



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**COLLEGE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS**  
**YARED SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

**ARABIC MUSICAL INFLUENCE ON THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF ETHIOPIA**

BY: MASTEWAL MANDEFRO

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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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This is to confirm that the thesis written by Mastewal Mandefro, entitled "**Arabic musical influence on the traditional music of Ethiopia,**" is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Music and complies with university policies and fulfills recognized standards for originality and quality.

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## ABSTRACT

*This thesis focuses on the historical relationship and the music sound that had been created between Ethiopia and Arab from 7<sup>th</sup> century starting from northern and central parts of Ethiopia to trace where Arabs and Ethiopians grow more attachment to their relationship in all aspects, particularly music, after the Islamic religion began. Using Archaeomusicology and Ethnography method to get historic, social, and behavioral understanding on the influenced music, in its relation to socio-cultural context, in addition observing other related cultures, clothing, language, belonging, and the music style that is used today by the descendants of the first people who shared the Arabic culture. Data analysis includes literature review, interviews with historians, university professors, researchers, and religious leaders, and melody analysis of the folk music and archeological findings that has been inherited by the ancient Ethiopians, its related history, and the given identity of its social and cultural value in current time. The principal findings are focused on the musical influences of Arab in Ethiopia and their early history of cultural entanglement. Unlike other countries in Africa, their relationship does not start with conquest for Islamic expansion. It happened way before the Islamic religion's expansion, with the traders on the Red Sea earlier, and continued after the arrival of the Prophet Mohammed's followers as asylum-seekers in Aksum, Northern Ethiopia, in 615 A.D., when the Aksumite king welcomed them and allowed the refugees to stay in his kingdom.*

**Keywords;** *Arabic music influence, Archaeomusicology, cultural relationships, Ethnography, Islamic music, traditional music.*

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## Acronyms

**TPLF**----- Tigray People’s Liberation Front

**FDRE**-----Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

**OLF**-----Oromo Liberation Front

**UNESCO**-----United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **1. The Background of the Study**

This chapter discusses the origins and contextualizes the uncertainty that prompted Ethiopian music. The chapter begins with a discussion of the subject's background and then goes on about the research, and the study's scope and limitations.

This study focuses on the Arab music influence specially after the Islam formation, which some parts use a mix of Arabic music tones in their music in Ethiopia, and entails tracing the music's origins and roots, as well as every side of the community movement, this includes the music classification category, what we call it now genre. The Study of music in a large community in terms of social, political, and religion, and every other aspect that music is in between that's made for social encounter, and studying culture through music, in this study acknowledged as Ethnomusicology study, which this research is highly dependable on.

The relationship between Arab and Ethiopian music has been a long and complex one, with the two regions having been in close contact for centuries. Arab influence on Ethiopian music is evident in both the form and content of the music, and it has been an important factor in the evolution of the country's rich and varied musical culture. From exploring the transference of musical elements to analyzing the evolution of musical forms, the research into this relationship is continuing to yield fascinating results.

This study gathered information and analyzed the Arabic-music influence on the Harari, and Semitic speaking Islamic society cultures of Ethiopia. Music plays an important role in the culture and history of Ethiopia. It is an art form that has been around for centuries and is often intertwined with spiritual and religious ceremonies. From traditional, rural music to more modern, urbanized hip-hop, Ethiopian music is dynamic and varied, reflecting the country's diverse population and its unique history. All types of music have one thing in common: it's used to communicate different societies, whether it's by dancing to the music, singing to the music, or simply enjoying the music. Many factors define the civilizations and identity of the social community of one's country; Art, in this context music is the most important way to describe Ethiopian culture and identity (Rentfrow. 2011, P.1139) "Music is a cross-cultural universal, a ubiquitous activity found in every known human culture."

This thesis assists in preparing to take a closer look at and learn more about our unannounced past, the origin of some of our music and its genre, history, and purpose in our society (Ethiopian society), this study only concerns itself with traditional music that have similarity with Arabic, its origins and growth, how it appears to have been performed in the past, and its performance today.

The Ethiopian-Arab involvement started in the early centuries and then continued with more attachment after the refugees of the prophet Mohamed's followers in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the Arabian track in Ethiopia is a cultural asset that should be verified, reserved, and recognized.

This study takes place in Harari city evolving its study of historic literature to all the Semitic speaking parts of Ethiopia., According to the thesis title, the study should have included all

Semitic speaking parts of Ethiopia that had a long relationship with Arabs in the observing and fieldwork, However, due to the ongoing civil war between the rebel group of the Tigrayan People Liberation Front (TPLF) in the north, plus the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in the central parts, with the Federal Government of Ethiopia (FDRE), overall making everyday life difficult let alone for research, Therefore Harar is the chosen places for the study, limited for safety purpose because the chosen places were relatively safe to gather data and observe the places or move around freely.

### **1.1. Historical Background of Ethiopia and Arabs from Music Perspective**

As history tells us, Ethiopia is one of the world's earliest countries, and the Ethiopian people were engaged in exchanging trades and cultures with neighboring countries from near and far. Semitic clans began to migrate from Arabia to Ethiopia through the south Red Sea between 750 B.C. and 51 G.C. It is assumed that these Semitic people were more civilized than the Cushitic people who had previously lived there, so they shared their knowledge with the locals, and together they formed the old, civilized culture known as Sabeian civilization. This collaboration had a significant impact on Ethiopia (Atkins. 1969, Marcus. 1994).

The name Habesha was derived from the clan's name Habeshat, and the ancient Ethiopian language 'Ge'ez' was named after the other clan, Aga'azi. After the Semitic and Cushitic peoples merged, they formed one large mixed culture and the "Axumite Empire", Ethiopia's first and oldest empire (Atkins. 1969, HableSelassie. 1972).

Furthermore, numerous Arabian countries were once under Ethiopian control like Yemen. After that, the prophet Mohamed was born in Arab, and he founded the Islamic religion, which brought another revolution to Ethiopia (Atkins. 1969, Goldman. 1995, Shoemaker. 2011).

Most historians and researchers who studied Ethiopian early history agree that Ethiopians have some Arab ancestors and that their culture is primarily entangled from an early age, which includes everything, for example, economy, socio-cultural, Semitic languages, and religious relationships, including music (Atkins. 1969, Jason. 2014).

Compared to other African countries, Ethiopian music, as it is vast and diverse, had been neglected and has hardly been studied (Kimberlin, 1976). There will be numerous constraints and a lack of documentation for any researcher who wishes to study Ethiopian music. This is a category that specializes in cultural-based music that includes and is believed to have Ethiopian origin; music based in Ethiopia either is spiritual or secular.

Although there are few written books or articles on how music was performed in Ethiopia before St. Yared, and the Ethiopian Orthodox church liturgical creation of music and its performance, there are several possibilities for the origins of secular music in Ethiopia According to the written literatures. A Ph.D. dissertation on Amharic songs by Neguss Yilma Woldeesenbet (2018), argues about the origin of songs in Ethiopia and the first one relates to Hamito-Semitic immigrants. This perspective dates to the arrival of the Hamito-Semantic people in Ethiopia in the distant past. As a result, the songs they brought with them may be how secular songs were begun in Ethiopia with Dances, songs, and rituals were associated with dragon cult sacrificial services. It is hypothesized in this account that their songs may have later been combined with

the musical practices of the indigenous inhabitants to form Ethiopian secular and sacred music (Kebede, 1976). Sacred music is the second assumption. Saint Yared was given the credit for the growth of secular songs, Ethiopian Orthodox church music composer well known for his compositions.

It was during the reign of Gebre Meskel (550-564 A. D) that Yared, “the great composer of songs and hymns, cultivated poetry, song and dance as a unified whole” (Ashenafi, 1971). Geez, Ezil and Araray are three melodic principles attributed to him. It is believed that secular music inherited many of its melodic patterns and styles from sacred music. According to Ashenafi (1971), by relying on the 'Azmaris', who had church training, secular music gradually developed. myth of Queen Sheba is attributed to the origin of secular songs in Ethiopia. Queen Sheba is said to have brought with her Levites who served as musicians in the Jerusalem temple after returning from Jerusalem; however, there is little information on this (Kassaye, 1995).

The above three hypotheses suggest that the origins of Ethiopian secular music had been poorly understood and lacked concrete evidence. The issue is still a source of contention. This could be due to a lack of information or a lack of inquiry. Similarly, even after extensive research and historical review, it may be difficult to trace back the main origin of the music, but more shreds of evidence suggest that Ethiopian music is primarily created by and for religious purposes.

The idea of 'music before St. Yared,' was explained in Sergew's book, the ancient and medieval history of Ethiopia, Sergew (1972, P.165) “In those days, there was no singing of hymns and spiritual songs in a loud voice to well-defined tunes, but men murmured them in a low voice.” Ethiopian music has been greatly influenced by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, followed by the

Muslim religion. It is important to note that, as Sergew (1972) states in his book every composition St. Yared made was for a religious purpose only, St. Yared believed music is a gift from God to humans. As a result of his music, Ethiopian society has undergone a multidimensional change so far, because he was also credited with initiating the traditional education system and focusing on fostering human intellect, language, reading, writing, and literature. To combine them all, the music, and its form itself helped to give birth to the famous Ethiopian traditional musical form or systematic mode called 'Qinit or ቅኝት' in Amharic.

As we will see, both religions have had a significant impact on the formation of Ethiopian traditional secularism, which is rooted in a multi-ethnic Ethiopian culture (Ahmed, 2006). As a result, historical facts have become intertwined with religious sentiments and allegorical interpretations.

Ethiopia is separated from southern Arabia by the Red Sea, and South Arabia is known to have Semitic stocks. In Ancient and Medieval times Ethiopian was using the Red Sea for economic and demographic reasons at the time, which had a significant impact on the influence and exchange of cultures for both countries (Hablesellasse, 1972).

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Music has always been regarded as an important component of ritual and daily life, with the ability to reflect and influence human mood. Using the music, we practice and perform to broaden our understanding of our shared culture and history is both pedagogically beneficial and promotes a greater understanding of cultures and traditions other than our own.

When Claude explain music's uniqueness and unmeasurable value in a society (1969, P. 18), "Music is a language by whose means messages are elaborated, that such messages can be understood by the many but sent out only by the few, and that it alone among all language unites the contradictory character of being at once intelligible and untranslatable—these facts make the creator of music a being like the gods and make music itself the supreme mystery of human knowledge."

Based on this research most of the Arabic musical sounds and patterns come from Islam in Ethiopia and had a promising start because of the hospitality shown to the Prophet Muhammad's companions during their relocation to Axum in the 7th century A.D., often known as the First Hijra (Erlich. 1994, Ahmed. 2006, Trimmingham. 1952).

The physical proximity of Ethiopia to Arabia, as well as the thriving long-distance trade between the two, as well as the Christians' refusal to accept trade as a respectable livelihood, supplied a commercial conduit for Islam into Ethiopia's hinterland. An Islamic sultanate was established in central Ethiopia as early as the ninth century, followed by a plethora of additional Islamic states in modern-day south-eastern Ethiopia during the medieval period (Tamrat. 1968).

Ethiopian culture, customs, conventions, and musical testing are diverse in this century. However, there is still much work to be done, such as scientific research on Ethiopia and related culture and traditional music, to enrich our culture, traditions, lifestyles, and particularly the history of music in written papers, research, and publications. This has a major impact on our musical culture, scale (mode), and musical instrument learning and expertise. We shall soon lose

our identity and the things that distinguish us, including our language, if we don't start documenting our cultural assets fast due to globalization. Keep in mind that, once we begin to pay attention to the history and norms of our culture, customs, music, and musical instruments, it is critical to identify and explain our identity to future generations.

In the realm of music, the influence of Arabic music in Europe and Africa has had a significant impact on modern music, which is the goal of this study. The bulk of musical instruments used in medieval and classical European music had Arabic origins and was imported from the Arab continent during the Middle Ages (Sachs, 1940).

It's critical to demonstrate how ethnographic research and analysis may aid in understanding the cultural value of music, as well as the relevance of a culture's sound and the associated ideas and behaviors. This study focuses on Ethiopia's long history with Arabs and ties to the early Muslim period and their music. This topic of study in Ethiopia is just started to bloom and this study will attempt to fill the gap in a limited way by identifying the music itself, its origin, its characters, and the value that adds to Ethiopian society.

