

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE
GRADUATE PROGRAMME**

**POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SATIRE AS REFLECTED IN
BEWKETU SEYUM'S ENQILF ENA EDMIE AND BERARI
KITELOCH**

**BY
SINTAYEHU GENET**

June 2008

Addis Ababa University

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Bewketu Seyum's satiric and comic treatment of various social and political issues in his prose works, Enqilf ena Edmie (Sleep and Age) and Berari Kiteloch (Winged Leaves). The author of these literary works critically presents different issues through humorous ways. The targets of his criticism include political leaders, scholars, taxi drivers, government institutions, and aspects of human behavior. Thus, the study has attempted to analyze the satiric as well as comic elements that reflect the follies, vices, wrongdoings, and erroneous practices the author aimed at criticizing.

In this thesis, the writer has attempted to discuss the major features, characteristics, and techniques of satire. In addition, the prominent natures of comedy as well as the purposes of satire and comedy have been presented to establish a theoretical framework for the analysis. Accordingly, the researcher has made an effort to show Bewketu Seyum's utilization of satire and comedy for the purpose of social and political criticism.

The analysis of Enqilf ena Edmie (Sleep and Age) and Berari Kiteloch (Winged Leaves) highlights that Bewketu launches an elaborate satiric and comic attack on many aspects of human behavior as well as the erroneous practices of political leaders and government institutions. His social and political criticisms against individuals, political figures and institutions have been supported with numerous examples from the texts. This part of the study also reveals Bewketu's interesting mix of humor and criticism as fundamental literary devices toward a form of social or political criticism. Hence, the satiric and comic elements Bewketu employed in these literary works reflect his concern for the betterment of social values, political practices, and several aspects of human behavior.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Many writers of fiction organize their literary works in different ways. Some emphasize the economic conflict among the upper-class 'haves' and lower-class 'have-nots'. Others explore sublimated expressions of sexual instincts. Still others investigate the place of women in society. Each of these and many others, who focus on different issues, use various literary techniques to convey their message to the reader. One among other literary techniques they use is satire.

The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1993, **10**, 467) defines satire as: "artistic form, chiefly literary and dramatic in which human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings are held up to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other methods, sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement."

The aforementioned definition highlights that satire can be used to explore the social, political, psychological and cultural perspectives of individuals in particular as well as the society at large through an artistic and literary medium. In other words, satire is concerned with the nature of reality emphasizing what seems to be real. Its essence is to show the contrast between reality and pretense. Consequently, comic devices are used in order to criticize the individual, institution or society. Some of the basic techniques that the satirist uses are distortion, exaggeration, understatement, pretense and incongruity.

A number of distinctive features and techniques of satire have been discussed in the literature review part. What motivates the satirist according to Feinberg (1967:12): is "the aesthetic desire for self-expression far more than by the ethical desire for reform. He is stimulated by the incongruities in society, he is infuriated or amused by them, and he ridicules them."

1.1. Organization of the Study

Cognizant of the facts mentioned above, this M.A thesis attempts to thoroughly investigate the satirical and comic elements Bewketu Seyum employed in his prose works entitled ***Enqilf ena Edmie (Sleep and Age)*** and ***Berari Kiteloch (Winged Leaves)***. Hence, the study is organized as follows. The first chapter provides the introductory section of the research thereby including the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and the scope of the study.

The second chapter provides a review of literature. This chapter attempts to establish a theoretical background for the study. The third chapter analyzes the texts under the study in light of the theoretical background and methodology. The last chapter provides the conclusion of the study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Making use of various literary techniques and elements enriches the value of a literary work. It also reinforces the message the author attempts to convey to his/her readers, thereby increasing the readability of the text. In line with this, Bewketu Seyum's ***Enqilf ena Edmie*** and ***Berari Kiteloch*** are thought to employ different literary techniques, among which are satire and comedy. Bewketu's use of these techniques is worth noting for he is widely read. Apart from producing delightful pieces of literary works, he reflects the socio-political aspects of society in humorous ways. Hence, the writer's employment of satire and comedy to highlight messages in the aforementioned texts should be investigated and supported by evidence from the texts. On top of that, satirical and comic elements should be singled out to enhance literary appreciation and understanding of the texts.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to analyze political and social satire as reflected in ***Enqilf ena Edmie*** (Sleep and Age) and ***Berari Kiteloch*** (Winged Leaves). It seeks to examine how the writer used satire and humor to convey his message in the literary texts. With this broad purpose in mind, the researcher has tried to investigate how the author used satirical and comic elements to make social and political criticism in these texts.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study attempts to provide a deeper understanding of satire as a medium of social and political criticism. It also examines how Bewketu used language and literary techniques to highlight social evils and suggest ways in which the evils can be combated. The study may contribute to the understanding and literary appreciation of the writer's use of satire and comedy. In addition, this study may provide some important points that can serve as a springboard for other in-depth analysis on similar literary techniques.

1.5. Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher confined himself to two literary works of Bewketu Seyum, namely ***Enqilf ena Edmie*** (*Sleep and Age*) and ***Berari Kiteloch*** (Winged Leaves). Eventhough Bewketu has produced other works, such as, ***Newari Alba Gojowoch*** and ***Yesat dar Hasaboch***; these books have not been included in the study for they are written in verse. The other reason for not including Bewketu's works in verse is the time constraint that the researcher faced in dealing with both literary genres. This study is, therefore, limited to examining the prose works of the writer.

1.6 Methodology

To meet the objectives of the study and to obtain findings, the researcher has read texts written on satire and comedy. Accordingly, the writer of this thesis has identified that satire demonstrates the fact that humor can be one of the more functional devices to make social and political criticism. Besides, techniques, purposes, and different features of satire and comedy have been investigated from relevant reference materials.

The researcher has also thoroughly read the texts selected for analysis in order to identify the satirical and comic elements used in the texts in order to ridicule the social evils and suggest solutions. The primary sources for analysis are the texts written by Bewketu Seyum. On the other hand, secondary sources from which a theoretical framework has been derived are critical texts related to satire and comedy. Finally, the researcher has gone through previous researches related to the area, which is the focus of this study, to come up with a sound analysis and logical conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter attempts to provide the theoretical framework and a review of related literature. To that end, it begins with the discussion of the concepts of satire. It also considers defining the literary terms under discussion as well as elaborating other issues related to them. Therefore, the theoretical framework focuses on brief explanations of the nature and definition of satire. It also highlights on the characteristics, purposes, and techniques of satire. In addition, it seeks to trace the relationship between satire and comedy. Hence, the general features of comedy, and its purposes have been briefly discussed. The chapter finally provides a review of related literature that is done in Addis Ababa University.

2.1 The Nature and Definitions of Satire

Satire is a term applied to any work of literature or art whose objective is ridicule. It has significant functions in social and political criticism. Satirical literature exposes foolishness in all its forms, such as vanity, hypocrisy, sentimentality etc. It also attempts to effect reform through such exposure. Satirists, therefore, design a work of literature focusing on human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings. They use satire as a literary technique to combat these vices and shortcomings, and "to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony or other methods" (*New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1993, **10**, 467).

Satirical works are commonly critical. Hawthorn (2005:197) states, "Satire attacks alleged vices and stupidities either of individuals or of whole communities or groups - and its tools are ridicule, exaggeration and contempt." However, Sutherland (1958:2) points out that not all satirical works are equally critical. He argues that:

Some works are satirical throughout; in others the satire is only intermittent, one element in a more complex effect. The lines that separate the satirical from the unsatirical are often hard to define, either because the writer shifts easily and rapidly from one mood to another, or because the satirical tone is so rarefied as to be almost imperceptible.

In addition to being critical, many satirical texts are humorous. To put it in Feinberg's words, "criticism and humor have to be present in a literary work to be called satiric (1967:60)." Thus, it is the nature of satire to be humorous and critical in order to expose follies and vices of individuals and society, and if possible, to do justice to such erroneous practices.

Several literary critics state that satire is a protean term that makes it difficult to come up with a fixed definition. In line with this, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2005, **23**,173 states, "together with its derivatives, it is one of the most heavily worked literary designations and one of the most imprecise." This book even goes to the extent of saying:

*No strict definition can encompass the complexity of a word that signifies, on one hand, a kind of literature - as when one speaks of the satires of the Roman poet Horace or calls the American novelist Nathanael West's *A Cool Million* a satire and, on the other hand, a mocking spirit or tone that manifests itself in many literary genres but can also enter into almost any kind of human communication.*

Similarly, Feinberg (1967:18) points out that "satire is such an amorphous genre that no two scholars define it in the same words." However, many literary scholars have attempted to give suitable working definitions based on their own perspectives. This does not exclude the definition stated in the

above source that states, "Wherever wit is employed to expose something foolish or vicious, to criticism, there satire exists, whether it is in song or sermon, in painting or political debate, on television or in the movies." Nor does it disregard what Feinberg says in defining satire as: "a playfully critical distortion of the familiar (1967:19)." It is, therefore, important to mention the varying definitions of satire given by different writers at this point.

One of the most widely accepted definitions of satire is the one that is given in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* by Abrams (1981:167). Abrams defines satire as:

The literary art of diminishing a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, indignation or scorn. It differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire "derides"; that it uses laughter as a weapon and against a butt existing outside the work itself. That butt may be an individual (in "personal satire"), or a type of person, a class, an institution, a nation or even (as in Rochester's "A Satyr against Mankind" and much of Swift's Gulliver's Travels, especially Book IV) the whole race of man.

The above definition emphasizes the principal notion of satire as a literary work in which human vice or folly are attacked through such techniques as irony, derision, or wit. Accordingly, it is the nature of satire "to ridicule man's naive acceptance of individuals and institutions at face value (Feinberg, 1963:19)." It is also acknowledged that satire gives us pleasure, for it presents the subject matter to scrutiny through humorous ways.

Robert Harris (2004), points out that the best definitions of satire should be formulated from a combination of its corrective intent and its literary method of execution. He quotes Thrall's definition as an acceptable definition of satire as follows:

A literary manner that blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved. The true satirist is conscious of the frailty of institutions of man's devising and attempts through laughter not so much to tear them down as to inspire a remodeling.

It is important to note in the above definition that satire involves the fusion of laughter and contempt. Inseparable from any definition of satire is its corrective purpose. Ian Gordon (2002) points out the corrective purpose of the satirist saying that the satirist "stands in opposition to the current state of affairs, endeavoring to change things either to what they were in a recalled and often mythologized, past, or to what they might be in a preferred, and frequently Utopian, future." It may follow from the above definitions that the corrective purpose of satire is expressed through a critical mode that includes laughter and contempt.

Scholes and Sullivan (1986:8) define satire based on the view of the world presented in a literary text. They argue, "A work that presents a fictional world worse than the real world is in the mode of anti-romance, or satire." They also suggest, "The world of satire emphasizes ugliness and disorder." These authors' claim remind us that the theme of satire can be presented through different techniques in order to maintain standards, reaffirm values, and to come up with reforms in the society.

To put it briefly, satire is concerned with the nature of reality. It exaggerates or understates to criticize human follies and vices for it has a corrective purpose. It reveals the contrast between reality and pretense; yet again, it uses comic devices in order to criticize and give us pleasure. As Feinberg (1967) puts it, "the sphere of satire is criticism of man and society, a criticism made entertaining by humor and moving by irony and invective." For many literary scholars, efforts at defining satire may vary. However, the definitions such as those described above commonly share the view that satire is concerned with the criticism of individual and social evils. Moreover, at the heart of every satire, there exists a corrective purpose that is expressed through critical humor.

2.2 Characteristics of Satire

Satire, in prose or verse, employs critical humor to expose human wickedness and folly. In reflecting the salient characteristics of satire, Mitchell (2003) argues that satire attacks those institutions or individuals the satirist deems corrupt. In other words, one characteristic feature of satire is that it is concerned with ethical reform. The other characteristics of satire according to Mitchell are:

It works to make vice laughable and/or reprehensible and thus bring social pressure on those who still engage in wrongdoing. It seeks a reform in public behavior, a shoring up of its audience's standards or at the very least a wake-up call in an otherwise corrupt culture. Satire is often implicit and assumes readers who can pick up on its moral clues. It is not a sermon. Satire in general attacks types -- the fool, the boor, the adulterer, the proud -- rather than specific persons. If it does attack some by name, rather than hoping to reform these persons, it seeks to warn the

public against approving of them. Satire is witty, ironic, and often exaggerated. It uses extremes to bring its audience to a renewed awareness of its ethical and spiritual danger.

According to Ian Johnston (1998), one characteristic feature of satire is the desire to use precisely clear language to induce an audience to protest. As a result, the language of the satirist is full of irony, paradox, antithesis, colloquialism, anticlimax, obscenity, violence, vividness, and exaggeration. The satirist uses these techniques to describe painful or absurd situations or foolish or wicked persons or groups as vividly as possible. Johnston argues, "The satirist believes that most people are blind, insensitive, and perhaps anesthetized by custom and resignation and dullness. The satirist wishes to make them see the truth - at least that part of the truth which they habitually ignore."

Moreover, Johnston considers morality as an important characteristic of satire. To put it in his words:

At the basis of every good traditional satire is a sense of moral outrage or indignation. This conduct is wrong and needs to be exposed. Hence, to adopt a satiric stance requires a sense of what is right, since the target of the satire can only be measured as deficient if one has a sense of what is necessary for a person to be truly moral.

Satire attacks socially objectionable behavior through humorous ways. It aims at amendment of vices by correction. As Feinberg (1967) writes on the characteristics of satire, its essential qualities are entertainment and its freshness. That is, "the appeal of satire lies in its literary merit, brilliance, wit, humor, and freshness (7)." Satire, therefore, shows old things in a new

way to reveal the contrast between reality and pretense through skillful manipulation of language. To put it in Feinberg's (1967:16) words:

Satires are read because they are aesthetically satisfying as works of art, not because they are (as they may be) morally wholesome or ethically instructive. They are stimulating and refreshing because with commonsense briskness they brush away illusions and second hand opinions. With spontaneous irreverence, satire rearranges perspectives, scrambles familiar objects into incongruous juxtaposition, and speaks in a personal idiom instead of abstract platitude.

