in the Blue Nile?" Her father bending towards her and pinching her cheek fatherly with his fingers and kissing her at her forehead says, "Saron, the Blue Nile Fall is so dangerous!" in this conversation, there are two fundamental implicit meanings. The first one is about taking a shower in the Blue Nile. Here, his daughter is connotatively prescribing how the Blue Nile can be used for the benefits of Ethiopia instead of flooding tones of fertile soil down to the beneficiaries. The second meaning derives from her father speech when he says that the Blue Nile Fall is so dangerous. The word dangerous signal that the Blue Nile can not be used for different purposes by Ethiopian (e.g. irrigation and hydroelectric power) for it is rather a treat to the country when Ethiopia raises the questions of equity and balance in the use of the Blue Nile River.

The second salient verbal code is the Amharic news paper put on the table with the pack of cigarettes made of Switzerland and the watch of Teshome when they are having esteem bath together with Nadew. There is a newspaper with a headline of "There is an Anxiety that the Use of Nile River Could Goes to Confrontation" and it reads,

When the Ethiopian government explains that it wants to persuade Egypt with diplomacy and agreement rather than confrontation; the governments of Tanzania and Kenya have said the time to use the Nile River is approaching whether Egypt agrees or not.

The agreements signed in different times between Egypt and Sudan before 50 years benefits the two countries to use the river and prohibit other countries not to use the river beyond their will, many Eastern Africa countries, however, are forwarding their opposition towards it.

The Amharic version is stated below:

...

In the above quoted code, readers can easily understand the macro societal practices that are needed to be underlined. Firstly, the strategy of the present government in using the Blue Nile River is explicitly stated. It is through peaceful negotiation that the government aims to win the Egyptian government. Fading up to the lengthy negotiations with the Egyptians and Sudanese, the Kenya and Tanzania governments are now determined to use the Blue Nile water regardless of the Egyptian willingness. The determination of these governments foregrounds the passivity of the Ethiopian government in using the Blue Nile water for the profit of diplomacy. The newspaper also dictates the unbalanced power relationship of the Blue Nile basin member countries. It also explains that the colonial agreements of Egypt and Sudan have benefited the two countries to monopolize the Blue Nile water for many years and this inequity of using the Blue Nile water is now questioned by other member countries.

There are also textual evidences which tell the citizenship of the foreigner(s) who conspired with the traitors. When Fireselam find out the cassette recorder under her and the engineer's classes at the hotel, there is a meeting among the traitors waiting to her arrival for 45 minutes, at some other place. At that specific moment Nadew says, "A man has called from abroad and told us that we eat the pistol in our hands if we thought it 'mushebeck'. The word 'mushebeck' is an Arabic word. The chairman of the traitors also prescribes the coworkers English is *tight*. From these two evidences we may guess the citizenship of the coworker is Egyptian or Sudanese. In addition to the identity of the coworker, the written document of the newspaper indicates the source of the

controversies and confrontations among the member countries of the Nile Basin is the supreme dominance of Egyptian and Sudan on the water of the Blue Nile.

Likewise, Fireselam's monologue which she performs to attract the attention of engineer Eskinder has also a double meaning. The basic use of this performance is enforcing the engineer getting out of his class and able to introduce to him. She says, "Spit...Spit out! You are so much ungrateful. Feeling anxious about you, she was taking care of you when you were a little child. But now as you grew old, you are here to bite her [breast]. I swear you don't swallow her! Spit her! Leave her alone!" Her saying together with the title of the draft of her new book ('Yenat Tut Nekash'/The Traitor of the Motherland) indicates the agenda of her mission is identifying oneself with enemies and fighting to the motherland. From the first day of spending the night in the hotel class, one thing that recalls in her mind is the question of conspiracy on the motherland.

The other verbal code that carries a big agenda is the conversation between the beggar and the engineer. They talk to each other as follows:

Beggar: Brother, please help us meet our brothers, our brothers!

Yes...get me back to my brother!

Engineer: What do you mean?

Beggar: I miss the cattle keeper found on the one birr.

Engineer: I see...is that the other way of begging?

Beggar: What shall we do when the earth became brass and the sky is iron?

We abandoned everything and migrated into town...

Don't you understand!?! (With smile)

There is no rain. Rivers were dried.

So we all come to town.

Mother and brother are down there... (Pointing his hand)

It was late since father has expired.

This conversation has expressions of grief among the Ethiopian farmers to those Ethiopian intellectuals who have to find a solution to help stay in their surroundings by giving them technical and professional supports which increase productivity. As you may see, the beggar says, *'meet our brother'*, *'get me back to my brother'* and *'I miss the cattle keepers'* to signal his homesickness and to show his interest to get back to his home. The cause of the beggar's family migration is water, which again relates to the necessity of using the Nile River for irrigation purposes. Using water as the very cause of migration recites the researcher the Amharic proverb which says, *'The owner of Abay River is thirsty'* () This is an irony to all Ethiopians to tell they are named by *'hunger and famine'* while they are capable of changing the image of their country by using the Blue Nile River efficiently.

The other overriding verbal symbol which reinforces the preceding Amharic proverb is the title of the fourteen years research work of engineer Eskinder, *'Abayin Le Abayineh'* (Nile to Nilean/Ethiopian sort of saying). Abay is the Ethiopian name to Nile. Thus, the title connotes that Nile belongs to Ethiopian, though they do not practically use it effectively. Moreover, the conversation entails the issue of Nile River must not be the only agenda of higher officials, rather, people need to have a say on different forums about the Nile River (including beggars). Because of this, the research intends to rain Nile (Abay) to Ethiopian for it belongs to Ethiopian.

The traitors also ridicule the famous historical hero of Ethiopia when Teshome reprimands the waiter who is spying engineer Eskinder and Fireselam with money saying, "If you don't know what to do with it, use it to kill yourself as Emperor Tewodros did." This is a response to the waiter question that quests what to do with the pistol they have given him. To the researcher, the editor consciously or unconsciously lessens the Amharic version when he translates into English. Teshome says, "If the work is impossible to you, swallow like Emperor Tewodros did." The Amharic version reads; " " This saying smiles Petros and be the issue of discussion among the wives of the traitors. These events show how much the traitors are

taken by the promised thirty million dollars by letting aside historical values that are cherished by Ethiopian and by grand historians at home and abroad. Did emperor Tewodros commit suicide for he did not know what to do with his pistol or with his work? What might have been the right thing when a king has nobody to rely on except the marching enemies coming to hand him knees and ties? This shows how much the traitors mind is lost in million of dollars to the extent of ridiculing historical heroes of Ethiopia as a simple thing.