## **1.3. Objective of the Study**

### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The overall goal of the research is to assess the influence of Arabic music on Ethiopian traditional music.

### **1.3.2. Specific Objective**

The specific objectives of this study are-

1. To identify and analyze Arabic music influences starting from the Islam formation.
2. To investigate the effects of Arabic music influence on traditional music of Ethiopia.
3. To analyze the music's structure.
4. To explore the role of music in the society.

## **1.4. Research Questions**

As a result, the purpose of this research was to find a response to the following research question.

- What are the cultural, religious, and historical influences of Arabic music had on traditional music of Ethiopia since the formation of Islam?
- What effect did Arabic music have on traditional music of Ethiopia?
- How can one effectively analyze the music's structure by identifying its distinct components?
- What role does Arabic music play in Ethiopian social structures?

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The significances of this study are -

1. Studying Arabic music's influence on traditional Ethiopian music can offer a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage and legacy of both traditions.
2. It can demonstrate how each tradition interacts with and draws from the other, revealing connections that may have been previously unknown.
3. Examining this exchange allows for insights into the ways these cultures have changed over time, providing a more vivid picture of their respective histories.
4. It can open new possibilities for collaboration between them, creating exciting and vibrant forms of musical expression that are greater than the sum of its parts.
5. Furthermore, this will add more positive impacts on unstudied music and old music genres that haven't been recognized in Ethiopia and can be a good start and motivation to conduct research on related titles in Ethiopian music.

## **1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study focuses on the Arab-Ethiopian musical interaction starting from the seventh centuries, which continues to this day. Many areas in Ethiopia can relate to this study, which can add more value and have rich historical and cultural connections with the Arabic world, however, the government has imposed movement restrictions due to the current situation and the unsafe environment for travel in the country's northern regions. Due to this difficulty, the study was conducted in a safe and convenient location, Harari, but exploring literatures about topic related cities with Semitic speakers, including the Tigray, Amhara, and Argobba.

The other research's limitations were the lack of archived documentation (particularly in music), as many people have been displaced from war-torn areas, and the majority of people have been devastated and frustrated by the ongoing and active war, creating division from their ethnicity religion, and political view for more than a year.

## **1.7. Organization of the Study**

There are five chapters in this research. The first chapter introduces the study's background, describes the gap it aims to fill, outlines its objectives and research questions, and describes the study's scope and importance as well as its limitations and difficulties. The second chapter is devoted to a review of related works of literature. As part of the study, previous studies will be examined to identify the gaps that this study will address, as well as a quick overview of the social and religious viewpoints on the impact of the music and debate ideas between early research works. The third chapter discusses the study's methodology, data collection instrument, and data analysis. In chapter four, the findings and conclusions derived from the previous research and interviews are discussed, along with the study result and social functionalism of the music studied. The final chapter five contains a summary, conclusion, recommendations, and reference bibliography for all chapters.

## Chapter II: Review of Related Literature

### 2. Introduction:

This chapter will look at literatures and architectural sites that are proof of the Arab influence on Ethiopian culture from the 7<sup>th</sup> till now. The country was known as a Christian country (mostly before the advent of the Muslim religion) but after, was heavily influenced by Islam and its culture, including music. The blending of these two unique cultures and music had a significant impact on the type of music produced in Ethiopian Islamic society in the current time.

The Ethiopian Christians were influenced by Arab music to a degree, but not as much as the indigenous population of other neighboring countries, with the Arab Islamic conquest of North Africa and the Middle East, Arab Music was always present in Eastern Africa as well as Southeast Asia. This was due to their belief that Arab culture, specifically for Muslims, is considered sacred and should be respected, and mostly kept in religious circles (Robinson, 2004).

Muslims also adopted indigenous musical forms into their culture with a cautious concern not to let go of the original musical color but adapted to their local culture and understanding. This is because they believe that music is one of God's gifts to humans and can be used for anything - even worshipping Allah. After Islam began, new art emerged, elaborated both from pre-Islamic Arabian music and from important contributions by Persians, Byzantines, Turks, Imazighen (Berbers), and Moors. In this development the Arabian element acted as a catalyst, and, within a century, the new art was firmly established from Central Asia to the Atlantic (Allen, 2021).

There is a scarcity of information on the Arab influence on Ethiopian music since medieval times. This could be due to ethnomusicologists' loss of interest in the correlation between Ethiopian and Arab songs, their inability to find them, or their unwillingness to admit their lifestyles. To be fair, the energy expended in determining the origins of music and attempting to study uninfluenced Ethiopian music using Western music analogy is a waste of time, even if there is the possibility of obtaining Ethiopia's archived history and knowledge of Ge'ez language (which most of ancient Ethiopian history scripted by).

There are some modern music students, who want to study Ethiopian traditional music mostly Yaredawi Zema (Yaredic melody) in the western music study method because that's how we interpret globally in this generation, but we couldn't fit the sound into the formed metric system, so to understand the original Ethiopian music, one must go through the traditional learning system and completely devote their lives to the music or collaborate with the graduate students.

To describe the music's uniqueness there is an additional statement given by the most appreciated Ethiopian scholar in the music field, Ashenafi Kebede (1970) when he reviewed the book titled "Ethiopian Music: An Introduction" by Michael Powne (1968), when the author was fascinated by the music and states 'given enough time and patience can be transcribed', Ashenafi gives a critical review of this statement by saying "Accordingly, this chapter is of no academic value; it could only confuse a reader as to how the author constructed the pitches of the three sacred modes on the Western musical staff without a transcription of numerous representative samples and knowing that scales are a designation of Western scholarship non-existent in the Ethiopian thought of Zema ('melody,' 'music'). All the few students of Ethiopian music, like the

author himself, have been highly fascinated but challenged by its subtleties, complex melodic and rhythmic nuances, development and ornamentation, the heterophony microtonal aspects **which make transcription almost impossible**, the double meaning of the text which makes translation very difficult, and the relatively very marked and individual nature which makes it stand out among the music's of the world.”

So, this Zema (melody) is expression of its subtle incorporation elements of music, this traditional sound has been enriched with complex interwoven rhythms and melodies that blend seamlessly together. As a result, the music evokes an emotion-filled atmosphere filled with nostalgia and power, while also challenging its audience to explore new sounds they may never have heard before. This music style has been Ethiopians traditional music backbone for cultures and generations, creating innovative forms of musical expression that are truly unique.

When we come to Islam music in Ethiopia, outside the religious followers, until recently many people don't know the deep history of Ethiopian Muslim music and its relation to Arab music. For this lack of information, on the interview that is found in an archived file, a researcher describes it, as a result of a negative media influence on Islam and islamophobia, Islamic studies researcher Adem Kalid talks about the state media under Emperor Haile Selassie - the last Ethiopian monarch, who was deposed by a military junta in 1974 - portrayed Islam and Muslims as alien to the country. "We were described as 'Muslims living in Ethiopia' which was painted as an island of Christianity," he said "However, the negative media portrayal has failed to create Islamophobia, thanks to our tradition of co-existence with all faiths" (Tessema, 2017).

But in time the change began and the social awareness in the aspect of music started soon, slowly everyone started to notice the music's uniqueness. In this development, the media had vital role in spreading the songs on times of holidays of the Islamic religion.

The Ethiopian Broadcast Authority, a licensing office, does not allow broadcasters to provide religious teachings in any format. However, during Lent, when Christians fast and reflect for 40 days, and during Ramadan, radio stations add songs to their music shows... "This is a two-way engagement, we also play the songs when the listeners request us," he told Anadolu Agency. "When we approach Eid al-Fitr, we play more songs and air diverse Ramadan programs" (Tessema, 2017).

The relationship between the two is fascinating, especially when one considers that Arab influence existed in Ethiopia even before the 7<sup>th</sup> c. It is critical to recognize the records in the back of the Ethiopian Muslim track to absolutely admire its history and identity in Ethiopian tradition.

Islam has had a profound impact on the world of art, developing an entirely new style and form that continues to evolve today. This unique artistic expression is rooted in Islamic history and theology, combining sacred texts with visual beauty to create deeply meaningful and visually striking images. From intricate geometric patterns to lushly colored miniatures, Islamic art celebrates faith. It is also strongly influenced by local cultures across the Middle East and beyond, resulting in highly distinct styles depending on region or school. While this art form may look vastly different from traditional Western works, it nonetheless exhibits great sophistication and reverence for its subject matter, providing viewers with powerful insight into Islam's past and present.

Islam's distribution and a new art form is described by Shiloah (2022), "The period of Islamic music begins with the advent of Islam about 610 CE. A new art emerged, elaborated both from pre-Islamic Arabian music and from important contributions by Persians, Byzantines, Turks, Imazighen (Berbers), and Moors. In this development the Arabian element acted as a catalyst, and, within a century, the new art was firmly established from Central Asia to the Atlantic. Such a fusion of musical styles succeeded because there were strong affinities between Arabian music and the music of the nations occupied by the expanding Arabic peoples. Not all Arab-dominated areas adopted the new art; Indonesia and parts of Africa, for example, retained native musical styles."

This research paper only will not be enough to analyze the rich history of Ethiopian Muslim music and its relationship to Arabic music. But the given data and this knowledge will help you understand the most popular music color in Semitic speaking ethnics like the northern part of Tigray and Amhara, in the central part of Argobba, in the east Harar, Dire Dawa, and Afar, as well as other areas where Islamic culture predominates.

Ethiopia is distinct in many ways, including its music. The history of the Arab-Ethiopian relationship, including music, is long and complex, but some key points should be highlighted. It's difficult to say when Ethiopia was first exposed to Arabic music because north Ethiopia and, especially, south Arabia were exchanging civilizations, including their languages, long before the Axumite kingdom. "Sabaean was introduced by south Arabians and was spoken in northern Ethiopia for at least 1,000 years, from the 6th century B.C. to the 4th century A.D.... Those found

in south Arabia which relate to the Ethiopian occupation their deal, by and large, with political history” (HableSelassie, 1972, P. 11).

This implies that Ethiopia and Arab were in an economic, cultural, and political relationship before the advent of Christianity. Although there are multiple options the study can begin with the main reason for what made Arabic music influential after the 7th century is it's because this period was after the enlightenment of the Prophet Muhammad and the beginning of the Islamic era. From the first to the sixth century, the old Arabian civilization was scattered and lost, and the remaining was recorded in pre-Islamic history in Islamic history, Farmer (1929, P.1) “This is the period which Muslims have called the jahiliyyah or “Days of Ignorance," meaning by that, ignorance of the revelations of the Prophet Muhammad.”

As the researcher's opinion, based on the literatures and observation, over the centuries, Arab culture has influenced so many neighboring countries and Ethiopia has been greatly influenced by Arabic culture and music. This can be seen in the country's traditional music, which incorporates elements of both cultures.

Ethiopia is an ancient country with long history and union of multi-culture. To back up this claim with a reasonable concept, everything registered in UNESCO shows that Ethiopians' supremacy legacy and ancient knowledge, from ancient architecture to advanced literature with the oldest alphabet creation with the complexity of word usage, from astrology study to make their calendar, are some examples of knowledge that has been stored for centuries. Ethiopia is among the countries that have registered their tangible astonishment.

UNESCO has acknowledged four intangible and nine tangible Ethiopian heritages (for a total of 13), based on information provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Hailu, 2021).

The official sites of Ethiopia CSA census reports have been stopped at the 2007 report, but according to Ethiopian embassy latest report, with population of around 110.14 million, Ethiopia is a cultural melting pot, with Middle Eastern and African influences visible in the religious, ethnic, and linguistic makeup of its Semitic, Cushitic, Omotic, and Nilotic peoples. Ethiopians are made up of over eighty ethnicities, with the Amhara and Oromo being the majority, accounting for roughly 60% of the total population. Rural areas are home to around 85 percent of the population (Ethiopian Embassy, 2022).

## **2.1. History of the Semitic Speaking Ethnicities in Ethiopia & Their Relationship with the Arabs**

The Semitic peoples include Arabs, Assyrians, Babylonians, Canaanites, Copts, Ethiopians (Habashites), Hebrews (Israelites), Kurds, Moabites, Nabataeans, Persians (Pahlavians), Phoenicians, Samaritans, Sultans Syriacs. They have inhabited the Middle East and North Africa for about 6000 years (D'iakonov, 1965).