It is important to note in the above quotation that satire entertains through humor, irony and invective. Russell and Brown (1967:xviii) also argue that "where attack is absent or where it tends to turn almost wholly on extreme distortion, what may pass as satire becomes ineffective and does not deserve the name."

2.3 The Purpose of Satire

Harris (2004), highlights that the satirist's goal is to expose vice and hypocrisy in order to effect reformation. The best satire, according to Harris, "does not seek to do harm or damage by its ridicule, but rather it seeks to create a shock of recognition and to make vice impulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society under attack or from the person a society intended to benefit by the attack." Thus, satire attempts to effect some changes in the behavior of the target as well as to encourage others not to behave in such a manner.

Satire is concerned with justice, morality, and virtue. Maynard Mack (quoted by Harris) states that "satire asserts the validity and necessity of norms

systematic, values, and meanings that are contained by recognizable codes." Accordingly, Harris notes that satire has moral and didactic purpose. He writes:

Satire is inescapably moral and didactic (in the best sense of that unfortunately slandered word) even when no definite, positive values are stated in the work as alternatives to the gross corruptions depicted by the attack. The satirist does not need to state specific moral alternatives to replace the villainy he attacks because the morality is either already present in the lip service his target pays to virtue, or it is apparent by implication.

Likewise, Feinberg (1963:20) argues that the primary purpose of the satirist is to moralize. Humbert Wolfe (cited by Feinberg) strengthens this idea considering the satirist's work as "half-way between a preacher and a wit; he has the purpose of the former, uses the weapon of the latter." In other words, what motivates the satirist is the hatred he has for the wrong and injustice as much as his love of the right and the just. Moreover, the satirist holds up human and individual wrong doings to censure in order to make us better. The art of satire is, therefore, "the delivering of moral judgment and its objective is not to degrade man but to show him how he has degraded himself (Feinberg, 1968:23)."

The purpose of the satire, according to Sutherland (1958:11) is to compel man to what they have tried to ignore, and to destroy their illusions or pretenses. As a social critic, the satirist, therefore, makes us see familiar things in a new way compelling us to what we have ignored. Accordingly, any kind of satirical comment may magnify, diminish or distort to tear off the guise and expose the naked truth, or to bring someone to his senses.

Abrams (1981:67) agrees on the corrective purpose of satire. He says, "Satire has usually been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vices and folly." Similarly, Harris (2002) argues that the corrective purpose of satire in exposing individual and human vice and hypocrisy succeeds only to the extent that the audience responds to the attack. Hence, as Sutherland (1958:20) puts it:

Satire is not for the literal-minded. It exists on at least two levels, the overt and the implied; and it can only function properly when the tact, the intelligence, and the imagination of the satirist are met by a corresponding response in the reader.

In short, satire attacks erroneous practices of individuals in particular and human beings at large with intent to bring about changes. These changes may have corrective or moralizing purpose. That is, at the heart of every satire there is criticism that is geared towards exposing hypocrisy, pretense, corruptions, and other shortcomings of human beings. Therefore, satire aims at displaying the critical attitude of the satirist in order to reaffirm values, maintain standards and rectify the follies and vices of the society.

2.4 Techniques of Satire

It has been pointed out earlier that the essence of satire is giving pleasure of criticism by combining or contrasting ideas. Accordingly, satirists use different techniques to convey their messages. Certain specific literary techniques lend themselves to satire because they can contain a measure both of wit and of humor. Among them are exaggeration, distortion, understatement, innuendo, simile, irony, metaphor, oxymoron, parable, and allegory (Harris, 2002). On the other hand, Feinberg (1967) lists distortion, indirection, externality, brevity, and variety as major techniques of satire. Other scholars, such as Matthew Hogart, Gilbert Highet and Northrop Frye,

add reduction, invective, caricature, burlesque, and reduction ad absurdum to the list. A brief discussion of the prominent techniques has been presented as follows.

2.4.1 Exaggeration

Exaggeration is one of the most commonly used techniques in satire. Harris (2002), notes that exaggeration is one of the best ways to get the target to recognize or admit that a vice exists. The satirist exaggerates "in order to make the unseeing see, and the seeing-but-complacent oppose and expunge corruption." Hence, exaggeration as a satirical technique plays an important role. To use Feinberg's (1967:108) words:

The exaggeration of satirists is not as purposeless as it tries to appear. What the satirist exaggerates is the bad, the foolish, the hypocritical; what he minimizes or omits is the good, the sensible, and the honest. The resulting scene is not only exaggerated but heavily biased-against the victims of the satirist's attack.

In other words, the satirist uses exaggeration to describe painful or absurd situations or foolish or wicked persons as vividly as possible. On top of that, as a "dispassionate observer of humanity and the irate attacker of particular individuals (Knight, 2005)", the satirist employs exaggeration to make his observation and attack effective.

2.4.2 Distortion

The technique of the satirist, as indicated earlier, consists of a playfully critical distortion of the familiar. Distortion refers to "changing the perspective of a condition or event by isolation (separation from its ordinary surroundings) or by stressing some aspects and deemphasizing others (Harris, 2002)." Hence, the satirist distorts in many ways. For instance, he

may minimize the good qualities of the person or institution that he is attacking. For example, in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Swift exposes humanity in all its baseness and cruelty using this technique. Satirists may also magnify the bad ones making isolated instances seem typical.

2.4.3 Indirection and Invective

One often-used satiric technique is indirection. Many literary critics agree that the quality of satiric representation is effective when the attack is indirect. David Worcester (cited by Feinberg, 1967:93) remarks that satire is "the engine of anger rather than the direct expression of anger." Similarly, Sutherland (1958:20) points out that twentieth century satire relies more and more on the indirectness of irony, innuendo and fantasy. Accordingly, the indirectness of satire helps the satirist to make his or her attack tolerable by making it entertaining. As Johnston (1998) suggests satires that are very direct are boring and ineffectual.

Unlike indirection, invective is very abusive. It is an open insult used occasionally for shock effect. It usually lacks irony in order to attack a particular target. According to Johnston, it is the least inventive of the satirist's tools. Besides, "the danger of pure invective is that one can quickly get tired of it, since it offers limited opportunity for inventive wit."

2.4.4 Burlesque

Burlesque refers to ridiculous exaggeration in language, usually one that makes the discrepancy between the words and the situation or the character silly. To use Johnston's example, to have a king speak like an idiot or an ordinary worker speak as a king is burlesque. Similarly, a very serious situation can be burlesqued by having the characters in a literary text speak or behave in ridiculously inappropriate ways. In other words, burlesque creates a large gap between the situation or the characters and the style with which they speak or act out the event.

2.4.5 Irony

Irony is a systematic use of double meaning where meaning of words is opposite of the literal or expected meaning. It is a stylistic device or figure of speech in which the real meaning of the words is different from the literal meaning. As Muecke (1969:3) puts it, "irony may be a weapon in satirical attack."

Likewise, Johnston (1998) notes that irony brings two contrasting meanings into play. Consequently, it becomes "satiric when the real meaning appears to contradict the surface meaning." It should, however, be noted that irony is not confined to satire.

To put it briefly, satirists use a variety of literary devices. They may use various techniques, such as those described above, in order to say two or more things at one time, and to compare, equate, or contrast for satirical purposes. Moreover, these techniques provide variety, conciseness, and opportunity for employing wit and humor. In explaining the use of satirical techniques, Harris (2004) writes the following about satirical techniques:

The satire must be presented in a manner that will bring action, and in a world of complacent hypocrites, irony, with its various means of presentation, is essential; the message cannot be derived without it, if the message is to have any tangible effect. In a two-word abstract, the purpose of satire is the correction or deterrence of vice, and its method is to attack hypocrisy through the ironic contrast between values and actions.

The aforementioned quotation highlights that the techniques the satirist uses have to serve the purpose the satirist has in mind. It is an indispensable

quality of satire to employ appropriate techniques. Furthermore, Hawthorn (2005:197) remarks that the satirist is concerned with drawing our attention to what he or she is attacking rather than to create characters, situations and events that are believable in and for themselves. That is, "a novelist may include satirical elements in works that do not, overall, merit the term 'satirical novel' (and indeed most novelists do)." Therefore, literary works that are not usually categorized as satirical (novel or short story) may use the major weapons of satire in order to diminish a set of beliefs by making it appear ridiculous. Finally, based on the techniques the satirist employs satire can be divided into formal or direct and informal or indirect (Abrams, 1981:168). Abrams also distinguishes two types of formal satire, namely Horatian satire and Juvenalian satire, whereas the Menippean satire is indirect. On the other hand, Juvenalian satire is harsher; more pointed, and often attacks particular people with an invective attack. Horatian satire is mild and gentler. To put it in the words of Abrams (1981:169):

In Horatian satire the character of the speaker is that of an urbane, witty, and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy, and who uses a relaxed and informal language to evoke a smile at human follies and absurdities sometimes including his own. In Juvenalian satire the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who uses a dignified and public style of utterance to decry modes of vice and error which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous, and who undertakes to evoke contempt, moral indignation, or an unillusioned sadness at the aberrations of men.

2.5 The Nature of Comedy

Comedy, according to Abrams (1971:26), is a form of literature that is designed to amuse by use of wit, humor, criticism or ridicule. He defines it as:

a work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfitures engage our delighted attention rather than our profound concern, we feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters.

Abrams also notes that even though comedy is commonly applied to dramas, the comic form also occurs in prose fiction and narrative poetry. In whichever form it appears comedy attempts to arouse and satisfy human instinct for mischief. In line with this, Fowler (1973:31) has the following to say about the materials of comedy: "Comedy in itself is neither morally useful nor immoral: it can perpetuate and extend misconceptions as well as ridicule them. Sometimes, however, dramatists use the irresponsible instinctual speed of comedy to lead the audience to a more complex intellectual awareness."

According to John Morreall (<http://www.dbu.edu/mitchell/comedytr.htm>) there are many characteristics that make up a comedy. One among them is the fact that comedy is more imaginative, stressing playfulness. For this reason, comedy tends to look for a variety of answers and does not need to solve everything. Secondly, comedy tends to call attention to the incongruities in the order of things, be it political, social, or religious. Thirdly, comic characters are often "ironic and disengaged from the situation; they tend to respond with wit, imagination, or cynicism."

The other characteristic feature of comedy is that its language is fluent and articulate. To put it in Fowler's words: " Characters do not feel a need to develop exploratory, stretching uses of language to account for themselves and the world around them, but are satisfied that the relationships between them and the world are simple and comprehensible (1973:32)."

It is also the nature of comedy to reveal playfulness. Even if it has its serious side, the comic vision tends to treat large portions of life as not quite so serious. However, satiric comedy, according to Abrams (1971:27) "attacks the disorders of society by making ridiculous the violators of its standards of morals or manners." In addition to this, comedy involves exaggeration, incongruity, and contradictions as techniques. It also uses contrast between social order and individual, suspension of natural laws, and comic premise to provide structural and thematic unity for comic dialogue.

Many argue that producing pleasure through laughter is the primary nature of comedy. On the other hand, Sypher (1991:148) states that the pleasure caused by the laughter of comedy is not a pure enjoyment. He further notes that it is not a pleasure that is exclusionary esthetic or altogether disintegrated. "It always implies a secret or unconscious intent, if not of each one of us, at all events of society as a whole." Therefore, comedy may have a critical intent.

Hence, comedy is not always a naive joke; nor is it always seriously stuffed with didactic moral issues. It expresses the characteristics of men in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life. As Sypher (1991:149) puts it:

the comic is not always an indication of a fault, in the moral meaning of the word, and if critics insist on seeing a fault, even though a trifling one, in the ludicrous, they must point out what it is here that exactly distinguishes the trifling from the serious.

2.6 The purpose of Comedy

Comedies usually tend to focus on the larger community and spend more time paying attention to the interaction between groups. As a result, they often question tradition and those in authority. Comedy, according to Eric Trumbull, serves the purpose of looking at the world in which basic values are asserted but natural laws suspended in order to underscore human follies and foolishness. That is, in comedy we are usually being asked to laugh at our common human foibles and ourselves. Besides, comedy reminds us our inescapable human limitations.

Sypher (1991:241-2) discusses several social meanings of comedy. He points out that in its earliest days comedy is an essential pleasure mechanism valuable to the society. To put it in his words:

Comedy is a momentary and publicly useful resistance to authority and an escape from its pressures, and its mechanism is a free discharge of repressed psychic energy or resentment through laughter . . . The ambivalence of comedy reappears in its social meanings, for comedy is both hatred and revel, rebellion and defense, attack and escape. It is revolutionary and conservative. Socially, it is both sympathy and persecution.

Comedy also serves the social purpose of affirming the security of any group already unsure of itself. With this regard, Sypher says, "the comedian banishes doubt by ridicules and is the diplomatic artist (244)." He further notes that comedy can relieve the stress between compelling ideals by laughter. In other words, comedy may enable us to "adjust" incompatible standards without resolving the clash between them. Finally, here is how Sypher (1991:245) describes the use of comedy in helping us with our disillusion:

Comedy can be a means of mastering our disillusionments when we are caught in a dishonest or stupid society. After we recognize the misdoings, the blunders, we can liberate ourselves by a confident, wise laughter that brings a catharsis of our discontent. We see the flaws in things, but we do not always need to concede the victory, even if we live in a human world. If we can laugh wisely enough at ourselves and others, the sense of guilt, dismay, anxiety, or fear can be lifted. Unflinching and undaunted we see where we are. This strengthens us as well as society.

To put it briefly, apart from the pleasure that we get from it, comedy enables us to laugh at evils and errors of human beings. Consequently, it serves the purpose of psychological compensation. In other words, comedy helps us escape from the vices and follies of individuals and societies making us laugh at the imperfections of the world around us. Not only that, but comedy can also be quite in accord with stern morality. It should, however, be noted here that what distinguishes satire from comedy, as Fowler (1973:167) put it, is "its lack of tolerance for folly or human imperfection."

2.7 Satire and Comedy

Satire and comedy often shade into each other in ways that make an exact borderline difficult to draw. Like satire, comedy has a corrective purpose. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* (2005, 23, 151) highlights that "the comic artist's purpose is to hold a mirror up to society to reflect its follies and vices, in the hope that they will, as a result be mended." Correspondingly, Johnston shares this view of the corrective purpose of comedy. He argues that satire is a particular use of humor for overtly moral purposes. According to him, satire seeks to use laughter "not just to remind us of our common often ridiculous humanity, but rather to expose those moral excesses, those

corrigible sorts of behavior which transgress what the writer sees as the limits of acceptable moral behavior."