3.2.4.2 Commodity Codes

The commodity codes which are related to the main actress and actors are discussed in the narrowcast codes in the preceding section. In here, the researcher will highlight some signs from other casts in the film and the rest of the commodity codes expressed by the main casts. The closing of the bodyguards as well as their drivers of the traitors is often black. As it is dictated in the same section cited above, black cloth in Ethiopia connotes death and mourning. Thus, the drivers and their body guards signal the forthcoming prison and deprivation of the rights of the traitors through the legal institutions of Ethiopia.

Likewise, the wives of the traitors are changing fashions after fashions. At a time, the wives of Nadew and Petros talk about fashion cloths and gold, while they visit fashions together. Some other time they talk about the kind of car (Mercedes) that Petros wife is driving. The car, the food types they eat, the fashions they follow and their lust they do over their husbands, the house furniture and everything around them is by far incompatible to average Ethiopian who lead their life in extreme poorness. The family relationships among the traitors' are also spoiled, for life to the traitors is earning money and spending it at home. The luxurious lives of the traitors' family caution citizens and the existing government to speculate implicit deeds of rich people who hurts citizens by the name of legal organizations (like Mixer Investment Group).

On the other hand, at the welcome meeting ceremony of the scientist, engineer Iskinder wears a silver cross over his black t-shirt to reflect that Ethiopia is dominantly a Christian

country. On the contrary, religion is an instrument to Sudan and Egypt for gaining supports from other Arab countries to accomplish their interest on the Blue Nile River. Similarly, Fireselam wears an Axum cross when she invites him dinner in order to intoxicate him with drugs and takes the research paper. The Axum cross, which she wears as a necklace, indicates the ancient civilization of Ethiopia and the consequent reception of Christianity during the time of Izana in the fourth century A.D. Similarly, the bed sheets and blankets of the hotel in Addis Ababa and in Bahir Dar are not the same. In Addis Ababa, the bed sheets reflect more of foreign than the age long Ethiopian traditions. While in Bahir Dar, the cloths are made of local weave cloths and the classes are adorned with traditional seats and carpets. This shows that everybody in Ethiopia eventually will return to his traditions and customs than longing the western way of traditions by doing something evil to the Ethiopian mass.

In addition to the above commodity codes, the military uniform of Brigadier General Befrdu connotes the need to protect the sovereignty of the country seeing the counterparts' military plans and strategies. The uniform further entails the government of Ethiopia need to take military preparation together with the persuasions and the negotiations that are undergone so far on the Blue Nile River. Besides, the curiosity and intent of the general in protecting the scientist and Fireselam indicates how should the top government officials need to listen, support and protect intellectuals who contribute something fundamental in using the Blue Nile (other resources if it may) to the development of Ethiopia.

3.2.4.3 Behavioral Codes

The dinner invitation ceremony to engineer Eskinder by the top officials of Ethiopia, including the president of the country, entails the possible ideal picture of the joint mission of scholars (scientists) and government officials in different perspectives. In reality, there are no such hot receptions to the researchers in the field. Rather, we observe research projects when presented in symposiums and other forums and put on the shelf on the pretext of different constraints. Thus, the engineer's hot receptions echo the demanding active involvement of the Ethiopian Government to research works and other

projects on the Blue Nile River. The other behavioral code is the perseverance of the engineer in doing his research for the last fourteen years. While he is dining in the restaurant alone and by the invitation of Fireselam; during the presentation of his research study to the concerned bodies and in his conversation with Fireselam about his research work, we see his hope, his determination and devotion to the accomplishment of his research project. That is why the hope of civilization makes Fireselam excited like a beam, by thinking the forthcoming bright seasons. This foregrounds how professionals of Ethiopia should behave to achieve their goals to themselves and to their country.

The twisted face of Teshome, the concentrated and heated debate by Nadew and Petros in gaining the research by their hands by paying any severe bill (killing the waiter and the fiancé of the top official) are behavioral codes of the film. Besides, Teshome is a chain smoker and drunk hard. Nadew does the same in smoking. Their familial relations are spoiled. Their wives are all lost in lust because of the traitors' carelessness in satisfying their sexual desires. We see that they are in a hurry to get millions of dollars in their hands letting aside their family and their adjoined needs and interests. These shows how much traitors intoxicated with dollars to the extent of betraying their country and their family too. This indicates the end result of betraying ones consciousness and ones country in favor of money is decadence, jail and regret.

3.2.4.4 Regulatory Codes

There are three main regulatory codes in the film. These are: money, love and religion. The first regulatory code is money, promised from their foreign 'coworker' to the traitors. This 30 million dollar binds five traitors together and helps them to enslave others in the mission (the waiter, the servant of Yilma (the antelope), the receptionist, the killer, and finally Dr. Mulu). Fireselam has been one of the traitors till she is immersed in other authoritarian code_ love. Her frustration to accept his marriage proposal, her ambivalence in the two powerful drives and her final decision to support the engineer leads to say that love is a powerful derive than money (to those who are thoughtful and farsighted). The low value of money is also reflected through the wives of the traitors. For example, the wife of Nadew says that she felt as if she is a commodity in her life. Though she leads

luxurious life driving the latest model of Mercedes, money cannot buy her identity and she recognizes her self as commodity purchased by her husband. Fireselam betrayal of millions of dollars in favor of money also reminds to live to the question of the 'soul' (the cherished truth) than money.

The traitors do not talk any when they go to Bahir Dar for their aspiration of gaining millions of dollars ends with dream. The silence at the highway from Addis Ababa to Bahir Dar represents the dead end of theft, plot and conspiracy. Religion is also one regulatory code substantially used to show how religion is abused by Egyptians and Sudanese to collaborate those Arab League countries by masking their real agenda of using the Blue Nile River in the name of religion (e.g. the Kuwait Government has partly financed the 1.6 billions dollar project of the Sinai Desert Project of Egypt).