There are 86 different languages spoken in Ethiopia and more than 200 distinct dialects spoken. The three largest ethnic and linguistic groups are the Oromos, Amhara, and Tigrayans. Ge'ez was an ancient written language, first established during the Aksumite Empire when the Sabaeans migrated there from the Middle East. Tigrigna and Amharigna (Amharic) are modern languages

that are derived from Ge'ez and developed by the Aksumite culture. The Aksumite script was derived from the Sabeian script and is still used today by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

The Amharic language is the current working language of Ethiopia, as well as the primary tongue of a few different ethnic groups, with Arabic and English, as well as other languages spoken by many Ethiopians. The four major groups of Ethiopian languages are Semitic, Cushitic, Omotic, and Nilo-Saharan. The Semitic speaking people lived in Ethiopia for thousands of years and some of them are Tigray, Amhara, Argobba, and Harari (Treasures, 2022).

### **2.1.1. Tigray and Amhara**

At the current time, Islam makes up 5-10% of the population of Tigray, but it has historically been Islam's gateway to the region and Africa at large. Muslims first arrived in Tigray, Northern Ethiopia, in 615 A.D. after Prophet Muhammad sent his followers from Mecca to the city of Aksum, where a righteous Christian King, known as Nejashi would provide protection from religious persecution (Tigray, 2022).

When B. Hirsch (2020, P. 65) mentions this significant and historical moment “Memory of this contact between the Prophet’s companions and a king of Aksum is still alive today: in the village of Nägaš in the Təgray region are venerated the supposed tombs of twelve companions of Muhammad as well as the shrine of the naḡašī. This holy site, attesting to the primacy of Ethiopia in its contact with Islam, was known in the sixteenth century, according to the Futūḥ al-Ḥabaša, and is today one of the most important pilgrimage destinations for Muslim

communities.” For this reason, the Aksumite Empire was given a special name for the land, Arabic name ‘Dar al-Hiyad’ translates to ‘the land of protection’.

Abyssinia not belonging to the “Realm of Islam”, nor the “Realm of Conquest” (dâr al-harb), at a time when most states in the Red Sea region were under conquest, became the only region allotted its own domain, the Empire. The Zone of Neutrality and Protection.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Nejashi mosque is one of the historical sites and architectural beauty of Ethiopia and Islam and holds special significance to East Africans and Muslims all over the world. It’s believed to be One of the first mosques in the world, because the heritage site was built in the 7th century by the companions of Prophet Muhammad who fled from religious persecution in Mecca. The mosque is named after the Aksumite King who gave them refuge (Tigray. 2021, Tigray. 2022).



**Figure 1: AL-Nejashi Mosque<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Islam.pdf - OmnaTigray  
<https://omnatigray.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Islam.pdf>



**Figure 2: The Entrance of Al-Nejashi<sup>3</sup>**

In the Amhara region During Fasilides's reign (1632-1667), Muslims had an excellent opportunity to expand their religion throughout the country. During the reign of Emperor Yohannis (1667-1682), a council of Muslims was created to establish their own quarters in Addis Alem, far from the Christians in the commercial capital, Gondar. As a result of wider urbanization, Muslims gained their own space and their population increased (Ahmad, 2000).

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfmrW9fShb0>

ነጃሺ ሎከጂድ [Arts Tv World]

<sup>3</sup><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfmrW9fShb0>

ነጃሺ ሎከጂድ [Arts Tv World]

### 2.1.2. Argobba

The elders say that Argobba is Arab Geba (Arabs) others give a slightly different explanation of its etymology saying that the name is derived from ‘har geba’ and that it means silk that is seen here in a mountain nearby. They further explain that the first Arabs who came into the area settled on a hill and pitched a silk tent and so they were given this appellation (Asfaw, 2000).

All Argobba, however, believe that their name comes from Arab Geba and that they are a descendant of the Arabs. Therefore, they consider themselves Arabs and tell others that this is the case. They believe that Islam entered Ethiopia by way of their ancestors. The area is somehow arguable since some say it’s found in Yifat, others say in Wello. (Asfaw, 2000)

The history of Argobba may be discovered late; the rich cultural identity and tourist attraction place like Shonke describes the village and how far along their history goes. Shonke is an Argobba village that is located roughly 23 miles away from Kemise town in Jirota kebele in the current administrative district of Dawa Chefe in the Oromia Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia. As one of the 19th century's most important centers of Islamic education and Sufi orders, notable Sufi saint scholars like ShaykhJawhar b. Haydar b. ‘Ali (c. 1837–1937) settled here permanently and taught many Muslim scholars (Ahmed, 2004).



**Figure 3: Historical Village of Shonke<sup>4</sup>**

### **2.1.3. Harar**

Historians argue about the beginning of Harar city, but Harar was formed into a capital city in 1520 by Sultan Abu Beker Mohammed, and known as Ethiopia's holy city, and considered the fourth-holiest place after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem for Muslim community around the world. One of Harar's main attractions is its old city wall, which symbolizes both its Islamic architecture and its heritage. Around 90 mosques are in Harar, which forms the largest concentration of mosques in the world. The ancient Harar Jugol wall of Harar is one of the city's most popular attractions (Treasure, 2022).

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<sup>4</sup>[#ሸንኬ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) የ900 አመቱ ቅርስ [#አርጎባ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) [#ጉዞ ሸንኬ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) መስጫ ድ [#Shonke](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) [#Argobba Village](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) [#shonkemosque](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM) [#travelEthiopia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM).  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j\\_S3rLOM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN9j_S3rLOM)

“In the medieval period, Harar became the capital of the historic Adal Sultanate and began to gain prominence as an entire pôte or halfway house between the vast Ethiopian hinterland and the maritime regions of the Horn of Africa. Later still, Harar maintained its leadership as a political and socio-economic center of the region throughout the Dawudi Emirate.” Ahmed, (2015, P. 5). Even though the city formation and Harar’s beginning are unidentified, either way, Harar, Ethiopia is relatively new in that it has only been around since the 1700s, though the area has a long history of human settlement (Insoll, 2003).

The historically spiritual city of Harar has long been the center of Islam in Ethiopia and was once the center of politics as well, acting as the political capital of Hararge (Harare) Province until 1994 and becoming a federal city-state in 1995. (Treasure, 2022).



**Figure 4: Harar Entrance of the Jegol wall<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup>LTV Ethio planet Documentary about harari city the living

## 2.2. Examining the Presence of Music in Ethiopia

A million years ago, when man's ancestors stood upright in Africa (and began the whole adventure of making) the worlds of art, music, and language were perhaps one thing. The marks made, the sound uttered or sung, and even the step danced, were intimately linked. The history of this unity is lost although, as far as writing goes, we can piece together the development from drawing to script. The frequent liaisons, flirtations, affairs, and marriages that are attempted between words and music and between those and the visual image celebrate that imagined past of perfect union (Phillips, 1997).

From the dawn of human history to the present day, Ethiopian music has left an indelible mark on popular music around the world. Western musical traditions and culture have been profoundly influenced by African music (Falceto, 2018). Ethiopia (or Abyssinia, as it was formerly known) remained independent for most of its ancient history because it was never colonized. As a result, it adhered to more traditional religious and cultural practices than many other African countries. This eventually led to the development of an ancient musical tradition that can still be found today in churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques, as well as in secular settings such as clubs and private parties. Ethiopians now enjoy secular music in addition to their ancient sacred hymns and liturgical songs (NETWORK, 2012).

Ethiopian music is among the most distinct and intriguing in the world, with a complex structure that defies easy categorization. This ancient music's sounds are full of raw emotion, rhythmic

complexity, and haunting melodies that have remained unchanged through generations (Daoud& Hazen. 1959, Shelemay. Kaufman. Jeffery & Monson. 1993).

Since Ethiopian music has a long and rich history, and the study of this history just began to reach outside of the country in the early past century, we can divide it into three major periods to make it easier to analyze and get some general idea of the music part: early music of Ethiopia before, in times of St. Yared, and after, this is just broad thinking of categorizing, but as a result, it will help us to be able to identify each major curving bole of each music era in Ethiopia with greater accuracy and the descended music relationship between past and present (Shelemay, 2009).

### **2.2.1. Music of Ethiopia before St. Yared**

In This era, it was nearly impossible to find a document or any archeological findings that point and refers to the music of Ethiopia or any music that had a melody in it, although other histories of the country have been found in the old inscriptions, coins, letters and decrees, and Ethiopia's earliest Aksumite civilization has been recorded in Ethiopian manuscripts, Greeks, Latin and Arab writers have mentioned other aspect but the music was not one of them (HableSelassie S., 1972).

Even if we haven't found a documented Music sign or notation that's linked to the music of Ethiopia if there is I haven't found any.... However, Ethiopia carries with it a strong oral tradition dating back centuries. Microtonal scales and stripped-back melodies detail the trials and tribulations of the country's rich history. Over the years, popular music in Ethiopia has

morphed in immeasurable ways, shedding the more abrasive aspects of the traditional ballads, while retaining an important place in the heart of everyday Ethiopians, and the fact that Ethiopian liturgy survived from the 6th century ‘till now is a blessing and shows a great foundation of Ethiopian music, and that kind of base doesn’t grow overnight.

### **2.2.2. Ethiopian Music in time and after St. Yared**

During this time, the Christian faith began to gain popularity throughout of the country, and the sixth century was historical moment for Ethiopian music, Saint Yared, an Axumite composer, invented the sacred music of the Ethiopian Church chanting, and its application in liturgical music, as well as the Ethiopian musical notation system, and is often acknowledged as the pioneer of traditional music of Ethiopia. He also authored Zema (melody), or Ethiopian Church chant tradition, especially the chants of Ethiopian-Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Churches, which are still performed today (Giday, 1991). From this great composer, most of the Ethiopian mode has been formed and uses a fundamental modal system called Kiñit, of which there are four main modes: Tezeta, Bati, Ambassel, and Anchiho. From this invention, Ethiopian music became more of its own and evolved in most of the ethnic groups found in Ethiopia (Abate. 2009, Sutcliffe. 2022).

Ethiopia's musical development can be traced back to, many regions including Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan. It was influenced by these regions and evolved into a distinct form over time. Religion and other cultures have a large influence on fashion today. However, each region of Ethiopia has its distinct style that is distinct from others. Ethiopian music is influenced by

Islamic practices, as well as other religious practices such as Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. Arabian and neighboring African cultures also heavily influence it (Abate, 2009).

Ethiopia is one of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world. The Ethiopian culture and tradition have a rich history and can be traced back more than 2000 years (Gonfa, 2022).

Ethiopia can be also called the land of song. Music plays an important role in every part of Ethiopian life, from drinking, dancing, and praying, to working and relaxing.

The world of music is becoming increasingly interconnected, with various types of sounds crossing boundaries and finding new audiences. This phenomenon is beautifully exemplified by the story of Ethiopian musical traditions (Network, 2012). Ethiopia, in my opinion, is home to the most well-known Sub-Saharan African musical tradition. It's a place where almost any music fan can identify a recording or two from the high-pitched, whirling voices, the low-slung, pulsing rhythms, or any sound in between. This is because Ethiopia is home to nearly eighty different multiethnic cultural societies, each with its language and culture (Group, 2019).

The popularity and recognition of Ethiopian music have been rising in recent years. However, many people are not necessarily aware that there is much more to Ethiopian music than just these few widely known examples. Despite being so widely loved and recognized today, Ethiopian music was once an underground and hidden tradition with a history almost as long as its modern manifestations.

### 2.3. Arabic Music: A Brief History

In this research the name ‘Arabic music’ indicates the Middle East countries music, who uses encompassing myriad traditional ‘maqam’ form, which has served as the foundation for all Arab music. In traditional Arabic music, the maqam system underlies both compositions and improvisations. Maqams are not rhythmic and can be performed with either vocal or instrumental accompaniment. Maqams Known as the Arab tone system, it was invented in the 10th century by Al-Farabi and relies on specific interval structures (Tūmā, 1996).

“Almost everyone who has written on the subject of the music of the Arabs has looked, in the matter of origins, to either Greece or Persia. Much of this is perhaps excusable, seeing that until recent years we knew next to nothing of pre-Islamic Arabia save what could be gleaned from Greek and Latin authors or the legendary material handed down from pre-Islamic Arabic sources.” (Farmer, 1929, P. 2)

According to the Arab tone system, or system of tuning music, the octave is divided into twenty-four equal divisions or 24-tone equal temperament (24-TET), with a quartertone (50 cents) between each successive note. The names of different tones are not repeated across octaves, unlike systems with octave equivalency. The lowest pitch in the singer’s range that determines the lowest tone determines it (Tūmā, 1996).