One characteristic feature of satire, as indicated earlier, is criticism and humor. That is, the technique of the satirist consists of a playful critical distortion (Feinberg, 1967:19). Although not everything humorous may be satirical, Harris (2004) states that satire uses humor to make the attack funny. To put it in his words:

Satire, like all literature and poetry, must be intellectually rewarding, be reasonably well written, and especially must entertain in order to survive- and in the particular case of satire, in order to be received at all. The basic mood of attack and the disapproval needs to be softened to some extent and made more palatable; wit and humor serve this end by making the criticism entertaining, and even attractive.

The satirist's major objective is unmasking or exposing human follies, vices and shortcomings. As Sypher (1991:242) put it, "certainly the laugh of the satirist is often a sneer; and there is an undercurrent of satire in most comedy." As a result, when the satirist uses comic elements, it will only be for the purpose of criticism. In other words, wherever wit is employed to expose something foolish or vicious to criticism, there satire exists.

Sutherland (1958:7) strongly argues that comedy, like satire deals with the common errors of our life. He says, "If we can agree that it is the satirist's intention - to expose, or deride, or condemn - that distinguishes him from the writer of comedy, then we shall probably find that much of what has conventionally been referred to as comedy should more probably be called satire." On the other hand, the tone of satire may vary in different works

eventhough the elements of attack and humor is associated with the definition of satire. In line with this, Russell and Brown (1967:xviii) argue "many satirical works are so playful or whimsical as to preclude the idea of attack, and many other satires, even some acknowledged to be great, lack humor and tend to become ponderous."

However, satire and comedy are not exactly the same. Abrams (1981:167) argues that satire "differs from the comic in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end, while satire "derides"; that is it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt existing outside the work itself." What sets satire apart from comedy, according to Ian Johnston, is that in satire there is a clear and overt didactic intention. On the other hand, normal comedy aims at producing laughter at our common follies and ourselves. In line with this, Feinberg (1967:101) has the following to say:

Uncritical humor is not satire, nor is all satire humorous. But since satirists use all the comic devices for the purpose of criticism, to see how satire works it is necessary to examine four basic techniques of humor: incongruity, surprise, pretense, and catering to the superiority of the audience.

In general, there is a common agreement among literary critics that satire uses comedy for the effect of criticism. Besides, as Sutherland (1958:10) puts it, "we must be prepared to find the writer of a comedy losing his moral neutrality and slipping into satire, and the satirist occasionally loosening his control over the reader and relaxing into comedy."

2.8 A Review of Related Literature

Many research papers have been prepared on satire in Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment for first or second degrees. The researcher has accessed fourteen senior essays and two M.A theses that were written in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature since 1981. Among them, all the senior essays dealt with novels and short stories written by foreign writers in the medium of English. Although these researches touched upon satire and satirical elements, they are not directly related to this particular research. As a result, the writer of this research has not included the senior essays in the review part. On the other hand, the two M.A theses have some relevance to this research, for they focus on local writers, and they are reviewed as follows.

The first M.A thesis the researcher found relevant is the one done by Akalu Getaneh. Akalu's research is entitled "*Comedy and Social Purpose: Two plays of Mengistu Lemma*". This research was conducted in 1981 focusing on Mengistu Lemma's *Marriage of Unequals* and *Marriage by Abduction*. Akalu's purpose was to demonstrate the way in which Mengistu Lemma has utilized satire to defend the oppressed people. He focused on the playwright's use of satire to expose the erroneous practices of the then socialist Ethiopian society. Accordingly, he has attempted to show what satire can do as a constructive criticism of individuals and the society. In this research, Akalu believed that satire is "medicinal because its instruments are wit, humor and irony, weapons that are particularly effective in the hands of a dramatist such as Mengistu Lemma (IV)." Akalu concludes his analysis stating that Mengistu utilizes satire to defend the oppressed people.

Mesfin Endrias's "*Satirical Elements in the Poems of Nine Post - Revolution Amharic Poets (1993)*" is the second work that is of some relevance to this research. Mesfin examined satirical elements in nine poems written by nine

different poets. The poems he considered in his research were: *Kul Weyis Tilashet* (Abera Lemma, 1975), *Imbuwa Belu Sewoch* (Dagnachew Worku, 1974), *Yebrehan Fikir* (Debebe Seifu, 1988), *Berekete Mergem* (Hailu G/Yohannes, 1974), *And Ken* (Kifle Abocher, 1975), *Basha Ashebir Bamerica* (Mengistu Lemma, 1975), *Ingurguro* (Mesfin W/Mariam, 1975), *Metekezia* (Tesfaye Gessesse, 1974) and *Isat Wey Abeba* (Tsegaye G/Medhin, 1974).

Mesfin intended to investigate how the aforementioned nine poets used satire. He tried to show the features and tones of satire in the selected poems. With this purpose in mind, Mesfin found out that the poems focused on social problems such as pretentiousness, abuses of technological discoveries and corruption. He also concluded that the poems were seriously satirical manifesting opposition to pretense, social abuses, hypocrisy, lack of sympathy and loss of identity.

What makes my research different from those reviewed above is, first, the literary works that are under the study. This particular research focuses on the works of one of the contemporary writers Bewketu Seyoum entitled: *Enqilf ena Edmie (Sleep and Age)* and *Berari Kiteloch (Winged Leaves)*. Secondly, unlike Akalu, who worked on plays, and Mesfin, whose focus was poetry, this research takes other literary genres, which are short stories and a novel. Finally, to the knowledge of the researcher, the works of Bewketu have not yet been analyzed from satirical perspectives so far.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF SATIRE AND COMEDY IN *ENQILF ENA EDMIE* AND *BERARI KITELOCH*

This chapter attempts to analyze major satirical and comic elements in the works of Bewketu Seyum. It begins with the analysis of *Enqilf ena Edmie* (Sleep and Age). Next, among the fifteen short stories included in the writer's first work, *Berari Kiteloch* (Winged Leaves) those that have satirical and comic elements have been analyzed. Most of these stories raise varying social, political, and economic issues in which the writer's critical orientation towards individuals and the society is revealed.

3.1 Satire and Comic Elements in *Enqilf ena Edmie* (Sleep and Age)

Among the prose works of Bewketu Seyum, *Enqilf ena Edmie* (Sleep and Age) is the longest one. This fiction has three parts. The first part is entitled *Mewured ena Mewutat* (Up and Down) while the second is called *Mayet ena Megared* (To see and To Lose One's Vision). The last part is *Mekreb ena Merak*. In this novel, especially in the first two parts, the writer presents different critical issues related to our everyday life. Therefore, this section of the paper attempts to analyze the major satirical and comic elements in these parts of the book. The analysis also attempts to highlight Bewketu's skill in making a critical observation as a social and political critic.

3.1.1 Satirical and Comic Elements in *Mewured ena Mewutat* (Up and Down)

One of the critical observations of the writer in *Mewured ena Mewutat* (Up and Down) is related to the frequent car accident that happens in Addis Ababa. Traffic accidents have become the leading cause of death in the country. Some sources indicate that Ethiopia has the highest per capita rate

of car fatalities in the world, with 190 deaths per 10,000 vehicles. Bewketu holds up this issue to censure through the following humorous expressions.

ይህ ታሪክ የሚከናወነው በአዲስ አበባ ውስጥ ስለሆነ የመኪና አደጋ ጭብጥ ቢኖረው አይገርምም። አዲስ አበባ ውስጥ የመኪና አደጋ ያልታየበት ዘመን ካለ ከምኒልክ በፊት የነበረው ጊዜ ነው። ምክንያቱም ያን ጊዜ መኪና ወደ አገሪቱ ገና አልገባም። ኃያላን አገሮች ለአፍሪካ የሚያቀብሉትን የጦር መሣሪያ ቁጥር ይቀንሱ! በተለይ ታንክና ታክሲን። ባለፈው በመዲናይቱ በተካሄደው የመንግሥት ተቃዋሚዎች አመፅ ምክንያት ታክሲዎች ሦስት ቀን ሥራ አቆሙ። አዲስ አበባ ሦስት ቀን ሙሉ ከትራፊክ አደጋ ተገላገለች። (በዕውቀቱ፤ 2007፤ ገፅ 9)

Since this story occurs in Addis Ababa, it is not surprising if it has the theme of car accident. If there was a day (time) when car accident had not happened in Addis Ababa, it was before the reign of Menelik II; because there was no any car in Addis Ababa at that time. Let economically superior countries reduce the weapons they send to Africa, especially a tank and a taxi. Due to the recent riot of opposition party supporters in the capital, taxis stopped giving service for three days. Addis Ababa was relieved from traffic accident for three days.

As can be understood from the above excerpt traffic accidents are everyday stories in Ethiopia. It is an everyday experience for residents of Addis Ababa to witness car accident. As a result, it has become an overlooked killer from time to time. The writer criticizes this issue making it entertaining through witty language. He, however, seems to be concerned with the loss of life and the damage caused by car accidents. His criticism is geared towards inspiring new calls for an end to the destructive power of taxis. He further indicates that not much has been done to minimize these accidents.

The writer tells us Addis Ababa was free from car accident only when there was no car in the country before the leadership of Emperor Menelik II. According to him, the introduction of car to the country has resulted in

lethal effect. The writer uses expressions like *"Let economically superior countries reduce the weapons they send to Africa, especially a tank and a taxi."* In this example, he humorously exaggerates the accidents frequently caused by taxis. Accordingly, the writer refers them as weapons of war, and equates them with a tank. He also points out that Addis Ababa is free from such accidents only when taxis are not giving service. He exemplifies this when he says, *"...taxis stopped giving service for three days, and Addis Ababa was relieved from traffic accident for three days."* The author uses this example in the context of what happened after the 2005 Ethiopian national election.

It follows from the above explanation that Bewketu has made a critical observation on the service of taxis in particular and traffic accidents in general. His keen observation as a social critic reminds us that we are losing our fellow citizens because of car accidents. Above all, this comment exposes our negligence for road transport accident that is usually caused by absent-mindedness. The writer's satirical comment on this issue continues:

ከለማኝ ቡትቷም ገላ የተረፈው የሸገር አስፓልት ላይ እንደ ጠጠር የተበታተነ የመስታወት ስብርባሪ እዚህም እዚያም ይታያል። የመንግሥት ተቃዋሚዎች በእጃቸው ያገኙትን ሁሉ ወርውረው የአውቶብስ መስታወት ይሰብራሉ። ሲቪሎች እርስ በእርስ ተላትመው የመኪናቸውን መስታወት ያደቅቃሉ። አዲስ አበባ ውስጥ በሰላምም ሆነ በቀውጢ ቀን የሚያካብር ሥራ ካለ መስታወት ጠጋኝነት መሆን አለበት። (በፅውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 9)

On the asphalt of Sheger (Addis) that is not covered by beggars who wear tattered clothes, shattered glasses are seen here and there. Government oppositions break windows of buses throwing whatever they get at hand. Civilians collide with each other and pound their car glasses. If there is a job that makes one richer in Addis Ababa, both during the time of peace and riot, it must be repairing glasses.

Likewise, the aforementioned excerpt pinpoints the fact that the writer emphasizes the shattering of glasses. This, on the other hand, magnifies the author's criticism of car accidents. He might have included the issue of the opposition party supporters (during the Ethiopian national election in the year 2005) to give weight to the pounding of glasses and to build up the setting. However, the most important ironical criticism is what he said at the end of the above quotation. That is, "*If there is a job that makes one richer in Addis Ababa, both during the time of peace and riot, it must be repairing glasses.*" This humorously exaggerated expression is used to indirectly expose the problem of car accidents in Addis Ababa. Besides, the first sentence of the above quotation expresses the contribution of our highways to traffic accidents. It is not uncommon to see that the highways of Addis Ababa are crowded with beggars, street children, pedestrians, and livestock that make driving very difficult. Therefore, the author highlights the presence of too many beggars in the streets of Addis Ababa including negative effects on the flow of traffic.

Apart from the above criticism, the author's corrective intent is clear. That is, he ridicules the capital city in order to hold up the erroneous practices of drivers to censure, and to end the destruction caused by irresponsible driving. He humorously attacks taxi and other vehicle drivers to bring a change in our traffic system so that traffic accidents will be reduced. In other words, the satirical tone of the writer exposes the shortcomings of our drivers. The writer's message is not to disregard the contribution of taxis, but rather to show his concern about tragic accidents. Therefore, this satirical attack helps us to notice the destruction and death that are caused by careless driving.