3.2.5 Syntagmatic Analysis

Since many of the broadcast and the narrowcast codes in one way or another refer to the paradigmatic analysis, the researcher want to emphasize major syntagmatic features of the film. The syntagmatic features are going to be seen in three sections: synchronic/synoptic; diachronic/synoptic and diachronic/diatopic. Though many of the shots in the film refer to diachronic/synoptic and diachronic/diatopic representations, there are also some events that falls under synchronic/synoptic events.

3.2.5.1 Synchronic/Synoptic

There is a single shot of a black abstract picture depicting a head of a man which presents a lady in white color (when you see it carefully) in it. This picture by extension refers to the initial service of Fireselam to the whites' agenda and her eventual commitment to the engineer research project. At the same time, the picture indicates the tendency of the engineer to marry her. Thus, the picture conjures the love of females as the mighty controller of men's mind. That is why the engineer has given Fireselam his precious research paper which the National Bank of Ethiopia allows the engineer to preserve it in a secret section.

There is also a picture of choral group of church, wearing different cloth to the edge of their feet. The first person wears a white and red cloth, while the second one is in black. The third person wears red and a little bit of white combination cloth. The fourth and the fifth persons are in green and white combination. However, the dim light refracting from these pictures makes the white to seem yellow. The last person wears a yellow cloth and seems hanging a shield in his right hand. There is an Axum cross fixed to the background wall of the picture between the first person and the second one. There is a little space in between the first person and the rest of the persons in queues. There is a light gleaming from the top corner of the picture where the first person stands. Except the second person, all of them seem females. The picture shows the historical cultural and religious relations of Ethiopia and Egypt which is now partially the challenge of Ethiopian development. For example, there are many holidays which prohibit the Ethiopian peasantry exploit its very resource (labor) efficiently. Till the 1950's, the Ethiopian patriarchs were assigned by the Egyptians orthodox church. Presently, the dogmas of the orthodox religion are not the dominant driving force in the economic and political sector of Egypt. In Ethiopia, however, the state and the church of the governors of Ethiopia and the influence of church in economic, political and in safeguarding the wellbeing of the country in different historical times is still keep continuing. Thus, the inclusion of holidays as a principal element of the religion dogma seems a deliberate plan (poison) of Egyptians to systematically decline the economic development of Ethiopia.

3.2.5.2 Diachronic/Synoptic

There are different events that take place sequencing over time. The first of these events is the meeting of the traitors that illustrates agents, institutions and persons who/which participate in the course of the film in order to gain the research work of the engineer. This scene, as described in section 3.2.3.1, reflects the story of the theme. There, the traitors' agenda, the arrival of the engineer the day after the meeting, the driving power (regulatory code) of the group, their mission and their determination to achieve their goal, are all clearly explained. In addition to the verbal signals, the colors, the clothing, the cars and the surrounding represent different meanings which we have discussed in the

preceding sections. Stylistically, this scene is separately presented from any preceding sections to inform audiences the principal agenda of the film.

The second fundamental diachronic/synoptic scenes revolve around the engineer and Fireselam relationships. Firstly, they sit face to face in the restaurant of the hotel and talk their heartfelt drives to themselves. Engineer appreciates the female initiative to dine alone in the restaurant and says, “Ethiopia should have been changed.” Afterwards, he is thinking the possible change of the people of Ethiopia on the success of his research. Fireselam, on her behalf, is contemplating about the million dollars she may gain finally, about her wearing style and her expectation of his wink at her. This scene shows the beginning of the second regulatory code, love. Moreover, the monologue about the ‘the bitters of their mothers’ breast’ or ‘the traitors of the mother land’, draws him from his class and get introduced to each other.

At the dinner invitation he also tells her about his father’s death by poison during the reign of Atse Haile Selassie which amuses and terrifies her. This frustration of Fireselam is possibly added to the drugs given to her in order to intoxicate the engineer. Her mission begins to erode when she hears that his father died by poison. Similarly, they also discuss about the dinner invitation of the engineer by the president. This entails how much the project is welcomed by many people, top officials and intellectuals. Thus, he tells her that he is alone and asks her to be his wife. His request to marry her is also the second bell that makes her nervous to choose either money or love.

3.2.5.3 Diachronic/Diatopic

There are two major themes which have diachronic/diathopic features in the film. These are the meetings of the traitors and the reception of engineer Iskindir and his presentation of his research work to the concerned officials of Ethiopian government. Lets us see these events as follows. To begin with the meetings, the traitors have met four times in the course of the film. At first, they have formed a company by the name Mixer Investment Group and send Fireselam to catch engineer by her beauty. She is given a tablet to poison engineer to get the necessary document on time. However, her sister has taken the tablet

in order to protect her sister from any risk comes by. Because of this, her first mission has failed and the traitors meet to discuss again. They all embark upon on her negligence and her sister's interference on the millions of dollar game. The four traitors all comment her by taking turns and give her drugs again to poison him. The third meeting holds in the absence of Fireselam to listen to the cassette recorder handed by the waiter to spy her relationship with the engineer. When the engineer trusts her and gives his research work (which he calls his fourteen years old son), she calls to the chair of the traitors and refrain from telling him that she has got the research work.

What comes to her mind is copying the research work and hide it under the mattress of her bed. When she holds on the mattress to hide the copy of the research work, she finds the secret tape recorder. She does the same in the engineer's room and takes the cassette recorders and goes to Bahir Dar to rescue the engineer. When traitors hear from the waiter that she takes the cassette recorders, they go to Bahir Dar by shooting the waiter and by severely wounding the sister of Fireselam at first. Finally, engineer Iskinder is forced to stop his research work by the traitors. However, the traitors are caught and are sentenced to jail by government officials before they send the research work abroad.