Al-Kindi was an early Arabic music theorist who lived from 801 until 873 A.D., Along with others like as Al-Farabi; he recommended adding a makeshift fifth string to the oud. He authored numerous pieces on musical theory, including one on the cosmic implications of music (Farmer.

1988, Farmer. 1929). He identified twelve tones on the Arabic musical scale based on the position of his fingers and the oud's strings (Yusuf, 2011).

In current versions, Abul- Faraj's encyclopedic collection of poetry and hymns, *Kitab Al-Aghani*, covers over 20 volumes. *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir*, a crucial treatise on Islamic music, was written by Al-Farabi (872-950). His clean Arabian tone scheme is being used in Arabic music today (Tūmā, 1996).; Al-Ghazali (1059-1111) wrote "*Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir*," a book (*The Great Book of Music*). His authentic Arabian tone scheme is being utilized in Arabic music today; Following the development of this composer, Arab music, which included most musical instruments used in European medieval and classical music, had Arabic roots and was taken from the medieval Arab world (Farmer. 1988, Sachs. 1940). These evaluations are an excellent illustration of what the research will strive to uncover, and additional literature reviews and document analysis are needed to determine precisely what effect Arabian music had on Ethiopian traditional music.

Religion and art have a close and incredibly strong relationship, so strong that you might think religion is a creator of art because whenever religion encounters people, it inspires them to create or make idols, temples, and architecture of religious buildings, iconic statues, sculptures, poetry, or other types of literature and music. Every civilization has music, and the Muslim world has used music since its inception (Hackett. 1996, Religion. 2022).

The music genre we are attempting to investigate is known in Ethiopia as Islamic sacred music, or a Nasheed in Arabic 'Nashid' a work of music either vocal or accompanied by a percussion

instrument. There are only a few written histories following the death of Prophet Mohammed's first hundred years, particularly those related to music, but there have been some discoveries of musicians from that period in the 7<sup>th</sup> century of the Arabic world and the early Muslim community (Blogger, 2017). “Arabian music does not provide us with iconographical musical scenes or with instruments excavated from tombs.... the bulk of our knowledge about music of the pre-Islamic age came from later Islamic sources.” (Shiloah. 1995, P.2)

However, the Arabic world was probably the first to make instruments and accompany poetry with instruments and there were many musicians in Mecca and Medina. The instrument players, many of whom were women, and the music was closely associated with poetry even before the prophet Mohammed and continued into the Islamic era (Farmer. 1929). During this time, music was called Ghina, which can be translated as singing or music, showing that music was primarily a vocal art and strongly related to poetry. It has been alleged that the first famous male musician in this area lived shortly after the Prophet Mohammed's death and performed a duff dram in Medina. For this reason, later sources attribute his name to Tuwais (d.710). (Farmer. 1929)

## **2.4. The Sources of Arabic Musical Influence in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia was known for its ancient and free empires for centuries. In this long history of administration, war (within or out), commerce, and international relationship that was recorded on the stones and vellum found are unlikely unstudied, but despite the less eagerness of every generation for a history lesson, religions like, Christianity and Islamic have done a favor by recording the country's history in their religious book. Despite their effort, it is still difficult to know the full history of Ethiopians and it's impossible to understand fully and to adjourn, a huge

obstacle for a historian. This makes it essential that Ethiopian researchers and historians may have to experience and ability to be present in the historical place where the legends are spoken or to be with the people (the owner of the history) and even in this method it's complicated and scattered (Ahmed. 2006).

“Ethiopia is geographically in Africa, but for centuries its cultural affinities pointed toward Arabia and the Middle East, as well as toward Nubia. Christianity came to Ethiopia in the fourth century, probably through the efforts of Ezana who conquered Meroe and was bilingual in Greek and Ge'ez, and the Ethiopian liturgical language, and ruled the Axumite empire (Kimberlin, 1980, P. 232).

Author Bahiru Zewde (2002) gives details on the origins of Ethiopia, lost oral legends, edible animals, and plants, and then gradually developing farming and agriculture wisdom through the years, even though most of it is still produced by human labor, without any kind of technology. It's believed that this phenomenon was the beginning of government formation in Ethiopia. Ethiopia's Aksum kingdom captured its moment with this government formation resolution. Researchers and historians argue that, even though there is a lack of recorded history before the Aksum kingdom, some documents and artifacts are looked at as evidence. This is because they show that there was a form of governance before the Aksum kingdom (Hableselassie, 1972).

The famous port of 'Adulis' on the Red Sea, which served as a bridge to foreign trade, was the reason for The Aksum kingdom's vulnerability to the culture and influence of foreign merchants.

Most historians agree that this was the reason for the flourishing of Ethiopia's most famous and illustrious season (Hableselassie, 1972).

In the half of the 4<sup>th</sup>-century king, Ezana one of the great kings of the Aksumite Empire accepted Christianity as a state religion and opened a new chapter for the country (Derat, 2020). After two hundred years, in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, after the beginning of the Muslim religion, the conflict's impact on the red sea trading, and the Aksum kingdom started to decline. (Munro-Hay, 1991).

“As Muslim power and influence grew in the eighth century, Ethiopian shipping was swept from the Red Sea-Indian Ocean, changing the nature of the Axumite state.” (Marcus. 1994, P. 11) Even though Ethiopia was quieter in this specific time compared to the Axum empire time, as the eminent British historian describes it "Encompassed on all sides by the enemies of their religion, the Ethiopians' slept near a thousand years; forgetful of the world, by whom they were forgotten." (Gibbon. 1841, P.281), however, life still has been continued to be explored in a limited way and this interaction is one way of showing that, the time what's called the 'dark' age for Ethiopia isn't that dark.

In this ancient, scattered history chronicles, politics, economy, and religious activities are documented in Ge'ez, the ancient language of the country, and the recent histories are documented in Amharic, except for the ancient church of the orthodox Christian, which kept the language alive for worship service (Treasures, 2022).

The Arab influence on Ethiopia can be seen in many aspects, starting from the social, cultural, linguistic, and even religious levels of the country. And the Arab tone and scale are the most important and distinctive in Ethiopian music. The Arab scale consists of two modes that are used to create a seven-note tonal system. And the Ethiopian mode has five notes that span a whole step and a half step within an octave. Adding or subtracting one or more notes derives all other modes. The second and additional mode is called the triton, also known as the tetra chord in Ethiopia. It has five notes, but it spans an interval of a third within an octave. The mixture of the two different modes can create something new for the ear and a very artistic sound.

Ethiopian musicians have incorporated Arabic influences into their musical traditions, creating a familiar and exotic sound. Although Ethiopia is not an Arab country, the influence of Arabic music can be seen in its traditional music.

Practically most Ethiopian music pieces have some parts from Arabic theory and the music which is known as samai or the minor mode in Ethiopia, which has many similar modes to the Arabic music element including intervals and its performance practice. This statement can be proven today by the fact that most Muslims who came to dwell in Ethiopia belong to regions where Arabic is spoken and have learned their music from these regions. Additionally, it's because Ethiopia had been an important trading post for centuries between the Islamic world and sub-Saharan Africa (Gibb, 1999).

The significant impact that has Arabic music on Ethiopia can be defined both in terms of the musical modes and the performance. For instance, the popular Ethiopian instrument known as

the Masinquo is relatively similar to the Arabic rabab. Similarly, the Ethiopian minor pentatonic scale sound is very close to the Arab maqamat scale.

there has been a marginalization of Ethiopian music in recent years. This is due to the research finding that three main factors led to the marginalization of Arab and Ethiopian music. The first was the rise of the Islamic religion, which put a focus on monotheism and downplayed the importance of music. The second was the political control of Islam over Ethiopia; as a result, the Conquest of Imam Ahmed Giran in the 16<sup>th</sup> century led to the suppression of Ethiopian-originated music (Trimingham. 1952).

## **2.5. The Arabic Music and Its Spread to the Islamic World: A Brief History**

Music in the Arab-Muslim world has traditionally been a vehicle for poetry. Partly because of its association with the Qur'an and God, poetry has often been considered the highest cultural form. The great Persian poet al-Ghazali wrote: "There is no entry into the heart except through the antechamber of the ears. Musical tones, measured and pleasing, bring forth what is in the heart and makes evident its beauties and defects...whenever the soul of the music and singing reaches the heart, then there stirs in the heart that which preponderates in it." (Ajhays, 2018)

In the old days' music was mainly the occupation of women. Singing female slaves worked at weddings and festivals and entertained courts and caravanserais as prostitutes and entertainers. Sometimes they accompanied warriors to the battlefield and sang war songs to get them in the mood for fighting. Most male performers were "mukhanathin" which translated to transvestite slaves. It is no surprise, then, that when Islam came onto the scene that music was associated

with decadence and looked down upon. Yazid 3<sup>rd</sup> a noted Umayyad caliph wrote in A.D.740, "Beware of singing for it will steal your modesty, fill you with lust and ruin your virtue." In some places, music was banned, and musical instruments were confiscated and destroyed (Orla Duane, 1999).

Because music was handed down orally from generation to generation and was not written down, we don't know what early Arab music sounds like. What we know is based on a handful of paintings and illustrations and some descriptions by court observers. Among Sufis, music is viewed as a way to get closer to God. Sufis have developed techniques to create ecstatic experiences and heighten them. Among them are the repetition of poems and holy names, music, dance, meditation, rhythmic beating, chanting, and self-hypnotism. The goal is to work oneself into a trance and lose contact with the immediate world to intensify one's awareness of God (Joe Jenkins, Will Ord, 2002).

## **2.6. Relationship Between Islam and Ethiopia**

The original Arabs are thought to be those from the Arabian Peninsula. Tribes of nomads and villagers living in the Arabian Desert established Arabian culture. It was also from there those Arab migrations began, which eventually led to the Arab world's expansion. After the Prophet Mohammed's revelation and the Muslim religion started and most of the Arab people became Muslims, and some of them come to Ethiopia making Ethiopia the earliest country to have contact with Islam, Muslim became the 2nd largest religion with peace (Hoyland, 2001).

Like their Christian counterparts in Africa and Europe, Muslim Africans did not create a pure Islamic culture. Islamization was a process that blended indigenous cultural practices with those brought by Muslims. At least at first glance, it is difficult to say whether Islam or indigenous beliefs had a greater influence on the music history of Ethiopia. The two were so closely related that we couldn't tell where one ended and another began. This blending took place in various spheres of life in Ethiopia and among several classes of people. Among these were religious orders or brotherhoods that combined various musical traditions with a formal Islamic prayer (Braukämper, 2004).

The formation of Islam has had a big effect on the cultural setting in Ethiopia. The spread of Islam after Hijra was, came to Ethiopia during the reign of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (r. 634–644). By 640 it was firmly established in the major port of Adulis, and from there spread into the highlands. Islam became entrenched in the area now known as Eritrea and Muslim forces began their push westward into Christian areas. There is evidence that large numbers of Christians took up the religion during the period immediately following the initial Arab conquest (Halid, 2022).

One important aspect of Ethiopian culture is music. Music is an important part of Ethiopian life and is enjoyed by people of all ages. The traditional music of Ethiopia is rooted in the country's Muslim heritage. However, the influence of Arabic music can be seen in Ethiopian Islamic music as well (Stone, 2008).

The history of Ethiopian music is often intertwined with the country's religious traditions. Islam arrived in Ethiopia in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and Arabic music soon began to influence Ethiopian music

tradition. This influence continued until the 13th century when the Ethiopian Orthodox Church re-established its presence in the country.

Ethiopian music has been shaped by both Islamic and Christian religion influences, and it is unique in its blend of these two traditions of culture. Arabic music has had a profound influence on Ethiopian music tradition. This influence can be traced back to the period when the Islamic Empire was at its peak specially in Harari. Ethiopian music tradition underwent a significant change during this period, as it absorbed various elements from Arabic music. In this research we'll take a closer look at the history and development of Ethiopian Islamic music (Belda.2006, Hammond. 2007).