Like many writers of his kind, Bewketu shifts his tone of criticism in the story. As indicated in the above explanation, the tone of the criticism he uses when he writes about traffic accidents is a bit more serious than when he

talks about people's need to be recognized by their names. That is, he makes a less serious comment on the natural desire of people to be called by their own names. Accordingly, the narrator recounts an example story that may be considered as comedy than satire. Here is what he said:

ለምሳሌ ከአንድ ሰው ይህ ጋር መንገድ ላይ እንገናኛለን። ሰውዬውን ረስቼዋለሁ። በዚህ ዘመን ይህ ያለ ነገር ነው። ከደምዘ ቀን በቀር ሁሉ ነገር ይረሳል። ሰውዬውን ብረሳውም እሱ ስላስታወሰኝ ሻይ ቡና እንበል እለዋለሁ። ቡና እየጠጣን ስለሀገራችን ኢኮኖሚ እናወራለን። በወሬያችን መካከል ግን ስማችንን አናነሳም። ምን ይሰራልናል? መቼም የሱና የኔ ስም ኢኮኖሚውን እንደማያሳድግ የታወቀ ነው።

ሰውዬው ግን ተሰውሮ የኖረ ወንጀል ሚስጢር እንደተገለጠለት መርማሪ ፖሊስ፣ ድንገት አይኑን አጥብቦ፣ ራሱን እየነቀነቀ፣ «ስሜን ረስተኸዋል ልበል?» ይለኛል። ዝም እላለሁ። መቼም ስሙን ከእንደገና ከምጠይቀው ብድር ብጠይቀው ይመርጣል። ራሱን ወደጉን እየወዘወዘ «በገዛ ጋዜጣህ ላይ ስሜ ቁልጭ ብሎ ወጥቶ ዘነጋሁት እንዳትለኝ!» ይለኛል። ምን ልበለው? እሰራው የነበረበት ጋዜጣ ላይ ስሙ መውጣቱም ሆነ ስሙን መርሳቱ አያስገርመኝም። After all ጋዜጣ ማለት የስም ማጉሪያ ማለት ነው። የዘንድሮ የፊዚክስ ኖቤል ሎሬት እና አፋልጉኝ ማስታወቂያ የወጣለት ጉረምሳ ስማቸው በአንድ ገፅ ላይ ይወጣል። እና በዚህ ሁኔታ ውስጥ ይህ ሰውዬ እንዴት ትዝ ሊለኝ ይችላል? ሰውዬው ግን አይረዳኝም። ፊቱ እሳት ይለብሳል። ደህና ሲያጫውተኝ የቆየው ሰውዬ፣ ለኢኮኖሚው ጥሩ መፍትሄ ያመለክታል ያልኩት ሰውዬ፣ ገና ለገና ስሙ ስለጠፋኝ ስሙን ያጠፋሁበት ይመስል ሆኖ ይብሰዋል። (በፅውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 16)

Suppose I meet someone in the street. I have forgotten the man. This is something common. Everything will be forgotten except the payday. Eventhough I have forgotten the man, I invite him to drink coffee, for he has reminded him of that himself. We talk about our country's economy while drinking coffee. However, we do not mention our names. What is its importance? It is clear that his name and my name do not develop the economy.

However, like a detective who uncovered the secret of long obscured crime, the man suddenly narrows his eyes and asks me, "Have you forgotten my name?" I had nothing to say in response, so I kept quiet. I think he would prefer if I asked him to lend me money rather than asking him his name again. Then shaking his head, he says, "Don't tell me that you have forgotten my name whereas it has clearly appeared in your own newspaper!" What should I say. I am not surprised of the presence of his name on the newspaper I used to work for, or that I have forgotten his name. After all, a newspaper is where names are stuffed in. The name of this year's Nobel Prize Laureate in physics and the name of a lost young man being looked for appear on the same page. So how can I remember this man in such situation? However, the man does not understand me. He becomes furious. The man who was very friendly, whom I thought would suggest a good solution to the economy, feels disappointed as if I have slandered his name only because I forgot it.

The above quotation induces laughter in the reader. Expressions like, *"Everything will be forgotten except the payday,"* or *"It is clear that his name or my name does not develop the economy"* are humorous expressions. Similarly, what the narrator tells us about newspapers is also funny. Nonetheless, the laughter these expressions cause may have some important messages to convey such as, people's selfishness and poor structure of newspapers. Even though the tone of the speaker in the story is quite humorous, the writer ridicules people's selfish concern for recognition by other rather than paying attention to more important aspects related to economy. In addition, the structure of newspapers in our country has been humorously attacked.

Therefore, we can draw from the quotation that the author has skillfully made us laugh at some of our flaws and shortcomings.

In line with this, the story has many comic elements that make it a pleasant reading. For instance, the author makes a witty comment like;

...ሰዎች የሚኖሩት በደማቸው ሳይሆን በስማቸው ዝውውር ምክንያት እንደሆነ አውቃለሁ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 16)

...I know that people exist not by their blood-circulation, but because of the circulation of their names.

In a like manner, the dialogue between his maidservant and the speaker has comic elements.

ልብስ የምታጥብልኝ፣ ምግብ የምታበስልልኝ ተመላላሽ ሠራተኛ አለኼ። የቀጠርኳት ቀን «ስምሽ ማነው?» አልኳት። «የኔ?» አለኼኝ፣ በጠቋሚ ጣቷ ደረቷን እየነካች። «አዎ ያንቺ» ለማለት ራሴን እያወዛወዘኩ። ሦስት ደቂቃ ስታስብ ቆይታ፣ «ሸዋዬ!» አለኼኝ ፊቷ በደስታ በርቶ። እኔ ዘንድ ከመምጣቷ በፊት የሚቀጥሯት ሰዎች ሊጠሯት ሲፈልጉ «አንቺ!» ይሏት እንደነበር ነገረችኝ። ለብዙ ዘመን ስላልተጠራ ስሟን ሳትዘነጋው እንዳልቀረች ጠረጠርኩ። ሦስት ደቂቃ ያህል ካሰበችው በኋላ ግን ትዝ አላት። ሸዋዬ መሆኑን ስለደረሰችበት ደስ አላት፣ ወደ ሥራ ብቻ ሳይሆን ወደ ስሟ ስለመለስኳት ደስ አላት። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 17 - 18)

I have a maid who washes my clothes and prepares food for me. The day I employed her I asked, "What is your name?"

"Mine?" she said pointing towards herself.

"Yes, yours" I said nodding.

She thought for three minutes, and happily replied.

"Shewaye".

*She told me that her ex-employers used to call her "you!?"
I thought that she might have forgotten her name since she
has been not called by it for many years. Having thought
for three minutes, she was happy when she found out that
it was Shewaye. She was delighted not only because I
gave her a job, but also because I reminded her of her
name.*

The dialogue between the maidservant and the narrator employs critical humor. It reflects Shewaye's desire to be acknowledged by her ex-employers, and her ex-employer's hypocrisy. Her employers were so self-conceited that they were not willing to call their maidservant's name. This is a relaxing dialogue for it uses comic expressions. The narrator's comment also demonstrates the writer's constructive criticism. It reveals the fact that the woman has lost her dignity as a human being. Her employers never wanted to call her by her real name only because she is a house cleaner. We usually notice such things in our society. Many household employers consider their maidservants as slaves who do not even deserve a name of their own. Therefore, the above comic dialogue makes us laugh at such erroneous practices of our society thus holding up a mirror to censure social and individual hypocrisy and vices.

In addition to the foregoing discussions, the story is full of other critical observations. As has been mentioned earlier, the writer makes varying social and political criticism. The story about the king who ordered the people to speak in rhyming poem is one instance of a satirical attack directed towards political leaders.

The story recounts about an Ethiopian king who lived during the time Great Britain ruled most of the countries of the world including India and Africa. One military spy of Great Britain came to Ethiopia pretending as though he

were a tourist, and approached the Ethiopian king. Then he told the king that they ruled the world because it was a gift from God; and he asked the king if he had ever heard about Shakespeare. The king on his part asked the man if Shakespeare was a weapon. Then the man replied that Shakespeare was a great poet, and gave the king one of Shakespeare's books, *Hamlet*. The king who read two pages from the book told the spy that the book does not deserve to be called a poem. He also lied to the spy saying that his people speak only in rhyming poems everyday. Meanwhile, the king ordered his officers to make a sudden decree that every people had to speak in rhyming poem. Those people who violate this decree would be deprived of possessing their houses. He made this decree not to be called a liar by the British spy who was surprised by what the king said earlier. Towards the end of the story, we read that the king punished a man by hanging only for the sake of making a rhyming poem.

This story indirectly attacks our leaders exposing the deeds of political leaders on top. The indirectness of this satirical representation helps the writer to attack the fact that government officials make different decrees for their own advantages. An innocent man has been killed only because the king wanted to make a rhyming poem. The major character, Andromeda, clearly reveals the satirical implication of the story as follows:

«አረፍ ነው! . . . ንጉሥ ከሆንክ . . . ከላይ ከሆንክ የፈለገህን ማድረግ እንደምትችል የሚያስረዳ ጥሩ ታሪክ ነው!» አለችኛ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 23)

"It is very good! It is an interesting story to show that when you are a king... if you have authority, you can do whatever you like!"

The other political satire in this part is what the narrator says when he recounts about the death of Andromeda at the age of twenty-seven. Here, the

narrator seems to be amazed at the longer age our leaders have got (both in terms of their physical age and in terms of their ruling) and their desire to rule even for a longer period. The narrator tells us that one day he went to an institution where a research on history was being presented. The title of the research was 'The Battle of Metema and King Yohannes's Fate'. He heard that after King Yohannes IV was killed by the Mahdists, very expensive binoculars were found in the coffin of the late king. Then the narrator says:

«ዘውድ ከመቃብር በኋላም?!» ገረመኝ። ግን ምን አስገረመኝ? ዘውድን ከራስ ማውረድ ወደ መቃብር እንደመውረድ አይቀልም። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 25)

"A crown after death?!" I was surprised. But why was I surprised? To take away a crown is not as easy as going down to the graveyard.

The writer clearly attacks power mongers. The problem of our leaders' unwillingness to give up their authority is being ridiculed. History tells us that many kings of Ethiopia were barely willing to lose their authority. It is always difficult for them to pass their crown to a new leader. This satirical attack of the writer on the extreme greed for power is even more related to the recent political situation of Ethiopia. In other words, the narrator of the story relates the above attack with the 1997 E.C (2005) national election and the crises that it brought up in the following paragraph.

ለመጀመሪያ ጊዜ ይህ ልማድ የተሻረ የመሰለኝ በ1997 ዓ.ም. ነበር። መንግሥት በምርጫ ለመውደድ ከነበረበት ክፍታ ወደ ተቀናቃኞች ጠረጴዛ ወረደ። ይህንን ትዕይንት እጹብ አድርገው የቆጠሩት ጂሚ ካርተርና ሌሎች የምዕራብ ሊቃውንት እንደ ሆሜር አማልክት ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ተግተልትለው ወረዱ። ግን ትዕይንቱ እጹብ ሆኖ አልቀጠለም። ከጥቂት ጊዜያት በኋላ መንግሥት ኃይል ልኮ ለአደባባይ ተቃውሞ የወጡትን እንደገደላቸው ሰማሁ። ወደ ሙግት ጠረጴዛ ያወጣቸውን ተቀናቃኞች ወደ ወህኒ እንዳወረዳቸው ሰማሁ። ከዚያ ግዳዩን ይዞ እንደ ንሥር ወደነበረበት ክፍታ ተመለሰ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 25)

I thought this tradition was abolished for the first time in 1997 E.C (i.e. 2005). The ruling government came down a long way to the table of the opposition parties to compete in the election. Jimmy Carter and other Western elites swarmed in to Ethiopia one after the other like the gods of Homer considering this event quite spectacular. After some time, I heard that the government sent its troops and killed those who went out in the street for demonstration. I heard that it sent the people it called for dialogue to prison. Then it returned to its height taking hold of its prey like an eagle.

The above brief excerpt indicates that at least the narrator is not happy with the political trend of our country. Kings wanted their crown to follow them to their graves even after death in the past, and in our time the government that publicly brags about democracy, publicly kills civilians and opposition party members. The writer's choice of words is also a good indication of his attempt to criticize government officials of our country. It, therefore, reveals the follies of our government, especially their unwillingness to share their political power. Accordingly, the writer attacks the political situation of Ethiopian government with interesting diction. It symbolizes the government with an eagle that fiercely attacks its prey. On top of that, the writer shows the height on which the government has put itself, and exposes its failure to listen to opposition parties. Hence, the satiric elements in the above quotation make the wrongdoings of the government reprehensible in order again to bring social pressure on the government for a better outcome.

In relation to the 1997 E.C (2005) Ethiopian national election and the chaos that followed it, we can also identify other critical observations that the writer presents in the story. For instance, Andromeda's strong desire to release music album taking hold of the unfortunate incidents after the election exposes some individual's opportunistic feelings. Andromeda wants

to be a famous musician even from the very beginning of the novel though she could not make it. She wants to grab this opportunity and asks the narrator to compose her some lyrics that have a political theme. When the narrator asks her why she wants to sing about the killings of the civilians, she gets angry and insists that she is highly moved by the situation. She even furiously asked him, "Is it only Maria Mekeba who can sing about the oppression of her people?" After a while, she reveals her actual desire to be a famous singer. She says:

«ንገሪኝ ካልክ እኔ ተቃዋሚ አይደለሁም። እውነቱን ነው የምልህ! እኔ ሰፊ ሕዝብም አይደለሁም! እውነቱን ንገሪኝ ካልክ እኔ ጭቁን ብሔር ብሔረሰብም አይደለሁም! አንድሮሜዳ ነኝ! ይገባህል? መዝፈን የምረልገው ግን ግድያውን አውግዜ ነው። በግፍ ደማቸው የረሰሰ ምናምን እያልክ ጻፍልኝ! እሱን አቀንቅኜ እንትን ልበል!»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 27)

If you want me to tell you the truth, I am not a member of the opposition. I'm telling you the truth! I'm not the oppressed nation and nationalities! I'm Andromeda! Do you understand? But I want to sing criticizing the killing. Write me saying something like those whose blood was shade atrociously! Let me sing that and !?

This shows that she wants to sing not for the sake of what she calls atrocious killing of innocent people. It was rather to make herself a popular figure. When the narrator tells her that it is not morally good to compose a song quickly using such unfortunate incident, she angrily asks him the following:

«እናንተ ጋዜጣ ላይ ስለተገደሉት ሰዎች ዜና አልሰራችሁም?»
«ሠርተናል!»
«መቼ?»
«በግድያው ማግሥት መሰለኝ»
«እና የጋዜጣችሁ ኮፒ አልጨመረም?»
«ኮፒው? የጋዜጣችን?»

«እንዳትደብቀኝ!»

ለማበረታቻ ከዚህ በፊት አይቼው የማላውቀውን ቀስቃሽ ፈገግታ አሳየኝ።

«ኮፒው? ኮፒውስ ጨምሯል!» አልኳት

«ታዲያስ? እኔስ ምን አልኩ?» አለኝኝ በድል አድራጊነት ስሜት ፈገግ ብላ።

«እኒያ ሰዎች በሀይወት እያሉ ላንተ ምንም አልነበሩም። ሲሞቱ ግን አንባቢ የሚሰብ ዜና ለመሆን ችለዋል። ልለው የፈለኩት ገብቶሃል? ወይስ?...»

(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 28)

"Didn't you cover the news about the murdered people on your newspaper?"

"We did!"

"When?"

"I think the day after the killing."

"So didn't the copies of your newspaper increase?"

"The copies of our newspaper?"

"Don't lie to me!"