In contrast, the engineer is welcomed by the top officials of the government and given the necessary support by them. He is told that he can put his research work in the National Bank of Ethiopia for safety. Besides, he is allowed to take money from any bank when necessary. The necessary technical and logistic support is also arranged. The Inland Minister of Ethiopia also announces that he would render security measures if necessary. These testify that the government of Ethiopia has given due emphasis to the accomplishment of his research project. The emphasis has got weight when we see the dinner invitation by the president. The traitors themselves are talking that everybody and the newspapers are taking about the project. In addition to this, Dr. Mule and his fellow are also talking about the strong feelings of Agricultural Minister on the project and other senior officials of the country. This may be sarcasm to the passivity of the past and the present government (though there is a footstep) on the Blue Nile River.

In addition to this, engineer has also invited to give a presentation to concerned bodies of the country including the Water Resources Minister, the Defense Minister and the Ethiopian Metrology Agency. At the presentation, Brigadier General Befrdu wants to know whether the project is cognizant of Egyptians or not. How about others? This shows the weight given to Egypt than to other member countries of the Blue Nile Basin. Though Egypt contributes less to the volume of the water, every project on the Blue Nile needs to be approved by the Egyptians for its realization. This again reflects how much economic and diplomatic strength matters most in using a very resource of a country.

3.2.6 Macro Political Discursive Practices of the Film

The basic discourse of *Semayawi Feres* is addressing the hydro politics of the Blue Nile, though there are also historical and economic discourses in support of the political agenda. Since other countries of the Nile Basin are not influential and important to their economic and diplomatic ties as Egypt does for powerful countries, the balanced use of Blue Nile water has been passed unheard by America and other developed nations in the past consecutive decades (ETV, 2010). Though 86 % of the water is from Ethiopia, the country has never used the Blue Nile efficiently until now. Given that Ethiopia has passed through different civil wars in different historical periods, all the governments of Ethiopia have not gained enough opportunity to exploit the Abay River at its best. According to Global Policy Forum report, (August, 2000), [Egypt has maintained its monopoly over the Nile water by aggravating regional instability](#) by backing rebel groups in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia for many years. Using the internal instability of the governments as opportunities, Egypt and Sudan even have reached to sign a bilateral agreement between them on the resource of many countries. The present government of Ethiopia is also forced to focus on other rivers than Abay. In the present day, for example, many of the hydroelectric power stations of Ethiopia are planted on the Ghibe River than Abay (Nile). This is the result of the historical diplomatic passivity that goes in favor of Egypt and Sudan than the other countries of the Nile Basin.

Because of the diplomatic importance of Egypt and its economic development, when the Ethiopian government designs projects on the Blue Nile, the International Money Fund

(IMF) and World Bank request the approval of the Egyptian government directly or indirectly (Vasagar, 2004). ICE Case Studies, (1997) explains, in 1990 Egypt has blocked an African Development Bank loan to Ethiopia for new irrigation projects. Similarly, the present government project is withdrawn by the international organizations with the pretext of excessiveness of hydroelectric power beyond the countries economy. It is to highlight such monopoly of the resource of the Blue Nile by Egyptians *Semayawi Feres* is produced.

Semayawi Feres indicates that Blue Nile is the pillar that potentially changes the image of Ethiopia. The film ironical touches the passivity of the government as if it gives primary attention and curiosity in every detail concerning the Nile River. The film imply, as engineer Iskinder is given a high level of concern by the Ethiopian government, other concerned bodies, project designers, professionals and scientists need to be listened and given chances to use their knowledge to the benefit of their country by being cautious for plots and other political maneuvers coming against the plan of using the Blue Nile. It also entails that the issue of Blue Nile need to be public than only the point of discussions of the top officials of the government.

CHAPTER FOUR: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 A Semiotic Summary of 'Zumra'

Zumra is a dramatic film showing racial discriminations and its resultant effect upon the life of the innocent victims. In the film there are fundamental representations revealed by different signs. The researcher has used semiotics methods to find out discursive practices of *Zumra* and *Semayawi Feres*. In *Zumra*, power and love are presented as regulatory codes with their consequent results. Mr. Mamadu, who is running dominant race and having power, is expressed through defamation, degrading and abusing power (firing from work of Dr. Natan by Mamadu's cooked accusation), corruption, alcoholism, smoking, sensibility and other vices. Mamadu is the symbol of corrupted officials of Africa who assumed power by force.

The picture of Mandela, the background African music of the film, the African dance, darkness, washing hands with water, the Muslims dressing styles expressed through some characters and names of characters are among the broadcast codes which paradigmatically convey implicit meanings. The candle of light, wine, the blue t-shirt and other shirts, different Ethiopian pictures, and the style of title presentation show narrowcast codes of the film. In addition to this, the title *Zumra* conjures up the progressive Auramba community which is found in Region Three, South Gondar administrative Region, near Woreta town. Thus, the film transmits a message to audiences that African need to respect work than ethnicity and minimize the extravagant costs of traditional social ceremonies and celebrities of holydays. At large, the name *Zumra* represents respect for all, doing any kind of work without discrimination of sexes, with savings and with modern thinking that saves the resources of the society by making work the dominant ideology. The film also describes that love has a greater value than blood ties and other material benefits. Syntagmatically, the story is mainly shown in synchronic/diatopic (different places at the same time) and diachronic/diatopic (thematically related shots) manner.

We also seen those who are supported by Dr. Natan are also becoming his real enemies at the time of war. Thus, betrayal, deprivation of rights (to defend the accusation, for example), loneliness, and other disorders are expressed through the doctor. With all these racial discrimination effects, however, there are two people who represent peace, love, equality, forgiveness, sense and universality in the film. These are Ms. Nahomi and Mr. Nahom. The former remain a dependable girl friend in spite of the pressure coming from other people and her parents. Similarly, Mr. Nahom has a universal quality who believes in justice for all people regardless of their blood. The names of the casts, the colours used in the film, the unknown setting, the African background music, and the wearing styles represent different implicit meanings.

The names of the casts represent: Francophone people by the names Camara, Mr. Mamadu, Karanja; Anglophone people (, Mr. Joseph, Mrs. Ebony, Ms. Elian) and other Christian people of Africa (Ms. Nahomi, Nahom, Natan). This represents that the problem of racism in Africa is wide spread in different regions of Africa. The setting of the film can not particularly depict a particular place to represent universality of the theme among Africans. Similarly, the yellow and light blue colours reflected through Dr. Natan and Ms. Nahomi cry for the need to stop racial discrimination among the African people in favour of peace, freedom and prosperity.