## **Chapter III– Methodology**

### **3. Introduction:**

Archeomusicology and ethnography are two specialized fields of research which, when used together, can provide an illuminating insight into the development and evolution of music. With its focus on exploring cultural practices, archeomusicology takes a historical approach to understanding how music is rooted in our everyday lives. By analyzing ancient artifacts, manuscripts, and oral histories, it gives us a detailed look at the history of musical traditions across cultures, times, and places. On the other hand, ethnography studies current social relationships by collecting qualitative data from various informants. Through participant observation and interviews, this method provides an opportunity for researchers to gain direct information from their sources. When applied to music studies, these two disciplines often complement each other; offering a comprehensive view of music within a given context.

### **3.1. Procedures and Methodology**

This research was carried out to have a detailed historical relationship between Ethiopia and the Arabs as well as the music style that influenced Ethiopian traditional music, its impact and evolution, and its function in society. This research composed from reliable data collection to fully appreciate and elaborate on the occurrence.

## **3.2. Research Plan**

### **3.2.1. Research Design**

This qualitative research will employ an archeomusicology and ethnography view of the influence of Arabic music on Ethiopian traditional music starting from the earliest century. As part of the research design, a detailed literature review of existing studies related to this topic will be conducted in order to identify primary sources that can be used to investigate the influence of Arabic music on Ethiopian traditional music. Interviews with experts and scholars specializing in the study of Ethiopian Islam history and Islam music history will be conducted. In addition, video recordings of performances, as well as audio recordings of old religious music featuring traditional pieces will be captured to assess how much of the original tradition has been preserved by performers today in Harari society. By synthesizing all these data, I expect to draw meaningful insights about the ongoing interactions between the two musical cultures through the centuries.

### **3.3. Methods of Data Collection**

Collecting archeomusicological data requires physical evidence such as manuscripts and artifacts should be examined closely for any insights they might offer, while noting their age, condition, and location. Oral histories are another valuable source of information which can be obtained through interviews with elders and knowledgeable individuals. Similarly, when gathering ethnographic data, field visits and observations should take place prior to conducting interviews, so that researchers have a better understanding of the impact of Arabic music in Ethiopia.

### 3.4. Sampling and Song Selection for Analysis

Uses non-probability sampling is defined as a sampling technique in which the researcher selects samples based on the subjective judgment of the researcher rather than random selection. It is a less stringent method. This sampling method depends heavily on the expertise of the researchers; it is carried out by observation.

At this time, Arabic-influenced music could be found all over Ethiopia, but it's hard to pinpoint when exactly and how many songs have been written. In Harari this music's serve a variety of functions. For secular purposes, they are typically used for love songs, and most of them are written in Amharic and Haderi (language of Harar). The Arabic language is the mostly utilized for holy (spiritual) music because it is linked to and based on the music and religion's origins.

This study will analyze the music, which is influenced by Arabic music, so the song texts are not included. Most of them are in Arabic with a mix of local languages and a variety of secular songs like cultural songs with love, advice, and other life-changing events from Harari's cultural song collection.

Sacred songs like Menzuma are popular in most of the country's regions, with the exception of mixing the lyrics with the local language of each ethnic group with Arabic. These songs from each category are chosen based on thematically defined as living proof of the Arabic musical influence on traditional music of Ethiopia.

### **3.5. Methods of Data Analysis and Approach**

According to the music theorist Ian Bent, musical data analysis is the study of musical structure in either composition or performance. It is "the means of directly answering the question, 'how does it work?'". (Bent. 1987, P. 5). By observation, music analysis, interviews, documents, and other videos and audio using the Semitic parts of the country, especially Harar city, as a field experiment on the Arab-influenced music in Ethiopia, are including secular music that's found in Harari, and the Islamic religious music of Menzuma.

Using the framework analysis approach to discover the influence and how it grew familiar over time, as well as how it influenced cultural features of music, the time map, and history are provided.

### **3.6. Sources of Information**

The sources of this thesis were written or printed materials that have been created in any way and are referred to as documents that are related to the title. It is possible to see numerical records and song-poem books as distinct sorts of sources in themselves or as a subclass of documents. Stories and other oral interpretations that leave a record for future generations are considered verbal statements, and this is used especially in the interview and questionnaire methods.

### **3.7: Data Collection Instruments**

As research who focuses on the past, the methods that were used for collecting the data were based on Interviews, Observations, Audio/Video Recording, and Textual Analysis of Primary and Secondary Sources. These data collection methods are the main instruments as the research

topic involves the periodic sampling of selected attribute groups to support the investigation of past historical relationships with influences of cultures and performance analysis.

### **3.7.1. Interviews**

This process was used as one method to have more information and oral related stories about the given topic and was an informal interview (interviewed by another person for the holiday program) that has been collected since the above-mentioned limitations and the time made it difficult to have face-to-face interviews. However, these interviews helped to fill lots of gaps that hadn't been found in the document files, and I want to thank the interviewer for sharing these related files.

### **3.7.2 Analysis and Evaluation of Documents.**

This part of the research was used to find related documents and related literature to analyze and review how the Ethiopian and Arab relationships were and what kinds of cultural, religious, and political relations and influence occurred during that time. These includes Ethiopian historical books, and anything related to Islam since its inception, as well as other documents, related topic thesis, and published articles on the subject, as well as musical and historical papers in addition to more interviews and documentary films of the past on Arab and Islamic related history and music videos and audios that was included in the reference, were used.

### **3.7.3. Observations**

The researcher personally observed permissible and safe historical-related sights with a local tour guide attending the Id Al Adha festival, an Islamic holiday, in Harar with an audio recorder. In addition to the ceremony's purpose, a lot of cultural actions related to Islamic cultures, like clothing, food, and music festivals and the architectural sites were observed at the field site.

These observations were very helpful in summing up the document analysis and having first-hand experience with the cultural relations with Arabs.

### **3.8. Analysis and Interpretation**

Every collected data has gone through coding that's available at this time and has been analyzed like the literature review and the findings' part like the interviews were translated and coded with the help of Citavi 6 and Nvivo and the field data that are related to numbers had been coded through Excel, QDA and SPSS. As a result, explanation, summary, presentation of interpretations, viewpoints, and conceptions were used to make data analysis.

### **3.9. Considerations of Ethics in the Thesis**

Several academics have frequently emphasized the importance of ethical considerations when doing research, and it is advised that researchers do just that. (Pranas, 2018) The protection and respect of the rights and welfare of participants and other parties involved in these activities which are often referred to as ethical considerations while they are addressed to research have been greatly considered. For professionals in related fields, conduct on their websites and their interview videos that have been posted officially and been referred accordingly. Throughout the entire study process, the researcher tried to keep to and carefully follow ethical principles. An introductory letter that described the relevance of the study and its goal accompanied the questionnaire. The fact that solely the study's objectives would be served by the utilization of the individuals' responses was also disclosed. It also reassured them that their identities would be protected.

## Chapter IV – Results of the Study and Discussion

### 4. Analysis Presentation and Data Interpretation

There are three sections to this chapter that includes a crosschecked image of cultural assets, the statistics from the video interview are narrated on a related topic and the linked selected music analysis and interpretation make up will be the last section.

Below is a compilation of images of women's clothing from the Harari culture aforementioned for your reference.



**Figure 5: a cultural dress of Harari Women<sup>6</sup>**

The contribution of Islam to the expansion of Arab cultural influence in Ethiopia is significant. One clear example is how the Islamic religion helped shape Ethiopian architecture, from houses

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<sup>6</sup>Harari people. (2022, October 25). In *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harari\\_people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harari_people)

to religious structures like mosques so that Islam's effect on Ethiopian culture had increased significantly.

The next map found in the geo-current info site will provide data on the distribution of Islam in Ethiopia in 2007. (Lewis, 2013)

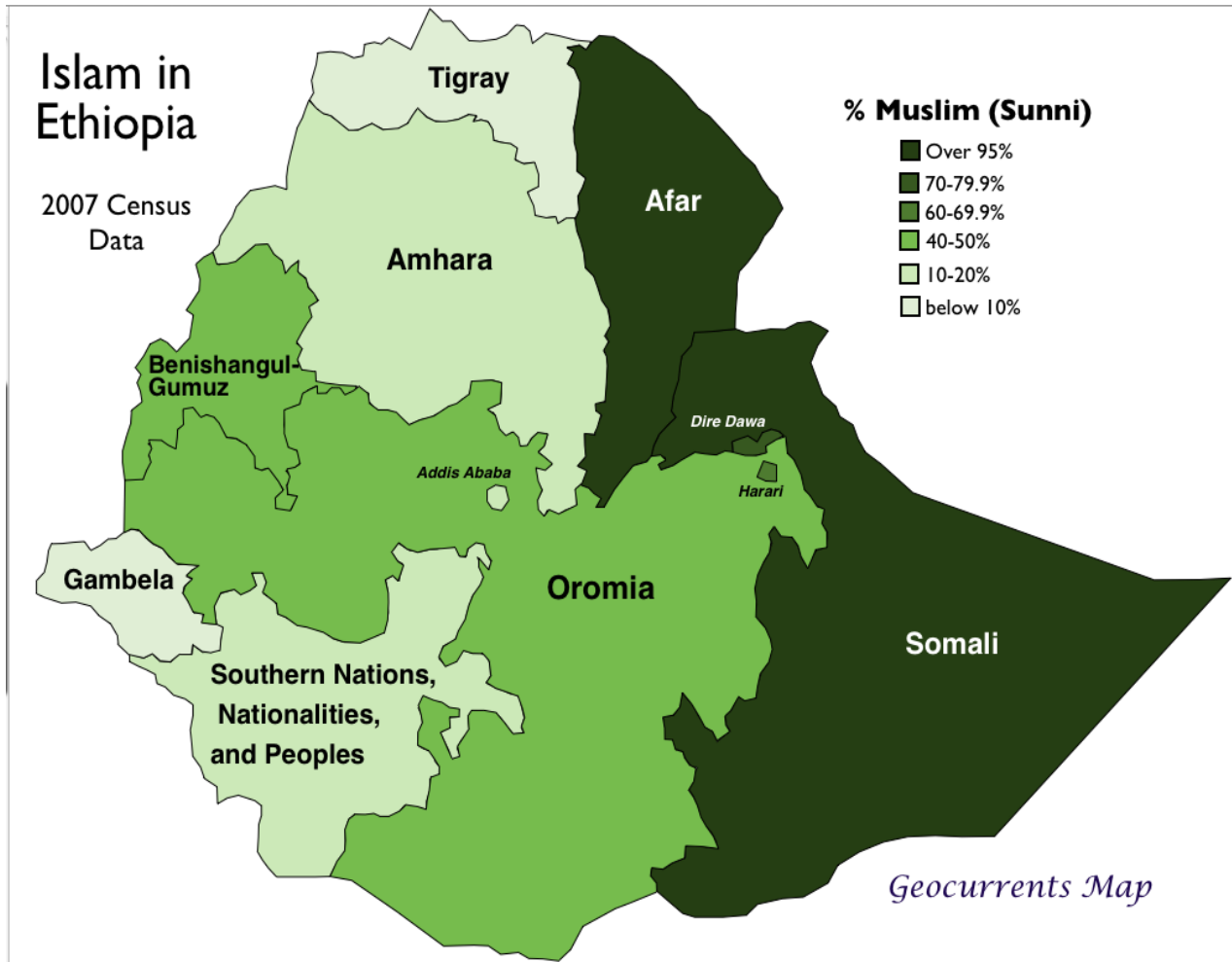


Figure 6: Islam in Ethiopia distribution (Lewis, 2013)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.geocurrents.info/cultural-geography/religion/religious-change-and-tension-in-ethiopia>  
Religious Change and Tension in Ethiopia

## 4.1. Interviews

### 4.1.1. Part one

**How did Menzuma begin in Ethiopia? How would you relate to Islam, explain the types, functions, and usage of the music?**

#### 1. Assistance Professor Adem Kamil's interview<sup>8</sup>

According to Assistance Professor Adem Kamil's interview,

*“In north Wollo, a village called Dana where it is believed the first Menzuma started, in the beginning of Ethiopian Menzuma history, shaykh Siraj Hudin is the most memorable one. When the shaykh started to make poems and melodies in Arabic language praising Prophet Mohammed, their beloved ones were worried that the shaykh was mentally ill so they strap on him by rope and take him to the most respected shaykh Omar in Haike, so he can be examined.... then Aniye said, “ten crazy people bring to me one normal person after they tied him” and told them to release him immediately. After he was released shaykh Siraj started to praise by singing Menzuma and start to create a poem then he looks upon Aniye and then goes to be silent then Aniye tries to promote him so he can continue to make the poem.*