She showed me a seductive smile I never saw before to encourage me.

"The copies increased!" I said

"So, what did I say?" she said triumphantly. "Those people were nothing for you when they were alive. They became breaking news that attracted readers after the people were killed. Have you got what I wanted to say? Or..."

The above dialogue illustrates that there are many people who have the tendency to take advantage of every opportunity for success. Andromeda is one instance of such kind of people. She wants to be famous at the expense of other people's disadvantage. Andromeda first pretends that she is concerned about the injustice that is made by the government. However, we finally find out that she is rather concerned with achieving self-advancement. Therefore, the aforementioned excerpts reveal people's follies, especially the act of taking advantage of opportunities with out regard for moral principles.

On the other hand, it is the nature of comedy to produce laughter at some human limitations or problems. It has been pointed out in the theoretical review part that as an essential pleasure mechanism, comedy serves as a defense against the social problems we encounter. Meanwhile, it serves the purpose of looking at the world and laughing at it. In relation to this, Bewketu's novel *Enqilf ena Edmie* (Sleep and Age) has many instances. For example, the narrator says the following when Andromeda asks him to tell her about himself.

አባቴ የሌሊት ተረኛ ዘበኛ ነበር። የመንደራችን የጎበዘተሰብ መምህር ደህነትን በሦሥት ደረጃዎች ቁልቁል ይመድቡታል። ደሃ፣ ሰቀቀናም ደሃ እና ጋሽ ተመስጊን (ጋሽ ተመስጊን አባቴ ነው)። አባቴ ምንም ዘበኛ ቢሆን ከጥበቃ ባተረፋቸው ሌሊቶች አሥራ ሁለት ልጆችን መውለድ ችሏል። የደብራችን ቀሳውስት አዳዲስ ወንድሞቼን በማጥመቅ ተጠምደው ለፍትሐትና ለመክፈልት ጊዜ ስላላገኙ አባቴ መውለዱን አቁሞ መስገድ እንዲጀምር ባያሳስቡት ኖሮ በአገራችን አንድ አዲስ ነገድ መፈጠሩ አይቀርም ነበር። አባታችን ዘበኛ፣ እናታችን የዘበኛ ሚስት ስለነበረች እኔና ወንድሞቼ እንደማንኛውም ደሃ ኢትዮጵያዊ ጠግበን የምንበላው ዓመት በዓል ቀን ብቻ ነበር። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 37)

My father was a watching guard during the night shift. The social studies teacher in our village categorizes poverty into three descending orders: Poor, extremely disappointed poor, and Gashe Temesgen (Gashe Temesgen is my father). Eventhough my father was a watching guard, he has managed to have twelve children in the nights he saved from his guarding activity. The priests of our church were very busy in baptizing my newly born brothers, and could not get time to make prayer for the dead, and to attend the meal served for the clergy after service. So they made him aware that he had to stop bringing up new children and start adoration. Had it not been for that, it was inevitable that a new clan could have come into existence in our country. Since our father was a watching guard, and our

mother was a wife of a guard, I and my brothers used to eat well only on public holydays like any poor Ethiopian.

This quotation humorously presents the problems of a poor family in our society. It makes us laugh at the poverty of people like the characters in the quotation making the agony of poverty entertaining. It also humorously attacks people who have very large family exposing their failure in proper family planning.

In addition to the above quotation, the narrator further recounts the days and nights he and his brothers passed starving, since their parents had nothing to feed them. He also humorously tells us why their parents sent them either to schools or to church or to collect fire wood as follows:

ከማስቀደሳችን፣ እንጨት ከመስበራችን፣ ፊደል ከመቁጠራችን በላይ የሚያስደስታቸው ቤቱን መልቀቃችን ነው። ቀን ቀን ቤቱ ባዶ ስለሚሆን፣ ከመውለዳቸው በፊት የነበረውን ጊዜ ስለሚያስታውሳቸው ለመውለድ የሚነሳሱ ይመስለኛል። ማታ ግን ጭንቅ ነው። ሁላችንም ከየአቅጣጫው እንፈልስና ቤቱን የጥምቀት ጃንሚዳ እናስመስለዋለን። እናቱ 'እኒህን ልጆች እኔ ነኝ ወይስ ጨለማው ነው የወለዳቸው? ሳትል አትቀርም። ባባቴ የሌሊት ዘበኝነት ሳትቀና የምትቀር አይመመስለኝም። 'እሱ ምን አለበት። በሥራ አመካኝቱ ከልጆቹ ያመልጣል! ስትል ሰምቻቸውለሁ። እንግዲህ ማታ፣ እናታችንን እንደጭስ እንከባትና ከአስራ ሁለታችን ማን ደፍሮ «ራት!» እንደሚጠይቅ ባለማወቅ ርስበርሳችን ስንተያይ ታየንና ትነቃብናለች። ሳይቀድሙኝ ልቅደም ብላ ነው መሰል ተረት እየፈጠረች በላይ በላይ ትተርክልናለች። (ተረት ባለቀባት ጊዜ በየተራ እያነሳች ትመርቀናለች።)
(በፅውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 38)

More than our attending the mass, our collecting firewoods, or our mastering the alphabet, what makes them happy was our leaving the house. During the daytime since no one will be in the house, I feel that it reminds them the time before they had no children, and they might want to have one. The worry was at night. We get back from everywhere and make the home look like a field where the feast of

Epiphany is celebrated. I think Mom might have said, "Is it me or the night that bore these children?" I also feel that she envies Dad's work as a watching guard during the night. I have heard her saying "He is relieved. He gets away from his children taking his job as an excuse!" So, we gather around our mother and look at each other waiting for someone who dares to ask for 'dinner'. I think she notices our intention, and tells us different stories. (When she does not have any story to tell us, Mom starts to give us blessings one after the other.)

This playful narration is clearly meant to make us laugh at the everyday problems of most of the members of our society. It has comic elements that are aimed at producing laughter at our common problems as a means to escape from the feelings poverty causes. In other words, the writer presents the agonies of poverty that are mostly aggravated by poor family planning. The narration is so humorous that it even precludes the attack against having a very large family and the problems related to it. However, the comic elements still serve as means for social criticism, for the writer humorously presents one of the chronic problems of our society.

In general, in this part of the novel, *Enqilf ena Edmie* makes significant observations on social and political issues. The criticisms that have been elaborated so far indicate the author's concern for the betterment of the life of the society as well as the improvement of the political trends in our country. The beauty of the language of the author also shows his skill in presenting social and political criticism in humorous ways. Therefore, the satiric and comic elements in this part of the story clearly hold up to censure the follies and erroneous practices of individuals and political figures in our country.

3.1.2 Satirical and Comic Elements in: *Mayet ena Megared* (To See and To Lose One's Vision)

Like the previous part of the novel, this part which is entitled *Mayet ena Megared* (To See and To Lose One's Vision), consists many satirical and comic elements. The writer devotes much of the story reflecting on the life of the character called Kassu. Kassu is depicted as history instructor in a university. The story begins with the description of the house where Kassu has been living in for many years.

From the satirical observations in *Mayet ena Megared* (To See and To Lose One's Vision), Kassu's humorous comment on the beggars is worth mentioning. When he thinks about the beggars to whom he gave the clothes that he would not use any more, and about his friends whom he used to invite he says:

«ድሃ! ድሃ የፍቅር ጠንቅ ነው! የገዛ ብርድ ልብሴን ተቀብለው እኔ እወስድ እኔ እወስድ በፊቱ ሲራኮቱ ትንሽ አላፈሩም። አንድ እንኳ አንድ እንኳ እግዚር ይስጥህ ያለኝ የለም። ለነገሩ አይፈረድባቸውም። ድሃ ናቸው። ካርቱኒስት ጓደኛው እንደተናገረው አንድ ሰው ምስጋናና ፍቅር እንዲያውቅ ተስሞ ማደግ አለበት። የድሃን ልጅ ግን ማን ይስመዋል? መጀመሪያ የድሃ ልጅ ምን ጉንጭ አለው? የለውምኮ። «ድሃ ሰጠኸው አልሰጠኸው ከፍ ያለ ኑሮ አይኖርም» አለው ለግድግዳው።» «ምክንያቱም ድሃ ከፍታ አያውቅም። ድሃ ከሰው በላይ ከፍ ብሎ የሚታየው ወይ አውቶብስ ሲሳፈር ወይ ራሱን ሲሰቅል ነው።»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 70 - 71)

"The poor! The poor are enemies of love! They were not ashamed of themselves when they wrangle with each other to take my own blanket. Not even a single person thanked me. Of course, I do not have to blame them. They are poor people. As his cartoonist friend said, a certain person has to grow up by getting a kiss to know love and gratefulness. Who kisses the child of a poor man? First of all, what cheek does the child of a poor man have? He

does not have any. Whether you give him or not the poor cannot live a higher status of living... A poor man is seen above other people either when he is on a bus or when he hangs himself!?

This brief quotation illustrates the attack against the living condition of the poor. The irony of the story is that the poor are not to blame. It is rather the society that is held up to censure. The writer ironically accuses the people who failed to give love and affection to the poor. The other quality of this satire is the fact that it humorously exposes the place given to economically disadvantaged people. Hence, the writer ridicules the living standard of the poor suggesting strong opposition against what they accepted as normal.

It is the nature of satire to present the reality in an objectionable way to defend the oppressed people. Accordingly, Bewketu has used satire to make constructive criticism of the society. He has also attempted to show what the society feels about the poor and how they consider them. To that end, he has utilized an ironic expression like, "...A poor man is seen above other people either when he is on a bus or when he hangs himself." It is clear that being on a public bus, especially in a so-called city bus that we use in Addis Ababa, does not make anyone feel to be above other people. Similarly, to kill oneself by hanging cannot be taken as a favorable situation. The writer, therefore, utilizes these expressions to satirize the life of the poor in our country.

The other point in this part is the political satire the writer makes about the history of Ethiopia. The narrator tells us that Kassu finds it difficult to remember the number of wars that broke up in Ethiopia. He even feels that it is better to fight in a fierce war rather than to remember the days and places each war occurred. In relation to this, the narrator says Ethiopia was a country that was imprisoned in her own wall of sleep for a long period.

This wall covered its sight not to see other countries. Perhaps Ethiopia was a country that used to refuse to see the Sudan though it was so close to it. the Mahdists defeated king Yohannes in the war that happened in 1881 E.C. They beheaded the king and took his head to Khartoum. Then the narrator says:

የደርቡሾቹ መልዕክት ይህ ነው፣ «የሌላውን ዓለም ታላቅነት ብትክዱ እኛ አስገድደን የገዛ ዓይናችሁን እንደባትረ በመዳፋችን ላይ አብርተን እናሳያችኋለን። እንድታዩ እናስገድዳችኋለን።» (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 74)

The message of the Derbush (the Mahdists) was this: "Eventhough you fail to recognize the superiority of the other world, we will force you to see it holding your own eyes like a torch in our palm. We will make you see it."

Accordingly, the writer attacks the failure of the Ethiopian kings with respect to foreign affairs. He points out that our leaders were so self-conceited that they failed to recognize what power the neighboring countries have. In addition, he says the following to strengthen the above views:

ጥንታውያን የዓለም ኃያላን የኢትዮጵያ ችግር በቅርብ ያለውን ብቻ የማየት ችግር መሆኑን አምነውበታል። ስለዚህ በሰላሙ ቀን፣ አርቀን የምናይበት መነፅር ላኩልን (ንግሥት ሺክቶሪያ)። በጦርነት ቀን፣ አርቀን እንድናይ ዓይናችን የተሰካበትን ጭንቅላታችንን በምርኮ ወሰዱለን (ደርቡሽ)። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 74)

The ancient super powers of the world had known that the problem of Ethiopia was its being near sighted. Hence during the time of peace they sent us binoculars so as we could see farther (Queen Victoria). During the time of war they took captive our head so that we could see farther (the Mahdists).

The criticism in this book is not only directed towards the society and political leaders. It also attacks some important institutions like the Ethiopian Television Agency. The satire the writer makes on Ethiopian Television exposes the problems in the agency. The satirical attack begins with the following paragraphs that humorously ridicule its programs.

ማታ ወደ ቤቱ ገብቶ ቴሌቪዥን ከፈተ። የትኛውን ቻናል ከፈተ? የኢትዮጵያ ቴሌቪዥን ሦስት ቻናሎች አሉት - የመጀመሪያው የመንግሥት ነው፤ ሁለተኛው የመንግሥት ነው፤ ሦስተኛው ቴሌቪዥንን ማጥፋት ነው። እሱ የመጀመሪያውን ከፈተ።

ዜና መጣ፣ ዜና ሄደ፣ ዜና መጣ፣ ዜና ሄደ! መጀመሪያ ተመለከተ፣ የተመለከተውን አመነ፤ የሰማውን ማመን ግን አቃተው። ጋዜጠኛው የካሱን ምስል እያሳየ፣ ድምፁን ግን ጋርዶ «በኢትዮጵያ ዘንድሮ የተካሄደው ምርጫ ፍትሐዊና እንክን የለሽ መሆኑን አንድ ምሁር ገለፁ!» አለ። ካሱ የገዛ ምስሉ ዓይኑን ሲያንቀሳቅስ፣ ጣቶቹን ሲጨብጥ ሲበትን ተመለከተ። ግን የእጁ እንቅስቃሴ የጥናታዊ ጽሑፉ ጭብጥ፣ ስለመተማ ጦርነት መሆኑን አልገለፀም። ካሱ ክው ብሎ ደነገጠ። ከሁለት ደቂቃዎች ባልበለጠ ጊዜ ውስጥ ስለእሱ የተነገረው ዜና ስህተት መሆኑን ተናግረው ይቅርታ ይጠይቃሉ ብሎ ጠበቀ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 75)

When he got home in the evening, he turned on the television. Which channel did he open? Ethiopian Television has three channels. The government owns the first, the second is also owned by the government; and the third one is to be turned off. He opened the first one. News came, news went. News came, news went. He believed what he saw; but he could not believe what he heard. The picture of Kassu was on the television. With the mute sound of the picture, the journalist said, "One intellectual confirmed that the national election that has been recently conducted in Ethiopia was flawless." Kassu's picture on television was moving his eyes and his fingers were waving. The movement of his hands did not reveal that the theme of the research was about the battle of Metema.