Likewise, the background music of the film describes Africa and the need to stand together rather than identifying themselves in any kind of race, as to the words of Ms. Nahomi, every African needs to think in his mind than in his blood. The wearing style of the casts and their different faces show that Africa is a pot of different races having manifest different cultures that need to be respected from any danger.

As to the words of van Dijk, discourse and reproduction of dominance is the resultant effect of control of the means of symbolic production, access, and representation. We will just discuss the racial discrimination effect of *Zumra* based on three parameters. The Robin people are the dominant and the Simba people are the dominated. The former controls power and institutions (the hospitals, the offices, etc.) and then controls the

discourse of the public. For the Simba people have no power, they are deprived of important discourse genres (meetings, reports, accusations, complains, broadcasting). For the Robins control the power and having access to any kind of public discourses, they represent themselves superior and better than the Simba people. In contrast they insult the Simba people as if they are cursed ‘son of bitches’, lost count, idiots, asses and sinful (e.g. the intimidation of the two body guards when they take Dr. Natan to the Security Minister office), demotion from power (e.g. Dr. Natan is downgraded from administering the hospital as medical director and forced to serve under the command of the Robin nurse) and other psychological and material dispossession.

4.1.2 A Semiotic Summary of ‘Semayawi Feres’

Semayawi Feres is a scientific touch dramatic film that describes the controversies of the Blue Nile by magnifying the apathy of the government of Ethiopia through the concerns of the executive bodies of Ethiopia in the film. The film describes the fourteen years scientific research of engineer Iskinder, who used to live in England, in an attempt to rain the Blue Nile in the northern part of Ethiopia and the plot to mess up the success of the research by some Ethiopian traitors and their ‘co-worker’ who bribes them with 30 million American dollars.

The settings, flags, the cars, clothing style of the casts, colours and other signs have been used in the film to represent implicit social practices concerning the Blue Nile. Darkness and light, black and white, and green (yellow) and red, are contrasting colours that signify the existing possible phenomena of the Blue Nile. Darkness signifies the prevalent limitations (like poverty, famine, ignorance and loss of consciousness) of Ethiopia. While white colour indicates the interference of the Egyptians (may possibly of Sudanese) by different names (negotiations, agreements, bribe, using other developed nations and international organization as an instrument). Similarly, green and yellow indicates the possibility of resolving the controversy of the Blue Nile with peace by using the river for equal and balanced development among the countries in the basin. The red colour in contrast, describes war as the last resort that may explode unless equity and

balance are long-established. When the main actor ends the story at 'Tis-Isat-Fall', he wears a blue jeans and a white t-shirt to sign peace and the unfailing attention of Egyptian towards the Blue Nile.

The macro discursive social problem raised is the necessity of using the Blue Nile and the need of giving due attention by the government to: scientists, researchers, professionals and other educators who come up with new investigation of their own for better agricultural development. The government has its own strategic plan to develop the irrigation scheme of the country by minimizing risks. However, till the day comes to utilize the Blue Nile water equally, the government need to promote researchers and scientists to help the poor farmers and getaway poverty and build up a competitive military might by anticipating the future.

4.2 Conclusions on 'Zumra' and 'Semayawi Feres'

The two films that are selected to the research have enunciated fundamental agenda of the society. Beyond seeing the superficial plot, acting and theme of the films, there are hidden discursive practices of the society. Thinking everything made by human beings as social construct that signify certain social, cultural, economic and political discourses of the society, the researcher has tried to dig out implicit meanings of the films based on the semiotic features employed in the films. CDA is a bond of ranges of disciplines (linguistics, literature, sociology, psychology, political science and history) that sees symbolic social practices using semiotics, conversation analysis, politeness principles, and other methods.

In the two films that are selected for this analysis, *Zumra* and *Semayawi Feres*, the researcher has used semiotic method of analysis to find out major implicit meanings of the films. *Zumra* and *Semayawi Feres* are from the modern times Ethiopian films, however, both of the films have one feature that blush their good quality. Both films are monopolized by the script writers. The script writer of *Zumra* is the director of the film. Similarly, the script writer, director, producer and the actor of *Semayawi Feres* is 'Ato' Serawit Fikre. Regardless of the rich artistic talent of these personnel, this possibly

affects the quality of the films by eliminating the involvements of different professionals that comment the film making from different perspectives as a collaborative effort.

With this weakness of the films (they actually share with most of the Ethiopian films), they have fundamental societal themes different from others. *Zumra* raises racism and corruption as its theme. Though the film totally cried for the racial problem of African people, the language of the film is only Amharic. If the film could have English subtitles, it might have been heard well by many African at home and abroad. The title of the film selected, the clothing style of the casts expressed, the colours that are used in the film, the African music employed and the universal setting depicted, the two regulatory codes (race and love) illustrated, and other signs (light, darkness, flame, boat, for example) represent Africa and its huge problems_ racism and corruption .

Similarly, *Semayawi Feres* has discussed one of the core problems of Africa. It is the Blue Nile River that has been dealt in *Semayawi Feres*. The issue of the Blue Nile is not only the headache of Ethiopian; it is also the central agenda of the member countries of the Nile Basin. At present, the Blue Nile River is the monopoly of Egyptians and Sudanese. Other countries in the basin have not used the Blue Nile River as the preceding two countries do, by the pretext of colonial agreements of the 1929 and 1959 that favours Egyptians and Sudanese. These two counties have utilized most of their irrigation potentials while those other counties in the basin do not use one third of their potentials. Of course other countries in the basin might have economic problems that retarded them not to use the Blue Nile water for irrigation and hydroelectric power generation. Presently, however, the major reasons of not using the Blue Nile River is more of political than economic.