*The oldest Menzuma poems reflect the honor and regard Ethiopia's place in the Muslim community and history.*

*The composers produce Menzuma in every local language so that society can understand and learn the meaning and practice the song. In the oldest time most of the Ethiopian communities were unable to read and write because they were farmers, so the composers*

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<sup>8</sup>መንደራዊ ከኢትዮጵያ እንዴት ፈለቀ? በሙስሊም አባቶች አንደበት | The Story of Menzuma | Ethiopia  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1XlwOfbNGg>

*after they write their compositions in Arabic language then translate them to the community in their local language so they can relay the message to the local people.*

*In most of Menzuma, the language is mixed between the local languages and the most used and known Arabic language so in the way the people will have become familiar with the Arabic language in time. In the Ethiopian Muslim religion, the believers were able to create a melody that's local but relatable to the Arab community, so they can give and relay their appreciation, love, and respect to Prophet Mohammed and his messages from Allah in Menzuma.*

*It's also used for spiritual teaching methods for the history of the prophet Mohammed and his works, jihads, for the laws and messages. The local composers of Menzuma, who composed in every language stand for the message that, the prophet's message is for all humans. As the purposes of the Menzuma stand for spirituals only, the composers of Menzuma must be followers of the Muslim religion and have knowledge of the Arabic language and the law of the Qur'an.*

*The thing that makes different Ethiopia from the other countries in the world is, she was the first one to receive Judaism in 580 B.C, After Christ's birth she received Christianity in the time of king Izana in 350 A.C., In third, she received Muslim in 615 A.C. in this time other countries where lucky if they got one religion at the time but in Ethiopia, all these three religions were already comprehended and accepted by the people of that time....*

*Menzuma had its earliest practice in Ethiopia before any other country. And the imams always migrate from village to city because Ethiopian Muslims didn't come from cities to the countryside, it comes from the rural areas to the city, therefore the history must not be forgotten; it must be documented and preserved because the elders did their job as they*

*taught and kept peace to the generation. At this time Menzuma is in great danger because the Arabic language of the old Menzuma needs a translator for the local language and the youngsters forgot the melodies and the poem of every older Menzuma that have been written in the old times and used to teach the farmers in the rural areas. This generation needs to collect and preserve it, otherwise, Ethiopia will lose one historical heritage that isn't found anywhere in the world."*

According to the professor's interview Menzuma began in north Wello by shaykh Siraj Hudin, starting from this Menzuma has been used for learning method, for history, Arabic language, and Islamic laws and rules. It is only used for a spiritual purpose only and the composers of the music must be Muslim with knowledge of Arabic language and Qur'an. Ethiopian Muslims don't come from city's, they migrate from village to the city, therefore documenting this historical culture necessary because nowadays the old Menzuma that has been practiced by farmers in the rural area is in great danger because it needs a translator and the young generation had forgotten the melody.

Menzuma is hence exclusively Ethiopian Islamic music with an Arabic influence, but it also has a distinctive flavor that is distinctly Ethiopian. Menzuma affects every area of social phenomena; hence it has an impact on social, political, and cultural aspects as well. Other types of cultural music also have an Arabian influence, but because Menzuma began in Ethiopia and incorporates some Arab characteristics, it has a significant social impact in addition to having artistic value and being a means of spreading a message in the Islamic world.

## What do Menzuma and its varieties mean?

### 2. A researcher of local religious history and culture Ustaz Hassen Taju<sup>9</sup>

A specialist /researcher in local religious tradition and history; according to **Ustaz Hassen Taju**, who investigates the Menzuma's genetic makeup in the Oromia region:

*“Menzuma is entangled with the knowledge of Muslim society, it is a learning tool that is used for every situation including spiritual and secular events that happens in the society.... Menzuma word is Arabic it means poetic melody, but it also has local meaning in Ethiopian Muslim society it's always related to spiritual poems and melodies because it's related to Prophet Mohammed. In the prophet Mohamed's time there were famous poets, literates, and who performed Menzuma or Nishida (singing spiritual melodies and poems). When prophet Mohamed migrate from mecca to medina, the Medinan people received him by singing Menzuma, that's where the history of Menzuma starts; Because even when you read the Qur'an you have to do it by melody and prophet Mohammed said 'if you don't read the Quran in the melody you haven't followed by my footsteps'. The Azan (the call to prayer in Masjid) is also Menzuma, generally, every melody that evolves in the Muslim community is related to Menzuma one way or another. In Ethiopia, Menzuma is a little different from the usual Nishida like there is a Yaredic melody in the ancient Ethiopian Orthodox Church, but the melody texture is only can be found in Ethiopia. As we said earlier most of the time Menzuma is used to teach about mostly prophet Mohammed from birth to death, besides that, it's used for other purposes that are related to social services like marriage, family and relatives, death of a family and loved*

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<sup>9</sup>መንደማ ከኢትዮጵያ እንዴት ፈለቀ? በሙስሊም አባቶች አንደበት | The Story of Menzuma | Ethiopia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1XlwOfbNGg>, 5:29

*ones how to behave in a community, generally, it teaches about all the laws and orders that have to be kept as a Muslim.*

*In the Qur'an, Ethiopia is remembered as a holy city; there are a lot of articles in the Quran that talk about the land of Habesha and the Habeshan people especially when it comes to the first two migrations of the prophet Mohammed. Because of this, most Menzuma carry a poem that talks about the chosen land to receive the messenger and the proud Habeshas and their great history. There are renowned Muslim scholars and those who study the Muslim religion history, who has written a lot about Ethiopia's first relation to the Muslim religion. And most of the Menzuma is related to this idea as it belongs to the Habesha people.*

*In the Muslim community, there is a lot to study and research, but Menzuma was untouched topic by researchers until now, before the globalization idea starts its influence and disappear or changes for worse or better, it needs a lot of studying and documentation and be reserved, as it's unique and untouchable heritage. The government sector, those who are superior in the Muslim community, and universities who studies history and culture are obligated and have a responsibility to study and preserve Menzuma and its culture."*

From the interview above, we get the meaning, types, and uses of "Menzuma." The Arabic word "Menzuma" means "poetic melody," but it also has a cultural significance in Ethiopian Muslim society. Menzuma deviates a little from the standard Nishida in the same way that the ancient Ethiopian Orthodox Church contains a Yaredic melody, but only Ethiopia has this particular melody texture. Also, acknowledge Menzuma as a way of gaining knowledge, including secular

and spiritual, this melody is originally designed for the prophet Mohammed and his revelation. In this interview Menzuma is described as Islamic poem or literature with a melody because it says the Medinan people received the prophet in Menzuma at that time. Even the prophet said read the Quran by melody. And finalize it by stating every melody that evolves in Muslim community is related to Menzuma one way or another, but the music is different from Nishida known for Islamic religious song around the world, this melody texture is found only in Ethiopia, because every composer composes this melody based on the place, they're from with Arab texture making it unique melody. This may be related to how Habeshans described in the Quran, and Ethiopia as a holy city, the melody carry-on the Habeshas history and the chosen land for receiving the messenger, that comes with conclusion of Menzuma belonged to the Habesha people.

## 4.1.2. Part Two

### 1. By Dr. Hassen Muhammad Kwo<sup>10</sup>

*“Menzuma is a word derived from the verb ‘neveme’ or ‘menvum’ in Arabic word and the meaning is correcting something or setting an order. From this word when we add ‘Ashir’ it would give us the meaning of adding words, and poems and making artistic literature and perching ideas into poems and melodies. Menzuma is believed to have been created by Habeshan in the 7<sup>th</sup> century in Mecca. When it comes to the Ethiopian context the meaning would become literally a spiritual song that praises, teach, and gives guidance to the Islamic community. Menzuma can be written or orally transfer from one to another or*

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<sup>10</sup>"መንደሚና" ልዩዘጋቢፊልም "Menzuma" Documentary, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1JOmte\\_ra8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1JOmte_ra8)

*sometimes both methods can be used. The mesmerizing melodies of Menzuma can be performed with movements or just sated. It's also one way of showing how the Islamic Quran has been transcribed into every local language here in Ethiopia and how far the literature and poetic arts have been expanding enormously by Menzuma.*

*This is how human's civilization has been transferred, from every piece of music, literature, and poem that has been made from the earliest era. When we came to Islamic music first, we have to see the beginning; this religious music started from the first 'azan' related to the Bilal history, the first person that performs the azan song. The reason why he was chosen for the job was, he was a very gifted young man who has the talent for a good voice and was a very excellent choice for the call to the prayer. So, we can say Menzuma is the reflection of the azan that Bilal performed for the very first time.*

*There are also some ideas of researchers about the influence that goes from Habesha on Arabs at that time even in the music part, and there is some evidence that explains the music and the movements in the performance that are based on the Habesha, because of migrated slaves, merchants, traders, and others who migrated for other reasons.*

*Some histories talk about how the prophet Mohamed and Isha watched the Habeshas market performance with admiration.*

*It's hard to set a clear date for when the Menzuma starts but it's related to the expansion of the Islamic religion. As we know, the first and second Hijra Islamic religion was introduced to the Ethiopian people started from the corner of the country and then come to the middle but most of the poets and their poems history has not been recorded or haven't found the source, so this creates a historical gap. But poems and melodies or now what we call Menzuma had been the most used tools and grand media to teach the illiterate and*

*farmers of Ethiopia about the Islamic laws from the beginning and they are still useful methods. Historians who are studying Islamic history have found documented Menzuma in Harari, Ethiopia that has been written in the middle century and talks about the four caliphs of the time with a mix of Hadderi and Arabic language and the document's copy is still available for the Muslim community. This shows that Menzuma was already have been used in the middle century. After the 18<sup>th</sup> century there are countless documents about Menzuma, the composers, and every detail that has been created and performed in the community, especially in Wello, Menzuma was more than just teaching or praising song, it was much expanded verbally, with the deep meaning of the words, after adding the local literature to the teaching of Quran and the methods of the famous 'SemenaWerk' or transcribed as wax and gold methods (when you mean something but say other things), the poets were very difficult to understand even if you are speaking the same language.*

*There are two types of Menzuma styles the first one is called Dewa, this type of song includes praise for Allah and how he is the one and only savior of humanity and his glory, also in troubled times it's used for entreaty. This category includes much more branches for every situation, whether it's a natural disaster or other disasters that happen in society. The second is called Medhi, which is related to the prophet Mohammed, and the holy Qur'an. Every song in this category speaks about the prophet's glory and praise. In this category, the prophet Mohammed is not the only one who is praise the other 'weresetulahi' or 'werash' translated as the heir of the prophet, the ones who followed in his footsteps also have been included in the praise songs. This also has so many branches that hold the origin and philosophy of one Muslim must know as a religious person and should follow. Therefore, every type of Menzuma is summarized in these two categories.*

*So, when we ask about the institution where Menzuma is coming from, the main place is called 'halaqateliem' zawiya of 'ibada' and 'terbiya'. There are two kinds of terbian institutions, the first one is used for getting knowledge, like fiqh, Hadis, Qur'an related knowledge for our mind development. The second one is called 'Ruhi' its target is the spiritual and emotional development of oneself. So, most of the institution of terbia specializes specifically in the mind or the spiritual growth but sometimes they include both in some institution.*

*In this institution, Menzuma is the main artistic description for both methods, and it takes a great knowledge of literature and discipline to compose it. Some of them have schools in their wings for the Menzuma lyrics writers, who specialize in making poems for the song, like 'Zema or Kine bet' translated to 'melody or literature school' in the orthodox Christian church of Ethiopia.*

*This post doesn't only write poems but also gives reviews about the previous works of poems, and other poems that originated from Arabs can only be adapted to the local community, after being analyzed, translated, and getting a convenient meaning in the local language.*

*In Arab there is a scientific way of doing melody and poetry and it's called 'Arud' the first one to propose the way, it was the famous scholar Ahmed Far-ahid, this person set a scale or symmetry for the poem itself. Every Menzuma has its own scale type, and this makes it easier to adapt international styles to the local ones because the beginning or home base of the melody is the same. Most of these compositions are available in Ethiopia especially in Harar the most famous work of sheik Hashim in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and others, In the local area of Harerge sheik Mohammed Kemal, in Arsi sheik Abdulkarim and others, in Bale*

*there is a school for poets and every famous poet, Nishida and Menzuma composers or Ullemas, their teachers come from this school, the founder of the school was called sheik Abdulkadir, it was found in the emperor Menelik II time and the school is still used in this century.”*

This description relates Menzuma to the first azan, having good voice and the lyrical words of the teaching Islam, for the people to stop and listen. It also indicated Habeshan music and dance may be there because of the migrant slaves and merchant. It's hard to set a clear date for Menzuma beginning, but it's related to Islamic expansion. It's mostly said by oral and had not been recorded making a historical gap.