Kassu was alarmed. He thought that the TV crew would apologize for the mistake in the news in two minutes and waited.

Kassu's picture was on television, but he could not believe what he saw. The camera operators took his picture when they recorded his research presentation that was entitled "*The Battle of Metema and king Yohannes's Fate.*" His research had nothing to do with the recent national election, and he did not utter a single word condemning or appraising it. However, it has just been reported that a renowned scholar named Kassu praised the election saying it was free and fair. As indicated in the above quotation, Kassu first thought that ETV reporters would apologize for the mistake they made. This never happened.

The writer uses satire as a literary technique to expose the erroneous practices of Ethiopian Television Agency. The first shortcoming that the above excerpt ridicules is the fact that Ethiopia has only one television channel. We do not have any other alternative to get information about our country on television. The government monopolizes electronic media, especially the television. In addition, the government has only a single channel. Secondly, it satirically presents the follies of Ethiopian television reporters with regard to the ethics of journalism. It is clear that reporting what someone has not said is a big blunder, and it is not expected from any media. Therefore, the implication of the satire is that such mistakes frequently happen in Ethiopian television, though it may be exaggerated here, and they must be corrected.

Later in the story, we read that Kassu becomes extremely anxious about the situation, and consults his cartoonist friend about what he should do. The cartoonist sympathizes with Kassu but he advises him that he does not have to expect Ethiopian Television to make an amendment about what they have

already reported. He tells Kassu that such things frequently happen on private and government media. Meanwhile, the cartoonist gives the following example, which may also be taken as comic attack against ETV and other government owned newspapers.

«...ለምሳሌ አንድ የመንግሥት ጋዜጣ ላይ በአንድ ጢማም ቁስ ፎቶግራፍ ሥር፣ ከኤች አይ ቪ ጋር የሚኖሩት ወይዘሪት እገሊት እኚህ ናቸው ተብሎ ተጽፎ አይቻለው። ሌላ ጊዜ ደግሞ የሆነ ድንበ-ሽቡሽ ያለ ህፃን ልጅ ፎቶ ሥር በቅርቡ የተመረቀው ድልድይ ይህ ነው የሚል ተጽፎ አይቻለው። የፊደል ግድፈትን በተመለከተ ያጋጠመኝን ብዙ ጊዜ ነግራለሁ፤ እኛ ጋዜጣ ላይ አገሪን፣ ለማገልገል ቆርጫለሁ የሚለው ርዕስ ላይ የመጀመሪያዋ «ገ» ተዘልላ ጋዜጣው ታትሟል...»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገፅ 77)

...For example, on one government owned newspaper, I have seen a caption that states the woman who lives with HIV is this (under the photograph of a bearded priest). Similarly, I have seen what says 'This is the bridge that has been recently inaugurated,' under a photograph of a little kid. I have told you many things about typographic errors...

A further point that illustrates the writer's use of satire to criticize ETV is the incident the narrator tells about the untimely program that we usually watch on the television. It is a common event to see programs that have not any relation with the present situation of the country on ETV. Some programs that barely deserve to be on air on that day are shown although there are many crucial issues the audience expects. Likewise, this story ridicules the program that follows the news that startled Kassu. The program is about harmful traditions, and the narrator says:

ጊዜው ያመፅ ነበር። በዚያ ላይ ጂሚ ካርተርን የሚያህል ሊቅ የመጡበት ነው። ባለስልጣኑ ግን ሕዝቡ እንጥል እንዳይቆርጥ ያሳስቡ ጀመር። የሕዝብ አመፅ ከእንጥል ርዝመት ጋር ተያያዥነት ሳይኖረው አይቀርም። አለበለዚያ «እንጥል

መቁረጥ በምንም በምንም መንገድ ተቀባይነት የለውም» የሚለውን ኃይለቃል አይደረጋግሙትም ነበር።

እውነት ነው። ሕዝብ እንጥል ሲቆርጥ ጎጂ ባሕል ነው። መንግሥት አንገት ሲቆርጥ ያስተዳደር ዘይቤ ነው። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2007፣ ገጽ 76)

It was the time of riot. On top of that, an intellectual like Jimmy Carter has come to Ethiopia. However, the official on television was insisting that people should not cut the tonsil. I doubt that the riot of the people has relationship with the length of the tonsil. Otherwise, he would not have repeatedly said, "Cutting the tonsil is not acceptable."

It is true that when people cut the tonsil, it is a harmful tradition. When the government cuts the throat, it is a style of leadership.

Many international televisions often broadcast current affairs. The above quotation, however, reveals that ETV deals with harmful traditions that may not deserve the airtime according to the setting of the story. The writer, therefore, exposes the shortcomings of ETV, especially with regard to the programs it broadcasts. More importantly, however, the narrator relates the program on harmful tradition with the riot that followed the 1997 E.C (2005) national election, and makes a very strong satire. That is what he stresses when he says, *"It is true that when people cut the tonsil, it is a harmful tradition. When government cuts the throat, it is a style of leadership."*

3.2 Satire and Comedy in *Berari Kiteloch* (Flying Leaves)

3.2.1 Satirical and Comic Elements in: *Gubaew*

(The Assembly)

In this story, the writer critically ridicules government authorities during the ancient emperors' reigns. The story is set during the time of king Aligaz. The narrator of the story presents a meeting held among the then scholars and the ruling king. The major agenda of the assembly was to discuss the cause of famine and to come up with a strong solution. This is how the king who chaired the meeting started the assembly:

ግርማዊ ጃንዎይ የፀሐይ ሽራሬ በመሠለ ዙፋናቸው ላይ ተቀምጦ ተደምጦ በማይጠገብ ደምፃቸው ይናገሩ ጀመር።

«ወገኖቼ! ሊቃውንት! ጠቢባን!»

«...እንደምታዩት በአገራችን በየጊዜው አስፈሪ መፃት እየተላከብን ነው። የዚህ ምክንያት ምንድን ነው? ራሳችን እንዳይመለስ አድርገን ለማባረር በምን አኳኋን መሥራት አለብን? ይህ የህይወት የህልውና ጉዳይ ነው... እስካሁን አሥራ ሁለት ጊዜ ተሰብስበናል... አሥራ ሁለት ጊዜ ሊቃውንት! ዛሬ ግን ጉዳዩ አልባት ማግኘት አለብን። ይህን ጥያቄ ሳንመልስ ከዚህ አዳራሽ ገቅገቅ ማለት አንችልም። ሊቃውንት ናችሁ!... መላችሁን ወዲህ በሉኝ» (በዕውቀቱ፣ 200ቁ፣ ገፅ 66)

Sitting on his throne that looks like a small piece of the sun, his Excellency the Majesty started to speak with that beautiful voice of his.

"My fellow countrymen! Scholars! Wise men!"

"...As you can see a frightening disaster is being sent upon our country from time to time. What is the cause for this? What shall we do to eradicate famine forever? This is an issue of survival... So far, we have assembled for twelve times... For twelve times, wise people! But today the issue has to get a solution. We cannot leave this hall without solving this problem. You are scholars! Forward your wisdom!"

The writer's use of the above words literally shows the king's interest in finding out solutions to famine. At this point of the story, indeed, there is nothing wrong with assembling to discuss crucial problems of one's country. However, the king's expressions, like "...So far we have assembled for twelve times... For twelve times, wise people!" imply that in their foregoing meetings, the king and his associates have done nothing of real importance to find solutions for their problems. The above excerpt is also a doorway to the satirical observation of the writer to lead us into the story.

As the story goes on, we read that the burning issue that brought the king and his followers together fades away. Hence, the major agenda leaves its way to some unnecessary issues that are not discussed. Like many meetings held in our days, this particular meeting ends without solving a question it ought to solve. One of the scholars who was given the first chance to comment on the issue of famine begins his speech as follows:

«እኛ እንግዲህ እኔ ነጋድራስ የትምህርት ነው ስሜ።... እናቴና የእናቴ ዘመዶች መሸሻ ብለው ይጠሩኛል። ወላጅ አባቴ ዋልድባ ተመግባቱ በፊት የፍፃሜ መንግሥት ተክለጊዮርጊስ አማካሪ ነበር። የሱ ታናሽ ወንድም ደግሞ...»

የሊቃውንቱ ዝምታ ወደ ጉርምርምታ ተለወጠ።

«እንግዲህ ስለራሴ ይህንን ታልሁ.. ወደ ዋናው አሳቤ እገባለሁ። እንግዲህ ተዚህ ቀደም በእርስዎና በአባቶቻችን ፈቃድ ለንግድ በተለያዩ አገሮች ተመላልሻለሁ። ለመሆኑ የት የት ሄደሃል የሚለኝ ታለ የሄድሁባቸው ሃገሮች የሚከተሉት ናቸው። ታምስት ዓመት በፊት ሰማይን የሚታከኩ፤ ዓለምን የሚረኩ ቢራሚዶች ባሉባት ግብጥ ነበርሁ። ተዚያም አስከትዬ የነውጠኛው እስክንድር አገር በሆነችው መቄዶንያ ከራርሜ ወደ ፋርስ ተሻገርሁ!... ተፋርስ ወደ ኑቢያ ተኑቢያም...»

(በፅውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 66)

"All right, my name is Negdras Yetimgeta... My mother and my mother's relatives call me Meshesha. Before my father left for Waldiba, he was the advisor of the government of Tekle Ghiorgis. And his younger brother was..."

The silence of the scholars was changed into discontented mutter.

"Well, having said this much about myself, I'll move on to my main idea. Well, with your and our fathers' permission, I have traveled to many countries for trade. If there is anyone who may ask to which countries I'd gone, these are the countries. Five years ago, I was in Egypt, where there are sky-scraping, marvelous pyramids. After that, I stayed in Macedonia that is the country of the famous Alexander. Then I went to Iran!...: From Iran to Sudan, from the Sudan..."

So far, the speaker has said nothing relevant about the issue on the agenda. He is rather concerned with recounting his adventurous travels as well as telling us the names given to him. In other words, Negadras Yetimgeta is much more obsessed with talking about himself than directly heading into the topic on the agenda. Even when we readers expect him that he has finished introducing himself and is ready to comment on some ways of avoiding famine, Negadras keeps on telling us about his journeys. The writer, hence, highlights that in many meetings people naively spend the time talking about irrelevant issues. Not only that it makes such assembly boring, it also contributes nothing to the society. Therefore, as a social critic the writer humorously exposes the problems in many assemblies in our country stressing that many meetings fail to solve what they are expected to solve.

In connection with this, other follies of individuals and government authorities are humorously, but critically, ridiculed in the story. The king gets impatient with Negadras Yetimgeta's self-description and orders him to stop. Then the former apologizes for detouring from the main issue, and pleads to finish his idea. Having been satisfied with Negadras's apology, the king allows him to continue. Here is what Negadras Yetimgeta says afterwards:

«እንግዲህ አስቀድሜ ወንዞቻችን ስለምን አገር አቋርጠው እንደሚነጉዱ እገልጻለሁ። ለጥቁ እንዴት አድርገን አናሳ ወንዞቻችን መገደብ እንደምንችል አብራራለሁ። ያንን አንድ ባንድ ታስረዳሁ በኋላ መስኖ በምን አኳኋን እንደምናበጅና. . .»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 67 - 68)

"First of all, I will describe why our rivers flow crossing the borders of the country. Next, I will explain how we can make a dam to our minor rivers. After making that clear one by one, how to do irrigation and..."

After these introductory words of Negadras Yetimgeta, the story turns into an unexpected issue. As indicated earlier, the agenda is how to eradicate famine, but at this point, it is completely neglected. The people in the meeting mutter discontentedly. The main reason for their grumble is, of course, Negadras Yetimgeta's language use. One of the high priests in the meeting, Merigeta Sine Eyesus expresses his disappointment saying:

«እኔ እንኳን ቅር ያለኝ የነጋድራስ ነኝ ባዩ የቋንቋ አጠቃቀም ነው!» ከማለታቸው
«እንዴት?» ጃንሆይ ተቀበሏቸው።
«እንዴት ማለት ጥሩ ነው፤ ሊቁ አባታችን ጃንሆይ!» አሉ መሪጌታ
«ወንድሜ ነጋድራስ አውቆ በድፍረት ይሁን ሳያውቅ በስህተት እንጃ የታፈረውን የተከበረውን ቋንቋችንን ሲዘነግጥለው ባይ እንባዬ መጣ ሆድ ባለኝ! ቁጭት ልቤን መዘመዘው!... አላስችል አለኝ...» እንደማልቀስ ቃጣቸው።
«በመዝመሪያ ጅረት ማለት ሲገባው አናሳ ወንዝ አለን። ዝም አልነው። እሱ ግን ይህንን ሳያርም ሌላ ገደፈ። ቀጥቶ ማለት ሲገባው ለጥቁ ብሎ ተናገረ። በዚህ መጽ አብቅቶ! መስኖ ማበጀት ብሎ አረፈ። እንግዲህ ይህን ዝም ብሎ ማለፍ እንደምን ይቻላል?»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 68)

*"I was disappointed with the so called Negadras's language use!"
"What do you mean?" his Majesty asked
"It's good to ask, your Majesty, our wise father. When my brother Negadras, knowingly or unknowingly, misused our respected language, I was almost in tears! I was*

*disappointed! Grief broke my heart! ... I could not stand it...
"First, when he should have said streams, he said minor river. We kept quiet. But he made another mistake without correcting this. When he should have said After that, he said Next. I wish he stopped with that! He said to do irrigation. So how can we tolerate this?"*

According to the excerpt above, selection of a correct diction became a more important issue than the main agenda that should have been given strong attention. The character, Merigeta Sine Eyesus, is more concerned with language use rather than the contribution of the speaker to the problem at hand, that is, eradication of famine. He is so hypocritical in the sense that he feels he knows the language better. Here the writer humorously attacks people who are critical about other speakers' language whereas the main purpose of the meeting is a very big issue.