The main actor of the film is an engineer who wants to rain 80 % of the Blue Nile water left over that empties to the Mediterranean Sea to change the life of the Ethiopian farmers. This agenda, as it is expected, attracts the attention of foreign enemies of Ethiopia and because of this the foreigners able to bribe five Ethiopian to take the research work illegally for 30 million dollars. In this film, colours like yellow, red, blue

and green portray the possible alternatives on the issue of the Blue Nile. Dark and white colours are also the two categories that refer the black (the rest of the counties in the basin, especially Ethiopia) and white people (Egypt plus Sudan and their allies) respectively. Like *Zumra*, the title of the film conjures up the whole intent of the film. The two drives of humans that are used in the film are love and money. The triumph goes to love rather than to the millions of dollars.

The two discursive practices that are manifested in the films are core problems of many Africa people that hindered their economic development for long. Interracial problems and intra-ethnic conflicts and the Nile River controversies are concerns of many African people. Thus, when issues of these kinds are artistically delivered to audiences, government officials, people and professionals need to see them as social reflections and need to exploit their educational values.

To conclude, researchers in the field of Cinematography, Literature and other related disciplines can see signs from semiotic perspectives and expose hidden social practices. Correspondingly, script writers, directors and producers need to be curious in using every element of a film against the theme of the film for possible critical recognition given by scholars. Wishes, emotions, needs, attitudes, interest and other traits of psychology are reflected through the clothing, background of the shot, drinks, lights, and other things used by the casts. Thus, in order to express unspeakable psychological and emotional intents, the film makers need to be aware of using many signs. Everything used in the film must not be thought as entity of decoration; rather, it must be thought as an embodiment of fundamental issues to the filming industry, to the researchers and to the society as a whole.

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Appendix 1: Facts about the Nile Hydro Politics

As you may refer from Appendix 2, the countries which contribute most of the volume of are other member countries of the Nile Basin. In spite of this fact, most of the water of the Blue Nile is exploited by Egypt and Sudan. One of the agreements protects the countries of the Nile Basin not to undertake any activities which decrease the amount of the Blue Nile River. The implication of this agreement is other countries should not use the water by their own without the permission of Egypt and Sudan. Global Policy Forum, (2000) also explains that Egypt's willingness to cooperate in the Nile Initiative Project supports its water monopoly though it seems to contradict its historical domination of the Nile. This institution states that:

“The contradiction, however, is only semantic. As the river's most experienced user, Egypt can employ its considerable experience to participate in dam development and water resource management as well as other projects in Ethiopia and the Sudan, thereby continuing Egyptian rule over one of the world's most famous rivers.”

ICE Case Studies, (1997) further notes that Egypt is desperately trying to meet its food needs through dramatically expanding the number of acres under irrigation using the Nile River. The study illustrates that on October 26, 1997, the Al Salam Canal, or Peace Canal, was opened by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. This canal will transport Nile waters under the Suez Canal into the Sinai desert, adding 620 acres of arable land and allowing 5.5 million Nile Valley residents to resettle there (ICE Case Studies, 1997) *ibid*). Amazingly, the \$1.62 billion project was partly financed by Kuwait. This directly relates to the religion code of Egyptian that conversely reflected through the Christian crosses of engineer Iskinder and Fireselam. Earlier in 1997, work started on the Toshka, or New Valley Project, which will extend a canal from Lake Nasser above the Aswan Dam westward into the desert. These huge projects consume billions cubic meter of the Blue Nile River. Having seen this intentional monopoly, one may be hesitant whether Egyptian want to share the Blue Nile water with the member countries of the Nile Basin Initiative. The film illustrate the distribution of the water based on the two animals' speeds that are explained in the film, Egypt has been a hare (a rabbit) in the past consecutive decades by establishing a strong ground of using the Blue Nile water.

Ethiopia and other countries of the basin are represented by a tortoise which have been lagging behind.

When we come to Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 4/1995; definition of powers and duties of the executive organs of the FDRE article 17 dictates the Ministry of Water Resources shall have the powers and duties to, “determine condition and methods required for the optimum allocation and utilization of waters that flows across or lies between more than one regional governments among various uses and regions.” Similarly, Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) – officially commenced in February 1999 has a joint vision to “*achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin Water Resources.*” Based on this agreement, the Nile Basin countries through Strategic Action Program (SAP) seek to realize their shared vision, comprising sub-projects/programs (Fekahmed Negash n.d). The Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP), which includes countries of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, seeks to initiate a regional, integrated, multipurpose program through a first set of investment in the area of:

1. Integrated water resources management
2. Flood management,
3. Power generation and interconnection,
4. Watershed management, and
5. Irrigation and drainage (taken from Fekahmed Negash n.d)

These five areas of investments need have to be thoroughly analyzed by the people of Ethiopia and the officials of the country. To the eyes of the researcher, number one, two and four of the program have a universal touch among the countries. However, agreeing on integrated and regional agenda on the irrigation and drainage and power generation and interconnection is seemingly inviting the Egyptians and Sudanese to exploit the huge and unexploited potential of Ethiopia. The Egyptian and Sudanese have used more than two-third of their irrigation potentials (refer to Appendix 3). Hydroelectric potential of Ethiopia is also one expected resource that needs to be exported to Egyptians and

Sudanese and other surrounding countries than dealing with them to built hydroelectric power station together.

But now, there is a universal awakening among Ethiopians to change the image of the country. What the film dictates is acceleration of development in the country and the contribution of the water in support of this plan need to be assessed. The 1929 and 1959 agreements of Egypt and Sudan cannot be binding codes of other member countries of the Nile Basin. For example, the 1929 and 1959 agreements between Egypt and Sudan allow the two countries to consume 48/4 and 55.5/18.5 billion cubic meter water of the Blue Nile respectively (K. Mekonnen 1999). Should other riparian countries respect these agreements and other supporting colonial documents? This is why the Kenya and Tanzania governments announce to consume the water of Nile River disregarding the Egyptians permission in the Amharic news paper that is discussed in social semiotics. As the research study of engineer Iskinder the point of discussions of many people through written and oral media, these sorts of 'binding documents' need to be equally approved by the citizens of each of the countries than by a few political delegates. People need have to say something on their resources that decide the future fate of their countries development. When the Blue Nile becomes public agenda, the government will avoid risks of awaiting challenging tasks to the forthcoming developed Ethiopia citizens by the name of agreements and negotiations.