But in Harari some documents are found related to Menzuma about caliphs in the middle century in Hadderi and Arabic, showing Menzuma may have been already in use in the middle century. Aside from that Menzuma specially in Wello was more than teaching or praising song, it was verbally grown and mixing the Ethiopian 'ሰም እና ወርቅ' 'wax and gold' in their literary making them difficult to understand to the common society.

In this interview Menzuma have two categories, first one, Dawa uses for prayer and praise for Allah, including much more categories for every situation that happens in human life.

Medhi is the second one, and this is for the prophet Mohammed and the Quran. The Next we have seen is where Menzuma is composing from, and the institution of the main place is called 'ሐለቃተሊም' 'haleqateliem'. Subpart of it is called 'Terbiya' this institution has two kinds of learning methods. The first is knowledge-based teaching including Quran and Hadis for mind development. The second target is spiritual and emotional development of oneself. Menzuma is used in both institutions and helps the teaching learning in artistic ways, to compose, it needs a

great knowledge of literature, creating melody, analysis of poems that originated from Arab, adaptation, translation, and adaptation of the scale of Arab to the local. There are famous composers of Menzuma in Harari in 18th c. All these Islamic composers are come from these institutions.

## **Does Menzuma vary from other traditional Ethiopian music?**

### **2. Dr. Mohamed Ali, Literary and cultural studies researcher<sup>11</sup>**

*“Every Menzuma that had been composed has always had Ethiopian context and texture. It’s very different from other religious songs or other secular melodies. So, this makes a great contribution to music and marks its identity as one an Ethiopian-based melody. The process of making the poems for Menzuma is divided by two purposes, the first one is for teaching method, in this case, the poem must be simple so that can be understood by everybody, and the second is composed for the philosophers and for those who have the knowledge of literature, and it has taken the art of poetry to the next level, this is where the art of ‘Semena Werk’ (wax and gold) needed, a message of this poem carries a simple meaning on the outside and have a double aged sword in the inside.*

*Menzuma also helped to teach the Arabic language, for example, more than half percent of Wello people speak the Arabic language than the local language Amharic without intention or direct language training and this shows that music makes things easier than the usual method of teaching.*

*The language they use to write Menzuma is always in Arabic or the local language or by mixing the two, famous Menzuma is written in Amharic, Oromiffa (Oromia), Haderi (the*

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<sup>11</sup> "መንደራማ" ልዩደደገቢፊልም "Menzuma" Documentary, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1JJOnte\\_ra8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1JJOnte_ra8), 13:01

*language of Harar), Somali, and other local languages with the mix of Arabic's are available everywhere. In addition, the Arabic language can't make the Amharic sound fully so the Menzuma professionals have to fill the gaps and create or mix them both, so the music can have a full sound that's comfortable to the local music and can be adapted easily.*

*There is a lot of argument about the type or genre of Menzuma or how to divide them, some of them have set it into three types and called it 'Tawhid' this is used mainly to teach the origin of the Islamic view and laws as Menzuma has always been seen in the context of Islam. The second is what we call 'Madish', its one way of performing something good or bad phenomenon in the past but it's also used for parsing for every deserving person in the community and other emotions, therefore in this genre the performer emotion is the driver of the chosen context. 'kisah' is the next one this means literally narrating the legends of the prophet or their pupil, mostly about the prophet's life and related histories. This genre is a little different from the others because this genre narrates about written facts and universal knowledge so the composer must have knowledge of the related history before trying to compose a Menzuma.*

*Other than that, Menzuma can be used for marriage, as an artistic way of comparing Christianity and Muslim for example in the earlier years, the Christian community has revulsion about polygamy marriage and other things that are considered repulsive in the Christianity norm, the Islam community uses Menzuma as a tool or media to give a proper response, then they also ask using Menzuma what they want to know about the Christian tradition.*

*in the old days there was no formal education or an organized way for learning so they used Menzuma for teaching the laws and history of the Islamic religion and they use their Hallawa, zawiya, and mosque as an institution for the teaching and learning process for example in the mosque they teach Quran and madrasa, in Zawiya the people who cannot read and write will be gathered here and learn in poems and it's easier to catch and remember the phrases for a long time because it had a melody, in Halawa, there are people who read and meditates to understand the knowledge and for spiritual connection with Allah, this was their intuition purposes. So, everybody withers its illiterate or educated thanks to Menzuma knowing the main things about Islamic history and laws, like knowledge of the prophet, Quran, or Hadis so Menzuma was the main part of the education system of Ethiopian Islam.”*

According to Dr. Mohamed Ali, Menzuma has two levels of performance understanding, first will be for learning and this is performed for the commoners and the next is the 'wax and gold' as we discussed it earlier this part is performed only for philosophers who can understand the double meaning of the poem.

It's easy to teach with not only history but also Arabic language, Menzuma had a big contribution in for adapting the Arab language easily this can be shown in Harar, Oromia and Somali.

Arab language can't make the sound of Amharic so to fill the gap the Menzuma professionals mix them adapting and creating new tone so locals can sing them comfortably.

In the Islamic community this song has a great purpose from the religion teaching to every aspect of life events is described in Menzuma.

### **4.1.3. Summary of the interview**

Each of these historians and researchers gave a different statement about the beginning of Menzuma, but the use and purpose were the same and they all agree that this unique melody is related to Ethiopia in so many ways and needs to be documented and reserved. It's a traditional form of Ethiopian religious music stands as an awe-inspiring testament to the far-reaching influence of Arab culture in Ethiopia. Being a unique musical style and genre with a strong Ethiopian-Arab identity and a fusion of Arab culture and language, it served as a vibrant conduit for Islamic teachings centered around the prophet Mohammed, Qu'ran and Allah.

## **4.2. Interpretation**

This section will look at and interpret music that was gathered for the "Arabic Influence on Ethiopia" project as part of a musical example, as well as a selection of songs from documentary videos, and music that was obtained from old tape cassettes.

### **4.2.1. Data Analysis technique**

Everywhere where Islam has been practiced since its inception, including Harar, Argobba, Somali, and other places, there appear to be different genres of music or subcultures with Arabic influences. A variety of religious ritual festivals and cultural and traditional celebrations can utilize the musical genre.

In addition to Menzuma as a whole as an example of the influence, the traditional music and structures of the Harari people are mentioned in this section. The two branches of the analytical technique are literary analysis and melodic analysis. While the textual study covered the cultural

melody, patterns, and characteristics of each form, the melodic analysis also included songs from this location that had been written down and transcribed.

### 4.3. Literary Analysis of the Cultural Song of Harari

This is based on the researcher's interpretation of the primary two musical genres. Please view a video of a song from the documentary "Harari cultural music part one" collections if you would want further information.

Parameters	Harari cultural song	Remarks	General Characteristics & similarity
<b>Melody and vocal style</b>	-Solo (by male or female).  -duet (for both genders)  -Unison-together, at the same pitch & time	-a song performed solely by one person  - Monophonic style.  -More like polyphonic singing simultaneously d/t melody line but sometimes uses continuity style (call and response).  -sometimes they sing one melody line in duet or more.  -Multiple variations of the same melodic line are audible at once in heterophony.  -Multiple voices that are harmonically	-Has a vocal style that is similar to Middle Eastern singing  -sings in their cultural mode related to the maqam system rather than typical pentatonic.  -uses more half steps and quarter steps to constitute a genre of performance unique in its type of

		moving at the same speed together are known as homophony.	breathing, support, and resonance.
			-lack of straight tone vibrato.
			-adds a lot of ornaments and its crucial part of the song.
<b>Rhythm</b>	-mostly Free rhythm style and hard to measure (in engurguro or lullaby) style but it uses 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, & 6/8 with clapping, drums, or other instruments.	By mixing engurguro and middle rhythmic music, you create the best dynamic in the music.	
<b>Scale</b>	-Mostly use minor scale, uses so much ornamentation, it uses more accidental than the given scale.	Even if it uses the major scale, it has a feeling of the minor scale, which is different from the most used scale of pentatonic in Ethiopia.	

**Table 1: Literary analysis of cultural sings of Harari**

### 4.3.1. Melody Analysis of the Cultural Harari Song

**Type of song:** solo (male)<sup>12</sup>

**Song Measurement:** 4/4-time signature, Primarily Free Tempo, but if we put it in Beats 118–150 (this is due to the inconsistent meter of the song in every bar),

**scale of the song:** - Ab Major scale

**Instruments:** a cappella voice (with no clapping or additional sound).

**Specifications of the song:** Similar to monophonic songs, it only has one melody. Harmony and counterpoint are not present, nor are any musical instruments, but uses more and more ornaments and is not afraid to add accidental notes in every bar.

## የሀረረዎች ባህላዊ ዘረን Harari cultural solo song

transcribed by: Mastewal Mandefro  
public song

♩ = 118

3

5

7

11

<sup>12</sup> From Harari Communication የሀረረዎች ባህላዊ ዘረን ክፍል ለንድ, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eh61p6kF-cI>

Essentially, this song was performed using the major scale. Because the singer utilized the 3rd in natural C and the 5th E flat note, which in the supplied piece forms a major scale, as we can see in the song's image up top. However, all of these musical pieces share the ornamental use of a lot of notes that are not in the scale.

**A flat major scale**



This is the song's scale, and when we hear the music most often, we don't hear a major scale; instead, it sounds more like a minor scale and is strikingly similar to a very rare maqam called MaqamAthar Kurd, which seems to have emerged in the 20th century. The tonic note is Athar Kurd, and the second note is JinsHijazkar, which is located in the fifth degree of the scale. The scale known as "MaqamAthar Kurd" combines MaqamNawaAthar and Maqam.

(Farraj, 2001-2018 MaqamWorld)



Scale name- JinsAthar Kurd

The song also uses B natural and flat notes as ornaments, so basically, besides lowering the 6<sup>th</sup> (F) note to natural; it uses a mix of both scales.

#### 4.4. Literary Analysis of Menzuma

Parameters	Menzuma	Remarks	General Characteristics
<b>Melody and vocal style</b>	<p>-Solo (by male or female).</p> <p>-Unison-together, at the same pitch &amp; time</p>	<p>-a song performed solely by one person</p> <p>- Monophonic style known as Engurguro.</p> <p>-uses continuity style (call and response).</p> <p>-sometimes they sing one melody line in duet or more.</p> <p>-Multiple voices that are harmonically moving at the same speed together are known as homophony.</p>	<p>-has a vocal style that is a mix of Middle Eastern and Ethiopian minor singing and is melodically rich.</p> <p>-sings in their cultural mode related to the maqam system rather than typical pentatonic.</p> <p>-uses more half steps and quarter steps to constitute a genre of performance unique in its type of breathing, support, and resonance.</p> <p>-lack of straight tone vibrato.</p> <p>-adds a lot of ornaments and its crucial part</p>

of the song.

**Rhythm**

-mostly Free rhythm style and hard to measure (in engurguro or lullaby) style but it uses 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, & 6/8 with clapping, drums only. For the kinds of Menzuma that need 'dibe', drum and clapping is common.

Sometimes after engurguro it continues to a measured rhythm style. Not all Menzuma accompany drum and clapping. many Menzuma with chorus or otherwise do not accompany any instruments.

The only common musical instrument used in Menzuma is the drum. It is often accompanied with clapping. This is typical of the hottest chorus (Ramsa).

**Scale**

-Mostly use minor scale, uses so much ornamentation, it uses more accidental than the given scale.

Even if it uses the major scale, it has a feeling of the minor scale, which is different from the most used scale of pentatonic in Ethiopia.