«ጃንሆይ!... አላምረው እንደሚያውቁት የህዝብ አንድነት መሠረት ቋንቋ ነው። የሰናኤር ሥልጣኔ የፈራረሰችው በቋንቋ ቅየሳ ምህኛት ነው! የቋንቋ ቅየሳ ሰዎችን ባልባለ ቦታ ከመጠቀም የሚመጣ አይደለም?... መቸም የቋንቋ ሊቅ ለመሆን የግድ የሰዎች ጥበብ መማር አለብን እያልኩ አይደለም። አስተዋይ አድማጭ ለሆነ ቢያንስ የጃንሆይን ንግግር ለሁለት ሰዓት ያህል ማድመጥ የተባ አንደበተኛ አያደርግም?.. አያደርግም ወይ ሊቃውንት?...»

«... ስለዚህ እንደኔ የቋንቋ ችግር አለብን። ይህንን የቋንቋ ችግር ታልፏቸው እንደሰብዓ ባቢሎን እንደምንፈታ ጥርጥር የለውም! . . »
(በፅውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገፅ 69)

"Your Majesty! As you know it quite well, the basis for people's unity is language. Sena'or's civilization was ruined because of language mix! Language mix results from wrong usage of grammar, isn't it? I'm not saying that we have got to learn the skill of grammar to be an expert in language.

Doesn't listening to the Majesty's speech for two hours make a prudent listener an eloquent speaker?...

"...Therefore, I feel that we have a problem of language. If we cannot solve this problem we will surely be undone...."

The above speaker is concerned with the correct use of grammar and diction. The comic effect is clearly achieved through the writer's expressions. That is, the incongruity of the speaker's idea with the crucial purpose of the assembly makes it a bit humorous. Nonetheless, there is a thorough observation behind the humor. Instead of commenting on the issue, Merigeta Sine-Eyesus attempts to win the Majesty's admiration flattering him with empty words. That is why he says, *"...Doesn't listening to the Majesty's speech for two hours make a prudent listener an eloquent speaker?"* Hence, the speaker's desire for cheap popularity is indirectly stated. On the other hand, this speaker comes up with a completely inconsistent topic. Most of all, what makes the assembly more humorous is the king's response to Merigeta Sine-Eyesus's aforementioned idea. Here is what the king says:

*«...ለነገሩ እኔም በቋንቋችን ውስጥ ያለው ጉድለት ጉዳይ ሲከነክነኝ ነው የቆየ!... መሪይታ እንዳሉት የቋንቋ ችግር ጊዜ የሚሰጠው አይደለም። የቋንቋችን ችግር ተየት የመነጨ ነው? በምንስ አኳኋን ሊታረም ይችላል? ሊቃውንት በሞሉባት አገር ይሄንን ሳንመልስ ተዘህ አዳራሽ ብንወጣ የሚያፍረው መከረኛው ህዝባችን ነው... በሉዋ ሊቃውንት! መሪይታ ተርስዎ ልጄምር መሠል?!»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገፅ 69)*

"...As a matter of fact, the issue of the mistakes in our language has been bothering me! As Merigeta has just said a problem in language does not have to be delayed. What is the source of the problem in our language? How can we solve it? In a country where there are plenty of wise men, if we fail to answer this and leave the hall, our poor people will be ashamed... So wise men! Merigeta shall I start with you?!"

The king is immediately carried away with the flattering words of Merigeta Sine-Eyesus. As a result, he forgets the main agenda and shifts to resolve another irrelevant and unnecessary issue. Here he seems to be concerned with the problems of the majority of the people. He, however, is being pretentious about the poor masses. In the above excerpt, the writer reveals the inconsistency of the king's determination to solve the people's problems. As indicated in the beginning of the story, the purpose of the meeting is to find ways to end famine. The king, who seems to be determined to stand for such big cause, now starts to urge the attendants of the meeting to solve other minor and trivial problems. It is ridiculous to waste the time discussing mistakes in everyday language use whereas people are dying because of famine. Therefore, the writer ridicules the king, the so-called scholars, and the assembly.

The writer's attack on the king and his wise men does not stop here. He ridicules them throughout the story. As the story goes on, we see that these government officials are not even capable of making a fruitful meeting. The king who gathers his wise men to talk about famine forgets his point and turns to discuss the simple mistakes in grammar. Then he shifts to talk about the expulsion of grammar teachers. This idea is brought to the King's attention by Merigeta Sine-Eyesus, who is given the opportunity to say something about the solutions to the problems of language. According to Merigeta Sine-Eyesus, the problems in language use could be solved when grammar teachers like Tekle Alfa are protected from migration. When the king heard that such a respected scholar has been forced to move away from the monastery where he used to teach, he wants to discuss the problem and says the following:

«...በነገሩስ የሊቃውንትን የፍልስጥ ወሬ ታንድም ሁለት ጊዜ መስማቱን እኔም አልሸሸግም። ጉዳዩ እንዲህ ሥር የሰደደ መሆኑ ግን አሁን ነው የተገለጠልኝ። መቼም የጅሎች ሁሉ በኩር ታልሆን በቀር በነግ እናቆየዋለን ብዬ አላስብም።»

ሊቃውንታችን የሚፈልሱበት ምህኛት ምንድነው...? ማነው የሚያፈልገው?... ነገሩን ተስር መሰረቱ ለማድረቅ ምን ማድረግ ይገባናል...? መልሱልኝ ሊቃውንት!»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 70)

... I do not deny that I have heard about the migration of scholars; but the depth of the matter came clear to me right now. Well, unless we are the first born of all the fools, I do not think we will keep it for another day. What is the reason for the migration of our scholars...? Who makes them migrate...? What should we do to resolve it? Answer me!

At this point, the king again pretends that he knows the problems of grammar teachers. The irony is that he does not know the problem, but he says it only to show his power over his followers. In addition, the inconsistency of the king is exposed when he turns to another agenda. This happens when one of the attendants of the assembly informs him that Tekle Alfa was caught red-handed, and that was the main reason for his expulsion.

«አልቀናል በሉኛ! እንግዲህ ንዋየ ቅዱሳቱ ተዘርፈው ከወጡ ምን ቀረን? እኛስ አለን ወይ? ህልውናችንን ነው የመዘበሩት... እኛስ እንግዲህ ማን ተብለን ልንጠራ ነው? በምን በኩል ኢትዮጵያውያን ነን እንበል?... ጎበዝ እዚህ ላይማ ዋዛ የለም...»
«ተቀመጥ መሪጌታ. . . በሉ ሊቃውንት ይህን ጉዳይ መልሱልኝ። ይህንን ሳንፈታ ብንወጣ ያባቶቻችን አፅም እሾህ ሆኖ ይወጋናል!.. በሉ እንጂ ምሁራን!»
(በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 71)

"We are lost! If church equipment is robbed, then what are we left with? Are we alive? They have looted our existence ...Afterwards what are we going to be called. How can we say that we are Ethiopians?...My men, there is no kidding with this...!"

"Sit down Merigeta ...You have got to answer me. If we leave this hall without resolving it, our fathers' bones will stab us!...Well scholars!"

Here the king makes another comic comment on the loss of church equipment. The superior authority in the hall is again ridiculed for his poor way of chairing the assembly. At this point of the meeting, more than half of the wise men yawn and begin to fall asleep. Like many assemblies of our days, this assembly is a total failure. The writer humorously exaggerates the king's lack of skill in chairing a serious meeting.

Furthermore, the following last comment by one of the elderly scholars can be referred as the most serious attack on the assembly. With the permission of the king, the old man says that he has seen many kings reign over his country, and that he has an opportunity to be their advisor. He continues:

*«...እኔ እንደታዘብኩት ከድርቅና ከቸነፈር በላይ ይችን አገር ያደቀቀት ጉባኤ ነው። ጉባኤ ምን አተረፈለን? ተሰብስበን እንወጥናለን። ወጥተን እንበተናለን። ስለዚህ ከሁሉ አስቀድሞ የዚህ ጉዳይ ቢታይ ደግ ነው ባይ ነኝ።...»
(በፅውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገፅ 72)*

...As I have made a critical note of it, even more than drought and plague, what has made this country weaker is an assembly. What has an assembly served us? We gather and plan, but we go out and part. Therefore, I feel that this case should be seen first...

The way the writer presents the majesty's response to the above comment is even more humorous and satirical. He talks about the fact that the country has many scholars, and amazingly tells us that knowledge that is not tested by age is like an echo. Besides, he criticizes those who have been giving suggestions on the assembly earlier, and appreciates the last speaker:

«...እንግዲህ የንግሥት ዓይን የታደሉ ብስል ሊቅ ግን ተሰውሮብን የነበረውን ጥበብ ገለልጡት! ልክ ነው! ትልቁ የኛ ራስ ምታት ጉባኤ ነው። ጉባኤያችን ለምን ፍሬ አጣ? እንዴት ፍሬ ይኑረው? ይህንን ነው መነጋገር! ይህንን ተነጋግረን ታልፈታን ከዚህ ጉባኤ ንቅንቅ አንልም! ነቃ በሉ እንጂ ሊቃውንት!»
(በፅውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገፅ 72)

...Well, such an eagle-eyed, wise man has uncovered the wisdom that was obscure to us! That is right! Our biggest headache is an assembly. Why is our assembly fruitless? How shall we make it fruitful? We have to discuss this! We cannot leave this hall unless we resolve this! Wake up wise men!

It is important to note in the above excerpt that the Majesty changes the agenda for the third or fourth time. It is ridiculous that the king is easily influenced by every idea his scholars forward, and changes the agenda immediately. Moreover, it is humorous for such very important figures of the country to assemble to discuss the problems of their assembly whereas their major concern was to talk about ways of eradicating famine. It is also ironical to hear the king saying, "Knowledge that is not tested by age is like an echo." That is, the king himself has become an echo of every speaker in the assembly. The story, hence, presents the king's little knowledge and pretension to scrutiny through humorous ways.

To sum up, this short story involves the fusion of criticism and humor. Like many literary works that can be termed as political satire, the story exposes the hypocrisy of our leaders. It humorously exaggerates the follies of the king who cannot even lead a successful meeting let alone the country. The writer ridicules the majesty based on his comments, and derides him evoking his lack of knowledge on the agenda of the assembly. Through its humorous nature, the story also attacks the government exposing its least concern for the people that are dying from famine. The implicit message of the attack is

that many government officials of our country have been hypocritically pretentious. They assemble to talk about a big issue, but waste time without contributing to resolve the problems of their people.

3.2.2 Comic Elements in *Wediko Yetegegne Yesilk Debter* (Lost and found Telephone Book)

The fact that comedy serves the purpose of showing the flaws and faults in human beings has been pointed out earlier. In addition to the pleasure that we get from it, comedy helps us to notice the erroneous practices of individuals and society. In line with this, *Wediko Yetegegne Yesilk Debter* (Lost and Found Telephone Book) has a comic tone. It reflects the writer's humorous observation on the common errors that we observe in our society.

The speaker begins the story telling us that he is sitting all alone in the house looking for something funny. He says:

«ተግተን ከፈለግን በዚህች ዓለም ውስጥ በዙ ጥርስ የሚፈታተኑ ነገሮችን እናገኛለን» ከሚሉ ሰዎች መካከል አንዱ ነበርኩ። ባለቅኔው «ዓለም የትያትር መድረክ ናት» ቢል የተያትሩም ዓይነት ቧልት ነው» ብደለሁ። ከመቃብር ማህፀንም ቢሆን አስቋኝ ሃሳብ አይጠፋም ብዬም አምኛለሁ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 7)

I am one of the people who say, "If we seriously seek, there are many things that make us laugh." Though the poet has said, "The world is a stage of theatre", I have said, "The type of the theatre is comedy." I believe that there will be something funny even in the womb of the grave.

In this story, the narrating 'I', that is, the first-person narrator tells us that if we seriously seek for them, there are many things that make us laugh. The speaking voice in the story is a naive person who laughs at anything. However, his laughter makes us see familiar things in a new way.

The narrator tells us that he laughs as he returned from the funeral of his neighbor. Since we know that a funeral ceremony is highly unlikely to cause something funny, we may wonder why the speaker laughs. He also asks himself and tells us the following:

...ግን ምናሳቀኝ? ምናልባት ከግምንት በፊት አጥሪን ገፋህ ብለው ባባቴ ላይ ከዘራ መስበቃቸውን አስታውሼ ይሆናል። ወይም የሕይወት ታሪካቸው ሲነበብ «...ዕድሜያቸው ለትምህርት ሲደርስ በችግር ምክንያት ሳይማሩ ቀርተዋል» የሚለውን ንባብ አስቤ ይሆናል። ምናልባት አባቴን ከለቀስተኛው መሐል ተሸፋፍኖ ስላየሁት «አይ አባይ!... ይኸኔ ኮ አፉን ጋቢው ውስጥ ቀብሮ ይፍነክነክ ይሆናል» የሚለው ሃሳብ ብልጭ ብሎልኝ ይሆናል። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 7)

...but why did I laugh? Perhaps I remembered what our late neighbor did. A week ago, he attempted to strike my father saying that Dad pushed his fence. May be I thought about his life history that says, "When he was ready for education, he couldn't go to school because of poverty." Perhaps I saw my Dad covering his face among the mourners and I thought, "Oh, Daddy! ... May be he is laughing covering his face."

It is funny to listen to such comments as "when he was ready for education, he couldn't go to school because of poverty" on someone's funeral. Besides, it is humorous to see a funeral attendant to laugh while a neighbor is being buried. These comic effects are achieved through the writer's use of incongruity as a technique. On top of that, his selection of words makes it playful. Nonetheless, this humorous distortion of the norm also reveals the writer's skills as a social critic.

On the other hand, eventhough this short story has a comic tone, it also pinpoints the common errors in our society. For instance, the narrator recounts that the deceased neighbor's main cause of sorrow were his own

parents. Meanwhile, he exposes their pretentious nature telling us that they have just started acting as people who offer condolences with their neighbor.

. . .የግዥ ጉረቤታችን ዋነኛ የሐዘን ምንጭ የነበሩት ወላጆቹ ዛሬ ቀንደኛ አስተዛዛኝ ናቸው። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 8)

...Our deceased neighbor's main cause of sorrow were my parents. However, today they have become the main mourners.

As indicated earlier, the speaker always looks for something that causes laughter. He looks up the telephone address book that he found in a taxi a month ago. Thinking that this phone book has many things that create laughter in stock he starts to dial the numbers of the names of females. He dials to the telephone numbers against the names Feven and Netsanet. Unfortunately, he found out that Netsanet, whom he thought would be a female, becomes a male. Then he dials to Lidya. Lidya's story is a little bit moving.