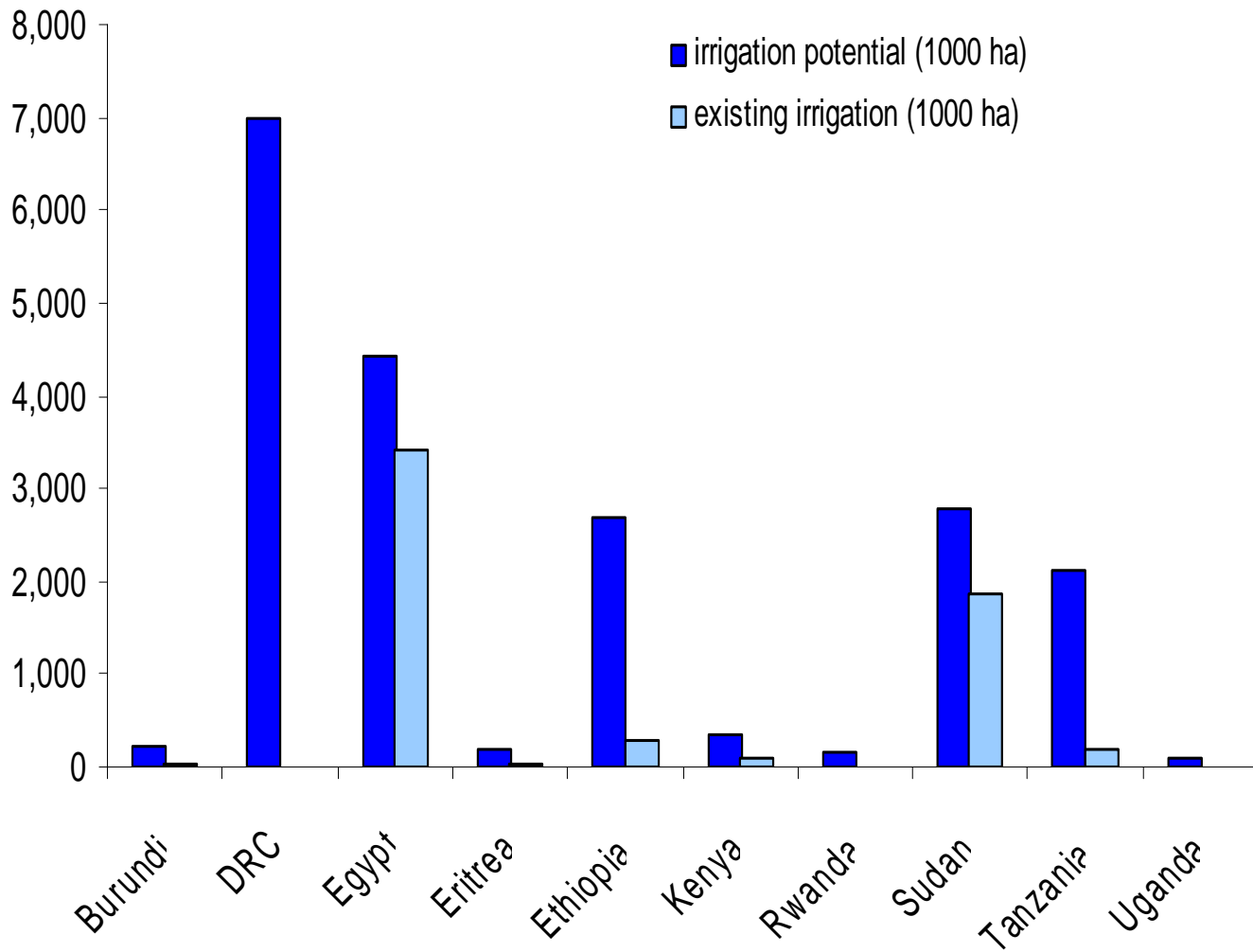
Sudan and Egypt have used their irrigation potential in the past five decades by using the Blue Nile River. This sort of water monopoly, however, is now resisted and challenged by other member countries of the basin. The Ethiopian government, however, chooses negotiation and agreement with the Egyptian government in using the Blue Nile. It is not choosing peace that concerns Ethiopian, it is rather the total relying (in spite of most of the volume of the water emits out from Ethiopia) of the government on the will of Egypt. It is to touch this apathy that Brigadier General Befrdu, the President of the country, the premier of Ethiopia and other top executive bodies in the film involve active role in the research that runs to rain the Blue Nile in Northern parts of Ethiopia. Recently, however, the four riparian counties of the Nile Basin, i.e. Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda (other than Egypt and Sudan) have signed a deal on equitable share of the Nile River on

May 14, 2010 (ETV, 2010), though Egypt and Sudan betrayed the deal. Such kinds of equitable and peaceful water security of the Blue Nile among the member countries of the Nile Basin need to be strengthened further.

The Beles Hydroelectric Power Station build on the Blue Nile with more than 400 Mega Watts potential needs have to be followed by other consecutive projects like the Ghibe Projects (that reaches to Ghibe Four Power Generation Project). The new Ghibe Two project is not presently generating power for the country because of the land slide or any sort of problem that stagnate functioning. If the country able to use Nile River as Egypt and Sudan do, the country has more than 41 thousand mega watts hydroelectric power potential to contribute for huge share of earning foreign currency (Yemane Nagish, 2010).

The other Egyptian apparent argument in protecting the government of Ethiopia from using the Abay River is that the country has optimum rainfall to the agricultural sector development. There are three basic reasons to negate this argument. Firstly, regardless of the rainfall distribution, countries have a right to use international rivers equally with other countries. Secondly, the rain fall distribution of Ethiopian is not consistent and dependable (refer to Appendix 4). The rainfall in Ethiopia is variable and the national GDP and agricultural GDP are also affected by the rainfall distribution of the country in different years. The third basic argument is rainfall distribution of the country is something uncontrollable and may affect the people coexistence when there are natural calamities. In the last nineteen years, the rainfall is variable having a positive correlation with the GDP and agricultural GDP. Thus, Ethiopia need have to exploit every water resource of the country to its development.