**Table 2: Literary Analysis of Menzuma**

**4.4.1. Melody Analysis of Menzuma one**

**Type of song:** solo

**Song Measurement:** 4/4-time signature

**Tempo:** ♩=210

**Scale of the song:** Eb major scale

**Instruments:** none

**Specifications of the song:** It is a monophonic (single voice) song with no harmony or instrument.

# መንገድ

## Menzuma

From the Story of Menzuma Ethiopia,  
transcribed by Mastewal Mandefro

♩ = 210 Fm

2

5

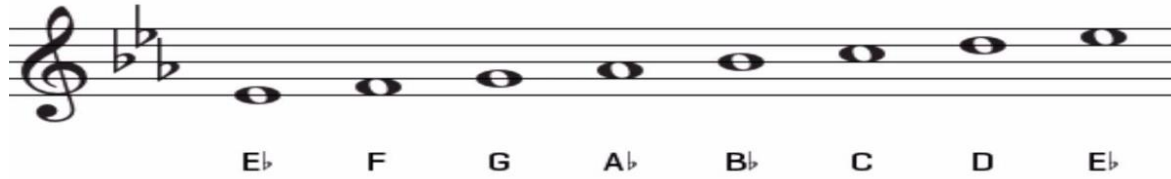
8

11 G# D#

14 Fm

This song falls under the category of studying the prophet's life, which is one way of worshiping. It has a message of adoration and love expression for the prophet, and it is a mixture of Arabic and Amharic. The song is in the key of E flat, and like other Arabic-related songs we've heard

before, it has excellent ornamentation throughout each phrase and primarily a free rhythm. Although there is a receiver in this song's next section, this passage is solo. Watch the video to gain a better idea.<sup>13</sup>



This is the song scale, and much like each song in a similar genre, it has a special arrangement. This song is typically connected with the Arabic scale, slightly with the hidden happy scale, rather than the western major and minor scales (since it is a praise song). When we build the scale from the 7th degree precisely as it is, it is quite similar to Maqam Lami, not the normal Ethiopian happiness scale like the Anchi Hoye scale. Maqam Lami, rare in the Middle East, was drawn from Iraq's repertory. Jins Kurd is assigned to the fourth degree, and Jins Lami is assigned to the scale's tonic. Maqam Lami is not part of any maqam family.



MaqamLami

#### 4.4.2. Melody Analysis of Menzuma two

**Type of song:** solo Engurguro

**Song Measurement:** 4/4-time signature

**Tempo:** ♩=200

**Scale of the song:** C major scale

<sup>13</sup>መንገሱ ስላለው ከኢትዮጵያ እንዴት ፈለቀ? በሙስሊም አባቶች አንደበት | The Story of Menzuma | Ethiopia  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1XlwOfbNGg>, 12:01

**Instruments:** none

**Specifications of the song:** It is a monophonic (single voice) song with no harmony or instrument.

# Menzuma Engurguro

By Mohammed Awol Hamza  
transcribed by; Mastewal Mandefro

$\text{♩} = 200$       G

4

8

12

This song's message is one of "wax and gold," and it is written in a combination of Arabic and Amharic. Like other songs with an Arabic theme, this one is in the key of C and features outstanding ornamentation throughout each phrase as well as a generally free rhythm. It is a lullaby or engurguro.<sup>14</sup>



This is the song's key, and because there isn't any straight tone vibrato and the important part is ornamented, it adds a lot of accidental notes.

The singer of this song will go through building most of the bars with a melismatic melody without lyrics and setting the vocal range for the word part, and when the time comes, he plays his lyrics within that pre-metered sound range.

#### 4.4.3. Melody Analysis of Menzuma three

**Type of song:** solo

**Song Measurement:** 4/4-time signature

**Tempo:** ♩=215

**Scale of the song:** A $\flat$  major scale

**Instruments:** none

**Specifications of the song:** It is a monophonic (single voice) song with no harmony or instrument.

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<sup>14</sup>Ethiopian Best Menzuma Mohammed AwelHamza, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVd6EP4Gx1w>

# Menzuma

By: Mohammed Awol Hamza

transcribed by: Mastewal Mandefro

$\text{♩} = 215$

4

6

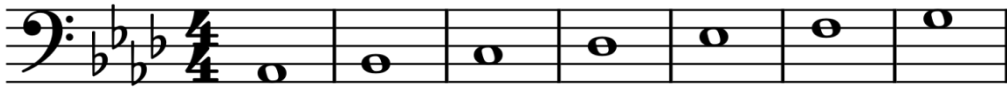
8

10

This song<sup>15</sup> incorporates Arabic and Amharic, which is one way of teaching historical events, in addition to poems with historical allusions and many meanings. Like other songs with an Arabic theme, this one is in the key of A flat and features outstanding ornamentation throughout each phrase as well as a generally free rhythm, this part is solo.

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<sup>15</sup>የጀማላው ንጉስ// ክፍል 1 ድንቅ ታሪክ(ቁረ) ከሃላል አርትስ Halal Arts part 1 Jema Nigus History and Menzuma  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lK-Bo7H0aF4>



This is the song's key, and because the interesting component is decorated and there is no straight tone vibrato, it adds a significant number of accidental notes.

## 4.5 Results

The researcher comes to the following conclusions regarding the musical influence of Arabic music on the Ethiopian traditional music on Harari cultural music and the Islamic religious music after carefully analyzing the information gathered in the field and from secondary sources:

4.5.1 Results regarding the Arab culture's influence on Ethiopia are.

- Arab culture has a significant influence on Ethiopia. There are components in numerous that can show those apparent and unapparent ancestries.

4.5.2 The following findings obtained from historical documents pertain to regions of Ethiopia that had a similar culture to Arabs:

- Harar, Dire Dawa, Argobba, Afar, and Somali are some of the cities that have similarities and cultural characteristics in common with the Arabs with more Islamic population. As an illustration most of Harari people dose not dress the same as other Ethiopian regions. These outfits are mirror of those worn by Arabs and people from other Middle Eastern countries closely.

4.5.3 Results on the language of Arabic in Ethiopia are as follows:

- The songs, the literatures and the observation study confirmed the long history of the Arabic language in Ethiopia, it is one of the oldest languages used in Ethiopia and its used mainly in Muslim community.

4.5.4 Results on religion's influence on music are: -

- Religion has had a great a significant influence on music and its advancement because it did create unique genre to praise and worship.

4.5.5 Results on Similarities Between Arabic Music and Ethiopian Islamic Music

- The songs are basically derived from Arab with the religious purpose and adapted in Ethiopian texture in terms of scale, musical structure, and vocabulary. Ethiopian Islamic music is quite close to Arabic music.

4.5.6 Results on Menzuma differentiate from other cultural music.

- The music is distinct from other types of Ethiopian ethnic music and the rest of the nation's musical traditions in terms of scale and style. It uses the mix of mostly Arabic and local language and has a different rhythm, mostly in terms of melodic style and tone.

4.5.7 Results on the role that Islam have played in the expansion of Arab cultural influence in Ethiopia are.

- Islam significantly brought the influenced Arab cultural influence in Ethiopia.

#### 4.5.8 Results on the beginning of Menzuma, purpose, and types are: -

- There are different views of the beginning of Menzuma one is that in the seventh century, Habeshan created "Menzuma" at Mecca using the Azan (the call to prayer in the mosque). Menzuma reflects the Azan that Bilal recited for the first time or by the Medinan people the other is it's created in Wello, Ethiopia.
- But they all agree on its purpose that Menzuma serves as tool for learning history of the religion and all related knowledge and this unique Menzuma is distinctively from Ethiopia.
- Ethiopian Muslims were able to create a tune that was both native to their country and well known to the Arab community to convey their love, appreciation, and respect for the Prophet Mohammed and the revelations from Allah that he received in Menzuma.
- It also serves as a tool for spiritual instruction on Islamic doctrine, jihad, and the life and works of the Prophet Mohammed.
- Most of the research Menzuma, but those who study history and culture are obligated to learn about and maintain Menzuma and its culture.
- There are two distinct Menzuma types. Dewa and Medhi, they are dedicated to the prophet Mohammed and the holy Qur'an and involve adoration for Allah.
- Results on the effects of Arabic music influence on traditional music of Ethiopia, is shown in the cultural music of Harari.
- Women of Islam community also perform Menzuma and praise Allah and Mohammed in their song among themselves in the holidays, but they can't compose the music. (Hassen R, 2016)
- Composers of spiritual songs of Nishida and Menzuma are called Ullemas.

## CHAPTER V

### 5. Summery and Recommendations

This chapter presents the summary of the research, the conclusion, and the recommendation. The study concentrated on the Harari people's musical and cultural practices and the Muslim religious music Menzuma. Following the presentation of the research findings, summary, and conclusion, suggestions for additional research based on the findings were made.

#### 5.1. Summery

In particular, the Harar, and Muslim populations from all across Ethiopia, historical relationship with Arab from the earliest century of the establishment of the Islamic religion are the focus of this study's analysis and We've mostly concentrated on music, and anything related to it. these links were also created through trade and other social exchanges as well as political and religious ties, which added a touch of tradition to every area. One of the earliest nations in the world, Ethiopians engaged in trade and cultural exchanges with both nearby and distant neighbors. Semitic clans began to migrate from Arabia to Ethiopia through the southern Red Sea between 750 B.C.

Many Ethiopians, until recently, were unaware of the background of Ethiopian Muslim music and its connection to Arab music. The media will be crucial in distributing the songs so that a larger audience knows it. Radio stations play Arabic music and Menzuma throughout Islamic Holidays and In order to completely appreciate the musical heritage of Ethiopia in general, it is crucial to comprehend the melodic features of Ethiopian Muslim songs. The history of the musical exchange between Ethiopia and the Arab world is extensive and nuanced.

One of the world's first mosques Al-Nejashi and a peaceful religious coexistence are both examples of Islam in Tigray. And the holy city of Ethiopia, Harar, ranked in fourth in terms of holiness, behind Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem and her more than 90 The world's highest concentration of mosques are the other proof.

In the interviews' regarding Menzuma, the oldest Menzuma poems reflect honor and regard for Ethiopia's place in the Muslim community. In the earliest times, most of the Ethiopian communities were unable to read and write because they were farmers. The composers wrote their compositions in Arabic and translated them into the community's local language. Most of the Muslim history was not recorded as most believers were farmers who lived in villages. Menzuma, which means "poetic melody" in Arabic, also has a local connotation in Ethiopian Muslim culture. It is always associated with spiritual poetry and music since they are connected to the Prophet Mohammed. There were prominent Menzuma or Nishida practitioners and poets in the time of the prophet Mohamed (singing spiritual melodies and poems).

Menzuma is in great danger because it needs a translator for the local language. It is a learning tool that is used for every circumstance, including spiritual and secular events that happen in society, Menzuma is intertwined with the knowledge of Muslim society.

In the seventh century in Mecca, Habeshan is thought to have invented Menzuma. Menzuma can be communicated verbally or in writing from one person to another. It is a spiritual song that encourages, instructs, and guides the Muslim community. In Harari, Ethiopia, historians researching Islamic history discovered a manuscript from the medieval ages known as the Menzuma.

Every Menzuma that has been written has a context and texture exclusive to Ethiopia. Poems are written with philosophers and literature experts in mind. The text is written in Somali, Amharic, Arabic, or a combination of the three. Islamic poetry known as Menzuma tells stories about documented facts and general knowledge. Composers must have knowledge of the related history before trying to compose a Menzuma. The genre can be used for marriage, as an artistic way of comparing Christianity and Islam.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

The following actions are advised based on the findings and conclusions: As in this study, the researcher advises the concerned body to do the following in order to get the necessary serious attention:

- Ethiopia is home to a variety of mixed cultures, some of which are categorized as "minor ethnicities," and these traditions should be researched and protected. This helps to preserve this underappreciated and unexplored cultural identity.
- Arabs were among the first people to come into contact with Ethiopians and had a big influence on their social, political, and religious ideas. For the benefit of future generations, these cultural aspects should be conserved and documented.
- The government, higher education institutions, and other interested parties ought to provide a supportive atmosphere in the country for writers of works that incorporate Ethiopian musical genres, lyrics, and melodies.
- According to the study's findings, Menzuma in particular has cultural, and linguistic similarities to Arab countries, which are physically remote from Ethiopia. Therefore, the

government and other stakeholders should promote and protect innovation as a musical subgenre and other cultural artifacts as one of UNESCO's cultural heritages.

- It is the obligation of every historian, researcher, music history experts, media expert, and resourceful person to document the knowledge about every aspect of this music Genre.
- It is recommended to do further study on this music genre for it holds much historical, religious, and secular wisdom of literature and mesmerizing melody style with Arabic and local language.

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