Lidya picks up the phone. She thinks it is Eyoel and calls his name. The caller pretends as though he was Eyoel and continues talking to her. However, the fun he wanted to make could not happen. Rather, Lidya accuses him for she thinks that he is her boyfriend who dumped her when she had told him that she was pregnant. As the dialogue between the caller and Lidya approaches the end, she tells him that doctors have told her that she cannot have an abortion. She also warns him saying if he cannot come to her in an hour, she will commit suicide.

This story is humorous especially at the beginning. It makes us laugh at our common follies like the narrator. The tone of the comedy, however, becomes more serious after the character makes a phone call to Lidya. In other words,

the story turns out to be more critical. We may laugh at the coincidence in the story. It is humorous to be trapped in unexpected problems that do not have any connection with a person. However, the story also reveals the evils of a man like Eyoel. It also exposes the drawbacks of male and female relationships. On top of that, it makes us share the worries of Lidya, and sympathize with her. Therefore, the story can be said to have a strong moral message although the tone is more of comic than satirical.

3.2.3 Satirical Elements in *Tor Awurid* (Warmongers)

It has been pointed out in the review part that satirists may write their literary works to describe absurd situations. To this end, they may use exaggeration as a technique and build up their social or political criticism. Accordingly, Bewketu's short story *Tor Awurid*, which can be translated as "Warmongers" recounts about some people who always wish to wage war against their neighboring nations.

The story is set in the ancient Axum Empire. It sets out narrating the prosperity of Axum, and the peacefulness of the neighboring nations, Nubiya (now the Sudan) and Yemen. However, some of the advisors of the king of Axum were not happy with the presence of peace in the country. On a certain assembly, where his Majesty has attended, one of his wise men expresses his worry about the peace of the kingdom of Axum. He explains himself saying that there is an unbearable peace in their government, and it has been very long since they have heard gunfire. He also notes that the songs of the shepherds have been about courage, but now it was all about love. In short, he tells the king that their tradition of war has been forgotten and that they cannot recognize what their neighboring countries are planning because of peace. Having heard this speech the king said:

«...ታዲያ ምን ይሻላል?»
 «ኑቢያዎችን ለምን አንወጋም?» አሉ ሊቁ።
 «ኑቢያዎች ምን አደረጉ?»
 «ሁለታችንን በሚለየው ድንበር ላይ ዋርካ ተክለዋል።»
 «እና ቢተክሉሉ?»
 «ዋርካዎች እየሰፉ በመጡ ቁጥር የኛን መሬት መውሰዳቸው አይቀርም።»
 «እና ምን ይሻላል?»
 «እናቅምላቸው» አሉ ሊቁ።
 «እንበላቸው» አሉ መኳንንት።
 «በሏቸው» አሉ ንጉሱ። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 79)

"So what shall we do?"
 "Why don't we wage war against Nubia [now the Sudan]?"
 "What wrong have Nubiyans done to us?"
 "They have planted a tree on the border."
 "So what if they plant a tree?"
 "As the trees grow bigger and bigger, it is inevitable that they will take our land."
 "So what shall we do?"
 "Let's conquer them."
 "All right, do it!" said the king.

This story exposes the wickedness of some people. It paradoxically exaggerates some people's desire for war. The exaggeration is not purposeless, however. It shows the vanity of some advisors who trade with the life of human beings. The story ironically attacks erroneous practices of individuals who are close to government officials. On top of that, the exaggerated elaboration of the speaker's desire for war suggests the satirical comment of the writer emphasizing the ugliness of the political world. It can also be argued that this story has a strong message for us, the readers. As we all know, there are many people who do not seem to be satisfied with peace in their country. Warmongers usually aim for unrest. Eventhough the short story is a fictitious work, we cannot deny that there

are people who show a similar behavior. Such people do not want to resolve conflicts through discussions. They rather resort to war. This is a sign of wickedness.

3.2.4 Satirical and Comic Elements in *Seleda ena Temenie (Blackboard and Chalk)*

This short story amusingly portrays a relationship between a teacher and his students in the countryside. It shows how a teacher poorly performs his routine job of teaching in schools that are located in residential areas of the countryside. The story humorously exposes how a teacher behaves in a village. Different behavior is exhibited among those who live in a big city. Thus, the story begins with the following exposition:

*ይህ የገጠር ቀበሌ ነው።
አዲሳባ አይደለም።
አሜሪካ አይደለም።
የሒሳብ መምህር ናቸው።
በጋቢ ላይ ሱፍ ቢደርቡ የሚያሸጧቸው የለም። በሁለት እግሮቻቸው ላይ
ሁለት የተለያዩ ጫማዎች ቢጫሙ፣ ሁለት የተለያዩ ካልሲዎች ቢያጠልቁ
የሚሰቅባቸው የለም፤ የሚሰለቅባቸው የለም።
ከብላቴና ተማሪዎች አንዱ እንኩዋ ደፍሮ «ለምን ይሄን አደረጉ?» ብሎ
ቢሞግታቸው «ለሁለት የተለያዩ እግሮች ሁለት የተለያዩ ካልሲዎች ማጥለቅ ምኑ
ላይ ነው ነውሩ?» ብለው እጃቸውን እጭኑ ሥር ከትተው በቁንጥጫ ሊመዘልጉት
ይችላሉ። አንበሳክከው ሊነዱት ይችላሉ። ምክንያቱም ይህ አዲሳባ አይደለም...
ይህ የገጠር ቀበሌ ነው... (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገፅ 55)*

*This is countryside.
It is not Addis.
It is not America.
He is a mathematics teacher.
Nobody will criticize him if he wears a suit over a gabi.
Even if he puts on two different types of shoes on his two*

legs, or wears different kinds of socks, no one will laugh at him; nobody will ridicule him.

Even if one of the senior students dares to question him, "Why have you done this," the teacher may pinch him under his thigh, or can make him walk on his knees saying, "What is wrong with putting on different socks?"

Because....

This is not Addis...

This is countryside....

The excerpt above indirectly compares the personality of a teacher in a big city with the one who works in the countryside. The narrator's use of humor reveals the type of personality that is not expected from a teacher, but that is taken as something acceptable only because it is a village. Hence, the narrator exposes the fact that teachers in the countryside do not care about their clothing even though it has a significant effect on the normal teaching learning process. Furthermore, as a social critic, the writer highlights the follies of a teacher in the countryside. That is, a teacher in the country has all the rights to punish a student who questions his/her teacher's way of clothing. Therefore, the writer ridicules the commonly accepted conduct of a teacher in many rural areas of Ethiopia through expressions that reveal amusing insights.

The story further shows the irresponsibility of a teacher in the countryside. The story goes on as follows:

ለዚያ ነው አርፍደው ወደ ክፍል የገቡት። ለዚያ ነው በላብ ያደፈ መጽሐፋቸውን እንኩዋን ትተው የመጡት። ሕፃናት ወደ እኔ ይምጡ አላለም። እሳቸው ወደ ሕፃናቱ መጡ። ደክሟቸዋል። ሕፃናቱ ግን ደብተራቸውን አወጡ። ምስኪን ሕፃናት! የሂሳብ ትምህርቱን ሊቀጩት።

«ሃሬ ትንሽ ስለደከመኝ... ስዕል ትስላሳችሁ!» አሉ። በአንዲት ቅጽበት ከሂሳብ መምህርነት ወደ ሰዓሊነት ተቀየሩ። ምክንያቱም ይህ አዲሳባ አይደለም።

«...አየለ መክት የሚባል ብላቴና ሳሉ... ራሱ ላይ ቁንጮ ይኑረውና... ያደፈ ቁምጣ ይልበሰ... በጁ በትር ይያዝ!» አሉና አዘዙ። ይህን አገዘው ዴስካቸው ላይ ተኙ።
አይጣል የሕፃናቱ ፍጥነት!
አየለ መክትን ከምኔው ሳሉት!
ይታረምላቸው ዘንድ ወደ መምህሩ መጡ።
ተናደዱ መምህሩ!
አሁን የሚፈልጉት መተኛት ነው።
«ጥሩ!» አሉ የከበቧቸውን አመዳም ሕፃናት እየተመለከቱ «...አሁን ደግሞ ሌላ የክፍል ሥራ ልስጣችሁ... አየለ መክትን እንደገና ሳሉት... በቁመቱ ይደግ... ካደገ በኋላ ቤተሰቦቹን በተለያዩ መንገዶች ሲያገለግል ቤተክርስቲያን ሲስም... ስሞ ሲመጣ፣ ሲያጠና... ሲመራመር... ትምህርቱን ጨርሶ ወገኖቹንና አገሩን ሲረዱ... በኋላም አግብቶ... ወልዶ ከብዶ በደስታ ሲኖር... ሳሉ! ይህንን ሳትሰሉ ወደ እኔ አትምጡ!» ይህንን ብለው የተደናገጡት ሕፃናትን አሰናብተው ተኙ።
ምክንያቱም ይህ የገጠር ቀበሌ ነው። (በዕውቀቱ፣ 2004፣ ገጽ 56 - 57)

That is why he came late to class. That was why he did not bring his book that was soiled with dirt and sweat.
He did not say let children come unto me. He came to the kids.
He was exhausted.
But the children took out their exercise books.
Poor children! There they are to learn Mathematics.
"I'm a bit tired today... You will draw a picture!" the teacher said.
Within an instant, he turned from Mathematics teacher to an art teacher.
Because this is not Addis.
"Draw a young man called Ayele Mekit... Let him have grown hair on his head and... let him wear dirty shorts... He has to hold a stick!" he instructed them. So saying, the teacher slept on his desk.
Oh, the kids' speed!
How fast they drew Ayele Mekit!
They came to the teacher to have their drawings checked.

The teacher was furious!

Now he wants to sleep.

"Well!" he said looking at those pale students around him. "...Now let me give you another task... Draw Ayele Mekit again... He has to grow in height... Once he gets older, draw him as someone engaged in helping his family in different ways: while he goes to church... when he comes from church.... while he is studying, researching... helping his country and country men.. After that, he has to marry, bear children, and has to live happily! Don't come to me without drawing all these!" So saying, he sent the frightened kids to their seats and he slept.

Because this is countryside.

This short story exposes the follies of a teacher. As can be seen in the above passage, the teacher is not accountable for his deeds. He is expected to teach mathematics, but he immediately turns out to be an art teacher for his personal benefits. Here the satiric stance is clear. In other words, we readers are not only invited to enjoy the humorous expressions of the writer, but we are also made aware of the ridiculous pretensions of the teacher. Besides, the ironic expressions of the writer indicate that a teacher in the countryside can do whatever he/she likes, and can be excused for that. Finally, the writer's main purpose in this short story seems to be provoking laughter at the erroneous practices, which he believes ought to be corrected with respect to a teacher in remote rural areas.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Attempt has been made in this thesis to analyze the satiric and comic elements in the prose works of Bewketu Seyum. To that end, the researcher has tried to pinpoint and analyze instances that reveal the vices, follies, and erroneous practices of individuals and the society in the literary texts under discussion.

Of all Bewketu Seyum's prose works, *Enqilf ena Edmie* (Sleep and Age) represents his most satirical work in terms of delineating the erroneous practices and wrongdoings of individuals and political leaders. As has been indicated in the preceding chapter, the author focuses on different social and political problems. He ridicules taxi drivers, politicians, kings, scholars and other individuals in order to expose their follies and wrongdoings holding up their deeds to censure. The criticism he makes on taxis illustrates the writer's skill in presenting the fatalities of traffic accidents with a touch of humor. Similarly, the satiric comments on the recent national election in Ethiopia dramatize the negative aspects of human nature, especially of those involved in politics. The story about the king who forced the people to speak in rhyming poems is also an instance of political satire. It shows our leaders' extreme authority over the vast masses of the people.

The writer also captures the current political situation of Ethiopia through expressions that ridicule the performance of the government. The writer uses witty expressions with respect to the election and to what happened after it. Accordingly, he underscores the wickedness and brutality of some political leaders by implication.

Similarly, the writer uses satirical elements to ridicule other social and political perspectives in the novel. The contribution of highways and the

beggars on the street to traffic accidents have been humorously satirized. The story also exposes some people's extreme greed for power. Furthermore, the writer reflects the political situation of Ethiopia, and shows that some sort of injustice had been done on the people during the election. As a result, the writer symbolizes the ruling government as a vulture that surreptitiously preys on its victims. The employment of expressions like "*Then it returned to its height taking hold of its prey like an eagle,*" thus, underscores the superiority of the government over opposition party members in order again to expose the stronghold of an undemocratic government.

On the other hand, *Enqilf ena Edmie* has a sense of comedy. Nothing better comically dramatizes the need of human beings to be recognized by their names. Likewise, the novel demonstrates some household employers' hypocrisy using comic elements. It also ridicules poverty and starvation through comedy. In general, he exposes the living standard of the majority of our society.

Likewise, the writer's other work, *Berari Kiteloch (Winged Leaves)*, which is a collection of short stories, is important because it emphasizes various shortcomings of individuals and political leaders. It presents the reality in an objectionable way so that we can notice the erroneous practices in our society. For instance, the writer ridicules the history of Ethiopia with respect to lack of recognizing the power of other nations as well as our poor foreign policy like what is observed in *Enqilf ena Edmie*. The short stories ridicule the weakness in leadership and the oppression of the masses. Besides, the short stories hold up hypocrisy, cheap popularity, pretension, wickedness, irresponsibility, and lack of accountability of people in our society. On top of that, the comic elements in these stories humorously exaggerate the follies of our leaders, and lack of the government's concern for the people. The stories also evoke laughter.

To put it in a nutshell, it can be said that the success of Bewketu's works is due not only to the fact that he attacks erroneous practices in humorous ways, but perhaps more importantly he treats his themes attaching them with implicit moral values. Therefore, Bewketu Seyum's prose works, *Enqilf ena Edmie* and *Berari Kiteloch* have satirical and comic elements that aim at the betterment of individuals, the society, the government and some institutions that render service to the vast majority of the people. Finally, his works can be very good references for young Ethiopian writers to contribute to the literature of the country as well as to expose the wrongdoings in the society.

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