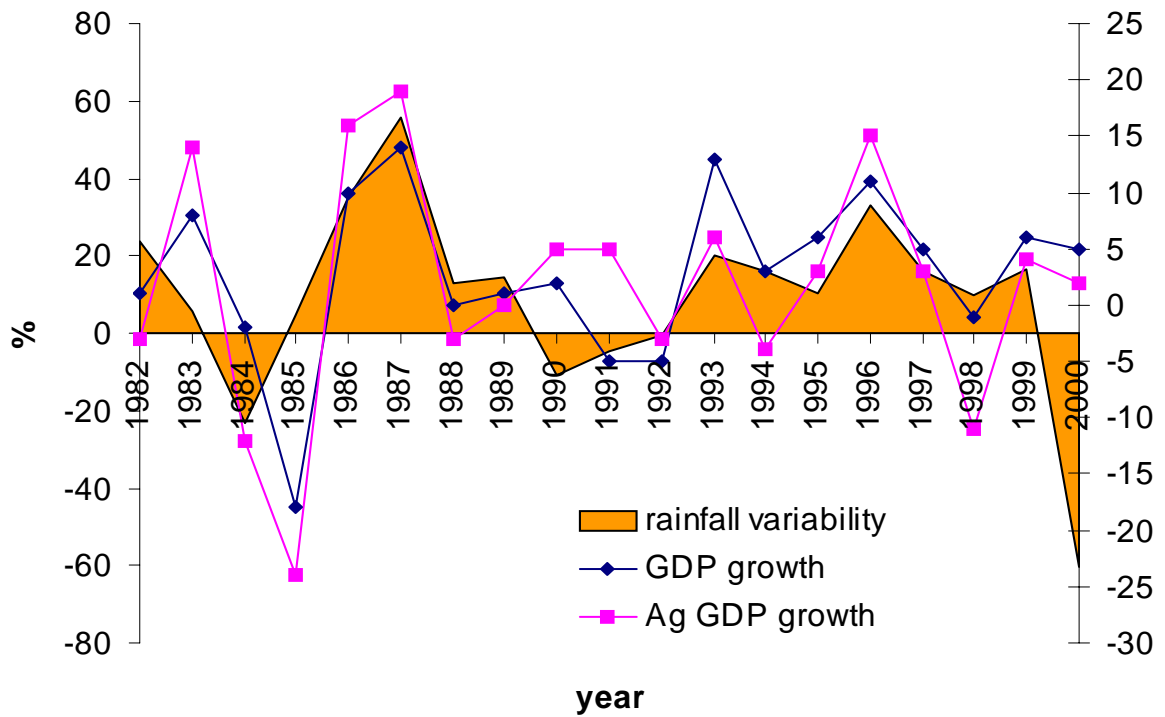
3: The Irrigation Potential and Irrigated Areas of the Countries in the Nile Basin (taken from Ijsbrand de Jong, 2007)



The Irrigation Potential and Irrigated Areas of the Countries in the Nile Basin (taken from Ijsbrand de Jong, 2007)

Appendix 4: Rainfall Variability and GDP

Ethiopia: rainfall, GDP and Ag GDP



Rainfall Variability and, GDP and Agricultural GDP Growths of Ethiopia (taken from Ijsbrand de Jong, 2007)

Appendix 5: Other Semiotic Signs in 'Zumra' Film

N	Types of Codes	The mediums of the codes	Lists of the codes	The function of the codes
1	Fruits	Pictorial	Green Wine Fruits, banana and orange	They represent peace, productivity and civilization respectively
2	Colors	Pictorial	Green, yellow, red, blue, white, black	Signal productivity, peace, love/struggle, foreign people, and something evil respectively
3	Drinks	Pictorial	Wine, orange, juice, beer and liquor	The first three fruits signify peace, love and stability, while the latter two represent corruption and sensibility.
4	Animals	Pictorial	Dog	Untrustworthiness of Mr. Mohammed
5	Means of transport	Pictorial	Boat	Means of passing discrimination and racism;
6	Actions	Pictorial	The splash of fruits,	The effect of racism on the youngsters of the nation
7	State of beings of characters	Verbal and Pictorial respectively	Conception of Ms. Nahomi and Careless hair style of Dr. Natan	The bright future the coming generation of Africa and the heavy weight of racism
8	Natural Resources	Pictorial	River and Forest	The first code signifies the continuity of traces of racism for years to come while the second one presents the rich sources of Africa.


Appendix 6: Other Semiotic Signs in ‘Semayawi Feres’ Film

N	Types of Codes	The mediums of the codes	Lists of the codes	The function of the codes
1	Buildings	Pictorial	The huge covered building under construction; MMD General Hospital covered in darkness	The first building represents the negotiation of the Nile Basin countries is not yet completed ; the hospital also signifies that the case of the Blue Nile needs medication (with diplomacy, fair negotiations and equal water distribution)
2	Flowers	Pictorial	Red flowers having some green leaves at the reception meetings of the engineer	Shows the agricultural productivity of Ethiopia (green) can be achieved through brutal diplomatic and political struggles (red)
3	Consumables	Pictorial	A pack of cigarette made of Switzerland, the fashion cloths of the traitors wives	Show how much the traitors and their families are possessed by foreign popular cultures
4	Natural Resources	Pictorial	Caucus, the ‘Tis Isat Fall’ (Blue Nile fall having white color)	Caucus signals the need of peace to all member countries of the Nile Basin. The ‘Tis Isat Fall’ is white to show that it is benefiting foreigners than Ethiopia.
5	Service areas	Pictorial	Millennium Restaurant and Bar (The name of this institution is written on the board having a half sun rise at its background)	The sun represents the universality of the Blue Nile; its size (half) signifies the inequality of member countries of the Blue Nile on the use of the water resource
6	Animals	Verbal	Pig and antelope	Pig is an insult to the chairman of the traitors to show how they are obsessed by material possessions rather than listening to their consciousness. Antelope is given to one of the messengers of the traitors to show they are the prey to the predators
7	Clothing	Pictorial	Green gown of Doctors and Nurses	Shows the great benefits of the Blue Nile if it is treated well

DECLARATION

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

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Date of submission: June, 2010

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Advisor's signature _____